



# THE NA TIMES

Phoenix – West Valley – East Valley

May 2025

## **Step 5:** *We admitted to God, to ourselves, and to another human being the exact nature of our wrongs.*

The relief that comes with 4th and 5th step work has always felt magical to me. The first time I worked these steps was transformative. I went from feeling like I had to hide my “real self” to feeling like it would be possible for me to be loved just as I am. I hadn’t felt that way for a very long time before I got clean. I even found some hope that I could love myself. Admitting to my Higher Power was very difficult the first time I worked this step. I still had leftover beliefs in a God of judgment and vengeance. My sponsor helped me through this by sending me back to my second step for review and more writing. Over time, my beliefs have changed and, the God of my understanding knows who I am, and loves me unconditionally. Admitting to my Higher Power involves prayer (I find kneeling to be helpful or otherwise humbling myself). I don’t read my 4th step to my Higher Power. While I use it as a guide, I like to have a “conversation” with my HP, including not only the specific acts but also the character defects that drove the behavior. The 5th step has been crucial in helping me build a strong relationship with my Higher Power.

Admitting to myself the first time around was also difficult. Before I got clean, I spent a lot of time in denial, lying to myself about what I had done. As an example, I would tell myself I was going to “borrow” something. Then, I would take it without permission and head straight to the pawn shop. This is stealing. I hadn’t really admitted that to myself until my first 4th and 5th steps.

Finally, admitting to my sponsor(s). The women who have sponsored me have been truly supportive and I have felt safe telling them anything.

The freedom I found after letting go of the self-judgment, guilt and shame was one of the most profound gifts in my recovery. I found once I let go of those, I was free to choose who I wanted to be. Clearly, I don’t always live up to my own expectations, and that’s fine. I get to be human and grow at my own pace. Narcotics Anonymous demands nothing from me. I get what I give, as they say.

Initially, the principle of courage was the most important one for me. There was so much fear of judgment, and I carried so much shame. Over time, though, the principle of honesty has become the most important principle. The more honest I am with my Higher Power, me and my sponsor, the more benefit I get from the steps.

*Marylou D*

**Fifth Concept:** “For each responsibility assigned to the service structure, a single point of decision and accountability should be clearly defined.”

The Twelve Concepts for Service reads as follows regarding the Fifth Concept: “In defining a single point of decision for each service assignment, we eliminate confusion about who has authority to do what. We also clarify accountability for our services; whoever is given the authority for a particular task will be held accountable for the fulfillment of that task.

Some of the questions your group can ask regarding this Concept follow:

- Does your group assign particular tasks to particular people? Does this help ensure that important jobs actually get done?
  - For example, does your group have a greeter or someone to distribute tickets for a ticket meeting? A coffeemaker? A group secretary?
    - Are these appointed people fulfilling their tasks?

- What happens when more than one person or subcommittee is responsible for the same task?
  - How has this turned out? Strong communication between the assigned people or committees is imperative when this does occur. For example, in H&I, members may chair a meeting one week each month. In that case, a group coordinator can help ensure they cover all the meetings.

Sometimes as committee chairs, we have to make tough calls. When a committee or group chairperson requests someone do something, or even harder, asks them *not* to do something, it is sometimes to protect the Fellowship from a Tradition violation or other issue. Do those people accept that chairperson’s request? (If you have never faced this issue in service, keep coming back – you will.) Alternatively, rather than accepting that request, is there backlash, gossip and resentment?

This concept tests our leadership, and sometimes, our humility skills. It shows how important it is that we elect trusted servants who possess the right skills to make the sometimes-difficult decisions. Our leaders must also be thick-skinned because leadership will invite criticism. As one of our former editors of the *NA Way* used to say, “If you stand up, you make a good target.” Service isn’t always easy.

While other people’s behaviors may trigger our response, it is always our responsibility to act appropriately or be prepared to make amends when we do not behave appropriately.

