



THE NA TIMES

Phoenix – West Valley – East Valley

March 2024

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

There is a solution : Entering my first Narcotics Anonymous meeting, I was a broken person. I was crying for help and I was willing to do whatever it took to alleviate the pain of addiction I was suffering from. I knew I was in the right place after sharing my desperation to the group of NA. They instantly welcomed me and offered help and hope. (I even got a terrific sponsor that day.)

Then came Step 3. Even though that first encounter of the NA meeting helped me stop my addictive habit, later I found myself negotiating back and forth with my decision to completely hand over my will and life to a Higher Power. Sometimes I took it back because I can control it – right? I realize this is a lifelong process to keep my HP in the forefront of my recovery. It’s too easy to go back into my old way of thinking that I don’t need help.

However, turning my will and life over to the care of a Higher Power of my understanding has been and continues to be an everyday occurrence since that first meeting and completion of Steps 1 & 2. How wonderful to get free help from so many sources; God as I understand Him, a sponsor who is available day or night, weekday or weekend, the readings such as the **Basic Text, Living Clean, It Works How and Why**, doing the 12 steps, and the NA meetings. All this help makes it easier and inexcusable not to turn over my will and my life. What more could I ask for?

As stated in *It Works How and Why* (page 32), “recovery benefits when we practice the principle of surrender, to the best of our ability in *all* areas of our lives.” There was an initial surrender when I first did the third step, but then it grew into a daily surrender that becomes more a part of my life. How easy it should be to be relieved of that burden on myself and yet how hard it can be if I am selfish and proud and unwilling to do so. It just makes logical sense to me that there is a third step in the right order of the 12 steps. Prior to NA, I tried to control my addiction on my own and failed miserably. It’s not a decision to take lightly, but it’s the right decision for me.

How easy it should be to simply “Take my will and my life. Guide me in my recovery. Show me how to live.” *Basic Text* (page 26). To be relieved of that burden on ourselves and yet, how hard it can be if we are selfish and proud and unwilling to do so. I am so glad I was willing to hand over my life and my will. What a difference from my first Narcotics Anonymous meeting of desperation and tears of confusion to current gratitude for the solution and tears of joy.

Kathy M.

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, 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
(continued pg.2)

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

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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

Tradition Three: *“The only requirement for membership is a desire to stop using.”* (Continued from pg.1

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, and if this tradition had not existed, I might have been turned away before my miracle happened.

Stephanie B.

The welcoming atmosphere of NA flourishes when we observe our Third Tradition. Our book *It Works: How and Why* tells us in the Third Tradition: "Any addict who walks into a meeting, even a using addict, displays a level of willingness that cannot be discounted." How welcoming are you and your group to the newcomer?

Addiction does not discriminate, nor should we when a newcomer comes in the door, even if he or she is impaired. Of course, we can't allow repeated disruptions in our meetings; but in many cases when the impaired addict arrives, a few members can talk to that person outside the meeting to avoid further interruption to the meeting. Some of us are quite skilled in talking to those who arrive at meetings still under the influence. Safety of the individual and the group, surely, must be a prime consideration.

We usually cannot judge a person's level of willingness at our first chat, nor should we try. We should try to "meet the addict where he or she is," not where we want or expect them to be.

When studying this Tradition, it may be helpful to ask yourself this question: "How did this Tradition help me remain in NA?" Many of us get here and stay clean from day one. Unfortunately, for others, a series of relapses finally hold our permanent seat in the rooms. If you have relapsed, how did others treat you? Can you extend that same spirit of tolerance and acceptance to the addict who may arrive still on a mood-altering drug? What about the addict on medication-assisted treatment? How does our group, and how do we, respond?

For the group, what might get in the way of your group practicing the Third Tradition? Is it one or two members who have decided they are authorities? In NA according to our *Basic Text*, "One addict is never superior to another... This Tradition guarantees our freedom to recover."

