



### **The Message of Narcotics Anonymous**

**“An addict, any addict can stop using drugs, lose the desire to use and find a new way to live.”**

#### **NA's Basic Suggestions**

- Attend 90 Meetings in 90 Days
- Get a Home Group
- Get a Sponsor and work the 12 Steps
- Change People, Places & Things
- Call Other Recovering Addicts Daily
- Don't Use No Matter What
- Read NA Literature

#### **Suncoast Area 24 hour NA Helpline:**

Find a meeting, talk to another recovering addict:  
**(941) 257-5055**

#### **Suncoast Area Website:**

**[www.suncoastna.org](http://www.suncoastna.org)**

#### **NA World Services Website:**

**[www.na.org](http://www.na.org)**

#### **Newsletter Contact:**

Please forward contributions to:

**[Newsletter@suncoastna.org](mailto:Newsletter@suncoastna.org)** and complete the

**Submission Release Form** located at:

**[www.suncoastna.org/newslettercommittee](http://www.suncoastna.org/newslettercommittee)**

The opinions expressed herein are those of the individual contributors, and do not necessarily reflect the opinions of the Newsletter or NA as a whole. We welcome any feedback in accordance with the Second Tradition. Please indicate if you would like that feedback published.

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**"WE LEARN TO RESPECT THE SPIRIT IN ONE  
ANOTHER" -LIVING CLEAN-**

## **A MOMENT OF CLARITY**

The Basic Text tells us to “act as if” until it becomes so. Even if we don't believe in a god we pray anyway. Even if we're terrified of crowds we extend a hand to the newcomer or attend an N.A. function offering our service to help on a committee. Each time we force ourselves to step out of our comfort zone and try something new, a new door appears before us, opens and reveals some new aspect of ourselves making us a little richer, a little more whole, a little more of the person we were meant to be.

Maybe our sponsor tells us to go to a meeting and share some of our own experience. I know when that happened for me, my hand went up and my mind went blank. It took a long time for me to even remember what I wanted to say, and an even longer time to get over the idea that everyone else had such profound thoughts and no one would be interested in the dull thoughts I had. My sponsor said to pray for honesty and that what came out of my mouth would be truth from the heart and a loving higher power and not from my head. Even today, when someone comes up to me after a meeting to say thanks and that my experience helped them to connect, I can't remember what it was I said.

Truth is, it only came through me. Sometimes while sharing in a meeting I will have one of those “ah ha!” moments where whatever I'm saying comes together, makes some sense and becomes a part of me. As soon as I've said “ah ha” that thought bursts like a bubble and slithers down inside me and the same breath it took to say “Ah” becomes a part of me and is lost to my analytical consciousness.

I just know that somehow I've changed in some small way and somewhere there was an “ah ha” moment that made a difference.

Thanks for letting me share.

**-Sandy-**





## **Our Local Members Share**

### **12 FANTASTIC REASONS FOR KEEPING A JOURNAL** **(CONTINUED)**

Occasionally, the concept of journal writing comes up in an NA meeting. This might be an easy suggestion to dismiss. But like many of the NA suggestions, the actual benefit does not become fully apparent until the action takes place. So, my suggestion is just to begin. But if you need some additional encouragement, here are 12 fantastic reasons for keeping a journal:

