



The Greater Los Angeles Area of Narcotics Anonymous Newsletter

the heartbeat

"The heart of NA beats when two addicts share their recovery"



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"Reflection" *by Kristi*

One year ago tomorrow I made a choice to change my life. I was headed in a downward spiral for many years, treading water until I could no longer hold my head above the water; I was drowning. I had hurt and used the people closest to me and who loved me the most.

I had allowed myself to be controlled, not only by substances but by others actions and my own emotions as well. I lied. I lied a lot; I manipulated and played the victim for a very long time. I allowed myself to become weak. I still remember that car ride out to Sebastopol; the feelings of defeat, shame, and being utterly lost inside flooded my mind. I had felt like I was being punished, sent away because everyone was tired of dealing with me, or that they felt in some way that I was broken and needed to be fixed. I was so dead inside that it hadn't really hit me that I would be leaving my son for a longer time than I had ever left him before or what the kinds of feelings he was going to have while I was gone.

While there I realized that I didn't have to hide anymore, that I could be me. I didn't have to fit into anyone else's idea of me. I didn't have to be what I felt others wanted me to be. I could be Kristi. After years and years of numbing myself, my feeling and my emotions started to come back to me and I started to feel stronger—strong enough to decide that I needed to change. I was told that all I had to change was everything. So that's what I set out to do.

In this past year I have done just that, changed everything. I have grown as a mother; my son is and always has been my first priority. I have been given a chance to watch my son grow, to watch him struggle making friends, to learn to be sure of himself and his life. When I left him I never even thought of the kind of abandonment he would feel, but I also never thought I would see the kind of pride I see when I look into his eyes now. My son is truly proud of me and proud to have me as a mother, we have grown closer than I ever thought possible.

I have grown as a woman. I have learned how to stand on my own and have earned the confidence to know that I can stand on my own. I left treatment with nothing. I have built a life for my son and I in this short year. A life that I am proud of. I have learned how to love, what I want out of a relationship, and how to talk and share my feelings—not keep them bottled up just to save someone else's. I have watched my son bond with a man in ways that I never thought possible. In ways that sometimes make me jealous, but jealous in all the good ways. I have found a man who is happy to watch me spread my wings not keep them clipped. A man that is as proud to stand by my side as I am to stand by his.

This year has had a lot of ups and downs. I have struggled and I have soared, I would not change it for the world. I now have a close circle of people that love me for me. Some relationships have yet to be mended and some maybe never will. But I know in my heart as long as I keep doing what is right for me and the people I love that all things will turn out just fine. If you have received this it's because I love you and during this last year you have helped me grow and learn about life, love, myself and the kind of woman I want to be in some way or another. So, thank you!



"The emphasis is not on who or what this Power is, but on what this Power can do for us."

Step Two Working Guide

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As we grow in or recovery, it's very important that our idea of the meaning of "sanity" also grows



Hope in a dark place

I've been in a lot of dark places in my life. In addiction. And in recovery. Throughout my addiction those dark places didn't mean that much to me. It was just another day.

After I got into recovery I started seeing things as they were. Things got hard though. But my dad's illness and passing was the darkest place I had been in. Especially at the very end. I loved my dad greatly, and still do. The day he passed led me to a very dark period.

At first I had little hope. As the days passed by I started seeing it. A little girl ran to her dad at the mall. And I realized my higher power was showing me what I had. And the goodness in memories and the life our family had. I started to have hope for a better day. Then a great man told me that when my dad left me he left me full of love for others and myself. He was a silly, hard-ass angel sent to me. He showed me that this insanity wasn't worth giving any more power to it.

My hope is and has always been surrounding me, with the beauty and love of fragile humans just like me. Even if it's hard to see. "We came to believe that a power greater than ourselves could restore us to sanity" NA Basic Text, PG 17, Step 2



My Higher Power

There are many theories that try to define what a Higher Power is. I don't think it would be worthwhile to decipher what that power is, or is not. What I believe is important in the recovery process is simply to accept, just as it's indicated in the Second Step: that it is something that loves me, takes care of me, and is more powerful than I am.

