



THE NA TIMES

Phoenix – West Valley – East Valley

November 2022

One Disease, One Program: Why NA Language Matters

When I came to Narcotics Anonymous in 1998, I was desperate for recovery. The recovery house I lived in had three different Fellowships that met in a room on the property. NA met on Tuesdays, and it's the Fellowship that I fell in love with. Three months after I got clean, I almost got loaded hanging out with old using friends. My sponsor was fine with me doing this, and intuitively I knew it was time to get a new sponsor. My sponsor also went to three different Fellowships for his recovery. I had a few good friends who explained to me about how NA was different than these other places. NA was all-inclusive, and it was unnecessary for me to go to more than one place for my recovery anymore. I then got an NA sponsor and began working the 12 Steps The NA Way. I joined the winning team.

NA is a different and distinct "society of men and women for whom drugs had become a major problem." One of those drugs is alcohol. "Alcohol is a drug." When I say that I am clean, it includes EVERYTHING. "This is a program of total abstinence." This includes liquids, solids, and gases. I don't need to say that I used drugs and alcohol because it would be redundant or repetitive to say so. I don't need to say that I am clean and sober because sobriety, or abstinence from alcohol, is a part of being clean in Narcotics Anonymous. We say that "thinking of alcohol as different from other drugs has caused a great many addicts to relapse," and it's true. Then, we see members say that they are "clean and sober," which essentially says that it is different, because we had to tag it on to the end of the phrase. "To speak in this manner suggests that there are two diseases, that one drug is somehow separate from the rest, requiring special recognition. NA makes no distinction between drugs."

NA has its own special language. One of the many ways I commit to NA is by using this language. NA has its own literature. One of the many ways I commit to NA is by using this literature. Are we saying there isn't any merit to any other recovery literature? We are not. I don't refer to other Fellowships' literature in NA meetings because it is unnecessary. We have an abundance of literature of our own that addresses pretty much anything and everything related to recovery from the disease of addiction.

Another reason why I use NA language is because it is less confusing to newcomers. I have had newcomers ask if clean and sober is different than clean, and I always tell them that according to our literature, it is not. When these newcomers see members with substantial time clean using this confusing language, it is no wonder that they can get confused and think that alcohol might be different, making a potentially fatal decision to use because of it.

Lastly, I know that there are those who will say that when we bring these language issues up, we chase people out of the rooms. Let's not forget that the time of NA's explosive growth in the United States was the 1980's and 1990's, which is the exact same time that our predecessors were fighting these language battles. Here in the Valley of the Sun, our biggest period of growth was in the 80's and 90's as well. I'm grateful for my predecessors, especially for the ones who guided NA to become its own distinct Fellowship. When we speak of being clean or being in recovery, we can all identify with each other. When we speak in any other manner, we focus on the differences and cause disunity.

All quotes are from the NA Basic Text and World Service Board of Trustees Bulletin #13

Keep It Simple, Jason S.

**THERE ARE
OPPORTUNITIES
TO BE OF
SERVICE IN ALL
AREAS!!!!**

Ask your GSR about open positions!

As I grow in the Fellowship of Narcotics Anonymous, I hear and learn various catch phrases.

These short sayings have developed over the years in the thoughts and words of other previous addicts and our predecessors. There is wisdom and value in the sayings, as they are easy to remember, yet carry great meaning. I often hear to “Do the next right thing.”

Many times, in my recovery I am not really knowing what big actions to take next, what is the long-range plan, etc. What I can do, however, is to take the next correct step in the right direction. When EVERYTHING is too much, I focus myself to do One Thing: “Do the next Right Thing.”

When I am able to do One Thing, I have faith that the next right thing after that becomes more easily focused than realized.

We might even (less frequently though) hear someone say or read in the Basic Text 6th Edition page xv: “Doing the right thing for the right reason.”

That sounds much the same as the shorter version of the saying— however, it carries more significance.

Another level of achievement for me is to know the reason to do the next thing, and to attain the awareness to develop Integrity by having the right thoughts to guide and motivate the actions of Doing the next Right Thing.

For example, if I were to push my shopping cart away to the collection stall, that certainly seems like the next Right Thing to do. But WHY did I do that? Was it to impress a friend or a even a stranger? That is not the purest reason to return a cart. A better reason is that returning the cart improves safety in the parking lot and lessens the chance of damage to vehicles and to the cart itself: respect for other’s property and well-being. If the second reason is the thought in my mind when returning the cart, then that adds yet another level to my actions: there is an Intention to my actions.

