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The NA Way Magazine welcomes letters from all readers. Letters to the editor can respond to any article that has appeared in *The NA Way*, or can simply be a viewpoint about an issue of concern in the NA Fellowship. Letters should be no more than 250 words, and we reserve the right to edit. All letters must include a signature, valid address, and phone number. First name and last initial will be used as the signature line unless the writer requests anonymity.

The *NA Way Magazine*, published in English, French, German, Portuguese, and Spanish, belongs to the members of Narcotics Anonymous. Its mission, therefore, is to provide each member with recovery and service information, as well as recovery-related entertainment, which speaks to current issues and events relevant to each of our members worldwide. In keeping with this mission, the editorial staff is dedicated to providing a magazine which is open to articles and features written by members from around the world, as well as providing current service and convention information. Foremost, the journal is dedicated to the celebration of our message of recovery—"that an addict, any addict, can stop using drugs, lose the desire to use, and find a new way to live."



Editor's note: *This article relates one member's experience and observations of the 2002 World Service Conference. Even though it was written a couple of years ago, in May 2002, I thought it would be timely now as we all prepare for the upcoming WSC in April 2004.*

The NA Way Editorial Board would like to take this opportunity to invite members who will attend WSC 2004 to submit their experiences of the conference to The NA Way Magazine for possible publication in future issues.

How I spent my spring vacation

When I was elected as my region's alternate delegate to the World Service Conference, I was fully committed to representing the New Jersey Region; however, it was not that simple!

Having already attended several service meetings and zonal forums over the years, I looked forward to the idea of going to California to play with the "big dogs" at the WSC.

When I discovered the 2002 *Conference Agenda Report* in my mailbox after attending a convention, the stage was set. I read the entire report in one sitting and was prepared to share my insights with my region. I attended the Mid-Atlantic Regional Literature Conference and listened carefully. As the motions were dissected, I soaked up what each participant and World Board member shared.

The regional delegate and I scheduled CAR workshops and barnstormed our way through the entire region, meeting with local members and trying to answer questions about the motions. Two days before flying out to the WSC, we tallied all the votes from the region and made our way to California.

I naively thought that, as the New Jersey regional delegates, we would simply report to the WSC's old business station and deliver our region's tallies. Not so! My RD informed me that this was not the way it was done, and some of the old business motions may not even make their way to the conference floor. I was dumbfounded.

The flight to Los Angeles was smooth; the rented car was waiting as promised; my accommodations were wonderful; however, the vertigo from a medical treatment I had undergone the night before left me exhausted and in need of sleep—immediately. I crashed!

Sunday morning was beautiful, and I hurried to the hotel for the opening session of WSC 2002. I was early, so I went to catch the end of the poolside recovery meeting. I was nervous and could not find my RD. Finally I found her in the gym, working out, and we were able to chat, prepare for the opening conference session, and settle my frazzled nerves. After centering myself, with the help of some hugs from the other Northeast Zonal Forum delegates, I was ready for WSC 2002.

As I entered the conference meeting room, I went to my assigned table. I staked out a chair facing the dais and set about introducing myself. The delegates at our table made quite a group. There were addicts from Colorado, Indiana, Ohio, Sierra Sage, Tennessee, Wisconsin, Colombia, and Australia. When I asked about the mix of seating, I was told that the seating arrangements were designed to maximize new introductions and expand the individual's familiarity with other WSC participants.

We were also introduced to the yellow/red card process. Each delegate was given a four-by-eight-inch laminated card with the region's number emblazoned on each side—59, in New Jersey's case. One side was yellow, and the other was red. The card was to be raised when participants had concerns or protests. New Jersey's card was never used; collectively, we decided to trust in the process.

Many members seemed to have a need to voice their concerns and opinions, but it appeared to me that most of their comments were merely rhetorical—"bloody obvious" might be another way of describing them, but that is just me!

In the business sessions I was truly impressed with the patience of the cofacilitators and the WB chairperson. Because of the efforts of the cofacilitators and the parliamentarian, business moved along—sometimes at an agonizingly slow pace, but it moved on nonetheless. Business was conducted and concluded without a single truly harsh word spoken. I believe it is a true credit to our overall faith in the process, as well as a faith in our collective Higher Power.

Our fellowship is full of love, faith, and compassion—but as soon as we start something new, we seem to feel a need to question it before the idea has even been fully developed. I believe Narcotics Anonymous's development is stymied sometimes by our lack of the faith that is necessary to allow new things to work themselves out. Throughout the week of the conference I witnessed our collective Higher Power calling us back to the vision of the WSC and Narcotics Anonymous World Services, reminding us that the reason we were there was to help NA, as a

whole, realize its primary purpose.

The roundtable session on Saturday was very rewarding for me. Participant numbers were beginning to diminish as folks started to leave for home. Our table had been reduced to just four RDAs, but the sharing of ideas about the issue discussion topics revealed far greater similarities than differences.

We shared our experience, strength, and hope on topics ranging from too little monetary support, too few trusted servants, and limited resources for fellowship development to the common problems of how to keep the newcomer coming back. We also talked about oldtimers being idolized to the point where they found it difficult to honestly share about their life and recovery. Sexual predators who loomed at our home groups were yet another topic we discussed.

A thread through all of these discussions was an overriding commitment to

the newcomer and oldtimer alike. It was gratifying to be a part of the continued effort that allows newcomers to hear our message in a safe, comfortable environment, and to foster the opportunity for them to live the vision of our fellowship.

Finally, on Saturday morning, despite being a little punch-drunk from the onslaught of issues, motions, and project plans, as well as a lack of sleep, I was truly awed by the dedication of conference participants determined to continue the good fight.

The confidence that filled me as I left the Marriott Hotel for the last time was that, together, we could do for ourselves and for countless addicts throughout the world what we could not do alone. I looked forward, with a renewed personal dedication to NA and our way of life, to returning to my home group, my area, and my region to carry that message and vision to any still-suffering addict.

Fred MacD, New Jersey, USA





Walking the path together

Hi, my name is Aksel S, and I am an addict. I live just outside Oslo, the capital of Norway.

I tried very hard to stop using, but my addiction helped me to reach the decision that I had to drink alcohol in order to stay insane. Intoxicated, I managed to relapse on amphetamines. Then depression came knocking, uninvited.

After ten years of trying various solutions of my own device to stop using, my best thinking finally brought me to Narcotics Anonymous meetings. I summoned all my courage, got a sponsor, and began to work *all* the steps.

Four years ago, I met Ralph K at a convention in Sweden, and we got along quite well. A little later, I asked him to be my sponsor. Ralph is from Germany and lives in Berlin with his wife.

I started working with him on Step One. It has been a challenge, especially when dealing with difficult issues like my father's suicide. The Sixth and Seventh Steps have been real eye-openers for me. The effects of applying spiritual principles often amaze me. It seems that I must constantly practice surrender and acceptance.

Inspired by the interview in the October 2003 issue of *The NA Way Magazine*, I called Ralph one Sunday morning and interrupted his breakfast with this interview:

Aksel S: What is your favorite recovery quote, and why?

Ralph K: "Just for today." This is the program in a nutshell. By taking it just one day at a time, I don't have to think ahead or behind. I can practice my recovery in the moment without the feeling of having to stay clean forever or do anything forever. Also, it makes me feel grounded and humble.

A: What is your favorite spiritual principle, and why?

R: Honesty. It is the basis of the program. With it, I break through denial, and I can see progress in my life. It makes things simple, and I am able to relate to people without second thoughts.

A: What does working the steps mean to you?

R: It is not so much working the steps *as living* the steps, as they say, "in all of my affairs." It gives me direction in my life. The steps are helpful tools in dealing with whatever I may have to face.

