

# WEST VALLEY NA MESSENGER

The “No Matter What” Edition

March 2020

## Groups in Need of Support

**Room to Grow** 255 N Litchfield Road. Goodyear, Vineyard Church **Monday 7pm**

**Change of Life** 4645 W. Bell Rd., Glendale, Mission Bell UMC, **Thursday, 7 – 8:30, women’s-oriented meeting**

**Solutions** 10485 S Estella Pkwy. Goodyear, Estrella Mt. Church **Wednesday 7pm**

**La Connecta** 3948 W Thomas. Phoenix, W. Thomas Baptist Church **Monday and Thursday 7pm**

**Miracles in Action (MIA)** 7702 N 35<sup>th</sup> Ave. Rm 7. Phoenix, Bethany Presb. Church **Sunday 4pm**

**Journey thru Recovery** 9059 W Lake Pleasant Pkwy. (behind CVS) Peoria, **Thursday 7pm**

**Addicts in Recovery (AIR)** Alleluia Lutheran Church 8444 W Encanto Rd. Phoenix, 85037 **Wed & Sunday 8:00pm**

**The Journey Begins** 2517 N 107<sup>th</sup> Ave First Baptist Church, Avondale **Mon 7 - 8pm**

**Sanity is Possible** 12313 Northwest Grand Avenue, El Mirage **Sunday, Thursday and Saturday at 7 pm**

**We Do Recover**, 8801 N. 43<sup>rd</sup> Ave., Phoenix, **Monday thru Friday 7:00 p.m.**

**Regardless of ...** 3546 E. Thomas Rd. to left of the church, Mt of Olives Church, format changes (and looking for a member to host another meeting) **Friday at 7:30 pm**

## General Announcement

With the COVID-19 issue and the state of emergency in the US, we do not at this time know what’s going to go forward and what will not. The responsible thing to do is act responsibility.

Watch the NA Arizona Narcotics Anonymous Facebook page and the regional website for updates about committee meetings and other events. Online meetings are available, and each home group will decide what to do moving forward. The regional PR committee is obtaining a Zoom account so we can’t facilitate online meetings. Stay tuned to the regional website for info.

We are a tough, resilient bunch as is our country. We’ll all be fine.

## The Twelve Steps of NA

**Step Three: “We made a decision to turn our will and our lives over to the care of God as we understood him.”**

When no one volunteers to author a specific article, the universe seems to fill in the blank. When it came to this month’s Step Three, I attended a meeting in Glendale recently where Step Three was the topic. Here are great snippets I heard from members as they shared their experience with this often-difficult step.

“I keep asking God to give me a sign when I’m standing on it!”

“Just give up. That’s Step Three.”

“As we stay clean, we learn different forms of surrender.”

“The God of my understanding knows better what I need than I do.”

“It’s not ‘I turned my will and my life over and it’s a constant’. It’s ‘Guide my thoughts; guard my words.’”

“It’s having not to fix it or control it.”

“It all started with willingness. If not for willingness, I wouldn’t have pushed through the uncomfortable feelings to get there.”

“Is fear lack of faith? I can be fearful but know that, no matter what happens, I’m going to be alright. To me, fear is fear and faith is faith. I can hold both feelings, to some extent, at the same time.”

“At first, Step Three was just about the group. God puts people in my life to tell me what I need to learn. People give me the faith to turn it over.”

“Sometimes I wonder, ‘Why is God not intervening here?’ Getting out of the way and letting [that person]

feel the consequences of his actions” is Step Three to me.”

“I found a religion, but I didn’t find a Higher Power. My sponsor asked me, ‘How would you pray in a way that made you feel fulfilled?’”

And, of course, this line from Step Three in our *Basic Text*: “The proof of this step is shown in the way we live.”

## Fellowship Event – NOTE EARLIER TIME

*West Valley Speaker Meeting/Event  
April 14, 2020*

*5:30 Speaker meeting with food to follow  
3104 W. Glendale Avenue, Phoenix*

*For more info on events in the Valley  
<http://www.arizona-na.org> calendar*

*Depending on the COVID-19 situation at that time, this event and other may cancel. Check before you go!*

## Guiding Principles The Spirit of Our Traditions

**Tradition Three: The only requirement for membership is a desire to stop using.**

Tradition Three is extremely important to me. When I first came to the rooms, I wanted to stop what I was doing. I was exhausted and just wanted to find a way off the chaotic merry-go-round I was trapped on. I entered the room in complete despair, not able to stop my tears while I sat in my seat. I knew that my life had fallen into complete disrepair, but I still had not yet fully surrendered to the idea that I was an addict. I spoke the words easily, “Stephanie, addict”, but something inside kept telling me that I could manage my life as long as I didn’t use the socially unacceptable drug.

