



# Our Living Promise

July 2009

Off The Wall Area Newsletter

Includes: Loveland Estes Park Greeley Berthoud Fort Collins

**Narcotics Anonymous offers only one promise and that is freedom from active addiction, the solution that eluded us for so long. We will be freed from our self-made prisons.**

BRINGING RECOVERY NEWS FROM AROUND THE WORLD

TO OUR CORNER OF THE GLOBE

Basic Text 102

## Sharing is Service

Sharing with fellow addicts is a basic tool in our program. This help can only come from another addict. It is this help that says, "I have had something like that happen to me, and I did this..." For anyone who wants our way of life, we share experience, strength and hope instead of preaching and judging. If sharing the experience of our pain helps just one person, it was worth the suffering. We strengthen our own recovery when we share it with others whom ask for help. If we keep what we have to share, we lose it. Words mean nothing until we put them into action.

We recognize our spiritual growth when we are able to reach out and help others. We help others when we participate in service work and try to carry the message of recovery to the addict who still suffers. We learn that we keep what we have only by giving it away. Also, our experience shows that many personal problems are resolved when we get out of ourselves and offer to help those in need. We recognize that one addict can best understand and help another addict. No matter how much we give, there is always another addict seeking help.

We cannot afford to lose sight of the importance of sponsorship and of taking special interest in a confused addict who wants to stop using. Experience shows clearly that those who get the most out of the Narcotics Anonymous Program are those to whom sponsorship is important. Sponsorship responsibilities are welcomed by us and accepted as opportunities to enrich our personal NA experience.

Working with others is only the beginning of service work. NA service allows us to spend much of our time directly helping suffering addicts, as well as ensuring that Narcotics Anonymous itself survives. This way we keep what we have by giving it away.

Learn to listen

&

Listen to learn

Basic Text Page 58-59

The Serenity Prayer en Español

Dios concedeme la serenidad para aceptar las cosas que no puedo cambiar. El animo para cambiar las cosas que puedo. Y el discernimiento para distinguir la diferencia



## Principles & Leadership In NA Service

Our Fourth Concept reminds us that we need to have effective leaders in our service system in order to best support our groups. Because we have seen so much success in our growth as a fellowship, it can sometimes seem that most of the work of NA has already been accomplished. When the doors to our meetings are open, it isn't always clear what more should be done to further our primary purpose. The truth of the matter is that all of our services need a constant influx of talent, creativity, and willingness from our members in order to continue helping our groups carry the NA message. Public Relations campaigns, panels in institutions, phonedlines, meeting schedules, and websites are just a few of the many services that support our groups. To accomplish these tasks, we need leaders and systems that support others efforts and offer them guidance. The most effective leaders in NA service both encourages other members to get involved and look for ways to improve existing services and to find new and innovative methods to help spread the NA message.

Service Pamphlet on Principles & Leadership in NA service

Off The Wall Area Website has undergone many changes in the past month. It is more appealing to look at and easier to navigate. One new page now lists current service opportunities, the subcommittees' needing service and a brief job description. A newsletter page has also been added which will allow you to view and print out past issues of Our Living Promise newsletter. How cool to see this area grow. Its development is a reflection of people stepping up and reaching out to the still suffering addict and to the addict who desires to stay clean just for today. If you wish to serve, go to [www.fortnet.org/na](http://www.fortnet.org/na)

## CLEAN AND PRESENT FOR MY LIFE TODAY

Life today is like a breath of fresh air, and I am all about taking that in. Years of chemical suffocation gives me the appreciation for the life I have been allowed to live; a chance to give more and consume less. The reward of inventing this life, past and present, manifests itself in how I react to life. Most days I am okay with which direction the world spins. The standards and principles I have adopted in my life through the Narcotics Anonymous program gives me that daily reprieve from active addiction and the knowledge of right from wrong; a once blurred line. As a practicing addict the only choice I had was to get high and I was stuck with the consequences following that decision. Bad, good or otherwise. This is not the case anymore. Now I choose life, the doors I walk through and the people I interact with. How cool is that, right? Today I am clean and have choices. I am here and focused on what is most important. Service is key to my recovery. I have learned that I have to give what I have received in order to grow in a direction of positiveness and love. Service is one way I make amends for years of selfishness. Service gets me out of myself and into GOD (Good Orderly Direction). I am thankful today to be clean and present for my life.

Charlie

## TEEN ADDICT

One of the biggest issues facing younger addicts coming into NA is trying to recover while living in the old, often abusive environment in which we grew up.

I couldn't keep living with parents who preferred me loaded, didn't respect me, and didn't know how to help me. Fortunately, there were no laws stopping me from leaving. I could work, and I could legally make my own decisions.

My two friends, though, were in a different position. They had to deal with parent-teacher school conferences, being sent to psychiatrists, and living among their abusers. Sadly, only one of them is clean today.

I wouldn't want to even speculate why one stayed clean and one didn't. I just know that my friend who stayed here in NA now lives in her own apartment, completely supports herself and is living her dreams. She is 20 years old now, and she's been clean for almost five years. She speaks two languages, has studied in Costa Rica, and is a different person from the wounded girl who walked into the rooms.