A: What about the "work" part of working the steps?

R: For me, the "work" part is a stopover on the way to living the steps, a prerequisite for living the steps. Work is not an end in itself—although it does seem that the work is never done.

A: Any opinions about online meetings?

R: They can be helpful for people who don't have access to regular meetings. But in general, people tend to react too quickly and usually respond too quickly when they share online, especially when no one is moderating the meeting. I don't participate in online meetings anymore because of that.

- A:** How do you handle disruptions at your home group's recovery meetings?
- R:** We talk about it at the business meeting. We have given our chairperson the right, via group conscience, to interfere if there are disruptions at recovery meetings. It is important that the group decide this instead of it being just the personal decision of the trusted servant. It is *our* responsibility, as members, to deal with this issue collectively.
- A:** How do you know God's will?
- R:** I don't! Oftentimes it's simply trial and error, but through prayer and meditation I try to find out.
- A:** Do you think being productive and responsible means being boring?
- R:** No, just the opposite.
- A:** What about work?
- R:** To be working is to be a responsible part of society. It is one way to contribute. Of course, work is boring sometimes—I am human!
- A:** How do you develop a healthy relationship with the opposite sex?
- R:** That's difficult (laughing). I think you do that through the practice of spiritual principles: honesty, respect, love, integrity, and tolerance.
- A:** What does it mean to be responsible and productive, in NA and in society?
- R:** Hmmmm. It means to contribute to the well-being of the greater whole; to be... what is the word... reliable, and to have integrity, and to not hurt others. It means to be concerned for the needs of others; to be of service.
- A:** How does your gratitude speak?
- R:** Through sharing with others, giving of time, energy, space, and money. My gratitude speaks whenever I do service in NA.
- A:** How do you continue to make amends?
- R:** When I do something wrong I try to make it up immediately, and I continue to work on my character defects and take them through the steps. For example, with my family, I continue to establish a good relationship and make an effort to be there for them whenever they need me—not just once. For many years, even in recovery, I did not visit them for Christmas, but during these last years I have been doing that and actually enjoying it. We even talk on the phone regularly.
- A:** I can't remember: Have you ever made any amends to me? (Trick question from a self-centered sponsee.)
- R:** I did it at least once, some time ago. I can't remember the issue exactly; it was about something I said to you.
- A:** Rigidity. How do you lighten up?
- R:** Oh, difficult. Difficult question. How do I lighten up? By getting out of myself. Playing. Not taking myself too seriously. I participate in society and try to have a balanced social life. Meditation.
- A:** Thank you so much for sharing, Ralph.

I also would like to tell the readers that I have a daughter, Catherine. She is ten years old. We are good friends, and we do a lot of things together. When she was younger she used to go to meetings with me. She still sometimes agrees to go, especially if we all go out for pizza afterwards.

My marriage broke up in my early recovery due to the strain I experienced as a clean addict trying to live without a program. Today, my ex-wife and I get along well.

She has remarried, and that is okay.

My mother is enjoying herself with her dogs and running a housing community. I have some sponsees who help to take me out of myself. I have a spiritual friend, and next summer we will go to Tibet together to start building a school for children. I am very proud and excited to be a part of this project.

I like to think that we, no matter how much time we have, all walk this path together, not leaning on each other, but living without using drugs, shoulder-to-shoulder, a day at a time.

If I am leaning on someone and he or she should fall, then I too will fall. So I do not lean; instead I try to open myself to receive the collected experience of living life on life's terms without using.

I think I am lucky to be an addict who can draw on the resources of Narcotics Anonymous in these times, so thank you, NA.

Aksel S, Oslo, Norway

Tolerance

When I was asked to speak at my home group about tolerance, I decided to look up the word. A lot of the time I think I know the answers, and when I look them up I am surprised by what I did not know.

The definition of tolerance is freedom from prejudice, open-mindedness, and the act of enduring. As an addict I had more experience with intolerance, and I became aware of this character defect when I did my Sixth Step. The ways in which I act out on this character defect of intolerance are trying to be right all the time, acting "better than," and being self-righteous, judgmental, angry, and prideful.

When I am intolerant, I get angry and become very manipulative. I put up my defenses, and no one can change my mind. I find myself trying to act as if I am better than other people. I become stubborn, and I close my mind to new ideas. The feelings that I associate with intolerance are pride and a lack of forgiveness.

Before I came to NA I never thought I would practice any spiritual principles, let alone the principle of tolerance. I used drugs to tolerate others and myself. I never believed that tolerance would be a principle that I would practice in my life when dealing with people, places, or things.

A situation at work with my supervisor provided me with my most recent experience in the practice of tolerance. I was not getting my way; I was uncomfortable, and I wanted to have control. I went through a process of acceptance and realized I could not change my supervisor. When I was first hired I was given Saturdays off by my request, and now my supervisor planned to change the schedule and not honor my request. I talked with her about why it was important for me to have Saturdays off, but that did not change her mind. I knew I needed to accept that, but I just was not ready to let go.

I went to the administrator, who explained that it was more than just me involved with this. Imagine that! The whole facility where I worked was involved in this particular decision. I needed to humble myself and realize that I had to accept that change was necessary if I was to continue working there, and that I was going to be okay.

I was not going to get my way, and I certainly was not in control. I wanted to continue to work there, so I had to become tolerant of a situation that I did not want to endure.

Once I let go of my self-centeredness and accepted that I would have to work on Saturday, I felt better. I felt released. I felt free.

Next, I had to go through the process of being okay with giving up some meetings on Saturdays, as well as my service position at the area level. Giving up my area position was easier than giving up my home group position. I think the reason it was so hard to give up my home group position was that those meetings were a huge part of my life and recovery. I had to tolerate the change and accept that it was going to be okay for my home group and me.

Being a part of NA and being a sponsor have taught me tolerance. It has been my experience that, for me, yielding to oth-

ers is a necessary element of learning tolerance. Whenever I practice the spiritual principles of willingness, humility, patience, acceptance, and faith, I am practicing tolerance in my life.

Diane P, Washington, USA

What is your favorite recovery quote, and why?

“Go to meetings” is, without a doubt, my favorite recovery quote.

I have been clean a little over twelve year, and I attend meetings on a regular basis. It has been a while since I experienced the constant crisis that affects some members.

During my first three years in recovery I seemed to have new experiences every day, and I always found solutions to my problems from the things I learned at meetings.

Now things are more tranquil—not worse or better, just different. It is a stage in my recovery where I have learned to accept meetings as they are.

Meetings help me to not feel alone with my disease. They help me to identify, to give and receive something—and, of course, they help me to not use.

In addition to going to meetings, working with public information has been a very satisfying experience for me. Somehow, all the years I wasted using drugs make just a little more sense to me when I can help someone else in recovery.

Besides living the steps and learning the traditions, I am learning to speak up when I do not agree with someone. I stop to think first whether I am saying something to be helpful or to harm someone. While these are simple details, sometimes they can make a difference in whether a newcomer or an oldtimer stays or leaves.

Javier P, San Roque, Spain

Not the convention type

Hi, my name is Cansile. I am a recovering addict. I have over six years clean. Narcotics Anonymous was four years old in Turkey when I first came to the meeting rooms in Nisantasi, Istanbul, and finally started to stay clean after twenty-seven years of active addiction. We were just a few people in recovery during those days, and we kept coming back.

Having a convention was a dream of our little NA community. It looked like a revolutionary thing! There we were: a small group of addicts in a small, crazy country, trying our best to live in recovery. A twelve-step program did not make sense to our society. We were lonely.

I was out of Istanbul at the time when friends from my home group called and asked me for some input for the convention. I felt so proud to be “a part of.”