1. To see the change: One definition of a spiritual awakening is a profound shift in our own personal perspective on how we see the world. While our literature tells us a spiritual awakening is “inevitable” when we do the step work, for some of us it’s a slow and subtle change, interspersed with moments of epiphany. When we journal on a regular basis we can start to see the milestones of the changes in our thoughts over time. Early entries might reflect our frustration of life on life’s terms, while later entries, after some experience with step work, show a greater understanding and reflect a calmer, kinder, and more insightful view of the world. While we are in either of these states the subtle nuances may be missed; seeing them written in our own hand brings some clarity to the changes slowly evolving in our thought process. Flipping back and forth to journal entries that show these changes is a great motivation to continue, and solid proof of how NA is working in our lives.
2. To purge our minds: Let’s face it, sometimes we just need to vent. Calling a sponsor or sharing at a meeting can be helpful, but having a journal and a pen at the ready can offer us an immediate outlet for our frustrations. There is something very gratifying about complaining or purging in a forum that no one else is privy to. Often this is enough to help us understand and process the issue. Sometimes seeing our own complaint on paper can help us view it from a different angle or identify something we missed when it was merely a thought in our mind. Pausing to write, in and of itself, can be a great benefit as well, by keeping us from saying or doing something we might later regret.
3. To locate patterns: As addicts, our lives had become dominated by unhelpful, destructive, and uncontrollable patterns. We were at the mercy of behaviors we simply could not stop doing. As addicts in recovery, we are likely to still fall prey to destructive habits, whether in the way we treat certain people in our lives, how we always react in specific situations, or even to the language or attitudes that we resort to on a regular basis. Keeping a journal of the simple, mundane things we do on a daily basis will necessarily begin to show us these patterns. When we begin to see recurring entries of “I got into another fight with my boss today” over and over, we may start to identify certain areas of our lives where our thinking and actions are stuck. Locating these patterns, combined with a commitment to change, will absolutely enhance the quality of our lives and make living life on life’s terms much easier to do.
4. To pray: Our literature tells us that praying is a way to ask our higher power questions and meditation is where we can listen for the answers. For me, in early recovery, I found it somewhat uncomfortable to actually kneel down and pray. However, writing came naturally and fluidly. One day while journaling, my writing simply came out as a prayer. I had journaled about something with which I was struggling, and I ended my journal entry with “God, please guide me in this situation and help me to live in your will, not mine.” From there, further prayer entries became more and more detailed, as needed. I had discovered my own best way to pray.
5. To show our gratitude: It is often suggested that we addicts make a gratitude list. All too often we focus on the negative and we easily fall into a ‘poor me’ attitude. Actually identifying and writing down some things for which we are grateful has an unbelievable ability to turn our thinking around. It can be as simple as listing things like gratitude for a sunny day or for a cool breeze. The more we do it the more we realize that there is actually a lot to be thankful for. These lists tend to grow over time and our thoughts naturally become more positive in everyday living. We may be astounded by the changes which occur in us simply by having more gratitude and by taking the time to write those things down.
6. To tap into our subconscious: A hallmark of addictive thinking is the addict’s ability to slip into delusional thought and to settle comfortably into a posture of denial. This space can be seen as a disconnect between our conscious thought (thoughts we are aware of) and our subconscious thought (thoughts we think and things we believe that are not readily apparent to us). In psychological terms, when those two sets of thoughts are in opposition, they cause what is known as ‘cognitive dissonance.’ Cognitive dissonance is a barrier to serenity and the way to help alleviate it is to become aware of what is going on in our subconscious thought. The technique of ‘flow of consciousness’ is a method which can be used to take the ‘thinking’ out of the role of ‘filtering’ our thought. This technique is very simple: we begin by writing whatever thoughts pop into our mind in one big flow of writing. We can abandon grammar, punctuation, even coherency, and just write absolutely everything that we are thinking in that moment. We don’t stop to self-edit, we simply keep writing and writing. It does not need to flow and transition from one idea into the next in any structured way. The intent is to get our hand moving in such a way that our subconscious thoughts come out onto the paper without any willful thinking or over thinking; it’s one big flow. When doing this regularly we might be surprised to find out that there are things we have been thinking about that we had no idea we were thinking about! When we identify these items, it can then be helpful to examine these ideas with our thinking mind. After a flow of consciousness exercise, we can write some structured thoughts in our journal about what we have uncovered in the flow of consciousness. Recognizing and reconciling our opposing thoughts and beliefs contributes to an overall feeling of contentment. Journaling is a fantastic tool for this.