When I came to NA I felt used up and damaged. I felt hard, and scared, and angry. But the longer I stay clean, the younger I feel! I don't quite know what to make of the 'oh, you're so young' comments. I feel like it's belittling and condescending. I look at the older women with recovery in NA with admiration and respect. I want to learn how to practice their honesty,

Teen Addict continued on P. 6



Seven days without a meeting makes one week

## What Do We Get From NA Service Work?

Not knowing how to best be of service is the first thing we get out of service work: The knowledge that we are lacking in knowledge. As with all things we don't know what we have not yet learned. So we begin with action, showing up at a subcommittee meeting, introducing ourselves and asking for guidance. It is hard, not complicated but hard, because many of us were taught not to show our ignorance; but how else do we learn? Many of us show up with all this and that, the walls safely around us to ward off any would-be addicts (human beings) who might get the idea we were also human and so suffering the same emotions, feelings or general human condition. The thing is, we all have those same emotional human foibles whether we hide them or not, and as long as we hang around genuine folks who are willing to share some of theirs, we learn how to open up and make that unparalleled human connection. Then we get the opportunity to bring that ability everywhere we go. That is what we get from service work.

That is just the beginning of it. Then we get to learn to discuss things without having to be right. Of course this may not happen right away but if we stick around long enough it will. When I was a newcomer to a subcommittee meeting, I remember well the feeling of blood rushing to my face as I vehemently argued why this or that must be done just so. I would do so without any knowledge except that I had developed an instantaneous opinion. So what if it was rooted in no experience. I had an opinion which is often the first sign of revived brain activity.

One thing many of us show up with is low self esteem and this is often balanced with a proportionate increase of our ego. By participating, though, we find that our opinion is just that—our opinion. Ours is just one perspective out of many. Accepting this and our own fallibilities we increase our empathy towards others. Our egos decrease. We are put into action and feel better about ourselves. And that's not all, but I will stop here as I have also learned not to hold folks hostage once I have their attention. Thanks for listening

Mevad  
The Voice of Recovery, Sonoma County, July/Aug/Sep 2007



This is a picture of the actual fire pit as seen by recovering addicts at the Jackson Lake Campout last month. The legs you see in the background are fictional. Any similarities to legs in recovery are purely coincidental.

One of the best parts of recovery is getting your feelings back. The worst part is getting your feelings back.

## It's a matter of Life and Death "Serious about Service"

"Why should I care about our primary purpose? Service usually isn't much fun, so why should I do it? If it isn't about me feeling good, I don't want anything to do with it."

Nobody would go to a meeting and say any of these things, but how often does our behavior proclaim these very attitudes? Pretty often, I think.

Every time we decide to skip a committee meeting because we found something "better" to do, every time we "forget" to make the phone calls we promised to make, every time we "forget" we were supposed to be somewhere and do something, we are letting someone down-and it's not who you think!

We don't do service for the addicts who are already clean. We do service for the mothers who bathe their babies in the same bathtub that's used to cook up a batch of crystal meth. We do service for the people whose bodies are ravaged with sores and whose teeth are rotting away. We do service for the teenager who may be infected with HIV when she has sex for a fix. We do service for the father who waits for the connection in a bar while his family worries about what he'll be like when he gets home. We do service so that an addict might hear about this program before he injects hepatitis into his veins. We do service for the addict who doesn't have to die tonight. I, for one, thank God and the NA fellowship for those addicts who cared enough to show up and do the work that carried the message to me. I am grateful that there were recovering addicts who loved me and cared for me before they even knew I existed. May God have mercy on my miserable soul if I ever forget the gift I've been given or ignore the suffering addict in favor of my own self-centered pleasure-seeking.

For the lonely, hopeless, dying addict, please keep coming back, and give back just a little of what you were so freely given.

*Joe C, Missouri  
The NA Way July 1999*

**There are SERVICE positions available right here in Off The Wall Area's backyard**  
Literature Chair Position for the ASC  
Vice-Chair position for the ASC  
H&I has positions needing to be filled  
PI Hotline needs volunteers  
Merchandise & Activities Looking for volunteers to work events or behind the scenes  
Newsletter needs people to submit poetry, art work, writings. Anything related to recovery.  
When at the end of the Road Noon Group needs chairpeople, A GSR, A GSR (A), A Secretary (for more info call  
Tues./Thurs. night 7:30pm Hope Dealers needs your support to help carry the message of recovery & Never Alone, Never Again also needs our support.  
*If you are interested in carrying the message of recovery and helping the addict who still suffers or desires to stay clean just for today please go to the Off The Wall Area of Narcotics Anonymous Website @ [www.fortnet.org/na](http://www.fortnet.org/na)*

