



# North Pittsburgh News

North Pittsburgh Area of Narcotics Anonymous Newsletter

PO BOX 10 - Glenshaw, PA 15116-0010  
October 2013

Your basic newsletter

NorthPittsburghNA.ORG  
Volume 003



**M**any of us may have heard the phrase, “Atmosphere of Recovery,” over the last several months and some of us have wondered exactly what it means. “What does atmosphere have to do with recovery?!” we pondered. If we consider atmosphere as the “air we breathe in our groups” we can look around and see if our groups have a loving, welcoming recovery atmosphere. We then may ask ourselves, “How do we create and maintain an atmosphere of recovery? What actions do members need to take to provide the love, warmth and safety so essential to a recovery environment in our groups?” As we may expect, it takes more than “desire.” If each of us is willing to take a step back and look at our group environment like someone who is attending a meeting for the first time, perhaps we will understand what creates an atmosphere of recovery. So, in the position of observer, what will we see? As we approach the meeting entrance, will we see addicts standing outside the group who appear welcoming? Is there a member or two at the front door to welcome

**“There are many ways to start building a recovery atmosphere. We simply need to be willing to start.”**

everyone to the meeting – whether they are addicts or visitors? Will we see those new to the group introduced to members and offered informational pamphlets and a meeting schedule? Often, we see groups of addicts talking outside, laughing and having fun, enjoying their recovery and friendships. This is one of the benefits of recovery and something that may be attractive to the newcomer, but sometimes we can get carried away with this activity and not even notice who is walking toward the group. At times, do addicts seem more consumed with their socializing than with actively carrying the message of recovery? At the entrance to the meeting facility, we may see an addict give a hug, say “Welcome,” and return immediately to their conversation with a friend. Do we think the addict who was hugged honestly felt welcomed and will have a desire to come back? Once inside the meeting room, do we see another kind of camaraderie—addicts working together to set up the meeting, laughing together, and also welcoming those sitting alone?

Continued on page 3

# grat·i·tude *noun* [grat-i-tood, -tyood]

:the quality or feeling of being grateful or thankful

*(Tell us what you are grateful for)*

“Being clean”  
–Caitlin P

“Having serenity in my life” –Don M

“My fiancé,  
new job,  
new apartment”  
–Kimmy S

“Being clean today  
and having good  
friends”  
–Jim G

“To be alive”  
–Ben F

“Having a safe  
place to live”  
–Kevin

“The recognition that  
I’m an addict  
and don’t have  
to live like I did”  
–Nick G



“Time spent with  
Peanut (my wife)  
before she died!”

–John M.

“The ability  
to be a father”  
–Chris T

“Life”  
–Bill K

“Having a roof over my head”  
–Ron J

“Family”  
–Tim S

Share your gratitude. Send us something that you are grateful for and we will print it.

Email: [npn@northpittsburghna.org](mailto:npn@northpittsburghna.org)  
or  
North Pittsburgh News  
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## Atmosphere of recovery

As we extend this welcoming hand, are we mindful and respectful of the new members' personal space? Then again, we might see members who have chosen to remain outside the meeting room until the group readings have been read. These members then shuffle into the meeting, still murmuring to each other, bumping into chairs and creating a distraction. These addicts appear to be totally oblivious to the disruptive wave they send through the meeting. Does this sound familiar? Has any group experienced the "loud late comers" or the "constant chatterers" during group readings or sharing? Is this behavior



ad-dressed by group members or does the group membership. Even though we are members of NA when we say we are, belonging to a group is like making an investment in recovery. How often have we heard members refer to meetings and NA as "coming home"? Most homes need ongoing maintenance and a loving atmosphere. Chaos, clutter, and a leaky roof do not provide for an inviting and welcoming Home-Group members may want to take time during their business meeting to discuss all aspects of their meeting atmosphere. Does the meeting have qualities of a "home" atmosphere?