I was convinced that I just had to stop using meth, but I was not quite ready to take the suggestions of our literature, my sponsor and the “winners.” So, I put down the pipe, but continued the alcohol, men and weed. I was not yet ready to surrender. Despite my stubbornness, no one turned me away. NA members always welcomed me with open arms, even though I was not doing exactly what was expected of me. I was still high, in a way, every single day I went to a meeting, believing I could

handle it in my own way. I knew I had to make a change, but at that time I was not yet ready to surrender.

Gratefully, my seat was always there for me, even though I was not yet ready to surrender. I obviously felt “a desire to stop using,” but I was not fully invested in my recovery. I’d go to meetings and leave to dive “controllably” (hah!) into one of my addictions, thinking it was no big deal. It was obvious my spirit was not yet ready to hear the words, but intellectually I grasped the meaning behind everything. Then one day I had a nasty relapse. While using, I even called my friend to tell her that I did not want to do what I was doing, but I was going to do it despite the possible harm I could inflict on others and the harm I was causing myself. It was in that moment that I felt the words of the program in my spirit. I was completely powerless, and my stubborn “I’m smarter than that” attitude washed away, revealing the harsh truth. I needed help.

After this relapse, I immediately started writing my first step, as my sponsor had suggested. It was only because the rooms had welcomed me despite my inauthenticity and stubbornness. It was obvious I wanted to find a way out of my circumstance, but in the beginning, I refused to surrender. Today, I now say “Stephanie, addict” from the core of my being. It took time, but now I completely identify as an addict. Without this tradition, I might have been turned away before my miracle happened.

Stephanie B.

## Committee Announcements

### Activities Subcommittee

Needs a Treasurer and your support. Only one day clean to get involved in the Activities Subcommittee. If your home group or committee would like to sponsor the monthly speaker meeting and dance, please contact the Activities chair. Contact Alva, Activities Chair.

### H&I Subcommittee

Have a few new facilities that *need volunteers*, six months clean requirement. If interested attend H&I meeting the 3<sup>rd</sup> Saturday of the month at 8:30am before Area meeting. For information, attend the meeting or contact Mary Lou, H&I Chair.

### Outreach Subcommittee – The Outreach

Subcommittee attends meetings that need support. It serves as the “outstretched hand of an established NA community to isolated groups and addicts....” (From A Guide to Local Services in NA.) We currently have no chair for this position. Interested? Attend the ASC

meeting. It's a great way to get out to groups you don't normally attend.

### **Public Relations Subcommittee**

We are always looking for members who can help with phone outreach to facilities, give presentations to various organizations and help us carry the message to the professional community. We especially need people available during the day for an occasional speaking engagement with a social service or other community organization. We'll train you!

We really need those who are retired or who have flexible hours since we often speak to groups or offer daytime presentations. Join us at the PR meeting in your area.

## **The Concepts for NA Service**

**Third Concept: "The NA groups delegate to the service structure the authority necessary to fulfill the responsibilities assigned to it."**

The NA groups maintain final responsibility and authority for the service structure they have created. Yet if they must involve themselves directly in making decisions for all of our service boards and committees, the groups will have little time or energy left to carry the recovery message in their meetings. For this reason, the groups entrust the service structure with the authority to make necessary decisions in carrying out the tasks assigned to it.

The delegation of authority can do much to free up both our groups and our services. Service decisions not directly affecting the groups can be made expeditiously; our phonelines, H&I panels, public information efforts, and literature development projects can move forward at full speed to serve NA's primary purpose. And our groups, not required to ratify every decision made on their behalf at every level of service, are freed to devote their full attention to carrying the NA message in their meetings.

We often use motions and guidelines to help us apply the Third Concept. We clearly describe each task we want accomplished, and the kind of authority we are delegating to those who will fulfill the task. However, even the most exhaustive set of guidelines cannot account for every eventuality. Our trusted servants will serve us best when we grant them the freedom to exercise their best judgment in fulfilling the responsibilities we've assigned them. Our services must remain directly accountable to those they serve, yet they

must also be given a reasonable degree of discretion in fulfilling their duties. A group, service board, or committee should consult its collective conscience in arriving at its own understanding of the best way to apply this concept.

Sometimes we fear that delegation will mean a loss of control over our services. Together, Concepts One, Two, and Three have been designed to help us maintain responsibility for our service structure without tying our trusted servants' hands. The Third Concept encourages our groups to focus on their own responsibilities, while assuring that the service structure is given the authority it needs to fulfill other necessary NA services. Our Twelve Concepts do not ask our groups to abdicate their authority, allowing the service structure to do whatever it pleases. The groups, after all, have established the service structure to act on their behalf, at their direction. And when the groups need to exercise final authority in service matters, they are encouraged to do so. However, in day-to-day matters, the groups have given our service boards and committees the practical authority necessary to do the jobs assigned them.