That it loves me means that it allows me to accept myself, people, and circumstances and situations as they are, without judging them or trying to change them, or adapt them to my personal wishes.

That it takes care of me means that it instills in me the desire to do better things for myself, to become interested in other people (in spite of them having different ways of acting, thinking, and living than my own ways), and to use my time to leave a better world to live in for my loved ones. That it is superior to me means that a Higher Power is vast enough to take me to a level of thinking and acting such that, although it goes against my own nature, I am moved to act in ways that are based on decisions inspired by sane judgment.

Although I have not defined it, the Higher Power works through me to act in ways that lead to my long-lasting well-being, and to the well-being of those around me and the world as a whole. Consequently, my Higher Power operates without me thinking about it when I act in a spontaneous, authentic, and selfless manner.

Jesus G, Coahuila, Mexico



Step Two: How to Train Your Disease

It works: How and Why defines the term "restoration" as "changing to a point where addiction and its accompanying insanity are not controlling our lives." - IWHW page13

Early one morning, I lied to my supervisor that I had a family emergency. The truth was my car wouldn't start. I was afraid to tell him the truth. That's when the obsession began roaring in my ears. The guilt from being dishonest was screaming inside my head. I tried to stop thinking about it over and over again. But I failed ...and I can feel the disease consume me.

Razor sharp guilt tore at my spirit releasing unresolved issues. All those regrets from my past telling me everything in my life is wrong, I have no purpose, and it's not getting any better. I can feel my spirit cry out in rage because I want so bad to use somebody or something to fix me; and the pain slides over me like an old comfortable blanket.

I hate my damn disease! I let it steal my peace! I wanted it back so I called my sponsor. My sponsor said it was my fault that I woke my disease up. He suggests next time pray to my Higher Power first thing in the morning as soon as I wake up. Ask for His will so he can recharge my heart into a "Use spiritual principles in all my affairs attitude".

When I switch to recovery mode, it's okay not to feel okay. I don't need to use dishonesty to change people, the past, and to get my life back. Self-will has never kept the disease off me. It's about starting my day trusting in a Higher Power. A Higher Power that is a God of restoration. His restoration plan will make me stronger and better. When I honestly choose to take responsibility for my mistakes, something amazing always comes. I attract life and life is another way of saying God. I will get an open mind and expect more recovery. More clean time. A smile on my face. A gratitude that will strengthen my heart. An expectation that things will change in my favor. An expectation my Higher Power will give me more courage and more wisdom. I will come to believe that God wants me more alive deep down in my spirit. I just have to shut my mind off and listen to what God is trying to say. This is what faith is all about. You have to believe He works even when you can't see Him.

Once again, God has revealed himself to me and transformed my world. As soon as I realized I was wrong about being dishonest and felt bad for lying, my car started and I made it to work on time. Go figure. Now I have more intangible evidence that God works and my peace can be restored to a better level using the principles of NA.

That's why practicing the principles of Step Two have always been critical to my healing because I have scars that can't be seen. Sometimes I am wrong in believing that the scars I inflict on my spirit will fade. Some old wounds never heal. Drugs are not my only issue. The disease of addiction is the issue and because I have a Higher Power and the Fellowship, I choose not to handle my disease on my own.

Greater Los Angeles Area of NA

**Tuesday Night
Heart  Heart
Men's Meeting
Presents**

**26th Annual
Men's Spiritual
Breakfast**

"Wearing Our Recovery"

Sunday, August 12, 2018

Time: 9 a.m.

**Carson Community Center
801 E. Carson St. CA 90745**

Price: \$40.00

Tony Mac



When all else fails, read the instructions

My first sponsor died suddenly and unexpectedly. In the years since his death, my gratitude for the experience, strength, and hope he passed on to me continues to grow. He always said, "When all else fails, read the instructions." Every time I am troubled, I reach for our Basic Text, and it always helps me put things in perspective. My sponsor and other recovering addicts who influence me sincerely believe that addicts can leave behind their fear-driven, pain-filled lives to find freedom from active addiction and a spiritual awakening. They constantly guide me to NA literature and passages of the Basic Text. My sponsor called the Basic Text "The Recovery Manual."