How do we welcome newcomers and help them feel comfortable? What do we do to welcome visitors? How about the addict who is not a newcomer to NA but is new to our meeting? Has the meeting's attendance grown or shrunk? Do our members display respectful attitudes toward everyone at the meeting? And, what are group members willing to do if addicts become disruptive and rude? We need to remember that "recovery" is an action word and that we can keep what we have only with vigilance. The recovery atmosphere can often be enhanced with a well-structured meeting format and a meeting that starts and ends on time. Groups that thoughtfully and carefully choose trusted servants and help newer trusted servants learn how to serve, say, as a leader or chairperson, tend to maintain their atmosphere of recovery. These groups have members who lead by example who "walk what they talk." Their actions demonstrate that they value their recovery and desire to keep their group thriving. These may be the members who offer that welcoming smile and knowing nod as newcomers share. Or they may be the ones who stay after the meeting and invite new attendees out for coffee. There are many ways to start building a recovery atmosphere. We simply need to be willing to start. It is members who create and maintain the atmosphere of recovery within our groups. Each of us has been given the gift of recovery and we can demonstrate our gratitude by reaching out to every person who walks into an NA meeting. As one newcomer said to a member who gave him a smile and hug, "It's been a long time since anyone offered me a hug."

--July 2005 NA Way

## Poetry Corner

Whenever I am down and feeling depressed  
I go to jail to see someone under arrest.

Whenever I am down and feeling depressed  
I go to a detox where I used to go to rest.

Whenever I am down and feeling depressed  
I make a meeting my only quest.

Whenever I am down and feeling depressed  
I call my sponsor and become a pest.

Whenever I am down and feeling depressed  
I thank God for all and know life is the test.

Whenever I am down and feeling depressed  
I think of my hero's who have been laid to rest.

Whenever I am down and feeling depressed  
I think of my friends and know they are the  
best.

Whenever I am down and feeling depressed  
I talk to someone hurting to pump up their  
chest.

Whenever your down and feeling a mess  
Do what I do and you too will hurt less!

*Phil D.*

### *The Newcomer*

I don't feel good  
My stomach hurts  
I'm shaking and  
my skin is crawling  
I'm hot,  
no I'm cold,  
no wait I'm hot  
How do I make it all stop?

Walk into a strange room  
Don't know any of  
these blank faces  
Who are they?  
Where am I?  
I just want to curl up  
in a ball in my bed  
But I know I must stay!

They all smile, and now the hugs  
What do they know that I don't?  
How are they feeling so good?  
I'm so confused,  
I want to go  
But I really must stay!

Now the readings,  
what does it mean?  
How can this help, this can't work  
You want me to stand  
and say who I am  
I feel sick, am I ready for this  
But here I must stay

They are all sharing  
Wait that's how I feel, how do they  
know?  
What's that, it does get better?  
You say you've been there too  
Now I know why I had to stay

I am an addict  
We talk, we pray, we share  
The only way to  
recover is to change  
As long as we stick around,  
and don't pick up  
I know in the rooms I must stay

*Missi M.*

Submit your poems and edible thoughts to us. See the contact information on the last page and make sure to tell us if its a poem or a thought.

# The SoapBox

Opinions of our members

*This is the opinion of a member and does not reflect the opinion of the P.I. Subcommittee or Narcotics Anonymous.*

## Clarity Statement Dilemma ???

*"In Narcotics Anonymous, we are presented with a dilemma. When NA members identify themselves as "addicts and alcoholics," "cross-addicted," or talk about living "clean and sober," the clarity of the NA message is blurred. To speak in this manner suggests that there are two diseases; that one drug is separate from the rest. Narcotics Anonymous makes no distinction between drugs. Our identification as addicts is all-inclusive, allowing us to concentrate on our similarities, not our differences"*

Not NA approved

When I hear "dilemma" I think of what a newcomer may think..."Dilemma? There's a problem here?? What the F#@k are they talking about??

(Also, when I hear "dilemma" I think, there is no dilemma in NA, only problem is folks going outside the literature and trying to change a perfect program.

Thank God nobody told me how to speak when I got here. Built-in rebellion would have chased me out had I heard a statement like this, or, I would have purposely identified myself as something off the wall

The "group" showed me how to speak, pray, ask for help, get a sponsor, work the steps and participate in service. "The group is the most powerful vehicle we have for carrying the message."

If a new person is in our meetings, it is not our business to tell them how to identify themselves. They may not even be an addict, (yet), or never

be. Nobody can tell anyone their an addict. It's an admission an individual needs to make for themselves.....

