

August 2th, 2009

Issues 7-8 Vol. 1

# RRAGS To RECOVERY NEWSLETTER

Available on the website at:  
[www.rragsna.org/newsletter.html](http://www.rragsna.org/newsletter.html)



## Table of Contents

Statement of Purpose.....	1
From Abroad.....	2-6
Local Submission.....	6-17
Recovery Puzzle.....	17
Calendar of Events.....	18-19
NA Laughables.....	20
NA World News.....	20

### Quick Quote

*"When you're home  
by yourself you're  
behind enemy lines."*

*- Anonymous*

The purpose of the Rock River Area Group Services (RRAGS) Committee is to be supportive of its member groups and their primary purpose. RRAGS accomplishes this task by linking the groups within the area, helping groups deal with their basic situations and needs, providing services as directed by its member groups, providing services within its communities, and by encouraging the growth of the fellowship of Narcotics Anonymous.

The primary purpose of the RRAGS' Area Newsletter Subcommittee is to carry the message to addicts by informing the public that NA exists in the Rock River Area and that NA offers a method of recovery from the disease of addiction. The Secondary purpose of the RRAGS' Area Newsletter Subcommittee is to improve communication among RRAGS subcommittees, RRAGS and its member groups and RRAGS' member groups and their members.

### FROM ABROAD...

#### Step Seven

"We humbly asked Him to remove our shortcomings."

Many of us view 'shortcomings' as acting out on a defect of character. A defect in our character makes us fall short in some way in our lives. Another way to look at it is to look at defects as actions that are wrong and shortcomings as things we want to do but cannot. At first we pray after we act out. Later we can catch ourselves acting out and pray to our higher power to help us stop. It is when we catch ourselves before the defect becomes an action that we begin to realize the benefits of this Step. One of those benefits is the beginning of true self-acceptance. We ask the God of our understanding to help us not act in ways which are unacceptable to us. This Step begins to align our behavior to fit our values.

In the Sixth Step we became entirely ready for God to remove all these defects of character. In the Seventh Step we stop feeding these defects. Just as we needed abstinence from drugs before we could begin to recover, in the Seventh we gain abstinence from acting on defects. As long as we feed the defect, it will never be removed. If we refrain from acting out, we notice the defects beginning to be removed.

This Step is the beginning of real change for us. We identify our defects in the Fourth Step and become willing to live without them in the Sixth Step. The Twelve Steps allow us to move on in life so these defects stop determining our behavior. We begin to experience life without the burden of defects. We experience a new level of freedom.

Some of us found the Sixth Step to be very difficult because as addicts we tend to associate change with trouble ahead. It is at this point in our recovery where we often come face-to-face with our self-centeredness. We have found that our defects of character no longer work and that they have no place in our new lives in

recovery. We may realize and accept that these defects are no longer effective yet we struggle with gaining the willingness to have God remove our shortcomings. Some may write a daily journal; focusing on our defects and the pain they cause us. Others may seek the willingness they need through prayer and meditation. One thing is certain. In order to grow and change we must take this Step. We discover that our defects are nothing more than our reactions to fear. This can be the fear of rejection, the fear of abandonment, or the fear that you won't like us. Fears are a manifestation of our self-centeredness. We learn that we can no longer use our defects to avoid facing our fears. Now what do we do?

Defects are behaviors that we still do that cause us problems. We hit to the left or right of the target but just can't hit the mark we are aiming for. Shortcomings are behaviors that we do not do that cause us problems. We meant to pay the bill but just forgot to mail the check.

Some of us begin by listing our defects and their opposites. Lust versus satisfaction, dishonesty versus honesty, etc. We discover the personality traits that we could replace our defects with. We may meditate and imagine what our lives would be like uncontrolled by fear. We begin to see the difference between being God-centered and self-centered. Ultimately, we become willing to have God remove our shortcomings. The Seventh Step can feel like jumping off a cliff hoping God will catch us. Few of us will ever jump from an airplane but all of us know we could if we had to in some emergency. If our desire for a new life is as strong when we work Step Seven, as it was when we first came to the program, we will definitely feel excitement. Since we are clean, we know we can change. Just not using is a big change. Recovery is a fact, not a theory.

We need to think of all the times that we threw ourselves into our addiction with no idea what would happen. We throw ourselves into recovery the same way with a major difference. Improvement seems as scary to us now as getting worse did in our active addiction. Any change that risks pain is scary to addicts. We must bridge this gap in our thinking. Many of us believe that the Seventh Step is the drug addict's dream since it allows us to become the people we want to be. Our defects have killed our dreams and denied us the relations with

# NARCOTICS ANONYMOUS

## ROCK RIVER AREA R.R.A.G.S.

other people we long to enjoy. The Seventh Step is our chance to renew visions of bright, happy and enjoyable lives. This Step allows us to see that our pain has more association with our past than our present. Because of working the Seventh Step, we find specific dreams from our past that just didn't happen. These dreams died when we started using. Furthermore, we come to believe that these dreams may return to us now. We can use these dreams to help motivate ourselves to make a lasting break with the past. We demonstrate the Seventh Step by stepping completely into the future. We do this by asking God, the God that has loved and taken care of us at our worst, to remove the obstacles to our happiness.

In addition to our willingness, we have the power of the God of our understanding to provide the strength and guidance we need to leave the things we do not care about and move on to those we do. It may help us remember that God works the Seventh Step only when we are willing enough to ask for help. While we know that recovery is real, we are often held back by our fantasies of what will happen. In fact, we don't have any idea what our lives will be like after we work this Step. How could we? That is why it takes real courage to go forward from this point. Life goes on and has for a long time. Our addiction set us apart from life and continues to try to cut us off from the feelings that God gives to all people. Addiction forces us to move in small circles. Recovery opens these circles up to ever-widening spheres of growth in all directions. If we were to work this Step earlier in the recovery process, we would probably flip out. The energy we are capable of using in our daily lives is enormous compared with what we have been wasting. For this energy to move through us we have to work the Seventh Step to remove obstacles that would block the flow of energy. When this debris is out of the way, we can feel the chains of the past slip away and we will experience an awesome wonder. This is nothing to be embarrassed about. We should feel embarrassment if we don't feel something like this. We deserve our sense of wonderment at the freedom from life-long slavery to the disease of addiction. We remember may overnight successes have worked toward a goal for years.

We only need a little power to help us concentrate and keep our part of the bargain with life. We can

usually earn our way with comparative ease. Other forms of hunger make us think it will take a lot to satisfy our needs. We are hungry for companions, financial security, peace of mind, appreciation and all the human needs. Spiritual hunger sometimes makes us forget the resources we have to work with at practically any point in recovery. Addiction wants us to forget our joy and miracles. Being grateful today - consciously thankful - is part of what readies us for the good things tomorrow. Sheer force of habit make us focus more often on what we lack rather than be thankful of what we already have at present. Some of us can remember when we first started pulling back from life. Addiction is necrotic and eats away at our lives: our minds, our bodies and our spirit. We knew on some level that if we were to continue, we would seriously hurt someone or permanently injure ourselves. We have all sustained some form of permanent injury, therefore we believe that our limitations keep us within safe bounds. Clean, we can expand our lives to find new and larger boundaries of our 'safe zone'. Many of our former limitations no longer apply to us. They served a purpose at some point in time but have become a hindrance. It's just like someone who has broken a bone and has had to wear a cast to allow the bone to heal. Now after healing, we can take off the cast because it becomes uncomfortable. The cast becomes a block to our healing. It may feel funny at first so we have to take it easy during the big changes. Soon though, we will have our balance and look back on our confinement with a sense of sadness mixed with incredible joy now that we are free.