We know that addiction is often a response to loneliness and alienation. Do you remember how you felt in high school when the "cool kids" didn't speak to you? Many of us describe arriving in NA and feeling that we "fit," perhaps for the first time in our lives.

The Third Tradition is vital to a welcoming group and a welcoming addict. How is your group practicing this Tradition? How are you? Are you making sure you spend a few minutes after your meetings to welcome the newcomer?

We never know how a few words of encouragement may mean the difference between an addict returning to the streets or to his or her next meeting.

Anonymous



BBQ party

> Food > Live Auction > Raffle > Fellowship

SUNDAY MARCH 3RD @ 2PM

SPEAKER MEETING @ 3PM

**COPPER SKY PARK
44345 MLK JR BLVD
MARICOPA, AZ 85138
GROUP RAMADA EAST**



H&I

TURNING HOPELESS INTO HOPE

H&I BBQ

Sunday March 24th, 2024
1212 E. Glendale Ave.
12pm - 5pm

Food, Fun, & Speakers!

Come Find Out What H&I is About!

HOMEGROUP

Special Olympics

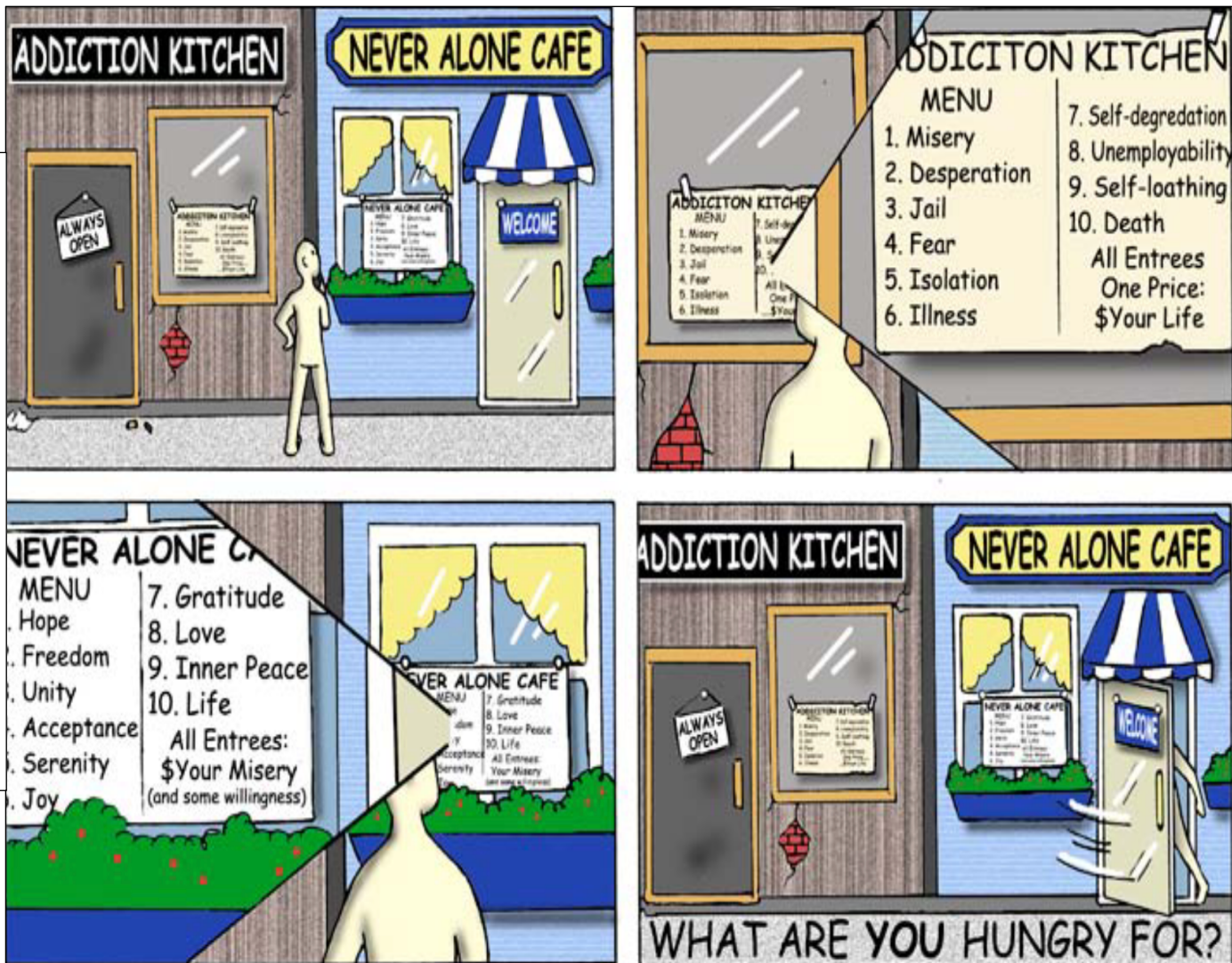
Have Fun & Support Phoenix Area H&I

UPCOMING EVENTS

Check out *Arizona-NA.ORG* for more Details

Game Group – Ray of Hope	Saturday, February 2 nd , 9 th , 16 th , 23 rd , and 30 th 2-4pm
BBQ Party	Sunday, March 3 rd 2:00pm
MACCNA XIV	Friday March 15 th -17 th
ARCNA Fundraiser	Saturday, March 23 rd 11am-6pm
PASC H&I BBQ	Sunday, March 24 th 12pm-5pm
EV Skyline Serenity Hike	Saturday, March 23 rd 9:45am

The NA Way – July 2006
(Volume 23 Number 3)



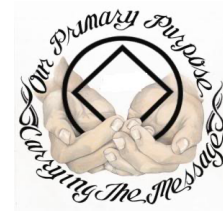
Sponsorship Behind the Walls

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 six months or longer than six months from their release date.

Where to mail your letter:

Arizona Region of 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.**



A. Write to us about:

1. What did using cause you to lose or give up/away?