The convention committee went into action. Once the date was set, I made a decision to go to Istanbul and join in the convention atmosphere. This was about seven months before the actual convention date.

Even though I experienced some difficult financial troubles during that time, I let go and turned it over to my Higher Power’s care. I started to trust and follow the process.

Somehow, miraculously, I came to Istanbul at the end of September, and I kept staying one night here and one night there until 17 October, the day our convention started.

I had thought before that I was not a convention type, but after the first day I realized that I liked it more and more, especially being around a lot of recovering addicts, sharing, hugging, and talking.

So many things come to my mind as I am writing this now—all the details and energy it took us to do all the footwork, which finally brought us all together.

I know the committee worked long, hard hours, and they tried to do the whole convention correctly, following our traditions and spiritual principles. Even though I was far away much of the time, they did not let me feel lonely or left out or like other loner NA members

who live outside of Istanbul. We finally found ourselves with a sense of unity and the spirit of NA. I cannot tell you how much it meant for us to have the company of members from around the world.

Just for today, Turkey is planning for the second convention to take place in October 2004 in Fethiye. Thank God I am still in Istanbul, in my hometown with my home group, having surrendered to my new way of life. I am a grateful addict, happy in recovery. Thanks, NA!

Cansile K, Istanbul, Turkey



What is your favorite spiritual principle, and why?

Honesty is my favorite spiritual principle. It is what keeps me alive, and it is the foundation for my recovery. It is a principle for living that I did not have in the past. It is a gift that was given to me through living clean in the program of Narcotics Anonymous.

I believe honesty allows me to trust people in my life who are in recovery because I can see them living by this spiritual principle, too. Being honest with others—and with myself—is what really matters in life. It is the best gift to give to anyone.

Before I came to Narcotics Anonymous my life was based on dishonesty, and that dishonesty became my prison. The stories and the lies I told so people would like me became harder to keep straight. Keeping secrets and avoiding the truth was exhausting, and it fed my shame, self-hatred, despair, and hopelessness.

It was harmful to me and my loved ones, as well as everyone else. It was also very costly. I just wanted to not be in my skin anymore. I tried to hide the degree to which my using was out of control, yet the only one I fooled was myself.

I learned from others in NA that I have a disease. I also learned a new way to live: a lifestyle that started with honesty. That was where I started my healing journey.

I believe this gift of truth is one of the most valuable gifts I can give and one of the most precious things I can receive. I have been harmed by deceit, mostly in the past during my active addiction; today I am healed when people in my life love me enough to be honest with me.

After a life of deception and lies, I find that I can help the ones I love—and myself—simply by being honest and sharing the ultimate gift of love and caring.

Deanne L, Alberta, Canada

Dear sponsor

Dear Sponsor,

Some days my awareness of this disease is positively debilitating. The disease is so prevalent in my everyday life. Being vigilant, as our Basic Text suggests, can be quite challenging, and knowing that my thinking can be off is no fun, whether I am in the middle of a heated discussion or just chatting in a social situation.

When I am tired and have not eaten the right foods for my body, my mind wanders to familiar, unhealthy places as I try to find comfort; instead, I find only dysfunction there.

When unexpected obstacles present themselves—as they often do—my emotions return to an old, old place. This place I know all too well, and after fifteen years in recovery it still haunts me.

In that dark place everything seems hopeless. Living life on life's terms seems like a sentence to a daily struggle for survival. During such times all I see is the self-centeredness of others, and all I want to do is run. To break out of this funk, I have to find the time to be alone.

Being alone gives me the opportunity to regroup and pray. I can appreciate all the good that is in my life: my recovery, my daughter, my health, and my friends.

I realize that there is another way to look at things, that life can be fun—yes, even that life can be better. I just have to hang on, stay close to the program, and wait for the miracle. I hear that so many times in the rooms of NA, and I know from my own experience that it is true.

I have to say, however, that it gets hard when my feet hurt from walking to a bus stop that is so far away; hard when my feet are aching and there are no seats available on the bus after it finally arrives; hard when I get off to switch buses and the dust from the road gets in my eyes; and hard when I finally arrive at my destination, only to walk another long distance before I can take off my shoes.

I know all this complaining probably sounds ungrateful—but *my* truth is hard. It is hard when I finally get home and open the mailbox, and all I see are “past due” bills with cut-off notices, and know that I will have to go without.

Sometimes it is so hard when I enter my apartment and my teenager is out with her friends, without a care in the world, while I wonder what I will cook today or how I will call someone to ask for a ride to a meeting tonight—especially since I have no telephone service and barely any choices for rations.

Yes, it is hard, and I have nowhere to run.

Look, I know there are a few gems like you who really could not care less about what I have or do not have. As a matter of fact, you have helped me many times. You reached out, helped me navigate my way through the steps, and offered your kind words of love and support, although only you know why. I certainly cannot figure it out. If I were you, I would get tired of hearing the same thing over and over again. I am so tired of *living* through it; I cannot imagine why you would not be tired of *hearing* about it.

My dear friend and sponsor, I know that no one can walk the walk for me. No one can feed my young-adult child and me every day. No one can go through this struggle for me.

But I am grateful for how you have stood by me. I am *very* grateful. Many times I have cried with relief at the help you and others have brought me.

Today, I know that getting high will not change anything in my life. I am acutely

aware of that, just for today. Unfortunately, the awful images of my last using days are ever present. While I do believe in a Higher Power, I feel that somehow he thinks the same as you—that I am strong enough to face these obstacles and go through this. However, right now, I think you are both a little off the mark! I do not feel strong; I feel lost and weak.

I want someone who has been through this to share with me about his or her pain and how long it lasted. I need to hear about how this struggle ends. I want to hear someone with time in recovery share about what “life on life’s terms” means and give me some hope that it will not always be like this.

That said, in a feeling of true surrender, I get my clothes ready for tomorrow. I will get up and ride the buses, go to work, and keep putting one foot in front of the other. Every day I will continue to pray and try something different. I will try to work with whatever I have at the moment—if there are no lights in the apartment, I will light candles; if it rains while I wait for the bus, I will just dry off at work. I will stay open and honest with my sponsor, showing up no matter what, and sneaking a call from work to an NA member whenever I can. I know I will get to a meeting soon, and when I do the newcomers will keep my mind off *my* life.

Okay, so maybe life does not always get better, but the way we handle it does, right?

Thank you so very much for giving me true support. Thank you for being honest with me and for telling me how *you* feel. Thank you for sharing with me your awareness, your discoveries, your thoughts, and your recovery. It has helped me on my journey to find my true self.

I have learned that recovery is a lot more than recovering the life I had before I started using. It is recovering the self I never had a chance to meet, or know, or love. It is change—constant, inner change. It is feeling these feelings and sharing them with others who are not afraid of feeling their own feelings.

Just for today I am still in it, recovering some peace of mind for moments at a time, but most of all, experiencing unconditional love and the joy of realizing that, truly, “together we can.”

Anonymous

Dear Sponsee,

What can I say? I mean, you are doing everything we are supposed to do if we are going to stay clean, right? I was told to do those very same things—do not pick up, go to meetings, work the steps, pray and meditate, and stay honest, open-minded, and willing. Like our Basic Text says, “With these we are well on our way.”

All I have to offer you is the hope that was given to me. All I can do is reassure you that, no matter what, I will be here, loving you to the best of my ability until you get through these challenges. You do not have to go through this alone. NA has given me the ability to be both a caring sponsor and a loving friend, and because of that I think we both are blessed.