## BIENVENIDOS A BARCELONA

*With only three short months remaining before the 33rd World Convention the time has come to brush up on our Spanish and prepare to hear the words "Welcome to Barcelona!" spoken by the shores of the Mediterranean. Plans for this unique event are moving ahead rapidly as we finalize arrangements for what we hope will be the largest gathering of Narcotics Anonymous members in Europe since WCNA 25 in Paris 14 years ago. At that convention over 3000 members from 20 countries celebrated their recovery together. For Barcelona we already have the same number of pre-registrations from over 40 countries.*

## Erik From Hawaii

*Erik has 22 years clean time and has been doing service sine he had 35 day clean*

*What follows is an expansion of a communication I had with an APF member who posed the problem of getting members to serve the area or regional committee in his community . It is not about PR but about being of service to a higher goal.*

Aloha,

Your plea for ES&H (experience, strength and hope) on getting members to serve is one that has perplexed the fellowship and me for many, many years. I remember in the 1990's that this was one of those topics for the Fellowship to comment on. Got lots of opinions and experiences on this, I wish I had an electronic copy of those shares.

In my opinion, we will always have this problem because of the nature of who we are (self-centered, selfish addicts). What follows is just my personal ES&H on the subject.

This lack of willingness to serve in NA communities that are young and small is common. Larger NA communities suffer from this problem but it is less noticeable. It can be frustrating as a committed member of a smaller, younger NA community to see the poor participation in carrying the message, the indifference to keeping the doors open for the addict that still suffers. .

I get quite angry and sad when I see the same thing here in Hawaii - although we are all well established here, it seems we have the same people serving again and again while others take little responsibility or don't lift a finger to help.

Trusted servant burn out is a real problem for some NA communities. I have to admit that I too get burnt out on service. I can tell I am getting the burnt-out-blues when I become resentful towards my co-workers and I don't do the best that I can. It's a real problem and some members don't come back after taking a break.

Amazingly, I have been in service since I had 35 days clean. I have not been out of service since (I have 22 years clean time). I have been given a lot of responsibility in that time span. I don't know how I did it, how I became such a committed trusted servant. At times it was prideful and ego driven motives for my participation in service. I paid a heavy price for it but my HP and the program allowed me to grow through it all to have a better awareness of what this is all for.

I learned over time that the most important thing was to do the job, to focus on the work and not on the personalities involved. I learned that self-

*Erik From Hawaii continued on page 9*

**IF YOU DON'T WANT TO GET LOADED, DON'T PICK UP!**

## TWELVE BENEFITS OF DOING SERVICE

1. Service keeps you clean!
2. Service puts you in the middle of the program. Service helps you feel a "part" of something bigger than yourself.
3. Service gets you out of yourself; helping out helps you out
4. Service makes you feel more at home at your home group
5. Service furthers our primary purpose by carrying the message to the addict. We are responsible for keeping our meetings open, holding events, printing the DI, etc.
6. Service is the training ground for learning more about the traditions. "It usually isn't until we get involved with service that someone points out to us that personal recovery depends on NA unity and that unity depends on how well we follow our traditions".
7. Service is good practice for becoming a responsible, productive member of society and proving to yourself that you are capable of it.
8. You can do service with one day clean. You can be the coffee maker or greeter and these are the two most important service positions.
9. Service "tricks" you into recovery. It gets you to a meeting
10. Service is addictive, but it is a good dependence.
11. Service helps you tolerate and work with those you might not see eye to eye with. "Anonymity is the foundation of all our traditions, ever reminding us to place principles before personalities".
12. MOST IMPORTANTLY: Service is fun! It works if you work it, so work it because you are worth it and live it and love it!!!

[www.na12.org/service](http://www.na12.org/service)

### Why Should You Get Involved In H&I?

Because it's simple. No notes to take (or forget), no budget to worry about, very little special training required.

Basically, it's just you doing an NA meeting with a bunch of addicts. No guns, no guards, no worries.

Because it's easy. One evening a month is all we ask for most H&I commitments. You arrive at the meeting room, everything is set up for you already, conduct a meeting, and share your recovery in NA. Not a good public speaker? No problem, you can read from NA literature.

Because it's cool. As a member of H&I, you join a worldwide fellowship of Very Special People, who share a deep spiritual connection. When you meet a recovering addict from Arizona or Calcutta, who is into H&I, nothing more needs to be said; we know! And let me tell you, as a conversation starter among normies, volunteering in

prison is way cool. Because the addicts are grateful. Nobody complains about how lousy the NA meeting is in prison. They only express regret when we don't show up! And they all know that this is the last place you would come on your free time, so they all appreciate your commitment. Because it builds character. You feel responsible. You feel like your giving back to the society that you took so much from. You stay humble, because at the end of the meeting, you can get up and leave. You dress neatly, you speak cleanly and you represent something the inmates look up to.

Many of our H&I members have never been incarcerated themselves, yet they experience a profound spiritual satisfaction doing H&I service in prisons. There are many addicts who cannot break the cycle of using and being imprisoned. Even in treatment centers, many addicts are desperate for the message that will finally free them from the patterns of behavior that trap them. It is a deep disappointment that those so hungry for recovery should go unfed. The ultimate weapon for recovery is the recovering addict. Our brothers and sisters in the prisons and treatment centers will more readily identify with and believe the live H&I member that has proven the program works for themselves.

