



THE NA TIMES

Phoenix – West Valley – East Valley

November 2023

Piece of an Arrow

She pulls a arrow from Her quiver, places it on Her bow, pulls back and releases. It soars towards its target... me. The question is, due I close myself off, making it impossible for Her to hit, or do I open myself up and let Her arrow strike true?

She is my Higher Power, Her quiver is full of arrows of knowledge, truth, acceptance, forgiveness and love. She is all these things and so much more. She wants these for me as well, but I need to be willing to receive them. Willing to be an open target and as of recently I have been allowing myself to be filled with arrow after arrow of Her wisdom, acceptance and self worth.

If you have read any of my past articles you might recognize I often write of the Human Condition. Yes, there is a positive message in them, but they are written through pain, sadness and scars which cannot be seen. They came to me from my Higher Power and through them I got to share myself with you. A month or so ago I was dealing with jealousy, confusion, anger and powerlessness. It controlled me, made me feel sick and was tearing me away from what matters most to me in this world. Being an inmate at a prison with years ahead of me did not help the situation. Addiction doesn't need to speak words of drug use to control this addict's mind.

I was defeated and knew I needed to seek help before I was consumed by the demons of my addiction. I spoke earnestly to my sponsor here in prison, opened up and brought forth honesty of where I was at. He had some experience with what I was going through and offered me advice on how he overcame his obstacles. I paid attention and not just listened. I felt his words and took them to heart. I let go and let God.

Jealousy was replaced by being supportive, confusion by understanding, anger by love and powerlessness by acceptance. I surrendered myself to my Higher Power and my recovery all over again. I have felt such a weight lifted off my shoulders and my recovery and spirituality since then has been quite amazing.

I meditate almost every night and those nights when I do I have been reading a section or two at a time out of Living Clean. I make sure to say the Serenity Prayer, the Third Step statement and a personal mantra someone very dear to me suggested, every night before I sleep, when I wake up and when it is needed throughout the day. I am much more at peace with myself. I can be a supportive and caring friend and an understanding and loving son. I am focused more on what matters, my recovery, my writing and my daughters. For those of you who have read some of my past articles, who have seen through my looking glass and have been touched by a particle of me, I have yet to have any contact with my daughters, that has gone unchanged, the pain ever present. But, I am not making myself invisible to my Higher Power, I am no longer angry towards Her, myself or others. I am opening my heart up wide exposing it to Her so She may allow her arrows to fly and pierce this target with recovery, wisdom and above all else, love.

I am an addict, my name is **Todd O.**

Step 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.

One day I was sitting in our lunchroom when I was approached by a co-worker. She asked me what my purpose in life was. I was taken aback by this question and thought about it for a moment. Then I said my purpose in life was to "Seek through prayer and meditation to improve my conscious contact with God, as I understand Him, praying only for knowledge of His will for me and the power to carry that out." She said, "Wrong!" My purpose in life was to have babies. My jaw just

about hit the floor. This happened many years ago when I had barely a year and a half clean.

I guess for the longest time, I really didn't fully grasp the power of the 11th Step. Then one day while I was in the midst of an aspersive divorce, I was in fear of losing my home and being homeless. I was being asked to pay support that would have left me insolvent. I was so terrified that I spent the night in the dark praying. I kept repeating the Serenity Prayer over and over again. I believed that I needed to work the 3rd Step really hard. After hours of this, I was finally exhausted and fell asleep.
(Continued on pg. 3)

11th Concept: *NA funds are to be used to further our primary purpose and must be managed responsibly.*

Our literature tells us this about the 11th Concept. “Narcotics Anonymous funds should always be used to further our primary purpose. Money is used to pay the expenses involved in running NA recovery meetings, to inform the public about NA, and to reach addicts who can’t get to meetings. It is used to develop, produce, translate, and distribute our message in written form, and to bring our members together in a service community committed to the vision of spreading our message around the world to those in need. All of this is done in support of NA’s spiritual aim: to carry the message to the addict who still suffers.”

Groups handle their expenses according to that group’s conscience, which is the collective wisdom of its group members decided on at that group’s business meeting. Many groups offer refreshments, such as coffee and snacks. These items often come from the group donations. Other meetings decide not to furnish food from the members’ 7th Tradition donations but may take up a second collection to pay for an anniversary event, or potluck food items.

Some groups have the anniversary persons bring their own cakes; other groups may decide to pay for it out of the 7th Tradition funds.

Responsible management of our money helps us more effectively carry the message. Our literature states, “Clear, frank communication from our service structure is the best way to help our groups contribute their funds in a responsible way.”

Our areas, our regional service committees and our world services all require money to carry our message of recovery more effectively. When groups do not contribute to their areas, or areas fail to contribute to their regions, this fund flow can break down.