Anonymous

Picture this

NA communities are invited to send photographs of their meeting places. We especially welcome photos that include meeting formats, recovery literature, posters, dirty coffee cups, and anything else that makes the meeting place look “lived in.” Sorry, we cannot use photos that identify NA members. Please tell us about your meeting, its name, the location and city, how long it has been in existence, and what your format consists of (speaker, participation, etc.).



The Ain't Dead Yet! Group of Narcotics Anonymous in Denver, Colorado, USA, meets five times a week. Monday is a step study, and Wednesday, Friday, Saturday, and Sunday are topic discussion meetings. We currently have 100 group members on our phone list, with about twenty to sixty members at any given meeting. We give a free Basic Text to a newcomer at every meeting. Our group is thirteen years old. Please check out our website at www.aintdeadyet.org.

Anticipation

Thoughts about waiting for the ECCNA XXI in Frankfurt, Germany, from 23 to 25 July 2004

Hello, my name is Elke, and I am an addict.

This year my NA birthday will come around for the sixth time on 7 April 2004, and I have already gone through a lot in and with NA.

During my first year, I was shaken by so many incidents and feelings. I returned to my home from a treatment facility at the beginning of July 1998. I had already gone through many miserable times there and cried rivers of tears. My home was where I used the most; it was where I spent hours of being high and isolating.

But now my life has changed. Starting the first day after leaving treatment, I went to a meeting on a daily basis. I experienced the warmth of the NA community in my first year—so unbelievably supporting and loving. My search was finally over—I had come home.

I made my first attempts at working, failed, became unemployed again, and continued to go to meetings. I shared and shared and shared. I talked and cried and laughed with my new friends.

Immediately after leaving the treatment facility I found a sponsor, and up to today I have always had a sponsor. There were only a few months when I did not have one.

The fact that I am working now with my seventh sponsor indicates some of the difficulties I continue to have with relationships; however, I approach them little step by little step.

In my second year, I started going to conventions on a national and European level. I attended my first European Convention and Conference of NA which took place in Barcelona in 1999. I experienced one emotional high after another. To listen to the main speaker on that Friday evening was an unbelievable awakening. She was a woman in her fifties who got clean at thirty-eight, the same age that I did. It was the first time I fully identified with another woman, since I seemed to always search for the differences and not necessarily for unity.

Other conventions followed, and in my third year clean I had an opportunity to experience my first world convention in

Cartagena, Colombia. Again, one emotional high was followed by the next.

The following year I traveled to French Canada to the ECCNA and again experienced many emotions, found new friends, and met old ones. In 2002, I went on my last international trip, to the world convention in Atlanta, Georgia, USA.

I also traveled through the southern states for two weeks and had the opportunity to experience the special spirit of NA in the United States.

Then my life took an unexpected turn—financial chaos, living from hand-to-mouth, welfare, and a reduction of my fixed costs, which meant no more international recovery convention trips!

My hometown is located near a large international airport, and I was most fortunate to welcome some international guests to our local NA meetings. Ironically, this phase of financial abstinence also gave me some advantages, since traveling was not always a joyous experience for me. Traveling often was quite an expense, and a rather big one, I might add. My inability to ground myself or enter into committed relationships was artfully covered up by my travels.

For almost two years now I have been practically forced to develop relationships in my hometown. And that is good; difficult, but good. Since the summer of 2003 I have worked diligently on forming relationships within my local NA service structure. I joined the application committee for ECCNA XXI and have been elected vice treasurer.

We will host the convention for 2004, and the committee meets regularly every two weeks. It is good for me to be a part of and to belong in this way.

Service is part of my recovery, and I am very excited when I think about the coming months of preparation and all the relationship work I will participate in with all of my new service friends. Life has become exciting without my creating a mess.

Living a clean life today provides

me with so much progress in my recovery, more than I ever dreamed possible. I am looking forward to meeting many of my international friends in the NA program whom I cannot visit at the moment.

God takes care of me, bringing my friends and my NA family home to me! We are all very much looking forward to the flow of international recovery that will hopefully be coming to Frankfurt in large numbers!

From a grateful addict in recovery.

Elke L, Frankfurt, Germany

**Please take a look at our
convention's homepage:
www.eccna2004.de**

My name is Andrea. I am an addict and have been clean for over seven years. I was lucky to find NA four months after getting out of a detox center, just as my euphoria of being clean turned into fear of the future.

There was a void spreading over my life, and I had no idea of how to fill it without drugs. Today, I still joyfully remember my first meeting.

During that first NA meeting I found out that I was not alone with my fears and worries or with my hopes and dreams. I had never before felt so understood as I did there. I came to understand my part, not only during my active addiction, but in my recovery as well.

During the meeting that evening, "just for today" was the topic, and probably is the phrase that, impressed me the most for more than seven years now. "Just for today" has helped me to lose the fear of the next morning and still manages to remind me of the basics.

I often remember that very first meeting, especially when my life today seems to be lost in chaos, and the fear of taking the next steps overwhelms me. It is very clear to me that I am well taken care of by NA.

Since that evening I have been going to meetings on a regular basis, and I have been working the NA program *and* it works. Of course, there are times when I feel that having a clean brain means I cannot master my life. But since I have come to know NA, I have learned to turn

Continued on page 12



Carrying the message of hope

Members of Narcotics Anonymous from the Anchor, Georgian Heartland, and Toronto areas in Ontario, Canada, united during Drug Awareness Week to let 14,000 students and 900 teachers from the York Region Catholic School Board know “that an addict, any addict, can stop using drugs, lose the desire to use, and find a new way to live.”

The Public Information Subcommittee of the Anchor Area recruited twenty speakers to talk with people from nine schools about their recovery in NA. Thirty more members staffed an NA information booth at health fairs in twelve more schools during Drug Awareness Week, which ran from 12 November to 27 November 2003.

Thank you to everyone who volunteered to serve on NA’s behalf. The gratitude of those recovering addicts echoed through the hallways of the schools they visited more loudly than the words they uttered.

The past chairperson of the York Regional Catholic School Board’s Drug Awareness Committee commented, “Drug Awareness Week was the best ever as a direct result of participation of members from Narcotics Anonymous.”

“NA speakers reached the students by firsthand meetings in small groups, answering questions and facilitating discussions,” a school administrator noted.

Other agencies involved in this project also heard the message of Narcotics Anonymous. These included the York Regional Police, Addiction Services for York Region, Canadian Mental Health Association, York Regional Health Services, Mothers Against Drunk Driving–Canada, and NarAnon.

We have great hope that many, many more recovering addicts will come forth to do this type of service. We have booked several dates in 2004 when NA members will get the chance to share their recovery experiences with even more students.

We wanted to share with members worldwide how, with just a little extra effort, our message can be carried. The Anchor Area Service Committee pulled together, working side by side with other areas and with the public. As a result, our participation in Drug Awareness Week has been an astounding success.

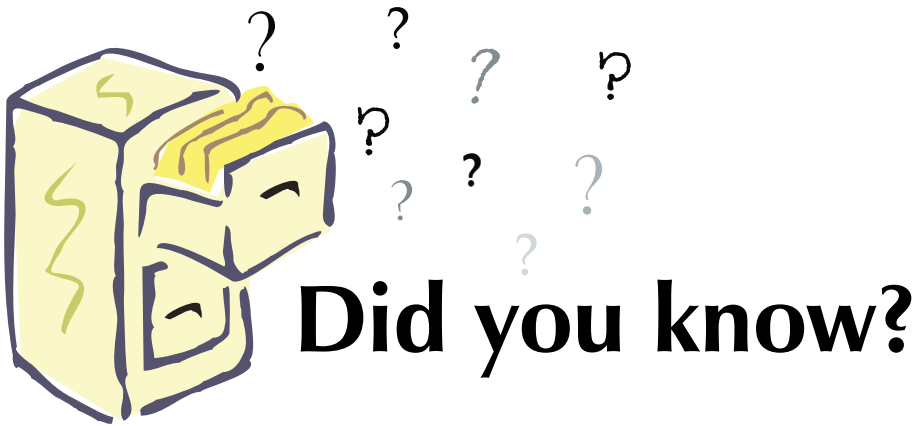
Mark C, Public Information Chairperson, Anchor Area ASC, Ontario, Canada

Our Regional Service Committee has developed a campaign to make Narcotics Anonymous familiar around the city. In the past year we have installed ten NA signs at various bus stops around Lima, the capital of Peru.

