



THE NA TIMES

Phoenix – West Valley – East Valley

October 2024

The 12th Step Works Both Ways

Evolutionary psychologists believe that the ability to feel loneliness developed to remind humans they are social animals, reliant on other humans for survival. They believe loneliness developed as a warning to humans that they were straying too far from the group, risking their lives by staying at the perimeter. The cure for loneliness may be as simple as connecting with others, even when our brains tell us we should isolate.

I was living in San Fernando Valley where, after three years, I still felt unconnected to the Fellowship. I had just ended a relationship I shouldn't have gotten into in the first place, two of them, in fact, one shortly after another. (I've always considered myself a serial monogamist.)

I had just moved to Orange County and was at a midday meeting where I knew no one, but I was in a complete breakdown and could not stop crying. (I didn't cry until I had many years clean, then sometimes I couldn't stop.) After the meeting, a gal approached me and asked me to sponsor her. "What could you possibly see in me?" I thought since I had just sobbed through the whole meeting.

In short, she was just what I needed. For the next few months, we spent time getting to know one another and starting the Steps. I don't know how I would have gotten through those tough months without her, because practicing the 12th Step with her allowed me to get out of myself and give. In short, the 12th Step worked both ways.

If you're struggling, reach out. Take a newcomer to coffee or dinner. Grab your phone and call a few newer members to see how they're doing. Or call an old-timer you haven't seen in a while. Sometimes the old-timers need the 12th Step as badly as the newcomer.

-Nancy G

Q&A 11/24: Since it's the 12th month, we thought we'd ask the following question on the Arizona NA page. Below are the answers from quite a few members. We had some great answers, so many that we could not use them all. Thank you to all who participated in working the 12th Step with your story.

Q. Question for this month's newsletter:

How did you first hear about NA? Did someone 12-step you? Or did you learn about NA through treatment?

A. At a laundromat, I saw a card with the hotline number on a bulletin board. The addict who answered the phone suggested that I attend a meeting of Narcotics Anonymous. (I did not even know that Narcotics Anonymous meetings existed at the time.) I took her suggestion, and thirty-one years later, still attend NA meetings regularly.


A. Years before I got clean one of my husband's said I needed help and sent someone to take me to a meeting... it was an NA meeting.. I did not understand what they were talking about and did not go back. I went back to using. Years later I got arrested and was court-ordered to go to treatment and I was taken to that same meeting place and since I was court-ordered, I started listening and then the understanding happened. I still am not perfect, though through the process of listening and learning a new way of life I am better than that person who went to her first meeting 🌹

A. I Googled needed help with a certain drug. Then the NA helpline number was there. I called and someone answered and told me about a meeting that night. I showed up. **(Continued pg. 2)**

Q. Question for this month's newsletter:

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How did you first hear about NA? Did someone 12-step you? Or did you learn about NA through treatment?

- A. Your husband (Tom T.) 12-stepped me. I had a brief moment in my past when NA was the way and witnessed his success firsthand. He helped me get back to basics with suggestions and went out of his way to help. Saved my life, that's the straight--up truth of it.
- A. I first heard of NA back in 2013 when I was in treatment, but it didn't appeal to anything that I wanted in my life. In 2021, I was locked up and forced to get clean. A woman I met had over 20 years clean and was dealing with the wreckage of her past but still had faith in the program and her Higher Power even given the circumstances surrounding her. She '12-stepped' me and told me to get a Basic Text and to start reading, so I did. Here I am over 3 and 1/2 years later, still clean. This program works, I don't think I could ever be convinced otherwise.
- A. My AA road dogs dropped me off cause they were afraid I might die if I didn't get clean. They knew the answer was in Narcotics Anonymous. They were right.
- A. H&I in treatment on a Thursday night 2003
- A. My friend Charley P. told me to go to my first NA meeting. He said to go to that meeting, because that's where he got clean.
- A. My addiction counselor recommended I go to NA.
- A. When I was 7 years old, my mother used to attend the North Mountain campfire meeting. At the time I did not know where we were or the importance of each of those meetings. But the seed was planted for when I would one day need it myself.
- A. I met a man out at the pool. As we talked he said, "You should come to the club where I work." He then gave me the address and said nothing more. That night I got all dressed up (and loaded of course) and went to find the club. Couldn't find it, so I went back to his house and asked his roommate if he could help me. He took me to the address and took me inside... it was an Alano Club. His friend took me into the meeting room. Because I was loaded I really didn't hear the message.. except at the end when they grabbed my hands and all said, "Keep coming back, it works!" I must have "woke up" cause I kept asking "What works?" I went home and sat on my bed, playing that sentence in my head over and over. What works? I didn't use all that night and into the next evening. I went back to that address and meeting and have never had to use again. ! I was definitely ready! 34 years clean!
- A. I came to NA a via a court card. I had never heard of NA. I thought it was silly at first. Then I heard the message. NA saved my life.
- A. I was in a teen halfway house in North Texas. Some dude kept showing up with Basic Texts every Thursday asking if anyone wanted a meeting. You could get out of chores for the evening if you went. It was a good deal.
- A. The first time I heard of NA was in rehab in 1987. When I left treatment I went to two NA meetings a week and stayed "abstinent " for two years. By the way, all while living with my dealer. Dare I say I relapsed. In 1994 my dad celebrated two years and invited me to his homegroup. Don't know how I got there. But I surrendered that day. My dad and I celebrated together for eight years when at 10 years clean he relapsed, and I lost him to this disease. Every year I pick up my medallion, I kiss it to heaven. 
- A. I learned about it through an AOL chat room called NA Way.
- A. I was in a teen halfway house in North Texas. Some dude kept showing up with *Basic Texts* every Thursday asking if anyone wanted a meeting. You could get out of chores for the evening if you went. It was a good deal.