***Submission by Charlie L. (Continued on Page 2)***

## ***Our Local Members Share (Cont.)***

### **12 FANTASTIC REASONS FOR KEEPING A JOURNAL (CONTINUED)**

7. To practice honesty: It's been said that none of us make it to NA brimming with honesty. Most of us have a difficult time in this area. While it is very important to find someone in NA with whom we can become honest, we may have had very little practice with this, and fear and mistrust is common. Journaling what we are really feeling, with rigorous honesty, allows us to start this process and reap the rewards of being honest with less apparent risk. This becomes a prelude to taking the step of being honest with another human being. Simply commit to being honest in your journaling. Write down what you are really feeling, however odd you may feel in doing it. The truth is already the truth; we need to get comfortable living in the truth, and our journal can be the perfect starting point. But remember to keep your journal in a safe and secure place so that you will not hesitate to write whatever you need to write without fear.
8. To enjoy some down time: When I first started to journal it felt a bit forced and my writing was somewhat stilted. There were other things I'd rather have been doing. But it only took a few days to 'find my voice' in my journaling and it started to feel like I was benefitting. Certainly part of that benefit was simply giving myself some quiet down time to reflect upon my own thoughts in a peaceful and relaxed setting. I began to get up a little early to journal for 20 minutes before work. We get so used to the 'just in time' method for getting to work that we completely miss how unbelievably peaceful and serene the early morning can be. In this sense, quiet journaling can be its own form of meditation. On those days when I take the time to journal before work I seem to have a more relaxed attitude throughout the day.
9. To reflect on the day: Journaling at night before bed is an excellent way to review our behavior to see if our actions are lining up with the changes we need to make in practicing our new way of life. Together with our decision to practice at being honest, this reflection is a sure way to change. Writing down what went right and wrong, and why, is feedback to ourselves and leads to continual improvement when done regularly. This improvement leads to feelings of esteem and contentment.
10. To make amends: A journal entry can take the form of a letter or message to someone who is no longer with us, absent from our lives, or who might be harmed by our contact. We may want to regularly communicate in this way, with no intention of ever sharing these writings with anyone. It might also be beneficial to incorporate comments to a higher power into this dialog.
11. To forgive: Forgiveness is for us, not necessarily for the other person. There may be people in our lives we are not ready or willing or able to face directly to forgive. When we forgive, the anger or pain inside of us can be let go. Journal entries offering our forgiveness can help clear up our own blockages to serenity and foster a sense of peace. Journaling can also serve as a baby step to a direct statement of forgiveness.
12. To make self-affirmations: Many self-help books champion the effectiveness of making self-affirmations, statements to ourselves reinforcing our worthiness or strengths. We can also affirm our own love for ourselves in a healthy, positive way. Our sponsor can help us to figure out some appropriate affirmations which make sense for us, and we can then incorporate those things into our journal entries to reinforce our value and self worth.

#### ***Submission by Charlie L.***

I close my eyes and open my heart, power down the visual reception, amp up the intuitive perception, I listen for the gentle roll of waves on the ocean with each breath taken, Brain is in slumber for the spirit to awaken. I find grace in this moment, I find gratitude in this now. I give thanks for this life, though I don't know how. My best thinking killed me, of this I am sure, a gift from above, and a chance to mature. Shed from the bondage of a shell of a life, an existence full of Fear, sorrow and strife. I'm here today, and for that reason alone, I know I'm living a life that's not my own. I give credit where credit is due, a power greater than me, greater than you. I close my eyes and open my heart, ready for this new life to start..

-Derrick H-





# NA Around The World



*The Narcotics Anonymous Fellowship is a world wide fellowship. The following content is brought to you from NA areas around the globe. (Sources NA.org, NA Way Magazine)*

## Recovery In The Jungle

### **One Keytag...**

One Sunday when we were in the refugee camp at Calais, France, we were building a shelter for an Iranian family. One of the Iranian fellows congregating near us sat talking with me in his broken English. He offered me a smoke of his joint, which I obviously declined, and we continued to talk some more, with him saying that unless he made it to England he would kill himself, as he had no other options. Such is the desperate and hopeless nature of the Calais Jungle.

In my efforts to offer this wretched man some hope, I said he couldn't know what would happen, that you never know how life can change. "Look at my husband," I said, pointing to my husband as he built a shelter. "He was a heroin addict, homeless, in jails and hospitals, and now we have a family, health, and love in our lives." The man went quiet, and then asked me if I had heard of NA! I said I had, but he didn't believe me until I showed him my NA keytag—and then he started crying.

It turns out that this guy—this one man in 6,000+ living in the refugee camp whom I happened to talk to—had been six and a half years clean in Iran. He fled Iran and found himself in the arse end of humanity, his last hope, the Calais Jungle; and in desperation he relapsed. Now, at this darkest point when his faith was lost, his higher power reminded him that he is still involved, still a part of the NA Fellowship.

Six thousand people in that camp, and our ragtag little crew ended up talking to him. It blows my tiny mind. When has the phrase "never alone, never again" been more apt?

Since then, we have worked with other NA members from London, Brighton, and other locations in England and with several French NA members. We obtained Farsi literature and started meetings there in the refugee camp. Today a daily meeting with about 25 "local" members who live in the camp continues to meet.