Included on the signs is the helpline phone number so that people requesting information can find out when and where recovery meetings are held. We believe this is an effective way of spreading the NA message.

Presently, follow-up on this campaign is on an “Adopt-a-Sign” basis: Members who adopt a sign are responsible for producing, installing, and following up with the panels for that sign.

Augusto R, Grupo Nuevos Amigos de San Borja, Lima, Peru



Did you know?

The Fellowship of Narcotics Anonymous has come a long way since our early beginnings in 1953. We have grown from that first meeting held in Sun Valley, California, USA, to over 31,700 weekly meetings held in over 113 countries worldwide. Our history is rich with diversity, and we want to share the facts of that history with you, the little-known, as well as the well-known. If you have an interesting and historic fact, send it to us at naway@na.org or NAWS, Attn: *The NA Way Magazine*, PO Box 9999, Van Nuys, CA 91409.

- Did you know...** Two people from each area and region can update their groups' information directly into the NAWS database?
- Did you know...** That there are 3,259 groups that regularly purchase literature from and/or make contributions to NA World Services? Of this set of groups, fifty-seven groups share the most common name, "Just for Today," and twenty-nine groups share the second most common name, "New Beginnings."
- Did you know...** There are twenty-seven groups with 105 meetings per week in the Ukraine, forty-five groups with 150 meetings per week in Western Russia, and eight groups with fourteen meetings per week in Lithuania?
- Did you know...** The financial statement for the General Service Office (now known as the World Service Office) for 15 January through 15 November 1971 reflected income from groups located in Georgia, Nevada, Colorado, Idaho, and California, USA?
- Did you know...** The first World Service Conference was held in Ventura, California, USA, in conjunction with the world convention on 13 November 1976?
- Did you know...** That on 1 April 1978, the WSC was held independently—for the first time—in Van Nuys, California, USA, over the course of a weekend? The basic concepts and guidelines for world service and the WSC were developed. The Literature Committee was also established at this conference.

to my Higher Power and to surrender anything and everything.

Unfortunately, this is not always working in my life, although I now know that my Higher Power takes care of me very well. I have received a lot from NA, especially during the last few years, and I am so very grateful for that. Without NA, I would not be where I am now—living and enjoying my life.

This year the ECCNA will be taking place in my hometown of Frankfurt, Germany. Despite being clean for seven years in the program, I have not participated yet in an international convention—especially since my fear of flying keeps me from doing so. Therefore, I am more than happy that Frankfurt can host the convention, and that I also have the opportunity to participate in an international event.

I am so excited about the possibility of sharing with NA members from many different countries as they visit Frankfurt and look forward to meeting new friends from the NA community.

I hope that many NA members will arrive in Frankfurt, and I hope that not too many of them will have difficulty with the long trip. By participating in the preparation for the ECCNA and the service work I plan to do during the convention, I hope to be able to give back part of what was given to me in NA and for what my gratitude has no limits.

Andrea J, Frankfurt, Germany



“A society of men and women...”

Narcotics Anonymous is a society within the larger society of which we all are parts. Like all societies, we are made up of quite an array of individuals. Although we are all members with a common goal—and, for the most part, a common path of recovery—we are still individuals who are unique and independent.

Within the larger society of humanity, there are those who act in ways that are not acceptable. When people take it upon themselves to commit acts that harm others, then we as a society apply our laws to these acts. This generally protects society as a whole.

Why, then, have I witnessed so much behavior in the rooms of NA that hurts newcomers? And why is it that no one speaks up? How is it that we look the other way and do not take the responsibility to step forward when we see newcomers added to the resource pool for older members' sexual and manipulative gratification?

Since our traditions dictate that we cannot discipline our members in the same ways that other societies might, what are we to do?

Many members choose to ignore these instances, even continuing to idolize the offending older members simply because they have been clean for so many years. At this point, not only is the preyed-upon newcomer denied the clean, fresh start at recovery that all of us deserve, but other newcomers and members-at-large get the message that this practice is acceptable.

If it is judgmental to believe that “thirteenth stepping” is unacceptable, then I am judgmental. If it is arrogant to believe that all newcomers should have an opportunity for a fresh, unhampered start at recovery, then call me arrogant.

Under no circumstance can I find justification for a longtime member of Narcotics Anonymous to engage in a sexual relationship with a newcomer.

One instance might be considered a mistake in judgment. The second instance—again, in my opinion—is unacceptable behavior. To condone this behavior is just as destructive to the fellowship as the act itself. I believe that silence condones, and I will not be silent.

Dee S, Georgia, USA

Matters affecting NA as a whole

Do you know what I need to remember?

Sometimes I forget that we are all addicts. Sometimes I forget that not all of us work the steps all the time. Sometimes I forget that not all of us at a meeting are necessarily clean. Sometimes I forget that clean time does not equal recovery. Sometimes I forget that you should know better. Sometimes I forget that addicts act like addicts!

We had a few incidents over the weekend during our area convention. A purse was pilfered, and a cell phone stolen. A car was “keyed” in the parking lot, ruining the paint, and a hot-dog tailgate party was started there as well. Some members saved too many seats during the main meeting and acted rudely when asked by the convention committee not to do so. And then some addict thought it was a good idea to set off a fireworks display in the hotel parking lot, which is located next to an airport—federal airspace.

With well over 2,000 addicts attending the convention throughout the weekend, I believe we behaved pretty darn well, overall.

Here, however, is the problem: The guy who had his car keyed told me, “I’m never coming back.” The trusted servants who were yelled at by the members trying to save seats do not want to be of service any longer because they feel hurt and betrayed. The girl who had her phone stolen understood her responsibility, and she will be back, but the hotel still does not know if our convention committee will be charged a \$500 fine for the fireworks show, and the Burbank police see us as a bunch of troublemakers. They would rather not see us return to their city ever again.

We tried to explain that it was just one person who did this stupid act, but the police and hotel did not want to listen. We all were balled up into one big lump

of stupid, careless addicts who—in the eyes of those outside our fellowship—will never find recovery.

When we gather together in a group, we take these chances, but should we go back into the basements and shadows like before? No, we have made the choice to stand up and present ourselves in a manner that is attractive rather than promotional, and sometimes that attraction can be derailed by one of us in a crowd of 2,000.

On Monday night, after sleeping all day, I finally had a chance to hit an NA meeting. The meeting was in a church. This group has several meetings there, and other NA functions are held there as well. A school also holds classes in the church building. The group secretary reported that smokers would have to dispose of their cigarette butts in the cans provided, or NA would lose its right to use the facility.

I went down to the smoking area only to find butts all over the ground. Who knows if the butts were even from us? Bottom line is that, once we begin to meet at a place, we need to ensure that these facilities are cleaned; otherwise we run the risk of losing the facility.

So what can I do? I can remember that addicts sometimes act like addicts—and I, as a responsible member of our society, can do my best to keep things right. I can pick up cigarette butts, even if they are not mine. I can act in a manner that honors other members and Narcotics Anonymous, wherever I go and whom ever I meet.