2. Where did you first hear about Narcotics Anonymous?
3. What have you gained from working a program of recovery?
4. If you are working with a sponsor:
 - a. Is he an inmate?
 - b. Someone from before?
 - c. Or from writing to "Sponsorship behind the walls"?
5. What keeps your interest in NA alive?
6. How long will you remain incarcerated before release and your concerns for that eventful day.

B. Guidelines for writing:

1. Keep your story concise and fit it on one page or less.
2. No need to over emphasize with cussing.
3. Please don't write with excessive details about the drugs or drug class which you used.

C. Once completed send your story to:

East Valley Prison Coordinator
PO Box 5264
Mesa, AZ, 85221



Inmates! *Show your creativity*

We would like to publish your artwork. **The NA Times** - Phoenix, West Valley, East Valley – is looking to involve the members of the fellowship **Behind the Walls**. Send your artwork and a piece of your recovery story to us for publication (Keep the artwork clean and recovery related).

Send to:

Narcotics Anonymous Prison Coordinator
PO Box 5264
Mesa, AZ 85221



DATE CHANGE MARCH 15-17, 2024 MACCNA XIV • YUMA, AZ *"Lost Dreams Awaken."*

Mark your calendars and join the Facebook Group "MACCNA Convention" or visit our website www.maccna.org for up-to-date information about our convention such as: surrounding hotels, when registration will be up and running, service opportunities, and more.

Things to look forward to:

Friday Night Dance with



NATIVE AMERICAN CIRCLE OF LIFE



THE HILARIOUS CHARLES SANCHEZ & FRIENDS COMEDY SHOW!

- Great Speakers
- Hospitality Room
- Live Auction / Raffle
- Marathon Meetings
- Clean Time Countdown
- Love and Unity

Convention Location



Yuma Civic Center
1440 W. Desert Hills Dr.
Yuma, AZ 85365

**On-site dry camping will
be available for a fee.**