

WEST VALLEY NA MESSENGER

The "No Matter What" Edition

August 2020

An Announcement About the *West Valley NA Messenger*

This will be the last edition of the *West Valley NA Messenger*. Starting in September, the tri-city areas, Phoenix, East Valley and West Valley, will team up to write a newsletter that covers the entire valley. We'll be able to make more announcements and it will be a bit longer to include anniversaries and other items of interest.

We feel this is a better use of our service resources. I've enjoyed this commitment and will continue to be involved; however, there will be a new editor and a new look.

You can still contribute and view the new editions on the NA regional website. To those of you who wrote, read and supported this endeavor, thank you! It's been a blast, like all my service in NA. Watch the regional website for the new publication in August or September.

Yours in service, Nancy G.

The Twelve Steps of NA

Step Eight: We made a list of all persons we had harmed and became willing to make amends to them all.

According to the "Green and Gold," steps six and seven afford us the opportunity to free ourselves from our defects of character; then Step Eight puts us in a position to free those around us from our reckless disregard for others. We do this by making a list of people we have harmed and become willing to take responsibility for our harmful words and actions. For me, it is my mainly words that have decimated my relationships and sometimes the self-esteem of people in my life.

Of course, judging the faults of others doesn't make me a better person; I become a better person by admitting that I've harmed others and taking steps to clean up my mess. For example, there was the time I took the inventory of a former classmate, Rob, then published this inventory for everyone to know.

You see, Rob made the mistake of publicly saying something mean and racially insensitive to a friend of mine. Instead of practicing spiritual principles of forgiveness and compassion that I learned in recovery, I practiced my former version of the spiritual principle of honesty a.k.a. my truth about Rob. I decided I would avenge my friend by telling him, and everyone else from Arizona to Virginia Beach, that he was a lesser person because, at 44, he was still living with his parents in his childhood bedroom; he had no job, no spouse, no family, and only a computer keyboard for enrichment. I may have attacked his manhood with a word that begins with "I". According to The Book of Ann, Rob was a racist loser, and everyone needed to know it.

Later that night, still fuming, I called my brother William and said something like, "What is wrong with this loser? Who is he to make racially insensitive comments to my friend, even calling her a 'Beaner'; I mean, she is a doctoral candidate who runs a program to support first-generation college students."

I further explained to William that she is making something of her life while Rob, according to *The Book of Ann*, is wasting his life in his childhood bedroom taking cheap shots as a Keyboard Cowboy and an ass.

My brother took a minute then a breath and said, "Don't you remember, Ann? He's the guy who dove in Lake Joyce senior year and broke his neck. He's been paralyzed from his neck down ever since."

.....radio silence.....head down slowly lowering to my chin.....exhaling in defeat....I was caught in that moment just after "I gotcha!"... and just before "omg, what have I done?"

OMG, who was the loser now? I was the Keyboard Cowgirl in Scottsdale, Arizona, who had just explained in great detail what a judgmental asshole that I thought this guy behind the keyboard was in Virginia Beach, VA, really. Except, I was the ass.

Fortunately, I have a program that whispers in my head "Do the next right thing." This put me on the phone with a friend, explaining my latest faux pas. I hear my friend say, "I can't wait until you call to tell me how your amends went." Click.

Amends? Yes, amends. Take responsibility for my behavior and do something different. Change my words and actions. Amends does *not* mean “apology.” We don’t apologize to the Constitution; we *change* the Constitution when The People decide that something can be improved.

But...wait! Wasn’t Rob the one who owes an amends? I mean, he was the jerk who called my friend a racist name. His behavior was mean and racist! Wasn’t it? Of course, but I’m not on a journey to change Rob. I am not concerned with what Rob has done; I’m concerned with accepting responsibility for Ann’s behavior and making the necessary changes.

At this point, I can’t change the fact that I publicly humiliated a man who is confined by his physical limitations and the mental limitations of his belief system. I can, however, *free us both* by repairing the damage I just caused him and by changing the way I behave when faced with negative stereotypes in the future.

By removing my “Victim” name tag and becoming willing to make amends to Rob, I freed myself from self-obsession and stepped back on the path toward that spiritual life I seek.

Ann B.

Guiding Principles

The Spirit of Our Traditions

Tradition Eight: Narcotics Anonymous should remain forever nonprofessional, but our service centers may employ special workers.

Recovering addicts built Narcotics Anonymous, addicts who were willing to dedicate their lives to the belief that this organization works. We hope to offer a new way of life in Narcotics Anonymous that we have experienced firsthand. It was on the backs of these grateful addicts that our organization has blossomed and now touches the lives of addicts worldwide.

It is not the promise of money and fame that draws people to being of service – it is love, empathy, and gratitude that brings our members together. That is why the 8th tradition states, “Narcotics Anonymous should remain forever nonprofessional...”. As addicts, we know that it is not the money or titles that keep this organization running. To make things professional is to blur the message.

Without money influencing Narcotics Anonymous, we can remain pure, and addicts can continue to hear our untainted message. We chair meetings, share,

sponsor, and work on committees as volunteers because we believe in the message of Narcotics Anonymous. We offer ourselves to the service of NA because we have been given a second chance at life, and we want to share this gift with others.

Stephanie B.

The 12 Concepts for NA Service

Eighth Concept: Our service structure depends on the integrity and effectiveness of our communications.