I, for one, am grateful for the opportunity to serve the area and the fellowship I love. When you act contrary to what is right, it hurts me deeply and makes me want to strike out and hurt those who hurt me, but I need to remember...

Kevin L, California, USA



WE
NEED TO
REMEMBER...

Primary Purpose

"There are many ways of doing things in Narcotics Anonymous. And just as all of us have our own individual personalities, so will your group develop its own identity, its own way of doing things, and its own special knack for carrying the NA message. That's the way it should be. In NA we encourage unity, not uniformity."

The Group Booklet, pg. 1

This is a column for you, about you, and by you. We invite you to share any challenges your group may have faced, how your group reached a solution, and/or its "special knack" that keeps you coming back!

Editor's note: *The following letter was sent to the NA World Services Fellowship Services team. We thought that other groups might identify with the problems this group is facing, and we hope you find the suggestions helpful.*

I have a couple of questions. First, what is NAWS' view on people who are still using and share in meetings? These folks do not take any positions; they just share in meetings. Should they be stopped from sharing? What is the chairperson's responsibility in a meeting regarding stopping people from sharing things that others may find inappropriate, such as feeling like beating up someone in their family?

Second, what if someone always comes in late or always has their cell phone on? Thank you. We look forward to hearing from you soon.

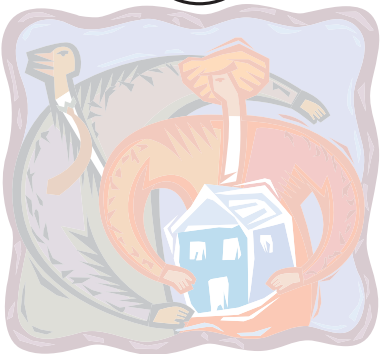
Tracy L, Georgia, USA

Thank you for contacting NA World Services. We appreciate your inquiry and will do our best to answer your questions.

Fellowship experience has been to include in the meeting format a few sentences addressing attendees who are still using, such as, "If you have used drugs within the last twenty-four hours, we ask that you not share but speak to someone after the meeting. You are welcome here." An experienced chairperson exercises judgment, leadership, and intuition as to when an intervention is appropriate.

Again, most groups include something in their meeting format asking members to shut off their pagers and cell phones. If people come in late, you may want to place that sentence in the format where you know people will hear it.

Take a look at *The Group Booklet* for more suggestions about meeting formats and the responsibilities of trusted servants.





H&I Slim

For those of you who haven't had the pleasure of meeting him, H&I Slim is "the ultimate H&I kinda guy." He hangs out in hospitals and jails all over the world. You might say he's always in the know and always on the go. Got a question about H&I? Need some help? Write H&I Slim in care of the WSO.

Dear Slim,

I am an addict in recovery residing in a state correctional institution. I have been here almost five years and had a brief introduction to NA shortly before I was arrested. Since I have been here, my sister has sent me a copy of the Basic Text and *It Works: How and Why*. I go to meetings whenever they are available.

Let me cut to the chase: From what I have heard in meetings and read in our literature, abstinence alone just does not cut it. Recovery is a result of working the steps—working the steps with a sponsor.

Slim, up to this point I have been unsuccessful in finding a sponsor, so here is the deal: My sister, God bless her, recently sent me a copy of IP#10, *Working Step Four in Narcotics Anonymous*. My question to you is this: Should I proceed with working a Fourth Step inventory without a sponsor?

What about Step Five? Please share your experience, strength, and hope.

*Thank you,
Anonymous*

Dear Fellow Addict,

I want to thank you for writing to Narcotics Anonymous World Services and addressing your questions to me. Your letter touches on a sensitive issue, particularly due to the circumstance of incarceration. Not from my own personal experience, but from the experience of others with whom I have shared over the years, I can sympathize with you and maybe shed some light and hope on your current situation.

Looking back at NA's early days and Jimmy K's vision for NA of truly becoming a worldwide fellowship, we can see that NA has made tremendous strides to fulfill that vision, as signified by the number of NA groups and countries that in which NA now exists.

During the late 1980s and early 1990s, NA started to recognize the independent NA meetings that are held in some correctional settings. Over the past ten years or so, NA has taken some steps in the area of offering sponsorship to those addicts who are incarcerated and yet want to experience recovery from the disease of addiction through the Narcotics Anonymous program.

As you probably have already noted from past H&I Slim articles in *The NA Way Magazine*, and perhaps from your own experience, sponsorship behind the walls is not a fellowshipwide practice.

There are situations, even on the outside, where addicts who want to recover in the NA program have made adjustments to adapt the program, taking into consideration their own personal circumstances, and do the best they can with what they have available to them.

Obviously, in your case, if you are going to work the steps you are going to work them without a sponsor, at least for the time being. However, you did mention there are sporadic NA meetings (I will assume H&I meetings), and that you do have some contact with members from the outside. I am assuming there are other addicts in the facility who also attend the meetings.

Although you cannot find a sponsor, I would think you might at least want to ask a few questions of the outside members whenever they are available and utilize whatever experience the other addicts who attend the meeting have, as well as ask questions and share your own thoughts with them. There is a good possibility that they would find it helpful to their recovery, too.

Of course, you will want to continue to read the NA literature you already have.

As you can see, I am obviously not telling you whether you should or should not do an inventory without a sponsor. I believe that is your choice.

And I believe that, by taking the initiative and writing to Narcotics Anonymous World Services, you already have made that choice. I would encourage you to move on and do the best you can under the circumstances, use what tools are available, and give it your best effort.

A word of caution, though: Keep in mind your surroundings, and let that guide you in the amount of detail you want to put on paper regarding certain events in your life.

When it comes time to think of sharing your inventory, I would suggest, once again, that you read the narrative on Step Five in our Basic Text. This way you can reaffirm the options you have to share your inventory with another human being.

I am confident that you will move forward, and I sincerely wish you the best on your journey through the Fourth Step and in your recovery.

*In loving service,
H&I Slim*



CALENDAR

We encourage you to publicize your event by having it published on our website and in *The NA Way Magazine*. You can inform the WSO about your event by fax, phone, or regular post, or through our website. We encourage using the website because you can check to see if we already have a listing on your convention, and, if not, you can enter your own convention information. It is then reviewed, formatted, and added to the online convention calendar on our website in approximately four days. Just go to www.na.org, click on "NA Events," and follow the instructions.

Convention announcements entered through the website and those received by other means are also given to *The NA Way*. *The NA Way* is published four times a year in January, April, July, and October. Each issue goes into production long before its distribution date, so we need a minimum of three months' notice to ensure your event will be published in the magazine—that's three months before our publication date. For instance, if you want your event published in the October issue, we need to know by 1 July.