“Twelve Concept for NA Service” offers some study questions for your use in your group, or alone, at this [link](#).

The bottom line is this: Does your group openly and effectively discuss fund flow and money management?

Nancy G.

Step 11: *Sought through prayer and meditation to improve our conscious contact with God as we understood him, praying only for the knowledge of God’s will for us and the power to carry that out.”*

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Early in my first marriage, my husband began using. His drugs of choice were not mine and he kept his drugs, out of the house, so I continued to live with him, determined to “wait it out” while I finished college.

I asked my sponsor what to do. She never gave me advice. She simply recommended that I “Stay in Step 11 and pray for the knowledge of God’s will *and* the power to carry it out.” Then she added, “You might not get both at the same time.” She was right.

I struggled through the marriage for another two years, attending our sister Fellowship of Naranon for guidance and trying to, as they recommended, “detach with love.”

One day after he had just finished another stint in treatment, he used again. It became clear to me: He did not want to get clean; *I* wanted him to get clean. My wishing him clean was not going to work, ever. He had to *want* to get clean.

In that moment I experienced Step 11 in a new way. I knew I had both the knowledge of my Higher Power’s will *and* the power to carry it out. I left the marriage, moved to a new area to begin a new career, and stayed clean.

I heard a fellow addict say in a meeting that when he was struggling with something, he would call his sponsor and tell his sponsor about his problem. His sponsor would listen and then say, “Sounds like you’re powerless.”

“I am,” he would admit to his sponsor.

“Then why don’t you act like it?” His sponsor replied.

Step 11 is a way to practice the acceptance of our powerlessness. As our Basic Text tells us, “We become willing to let other people be what they are without having to pass judgment on them. The urgency to take care of things isn’t there anymore.”

We can ask for guidance and wait, even when it takes a long while for the answers to come.

Anonymous

“Guess what everybody, I’m an addict, but I am in recovery, and I’ve never been happier!” After only two months into my journey riding high on my *pink cloud*, I decided to announce my story to the world.

I practically shouted it out for all to hear while walking in a lazy river, therapeutic pool about 4 feet deep with lots of other people. It gets kind of boring just walking in circles, so we often struck up conversations with each other whether they are complete strangers or previous acquaintances.

Such was this conversation I started with a recent acquaintance. She was a nurse, so I felt comfortable divulging my addiction/using story and all the *gory* details of hitting bottom. Surely, being in the medical profession gave her “street cred” to congratulate me in finding help and staying clean for two months and working the steps.

Instead, I got a shocking response in a very stern voice: “How could you be behind the wheel of a car in that condition!,” she scolded.

I thought to myself, *wait...what? Was that what you came away with?* My bottom hit when I was **not** driving, but face-planting on hard gravel, *then* I drove myself home. It was at that moment I realized the non-addicts cannot comprehend our way of thinking and using and there is no way to explain it.

Later that night at a meeting, I shared my experience. Another addict long in the program pulled me aside afterwards and stated, “That’s why we call it *anonymous!*”

Bullseye!! That hit me how right she was, and I realized that I had a lot more to learn.

Now, when the Traditions are read in the meetings and the 11th Tradition is mentioned, I occasionally reminisce how this tradition tells us to “maintain **personal** anonymity....”

As stated in the **How It Works** book page 204, “If you want what we have to offer, this is what we are and how we work. If we can be of service, please let us know.” “

No need to shout it out for *everyone* to hear from my personal pink cloud.

Kathy M.

Step 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. **(continued)**

The next day, I met with my sponsor. I told him what was going on, and how terrified I was. That I was going to lose it all and be homeless. He asked me, “What Step are you working?”

I said, “Step 3.”

He said, “No wonder. You are working the wrong step.” He said, “You think that if you turn it over to God, it is still your job to end the fear. He said that I should be working the 11th Step. That I should be asking God, how I can be of value to others, how I can contribute, how I can be an asset to others. Then it is God’s job to remove the fear.

And that is exactly what I did. And it worked exactly as he said. The fear went away. I just knew that I would be okay. And after the court hearing on spousal maintenance, I was given a manageable amount to work with. So today, I fully understand how important the 11th Step is in my life.

I pray to ask God how I can be of value to others, how I can contribute, how I can be an asset to others. The answers don’t always come right away. Rather, I am presented with opportunities to do so. So those were the channels those old timers were talking about, the 2-way street. Prayer is my channel to God, and being attentive is his channel to me.

Since then, whenever I am faced with a tough situation, I always remember to work the 11th Step. What a wonderful gift this program has given me. I would have never figured out that the key was to be of service to others.