I am grateful I have access to a Basic Text and other NA literature in a language I understand. There are many addicts who don't yet have that chance. When I think of this, the reality of NA's vision hits me. Our vision looks forward to the day when "every addict in the world has the chance to experience our message in his or her own language and culture." (NA World Services Vision Statement) Often, in my daily meditation, the power of this vision sweeps over me. I can be reduced to tears of gratitude for the life I have found through working the Twelve Steps of NA, and for those who care enough to work in service and carry NA's message to me. In NA, I found a fellowship of men and women, addicts meeting in groups and trying to use spiritual principles to find a new way of life and freedom from addiction. The NA I found was the legacy of recovering addicts who had learned to depend on a power greater than them. They kept coming back, and they served NA to support our fellowship's primary purpose. I see my own service as one way of fulfilling my commitment to carry the message they carried to me.

The pain of addiction brought me to NA, but if our rooms were only filled with pain, there would be no hope and no promise of freedom such as we read about in our Basic Text. Fear of returning to the life I had escaped, and attraction to those who worked at recovery, forced me to address lifelong habits. I had to face an almost instinctive rebelliousness and reluctance to be guided. All my lonely life, I clung to the delusion of self-sufficiency. Pain forced me to ask for help, and the NA way. Working the Twelve Steps of Narcotics Anonymous has helped me find the tools that will, if I use them, allow me to get honest with myself, open my mind to alternatives, and become willing to try what is suggested.

With so much pain among us, there will always be conflict. Many times, simple misunderstandings have grown into grave conflicts, entirely disproportionate to the original issues.

In "The Recovery Manual," the essay on the Second Tradition says, "By nature, we are strong-willed, self-centered people who are thrust together in NA. We are mismanagers and not one of us is capable of consistently making good decisions." (Basic Text, p. 60)

So, how do we "mismanagers" manage to work together? In the Introduction to the Basic Text, the addicts who wrote and compiled material for our book offer some suggestions. We can consciously and deliberately invite a Power greater than ourselves into our work, and ask a loving God to influence our decisions. By relying on a loving God, we have a defense against anger, personal opinion, and ego. We can disagree without being disagreeable, and we can conduct our service in a businesslike fashion. By practicing willingness to achieve conscious contact with a Power greater than ourselves, we develop the capacity to recognize the difference between group opinion, as dictated by powerful personalities or popularity, and group conscience.

I have a strong personality, but I've never been that popular. I am not capable of consistently practicing spiritual principles in all my affairs. I am an addict trying to recover. I pray for progress rather than perfection. Through years of practicing these principles, our fellowship has developed practical guidelines to help addicts like me who wish to find a new way of life and follow the NA way. So, when all else fails, I phone my sponsor, get to a meeting, and read the instructions.

Francis M.

Share the Wealth

the heartbeat presents the experiences and opinions of individual members of Narcotics Anonymous. The articles you see in this newsletter are written by NA members like yourself. You need not consider yourself a skilled writer. You don't have to know all the rules of grammar. We have an editorial team whose job it is to take care of those details. The articles and letters do not necessarily express the philosophy of NA as a whole nor does publication imply endorsement by NA, **the heartbeat**, or the Greater Los Angeles Area of Narcotics Anonymous. **the heartbeat** assumes no responsibility to return submitted material and does not guarantee that submissions will be published. **the heartbeat** reserves the right to edit any material submitted in accordance with our review policy. The policy includes but not limited to:

- Articles should be no longer than two page handwritten or typed.
- Use of NA language of recovery.
- No profanity
- No personal attacks directed towards NA members or NA as a whole.