*-Amanda A, Lancashire, England -*

### **...and twelve steps**

What can I add to Amanda's testimony? The English NA members have been incredibly supportive, implementing the meeting and coming over several times from the beginning. Our outreach committee, Comité Aide aux Groupes (CAG), and individual French members have supported it, too, traveling there almost every Saturday. The support and coordination of the few Farsi-speaking NA members in Paris (including a guy who once lived in the Calais Jungle) are extremely valuable, as none of the Iranian members in the Calais Jungle speak French or English.

The first meeting took place Saturday, 28 November 2015, with three "local" addicts (camp residents) plus a dozen English and French addicts. One month later, there were 18 people at the meeting, including 15 Jungle locals! Most of them are Iranians, as the meeting is held in Farsi, but also because there are many thousands of meetings in Iran and so many people who know the NA program.

When we go over, we attend the meeting and we usually try to support them in some other ways, too—maybe some public information/relations service or helping to build a wooden shelter, for example. As we all know, this experience works both ways: for them, who sometimes feel so desperate, and at the same time full of determination; for us, whose the round-trip by car (seven hours) is always filled with laughter and sharing. And together, during the meeting, we all experience the strength of the program, the feeling of NA fellowship, and of a higher power binding us together, beyond culture and beyond language barriers. This is the meaning that comes to us through the Twelve Steps.

*-Arnaud A, Paris, France -*

## Recovery Word Find

C D R V G P F L S L S M Q L Q Y H U B Q L P V U R  
 Z L M E H J W I U P N Z W A W J X T O X V S W E T  
 H S E Y W J L B I O O F E D H B J E C H W C C G H  
 Z A C A F Y Z R Z K I B V C Z Y C E W X T O R E V  
 P N W H N Z I H W S T Q V C N A D M I T V R Y Q S  
 D A H K F T P I G A I M D P S E C H S E J C I A I  
 Z M B Y U K I V N G D M Y J S C I S R X U S R Q O  
 T Z T A C P C M O O A V C B H B E R S T C E F E D  
 R Q L L Z Z T E E B R G O Y O L E V E S H Y I T Y  
 D L P S Y Q Q F T H T U S O R N L S X P R Q R T B  
 Y B Z K S M Y B D C N K M E T K T J T E X X O L T  
 Q I J L K R S N E Y L X W K C C T W F B Z E B W H  
 T S N V B N J A G E F O H F O S E R R A F D P O W  
 X S J L E N W A E H P T Y B M B S L B G E N C Q S  
 C Y Q K E J G K C K J Z A V I K Z E Z J S J V B O  
 Q Z A Y W H Z Q H K Z U K I N L Z M C Q J W Y C L  
 I W R N L U U D S Z F Q Q M G O Z K A O W U F L K  
 A N O N Y M O U S T Z R D F S C V L I Z R R Q Y W  
 E B B M N I M N I U E M Z B Q G H Q R F N P A U H  
 D P O J Y L A K A Y Q P C P E F Z O Y F K I M I G  
 K W N W H I R F W Z T R S D H K Z L S L G Z P Q Q  
 I H O W S T G D H M V H X Q K G S C U M L E X Y S  
 Q F N W X Y O K B Y K Q G B P Y C R L S I P A U M  
 Y T O Q I H R G E L D O W T J S E P L M Y N Q O A  
 M E C N A T P E C C A G H N B K L D B D N Q Z J W

## Word Checklist

ACCEPTANCE  
 ADMIT  
 ANONYMOUS  
 AWAKEN  
 CLEAN TIME  
 DEFECTS  
 EXPERIENCE  
 HUMILITY  
 POWERLESS  
 PROCESS  
 PROGRAM  
 RECOVER  
 SHORTCOMINGS  
 SPIRITUALLY  
 STEPS  
 TRADITIONS

If you solve the puzzle let the newsletter know for an honorable mention.

Last Issues crossword winner is Tony C.  
Way to go!!!

## You spoke and we listened.

Henceforth, our newsletter will print anniversaries only *after* they occur and *only* when reported by email or GSR Report. For inclusions: Please e-mail [newsletter@suncoastna.org](mailto:newsletter@suncoastna.org) or tell your GSR to submit it after it happens into your GSR report.