“Our service structure depends on the integrity and effectiveness of our communications.” **Yes!** This cannot be stated with enough emphasis. When I read this concept in our literature, I had an immediate and visceral response. Every part of me wanted to shout my discovery to the world. We all know as addicts that sharing and talking to other members has kept us clean. I know if I try to close the door to other addicts by not communicating, then I find myself back in the chaos of my addiction.

It is our duty as members of the service body to openly talk to all addicts. We spread the word and get our message out there. We do not carry the message by keeping our mouths shut; we tell other addicts about our personal struggles and about how they, too, can help themselves and the next newcomer by being of service. It is not alone that I am able to stay clean today; it is because someone told me how to get there.

To communicate with integrity, we do not gossip or speak from our personal agenda. No! We communicate with honesty, through a group conscious, and with respect for all members of NA. This is the message of recovery that we hope to share with other addicts, especially the newcomers. It is together, not alone in our addictions, that we have survived, and we did this by sharing our life of recovery with other addicts.

Effective communication means that we communicate with other service bodies consistently and accurately. When I commit to service, I am not just committing to that one service role. I am committing to NA as a whole and ensure that I take the responsibilities of my position seriously and share what I have learned with from other members with other NA members. When I am of service, I do not sit alone in those efforts, but work to continue the unity of this program and communicate openly with other addicts.

Stephanie B.

I know that if I stay isolated and shut out other addicts, I am letting addiction creep back into my life. Gratefully, today I know how to fight against my addiction. All I must do is openly share my world with other addicts and I get to stay clean another day.

Stephanie B.

Want to be of service?

Are you interested in sponsoring and working the 12 steps of NA with an incarcerated inmate? if so Sponsorship behind the walls could use your help. There is a two-year clean time requirement, must have worked the steps of NA with an NA sponsor, and be willing to carry a clear NA message.

If you are interested, please email HI@arizona-na.org. Regional H&I meets the third Sunday of every odd month at 10am before region. Inmates need to receive the lifesaving message of Narcotics Anonymous, too! You can help, whether you've ever done time or not.

Clean-Time Chronicles

"I am living the good life"

When I arrived in the rooms, I didn't trust anyone or anything, and had been incarcerated for 23 years with a life sentence and spent my days in a small locked room with no hope for change. I started going to NA meetings in prison and had 13 years clean behind the walls before I was released after 23 parole hearings. I never thought it could happen to me as I went to prison four days before my 21st birthday and was released at 44 years of age. After receiving a full pardon, I was beginning life over again.

Using was over and I was done, but I sure didn't believe in God or anything else. I needed to find something to believe in. When I met my first sponsor, we started to do sweat lodges, and I began to go to meetings every day. This man Jeffery was a full blooded Indian and he knew me...I started to feel comfortable in NA.

When I was released from prison, my first meeting was on 15th Ave and Maryland and I met Kelly who

would become my wife, Jim C, Cathy and Mary. I continue daily meetings, one day at a time, even amidst the current COVID crisis. It's just a part of my day now. With my support group and a sponsor, I found something to believe in. I have learned to talk before and after the meeting; but to listen, really listen, during the meeting.

My best memory was going to Hip, Slick and Kool when it was on 3rd Street and Roosevelt. The first person I saw was a long-haired kid who was sitting there, I just looked at him and knew I was in the right place. Chris L. is still my friend to this day, and we meet every week for a meeting, movie, and dinner. We go to concerts, conventions, and travel on road trips and I feel like I am living the good life.

When my first sponsor died, I chose Jason my current sponsor, because he was good with his family and kids. By this time, I had a son and family of my own and I didn't know how to be a good Dad. He is still my sponsor today even though he lives in Colorado and my son is 21 and has his own life.

The *Living Clean* book, Chapter Three, Spirituality in Action says, "When we engage in selfless service, we find that all of the principles we have come to love and learn are called upon. It isn't easy to get out of our own way, but that is precisely what frees us from our self-made prisons."

I find that there are many levels of service and I have found my niche. Over the years lending support to my home group in a variety of ways has been very meaningful. I continue to participate in the Sedona Campout service structure and have for over 18 years. Going to Mexico to the convention and to donate literature are just a few examples of the ways to serve.

In closing I wanted to talk about something I noticed, and it concerns me. I have been able to attend meetings in person, but many people can't. During this time of change, I wondered if the donations that we normally toss into the basket are not making it to our area, region and world. Did you know that there are links to donate on-line?

Check your area, and home group, and the following links are for online donation for our region and NA world.

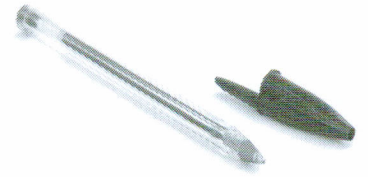
Arizona Website: arizona-na.org

and World NA website: na.org

Lenley T.

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Sponsorship
Behind The Walls
“How It Works”



Trust the process



Narcotics Anonymous

Sponsorship in Arizona for inmates is 100% voluntary and can begin with just a letter of willingness to participate. Once your message of interest has been received, your initial projects to be completed will be sent to you. After completion, a sponsor is then assigned to work with you as long as the communication remains open. Your sponsor will send you an initial welcome letter letting you know who they are and how to further reach them with “Step Work” and other correspondence. This method of sponsorship is useful for those who are serving time longer than six months from their release date.

Arizona Region Narcotics Anonymous—H&I

PO Box 1351

Phoenix AZ. 85001

While you wait to hear from us, search out your unit for existing NA Meetings and begin attending.

In the meantime, let us welcome you to

Narcotics Anonymous

Arizona Sponsorship Behind The Walls