**Tradition Five:** *Each group has but one primary purpose—to carry the message to the addict who still suffers.*

Where to start, where to start. Our primary purpose seems to pretty much says it all. Carrying the NA message—hope and freedom from active addiction—is and should be our main concern. A lot of the other stuff is fluff. Our groups are responsible for carrying the message and we should be unified in purpose to that end. Creating an atmosphere of recovery that is attractive to newcomers is the responsibility of each group. How to employ that is left up to the groups.

One way we do that is for our meetings to start and stop on time. We fail to do that, in my opinion, when we spend meeting time discussing homegroup finances, literature reports, etc., during the meeting time. One of my pet peeves is to attend a one-hour meeting that wastes 10 minutes that could be devoted to sharing by members and newcomers that is instead used for the earlier named purposes.

We as a group share a responsibility to create an atmosphere of recovery, and not just for newcomers. As an addict who still suffers myself occasionally, I need to be in that atmosphere where I can share what’s really going on and hope that there’s someone there who can offer me some direction. That is what a homegroup does for me.

When we come together as a group, our first task is to carry the message of recovery. Everything else needs to take a back seat. Socializing with our friends during meeting time is a prime example, coming in late and hugging everyone there after the meeting has started is another.

Meeting time is for meetings, period.

*Tom T.*

**Q&A**

Q. Back in the day, the old timers (who may have had a few years more than us or even just a few months) used to tell us, "Don't tell me anything where the statute of limitations has not run." Haven't heard that in many years. Dump that stuff with a priest.

Q. Did you do your Fifth Step with your sponsor or with another person such as clergy? What do you feel is the most important spiritual principle behind the 5th step?

A. The important thing for me was honesty. I wasn't immediately capable of complete honesty; it was more important to be as honest as I could be then. Similarly, I was told to write anything that I didn't want to. The things I was eager to tell were probably all b.s. And it was true. I learned the hard way not to write down anything I can't afford to have someone read. No matter where you put it, someone snoopy person may find it.

A. I was sure when I was in treatment that I'd be sharing that with a preacher—somebody I didn't know. Turned out to be my sponsor. Find someone you trust, really trust, to work all the steps with.

A. My first 5th step was with a nun named Mary Fran. She had such a calming demeanor that I trusted her. I'm not Catholic or religious in that aspect she was a staff member at the treatment center I went to. It just made sense to do it with her because I trusted her. I didn't trust anyone then. We burned it afterward. It was very therapeutic to do that. I didn't need that baggage anymore; I needed to release it. I've done many 5th steps since then and they are all therapeutic but that 1st one was a huge burden lifted off me. I'll never forget that feeling. Mary Fran had nothing but love for me. No judgment at all. It was life-changing.

## UPCOMING EVENTS

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Check out [Arizona-NA.ORG](http://Arizona-NA.ORG) for more Details

<b>Game Group – Ray of Hope</b>	Saturday, May 3 <sup>rd</sup> , 10 <sup>th</sup> , 17 <sup>th</sup> , 24 <sup>th</sup> , 31 <sup>st</sup> 2-4PM
<b>Spring Fling Picnic</b>	Sunday, May 3 <sup>rd</sup> 5:00pm
<b>Bingo De Mayo</b>	Sunday May 3 <sup>rd</sup> 1:30-3:30pm
<b>Baseball Fundraiser</b>	Sunday, May 18 <sup>th</sup> 10:00am-4:00pm
<b>ARCNA</b>	Friday May 30 <sup>th</sup> – Monday June 1 <sup>st</sup>
<b>EV Skyline Serenity Hike</b>	Saturday May 24 <sup>th</sup> 9:45am
<b>Sedona Campout</b>	Thursday May 29 <sup>th</sup> - Monday June 1 <sup>st</sup>

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

# 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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**18160 N MAYA ANGELOU DR  
MARICOPA, AZ 85139**