



The Greater Los Angeles Area of Narcotics Anonymous Newsletter

the heartbeat

NOV - DEC 2019

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



SINCE 1993



VOLUME 25 NUMBER 6

24-HOUR HELPLINE: 323 933-5395

www.GreaterLosAngelesNA.org

"Hope on the Horizon" by Toni B.

My journey has been one of great pain and great joy. Twelve years after coming into recovery, I'm still clean and still a single mother. Raising two teenaged daughters on my own and staying clean has presented many difficulties and many painful moments—moments when, because of my daughters' memories, real or not, they have let me know how much pain they endured as a result of my using. The reality of being clean and realizing that it did not automatically make me a wonderful mother has been a journey in itself. There have been times while on this journey when I felt like a total failure as a mother—times when our arguments were so painful that getting loaded was not even an option for comfort. Nothing was. In spite of the pain I felt, I didn't use, but I continued to feel and cry and feel and cry until I (we) reached the other side. These experiences have proven, time and time again, that this journey is a long one, full of beautiful outcomes and new visions of hope. My journey will forever continue upward with positive results as long as I stay clean. This is a gift that can only be experienced by those who are willing to feel every damned thing there is to feel. Sometimes I wish I didn't know this fact or know what I know now. Because of this amazing reality—and many others—I can't even tell myself that it won't get better, because my experiences in recovery have proven to me that it will always get better; as long as I don't use, no matter what.

While this realization makes me angry, it also saves my life every time. So, these are not only my experiences but also my daughters'. One day I came home from work and saw my younger daughter's writing assignment on the table, titled "One Day at a Time." I just had to read it! After all, wasn't that why it lay there? It was a short essay about her memories of my active addiction, her life with me during that time, and my recovery. She closed the essay by stating that I was the strongest woman she knew and that she was the happiest kid around. Suddenly, all of the pain and sorrow our relationship had suffered in the past didn't matter. For that moment in time, it was all worth it. The assignment was turned in to her English teacher the next day for the whole world to see, as far as I knew. And, because of this journey that my daughters and I have traveled in recovery over the past twelve years, I was the proudest and best mom in the world for the first time in my life!



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Goodbye Her-O

by Cree

Today, I am writing to say goodbye;
I can no longer live with you, your love, or your lies.
You've destroyed me and left me torn and tattered;
From strong and vibrant to broken and battered.
That's not to say that you didn't rush in to comfort and care
in moments of grief and despair.
I'll give credit where credit is due
and credit is duly owed to you.
You were there when I was overcome with sudden grief
and yearning for fleeting relief.
I was incensed and at odds with my God;
Furious at false assurance and my fragile facade.
I was broken and plotting death;
entreating Him to take my last breath.
I could not eat, could not sleep,
could not be...
nor did I want to;
No push through or undue.
My eyes were swollen from relentless crying;
Every tear indicative of a piece of me dying.

Nearly all faith is gone;
But then, faint and far, whispers to carry on.
God says "my child, I have a plan unforeseen;
with faith the size of a mustard seed."
His voice cuts in and out...I hear every other word;
But the message is clear and words are heard.
A warm ray pierces through the clouds;
The light is loud and impressively proud.
A glimmer of hope, faith, and courage dawn on
my soul like the dawn of a new day;
Leaving you and your confines at bay.
With color in the sky, clouds part, and cease raining;
Red mountains in the horizon like a pretty prized painting.
I can plainly see;
Although blurry like the static soaps on an old box tv.
Clear enough to reveal the true you;
You, once so confident, reliable, fearless, and true.
You that I once loved!

Just for today, I am drawing the line;
You've lost all meaning in my life and my mind!
I can't do this anymore;
It's time to settle our score.
Nothing more I need to say;
We have to go our separate way!
I want to see other people;
Tantamount and equal! I won't love at any cost;
So, it's better to have loved and lost!
It's not you...It's me;
I'm going to live life free!
I hate to watch
you leave but I love to watch you go!
Goodbye Her-O!

Recovering Addict,
Cree



The Key?

by Chris B

I have heard multiple answers to the question "what is the key to recovery?" In life, unlike what many may misquote, survival goes not to the strongest, but to the one most able to adapt to reality. My adaptation, my best answer, almost killed me. Everything about my solution became anti-survival. Initial benefits (false perception that I became cool, could cope, looked better), soon enough, came at a terrible cost and, for that matter, ceased to exist. Benefits stopped, and yet I couldn't. After that first time using, the more I tried, the more I paid physically for my solution, the farther its evasion seemed to become. My solution was anti-reality. My attempt to adapt was actually my attempting to change reality. Reality is persistent. Insistent. So is addiction. The reality of my problem did not match my perception of what my problem was. My solution only matched this misperception...and even at that, my solution pretty much sucked. It sure did in the long run. Ultimately, a faster death built on a life of shame, I mean, for real – wtf! If this seems like a solution to life's challenges, then I have great beach front property in Nevada I'd like to show you.