## ANNIVERSARIES

### Call Group

Laura - 1 Year

### Girls Gone Good

Nikki M - 3 Years

Jessica C - 18 Months

Bonnie R - 3 Years

### Life Boat Group

Ronnie C - 1 Year

### Men's Meeting

TJ - 2 Years

### New Directions

Gordon - 13 Years

### Peace In The Morning

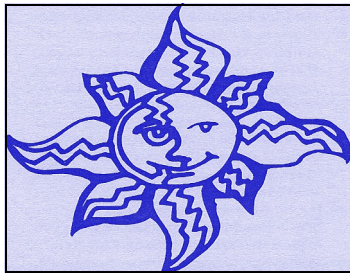
Eric - 13 Years

### Recovery By The Books

Kate - 6 Years







## SUNCOAST AREA ANNOUNCEMENTS

For directions to meetings go to: [www.suncoastna.org](http://www.suncoastna.org)  
Or call the NA Helpline (941) 257-5055  
For meetings outside the Suncoast Area, go to: [www.na.org](http://www.na.org)  
(NA is not affiliated with any meeting facility)



### Groups In Need of Support

**Never Alone**—Gratitude Club, Mon-Fri 10am

**The Lifeboat Meeting**—Siesta Key Chapel-Tues.6:30pm

**Frontline Group** 833 Magellan Dr. Tues-7pm

**Wednesday Night Bonfire**—6926 15th St. E.-7:30pm

**Just For Today**—222 S. Palm-Sat-7:30am

**Living Clean**—Gratitude Club, Fri. 6:45pm

**Tradition 12**—3773 Wilkinson Rd. Sarasota, FL 34233-  
Tues.-8:15pm-St. Wilfred's Church

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### New Meetings

**Together We Can- Special Interest L,G,B,T NA Meeting** - Saturdays 1:30 pm UCC Congregational 3700 26th St W, Bradenton, FL 34205 (all addicts welcome)

Meeting is held in room in back of church.

**Message in the Moonlight** Siesta Public Beach near the Fire Station— Saturday-10pm

**Keeping It Green**—4850 State Rd. 64 East-Sunday-7:15pm

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**High Hopes Group** Mon.-8pm has moved from The Church of the Cross to The Sarasota Family Worship Center 3341 Gocio Rd.

**Waves of Recovery**— Meeting will be returning on March 15th Tuesday 7-8 PM and the Sun morning beach meeting will be returning as well at 10:15am.

**Frontline Group**, long standing in our local NA community is now a “hot dog” meeting and in need of support.

**Tradition 12**, New Time and Location: 3773 Wilkinson Rd. St Wilfred's Church, 8:15pm Tuesday

**Admission of Defeat**— New Time and Location— St. Wilfred's Church, 3773 Wilkinson Rd. Sarasota, FL Thursday 8:00 PM

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"SELF-SUPPORT IS A SPIRITUAL PRINCIPAL, AND LEARNING TO SUPPORT OUR OWN SPIRITS IS A CRITICAL PART OF OUR DEVELOPMENT."  
-LIVING CLEAN-

### Fellowship Development Committee (FDC)

**Resources meet at 1:30pm**

**FDC Committee meets at 2:30pm**

**Area Service Committee meets at 4:00pm**

Second Sunday of the month

at

**Our Lady Queen Of Martyrs Church**  
833 Magellan Drive, Sarasota FL

Our Area Service Committee and FDC Committee are in need of trusted servant like YOU!!!

To find out more and what positions are available go to [suncoastna.org](http://suncoastna.org) and come to the monthly service meetings to get involved.

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"SERVICE IS THE BACKBONE OF NARCOTICS ANONYMOUS"

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**There are many volunteer opportunities to serve listed on our regional website. Go to [naflorida.org](http://naflorida.org) and click on “help wanted”**

**Help us be responsible caretakers of NA funds.**

The Literature Committee is asking that unused meeting lists be returned to them for recycling.

Groups are asked to note on GSR reports how many new meeting lists they received and how many are unused at the end of the meeting list cycle (every two months). We also ask that you return any unused Newsletters so they can be recycled to institutions that do not receive literature.

### *The Helpline Needs Help!*

Please help our helpline remain available to addicts needing meeting times, meeting locations or just another addict on the other end of a phone.

Helpline meets at FDC, second Sunday of the month.