



THE NA TIMES

Phoenix – West Valley – East Valley

August 2024

For Anyone inside AZ Dept of Corrections: The NA Basic Text Audio Book is available in English & Spanish on the tablets statewide!

From Behind the Walls: Dear Addiction

How I loved you. Ever since I first sipped my way into intoxication with your alcohol elixirs, we have fallen into more and more spiraling phases of destruction since then. From the laughter and paranoia brought on from the smoking mirrors of weed and meth to the numbness and sickness of Xanax and opiates. I was always so loyal to you and could find you in the crowd within seconds of searching for you.

I was captivated by you and your illusions you are my world and my everything. I felt lost and worthless when I was unable to feed your desires. You've left me beaten and battered on many occasions with nowhere to turn but to try and seek you out again. I lost my independence with you and at the time I didn't realize that was your intentions all along. You needed that control over me more than the cravings I had for you. You want me absolutely dependent upon you and you won the battle. You robbed me of my self-worth and shattered my spirit and the confidence I used to have.

You've taken my dignity and melted it down and shot it into my veins until I became sick and delusional from it. You've allowed me to rape myself in drug induced psychosis with illusions and obsessive behaviors of fulfilling your next fix. With temporary satisfaction you had me befriend isolation. Shutting me off from the world because you knew I had so much to offer it. I had no use for trust in myself nor trust given to me from others because I always aimed to please you and put you first above all else. I've lost my family friends jobs reputation but most depravely of all I lost myself. I've given you excuse after excuse to try and justify the reasoning behind the abuse you've had toward me.

I can no longer accept these terms of endearment from you. You always persuaded me to run from my fears responsibilities obligations and boundaries by just turning to you for comfort. You would make them all disappear. I tore my walls down for you so I could fully allow you in thinking that was acceptance of myself but that was a huge mistake because that allowed you no shame in taking your abuse out of me even further.

But now it's time for you to reap what you've sown and to face your greatest fear, to tear down your walls and to break the chain you have on me because now I'm declaring war and I'm leaving you. I can no longer allow myself to love you more than I love myself. You swindled me into thinking you were a necessity of love while slowly trying to claim my life when in reality you're a parasitic disease who needs me in order to survive not the other way around. So, I will no longer run from the fear of you but will practice taking 12 agonizing and determined steps in leaving you. In my past it's been one hell of a ride and a lot of unnecessary hardships and crucial life lessons learned. However, I know our paths may cross again from time to time but I'm reclaiming my life from your crutches so that when our paths do meet, I know that I have the courage and strength to continually turn my back on you by being aware of you and the warning signs of your presence in others. Your seductive way we're always alluring but are now disgusting repulsing to me I have now since found someone new and we are getting married. His first name is Recovery, and his last name is Self-love, and he is related to Determination and Success. So, so long addiction I wish you all the speed for you to flee away from me and all the narcissistic distractions of yourself to never return.

Forever departed from you,
Kelsey S.

There are three areas of forgiveness in working the Eighth Step. “The Eighth Step starts the process of forgiveness: We forgive others; possibly we are forgiven; and finally, we forgive ourselves and learn how to live in the world.” *Basic Text* page 38.

When starting my Eighth Step work, I had a lot of concerns. I had gone through abuse and neglect both physically and mentally at the hands of a few people in my teenage years. I had nearly forgotten all this as it took place over 5 decades ago. The Fourth and Fifth Step brought all these memories back up and now I had to deal with them. At first, I went into a tailspin trying to come to terms with my hatred, condemnation and resentment towards them and now having to forgive them. *Why should they be forgiven?* Because in order to be forgiven myself, I must forgive everyone who has ever hurt me. I don’t have to like these people, but I need to love them in order to release them from my life. In turn, I can be forgiven by those who resent me. This did not happen overnight. It took almost one year and speaking with my Higher Power to resolve this dilemma. I could not expect someone to forgive me with my amends if I could not do the same and forgive those who harmed me. When I think back on examples of my bad behaviors towards others and so desperately want to apologize or make amends, I wonder if they “hate” me for what I have done to them. Can this also be happening with my abusers who may be remorseful and would apologize to me if they could? I will never know, but my job is to forgive them no matter what.

That leads to making amends or seeking forgiveness for my behavior towards others. Unfortunately, so much time has passed that make it impossible to do all of my amends in person. Dementia, death, inability to locate, and not wanting to speak to me had been my barriers. I can remedy this by living amends, writing letters that go unread, just willingness to make the amends and moving into the future of not creating any situations that would require present apologies.

Finally, the hardest for me has been the forgiveness of myself. How often I come across a thought or memory of my bad behavior and want to condemn and berate myself. This is when I need to instead care for myself daily – mentally and physically. I eat right, exercise regularly, and am kind to family, friends and strangers. I work the NA Program through the readings, going to meetings and speaking with my sponsor and Higher Power.