So, in nature's due course, perhaps adaptation is the key to survival. This certainly seems to make sense. A weakling in the snow who knows how to build a fire is stronger than a weight builder who only knows how to lift weights. Nursing words' meaning, I suppose one could say that this ability to adapt *is* 'strength'...or, one could say that the disease is trying, convincingly, to misdirect by over-complicating. Yet again, regardless, what I've heard, and what I believe to be the truth, is that acceptance is the key. Acceptance of reality affords me an opportunity to adapt in such a way that my adaptation addresses the real instead of my feelings about the real.

The clinical nature of my thinking cuts right to this awareness: my disease centers itself in my thinking (this revelation courtesy of people with time saying as much) Nothing that I've written matters without a power greater than myself doing for me what I have proven I cannot. The key may be acceptance.

As an aside, *surrendering* to reality might serve me prior to accepting it...where being *willing* to even surrender or accept might even serve as further precedence. An *honest* interpretation of reality based on reality helps too. *Open-mindedness* to allow for honest interpretation also has dividends. I guess what I'm truly saying is read the basic text. What I think I know, what I try to impart, is best realized in our basic text. Anything else is interpretive, flawed by ego and subject to revision. Love encompasses all. Thank you NA. Just for today, right now, please, God, help me remain teachable. Thank you for the opportunity to try.



Question of the Month

**ARE YOU GRATEFUL FOR YOUR DEEPENING
RELATIONSHIP WITH A HIGHER POWER ?**

I am deeply grateful for my relationship with my Higher Power. This relationship has caused me to appreciate my life in ways that I was unable to recognize prior to me getting clean. The relationship gets deeper and also becomes more intimate and I begin to realize how much the God of my understanding has been in my life, both in and out of my addiction. I thank God for waking me up clean and getting me to work and being able to be healthy. Most importantly, I know that I am loved and not alone. As I stay around I fall deeper in love with my God and the program. just for today I will demonstrate this gratitude by living as honestly as I can just for today, thanking God for the program of Narcotics Anonymous and a deep relationship that I have with the God of my understanding.

Marshall M.

The Greater Los Angeles Area of Narcotics Anonymous
Women En Vogue Ad Hoc Committee



Presents
The Spiritual Journey
26th ANNUAL BRUNCH
Theme: *Sharing The Real Me*

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

November 30, 2019
10:00am—2:30 pm
DONATION: \$40.00



Yolanda J—Chair: 323.273.1768 Sharleen D - 310.237.8802 Veronica L—562.331.6026





Fearless self-love: A concept

by Bill C.

Sometimes, when I am very still, rejoicing in the silence that embraces me, I am aware of the stillness that is my sense of the Higher Power. I am fearless and engulfed in unconditional love. Pretty brave and self-assured thoughts, huh? It is because of this sense that I am comfortable with loving myself today, and that is directly related to my personal journey through the Twelve Steps of Narcotics Anonymous. Recently I was sitting in a meeting and heard the speaker share that his personal experience of understanding unconditional love came about when he was asked to take a man out on a pass from a recovery facility. The two men had nothing in common: age, experience, education, drug choice, family, ethnicity, sexual preference, nothing except the disease of addiction. That was the common bond that allowed them to share the next eight hours together and relate on levels of spirituality neither had experienced before that God-given encounter. As the two men parted, they embraced and expressed their gratitude for the time and emotions that were equally given with such freedom and peace, without judgment. The speaker realized, in his heart, that he had freely given his love for himself—his sense of God loving him—without reservation or expectation, and as a result he felt empowered. For the first time in his recovery, he experienced the beginnings of self-love and fearlessness within himself. His spirit soared, and he was filled with the sense that real recovery was possible by simply giving it away. So many times, in recovery—and in life—I am filled with self-doubt, self-loathing, jealousy, envy, and anger. I tend to succumb to the character defects that were the mainstays of my life prior to recovery. I wrap myself in the tattered, soiled comforter of my old image of what I thought I really was. I rely on my self-described personality, the sum total of all my past experiences, to bring me to the place and time of the moment. It is in recovery and, with the passage of time, in the warm embrace of self-love that my Higher Power gives me as my new cloak that I come to understand what I can give away. I am assured that my experience, strength, and hope are tangible, and that they are transferable to others who may be longing for that kind of loving embrace. I am grateful today for my understanding of self-love, and I gratefully give away what has so lovingly been given to me.



