

THE BUZZ

Recovery and Relapse FROM I.P. #6

Many people think that recovery is simply a matter of not using drugs. They consider a relapse a sign of complete failure, and long periods of abstinence a sign of complete success. We in the recovery program of Narcotics Anonymous have found that this perception is too simplistic.

After a member has had some involvement in our fellowship, a relapse may be the jarring experience that brings about a more rigorous application of the program. By the same token we have observed some members who remain abstinent for long periods of time whose dishonesty and self-deceit still prevent them from enjoying complete recovery and acceptance within society.

Complete and continuous abstinence, however, in close association and identification with others in NA groups, is still the best ground for growth.

Although all addicts are basically the same in kind, we do, as individuals, differ in degree of sickness and rate of recovery. There may be times when a relapse

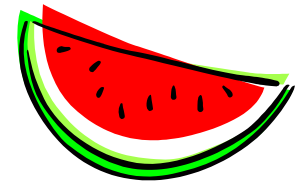
lays the groundwork for complete freedom. At other times that freedom can only be achieved by a grim and obstinate willfulness to hang on to abstinence, come hell or high water, until a crisis passes.

An addict who by any means can lose, even for a time, the need or desire to use, and has free choice over impulsive thinking and compulsive action, has reached a turning point that may be the decisive factor in his recovery.

The feeling of true independence and freedom hangs here at times in the balance. To step out alone and run our own lives again draws us, yet we seem to know that what we have has come from dependence on a Power greater than ourselves and from the giving and receiving of help from others in acts of empathy. Many times in our recovery the old bugaboos will haunt us. Life may again become meaningless, monotonous, and boring. We may tire mentally in repeating our new ideas and tire physically in our new activities,

yet we know that if we fail to repeat them we will surely take up our old practices. We suspect that if we do not use what we have, we will lose what we have. These times are often the periods of our greatest growth. Our minds and bodies seem tired of it all, yet the dynamic forces of change or true conversion, deep within, may be working to give us the answers that alter our inner motivations and change our lives.

Recovery as experienced through our Twelve Steps is our goal, not mere physical abstinence. To improve ourselves takes effort, and since there is no way in the world to graft a new idea on a closed mind, an opening must be made somehow. Since we can do this only for ourselves, we need to recognize two of our seemingly inherent enemies, apathy and procrastination. Our resistance to change seems built in, and only a nuclear blast of some kind will bring about any alteration or initiate another course of action. A relapse, if we survive it, may provide the charge for the demolition process. A relapse and



Enjoy the summer in a whole new way.

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We Do Recover

We do recover

Although “Politics makes strange bedfellows,” as the old saying goes, addiction makes us one of a kind. Our personal stories may vary in individual pattern but, in the end, we all have the same thing in common. This common illness or disorder is addiction.

We know well the two things that make up true addiction: obsession and compulsion. Obsession—that fixed idea that takes us back, time and time again, to our particular drug, or some substitute, to recapture the ease and comfort we once knew.

Compulsion—once having started the process with one fix, one pill, or one drink, we cannot stop through our own power of will. Because of our physical sensitivity to drugs, we are completely in the grip of a destructive power greater than ourselves.

When, at the end of the road, we find that we can no longer function as human beings, either with or without drugs, we all face the same dilemma. What is there left to do? There seems to be this alternative: either go on as best we can to the bitter ends—jails, institutions, or death—or find a new way to live. In years gone by, very few addicts ever had this last choice. Those who are addicted today are more fortunate. For the first time in history, a simple way has been proving itself in the lives of many addicts. It is available to

us all. This is a simple spiritual, not religious, program known as Narcotics Anonymous.

When my addiction brought me to the point of complete powerlessness, uselessness, and surrender some fifteen years ago, there was no NA. I found AA, and in that fellowship met addicts who had also found that program to be the answer to their problem. However, we knew that many were still going down the road of disillusion, degradation, and death because they were unable to identify with the alcoholic in AA. Their identification was at the level of apparent symptoms and not at the deeper level of emotions or feelings, where empathy becomes a healing therapy for all addicted people.

With several other addicts and some members of AA who had great faith in us and the program, we formed, in July of 1953, what we now know as Narcotics Anonymous. We felt that, now, the addict would find, from the start, as much identification as each needed to convince himself that he could stay clean by the example of others who had recovered for many years.

That this was what was principally needed has proved itself in these passing years. That wordless language of recognition, belief, and faith which we call empathy created the atmosphere in which we could feel time, touch reality, and recognize spiritual values long lost to many of us. In our program of recovery, we are growing in numbers and strength. Never before have so many clean addicts, of their own choice and in

free society, been able to meet where they please, to maintain their recovery in complete creative freedom.