Submit articles to:
the heartbeat
P.O. Box 512431
Los Angeles, CA 90051

theheartbeat@glana.org

Fax: (888) 858-4713

HEARTBEAT STAFF

Lester L	323-493-4576
Pam H	213-248-2521
Lisa D	310-680-7376
Zina L	310-680-7376
Donna D	323-697-9127
Erwin T	310-619-3715
Vivian W	323-385-8899
Tony Mac	323-203-7031

Greater Los Angeles Area of NA
WE CARE
7pm Wednesday Night Meeting at 8620 S. Broadway

PRESENTS

RECOVERY UNDER THE STARS
Saturday, August 24, 2019

Greater Los Angeles Club House 5852 So. Western Ave., LA, CA 90047
Contacts: Sherleen @ 213.237.8882 Carl @ 323.667.5131 Doug @ 323.979.5673

Meeting: 6 - 9 pm Dance: 9:30 pm - 1:30 am Pre-sold ticket donation: \$5 \$8 at the door

Greater Los Angeles Area Activities Committee

SUMMER MADNESS PICNIC Saturday July 13, 2019

10am - 6pm

6127 Centeno Park Avenue
Los Angeles, CA 90008

Donor Donations \$10.00

For further info contact:
Lester 323.858.1221
Mignon 323.339.6284
Henry 323.838.2919

JOIN US IN SUPPORT
OF
THE GLAAC(NA)

The Gift is Recovery "9"
SPEAKER JAM FUNDRAISER

Saturday
July 27, 2019

10A - 9P

8305 S Gramercy Place
LA, CA 90047

Food donation: \$8.00

lucky drawings!
fellowshipping!
the ties that bind!
Fun! Fun! Fun!

JULY / AUGUST 2019 HELPLINE: 323 933-5395 WWW.GreaterLosAngelesNA.ORG





Happy Birthday



1 YEAR

Danny R 7/08/18

2 YEARS

Brittaney 8/22/17
Nicole H 8/12/17
Leslie L 7/28/17
Dawn S 7/08/17
Rasheedah W 7/06/17

3 YEARS

Teresa J 8/22/16
Natacha M 8/14/16
Lauri C 8/04/16

4 YEARS

Milton A 8/01/15
Krystal M 8/02/15
Emerson C 8/04/15
Joseph A 7/08/15
TPH 7/05/15

5 YEARS

Clyde B 8/24/14
Veronica P 8/21/14
Tracey K 8/13/14
Gloria V 7/29/14
Sharon M 7/25/14
Andy R 7/13/14
Olivia S 7/06/14
Tim D 7/03/14

6 YEARS

Susie B 8/25/13
Diana R 8/22/13
Ross H 7/26/13
Mary T 7/11/13
Robert M 7/10/13
Kendra P 7/08/13
Eddie B 7/05/13

7 YEARS

Motique A 8/29/12
Minnie N 8/15/12
Kimberly R 8/08/12
Jessica R 7/12/12
Charles C 7/06/12
Jerome D 7/05/12

8 YEARS

Paul S 8/26/11
Damone B 8/14/11
Kammie S 8/08/11
Darryl K 8/06/11
Myrna S 7/17/11
Yolanda G 7/10/11
Laura R 7/06/11
Marc P 7/01/11
Derek M 7/01/11

9 YEARS

Christopher E 8/28/10
Stanley B 8/20/10
Michelle S 8/15/10
Greg F 8/12/10
Ray V 7/14/10
Patricia W 7/28/10
Lila W 7/23/10
Sharon F 7/11/10
Teresa B 7/09/10
Artis C 7/02/10

10 YEARS

Andrea H 8/31/09
Charles R 8/25/09
John N 8/18/09
Mike S 8/06/09
Donna G 8/18/09
Patricia W 7/28/09
Jerome B 7/14/09
Kevin P 7/13/09

11 YEARS

Brandy F 8/28/08
Natacha C 8/24/08
Sherri W 8/23/08
Christine B 8/18/08
Janna A 8/17/08
James E 8/13/08
Stephanie B 8/06/08
Diane K 8/05/08
Pam S 8/05/08
Fred C 8/01/08
Jamesha R 7/29/08
Dag 7/24/08
Big Mike T 7/23/08
William J 7/23/08
Denise K 7/23/08
Michelle N 7/19/08
Edna M 7/16/08
Debrina P 7/14/08
Sherlock S 7/13/08
Carolyn H 7/12/08
Fisseha A 7/07/08
Christie C 7/06/08
Edward B 7/02/08