How to train your disease: Step Three

by Tony Mac

It began as a whisper. Voices in my head telling me I want what I want when I want it. Too impossible to ignore. Or resist. Speaking to me. Calling me. Pulling me. I want so badly that surge of power I have long forgotten. The disease is talking so much louder than the rest and refuses to shut the hell up. So, I answer with a scream, *"Thanks for sharing that, but I don't think so!"*

It's difficult to see God's love, when I'm in the grip of my disease. I find it hard to see things clearly. I got this war going on inside of me battling for control. On one side I want peace, and the other side wants to watch the world burn. While I'm uncomfortable not getting my way, not being treated right, things are not happening as fast as I would like, worry and stress becomes my new addiction. Pride and selfishness takes over and turns me into Dr Jekyll and Mr. Hyde for a short time. Long enough to do some damage. Maybe too long. That's when it's time to set things right,

God, I want you to take my will and life guide me back into recovery. It's all some bad misunderstanding that I keep thinking I need to get what I deserve. I know a lot of my difficulties are results of my own bad choices. I'm use to blaming you, because of my fear to accept responsibilities of my failures. But the good news is that all that wreckage and hard times brought me closer to you. After all these years of staying drug free, I'm a lot stronger thanks to Fellowship of NA. I know how to stop running from the disease, and make the disease run from me. I'm done hiding. Done waiting for the nightmares to work themselves out of my head. Done planning and training. Done with fear. Just done. I make decisions to live life on life's terms using your Step Three principles. The NA Third Step has shown have showed me how to experience Your Will, Your Love, Your Protection, and Directions while I am in the grip of addiction. So, God continue to take my will and my life, I promise you, not only will I stay clean and grateful no matter what, but I will wait for You to show me Your message, no matter what happens."

God, your ways are obviously not my ways. You use difficulties to grow me up. I have to keep believing even though it feels impossible, I know that you will love me and care for me. I know you will act as my loving father. You're not giving me what I deserve but instead showing me how to live because you love me very much. Because of You, I will be proof that the disease can be a defeated enemy. The world will find out about my God. Together in NA, we will carry the most powerful message: That no addict anywhere needs suffer while in the grip of the horrors of addiction.

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.

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Happy Birthday



"My Gratitude Speaks...When I Care And When I Share With Others The NA Way"

1 YEAR

Raymond T 11/24/18
Elaine T 11/22/18

2 YEARS

Felisha C 12/23/17
Angelia H 12/01/17
Beverly H 11/02/17

3 YEARS

Lucretia G 12/10/16
Melissa T 12/04/16
Karl M 11/05/16

4 YEARS

Alexandria 12/18/15
Karen G 12/15/15
Steven H 11/10/15

5 YEARS

Daisy V 12/15/14

6 YEARS

Samuel B 11/24/13
Michelle S 11/05/13

7 YEARS

LaSonya G 11/26/12
Horace L 11/17/12
Nikah W 11/14/12
Lavnire V 11/09/12

8 YEARS

Mishayla 12/31/11
Deon G 12/30/11
Aida M 12/28/11
Christopher M 12/10/11
Kenroy T 12/08/11
Johnny D 11/24/11
Malinda M 11/16/11
Kim R 11/14/11
Michael C 11/13/11
Barbrette W 11/06/11

9 YEARS

Bernadette M 12/21/10
Anthony R 12/19/10
Matt D 12/15/10
David B 12/08/10
Yvonne M 12/05/10
Norma N 11/17/10
Wesley J 11/04/10
Howard W 11/02/10

10 YEARS

Dennis S 12/29/09
Samantha H 12/23/09
Felicia J 12/22/09
Emmit L 12/11/09
Lorraine G 12/10/09
Tanya H 12/07/09
Lee Mc 12/07/09
Chauncey F 11/29/09
Mitzi S 11/06/09
Ashanti L 11/04/09
Demetric D 11/02/09
Herschel C 11/01/09

11 YEARS

Rita C 12/28/08
Conrad W 12/03/08
Raquel D 11/24/08
Brenda J 11/22/08
Russell H 11/05/08
Beverly H 11/04/08
Brenda J 11/02/08