I was privileged to have members of the Narcotics Anonymous fellowship help me in my recovery as they practiced their 12th Step in my life. They truly were examples of the program working. My first encounter came out of desperation and confusion. Promising myself to quit every morning but failing by late afternoon to stop my addiction, I sought help by unsuccessfully Googling where I could find a meeting. This was in 2022 one year into the Covid pandemic. All the meetings were marked closed. I assumed it was because of Covid.

At the same time, I had my annual doctor wellness appointment and voiced my frustration of not being able to quit my addiction on my own and frustration of not finding any meetings that were "open" during COVID. He introduced me to the meeting app. That's when I learned the meaning of the "closed" versus "open" meeting. It had nothing to do with COVID but rather who could attend these meetings – an addict versus a non-addict. I immediately attended my first meeting that night and miraculously was able to stay clean right away. At my follow-up doctor appointment four months later, I expressed my utmost gratitude to him for helping me get into the program. He stated that he was just an Eskimo. I had to ask him to explain. Here's what he told me.

"Two guys are sitting together in a bar in the remote Alaskan wilderness. One of the men is very religious and the other man is an atheist. Eventually, the conversation turns to God and the atheist says to the devout man, "Look, it's not like I don't have actual reasons for not believing in God – I even experimented with the whole god-prayer thing. Just last month, I was far out on the tundra. I got trapped in a big blizzard. I could not see a thing and I was so lost. And so, I tried God. I got on my knees, and I prayed, "God, if there is a God, I'm going to die out here, please help me get back to camp."

So, in the bar, the religious man looks at the atheist and says, "Well for heaven's sake, you must believe. Here you are! You're alive!"

But the atheist rolls his eyes at the religious man and sighs and says, "No man, all that happened was that some Eskimos came along and showed me the way back to camp."

Dr. M. was my first Eskimo.

I have had other members or Eskimos help me along my journey. One who just listened to me in the parking lot after a meeting as I was experiencing a mental breakdown. Another who drove to my house to share her experience, strength, and hope after I asked for help before almost relapsing. Yet another who always gave and still gives me great suggestions to overcome my struggles. I am so grateful to those who gave me unconditional love and attention. No one else but another addict could have because we all share the same disease.

Now, I must practice the service of the 12th Step by giving and sharing this new gift of life with other addicts who need it. "In the 12th Step, we practice the spiritual principles of giving the NA message of recovery to keep it." *Basic Text*, page 50. I need to be an example and be available when help is asked for as I was helped.

Kathy M.

Tradition 12: *Anonymity is the spiritual foundation of all our Traditions, ever reminding us to place principles before personalities.*

What is "anonymity"? A dictionary defines anonymity as "the condition of being anonymous," or "lack of outstanding, individual, or unusual features; impersonality." In *It Works: How and Why*, the book states, "Our unity is so precious that, given a choice between fulfilling our own wishes and preserving our fellowship's common welfare, we put the interests of NA first."