Without self-examination we are basing our lives in part on snap judgments made at a time in our lives when we weren't able to see or think clearly. We often jumped to rash conclusions about who and what and why things were happening. We carry the judgments with us now. Some of these judgments may be accurate but the ones that are wrong hurt us by basing our lives on incorrect information. Corporations spend huge amounts of time and resources to acquire accurate information upon which to base their positions and plans for the future. Even so, they are wrong sometimes and go out of business.

Expressing our willingness relaxes our willpower

# NARCOTICS ANONYMOUS

ROCK RIVER AREA R.R.A.G.S.

and prevents conflicts between wanting to be free of defects and wanting to hang on to them. Character may simply be how we deal with life on life's terms. Life on life's terms makes demands on us that we can meet or that we cannot meet. Defects are "holes" or flaws in our character. Where there should be a planned reaction, a learning from someone who loves us or a successful way of responding that we have worked out ourselves, there is a resentment, a bad idea or an unworkable habitual response. If so, it is a logical conclusion that as our character improves; the rest of our life improves. Flawed, scarred, broken, misshapen, and damaged all describe the parts of us that do not work. Defects are defective. They aren't fun, interesting, enjoyable or effective. They don't help us make money, get along with the opposite sex or cope with the world effectively. If they did, they wouldn't be defective. With God's help we begin to remove the defects to free the energy we have been forcing into them that will be available to us as we heal. Pain from the past creates ripples that continue even now. 12 Step recovery stops the ripples from creating trouble in our present and so frees our future. The light within each of our hearts was so dim that only a little light could come through. We didn't want to do too well too quickly.

Thoughts, memories, habits and everything that makes us 'us', are carried in tiny bio-electrical charges within our bodies. A computer engineer stated in an article that they could make magnetic images stronger but it would make them hard to over-write. In recovery, we change what is written in our hearts and minds to produce changes in the way we feel and live. Our surrender to the fact of our addiction and our belief in a willingness to align ourselves under the care of a loving and caring Higher Power allow this to happen. Suiting up, showing up and doing what we can while God does all the rest is all we have to do.

We didn't want to change what other people would expect and then demand from us until we were sure we could live up to our new capacities. As the blockage clears, we give ourselves permission to follow up on a good idea or impulse. We gain the ability to communicate that idea to others around us. The most amazing thing is having some of these ideas become realities without the negativity we have come to expect. These emanations may come from deep within us and be in fact the will of our Higher Power coming out through us. Much of our pain results when these deep dreams cannot manifest themselves in reality. Working the Seventh Step is a leap of faith because we don't know exactly what will happen when we take it. It is opening ourselves to the possibilities of what will happen when God removes our defects. It does more than allow us to move beyond our former boundaries of competence and ability. It allows us to set our sights on things that we really care about and stick to it until we reach our goals. It also lets us be happy where we are. If happiness and attainment is perpetually in the future, how will we ever attain happiness in the present? The leap of faith of the Seventh Step may first be stepping into the here and now.

*--Reprinted from the Narcotics Anonymous Way of Life, Traditions War: a pathway to peace, The Spirit of NA or NA Twenty Plus  
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## ANNOUNCEMENT

The Hospitals and Institutions Subcommittee needs your help! We need men and women to volunteer to go into the Jails and carry the message of recovery thru Narcotics Anonymous! There are limited clean time requirements, background checks, and volunteers must not currently be on probation or parole. For more information attend the H&I Subcommittee Meeting held the one hour before Area on the First Sunday of the month. See with website for details on when and where area meets at <http://rragsna.org/ascrotation.html>. Or e-mail the committee at [hi.chair@rragsna.org](mailto:hi.chair@rragsna.org)

# NARCOTICS ANONYMOUS

ROCK RIVER AREA R.R.A.G.S.

*Step 7 Should have been in last month's issue however no issue made it out last month...Sorry! As a bonus this month we will also republish Step 8!*

## Step Eight

"We made a list of all persons we had harmed, and became willing to make amends to them all."

The destruction of our active addiction has left lasting scars and limitations in our lives. The purpose of the Eighth Step is to find freedom from these limitations in the present and for the future. As with many things, we have a fear of looking too closely at the pain of our past. By recalling where the parts of our leftover pain began, we can cut it out by the roots. The first associated memory may provide a clue. Sometimes, we will find our amends lie in directions that are far different from where our fear and imagination had placed them. We addicts seem to love familiarity. We become familiar with feelings, both good and bad. We become too familiar with good feelings and push our luck trying to feel more estatic. We become familiar with bad feelings and hold on to them, wallowing in pools of depression. Hasn't anyone ever told us that we don't have to hold on to bad feelings? We develop a better understanding of the nature of harm after a while. We finally own that we have harmed ourselves. Do we still want to carry a load of guilt around? Maybe we do, but that's only because we think there might be some future benefit from it. We must remember that there isn't and there never will be!

'Listing' is merely writing down names of those people to whom we feel we might owe an amend. We can make seperate lists for those we are willing to make amends to right away, those who we have harmed but don't feel we owe amends, and those we may have harmed but never want to have contact with again. Our sponsor may help us determine who to make amends to, especially where making amends may be harmful or dangerous. We may later decide that no amends are called for. The key at this point is that we have to exercise our freedom to write down the names no matter what the outcome may be. As we ask God to remove our defects of character, we set forces in motion that lead us

to consider other people. We acknowledge and accept the limitations placed on us by unfinished business from the past. When we feel hemmed\_in or restricted by fear or guilt, we can remove it by positive action. Amends allow us to correct what is out of order. The wreckage of the past often leaves us with a desire for revenge or a fear of the revenge of others. Either way this imbalance makes it hard for us to live fully in the present. We worry about past problems and future retribution instead of being free to live in the present. Working Step Eight helps us restore our balance and resume the everyday functions of life clean. We no longer have to look over our shoulder. We can walk free of shame as our load of guilt is lifted.

To be part of the human family, we need to find harmony in our relationships with others. When we lose our humility, we make ourselves targets of envy or victims of pride. The world helps the person who is open, relaxed and attentive. The world fears the proud and arrogant because they don't appear to care about people. We may think of the earlier Steps as mending our own being. To continue the recovery process, we must heal our sick and damaged relationships with other people. We do not knuckle under, making ourselves into door-mats, or inviting attack with our vulnerability. We are mending links and building bridges to other people. When we come around to a place where we don't fear others and we sincerely want to help, it creates a change in others. The person they meet in us is the difference.

## On the Website.... CleanTime Calculator!



[www.ragsna.org/cleancalculator.html](http://www.ragsna.org/cleancalculator.html)

# NARCOTICS ANONYMOUS

ROCK RIVER AREA R.R.A.G.S.

If we are hiding something or keeping a secret agenda, other people will pick up on our dishonesty. It is not a failing in them that they can detect our game and protect themselves from our intrusion into their lives or our taking of their goods. When we learn the art of giving, they will come to us to receive what they need. They, and we, will have no need to fear.

A person not familiar with spiritual principles may have problems determining the amount of commitment or application they have to apply before getting visible results. Reservations have way of canceling out our spiritual actions in the same way a wire that is broken will not allow your television to switch on. To get results our amends must be strong and connected to an impulse of restitution or restoration to those we have harmed. Expectations of positive results is important, as is the willingness to take the necessary actions, and the ability to concentrate on what you're trying to do. These abilities combine with belief to trigger the spiritual shift or miracle we're praying for. It may help to bear in mind that we are seeking help where all other efforts have failed - and we are getting results! This is why NA is known as a spiritual program. The NA 8th Step frees us from others being able to push our buttons, thoughts of revenge or fear of revenge, fear of discovery, acts of sabotage, recrimination, justification, endless blame assessment, and incarceration, legal actions and physical harm. Unless we are totally willing to make the amends, we will feel no relief and experience no positive change from the Eighth Step. The measure or our willingness is up to the individual for who can know the heart of another.