12 YEARS

Darleen C 8/23/07
Anton M 8/20/07
Sharon B 8/20/07
Pat B 8/18/07
Lillie O 8/18/07
Lucretia W 8/18/07
Annamarie L 8/11/07
Darryl M 8/10/07
Durrell C 7/27/07
Annie C 7/20/07
Iris H 7/20/07
AC 7/20/07
Patricia B 7/18/07
James B 7/14/07
Traci M 7/12/07
Dyannell P 7/07/07
Robert M 7/04/07
Ronnie P 7/02/07

13 YEARS

Larry S 8/28/06
Latanya C 8/27/06
Bill W 8/26/06
May S 8/22/06
Karl A 8/21/06
Gwen B 8/18/06
Michael Y 8/09/06
Joe J 8/07/06
Timothy S 8/01/06
Emmett B 7/28/06
Theresa R 7/27/06
Derrick M 7/25/06
Donna R 7/15/06
James J 7/14/06
April S 7/13/06
Yvette G 7/11/06
Samuel M 7/07/06
Blanche J 7/07/06
Diana H 7/05/06
Leroy Y 7/04/06
Tim S 7/01/06

14 YEARS

Francisco S 8/16/05
Beverly G 8/15/05
Darlinda H 8/12/05
Willie L 8/05/05
Donald M 8/05/05
Jay B 7/17/05
George T 7/11/05

15 YEARS

Darryl G 8/19/04
James D 8/19/04
Rhonda T 8/14/04
Enrique L 8/08/04
Latanya H 8/07/04
Erwin T 8/06/04
Robert R 8/05/04
Felix P 8/05/04
Kevin P 8/04/04
Alphonse W 8/03/04
Herman A 8/03/04
Ricardo B 8/02/04
AI W. 8/02/04
Myra P 7/28/04
Teresa W 7/27/04
Rosemary 7/23/04
Paula R 7/16/04
Tom H 7/13/04
Kimberly T 7/06/04
Eric P 7/04/04
Yvette W 7/01/04

16 YEARS

Shantea S 8/29/03
Janet W 8/26/03
Jessie G 8/24/03
Lee J 8/18/03
Winnetra C 8/18/03
Rick G 8/11/03
Samuel S 8/10/03
Claudia C 8/06/03
Mesha H 8/04/03
Stephen L 8/04/03
Felicia B 8/01/03
Elizabeth W 7/31/03
Gary C 7/26/03
Geraldine Mc 7/22/03
Kenneth M 7/19/03
Ollie B 7/19/03
Taylor L 7/16/03
Lynn T 7/16/03
Barbara M 7/16/03
Tyronne M 7/12/03
Taylor L 7/12/03
Ken M 7/11/03
Morgan E 7/08/03
Lynn T 7/04/03

17 YEARS

Derek T 8/25/02
January S 8/23/02
Cynthia C 8/23/02
Les Y 8/22/02
Linda H 8/20/02
Jerry K 8/14/02
Kimberly T 8/12/02
Gwendolyn D 8/09/02
Gregory W 8/07/02
Marlon G 8/07/02
DeAndre T 8/06/02
Brenda B 8/06/02
Debra B 7/26/02
Ana N 7/25/02
Djakhangir A 7/25/02
Athena W 7/24/02
Rhonda C 7/22/02
Serena C 7/17/02
Rachelle B 7/16/02
Andrea R 7/15/02
Ricky T 7/10/02
Willie R 7/07/02
Bobby M 7/04/02
Maurice C 7/01/02

18 YEARS

Ivan T 8/31/01
Sharon Y 8/17/01
Charles J 8/15/01
Sharon R 8/14/01
Paris P 8/09/01
Henry P 8/09/01
Brian P 8/07/01
Dana K 8/05/01
Cynthia S 8/01/01
LaNette B 7/30/01
James T 7/22/01
Wali W 7/19/01
Celanese T 7/17/01
Howard W 7/16/01
David H 7/15/01
George S 7/11/01
Margaret W 7/08/01

