



THE NA TIMES

Phoenix – West Valley – East Valley

February 2025

Tradition 2: *For our group purpose there is but one ultimate authority – a loving God as He may express Himself in our group conscience. Our leaders are but trusted servants; they do not govern.*

The voice of NA speaks in unity when we observe our Second Tradition. In NA, we have no “big I’s and little U’s.” All of us have an equal voice. Simply because a person accepts a leadership position in the group or at the area or the regional level or beyond, that voice holds no more weight than any other member’s voice.

This does not mean we don’t consider their service experience and reflect on that experience and strength; it means we still can hold our position, even if it’s very different. In NA, we learn to think for ourselves, but not at the expense of unity whenever possible. Moving away from a “yes/no,” majority rules vote, many of our groups and service committees increasingly embrace consensus-based decisions. In making consensus-based decisions, we listen to and consider the minority opinion just as clearly as the majority.

In NA, we are an inverted pyramid, and our group conscience comes from our base—the groups. Our voices carry from the top (which is the group), up to the area, to the region, and finally to NA World Services. Our newcomers often remark on our unity after they attend their first meeting. It’s vitally important that our groups display this attitude, even in service. When there are group disagreements, we can temporarily break our spirit of unity, or even permanently if disunity causes a group to disband or home group members to flee to other groups. When we make consensus-based decisions, we listen carefully to those who dissent, discuss further, and then try to make our decisions so the dissenters can support the outcome.

A famous negotiator who works on peace accords throughout the world tells a story of San Bushmen of the Kalahari he visited who used consensus decision-making. Fierce hunters, the Bushman hunted with poison-tipped arrows to hunt their game. With that cultural backdrop, this famous negotiator asked a leader of the Bushmen, “How do you resolve conflict? What do you do when tempers rise, and conflict becomes destructive?” The tribe sits in a circle and talks, and listens, the Bushmen told him. But first, the Bushmen said, “Someone hides the poison arrows.”

How many times have we seen the unity of home group or service meetings pierced by the poison arrows of our tongues? We could learn from the Bushmen by hiding our poison arrows before we speak or if we become emotional.

Our steps help us internally and our traditions help us relate to our external environment where we serve. We have leaders in NA—those who exhibit skills that allow our groups and committees to flourish. However, the Second Tradition tells us they are “trusted” servants,” not “governors.”

When we can remain calm in adversity and listen to the needs of all group members, we rely on a power greater than we are. With that discussion and guidance from a loving higher power, we can arrive at better decisions that will benefit NA and keep it strong for years to come.

Nancy G.

Q. What was your experience with Step Two? Did you try to define what sanity looked like in your life? Did you focus on the first power, coming to believe in a Power greater than you?

- A The power that seems to work for me is the collective voice of the people and the love (spiritual principles) that I listen for in open NA meetings. I attend as many meetings as possible, listening to anything that helps me in my recovery/life.
- A **I do not feel as though the power is a deity; it is our collective consciousness in NA. Perhaps "God" gave me NA to find my way. BTW, I just so happens that I'm just finishing another 2nd step. Is that just a coincidence or is it God? I'll keep coming back.**
- A Once I got past the idea of being restored to sanity (as I was pretty sure I'd never been "sane") and embraced the idea of getting to a place of sane behavior, I realized I could make progress in that direction. I really like the idea of "could be" rather than "would be". It seemed if I gave it my best effort I could possibly get the best results.
- A **I believed that there was some Higher Power, but I felt as though I burnt so many bridges that I burned that bridge as well. I felt so far removed from any hope, faith, or belief that I could be restored to sanity. When I first thought of "restored" I said, "Welp, this step won't work for me." My first sponsor started me off by envisioning a yellow line in front of me. On one side is sanity(Step 2) and on the other is insanity. Whenever I felt that craziness or urge, I was to look at what side of the line I was on. She said all I needed to do was to step over the line into Step 2 and "believe" that I would be okay. I had writing assignments to list the things my higher power does and does not. One of my does nots eventually became that my HP does not abandon me. Stepping over the yellow line into the 2nd Step strengthened my belief and definitely prepared me to move into living a Third Step.**
- A I knew I had a higher power greater me at a young age. Even while using I was aware of that power. I'd never considered being restored to sanity until I started reading the *Basic Text* and hearing others share their experiences. Even if life was still unstable, it was slowly getting better, and they had hope and experienced some joy again. I decided I would trust others and the process of coming to believe I could be restored to sanity. No one said I *would* be, just that I *could* be. I liked that honesty and gained hope in this new way of life.
- A **I love Step 2. It gives me the opportunity to choose my own belief in what my higher power is or is not. I had to have something tangible at first, so the weather was my higher power. I could see it, feel it and had no control over it. It worked for me. I didn't have to overthink anything. I added angels later after someone gifted me some angel cards. Angel cards have one word written on them. That was my guardian angel that day. The longer I stayed clean the more my mind cleared up, so I could focus and listen to suggestions. In doing that the insanity subsided and clarity came into play. I could see the red flags in my life. I could see my patterns of doing things the same way expecting different results. I was open to change.**
- A My first trip through Step 2 was proof driven. That early in my recovery I needed tangible evidence that there was an HP I could come to believe in. Once it was pointed out to me how my life was changing and all I had done was stop using, certain things started happening. My life was getting better. I first believed in a power, not sure what to call it. I did believe I could be restored to some type of normalcy (sanity). To be complete though, I spent many years acting as if, more than truly believing. But life has a way of forcing you back to the steps, and a more rigorous belief. So yes I focused on power first. Then the insanity was easy to recognize.
- A **I came to believe, and I continue to come for the same reason. It could happen, that elusive sanity. There has been progress, and the journey continues.**
- A I once thought..."I ain't crazy!!" When I realized how crazy my way of living was –abandoned the kids, could not pay rent, treated everyone badly and blamed everyone else but myself... yup... I am insane... This step helped me start the process of looking at myself and the things I needed to process the change within myself. I am still a tad crazy, yet way better than I was, and I can't blame others.
- A **Didn't like it. Still think it is to push the idea to newcomers that there Is an invisible being listening to their every thought. The newcomer is led to believe that belief is a requirement. Is this a cult? Think not. Total nonsense. Should be embarrassed to believe such unprovable crap.**
- A When you're flat out loony and the mind goes in so many different directions simultaneously, it's really a dream to obtain any semblance of sanity. After years of continuous heavy drug use, my personality was so warped that normal was an illusion. With some guidance from a sponsor, I learned that thinking crazy and acting crazy were two different things. They don't put you in the loony bin for thinking crazy, just for acting crazy.