--Reprinted from the *Narcotics Anonymous Way of Life, Traditions War: a pathway to peace, The Spirit of NA or NA Twenty Plus*

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## Did You Know?

**You can view the Basic Text, All the IPs and Most Other NA Literature right from our Area's Website!**

Visit <http://rragsna.org/naliterature.html>

**You can download and print it too!**

## LOCAL SUBMISSIONS

### PATHS OF RECOVERY INTRODUCTION

This pamphlet presents statements of relevance to Narcotics Anonymous. They are arranged in four sets of twelve that relate directly to our symbol.

**Self - Twelve Steps**  
**Society - Twelve Traditions**  
**Service - Concepts of Service**  
**God - Spiritual Tenets**

Following each statement is a brief explanation of the way the statement relates to our program. It is meant to be an expression of the fundamental principles and concepts of Narcotics Anonymous. This pamphlet draws on the experience of one member who has been active in N.A. for many of years. The inspiration regarding our symbol occurred early in the morning of April 23rd, 1988 and most of the basic statements presented in the sections entitles "Concepts of Service" and "Spiritual Tenets" were written later that day during an airplane flight to N.A.'s World Service Conference. The piece was developed and completed over the following 7 weeks. It was submitted to the W.L.C. and subsequently placed in the "Return to Originator" category of material without further work being done on it.

### THE TWELVE STEPS OF NARCOTICS ANONYMOUS

The Twelve Steps of Narcotics Anonymous are a specific method of recovery from the disease of addiction; they are our philosophy of personal recovery. They are the basis of our program; "a set of principles written so simply that we can follow them in our daily lives". As N.A. members, we strive to follow this way of life, and in so doing find freedom from active addiction. By living the Steps we tap into and unleash a power greater than ourselves that transforms our lives.

1. We admitted that we were powerless over our addiction, that our lives had become unmanageable. Addiction is a disease that we can either die from, or learn to live with; the choice is ours. This disease is one

# NARCOTICS ANONYMOUS

## ROCK RIVER AREA R.R.A.G.S.

of obsessiveness and compulsivity; it is physical, mental and spiritual in nature. We don't have to accept anything on blind faith or in theory to work this Step; we only have to be honest, accept the reality of our lives, what our drug use has done to us, and the impact we have had on the world around us. We are addicts and we have addiction, this creates contradiction and unmanageability in our lives. Addiction implies a distorted perception of reality and an abnormal reaction to people, places, and things. We are never cured, but we can recover, "Just for Today".

2. We came to believe that a Power greater than ourselves could restore us to sanity.

All our great ideas and all our best efforts to moderate, abstain from using, or get help for our problem eventually failed; we found no lasting relief from our addiction, no cure. Our basic approach to living was by manipulation, control, and "Self-will"; these not only failed, but usually made things worse. We realized that we could "no longer function as a human being, either with or without drugs". At this point we can only seek help from beyond ourselves, from something greater than ourselves, from some spiritual power. Most of begin by realizing that Narcotics Anonymous is a power greater than ourselves; in time, our concept and understanding of a Higher Power grows. We learn that every recovery is a miracle; and that only a spiritual awakening can give us balance in our lives and a healthy relationship with reality.

3. We made a decision to turn our will and our lives over to the care of God as we understood Him.

Our pasts show that we have been unable to care for ourselves and that "self-will" only ends in disaster; now we begin to depend on a loving God. We start by simply making a commitment to live the N.A. way, rather than the way we have been living. As our recovery unfolds, we are confronted with mounting evidence that there is a spiritual power working in our lives, and in the lives of other N.A. members. Our understanding of reality and our place in the universe changes; we begin to develop an awareness of a loving God. Our concept of god changes from "general" to "personal". As our acceptance of a Higher Power grows, our decision and commitment to trust in God also grows; it eventually encompasses

every area of our lives. The result is freedom.

4. We made a searching and fearless moral inventory of ourselves.

Two things that are clear are that we don't know who we really are and we don't know how to live successfully. Much of our pain comes as a direct result of living a life in contradiction to our moral values and in conflict with the world around us. Unless we can gain some insight into our living patterns and our morality we are destined to continue to violate ourselves and suffer. The fourth Step is an assessment of our morality and our actions; its purpose is to show us who we are, teach us what's right and wrong for us, and help us develop valid rules for living. The things we learn through the inventory process can become an important part of our new way of life, if we are willing to give up our destructive concepts and patterns; and have the desire to change.

5. We admitted to God, to ourselves, and to another human being the exact nature of our wrongs.

Some members question the necessity for this Step after having taken a written inventory; after all, "God already knows all this stuff, I've just written it all down, and no one else can really understand because they haven't had the same experiences that I have". This Step shows us that we are not unique and teaches us about forgiveness and acceptance; from God, of ourselves, and from another human being. It removes the rationalizations and prejudices we have about ourselves and we gain additional understanding, insight, and clarity about our lives. By formally admitting the exact nature of our wrongs we are acknowledging the reality of our past and committing ourselves to a new way of life.

6. We were entirely ready to have God remove all these defects of character.

Knowing about ourselves and how we relate to the world around us is just the beginning; we now need to begin to integrate this information into our daily life. For many of us this is a difficult process. We find ourselves continuing to make the same mistakes, but now we are much more aware of the problems we are creating for ourselves. It seems that our instinctive reactions to people, places, and things, are somehow distorted, and often inappropriate. "Defective" instincts are part of the disease of addiction; we need to stop acting on impulse,

# NARCOTICS ANONYMOUS

## ROCK RIVER AREA R.R.A.G.S.

but we can't do it on our own. Being powerless over our defects is very frustrating until we, once again, seek help from the loving God we have come to believe in and trust.

7. We humbly asked Him to remove our shortcomings.

Our shortcomings are the manifestations of our defects; they are the actions that are dictated by our defects. Although we are powerless over our defects; we can, with the help of God, control our actions. Humility means knowing who and what we really are and acting accordingly; not trying to be someone who we're not, and not trying to exert power and control over things beyond our power and control. Most of us ask for God's help by praying for the removal of our shortcomings or for the strength and courage not to act on our defects. Each time we can abstain from taking defective action (shortcomings) our defective instincts (defects of character) lose a little of their power. With time, this new way of responding becomes more natural and our instincts become more spiritually correct.

8. We made a list of all persons we had harmed, and became willing to make amends to them all.

An important part of the recovery process is gaining freedom from our pasts. We carry a burden of the harm we've done, our past misdeeds, and the wrongs we've done to others into our recovery. In order to stop paying for our pasts in guilt, remorse, and low self-esteem we need to take positive action; we need to make amends. We begin by putting down on paper all those we have wronged, including ourselves, and specifically stating the harm we've done to them. This helps us acknowledge and take responsibility for our past actions. For most of us, it is difficult to find the motivation to actually make the amends; after all this can be very humbling. In order to find the willingness we call upon our need to change the way we live, our commitment to recovery, and our desire to be free.