I have become better at forgiving myself, but I need to stay vigilant. Self-depravation had always led me to acting out on my addiction so I could falsely feel better about myself. I cannot let that happen. “The Eighth Step offers a big change from a life dominated by guilt and remorse.” *Basic Text* page 39. Working through those three ways of forgiveness has given me a new way to live happily away from my addictions.

Kathy M.

8th 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.

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.

- A. Don't quite five minutes before the miracle.
- A. **Sit down, shut up and listen. (Of course, that went out in the 90s!)**
- A. Take the cotton out of your ears and put it in your mouth.
- A. **I never have to use again, even if I think about it, feel like it, or dream about it.**
- A. You can't think your way into right action. You have to act your way into right thinking.
- A. **I think, therefore I'm insane!**
- A. Your best thinking got you here.
- A. **If you share for more than five minutes, it's your ego speaking.**
- A. Every word used after the word "but" is BS.
- A. **Don't use if your ass falls off. If your ass falls off, pick it up and go to a meeting.**
- A. Two sickies don't make a welly.
- A. **You can't save your ass and your face at the same time.**
- A. What are your motives?
- A. **One promise, many gifts.**
- A. Trust the process.
- A. **You're right where you're supposed to be.**
- A. Where are your feet?
- A. **If nothing changes, nothing changes.**

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

Some of us come to NA with an advanced degree or earn one along the way. There are many professionals among us, including nurses, doctors, therapists and other professionals. However, once we enter the rooms of NA, we drop our professional designations. We are simply addicts in recovery. If we affiliate with treatment centers, for example, we will quickly destroy our unity.

However, there are many tasks that NA must fulfill to carry the message worldwide. Where we once were a tiny fellowship located in one or two areas, today we are a worldwide fellowship of many members who speak many languages. We must translate literature for other countries. We manage financial transactions in various types of currency, and we must cross borders of regimes that might be hostile to the NA message in our quest to grow our fellowship so that any suffering addict might avail him or herself of our message.

Many of these tasks require special skills. For example, managing the insurance needs for our many worldwide efforts requires special knowledge. Using a group process, we develop and publish new literature. We need bookkeepers and accounting experts. These are just a few tasks performed by our special workers.

We must balance the 8th Tradition with the 9th Tradition where we "must never be organized" with the needs of the still-suffering addict who might benefit from our message, no matter where he or she resides.

Having been a special worker, I know firsthand that NAWS strives to hire recovering addicts when they are able to fill

positions as special workers. However, in some cases, non-addicts can also fill those roles as special workers.

While NA is not a business, to protect ourselves from liability and to ensure our meetings have access to facilities, we must buy insurance, protect our intellectual property such as the *Basic Text*, form not-for-profit or non-profit corporations where appropriate, and in short conduct ourselves legally, financially and ethically. This is where in some cases we need special workers.

Many of us rebel against any kind of "authority." Special workers have no more voice in NA than the scope of their duties, which is to advise World Services trusted servants and special workers how to best approach difficult problems.

These service centers are integral to our fellowship's growth. Service offices pay special workers a salary for the work they do, just like any other employee of an organization. They are not paid to do traditional 12th Step work; they simply work at their assigned tasks to help addicts carry the message throughout the world.

Sometimes we see members grouse on social media about the pay rate for special workers. To ask special workers to work for less than they would make at another non-profit or not-for-profit may fly in the face of our 7th Tradition, which says we are fully self-supporting through our own contributions.

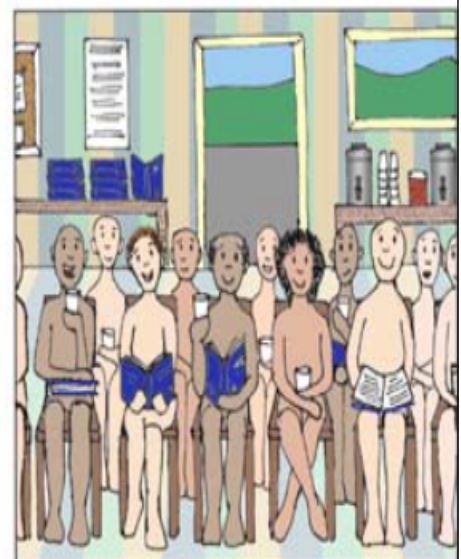
Nancy G.

UPCOMING EVENTS

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

Game Group – Ray of Hope	Saturday, August 3 rd , 10 th , 17 th , 24 th , 31 st 2-4pm
Lip Sync Battle	Saturday, August 10 th 5:00pm
Pancake Day (Nacona Fundraiser)	Saturday August 17th 10:30am
West Valley Annual Campout	Saturday August 24 th – Sunday August 25th 12pm-4pm
EV Skyline Serenity Hike	Saturday August 24 th 11:00am

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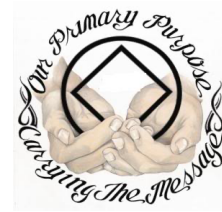
Sponsorship Behind the Walls

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

GAME GROUP

**SATURDAYS
2PM-4PM**

**JOIN US FOR
FELLOWSHIP
&
BOARD GAMES!**



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