Action: Return shopping cart

Spiritual Principle: Service to Society

Integrity: Thought to return cart, action to return cart

So far, so good...

Intention:

A) Self-gain, impress others?

B) Respect for others, Productive Member of Society?

We may not be able to see others’ Intentions, and at times might not even be paying attention to our own Intentions.

My job is to be aware of my own Intentions and practice and develop “Good Intentions”— let those intentions guide Good Thoughts which leads to Good Actions, aka Doing the next Right Thing, and Doing the next Right Thing for the Right Reason.

I mentioned Integrity, so— What is Integrity?

For my way of thinking, Integrity is shown, felt, and experienced when my thoughts of the mind are in alignment with my actions.

Put a little differently, Integrity is the alignment of thoughts and actions.

If the thoughts in my mind are not righteous, and I follow through on those thoughts, I would still be in a state of Integrity. What is lacking in this example are the intentions of a Productive Member of Society.

Over time, with much help form others and prayer and meditation, the un-righteous thoughts leave my thoughts and are replaced with intentions of a Productive Member of Society such as:

- Always leave a place looking better than I found it
- Continuous improvement of self to help make the world a better place, to be an ambassador of Goodwill
- Act in a way to be of Service:
 - To Self
 - To Society
 - To my Higher Power

This is my path to Freedom.

Chuck H.

After we have been clean awhile, we begin to understand the importance of anonymity as “the spiritual foundation of all our traditions.” Anonymity means what we say in meetings stays there. It means that if we go on a television show or are interviewed by the media, we don’t identify as a member of NA. As PR presenters, we offer no opinion on outside issues— for example, where the Fellowship might stand on medical marijuana or methadone. These are outside issues. If the media appears at a convention, experienced public relations members field their questions to ensure our message is consistent.

How then, can we have a Public Relations Committee and still comply with the spirit of the 11th Tradition? As our literature explains, “As NA groups, service boards, and committees, we deliberately and energetically cultivate good public relations, not as an incidental result of our normal activity but as a way to better carry our message to addicts.”

We provide presentations about NA to methadone program administrators, police department personnel, church workers, and city governments, to name just a few. Our Public Relations Committee trains our members to answer tough questions that others pose as we introduce them to Narcotics Anonymous and what it can offer those their organizations serve, be they homeless or newly arrested.

Public Relations Committees are an important tool in attracting new members to NA. Each PR Committee member must understand the 11th Tradition to carry our message most effectively.

Nancy G.

Spiritual Principle of the Day: *November 1st*

Acceptance Takes Practice

Acceptance is not an all-or-nothing event, and it doesn’t necessarily happen all at once.

—*Living Clean*, Chapter 1, “Growing Pains”

We talk about “practicing spiritual principles” because they take *practice*. That’s certainly true of acceptance. At times, the only thing we fully accept is the fact that we’re addicts. On those days, that’s good enough. We practice acceptance by not picking up. And if we don’t pick up, we won’t use.

As we grow in recovery, we start to recognize where our acceptance falls short. Sometimes we might acknowledge a problem, but not fully accept its implications, especially when a solution requires us to take responsibility and make an effort. For example, we might sense relationship trouble, but may or may not adjust how much time we spend with a partner. Some of us can’t accept, or even recognize, that we’ve been dishonest until we do a Tenth Step; the disease calls us to stop writing.

Our ability to practice acceptance sometimes wavers depending on who else is involved. We may be able to accept relapse from others, but not when it’s a family member. Maybe we can accept the blunders of newcomers but not those mistakes made by oldtimers.

We celebrate the progress we make, no matter how small: “Today I told my boss why I was *really* late; that was a first!” Or big: “The loss of my beloved dog opened the floodgates, allowing me to revisit the grief of other losses and come to new levels of acceptance.”

As we recover just a little more each day, practicing acceptance pays off. We experience rare and remarkable epiphanies with acceptance and recognize the path it took to get there. We can hear other members’ struggles with acceptance and think, *Yep, they’re right where they’re supposed to be.*

Today I’ll look at the conditions I place on acceptance and try to practice this principle more fully.

Step Eleven: “We sought through prayer and meditation to improve our conscious contact with God as we understand Him, praying only for knowledge of His will for us and the power to carry that out.”