9. We made direct amends to such people wherever possible, except when to do so would injure them or others. This is one of the Steps that we should not attempt alone; we have found that it is extremely important to get guidance before we make any amends. There are times when amends are inappropriate, there are times when they do additional harm, and there are times

when an amends might be motivated by our own selfish needs rather than a desire to take responsibility for the harm that we have done. Amends can come in many forms, the most important of which is changing the way we live. With the advice of our sponsor, we attempt to make our most pressing amends first. If we trust in God, opportunities will be given to us when we need them, and the results of our efforts will be fruitful. Amends are made in order to find freedom, not to make the person we have harmed feel better or so they will forgive us. Amends are not just words or deeds they represent an active change in us and a commitment to recovery.

10. We continued to take personal inventory, and when we were wrong promptly admitted it.

Self-awareness is a very important part of recovery, it helps us stop creating problems in our lives. Most of us approach this Step in three ways; one is by taking time at the end of the day to review what has occurred during the day, another is by writing about a specific aspect of life or recovery, and a third is by monitoring ourselves throughout the course of the day. We look at our motives, our actions, our reactions, our focus (past, present, future), and our relationship with our Higher Power and the world around us. Most of us, in learning about ourselves, develop a set of criteria with which to measure these things. When we find that we are drifting away from "recovery oriented living" we quickly take corrective action to avoid accumulating "wreckage in the present". We stop living in the problem and start living in the solution.

11. We sought through prayer and meditation to improve our conscious contact with God as we understood Him, praying only for knowledge of His will for us and the power to carry that out.

Pivotal to our new way of life is our relationship with God; ongoing recovery requires ongoing spiritual growth. This Step describes the basis of N.A. spirituality: an active, God-centered, approach to living. We have found that we can only focus on our Higher Power in the present; if we are obsessed with the past or the future there is no room for God. With practice, prayer and meditation link us with our Higher Power. We consciously orient ourselves toward God and learn to depend on spiritual guidance and direction rather than our own intelli-

Ever Wonder Why Rock River Area Group Services does things they way they do?

Want to know what makes up our Prudent Reserve?

Want to know the requirements to be a trusted servant?

Find all this and more in our policy packet available on the website at: [www.rragsna.org/policypage.html](http://www.rragsna.org/policypage.html)

gence. N.A. does not prescribe any specific rituals or methods to make contact with God, we encourage each member to find and practice whatever works the best for them. Awareness is also a form of spiritual communication; we speak to God through our actions, and God's will for us can be revealed by other people and by the events which occur in our lives. We believe that our lives get better as true spirituality awakens, evolves, and grows in us.

12. Having had a spiritual awakening as a result of the steps, we tried to carry this message to addicts, and to practice these principles in all our affairs. Our steps are a spiritually based formula for living that allows us to be free from active addiction and the bondage of self. They assault all three aspects of our disease; the physical, the mental, and the spiritual. The key to is the awakening of spirituality within us; this can only occur in the absence of obsession and compulsion. "There is no freedom without responsibility", and ours is to carry our message of hope and deliverance to others who suffer from this disease. Recovery is what we try to express in our words and our actions; but the strongest statement that we make is the way we live. We can only present what we have found for ourselves. Every aspect of our lives is a statement about our recovery; as our ability to apply these Steps improves, the message of

our recovery grows richer and stronger. We are the message of recovery from the disease of addiction.

### THE TWELVE TRADITIONS OF NARCOTICS ANONYMOUS

*"We keep what we have only with vigilance, and just as freedom for the individual comes from the Twelve Steps, so freedom for the group springs from our Traditions."* Although the Traditions were designed as guides for our groups, the principles underlying them are applicable to the individual in their search for spiritual growth. The Traditions express the basic philosophy of our society; how we, as N.A. members, relate to each other within our groups; how N.A. groups relate to each other and to N.A. as a whole; and how we, as a fellowship of members and groups, relate to the world around us. They are not rules; but rather, expressions of spiritual principles which by their very nature are immutable and non-negotiable. They are the ties that bind us together.

1. Our common welfare should come first; personal recovery depends on N.A. unity. Concerns about what's best for "us" instead of what's best for "me" are foreign to most addicts. We know that our lives depend on changing "I" oriented thinking into "we" oriented thinking. We will need to set aside "I want", "I will", and "I won't"; and accept the unmanageability of our lives. The group is precious to the individual and the individual is precious to the group. The welfare of the group is essential, since without fellow addicts to identify with, learn from, and share with very few of us could find or maintain recovery. We escape the isolation of our addiction by becoming a part of a greater whole. Our concern for the welfare of our group springs from the simple fact that "I can't, we can".

2. For our Group purpose there is but one ultimate authority - a loving God as He may express Himself in our Group conscience. Our leaders are but trusted servants; they do not govern.

In recovery, we develop morality and a conscience; we use these as a guide for our actions and help us make our decisions. We utilize this same principle when we gather together in the group setting. Group conscience is the collective understanding of, awareness of, and surrender to spiritual principles within the group; it is the basis of our decision making process. As individuals

# NARCOTICS ANONYMOUS

## ROCK RIVER AREA R.R.A.G.S.

we are many things; as members of an N.A. group we are all equal. The idea of personal power contradicts our principles. We each have an equal voice in our group decisions, no one member is more important than any other member. To be considered special, better than, or more important is a "death sentence" for an addict; it feeds our self-obsession and separates us from the group. In N.A., leadership comes from within the group, we are all leaders when we serve.

3. The only requirement for membership is a desire to stop using.

Addicts come to Narcotics Anonymous for many reasons; those who stay have, or develop, a desire to stop using and live "drug-free". Just being an addict, wanting to be clean, or attending N.A. meetings is not enough to make someone a member of our program. An N.A. member is an addict, who demonstrates a desire to stop using "drugs", and who has chosen to recover in Narcotics Anonymous. We say that "an addict is a man or a woman whose life is controlled by drugs". We demonstrate our desire to stop using by making an active effort to abstain. For our purposes, we define "drugs" to be any substances which we consciously ingest because we want to change our perceptions or alter our mood. Specific "drugs" are not our problem, we suffer from the disease of addiction. Our first Step says "powerless over our addiction"; not powerless over drugs, or just powerless over addiction. Our lives are proof that the N.A. program is a power greater than addiction.

4. Each Group should be autonomous except in matters affecting other Groups, or N.A. as a whole.

Autonomy protects our fellowship and our groups, it means to independent and free from outside influences or entanglements. Each N.A. group is a unit unto itself, and can survive on its own. The problems that face one group should not be a threat to, or have a major impact on, other groups. A group should exercise their autonomy by seeking ways to better fulfill their primary purpose, but not as an excuse to do whatever we want. There are limits to our autonomy, it is not a license to deviate from the principles of Narcotics Anonymous; any actions that compromise our Traditions affect the rest of our Fellowship. We are linked together by principle; autonomy is the basis for creative freedom, it should never be used

to separate us from each other.

5. Each group has but one primary purpose - to carry the message to the addict who still suffers.

Whenever we come together as a group, we each have a responsibility to help maintain the integrity of our purpose. There is great power in purity of purpose, it binds us together; without it we would splinter into many isolated sub-groups and lose the unity upon which our lives depend. In N.A., we say that "we get what we come for". This means that if we come to N.A. to please someone, get out of trouble, find a job, socialize, find friendship or a lover, find a place to stay, or whatever, we are likely to get these things; however, implied in this saying is the warning that unless we come to N.A. for recovery we will not get recovery. As individuals we may have many personal causes, opinions, projects, prejudices, and purposes; but as N.A. members, we set these things aside and focus our efforts on helping the newcomer find recovery from the disease of addiction.

6. An N.A. group ought never endorse, finance, or lend the N.A. name to any related facility or outside enterprise, lest problems of money, property, or prestige divert us from our primary purpose.