19 YEARS

Vaughn H 8/30/00
Patricia C. 8/29/00
Raymond L. 8/24/00
Earl G 8/18/00
Scott P. 8/16/00
Rhonda T 8/14/00
Tyra T 8/13/00
Eddie B. 8/12/00
David W. 8/09/00
Denise C. 8/08/00
Matthew M. 7/31/00
Belinda W 7/30/00
Marvin H 7/28/00
Elizabeth D. 7/25/00
Tone A 7/24/00
LaCretia E. 7/22/00
Earl G. 7/18/00
Doreen S 7/10/00
Sarah H. 7/06/00
Shirley R. 7/05/00

20 YEARS

Eddy L. 8/31/99
Lisa T 8/20/99
Laura M 8/20/99
Susan G 8/17/99
LaToya J 8/16/99
Billie S. 8/13/99
Robert B. 8/11/99
Richard J. 8/05/99
Remona J. 8/03/99
Glen C. 8/03/99
Greg J. 7/26/99
Sheila T. 7/16/99
William J. 7/05/99
Charlotte T. 7/2/99

21 YEARS

Mary SF 8/30/98
Johnny N. 8/24/98
Larry W. 8/22/98
Alvin J. 8/19/98
Maria K 8/10/98
Aaron R. 8/09/98
Artimus J. 8/07/98
Sonia B. 8/07/98
Clifton S 8/01/98
Jezette B. 7/30/98
Joe S 7/15/98
Marcus M. 7/13/98
Angelus W. 7/12/98
Kenneth K. 7/05/98
Faith A. 7/04/98

22 YEARS

Mignon R 8/30/97
Catherine C 8/23/97
Mark B. 8/21/97
Linda H. 8/19/97
Patricia W. 8/09/97
Jonathan J. 8/09/97
Stephanie M. 8/08/97
Christopher H. 8/02/97

23 YEARS

Mignon R 7/30/97
Tracie H. 7/26/97
Taryn G. 7/26/97
Ronald R. 7/24/97
Jackie T. 7/24/97
Rebecca L. 7/16/97
Alma E. 7/15/97
Ricky W. 7/11/97
Linda M. 7/10/97
Nina L. 7/10/97
Jamaire W. 7/02/97

25 YEARS

Michele S 8/19/96
Cynthia G. 8/12/96
Stephanie M 8/08/96
Yvonne F. 8/06/96
Della H. 7/25/96
Dana S. 7/24/96
Phyllis H. 7/23/96
Tracy R. 7/17/96
Jama J. 7/15/96
Rosalind R. 7/14/96
Kermis H. 7/09/96

24 YEARS

Chuck M. 8/27/95
Patricia H 8/15/95
Kim W. 8/14/95
Billy B. 8/10/95
Elliot B. 8/10/95
Keenan M. 8/08/95
Sandra M. 8/04/95
Sandra A. 8/01/95
Robert B. 8/01/95
Yolanda G. 7/10/95

29 YEARS

Ted B. 8/09/90
Michele L. 8/01/90
Michelle B. 7/28/90
Brooks W. 7/26/90
Mary J. 7/16/90
Ellen H 7/16/90

30 YEARS

Linda H 8/28/89
Veeta M 8/14/89
Mark D 8/13/89
Ron S. 7/25/89
Marlene E. 7/16/89
Donnie C 7/15/89
Terri L. 7/12/89

31 YEARS

Malik H. 8/12/88
Maria K 8/10/88
Mike E 7/24/88
Sharon A. 7/19/88
Johnny P. 7/07/88

32 YEARS

Gerald C. 8/12/87
Vanessia K. 8/04/87
Phillip B. 7/18/87
Mike M 7/10/87
Rikki J. 7/09/87

33 YEARS

Cheryl B. 8/27/86
Don M. 7/24/86
Jessica M 7/15/86
Leigh W 7/15/86
Rhonda T 7/05/86
Diana H 7/05/86

34 YEARS

Idris H 8/21/85
Frank P 8/16/85

35 YEARS

Travis S 8/16/84

36 YEARS

Dawud B. 8/26/82

46 YEARS

Alex L 8/24/73