Are we that insecure as a fellowship, that we are threatened by a word? How many times have we really heard consistent mis-identification?

If groups are strong and focused on the primary purpose, the group power is the guiding force, showing the newcomer how to identify in NA.

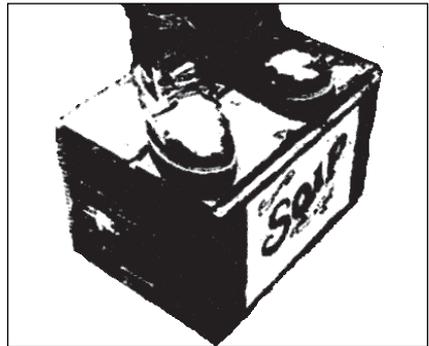
What happened to gently and lovingly speaking with a newcomer after the mtg if needed?

This can be a sponsorship discussion, also.

Last, but not least.....

THERE ARE NO MUSTS IN NA.....?>

--Roberta S.



If you have an opinion and would like others to hear it, send it to us.  
See the contact information on the last page of the newsletter. Make sure to tell us it's an opinion.

## Growing Pains

I will never forget the time I first walked into the rooms of Narcotics Anonymous, I had my beautiful little boy on my hip. It was a whole new world for me to come into these rooms and what made it even harder was that I had no choice but to bring the little guy. During that time he was a toddler, and could not sit still no matter how hard I tried. Although I was a little embarrassed to be there with my child, it was a great way for a good conversation with strangers. I always tried my hardest to keep my son as quiet as possible but it didn't always work. When people would turn around to look at me because he was being disruptive it made me want to run out the door. This was my excuse I used to not come around, because I felt unwelcome with my child. Needless to say I would relapse and come back for a few months and go back out, all because of my son. I decided to leave my sons father and go into a halfway house for women with children, here I learned a lot about being a mother in recovery, which ultimately I believe was when I really wanted this, or so I thought.

When I was released from the program I attended the first thing I did was hit a Friday night meeting, We Is the Key. It felt so good to see familiar faces and they welcomed me and my son **BOTH** back with opened arms. That evening I had went out to eat with everyone after the meeting; there is where I spotted this man. You know being locked in one building with 13 women for 6 months and no man is tough. Needless to say he was pretty good looking, and I just couldn't listen to my sponsor about staying out of a relationship for a year like she had suggested. He later on asked me to marry him. After using and getting clean with him many times I know found out I was pregnant with my 2<sup>nd</sup> son. At this point I had enough I had to get it right this

time, I was just so sick of living this way. I used against my own will since I had my 1<sup>st</sup> son and I just knew that I didn't have another run in me. He left and went to rehab, and my oldest boy and I went to meetings while he was away.

I had got a new sponsor, with a good amount of time and from what I heard was working a great program. I also got a home group, which just was always my favorite meeting and that's why I picked it. My now fiancé came

“These meetings have not only saved my life, but also my family.”

home from rehab and he was in this totally with me. I continued to go to these meetings with my son, my fiancé and my now big old belly. I remember picking up a 90day key tag with “big old belly” being totally embarrassed, because I felt like such a piece of crap that I had done this yet again with another child on the way.

My 2<sup>nd</sup> son was born the day before my 6month anniversary, I remember how bad I just wanted to go get my key tag after I got home, but I had not slept in days and my sponsor suggested for me to get rest, which wasn't a hard suggestion to take. So now here I was with a week old baby and a 4 year old heading to a meeting. Now just so you understand it's not easy to get out of the door to go to a meeting, I can't just pick up and go. I have to pick my fiancé up from work, come home, make dinner, pack a diaper bag, make bottles and pack something for my now 5 year old to do. It's a lot of rushing around and in none of that do I get to do for myself. Now with a year clean this is my life.

I almost always have went to the same meetings, because they are very welcoming to both me and my children. I have gone

to meetings where I do feel unwelcome with my children so therefor I just don't go there anymore. My children are one of the biggest parts of my recovery, this is a family thing for us. It can at times be very overwhelming and I just can't catch a break but I have a great WE and these people offer to help me so I can have time to myself. When I do have time to myself the last thing I want to do is step work, but I make time. If I want a better life for me and my family,

then I have to put in the work, no matter how hard it is. I still have mental break downs, but I have great people to talk to now that help me through these times and steps fall right in at this time also. There is no reason in the world I could find to use, because I honestly don't want to.