We are Narcotics anonymous and if we are to survive we must maintain our integrity. Our principles come from many sources, both recent and ancient; however, our application of those principles and our approach to recovery are unique. Early in our recovery we learn that we must identify ourselves and commit ourselves to what we believe in; principles and recovery. This is true for the individual and this is true for the group. Our Fellowship needs to avoid becoming entangled in the affairs of others, aligning ourselves with others, and being dependent on others; we must "stand on our own". This Tradition has been a source of controversy between those who are fully committed to Narcotics Anonymous and those who are not; it describes actions which could easily degrade our autonomy, and the consequences that are likely to occur if we do.

7. Every N.A. Group ought to be fully self-supporting, declining outside contributions.

N.A. members support Narcotics Anonymous; it is a right, a privilege, and a responsibility of membership. Support comes in many forms, including cash donations, personal

# NARCOTICS ANONYMOUS

## ROCK RIVER AREA R.R.A.G.S.

effort, active participation, and emotional commitment. Giving of ourselves without selfish motives is a new experience for most of us; self-sacrifice is foreign to addiction. By contributing to our Fellowship, in any way that we can, we begin to feel like and really be a part of Narcotics Anonymous. This feeling of belonging is precious to us, who have always felt separate. By financially supporting our services, we can both fulfill our personal programs, and insure direct responsibility. Being autonomous means being self-supporting; if we accepted outside contributions we would entangle ourselves in the affairs of others. The Seventh Tradition is part of the promise of freedom that is our heritage as N.A. members.

8.Narcotics Anonymous should remain forever non-professional, but our service centers may employ special workers.

Narcotics Anonymous works because of one addict helping another, in anonymity and empathy. There can be no "professional" N.A. members; we are not specialists and do not get paid for caring about each other. N.A. can never be, and should never be a business; however, within our services there is a need for workers with special skills and abilities. This Tradition provides that we may employ professionals in our service centers, working on the behalf of Narcotics Anonymous, but separate from Narcotics Anonymous. Special workers do for us what we are unable to do for ourselves; they are necessary but, in terms of recovery, they can never take the place of the individual N.A. member. It is absolutely essential that we maintain the spiritual integrity of our fellowship and our groups; if we fail to do this, then many addicts will die needlessly and Narcotics Anonymous, as we know it, will cease to exist.

9.N.A., as such, ought never be organized, but we may create service boards or committees directly responsible to those they serve.

Recovery is a spiritual experience, with its foundation in surrender. Organization implies management and control; the antithesis of surrender. The Tradition makes it possible for us to take care of our "organizational needs" without losing our focus on recovery. It allows us to establish a "service structure", made up of working boards and committees, to help us communicate and function

more successfully. The purpose of our "service structure" is to do those things for our groups which would disrupt their "atmosphere of recovery" or distract them from their "primary purpose". We create and direct our services, our boards and committees exist only to serve us, and are strictly accountable and responsible to us. When we provide the physical, financial, and emotional resources necessary to fuel our "service structure", it takes care of our "business" so we can concentrate on recovery.

10.Narcotics Anonymous has no opinion on outside issues; hence the N.A. name ought never be drawn into public controversy.

Unlike most programs designed to help addicts, Narcotics Anonymous believes that the only way that we can learn to live with the pressures of society is by remaining within society. The "real world" issues, causes, prejudices, and concerns; for each of these there are different points of view and different sides. If we align ourselves with any particular position, regardless of its merit, we automatically alienate ourselves from part of society and enter into controversy. Controversy breeds closed-mindedness, and alienation is a symptom of our disease. We must avoid any action or statement that would make it more difficult for any addict to find freedom from addiction. We can not afford to become involved in out-

## On the Website...

**Interactive Area Coverage map with pinpoint locations for all the groups in the area. Zoom in, Zoom out.**

**Click on the pinpoint to open a small window with the name of the group, the address and a link to that groups webpage on our site!**

**Find a group you haven't been to yet. Load up some sponsees and oldtimers and take a road trip!  
[www.ragsna.org/meetings.html](http://www.ragsna.org/meetings.html)**

# NARCOTICS ANONYMOUS

ROCK RIVER AREA R.R.A.G.S.

side issues, they separate us from society, and could divide us or distract us from our purpose; we must maintain our unity and continue to be a haven for the addict seeking recovery.

11. Our public relations policy is based on attraction rather than promotion; we need always maintain personal anonymity at the level of press, radio, and films. We say, "This is a program for people who want it, not for people who need it". This relationship extends into our relationship with society. There are many addicts in society who desperately need recovery, and it would be wonderful if we could bottle, package, and sell it to them all. However, recovery is not a tangible thing. It is, instead, a spiritual experience, an awakening, a surrender, and an acceptance of spiritual principles in our lives; it can never be marketed or sold. Our way of life speaks for itself, freedom from addiction is something that the addict who still suffers dreams about in secret. None of us is a perfect example of recovery; "I" can never clearly or fully represent our message, but "we" can. By not individually identifying ourselves to the general public we protect the integrity of our message of recovery, we protect ourselves from the trap of false pride, and we protect our Fellowship from being perceived as the extension of one personality.

12. Anonymity is the spiritual foundation of all our Traditions, ever reminding us to place principles before personalities.

The principle of anonymity is part of the foundation that Narcotics Anonymous has been built upon. It literally means "without name" or "without identity and personality". We practice anonymity by setting aside all those things that we use to judge, discriminate, and separate ourselves from each other. In N.A., we are all equals and welcome one another as "family". This is the only place in the world where people love and accept us because of who we are, rather than in spite of who we are. We believe that there is God in each of us, and that this is the anonymity. When we can recognize this and act accordingly we demonstrate respect. When we push each other away we're really pushing God away, and when we don't respect each other we're really showing disrespect for God. Anonymity protects us from this, takes the focus off our differences, and lets us see the similarities.



**We Need Your Input!**

**[www.ragsna.org](http://www.ragsna.org)**

**Click on Newsletter!**

"I" has a personality, but "we" have principles; "I can't, we can".

## **THE CONCEPTS OF SERVICE OF NARCOTICS ANONYMOUS**

This "Concepts of Service" is a statement of fundamental principles that we rely on as the basis of our efforts to provide service and support for our groups, as they strive to fulfill their primary purpose; and for our members, as they strive for personal recovery. They are drawn from experience and the verbal tradition that has grown over the years. They express the principles that should guide our service boards and committees and the ideal relationship between service boards, service committees and N.A. members.

### **1. Service is a Spiritual Principle.**

It is through giving freely of ourselves that we receive. In N.A. we believe that service doesn't not equal recovery, but rather that service is an integral part of personal re-

# NARCOTICS ANONYMOUS

## ROCK RIVER AREA R.R.A.G.S.

covery. It is one of the ways that we fulfill our ninth, eleventh, and twelfth Steps. We have established a participatory service structure where the opportunity to serve is both a privilege and right of Membership. The right to serve is guaranteed to each of us; however, the way we choose to serve depends on our desire and abilities. Some members are wonderful as trusted servants, while others flourish best in the one-to-one services we give each other. Through service, we begin to feel better about ourselves and find meaning for our lives.

### 2. Service should be inclusive not exclusive.

We believe that all N.A. members have a responsibility to serve in some way and something positive to offer the addict who still suffers. There are many ways to serve; they include carrying the message, sponsoring, setting up a meeting hall, being a group officer, being part of a committee, chairing a conference or convention, and everything in between. We actively strive to involve as many members as possible in our service efforts. Individually, we do not claim credit for the results of our service, each of us contributes our small part; we understand that, ultimately, it is a loving God working through us that makes it possible for us to achieve our goals. God makes the results of our service greater than our individual efforts.