4

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 Nar-Anon 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.

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.

Nancy G.

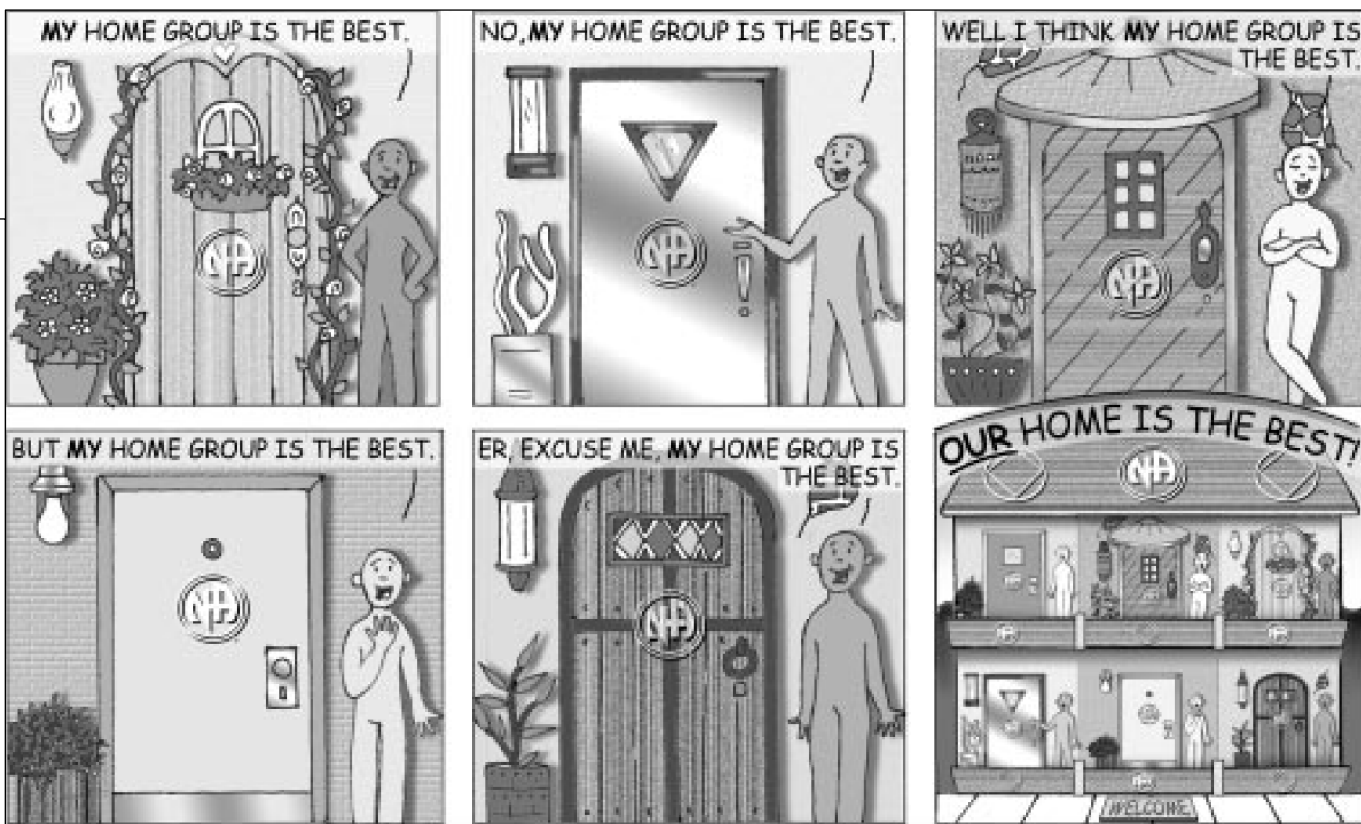


UPCOMING EVENTS

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

Blues Fest	November 12 th (10am-5pm, doors at 8am)
Luncheon & NA Jeopardy	November 12 th (1pm-4:30pm)
Fire Side meeting	November 19 th (6pm-10pm)
PAAC Thanksgiving Narathon	November 24 th -25 th
EV Skyline Serenity Hike	November 26 th (9:45am-2pm)

The NA Way – April 2002
(Volume 19 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



WEDNESDAY 7:00 PM TO 8:15

4140 N MILLER RD
SCOTTSDALE, AZ 85251