My 5 year old is starting to listen now at the meetings to what people talk about, the readings, the prayers etc. This is something I was always scared of facing, and a great excuse I used for not coming. Now I look at this a lot different, this is a lot better than him finding me dead, visiting me in jail or getting taken off of me. So I just simply told him that I go to meetings to talk with my friends and to learn how to become a better person/mommy(which to me is true).

These meetings have not only saved my life, but also my family. I wouldn't want my life any other way and wouldn't change anything about it. It has made me the person I am today and it is only getting better from here. It's not always easy bringing your whole family to a meeting, but it sure is worth it!

--Alicia L.

## Upcoming Events

### NEASCNA Learning Day

November 16, 2013 - Saturday 12-5PM

H&I Workshop 1PM  
 PI Workshop 2PM  
 Activities 3PM  
 Literature 4PM  
 Speakers on Various Service Positions  
*St. Thomas Church  
 4th Street and Delaware  
 Oakmont*

### Bergen Area Convention

Monday December 30, 2013 - Wednesday January 1, 2014

New Year, New Life 20 Believe The Unseen 2014

*Hanover Marriott  
 1401 Route 10 East  
 Whippany, NJ*

Book your room \$99/night, call 800-242-8681 and mention code BASCNA to get the discounted group rate.

### 12 Traditions Workshop

November 30th Sunday 12PM-5PM

St. Marks Lutheran Church  
 126 W. Pennsylvania Ave  
 New Stanton, PA  
 (Before Cracker Barrel)



### Events to look for later this year

More Will be revealed

North Pittsburgh Holiday Dance - December 2013

Bowling! - March 2013

### Start To Live XXXI Convention

November 21-24, 2013

NEW - Four days this year!

NEW! - Online registration

at [www.starttolive31.com](http://www.starttolive31.com)

Seven Springs Mountain Resort

777 Waterwheel Drive

Seven Springs PA 15622

### North Pittsburgh Area Service Committee Meeting

Dates are listed below There is always a need for people to help out. See your GSR for more information on how to give back.

#### December 7th

3:30PM H&I. 4:00PM Activities Committee, 4:30PM GSR Orientation and 5:00PM Area Service

Berkeley Hills Lutheran • Church 517 Sangree Road • Pittsburgh PA 15237



# Free coffee at these meetings that need support!

## Free Coffee!

*All you can drink*

### Talking Text

Friday, 6:40PM

Nativity Lutheran Church  
4518 Mount Royal Boulevard  
Allison Park, 15101

Donation is optional, but suggested.



## Free Coffee!

*All you can drink*

### Vets And Friends

Thursday 7:30PM

Veterans Service Center  
945 Washington Blvd Pittsburgh  
Larimer, 15206

Donation is optional, but suggested.



## Free Coffee!

*All you can drink*

### Chapter 7: Relapse & Recovery

Friday 12:00PM

Door of Hope Church  
5225 Holmes Street  
Lawrenceville, 15201

Donation is optional, but suggested.



## Free Coffee!

*All you can drink*

### Staying Clean For Dummies

Tuesday 7:30PM

Ingomar Methodist Church  
501 West Ingomar Road  
Ingomar, 15237

Donation is optional, but suggested.



## What is Public Information?

Public Information is a committee that informs the public about recovery from the disease of addiction through the Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions of Narcotics Anonymous.

We provide community awareness of what NA is, as well as how, when and where we are available. We accomplish this through presentations, our website, newsletter, and responding to requests for speakers and/or information about NA from the community.

To get involved in the North Pittsburgh Area Public Information Subcommittee you only need 24 hours clean and the willingness to help. We meet at:

**Emmanuel Christian Church**  
1427 Davis Ave  
Brighton Heights, 15212

At 6PM on the last Thursday of every month. Please join us and remember:

***"If you're not giving back, you're stealing!"***

North Pittsburgh News is brought to you by the Public Information subcommittee of the North Pittsburgh Area Service Committee of Narcotics Anonymous. We are always looking for your contributions and wisdom to print in our newsletter. If you have something to share, please send it to:

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