3. Our services are initiated and completed by our members.

Part of being an N.A. member is being of service, our program is based on this. When we find a service beyond our individual ability we pool our efforts and our resources. Members, aware of a need beyond their combined ability, establish service boards or committees to fulfill that need. Our service structure, therefore, begins and ends with the member; it is a closed loop. Our members begin the process with an idea of what needs to be done, or could be done to help fulfill our primary purpose. Our service boards and committees are responsible for implementation of the idea, which is finally achieved by members working directly with the addict who still suffers. Without the member there would be no service and no need for service.

### 4. Our service is for the addict who still suffers.

We believe that the N.A. member is the most important part of our service structure. "The therapeutic value of

one addict helping another is without parallel." The N.A. group provides an "Atmosphere of Recovery" where the N.A. message is manifest. All the other elements of our service structure have been created to assist, support, and serve our groups and members in the fulfillment of our primary purpose, and are directly responsible to our groups and members. We believe that the "point of delivery" of our service structure should be as close to the recipient as possible; our service structure was designed to reflect this principle.

### 5. Our Service Structure is only a tool.

Our ninth Tradition tells us that we create service boards or committees; we call these boards and committees, and the way that relate to each other, our "service structure". Its purpose is to do those things for our members and Groups which might compromise their spiritual integrity or distract them from their primary purpose. We try to keep the "recovery" aspects of N.A. separate from the "business" aspects of N.A. The "business" of N.A. begins in the Group and is carried through the rest of our service structure, which is neither separate from nor strictly a part of the Narcotics Anonymous program. Because our service structure is only a tool, it is only as effective as the members who use it and take care of it. A tool does not work by itself, and only has meaning in relationship to the job it is designed to do.

6. The principle of Practical Spirituality is at the heart of our service.

Spirituality is not theoretical; spiritual principles only work for us when we accept them and apply them. Our eleventh Step teaches us to seek knowledge of God's will for us and the power to carry that out. We discriminate between "self-will" and "God's will" by applying this principle. We believe that if it is not practical then it is not spiritual; "self-will" is like swimming upstream and "God's will" is like swimming downstream. When our service efforts encounter significant problems or resistance, they are usually based on "self-will"; when they proceed smoothly and naturally, they are usually "God's will". A loving God is at the center of our service and this God has the power to make all things possible and practical.

7. The resources we need to fulfill our service projects will always be available when the time is right.

# NARCOTICS ANONYMOUS

ROCK RIVER AREA R.R.A.G.S.

We believe that God gives us opportunities when the time is right. If a service project is spiritually correct then the finances, manpower, and emotional support necessary to complete the task will be available. These things have never been a problem for us when the service project we were working on was in keeping with God's will for us as expressed in our group conscience. It is only when we try to make things happen the way we want that we experience failure; when we let them happen in their own way and in their own time, we succeed. Our service is like our recovery; dependent on the same spiritual principles and the same loving God.

8. Our service should be simple and straightforward.

Ongoing recovery is a process of simplification and likewise in our services we should strive for simplicity. "This is a simple program for complicated people." Our natural inclination seems to be to complicate any project, think it to death, get overwhelmed, and give up. If our service efforts are in tune with God's will then they do not need to be complicated. When service is in harmony with God's will it is automatically in tune with reality and there is no need for secrecy, dishonesty, manipulation, or complicated schemes; the spiritual correctness of the service and our willingness to follow through is all that is necessary for success.

9. All service should be open and aboveboard. Communication is inherent in the principle of direct responsibility, open information and full accountability are implicit in our approach to service. Secrecy is part of our disease, when we were active in our addiction it seemed necessary; but in recovery, it is a contradiction to our principles. "In our secrets, lie our sickness." In order to maintain the integrity of our services we openly monitor our motives and inventory our methods. When we maintain our focus on our "primary purpose" and keep our actions consistent with spiritual principles then we have nothing to fear, and nothing to hide from each other.

10. The services we provide within our Service Structure should always be guided by principle. "True spiritual principles are never in conflict" and the spiritual principles embodied in our Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions should be respected and maintained throughout our services. Our Twelve Steps literally apply

## **"Spanish speaking NA members needed!"**

RRAGS PR Subcommittee would like to meet with you to discuss the possibility of forming a Spanish language NA meeting.

**For more information please contact**

**Eric D. (815-997-2335)**

**or Rob K. (815-315-2303)**

to the member seeking recovery, our Twelve Traditions literally apply to our Groups, these Concepts of Service literally apply to our Service Structure, and our Spiritual Tenets literally apply to our relationship with reality. However, the "spirit" of the Steps, Traditions, Concepts of Service, and Spiritual Tenets apply universally. Surrender to, awareness of, and application of spiritual principles are necessary for us to survive, grow, and provide service based on God's will.

11. Selfless service is our ideal.

The disease of addiction is our greatest strength because it brings us together, it also our greatest weakness because it tends to tear us apart. Our disease is one of obsessiveness and compulsivity; it is physical, mental, and spiritual in nature. We recognize that there is a direct relationship between quality of service and personal recovery. We stress the need for each member involved in service to keep their personal recovery (physical, mental, and spiritual) as their first priority. When individuals get distracted by their disease, fail, or fall short in their service we treat them with compassion and love rather than rejection, exclusion, or punitive action. We strive for progress and do not demand perfection of each other.

12. Ultimately, our service projects are in God's hands.

We trust in God. Trust is a key principle for us, and essential in our service efforts. The trust that N.A. members give those who serve is equal to the trust that those who serve have in the Fellowship of Narcotics Anonymous, in spiritual principles, and in God. As individuals, we trust our will and our lives to the care of a loving God. Our Groups trust in a loving God as their ultimate au-

# NARCOTICS ANONYMOUS

## ROCK RIVER AREA R.R.A.G.S.

thority. Likewise, in our Service Structure we trust a loving God as the source and strength of our service. Trusting in God does not relieve us of the responsibility to take appropriate action. God gives us opportunities, we follow through with our effort, and God takes care of the results. All we are, all we have, and all we do is in God's care.

### THE SPIRITUAL TENETS OF NARCOTICS ANONYMOUS

Recovery depends on the awakening and growth of spirituality, and our lives depend on our relationship with what we believe is the source. The Spiritual Tenets express some of our most basic ideas about spirituality in Narcotics Anonymous. They are the foundation upon which our Steps, Traditions, and Concepts of Service are built. They make possible our individual and collective surrender to, and dependence on a loving God of our own understanding. They are the keys to our freedom.

1. There are no "Good days" or "Bad days" there are just days.

In Narcotics Anonymous we live "Just for Today"; we acknowledge, and let go of, our painful pasts and trust the future to the care of a loving God. In recovery, absolutes lose their meaning; we find that all things in life are a mixture of good and bad, of positive and negative. We begin to look at the events and situations in our lives as opportunities or gifts from God; each one is of value and provides a chance for us to learn and grow. We believe that each day we are given a reprieve from our active addiction; and that it is only our attitudes and our actions that limit our recovery.