Australia

South Australia: 1-3 Oct; 20th Australian Regional Convention; Fullarton Park Centre, Adelaide; speaker tape submission deadline: 1 August; write: South Australian Area, Box 479, Kent Town, South Australia 5067; www.enable.net.au/sana/

Canada

British Columbia: 23-25 Jul; British Columbia Regional Convention XXV; Livin' It and Lovin' It; Beban Park Recreation Centre, Nanaimo; event registration: 250.753.0797; event info: 250.754.8554, 250.619.2375; speaker tape submission deadline: 1 June; write: British Columbia Region, Box 868, St A, Nanaimo, BC, Canada V9R 5N2; www.bcrscna.bc.ca

Vancouver: 29-31 Oct; Pacific North West Convention XXVII; Renaissance Hotel Harbourside, Vancouver; hotel rsvns: 800.905.8582; event info: 604.879.1677, 604.785.1352; write: Vancouver Area, Box 549, 3495 Cambie St, Vancouver, BC, Canada V6Z 4R3

New Brunswick: 22-24 Oct; Canadian Convention XII; Coastal Inn, Saint John; hotel rsvns: 800.943.0033; event info: 506.847.4678, 506.847.4678; write: North East Atlantic, Box 1609, Moncton, NB, Canada E1C 9X4; <http://convention.cana-acna.org>

Nova Scotia: 16-18 Jul; 15th Annual Pig Roast and Campout; Blomidon Provincial Park, Cape Blomidon Bluff; write: Annapolis Valley Area, Box 522, Kentville, NS, Canada B4N 3X3

Ontario: 21-23 May; Ontario Regional Convention XVII; Waterloo Inn and Conference Center, Waterloo; hotel rsvns: 519.884.0220; event info: 800.361.4708; write: Ontario Regional Convention, Box 40022, Waterloo Square PO, Waterloo, Ontario, Canada N2J 4V1; www.orscna.org/orcna

Prince Edward Island: 11-13 Jun; Prince Edward Island Area Convention I; The Miracle Continues; Best Western Charlottetown, Charlottetown; hotel rsvns: 800.937.8376; event info: 902.853.2149, 902.436.2613; write: Prince Edward Island Area, Box 8, Alberton, PEI, Canada C0B 1B0; www.nearna.com/pei

Quebec: 9-11 Apr; Congrès de L'Outaouais (Hull); 1170, Chemin Aylmer, Hull; hotel rsvns: 800.807.1088; event info: 819.561.0996

Germany

Kempton: 9-11 Apr; NA Osterconvention 2004; Haus International, Kempton/Allgäu; write: NA Kempton/Allgäu, Donnerstag 20 Uhr, c/o Beratungsstelle Illerstr 13, 87437 Kempton; www.na-suedwest.de, www.na-gebiet-sued.de

Frankfurt: 23-25 Jul; European Convention and Conference XXIV 2004; Saalbau Titus Forum, Frankfurt; German-speaking: +069.60325266; English-speaking: +069.94410814; Spanish-speaking: +0172.9773007; write: German-speaking Region, NAGKM e.V. Postfach 101662, 60016 Frankfurt, Germany; www.eccna2004.de

Italy

Rimini: 30 Apr-2 May; Italian Convention of NA XXI; Hotel Continental E Dei Congressi, Rimini; hotel rsvns: +39.0541.391300; www.na-italia.it

Japan

Tokyo: 17-20 Sep; Japan Regional Convention III; I Can't, We Can!; National Olympics Memorial Youth Center, Tokyo; event info: +81.8054151801

Mexico

Puerto Vallarta: 19-22 Aug; Región Occidente Convención III; Comenzamos a Vivir; write: Matamoros #847, Colonia Centro CP 48300, Puerto Vallarta, Jalisco, Mexico

New Zealand

Wellington: 22-24 Oct; Living the Programme; 9th Aotearoa New Zealand Regional Convention; The Boatshed, Wellington; event registration: +64.49347280; event info: +64.274886255; speaker tape submission deadline: 1 July; write: Aotearoa New Zealand Region, Box 9051, Wellington, New Zealand; www.nzna.org/events.html

Peru

Arequipa: 14-16 May; Peruvian Regional Convention X; Casa de Retiro San Juan de Dios, Arequipa; event info: +511.9970.6609, +511.440.4040; write: yachaskay@yahoo.com

Portugal

Oporto: 3-4 Apr; National Convention XIV; Seminário de Vilar, Oporto; event info: +0035.93660.7421; write: Portugal NA, Apartado 4605, 4000-001, Oporto Codex

Spain

Barcelona: 28-30 May; 20 a Celebrarlo, 20 a Compartirlo; Seminari Martí i Codolar, Barcelona; hotel rsvns: +34.902.180.640; event info: +34.902.180.640, +34.609.30.23.18, +34.686.81.55.26; write: Spanish Region, Area de Barcelona, Apdo. de Correos 22-273, 08080, Barcelona, Spain

United States

Arizona: 16-18 Apr; 12th Annual Campout; The Nature of Recovery; Cave Creek Recreational Area, Cave Creek; event info: 623.930.7967; write: West Valley Activities Committee, Box 27220, Phoenix, AZ 85061

2) 28-30 May; Arizona Regional Convention XVIII; Doubletree Hotel at Reid Park, Tucson; hotel rsvns: 800.222.TREE (8733); event info: 520.290.6710, 520.404.4042; write: Arizona Region, Box 14707, Tucson, AZ 85732-4707; www.NAtucson.org

California: 8-11 Apr; Northern California Convention XXVI; Carrying the Message; Westin Hotel, Santa Clara; hotel rsvns: 408.986.0700; event registration: 707.616.4238; event info: 650.321.7461

2) 9-11 Apr; 13th Annual Southern California Regional Spring Gathering; Sheraton Gateway LAX, Los Angeles; hotel rsvns: 800.325.3535; event info: 562.989.8421, 714.542.4148

3) 11-13 Jun; California Mid-State Regional Convention; Planting the Seeds of Recovery; Fresno California-Radisson Hotel, Fresno; hotel rsvns: 800.333.3333; event info: 559.229.0204; write: California Mid-State Region, Box 9009, Fresno, CA 93790-9009; <http://www.cmsrcna.org>

4) 2-5 Jul; CIRCNA VII; Carry the Message; Miracles Do Happen; Palm Springs Riviera Resort and Racquet Club, Palm Springs; hotel rsvns: 800.444.8311; event registration: 760.323.1211; event info: 760.324.5838; speaker tape submission deadline: 30 April; www.cirna.org/convention

Florida: 28-30 May; Funcoast Anniversary Convention; Crown Plaza-Tampa at Sabal Park, Tampa; hotel rsvns: 813.623.6363; event info: 813.265.4772; event registration: 813.988.0406

2) 28-30 May; 22nd Anniversary Convention; Celebration of Unity; Radisson Universal Studios, Orlando; hotel rsvns: 407.351.1000; event info: 407.425.5157, 407.616.7264; write: Orlando Area, Box 149004, Orlando, FL 32814; www.orlandona.org

3) 28-31 May; Gold Coast Area Convention; Together We Can; Embassy Suites Hotel Boca Raton, Boca Raton; hotel rsvns: 800.EMBASSY; event registration: 561.302.9221; event info: 954.650.0800; write: Box 24055, Ft. Lauderdale, FL 33307

4) 1-4 Jul; FRCNA XXIII; Stepping to Freedom; J.W. Marriott, Orlando; hotel rsvns: 800.228.9290; event info: 407.206.2300, 863.683.8224, 561.641.9748; write: Florida Region, 630 North Ingraham Ave, Lakeland, FL 33801; www.floridarso.org

Georgia: 19-22 Aug; Midtown Atlanta Area Convention XIV; Together We Do Recover; Renaissance Atlanta Hotel, Atlanta; hotel rsvns: 888.391.8724; event registration: 770.210.9320; event info: 404.766.3953; write: MACNA XIV, Box 5913, Atlanta, GA 31107; www.midtownatlantana.com

Idaho: 2-4 Apr; Southern Idaho Regional Convention XV; Point of Freedom; Owyhee Plaza Hotel, Boise; hotel rsvns: 800.233.4611; event info: 208.442.2220; write: Southern Idaho Region, Box 96, Caldwell, ID 83605; www.sirna.org

Illinois: 2-4 Apr; Rock River Area Convention XIII; Our Message Is Hope, The Promise Is Freedom; Ramada Inn, South Beloit; hotel rsvns: 815.389.3481; event registration: 815.316.3041; event info: 815.962.1384; write: 5301 E State St, Ste 318, Rockford, IL 61108; www.wisconsinna.org

