



# North Pittsburgh News

North Pittsburgh Area of Narcotics Anonymous Newsletter

PO BOX 10 - Glenshaw, PA 15116-0010  
January 2014

Your basic newsletter

NorthPittsburghNA.ORG  
Volume 004

## The Miracle of Freedom

Thank God I am here—clean, alive, and with you. When I review my childhood, the first thing I remember is fear. I used to live in constant anxiety and stress all the time.

At six, I knew completely the meanings of three words: divorce, isolation, and suicide. I was nine when I started to read serious psychological books, searching for studies on children who suffered as I did. I wanted to know how to heal the pain I felt. At that time, I did not know why I was the way I was. I would think it was because of my parents' constant fighting. I blamed my parents for whatever unhappiness came to me. Later on, I would even accuse them of being the cause of my addiction.

I felt an emptiness and insecurity deep inside. Like every other child, I had nightmares sometimes, but mine would affect me in a really bad way. I used to analyze them and then go into a long-term depression.

When I entered into my teenage years, I filled the emptiness I felt inside with whatever I found at hand. One day, I would grasp onto religion, which I understood at that time; the next day, it would be politics. Sometimes it was sports, and sometimes arts.

One day, I thought that I would feel differently about myself if I became famous, so I started writing short stories just to become a famous writer. I was talented in many fields, but as soon as I started making any progress I would become fearful, shut down, and step backward.

I had an idea of being like a hippie and reaching peace; however, the only thing that was hippie-like about me was my appearance! I learned different methods of meditation and grasped onto eastern philosophies. Finally I came to the conclusion that only love could help me find peace.

So, I fell in love. Actually, I fell in love with love. The love I knew at that time was different from what I know today, but at that time it was a real love to me. I got married to an intellectual addict with whom I was in love. He meant everything to me. I did not know that I was a sick person with all the signs of addiction: dependency on something outside me, lack of self-confidence, selfish and self-centered, too

sensitive, easily annoyed, deciding quickly without thinking, denying and dreaming instead of coping with reality.

Anyway, I started using heroin with my husband. The first time I used it, I thought I had finally found God. The feeling was great, a sort of peace and indifference mixed with loving everything and everyone. Actually, I had already started using alcohol and tranquilizers a few months earlier to kill the pain I felt from watching my husband drown in his own addiction.

I started to think that I could relieve all the pains of life by using drugs. For one year it worked for me. After that, the "dark age" of my addiction began and pushed me into a nonstop nightmare that lasted for five years.

I started telling lies to avoid my responsibilities. I had a job, and three days a week I would tell them a lie so as not to go to the office. I started to sell my things, even my clothes. Naturally, that did not get me the money I needed, since my heroin use was increasing, so I lied to everyone to get cash from them.

During the weekends I would go to sleep at midnight—well, honestly, it was not really sleeping, it

"Funny thing was that I used to "sniff," and I thought that only those who fixed heroin were the real addicts."

was a coma—and wake up eighteen or nineteen hours later when it was dark again.

At these times, I would be scared to death. I would lose any sense of time, and some-

times I could not recognize where I was, so I would start crying uncontrollably.

Every night I had terrible nightmares about Satan. I would wake up terrified, shouting and crying. I was scared of dying, and I believed that God had especially hard punishment waiting for me when I did. Sometimes I felt like my heart would skip a beat, and my stomach was on fire. I had a bad overdose experience once and lost four days.

There were times when my mother would come to visit me, but even though I loved her, I could not wait for her to leave so that I could use again. She was not aware of my heroin addiction.

I lost her one year later. She had a heart attack, and I was sure it was because of the big pressure of my life on her shoulders, since she had supported me financially and emotionally.

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

“Starting a New Year  
positive”  
–Larry W

“Just do what you do  
and do it well”  
–Suyash R

“To be alive”  
–Ben F

“Had a great week full of  
service”  
–Justin G

“For being inspired  
by others for seeking a  
solution for the quiet,  
peace, and stillness of  
my home”

–Joelle K



“The ability to do  
what’s right even  
though it’s uncom-  
fortable”

–Keith E..

“Grateful to dance  
without the need for  
a substance”

–Bill F

“To be alive”  
–Steve J

“This year go the right way, even if  
you’re going alone”

–Guy B

“I am free”  
–Dennis F.