More than all the books, psychiatrists, therapists, churches and programs cooked up by non-addicts, they hear us. Prove it yourself; this program works. Why stop at the eleventh step. Move forward by carrying the message. WE DO

RECOVER. [na12.org](http://na12.org) Administrator

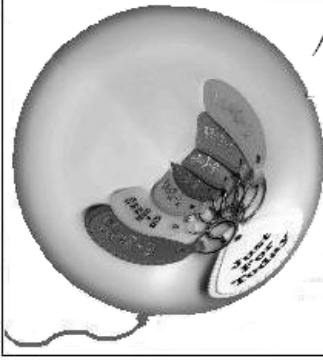
Your Experience Here

DONT PICK UP, ASK FOR HELP,  
CALL YOUR SPONSOR, GO TO MEETINGS

Cultivating leadership in NA is not limited to those who hold formal service positions. In some cases, sponsors who are unable to take positions themselves work hard to guide sponsees into service. In other cases, members with abundant knowledge or experience make themselves available as resources to trusted servants. Even for those who currently hold a title, leadership is not about position, it is about action. We must choose leaders who look beyond the tasks at hand to see a bigger picture. Effective leaders can help us not only to carry out our services effectively, but also to make lasting improvements so that we can better carry our message of hope to still-suffering addicts.

*Principles & Leadership in NA service (NAWS 2008)*





## NA Birthdays

KARL W. 22 YEARS  
 DAVE A. 23 YEARS  
 CHARLIE A. 2 YEARS

*People who don't go to meetings don't hear about what happens to people who don't go to meetings*

Come out and play some ball with your buds in recovery. We will be meeting at the Intramural Fields at CSU Sunday July 19th 10am Intramural Fields is located East of Shields and Elizabeth in Fort Collins South behind Moby Arena



## Homegroups, Group consciences, Days & Times

- Addicts Helping Addicts Last Wed. of the Month after the meeting 248 Welch St., Berthoud, Colorado 7:30p
- Addicts Seeking Sanity Last Sat. of the Month after the meeting 3800 W. 20th Sr., Greeley, Colorado Approx. 8:10p
- Addicts Unite Last Fri. of the Month after the meeting 5712 S. College Ave., (coffee Shop) Fort Collins, Colorado, 10:00p
- Clean Serene Freaks Last Sun. of the Month after the meeting 102 E. 3rd St., (unity club) Loveland Colorado, Approx. 9:45p
- 4th Street Recovery Last Mon. of the Month after the meeting 232 W. Fourth St., Loveland, Colorado, 8:00p
- Freedom Springs Thurs. immediately prior to ASC 3448 N. Taft Ave., Loveland, Colorado 7:00p (check meeting schedule)
- Hugs Not Drugs Last Mon. of the Month 2608 7th Ave., (clubhouse) Greeley Colorado, 8:30p
- Just For Today Last Fri. of the Month after the 8-day meeting 1015 9th Ave., Greeley Colorado, Approx. 8:05p
- Make Your Own Monday Fourth Mon. of the Month after the meeting 2100 Mathews (in Spring Creek Park) Fort Collins Colorado, 8:00p
- Mass Addicts Sun. immediately prior to ASC 261 S. College Fort Collins Colorado 12:00p
- Never Alone, Never Again 2008 Lincoln Ave. Fort Collins Colorado
- NA Nooner Fourth Mon. of each Month 1324 10th Ave. Greeley Colorado 1:05p
- On Higher Ground Last Sat. of the Month 1201 Riverside "Outback" Fort Collins Colorado 10:30p
- Primary Purpose 3rd Thurs. of the Month prior to 7p meeting 929 15th St., Greeley Colorado 6:00 p
- When At The End Of The Road Last Fri. of the Month following noon meeting 1201 Riverside "Outback" Fort Collins Colorado Approx. 1:10p
- XX Genes Last Wed. of the Month following meeting 1208 W. Elizabeth St. Fort Collins Colorado 7:00p

**LOVELAND FREEDOM RIDE IV POKER RUN**  
 July 25th

Don't have a Bike? No Worries! There will be an ALL DAY BBQ CARDS GAMES VOLLYBALL FUN SO, come down for fun in the sun and hang out for Fellowship or Ride whatever you want. This is a great opportunity to touch bases with friends and family



## OFF THE WALL UNITY DAYS



Happening Saturday August 22nd At the Pheasant Run Park in Greeley All area Subcommittees are expected to be attending. There will be a BBQ a DJ and tickets will be on sale soon for \$5 or \$7 at the event. Food Sports Learning Entertainment

Off The Wall Area is Hosting a bicycle ride along the Spring Creek Trail Low Impact is the theme of the ride. Bring your friends

LET'S GO BICYCLING TOGETHER In Fort Collins and family. For more info. contact Charlie at

One of the goals of our newsletter is to maintain a high standard with regards to carrying a clear Narcotics Anonymous message of recovery. By submitting your written work to Our Living Promise, you automatically give up all rights to your work and give permission to OTWA to edit, modify or change the language and/or format if we feel it necessary. All articles are reviewed by this committee before they are put into print.