12 YEARS

Rita C 12/28/07
Richard W 12/25/07
Donald M 12/19/07
Gary L 12/15/07
Floyd E 12/13/07
Gregory E 12/13/07
Clausel N 12/12/07
Gloria M 11/27/07
Tim R 12/06/07
Silvia S 11/27/07
Richard W 11/22/07
Cari D 11/21/07
Gina P 11/08/07
Terry M 11/07/07
Marisol C 11/05/07

13 YEARS

Floyd (Sho-Nuff) E 12/13/06
Donna M 12/05/06
Benchietta G 12/04/06
Patricia H 12/04/06
Corbette L 12/02/06
Carolyn B 11/16/06
Tony B 11/13/06
Eddie V 11/12/06
Rickie S 11/01/06

14 YEARS

Dale H 12/31/05
Cheryl C 12/30/05
Tyrone D 12/28/05
Ricky T 12/20/05
Oregona T 12/20/05
Guy C 12/15/05
Angela M 12/14/05
Starla M 12/12/05
Elaine R 12/11/05
Pelar T 12/10/05
Jacqueline R 12/05/05
Patricia L 12/05/05
Delison C 12/05/05
Dale C 12/05/05
Steven J 11/29/05
LaToya G 11/28/05
Orlando Y 11/28/05
Clifford D 11/23/05
Charmaine C 11/21/05
Beatrice M 11/21/05
Kimberly N 11/20/05
Clarence B 11/17/05
Randy N 11/05/05

15 YEARS

Louis M 12/28/04
Chandra F 12/28/04
Forrestine G 12/23/04
Flora B 12/18/04
Gregory W 12/12/04
Sherman W 12/05/04
Kisha H 11/24/04
Leo T 11/24/04

Kimberly N 11/20/04
Marcus B 11/17/04
Darrell L 11/06/04

16 YEARS

Dee R 12/28/03
Melody S 12/24/03
George J 12/17/03
Carlton E 12/07/03
Brenda W 12/16/03
Vanessa S 12/15/03
Maurice C 12/14/03
Bob D 12/10/03
Candice Y 12/09/03
Timothy R 12/09/03
Bridgett G 12/05/03
Laura R 12/05/03
Shannon S 12/03/03
Andre L 11/28/03
Allen T 11/22/03
Jay B 1 11/17/03
Tony P 11/17/03
Carlton E 11/16/03
Toney H 11/14/03
Mama H 11/13/03
Terrence P 11/13/03
Antoine S 11/11/03

17 YEARS

Arthur G 12/31/02
Mark L. 12/30/02
Richard F 12/29/02
Gary W 12/27/02
Derwin O 12/21/02
Treacia S 12/18/02
Kim W 12/17/02
Herbert G 12/15/02
Suzette R 12/13/02
Marvin M 12/13/02
Michele T 12/12/02
Barbara Mc 12/11/02
Precilla 12/07/02
E.J. 12/07/02
Romeo M 12/05/02
Ronald R 12/05/02
Roosevelt W 11/27/02
Gene M 11/25/02
Howard A 11/25/02
Rick B 11/15/02
Terence P 11/14/02
Ernest W 11/12/02
Anthony T 11/07/02
Guillermina M 11/07/02
Roosevelt Y 11/06/02
Kevin M 11/06/02
Herschel C 11/02/02
Alyson P 11/01/02
Angie M 11/01/02

18 YEARS

Lisa D 12/30/01
Mark W 12/30/01
Alex M 12/25/01
William H 12/21/01
Lisa T 11/21/01
Olivia R 12/17/01
David P 12/12/01
Joe J 12/10/01
Martin V 12/05/01
Michael Y 12/03/01

Squeak T 11/29/01
Taylor A 11/29/01
Big Dre 11/28/01
Andre' T 11/28/01
Joyce K 11/27/01
Lisa L 11/27/01
Lee G 11/26/01
Demarest D 11/24/01
Lisa L 11/21/01
Elsa R 11/15/01
James B 11/11/01
Darrell B 11/09/01
Felix P 11/07/01
Kevin M 11/06/01
Robia S 11/01/01

19 YEARS

Norene N 12/29/00
Karen L 12/22/00
Margarita R 12/12/00
Johnny T 12/11/00
Rosie S 12/10/00
Eric P 12/04/00
Major W 12/01/00
Cheryl A 11/28/00
Sharee A 11/22/00
Paulette T 11/21/00
Patricia N 11/18/00
Beverly G 11/15/00
Gloria C 11/08/00
Denise J 11/04/00
Sherry S 11/03/00
Tony B 11/01/00