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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# The Miracle of Freedom

After her death I became totally miserable. I could not see the sky or tell you what the weather was like. My window curtains were always closed. It did not matter if it was cold or warm, snowy or rainy, or even if there was an earthquake or a war happening. I had become a numb, selfish person. I lost my job. I did not have any money.

Day after day I woke up thinking how I could get my drugs for that day. I begged people for money. I could see people watching me in a strange way. I knew I had a problem, but I did not accept or admit to myself that I was an addict. Funny thing was that I used to “sniff,” and I thought that only those who fixed heroin were the real addicts.

My family pushed me to get divorced, and so I did. I do not even remember the day my husband and I got divorced. After that, I was totally alone, and I felt so lonely. I cried a lot, whether I used drugs or not. Each night I asked God to let me die; when I woke up the next day I would curse Him for opening my eyes. I tried a number of ways to quit using or substitute other drugs for heroin. For example, I went on a trip abroad so that I could be far away from heroin, but from the first day on the road I started drinking a lot, and as soon as I got back home I rushed to my heroin again.

I substituted with many other drugs, but always came back to my favorite one. I did not know of another way, and I grew so weary of asking God to save me. I started, instead, asking Him to let me just die.

During the worst days of my loneliness, I could not even eat or bathe. I was unconscious most of the time, and I could not look in the mirror without seeing the beast named Atussa. Then, all of a sudden, my neighbor called me to see someone.

The “someone” was an NA member, and he gave me the recovery message. I was high when he was talking to me, and I remember thinking that he was not an addict like me because I could not believe an addict could be so happy and energetic!

The next day I went to buy enough drugs to kill myself. As soon as I put the lines down to sniff, the doorbell rang. I was selling the rest of my stuff, and one of my neighbors was interested in buying something. I had to put down everything so that I could deal with my neighbor. When I got back, I noticed that another neighbor had removed all my drugs after the NA member had called and asked her to do so.

Well, I realized that this may be the time to give up, so I gave up. That NA friend became my sponsor, and I came to the program and into recovery.

I started to work my First Step. It was long, and I thought the more I wrote, the more I would understand the program. I was about two months clean when I started to see my ex-husband. I stopped going to the meetings, saying that I had trouble hearing the people sharing, the meetings were boring, and I knew basically everything there was to know about NA.

Needless to say, at two months clean, I relapsed. That relapse opened my eyes, and I came to understand that our program is not a joke. I admitted that I was powerless over my addiction. I started taking small steps forward by working the steps, going to meetings, sharing in the meetings, contacting my sponsor and other NA friends, and not using for the first time, just for today.

I was again two months clean when I found a good job in a good atmosphere; I still work there. I rented a flat for myself in which I now feel great peace. I made many friends inside and outside NA who really trust me.

The world trust had become alien to me. No one trusted me, and I did not trust anyone either. But after a while in recovery, people started to trust me again. My family—my only brother and his family—welcomed me back to their home.

I came to understand my God and love in a new way. As my relationship with God grew stronger, I saw many miracles happening in my life. I could see the signs. After I got clean, it seemed like every single person was put in my life by God, and they were like angels for me.

My second sponsor, from the farthest part of the world, appeared in my life through a miracle. I learned that I should share all my experiences with NA and non-NA friends to guarantee my recovery. I became aware of, for the first time, those spiritual principles I had been searching for my whole life—honesty, acceptance, surrender, willingness, hope, patience, open-mindedness, love and, finally, freedom. Today I am free. I am not doomed to do things that are not good for me. Today I am not compelled to tell lies, and I am not afraid of who I am. I have come to know myself better through the steps.

Today my surrender is not only to my powerlessness over my addiction; I am surrendering my defects of character. Many defects that would have bothered me for a lifetime are fading as my willingness to surrender them increases.

I believe the most valuable gift NA has given me is the ability to focus my awareness on the moment I am living now. I am no longer nostalgic, rewinding and replaying my past, feeling guilt or self-pity, nor am I looking at my future with stress and anxiety. I have learned to live in the present and do my best, just for today. Now I can experience the peace I had been chasing my whole life. Today I can look in the mirror and smile, thanks to God and the NA program.