## Twelve Concepts for NA Service

The Twelve Traditions of NA have guided our groups well in the conduct of their individual affairs, and they are the foundation for NA services. They have steered us away from many pitfalls that could have meant our collapse. Our various service units serve, for example, they do not govern; we stay out of public debate; we neither endorse nor oppose any of the many causes that our members may feel strongly about; our approach to addiction is a non-professional one; we are fully self supporting. The traditions have provided our fellowship with essential guidance throughout its development, and they continue to be indispensable.

The Twelve Concepts for NA service described here are intended to be practically applied to our service structure at every level. The spiritual ideals of our steps and traditions provide the basis for these concepts, which are tailored to the specific needs of our fellowship's service structure. The concepts encourage our groups to more readily achieve our traditions' ideals, and our service structure to function effectively and responsibly.

These concepts have been crafted from our experience. They are not intended to be taken as the "law" for NA service, but simply as guiding principles. We find that our services are stabilized when we are conscientiously apply these concepts, much as our steps have stabilized our lives and our traditions have stabilized and unified our groups. The Twelve Concepts guide our services and help ensure that the message of Narcotics Anonymous is available to all addicts who have a desire to stop using and begin practicing our way of life.

1. To fulfill our Fellowship's primary purpose, the NA groups have joined together to create a structure which develops, coordinates, and maintains services on behalf of NA as a whole.
2. The final responsibility and authority for NA services rests with the NA groups.
3. The NA groups delegate to the service structure the authority necessary to fulfill the responsibilities assigned to it.
4. Effective leadership is highly valued in Narcotics Anonymous. Leadership qualities should be carefully considered when selecting trusted servants.
5. For each responsibility assigned to the service structure, a single point of decision and accountability should be clearly defined.
6. Group conscience is the spiritual means by which we invite a loving God to influence our decisions.
7. All members of a service body bear substantial responsibility for that body's decisions and should be allowed to fully participate in its decision-making processes.
8. Our service structure depends on the integrity and effectiveness of our communications.
9. All elements of our service structure have the responsibility to carefully consider all viewpoints in their decision-making process.
10. Any member of a service body can petition that body for the redress of a personal grievance, without fear of reprisal.
11. NA funds are to be used to further our primary purpose, and must be managed responsibly.
12. In keeping with the spiritual nature of Narcotics Anonymous, our structure should always be one of service, never of government.

[www.na.org/literature/service](http://www.na.org/literature/service)

(Teen Addict cont from page 2) their self-respect, and their courage. I met the woman who would eventually become my sponsor at the third NA meeting I attended, and I walked away from her muttering obscenities. Although I wanted someone to tell me the truth—I was dying for someone to tell me the truth—I wasn't very comfortable hearing it. She never once let me squirm away from the principles of this program under the guise of innocence, feigned naiveté, or mere youth. She held me to the same tough surrenders we all must make if we are going to recover in Narcotics Anonymous.

Anyone is capable of embracing the principles of recovery here in NA, especially those of us in our youth. We've got the energy for it, and we've got our whole lives ahead of us to live out our recovery.

Kim Y., NA WAY Oct. 2008



**Saudi News:** For the last six months the number of NA groups has increased rapidly, as 7 groups started their meetings in different cities of the country. Three groups started in the western province, two groups in the south province, one group in the middle province and one group in the eastern province. Also an English speaking group with one meeting a week has begun meeting since last January in Dhahran city.

**An addict cannot be grateful and hateful at the same time**

**NOBODY EVER FOUND RECOVERY AS A RESULT OF AN INTELLECTUAL AWAKENING**

Your Strength Here

# Areas' of Service in Your Community

In keeping with our 4th tradition "Each group should be autonomous except in matters affecting other groups or NA as a whole", the individual addicts which make up each of the NA meetings from home groups. In NA, every addict has a voice, with the ability to affect how their home group runs and how NA policy is formed. The service structure of NA is best described as an upsidedown pyramid. The individual addict is situated at the top, with every service body, subcommittee, and trusted servant lower in the pyramid. This makes everyone at the bottom of our service structure directly responsible to those they serve at each higher level.

## Home Group

The NA group is the heartbeat of recovery. The group provides us with a safe place to meet and discuss recovery with other addicts. Together, we can do what we cannot do alone. Many NA groups elect a chairperson, treasurer, and secretary who help to make sure the meeting runs smoothly. Most NA groups elect a group service representative (GSR) who serves as that group's voice and ears among other groups in the area. Some NA members serve their home group by making coffee, cleaning up after the meeting or greeting new members. Another way to support the NA group is to regularly attend business meetings and contribute to the group conscience discussions. Many members have found it extremely helpful to choose a "homegroup," a group to which they make a commitment. Many of us have found that we get from a group whatever we are willing to give to a group. To find out more about group service, we recommend that you attend a group business meeting and ask for information.