2. There is a spiritual power greater than any individual.

Personal power has proven to be a complete failure for us, human effort has not been able to cure our addic-

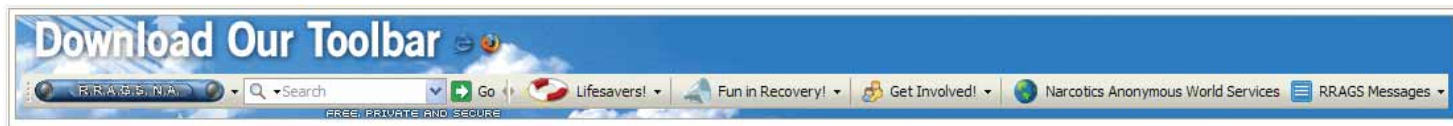
tion or keep us from destroying ourselves, our only hope for salvation seems to lie in a spiritual power. Our Steps are designed to awaken, develop, and maintain a relationship between us and a Higher Power. When we use the term "God" we are referring to a spiritual power that is loving, caring, and greater than ourselves. This power has the ability to care for us, restore us to sanity, and set us free. We also believe that there is a "God of our Fellowship" that we each personalize according to our perceptions and beliefs; it is this God that protects our fellowship, helps it grow, and makes recovery possible for the addict who still suffers.

3. Faith is the key to our new way of life.

In recovery, we come to depend on a power greater than ourselves rather than our own resources. Faith is composed of belief, trust, and acceptance. Belief is the lowest form of faith, it is conceptualization. Trust is the application of belief in our lives, it is action based on what we believe. Acceptance is the highest form of faith, it is instinctive rather than conceptual. In recovery we reach a point where we no longer need to know the "why's" and "wherefore's"; our actions become appropriate without the need for conscious thought. Our instincts change from destructive and misguided to constructive and spiritually correct. Recovery is a natural way of life.

4. Narcotics Anonymous is a spiritual program, not a religion.

Spirituality is the relationship a person has with what they believe in. A religion presents a specific concept of a deity, a specific code of ethics, and a specific method. In N.A. we believe, unconditionally, that all members have a right to their own religious beliefs and concept of a higher power. N.A. is inclusive rather than exclusive. Each of us follows our own path based in spiritual principles; we believe in believing and have faith in faith.



Visit our website [www.rragsna.org](http://www.rragsna.org) and at the bottom of the main page you can download and install the toolbar into your internet explorer or other web browser. It contains links to our website as well as Narcotics Anonymous World Services Website.

# NARCOTICS ANONYMOUS

## ROCK RIVER AREA R.R.A.G.S.

Our fellowship is based on learning how to apply spiritual principles in our daily lives; coming together for mutual support and care; and one addict helping another through sharing, sponsorship and service. Narcotics Anonymous recovery is something that happens within the individual; it is the way we live; we are Narcotics Anonymous.

5. Narcotics Anonymous is based on spiritual principles.

There are basic spiritual truths that are universally correct; they are not dependent on time, place, personality, or circumstance. "Our program is a set of principles, written so simply that we can follow them in our daily lives." There are many spiritual principles expressed in our literature; honesty, open-mindedness, and willingness are the most basic and make change and growth possible for us. The active application of spiritual principles is the basis of recovery from the disease of addiction. "There is one thing more than anything else that will defeat us in our recovery, that is an attitude of indifference or intolerance towards spiritual principles."

6. "True spiritual principles are never in conflict." We believe in a loving God as our ultimate authority and as the source of spiritual principles. By definition, something that is universally correct can not be true sometimes and false at other times. One aspect of God is harmony, and there can be no disharmony or contradiction between principles that are spiritually centered or "God centered". Actions that are spiritually correct can not violate any spiritual principle; when our actions violate any spiritual principles, they are not spiritually correct. We utilize this basic truth as a guide for appropriate action and decision making in Narcotics Anonymous.

7. "What goes around, comes around." This program saying is an expression of the principle of reciprocity and is fundamental in our way of life. Recovery is a reciprocal experience: we get out of it what we put into it, we reap what we sow, people treat us the way we treat them, and the way we live determines the way we live. If we base our lives on dishonesty, disrespect, destructiveness, closed-mindedness, negativity, and selfishness then we will be miserable; if, on the other hand, we base our lives on honesty, respect, caring, willingness, open-mindedness, positive action, constructive

**Did you know that all Area Trusted Servants including Group GSRs have a RRAGS e-mail address? Find them at:  
[www.rragdna.org/trustedservants.html](http://www.rragdna.org/trustedservants.html)**

effort, and love then we will be happy and at peace. A life based on the active application of spiritual principles is its own reward; we become part of the solution rather than part of the problem.

8. Recovery is a spiritual journey. "We claim spiritual progress rather than spiritual perfection." The purpose of our way of life is recovery from the disease of addiction. In order to achieve this we must grow spiritually. We often say "Work the Steps", by this we mean live the N.A. way; approach life by utilizing a set of directions based on spiritual principles. We change the way we live by following a new set of instructions, we do not change the instructions to fit the way we want to behave. We believe that we never fully complete the steps and that "Living the Program" means we apply the principles of recovery to every area of our lives on an ongoing basis.

9. Recovery is based on Divine Intervention. When we share our experience, most of us relate a series of unplanned events that led us to find recovery in the Fellowship of Narcotics Anonymous. We believe that these events did not happen by chance; but rather that they represent evidence of a loving God intervening in our lives. If we live by spiritual principles we are always given what we need and never given more than we can handle. This happens with such consistency that, in time, most of us find it had to deny the presence of a Higher Power working in our lives, and in the lives of other N.A. Members. As our ability to depend on God increases, God's presence in our lives increases. The degree to which we surrender our will and our life to the care of a loving God is equal to the extent to which we are freed of our disease and our self-destruction.

10. God works through people: "I can't, we can". We call Narcotics Anonymous a "we" program, and believe that if we are left to our own devices we will continue to destroy ourselves. According to our literature,

addiction is progressive, incurable, and fatal. We are powerless over our addiction; we cannot recover simply by our own power of will, we need each other. "An addict alone is in bad company" and isolation is a symptom of our disease; only by mutual support and interdependence do we recover. God works through each one of us once we surrender. We find we are given words beyond our understanding and talents beyond our ability. We express our trust in God by depending on each other; and by caring for each other we are offering ourselves as an extension of God's grace and love. "One addict can best understand and help another addict."

11.Recovery is a series of surrenders.

"Surrender means that we do not have to fight anymore." The internal battles that have raged within us for many years are set aside in our recovery. We are free to become who we are and no longer have to live in contradiction to our inner nature. We begin to recover by letting go of the contradiction between the reality of our addiction and the illusion that we are in control of our using and our lives. Surrender is inherent in each of our Steps; and each time we consciously work a Step we make another surrender. Each time we surrender it goes a little deeper and the burden is lightened a little bit; ongoing spiritual growth implies an ongoing series of surrenders and the search for a better relationship with God.

12.The promise of recovery is freedom.

In Narcotics Anonymous we are given a choice and a chance to be free of active addiction and the limitations of self-obsession, self-hate, and self-destruction. We often talk about a choice, but sometimes forget that there is more than one choice. When we deny an addict the right to reject our way of life, then we also deny them the opportunity to choose our way of life and have a chance to recover. Recovery and freedom are not automatic; they are contingent on our choice, our commitment, our courage, our willingness, and our ability to apply spiritual principles in our daily lives. We never have to use again against our will; we can be free.

Thank You for My Life!

*Submitted by Dave E. RRAGS Area*

## THE RECOVERY PUZZLE

Z Z B O R O S L P K S G A T E  
 F L E S N I F E I L E B Y M S  
 Z N R E P O H G U V K T O N L  
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HOPE  
 FUTURE GOALS  
 EMOTIONAL HEALTH  
 DESIRE  
 BELIEF

RENEWED  
 DREAMS  
 STABILITY  
 BELIEF IN SELF  
 SATISFACTION

## WE NEED HELP!

This newsletter cannot stay alive without your support. We need articles submitted by YOU. Ever want to voice you pleasure or displeasure with an issue related to recovery?

**This can be your forum.**

However, no one seems to want to make a submission, if this continues then there would appear to be no need to continue this newsletter.