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

Step 2: *We came to believe that a Power greater than ourselves could restore us to sanity.*

It feels so good to be sane. It’s hard to think back on the insanity that ruled my life on and off for 52 years and that I am still alive to talk about it.

Insanity was pawning my dead mother’s wedding rings and my jewelry for drugs. Insanity was stealing from stores only to return the merchandise for money and risk getting caught. Insanity was walking in zero-degree weather with my toddler to score drugs. Insanity was trading sex for drugs. Insanity was breaking into houses to look for drugs or money or items to pawn. Insanity was buying drugs with my husband’s prized coin collection. Insanity was hiding in my clothes closet on the floor shooting up in my feet to hide any track marks. But no one was home so who was I hiding from? Insanity was stealing drugs from my place of employment risking arrest or losing my license. Insanity was driving drunk or high. Insanity was blacking out and nearly killing myself. I am not alone in these stories. All for what—a few hours of oblivion and then right back at it again. INSANE!

How delicious it is now to live a sane life after finding Narcotics Anonymous and a higher power! No longer does my addiction and insanity control my life. As much as I tried to find sanity on my own, I couldn’t. I had to rely on my Higher Power for that.

I stopped using at my first meeting two years ago. I don’t understand how because I didn’t know the program yet, but I believe my Higher Power took over right away, clearing the way for me to get a sponsor, work the steps, read the literature and go to meetings. I attended several meetings a day to keep my sanity. If I can work that hard at getting high, I can work that hard at staying clean and sane.

“Sanity often means that we don’t act on our first impulse. We begin to make choices that helps us rather than harm us. ... there is hope: a power greater than ourselves is always available to us.” *It Works How and Why*, pg. 25.

Kathy M.

UPCOMING EVENTS

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

Game Group – Ray of Hope	Saturday, February 1 st , 8 th , 15 th , 22 nd 2-4PM
EV Skyline Serenity Hike	Saturday, February 22 nd 10:15AM
Spirit of Love & Unity Dinner	Sunday, February 16 th 1:00PM-6:00PM

ARCNA E&F PRESENTS

The Spirit of Love & Unity Dinner

FEB. 16TH 1-6PM \$20

4140 N. Miller Rd.
Scottsdale, AZ

**JOIN US FOR
DINNER, A GREAT
SPEAKER, BINGO,
A RAFFLE AND
AUCTION!**

*Dinner Includes: Lasagna,
Garlic Bread, Salad and a
delicious Pizooki Dessert!*



****BINGO WINNER WILL RECEIVE ONE FULL
REGISTRATION FOR ARCNA****



**FOR QUESTIONS OR IF YOU WOULD
LIKE TO BE OF SERVICE**

John W. (602) 475-4434
Tony L. (480) 547-4561

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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