20 YEARS

April S 12/25/99
Sheryell P 12/23/99
Linda A 12/18/99
Johnny R 12/16/99
Benson R 12/16/99
Wanda L 12/16/99
Felicia B 12/14/99
Ruben M 12/13/99
Demetric M 12/11/99
Emmit L 12/09/99
Mark M 12/06/99
Eugene H 12/04/99
Monty R 12/03/99
George N 12/01/99
Jenine K 11/30/99
Squire M 11/26/99
Angela L 11/26/99
Stacy D 11/20/99
Jerry L 11/16/99

21 YEARS

Charles G 12/30/98
Marquitta M 12/28/98
Donna D 12/24/98
Brenda C 12/23/98
Sherlanda M 12/10/98
Sarah T 12/10/98
Greg A 11/26/98
Rhonda G 11/25/98
Thurman G 11/23/98
Clarence C 11/22/98
Samuel B 11/18/98
Jeff W 11/16/98
Deborah G 11/15/98
Tyrone R 11/12/98
Roxann S 11/08/98
Rene W 11/05/98

22 YEARS

James J 12/25/97
Keisha J 12/22/97
Gloria Mc 12/18/97
Paul H 12/16/97
Tanya C 12/13/97
Terry W 12/12/97
Darrell M 11/10/97
Wanda R 11/10/97
Tracy L 11/06/97
Yolanda W 11/03/97

23 YEARS

Elia C 12/23/96
Nathan K 12/17/96
Robert F 12/16/96
Linda B 12/12/96
Bennie H 12/04/96
Leslie L 11/11/96
Sandy P 11/12/96
Lester R 11/11/96
Marvin W 11/05/96
Marvin H 11/04/96
Michelle H 11/04/96
Myllinda P 11/02/96

24 YEARS

Richard M 12/27/95
Gloria McC 12/18/95
Terrell W 12/16/95
Jimmy Jam 12/12/95
Beverly Mc 12/05/95
Richard M 11/27/95
Tony H 11/15/95
Clarence M 11/12/95
Margarita 11/12/95
Yolanda H 11/09/95
Danny H 11/02/95

25 YEARS

Vivian J 12/27/94
Raymond M 12/27/94
Rev Lightfoot 12/13/94
John S 12/08/94
Karin L 12/03/94
Olga T 11/10/94
Roosevelt W(cha cha cha) 11/04/94

26 YEARS

Renee G 12/29/93
Cornella S 12/20/93
Iris L 12/19/93
Elijah B 12/18/93
Pam S 12/14/93
Peggy P 12/10/93
Nat H 12/09/93
Jesse W 12/07/93
Mario C 12/07/93
Kathy J 12/03/93
Pam N 11/30/93
Belinda B 11/23/93
Jerry J 11/20/93
Dana 11/16/93
Nikki C 11/11/93
Lea R 11/07/93
Roosevelt W 11/04/93
Deborah J 11/03/93
Cheryl E 11/03/93

27 YEARS

Sidney L 12/24/92
Robin D 11/23/92
Marvette A 11/16/92
Myllinda O 11/06/92
Kevin M 11/05/92
Sherri M 11/04/92
Cheryl E 11/02/92

28 YEARS

Alex M 12/25/91
Sonia O 12/02/91
Daniel G 11/20/91

29 YEARS

Bobby C 12/25/90
Dwayne H 11/26/90
Catherine W 11/15/90
Darryl S 11/05/90

30 YEARS

Bruce S 12/21/89
Zelda E 12/18/89
Jerome S 12/18/89
Vanessa W 12/18/89
Denise L 12/03/89
Dwayne H 11/26/89
Yvonne A. 11/20/89
Eddie T 11/16/89
Terry Mc 11/07/89

31 YEARS

Sepi B 11/28/88
Percy H 11/23/88
Raheem M 11/16/88
Pam H 11/14/88

32 YEARS

James J 12/25/87
Elijah W 12/24/87
Jose G 12/20/87
Kim B 12/17/87

33 YEARS

Chester W 11/07/86
Earl G 11/06/86
Joyce F 11/02/86
Anderia M 11/01/86

34 YEARS

Dwayne J 12/27/85
James A 12/23/85
Kevin H 12/15/85

35 YEARS

Raymond M 12/27/84
Wallace R 11/16/84

39 YEARS

Dennis L 12/16/80

40 YEARS

Derek F 12/08/79

41 YEARS

Bill W 11/30/78