Even addicts said it could not be done the way we had it planned. We believed in openly scheduled meetings—no more hiding as other groups had tried. We believed this differed from all other methods tried before by those who advocated long withdrawal from society. We felt that the sooner the addict could face his problem in everyday living, just that much faster would he become a real, productive citizen. We eventually have to stand on our own feet and face life on its own terms, so why not from the start?

Because of this, of course, many relapsed, and many were lost completely. However, many stayed, and some came back after their setback. The brighter part is the fact that, of those who are now our members, many have long terms of complete abstinence and are better able to help the newcomer. Their attitude, based on the spiritual values of our steps and traditions, is the dynamic force that is bringing increase and unity to our program.

The Serenity Prayer (long version)

God grant me the **Serenity** to accept the things I cannot change;
Courage to change the things I can;
and **Wisdom** to know the difference—

Living one day at a time;

Enjoying one moment at a time;

Accepting hardships as the pathway to peace;

Taking, as He did, this sinful world as it is, not as I would have it;

Trusting that He will make all things right if I surrender to His will;

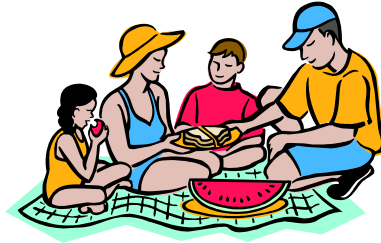
That I may be reasonably happy in this life and supremely happy with Him forever in the next.

Amen

“Courage doesn’t always roar, sometimes courage is the quiet voice at the end of the day saying, ‘I will try again’.” Mary Anne Rademacher

12 Promises for Newcomers

1. You will know your full name and address.
2. You will be able to shave yourself, or put on your makeup, whichever pleases you.
3. You will be able to dress and undress yourself.
4. You will know the town, the state, and the country that you live in.
5. You will be able to find socks that match, or nylons without runs.
6. You will be able to smoke without burning yourself, your clothes, or the furniture.
7. You will lose the fear of food.
8. You will be able to walk a straight line and pass the drunk driving test.
9. You will spend less time in the bathroom and be able to brush your teeth without gagging.
10. You will lose the fear of police cars.
11. You will be able to answer the door without looking through the peephole.
12. You will realize what a mess you were, and thank your Higher Power for NA.



Enjoy Summer Fellowship.

GO TO CAMPOUTS

We either make ourselves miserable
or we make ourselves strong.

The amount of work is the same.

Journey to Xtlan

Don Juan

May today there be peace within you.

May you trust your Higher Power that you are exactly where you are meant to be.



I believe that friends are quiet angels who lift us to our feet when our wings have trouble remembering how to fly.

**Central Minnesota
Area Narcotics
Anonymous**

- ◆ Points of interest from IP #7
- ◆ “Am I An Addict”
- ◆ Subcommittee’s Choice
- ◆ Upcoming Events Calendar

If you have an event or article that you would like to see in The Buzz, please submit your offering to the subcommittee. Newsletters are brought to the ASC for editing one month prior to being sent to the printer. Next issue will be ready for editing in July. After that it will be hit and miss to add something prior to printing in August.

Work cited
IP #6

GRATITUDE PRAYER

"Our gratitude speaks, when we care and when we share with others the N.A. way, that no addict seeking recovery need ever die from the horrors of addiction. without finding a better way to live."

NEW MEETING(S)

~~APPLYING SPIRITUAL PRINCIPLES
MONDAYS 6-7:30 PM
ATONEMENT LUTHERAN CHURCH
1144 29TH AVE N~~

*** Attn: Men’s Steppin’ in Recovery !!**

Please remember to mention your meeting PLACE in

CMASC NEWSLETTER SUBCOMMITTEE
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320-290-0242
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**LOOKING FOR SOMETHING TO DO ? ACTIVITIES COULD USE YOUR HELP.
THEY MEET AT 10:30 ON THE SECOND SATURDAY OF EVERY MONTH AT THE
MCDONALD’S ON HWY. 10 YOUR IDEAS ARE ALWAYS WELCOME.**

Content of this newsletter does not in anyway represent NA as a whole. It represents the views, opinions and concerns of the CMA Newsletter Subcommittee. Any constructive criticism shall be directed to the CMA Newsletter Subcommittee. Final Editing will be done at the ASC prior to final printing.

Any comments, concerns and submissions for content including but not limited to articles, poems, artwork, personal stories, events, etc. must be submitted to the CMA Newsletter Subcommittee via mail, e-mail, or in person. All submissions become the exclusive property of the CMA Newsletter Subcommittee with all rights reserved and are subject to change or editing at any time. Personal clean-time anniversaries will be posted upon request.