## Hospitals & Institutions

The purpose of an H&I meeting is to carry the NA message of recovery to addicts who do not have full access to regular Narcotics Anonymous meetings. H&I meetings/presentations, except for those in longer term facilities, are intended to simply introduce those attending to some of the basics of the NA program.

## Area Service Committee (ASC)

The Area Service Committee (ASC) offers service that individual NA groups would not be able to sustain individually. Helplines, public information projects, activities, conventions, spiritual retreats, meetings for hospitals and institutions and websites are examples of ways in which an ASC and its subcommittees can help to carry the NA message to the community as a whole. The ASC also provides a supportive forum in which groups can share their experience, strength and hope with other groups. A great deal of work happens at the area level. There are opportunities for any interested addict to share in this wonderful experience. We suggest that interested NA members attend an ASC meeting or ask their GSR for more information.

## Personal Service

*"The Spiritual Principle of Love"* ◆

Our Basic Text tells us that "the therapeutic value of one addict helping another is without parallel." Sponsorship, friendship, honest one-to-one sharing ... any type of contact that we have with other addicts is an opportunity to be of service. Many of us remember how a recovering addict reached out to us when we were new and helped to make us feel welcome. The first time someone remembered our name helped us feel like we mattered to another person. By seeing that others cared about us, many of us learned to care about ourselves. When we treat other recovering addicts with care and respect, we are practicing the spiritual principle of love. As we increase our capacity for love, we feel better about ourselves and the people and world around us. The best way to learn more about individual service is to spend time with other recovering addicts and practice giving and receiving care and respect. Talking to other NA members about individual service is another way to raise our own awareness.

## Public Information/Public Relations

The Narcotics Anonymous message is "that an addict, any addict, can stop using drugs, lose the desire to use and find a new way to live." Our relations with the public enables us to share this message broadly so that those who might benefit from our program of recovery can find us. We perform public relations service to increase the awareness and credibility of the NA program. We share our message openly with the public at large, with prospective members, and with professionals. Maintaining an open, attractive attitude in these efforts helps us to create and improve relationships with those outside the fellowship. Establishing and maintaining a commitment to these relationships, can help us to further our primary purpose.

**YOUR WORTH SHOULD  
NEVER DEPEND ON ANOTHER  
PERSONS OPINION**



Websters Dictionary Defines **Autonomous** as: **1** : of, relating to, or marked by autonomy **2 a** : having the right or power of self-government **b** : undertaken or carried on without outside control : SELF-CONTAINED **3 a** : existing or capable of existing independently

## "My Old Stomping Grounds"

By Angel B.

Hello Family, I'm back in Gods country after a fast paced trip to my old stomping grounds. I went back to visit and support one of my old sponsees and try to share with him some of the trials and tribulations that an old dope fiend has experienced over the years. The memories were heartfelt and still fresh in my memories. I am hopeful that they served their purpose.

I was invited to share at a meeting at the recovery house that I didn't get into 30 years ago. I took the residents out of their meeting room and brought them to the stairs in front of the house. I had them sit on the steps, close their eyes and imagine they're seeing a broken emotionally shattered human being - to see the tombstones in his eyes; a physically debilitated body, a tortured cry for help a soul lost to the ravages of addiction and lying in the gutter in front of them.

"Now open your eyes and take a good look at what that person looks like today." The experience of a long journey began at that point as I allowed my story to unfold. A childhood of fear, regrets, anger and rage. The institutions, prison experiences, lost battles of alcoholic black-outs, shame, degradation of the streets and the ultimate bottoming out in the gutter. I recalled the miracle of being rescued in the street, the loving dinosaurs that helped me to kick, early recovery, being tied in a hospital posey and those first three months of recovery. I recalled the miracles that I found in this program; love and support that was given to me by those path-setters for the NA program 10 years before I got here. The ability of those people who taught me about the promise of freedom from active addiction, those that I loved dearly and that have left this world, leaving me emotionally devastated. I made a promise that I would never disrespect their memory and that no matter what I would continue helping those as lost as I was - who would come into this program.

I shared those truths that kept people like us in the life. I acknowledge the strength and courage of the women in this program. I have seen the places and understood their circumstances that they survived; how they managed to forgive themselves. I have seen them blossom, evolve and become loving people. I acknowledge the strength they bring to the men in this program. Men who have learned of their ability to get through hard times because of the love that their women give them.

It was a long night and an emotional one that gave way to a lot of bitter sweet memories. I sat in front of the house after the meeting and let myself run through a gamut of old feelings. I have told myself that I would never allow myself to go there again. The journey into yesterday is very traumatic to my soul and mind.

The next morning I returned to that place where I spent my first three months of recovery. I saw myself in that chair and the people who surrounded me. Today, they are replaced with younger happier souls eager for recovery. I called my sponsor and spent an hour with him. I thanked him for being one of God's special people and rescuing me from that gutter thirty years ago.