We saw this principle in action years ago in Phoenix in planning a large event. Personalities and some very bad decisions (no single point of accountability, Twelfth Concept) sent the committee in a direction that could have caused problems for NA as a whole. Several members quietly stepped up, formed a new committee, and acted, which took that annual event back to a spiritual and sound financial basis. That event is still going strong today. No one mentioned personalities; we simply saw members who recognized a problem and fixed it with a new

committee and that committee's group conscience. This is an example of the 12th Tradition in action.

When newcomers arrive at their first meeting, they may not think NA will work for them. However, they watch home group members cooperate to set up, run and support a meeting. Later they see the unity in our service structure as members work together to organize an event. Our unity springs from our anonymity. We are all just recovering addicts who, although we may come from dissimilar backgrounds, help each other stay clean. There should be no "big I's and little U's" in Narcotics Anonymous.

As our book states, when difficulties arise with personalities, we should strive to make decisions not based on conflict but on what is best for our fellowship as a whole.

STEP TWELVE

“Having had a spiritual awakening as a result of these steps, we tried to carry this message to addicts and to practice these principles in all our affairs.”

In a sense, Step Twelve encompasses *all* the steps. We must make use of what we’ve learned in the previous eleven as we carry the message and practice the principles of recovery in all our affairs. Individually and collectively, each step has contributed to the extraordinary transformation which we know as a spiritual awakening.

Many of us have wondered how this spiritual awakening comes about. Does it happen all at once, or does it occur slowly over a long period of time? While there may be great variations within our experience about this awakening of the spirit, we all agree that it results from working the steps.

Our awakening has been progressive, beginning with a spark of awareness in the First Step. Before we admitted the truth about our addiction, we knew only the darkness of denial. But when we surrendered, acknowledging that we couldn’t arrest our addiction or hope for a better life on our own, a ray of light broke through the darkness, beginning our spiritual awakening.

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

UPCOMING EVENTS

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

Game Group – Ray of Hope	Saturday, December 7 th , 14 th , 21 st , 28 th 2-4pm
Chile and Cornbread Cookoff	Saturday, December 7 th – Sunday December 8 th
Regional CAR/CAT Presentation	Saturday, December 14 th 12-3pm
Narathons	Tuesday, December 24 th – Wednesday, December 25 th
EV Skyline Serenity Hike	Saturday December. 23rd 9:30am – 2pm



CHILI COOK-OFF

SPEAKERS RAFFLES AUCTION
BONUS... CORNBREAD COOK OFF

ARCA E & F
SATURDAY, DEC 7TH 5-9 PM
4735 N. 19TH AVE PHOENIX, AZ

COMPETITORS PLEASE ARRIVE BY 4-4:30PM
OFFICIAL TASTING BEGINS @ 5:00
\$15 ADMISSION

Arizona Regional CAR/CAT Presentation



All of the efforts of Narcotics Anonymous are inspired by the primary purpose of our groups.
All Members are welcome to attend & get informed.
WE ARE MEETING ONLINE AND IN PERSON
Saturday December 14, 2024
Starts at 12:00 pm
Lunch provided (Please bring side dish or desserts)

Interim Conf. Agenda Report/Conf. App. Track Information on U.S. Collaboration of Zones
Speaker Meeting after presentation at 4:30

Where: Trinity United Methodist Church
3104 W. Glendale Ave.
Phoenix Az. 85051

Sign in online: Meeting ID: 871 3038 3511
PW: service

Steve S. RD@Arizona-na.org 520-979-2363
Ryan M. RDA@Arizona-na.org 480-749-2526

DECEMBER 31, 2024



LET'S GLOW CRAZY

Phoenix Area NYE GLOW PARTY 2024
Embassy Suites
4415 E Paradise Village Pkwy South,
Phoenix, AZ 85032

Banquet Dinner with Show 5pm
\$85 until September 1st
\$100 After
Speaker Meeting 7pm Dance to Follow

•Chair: David (602) 326-3003 •Merch/Tickets: Aaron (602) 214-7050•

GAME GROUP

SATURDAYS 2PM-4PM

JOIN US FOR FELLOWSHIP & BOARD GAMES!



MARICOPA LIBRARY & CULTURAL CENTER
18180 N MAYA ANGELOU DR
MARICOPA, AZ 85139

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**

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&
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