Please see the website for submissions.

# RRAGS Area Events through July 2009

Friday, August 7, 2009  
7:30-8:30 pm  
Speaker Meeting  
90 in 90  
7914 Scott Lane – Mach. Park

Friday, August 7, 2009  
9:30-11:45 pm  
Game Night  
West Side Family  
326 College Ave - Rockford

Saturday, August 8, 2009  
6:00-Midnight  
Speaker – Dance  
RRCNA-19  
1210 11<sup>th</sup> St. - Rockford

Friday, August 14, 2009  
9:30-11:45 pm  
Game Night  
West Side Family  
326 College Ave - Rockford

Saturday, August 15, 2009  
Noon – 1:00 pm  
RRAGS H&I / PR  
Freedom to Grow  
4430 Manchester Drive - Rockford

Sunday, August 16, 2009  
6:00-7:00 pm  
Speaker Meeting  
West Side Family  
326 College Ave - Rockford

Sunday, August 16, 2009  
6:00-7:00 pm  
Speaker Meeting  
New You  
565 Turner Ave - Freeport

Sunday, August 16, 2009  
8:00-9:00 pm  
Lead-in Speaker Meeting  
The Group  
3223 N. Main – Rockford

Thur. 8-20-09 – Sun. 8-23-09  
World Convention WCNA – 33  
Barcelona, Spain

Friday, August 21, 2009  
9:30-11:45 pm  
Game Night  
West Side Family  
326 College Ave - Rockford

Sunday, August 23, 2009  
5:00-6:00 pm  
Speaker Meeting  
Reality Check  
11b East 3<sup>rd</sup> St. – Sterling, IL

Tuesday, August 25, 2009  
6:00-7:00 pm  
Speaker Meeting  
Freedom to Grow  
4430 Manchester Drive - Rockford

Wednesday, August 26, 2009  
Noon-1:00 pm  
Speaker Meeting  
Freedom to Grow  
4430 Manchester Drive - Rockford

Friday, August 28, 2009  
7:00-8:00 pm  
Speaker Meeting  
Home Group  
511 Public Ave – Beloit

Friday, August 28, 2009  
9:30-11:45 pm  
Game Night  
West Side Family  
326 College Ave - Rockford

Saturday, August 29, 2009  
1:00 – 6:30 pm  
Cookout & Speaker Meeting  
The Group  
3223 N. Main – Rockford

Friday, September 4, 2009  
7:30-8:30 pm  
Speaker Meeting  
90 in 90  
7914 Scott Lane – Mach. Park

Friday, September 4, 2009  
9:30-11:45 pm  
Game Night  
West Side Family  
326 College Ave - Rockford

Sunday, September 6, 2009  
6:00-7:00 pm  
Speaker Meeting  
West Side Family  
326 College Ave - Rockford

Sunday, September 6, 2009  
8:00-9:00 pm  
Lead-in Speaker Meeting  
The Group  
3223 N. Main – Rockford

# RRAGS Area Events through July 2009

Friday, September 11, 2009  
9:30-11:45 pm  
Game Night  
West Side Family  
326 College Ave - Rockford

Friday, September 18, 2009  
9:30-11:45 pm  
Game Night  
West Side Family  
326 College Ave - Rockford

Saturday, September 19, 2009  
Noon - 1:00 pm  
RRAGS H&I / PR  
Freedom to Grow  
4430 Manchester Drive - Rockford

Sunday, September 20, 2009  
6:00-7:00 pm  
Speaker Meeting  
West Side Family  
326 College Ave - Rockford

Sunday, September 20, 2009  
6:00-7:00 pm  
Speaker Meeting  
New You  
565 Turner Ave - Freeport

Sunday, September 20, 2009  
8:00-9:00 pm  
Lead-in Speaker Meeting  
The Group  
3223 N. Main - Rockford

Tuesday, September 22, 2009  
6:00-7:00 pm  
Speaker Meeting  
Freedom to Grow  
4430 Manchester Drive - Rockford

Wednesday, September 23, 2009  
Noon-1:00 pm  
Speaker Meeting  
Freedom to Grow  
4430 Manchester Drive - Rockford

Friday, September 25, 2009  
7:00-8:00 pm  
Speaker Meeting  
Home Group  
511 Public Ave - Beloit

Friday, September 25, 2009  
9:30-11:45 pm  
Game Night  
West Side Family  
326 College Ave - Rockford

Saturday, September 26, 2009  
1:00 - 6:30 pm  
Cookout & Speaker Meeting  
The Group  
3223 N. Main - Rockford

Sunday, September 27, 2009  
5:00-6:00 pm  
Speaker Meeting  
Reality Check  
11b East 3<sup>rd</sup> St. - Sterling, IL

**This Space is Waiting  
for Your Home Groups  
Announcement!**

## THE RECOVERY PUZZLE SOLUTION

Z Z B O R O S L P K S G A T E  
F L E S N I F E I L E B Y M S  
Z N R E P O H G U V K T O N I  
Y W O C C J J Q T W I T Q N A  
H A Z I N Q I M U L I Q A N O  
X W Q A T M Y H I O N R O A G  
X I Q D U C A B N Q I D Q F E  
N V Z F J T A A D B W T T F R  
C L N F D T L F D E J V K S U  
R E Y T S H W R S I S C X P T  
D R E N E W E D D I U I N A U  
Q C K A H A I O O E T E R T F  
J E L O M D O N V F O A Y E W  
Q T B S A G B K G U A Y S P D  
H Y M I D P U Y V F E N O Z C

View this calendar along  
with the flyers for each  
event on the website!

[www.calendar.ragsna.org](http://www.calendar.ragsna.org)

### N. A. WORLD NEWS...

#### CONFERENCE PROJECT UPDATES LIVING CLEAN

The Living Clean Workgroup met 19–21 February 2009. The group focused on reviewing the drafts of Chapters One and Two and engaged in a discussion that will form the base for Chapter Three. Work is continuing with the drafting of the text.

The best time to affect the development of literature is in the early stages; this has contributed to us trying new and innovative methods of gathering input. The latest innovation is in the form of a discussion board that is PUBLIC and is open to all members of the fellowship. We sent out an e-blast inviting people to join the discussion board where they can participate in the development of new NA literature. This discussion board is open to any NA member; upon registering, you choose a screen name and also have the option to hide your email address. The link is: <http://naws.org/lc/index.php>. The discussion board is divided up by chapter and the topic outline is posted there for easy reference. Members are sharing their experience in living clean regarding the topics covered on the outline and some other topics, as well. This is a wonderful reservoir of source material that is aiding in the development of the book.

There are over 500 responses to the online survey at the current time. The survey can be found here: [http://www.na.org/?ID=Living\\_Clean\\_Project](http://www.na.org/?ID=Living_Clean_Project). We are grateful to those members who have shared their responses with us, as this has moved us closer to the goals of this recovery literature. For members who want to participate through survey responses, please complete your survey by 15 July 2009. We will be discontinuing the survey mid-

July and be offering the discussion boards as a forum for responses.

At the April board meeting, we were able to complete the review and input drafts of the working outline, Chapter One and Chapter Two. That review and input material is included with this mailing and can also be accessed online from the links on the main project page: [http://www.na.org/?ID=Living\\_Clean\\_Project](http://www.na.org/?ID=Living_Clean_Project). We are open to new ideas for these drafts and the outline. We probably did not capture every recovery life situation. Please share your ideas with us.

*NAWS NEWS*

*VOLUME EIGHT - ISSUE FOUR - APRIL 2009*

### NA LAUGHABLES...