*Angel*

### Off The Wall Area

#### Subcommittee

#### Meeting Times

#### and Places

- Activities Subcommittee - 2nd Sunday of every month, 12pm - Mugs Coffee House in Fort Collins
- Merchandise Subcommittee - 3rd Saturday of every month 3pm - Unity Club in Loveland
- H&I Subcommittee - 4th Saturday of every month, 2pm Unity Club in Loveland
- PI Subcommittee - 4th Saturday of every month, 3pm Unity Club in Loveland
- Newsletter Subcommittee - 3pm 1st Wednesday of month, Mugs in F.C.

When At The End Of The Road Group in Fort Collins is having a Post-Fourth-PicNic on the 6th of July (Monday) at 1pm following the Noon Meeting. Bring Food, Friends and Family. Burgers, Dogs, Drinks will be provided so bring a side dish. 1201 Riverside behind main building

*To keep what you have, you have to give it away*

Many meetings, many chances; few meetings, few chances; no meetings, no chances

YOUR  
HOPE  
HERE

*(Erik From Hawaii con't from P. 3)*

esteem and self-worth were strengthened when I participated in self-less service to NA. I let others be themselves and learned to uphold principles learned instead of my opinion of others.

I've led many a committee, and saw from that perspective that the most important thing I could do was to have vision of the horizon...and beyond. I thought of what we are going to be doing 3 months, 6 months, or a year from now. I worked to share that vision with others so that we were headed forward. It seemed that every position I took had different degrees on how far forward to look. I got confused sometimes but I always came back to the vision that there is an addict beyond that horizon, someone that needed me to be there when they arrived on our doorsteps.

Normally I am not the visionary type of person. I found this out by having this outlook on service, I was able to overcome (within me) the obstacles of reaching the goal of the job at hand, as small or as large as the job is. Others just don't seem to be ready, if ever, to see the far country from their trusted servant position. They can't or won't accept the portion of spiritual work given to them by their HP. That's ok. It is my path that I have to be concerned about, not theirs.

What can I do about this lack of concern towards service? I've shared about it from time to time or paid special attention to one member or another (like a sponsee or one that has that spark that tells me that they are willing to serve). I have faith that this lesson will be passed on, that I've been conscience of it and gave it away.

We, as a fellowship, have shared about how to make service attractive. I always thought the question was backwards, how is it that we make service unattractive? My answer is that we as individuals place personalities before principles. The problem is that we need to learn and practice new principles but we don't know how. Service is a learning experience where we make mistakes and some forget this or get too caught up in the negative and that makes service unattractive. I can't change that but I can be a part of changing myself.

I learned to stay detached and focus on principles when in service - it has taken a long time to develop this skill and I am by no means perfect in practicing it every day, but I reach it more often than I have before.

My suggestion to you is to immerse yourself in humility of service and speak openly and honestly to others about their lack of participation in service. Don't put your ego into it; just feel a surrender to the 12 Tradition. Let the power of the principles do HP's work, think of yourself as a conduit for that message and power.

I've chosen to speak about this directly to you rather than recount all the different styles of coercing or manipulating addicts into service. I've seen a lot of them and have been the victim or instigator of a few. These are short term solutions and lack the principles we are taught to uphold and practice as NA members. My message is for you. You have the conscience and desire to serve. I want you to be in NA 22 years from now. When you learn and grow, practicing the principles of recovery and service, others will follow. Because this is the attraction to service; a trusted servant that practices principles and has a vision to prepare for what is yet to come - a newcomer over the horizon.

May the blessings be,  
Erik R, APF PR Resource Person

APF Newsletter June 2009



*If you don't want to slip, stay away from slippery places. If you do what you always did, you'll get what you always got. If you sit in the barber's chair long enough, you'll eventually get a haircut.*

## Carry the message!

*"There are times that I walk into a meeting and want to throw the coffee pot through the window"*

*For me, this is the way it works; keep giving away the old and making room for the new. For me, it never gets really easy to do, usually I have to be backed up against the wall and humiliated and then I share. They say that this is a program of action, that you can't keep it without giving it away; how true it is. In the beginning, I thought I had to say all the right things and save everyone. Today I realize I only have what's in my heart to share. Today, I can walk into a meeting and if I am full of the Father's love, then I share it, yet there are times I walk into a meeting and want to throw the coffee pot through the window. Yet I have to stay honest, for that's the way I stay clean.*

*I know today that staying clean and having a relationship with God as I understand Him is the most important thing in my life. When I do that and carry the message to the ones who still suffer, than all else is provided in my life. I really believe that I don't have to prove anything to anybody. I carry the message by letting the newcomer know who I am inside and sharing how I work the steps one day at a time.*

*Basic Text Page 133*

## How Do We Share In Meetings?

Part of sharing is sharing time. Give others a chance to share. (consideration, respect, maturity). If you share a problem, also share a solution. (hope, selflessness). Everytime you share, you should include a discussion of a spiritual principle or step. (carrying the message). If God wants you to share, He'll have someone call on you. (humility, patience). When you have very little to say, then say very little. Don't start by saying, "I really don't have much to say," and then talk for the next 15 minutes. Rambling is just taking up valuable meeting time. It is okay to be brief. (humility, willingness, goodwill, acceptance, trust). An NA meeting is not a garbage dump. This is the place to carry the message of recovery, not spread your disease. After you share, please do not get up and walk right out. Set an example for the newcomers. (patience, tolerance, maturity, integrity). If you shared last night, it is not your turn again tonight. You do not have the responsibility to share every night. (cooperation, communication skills, selflessness, self-acceptance). [www.na12.org](http://www.na12.org)