--Atussa G, Tehran, Iran

## Food For Thought

The difficulty we meet with in reaching our goal is the shortest path to it.

One's schooling is no indication of one's wisdom.

Winter always turns to spring!

The wise are sensitive to right and wrong; they cease doing anything as soon as they see that it is wrong, and they appreciate those who call their attention to it.

Until we learn the lessons inherent in unpleasant experiences, they will continue to hold power over us, and we will feel compelled to repeat them.

An unhappy person and a happy one will have different perceptions of the same circumstances.

Everything you need to break unhealthy cycles of behavior is within you.



There is a monster who lives in my head, He talks to me softly he wants me dead.

He tells me this time I'll stay in control. He tells me not to let anyone know.

He convinces me that no one cares, He whispers the pain is too much to bear.

He tells me how wonderful I will feel. He tells me he loves me and it is real.

He tells me not to call anyone, My heart starts racing, he tells me it will

## Poetry Corner

be fun.

He tells me not to think of past times, He promises I can do it just once this time

Who is this monster who calls me by name, RELAPSE, he waiting to start the game.

I am your friend, the only true companion you have.

I am with you when you are lonely;

I am with you when you are sad.

I am with you when you feel withdrawn and when the world is cruel.

I hide the heckler's words and block the missiles thrown in ignorance and anger.

I shelter you from the storms and I shield you from your fears.

I am your friend. I walk with you daily and live in your thoughts.

I feed off your failures, I revel in your guilt. I thrive on your shame and dance with your deceit.

I keep you in darkness and take pleasure in your pain.

I delight in your loneliness and wallow in your sins.

I laugh when you flounder and strike when you stumble.

I am your friend.

I relish in your anger and worship in your pride.

I feed off your compulsion and dwell in your isolation.

I am familiar with your weaknesses and abuse your denial.

I treasure your resentment and take comfort in your depression.

I am your friend

My name is "Your Disease."

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.*

## Dying to get Chose

Many are Called, few are Chosen, of those Chosen even fewer Choose, get of the wall, get involved you'll see it's true.

We make due just trying to shake this disease but it's crazy, it'll straight break kids.

Have you on the corner, begging for change, till you come where addicts meet and start begging for change.

Letting the same old patterns contradict our lives, it hurts when you look and see confusion in our eyes.

Contusions from the Ties that bind us to sickness, nobody really understands the things we live with.

Except us, that's why we're together on this short bus, Trust we'll find a way that's better.

First step give up, the fight is fixed.

You couldn't win that bout with the mightiest fists.

We'll help you with your thinking, you'll see in Step Two.

Then let go in Three and watch your life improve.

Step Four open the door and look in your house, we're gonna inventory what you're really about.

Step Five to stay alive you have to open your mouth,

Those secrets are poison and you have to

spit them out.

Step Six let go of the stuff that makes you sick,

in Seven ask for help to act right in-spite of motives.

Eight and Nine are simple, you just make the list, then let the stage be set to amend the lives you left ripped.

Step Ten check yourself every day from start to end.

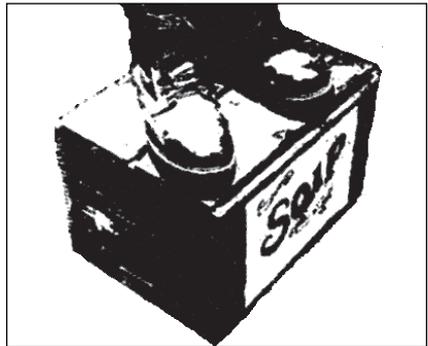
Eleven, the way you live are the Prayers you send.

Then Twelve, since you finally made it out of hell, your job's to go back and help the other Angels that fell.

Through all this, Keep It Simple, keep it moving, it isn't just about using I'm trying to be a better human.

What goals are you pursuing?

WE'RE DYING TO GET CHOSE.



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.

## Remember the day before you got clean?

How sad it would be to forget that day. I just celebrated twenty years clean, and over the years I have seen many people forget. Friends, sponsees, and sponsors all have forgotten what that last day of using was like. But every time I hear a newcomer, every time I hear someone share that day, I remember.