In my active addiction, I was selfish, self-centered. Everything was about me. Yet I was living a fearful life. When in reality, true freedom and peace came from being selfless and being of service to others. In the 1st Step we admit powerlessness. But in the 11th Step we are empowered to do God’s will. Thank you, NA.

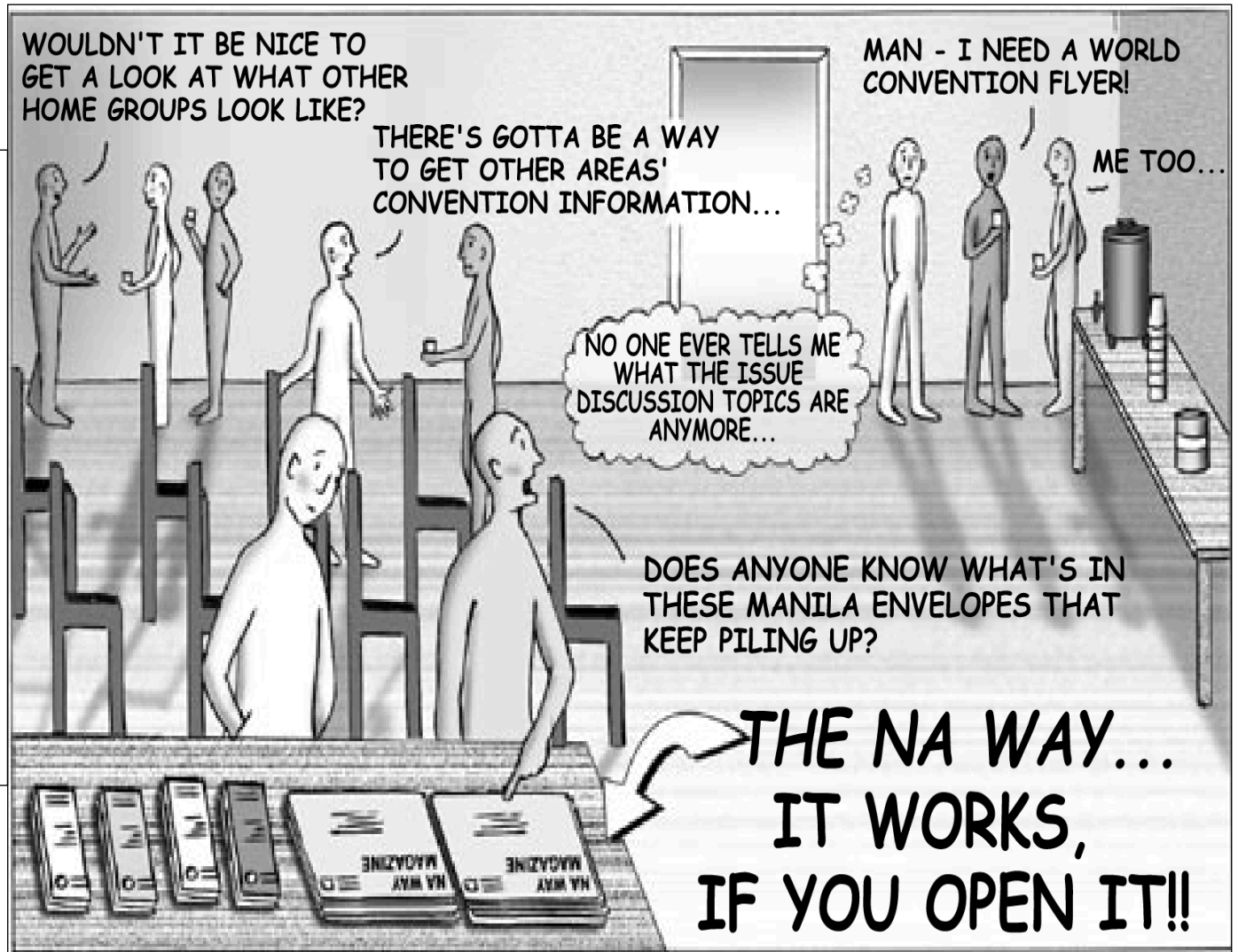
Steve M.

UPCOMING EVENTS

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

Picacho Peak Campout	November 17 th - November 19 th
Thanksgiving NArathon	10:00am November 23rd
Stuff-O-Rama	11:00 November 24th
EV Skyline Serenity Hike	11:00am Friday November 25th

The NA Way – April 2005
(Volume 22 Number 2)



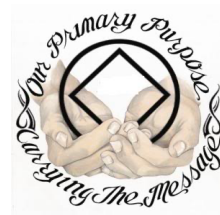
Sponsorship Behind the Walls

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