*It is possible to change without improving-it is impossible to improve without change*

## NA's History in Venezuela

It was on Monday, 27 January 1992, when NA formally initiated its activities in Venezuela. The first group was opened in the city of Caracas, and it was named "Grupo Ave Fenix" (Phoenix), located in the area known as Urbanization Chacao. This group is still active today. At the time, we only had one Basic Text in English and several photocopies of some NA IPs and booklets, in both English and Spanish. However, there was a lot of hope and faith, and that is what has kept NA alive since then. In 1992, two more NA groups opened in Caracas. Then more groups were started in different sections of the city and its surrounding areas. Others sprang up in other zones of Venezuela, such as Maracay, Valencia, Barquisimeto, Acarigua, Maracaibo, San Cristobal, Puerto Ordaz, and San Felix. Many of these groups still meet regularly, while others, for one reason or another, have stopped meeting and have closed their doors. In the beginning it was hard, and growth was slow. Neither the community nor Venezuela as a whole new anything about us, and they mostly ignored us. Finding meeting places was not an easy task. There were times when we were not allowed to utilize the restrooms of the rooms we were renting to hold our NA meetings. We had a service stigma as drug addicts, in spite of the fact that we were trying to recover, and some people believed that we could be transmitters of contagious diseases. However, we overcame many of these difficulties, and many of these places continue to rent to us their rooms, allowing us the possibility of presently having several NA groups. We maintain very good relationships with these places in every respect. In 2001, the Regional Service Committee of Narcotics Anonymous in Venezuela was first formed, thanks to the unconditional help that we received from members in our region and in other regions in Latin America. Help also came from around the world, from the World Board, and from NAWs staff. Presently we have two service offices, one operated by the Metropolitan Area Service Committee of Caracas and another coordinated by the Regional Service Committee of Venezuela. In these offices, we keep our area and regional literature inventories. Both offices are fully equipped and computerized, and both have telephone lines with their respective answering machines. The offices are managed by volunteer trusted servants who are responsible, amongst other things, for managing the financial resources and banking accounts of the fellowship, the postal box, and area and regional PI and H&I service efforts. These facilities are the main offices of NA in Venezuela. From the early days of NA in our country, we have had many experiences carrying the NA message to penitentiaries, psychiatric institutions, treatment centers, community groups, and medical, professional, religious, and civic organizations. We have had similar situations in public information, trying to carry the NA message in the best possible way to the community and to society as a whole through the media (newspapers, radio, and TV). Our objective has been to fulfill our primary purpose as a fellowship, which is to carry the NA message of recovery from addiction. In our region we have organized many events and special activities such as picnics, dances, regional meetings, workshops, learning days, regional service assemblies, and two regional NA conventions. All of these activities have helped us continue growing as a fellowship. Through the years, we have helped in the translation of NA books like *Just for Today* and *The NA Step Working Guides* from English to Spanish. We have updated and adapted several service manuals we received from other regions. At the NA World Service Conference in May 2004, after several years of communications with our region, the World Board recommended conference seating for the Region of Venezuela. This gave us the opportunity to have a voice in this event, where regional delegates from around the world meet every two years. As of September 2004, we had thirty NA groups and 130 weekly meetings in our region. There are nine H&I panels with eleven weekly meetings. We have five area service committees. In January of this year, we celebrated thirteen years of carrying the NA message of recovery, love, and hope to the addict who still suffers. In spite of the adversities and difficulties we have encountered, we continue on the path of recovery and service. The members, groups, and areas in our region have gained strength—and we continue on to grow and to show up, just for today and forever! NA works! Strength to the group! Thank you, Higher Power!

Mauro H. Caracas, Venezuela  
NA Way Oct, 2005



[www.na-greece.gr/Enthistory](http://www.na-greece.gr/Enthistory)

The first NA group in Greece was formed in Athens in 1987. At the time, two meetings were held each week. Currently, there are 27 groups and 110 weekly meetings that take place in Athens, Patras, Markopoulo, Thessaloniki, Katerini, Giannitsa, Alexandroupoli, Pireaus, Naflpio, Lefkada and Heraklion (Crete). In addition, weekly presentation meetings take place in treatment centers and penitentiaries in Athens and Thessaloniki.

**Disclaimer :** Our Living Promise presents the experiences and opinions of individual members of Narcotics Anonymous. The opinions expressed are not to be attributed to Narcotics Anonymous as a whole, nor does publication of any article imply endorsement by NA, Our Living Promise, or NA World Service. — **The Editor**

How does it work? It works just fine. **OurLivingPromise@comcast.net**