Delegating authority can be a risky business unless we do so responsibly. To make Concept Three work, other concepts must also be applied consistently. Most importantly, we must give careful attention to the selection of trustworthy trusted servants. We cannot responsibly delegate authority either to those who are fundamentally incapable of administering that authority or to those who are not willing to account fully for their actions. However, if we select our leaders carefully, choosing those who can be trusted to responsibly exercise delegated authority in fulfilling the tasks we've given them, we can feel much more comfortable with the concept of delegation.

When we give our trusted servants a job, we must adequately describe to them the job we want done, and we must provide them with the support they need to complete their job. Then, once we've given them instructions and support, we must delegate to them the authority necessary to make decisions related to the task they've been assigned. When our groups delegate sufficient authority to our service structure, our groups need not be overcome with the demands of making every service decision at every level of service, and our fellowship's primary purpose can be served to the fullest. With the Third Concept squarely in place, our groups are free to conduct recovery meetings and carry the NA message directly to the addict who still suffers, confident that the service structure they have created has the authority it needs to make the decisions involved in fulfilling its responsibilities. – *Twelve Concepts for Service*

**Want to be of service? The Helpline is a simple way of one addict helping another. Call the Helpline and join today!  
602.325.4702**

## **Outreach Committee Reboots With New Chairperson**

The West Valley has been without an outreach chair for several months. Outreach is a very important part of helping our groups survive and thrive. What does an outreach committee do? The Outreach Committee's purpose is to assist groups in registering their groups with NAWS. Committee members support area groups that may be struggling or that may not be attending the Area Service Committee (ASC) meetings for a variety of reasons. If a group loses its facility, the Outreach Committee Chair can assist that group in finding a new location. In short, any time a group struggles, the Outreach Committee can help the group in any way it can.

According to our West Valley Area Guidelines, the Outreach Committee is also responsible for organizing Trusted Servants' Learning Days. These are a chance for our members to learn more about service opportunities. Matt C. has stepped up to lead the newly reorganized committee and is looking for members who are willing to help in the following ways.

- Matt will create an email blast announcing where the committee will meet, and which meetings Outreach will visit. You do not have to attend the Outreach Committee meeting to help support meetings that may be struggling.
- Matt will recruit speakers willing to share at smaller meetings who might benefit from hearing from others. Remember, we don't know how great a meeting is until we attend it.
- Encourage meetings to appoint a General Service Representative to attend Area if the group has not been attending. Our area offer mentors who can assist new or returning GSRs who may have questions when they attend an ASC meeting.

If you're interested in this attending a meeting that may need support or just want to help, contact Matt C.

## **Clean-Time Chronicles**

**tattoo: The act or practice of marking the skin with indelible patterns, pictures, legends**

The Calvary meeting was on Tuesday night in 1983 when Tom made his entry for the first time into Narcotics Anonymous. He said he felt "conflicted" and left until 1985. On January 13, 1986, he got clean.

Our literature tells us: "Each time we surrender, we find once more that the desperation that drives us to our knees fuels the passion that carries us forward. When hope manifests into reality, our lives change. Our experience affirms what we believe, and belief grows into faith. When our faith grows into knowledge, the program that we once struggled to practice has become part of who we are. We find here what we were looking for all along: connection to others, connection to a Higher Power, connection to the world around us – and, most surprising of all, connection to ourselves." *Living Clean*

Although the *Basic Text* was in print in 1986, and there were 7,642 meetings in the US, recovery in Phoenix was in its infant stages. The fellowship was small and most everyone knew everyone else. Tom became friends with Mike U., who gave him the name, Tattoo Tom. We never called him anything else.

Narcotics Anonymous suggests the use of a sponsor and Tom asked Red, a "long time" member, to sponsor him. This was in part "...to have one... so I could say I had one, and it was in name only," he told us. He did make the connection with a sponsor later who was, "very mellow and would listen and hear you." Greg Boyle says, "Compassion is not a relationship between the healer and the wounded. It's a covenant between equals. Compassion is always, at its most authentic, about a shift from the cramped world of self-preoccupation into a more expansive place of fellowship, of true kinship."

The above quote described their sponsor relationship at its most basic level, including the many visits while he was working as a long-haul trucker from Canada to Mexico and many places in between.

In closing, your presence stamped an indelible mark upon our fellowship, and certainly all of us. We will sorely miss you.