It was an awful mix of hopelessness, despair, pain, and disease called active addiction. No future there, just going around in ever-decreasing circles with bigger bangs depending on the drug. I was standing at a crossroad. I wanted bigger, more powerful drugs to take away the pain, because the ones I was using had stopped working for me.

I was standing at a crossroad, but I did not know this at the time. I prayed for help to a God I did not understand. God brought me to NA before I even knew I was an addict. I was twenty-three and spiritually and emotionally bankrupt. I knew that what awaited me on the road of active addiction were insanity and a horrible, grey, hope-less life. I was too much of a coward to live a wild life. I lived in the shadows, in fear, in denial, in the dark. I ran away—I did not do,

I did not have, and I did not talk. I sat in a room by myself, living in psychedelic fantasies. I had no life; my addiction had brought me to a standstill.

And God brought me to NA—a God of hope and love, a loving, caring God that I did not understand. This was not the judg-

“I hear a newcomer, every time I hear someone share that day, I remember.”

mental, intolerant, cruel, woman-hating God I had grown up with. I left that one at the door of my first meeting. He did not belong in NA.

The God I do not understand does not mind if I say God and #&\*% in the same sentence. The God I do not understand has never denied me hope, has never shamed me, has never told me to leave until I can behave better. This God is unbelievably patient and tolerant, and loves all my darkness as well as my light. I know this because NA has taught me this. For me, as much as God is love, NA is hope.

I remember my first day clean. I was given an incredible gift—a profound moment of clarity in which I knew that, just

for today, this was the only way for me. I do not believe I have another recovery in me. I do not believe I could find that courage again. But I also have no doubt that I could use again.

So, I have no choice: Whatever it takes to not pick up is the only option

open to me.

I continue to go to meetings to hear that newcomer who has just crawled across the threshold. It has not changed out there. The stories change, the drugs change, and the fine details change, but as soon as they tell me how they feel, I remember that despair, that loneliness, and that hopelessness that so characterized the life of active addiction.

I was sitting in a meeting the other day next to a twenty-one-year-old who was eight days clean. She was so grateful to NA for being there. I was so grateful to God for helping her there. Without her, I would forget. What a sad day it would be to forget my last day of using...

*--Lucinda C, New South Wales, Australia*

## Upcoming Events

### Upcoming Anniversaries

- Living the Program - 1/8/14 7PM
- Sharpsburg Group - 1/20/14 6PM
- Zelienople Group 1/22/14 6PM
- Afternoon Delight - 2/5/14 11AM
- Simply Recovery - 2/10/14 6PM
- Living in Recovery 1/13/14 6PM
- Help Us Help You - 2/16/14 5PM

### Rochester Area Convention 20

February 21st through 23rd

Rochester's annual area convention is fast approaching.  
*Radisson Hotel*  
 120 E Main ST,  
 Downtown Rochester, NY  
 More information @ <http://rochesterny-na.org/>



### H&I Workshop

February 18th, Tuesday at 6PM

By the Book  
 Grace Episcopal Church  
 319 West Sycamore Street  
 Mt. Washington, PA 15211

### Events to look for later this year

More Will be revealed

### TSRSR XXXII:

#### It's Available to us All!

May 23rd - May 25th  
 Camp Twin Echo  
 New Florence, PA  
 More will be revealed!

**Bowing!** - March 2014

### 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.

January 25th

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*

### Sharpsburg Group

**Monday, 7:00PM**

Mt. Olive Baptist Church  
1020 Main Ave  
Sharpsburg, PA, 15215

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  
1501 West Ingomar Road  
Ingomar, 15237

Donation is optional, but suggested.

## What is Hospitals & Institutions?

We know that active addiction leads to jails, institutions, and death. Also, NA's primary purpose is to carry the message of recovery to the addict who still suffers.

The purpose of an H&I meeting is to carry the message of recovery to addicts who do not have full access to regular Narcotics Anonymous meetings. H&I meetings, except for those in long-term facilities, are intended to introduce those addicts in attendance to the basics of the NA program.

To get involved in the North Pittsburgh Area H&I Subcommittee see your GSR for clean-time requirements. We meet at:

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

At 3:30PM on the last Saturday 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:

Email: [npn@northpittsburghna.org](mailto:npn@northpittsburghna.org)

or

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