2) 16-18 Apr; 11th Annual Discover Freedom Campout; Pere Marquette State Park, Grafton; event registration: 618.530.4730; event info: 618.254.8203; write: Metro East Area Ways and Means, 2808 North St, Alton, IL 62002

Indiana: 9-11 Apr; Kentuckiana Regional Convention XVIII; Executive Inn, Evansville; hotel rsvns: 877.424.0888; event registration: 812.491.3045; event info: 812.437.5086; write: KRCNA XVIII, Box 3332, Evansville, IN 47732-3332

Iowa: 2-4 Jul; Iowa Regional Convention XXI; Holiday Inn, Davenport; hotel rsvns: 563.391.1230; event info: 309.786.1404; event registration: 563.210.1003; write: IRCNA XXI, Box 524, Bettendorf, IA 52722

Kansas: 9-11 Apr; Mid-America Regional Convention; Hyatt Regency Hotel, Wichita; hotel rsvns: 800.243.2546; event registration: 785.227.4241; write: MARCNA, Box 422, Lindsborg, KS 67456; www.marscna.net

Louisiana: 28-30 May; Louisiana Regional Convention XXII; Hampton Inn/Louisiana Convention Center, Alexandria; hotel rsvns: 318.487.8500; event registration: 318.449.1589; write: LRCNA XXII, Box 7045, Alexandria, LA 71306-0045

Maryland: 16-18 Apr; Chesapeake & Potomac Regional Convention XVIII; Ocean City Convention Center, Ocean City; write: Chesapeake & Potomac Region, Box 1704, LaPlata, MD 20640

Michigan: 8-11 Apr; Detroit Areas Convention XII; Marriott Hotel at the Renaissance, Detroit; hotel rsvns: 313.568.8000; event registration: 313.526.8253; event info: 313.865.5203; write: Detroit Areas, Box 32603, Detroit, MI 48232; <http://michigan-na.org/dacna/>

2) 1-4 Jul; Michigan Regional Convention XX; Celebrating Twenty Years of Freedom; Valley Plaza Resort, Midland; hotel rsvns: 989.496.2700; event info: 517.402.0474; write: Michigan Region, Box 21051, Lansing, MI 48909; www.michigan-na.org/mrcna

Minnesota: 30 Apr-2 May; MNNAC XI; Simplicity Is the Key; Holiday Inn, St. Cloud; hotel rsvns: 800.HOLIDAY; event info: 320.230.2188; write: MNNAC XI, Box 728, Sauk Rapids, MN 56379-0728

2) 28-31 May; Spiritual Refreshment XXI; Fair Hills Resort, Detroit Lakes; hotel rsvns: 800.323.2849; event info: 218.287.6012; write: Upper Midwest Region, Box 174, Fargo, ND 58107-0174; www.umrna.com

3) 16-18 Jul; PIG; Country Camping, Isanti; hotel rsvns: 763.444.9626; write: South Suburban Fireside Area, Box 2583, Invergrove Hgts, MN 55076; www.naminnnesota.org

Mississippi: 15-17 Oct; Mississippi Regional Convention XXII; Executive Inn, Tupelo; hotel rsvns: 662.841.2222; event info: 662.422.2368, 662.401.6609, 662.512.8940; write: Mississippi Region, Box 892, Iuka, MS 38852; www.mrscna.com/2004convention.html

Missouri: 8-10 Oct; SLACNA I; Staying Connected by Carrying the Message; Millennium Hotel, St. Louis; hotel rsvns: 800.325.7353; event info: 314.771.9902, 314.531.5435, 314.832.1699; write: St. Louis Area, Box 3540, St Louis, MO 63143; www.slacna.com

Montana: 11-13 Jun; 16th Annual Montana Gathering; Boulder Hot Springs, Boulder; hotel rsvns: 406.442.4705; event registration: 406.442.4705; event info: 406.442.4705; write: Montana Region, Box 36, Helena, MT 59624; www.namontana.com

New Hampshire: 25-27 Jun; Fellowship in the Field XIV Campout; Apple Hill Campground, Bethlehem; hotel rsvns: 603.645.4777; event info: 603.223.2573; write: Granite State Area, Box 5171, Bethlehem, NH; www.gsana.org

2) 30 Jun-1 Jul; Granite State Area Convention III; A Burning Desire; Sheraton Nashua Hotel, Nashua; hotel rsvns: 603.888.9970; event registration: 603.232.4995; event info: 978.649.2554; write: Granite State Area, Box 5171, Manchester, NH 03108-5171; www.gsana.org

New Jersey: 4-6 Jun; New Jersey Regional Convention XIX; Clarion Hotel and Conference Center, Cherry Hill; hotel rsvns: 856.428.2300; event info: 732.571.0252, 856.863.0235, 732.895.1248; write: New Jersey Region, Box 134, Fords, NJ 08863; <http://www.njrcna.org/>

New York: 28-30 May; Heart of New York Area I; Unity from the Heart; Sheraton Syracuse University Hotel, Syracuse; hotel rsvns: 800.395.2105; event registration: 315.876.2628; event info: 315.469.4740, 315.424.7524; write: Heart of New York Area, Box 1075, Syracuse, NY 13201-1075

2) 28-31 May; Freedom XVII; Keep It Simple; New York Hilton and Towers, New York; hotel rsvns: 800.445.8667; event registration: 212.242.8140; event info: 212.242.8140; write: Greater New York Region, 154 Christopher St, Ste 1A, New York, NY 10014; www.newyorkna.org/freedom/index.html

3) 11-13 Jun; Spiritual Awakening Campout VI; Chenango Valley State Park, Chenango Forks; hotel rsvns: 607.724.5996; write: Triple Cities Area, Box 422, Binghamton, NY 13901

4) 23-25 Jul; Lighting the Way V; Sheraton Long Island Hotel, Hauppauge; hotel rsvns: 800.325.3535; www.sasna.org

5) 23-25 Jul; Northern New York Regional Convention XV; The Promise of Freedom; The Owego Treadway, Owego; hotel rsvns: 607.687.4500; event info: 607.722.0565, 607.624.3150; event registration: 607.772.6065; speaker tape submission deadline: 12 June; write: Northern New York Region, Box 395, Binghamton, NY 13902; <http://66.175.31.250/nnyrcna/xv/>

North Carolina: 9-11 Apr; North Carolina Capital Area Reunion; Sheraton Raleigh Capital Center Hotel, Raleigh; hotel rsvns: 800.325.3535; event registration: 919.255.6807; event info: 919.832.5204; write: Capital Area, Box 50196, Raleigh, NC 27650-6196

2) 16-18 Apr; Bound for Freedom XIX; Adams Mark Hotel, Charlotte; hotel rsvns: 800.444.2326; event registration: 704.587.7907; event info: 704.597.9413; write: Greater Charlotte Area, Box 33306, Charlotte, NC 28202

3) 16-18 Jul; When at the End of the Road...; Sheraton Imperial Hotel and Convention Center, Durham; hotel rsvns: 800.325.3535; event info: 919.918.7538, 919.544.5674; write: New Hope Area, Box 25043, Durham, NC 27702; <http://dlhsolutions.com/NHACNA/index.htm>

Ohio: 28-30 May; OCNA XXII; Freedom Through Unity; Best Western Springdale Hotel, Springdale; hotel rsvns: 513.671.6600; event info: 513.385.4931; event registration: 513.505.6298; write: Hamilton-Middletown Area, Box 1121, West Chester, OH 45071-1221

2) 2-4 Jul; Dayton Area Convention V; Out of the Darkness, Into the Light; Holiday Inn, Dayton; hotel rsvns: 800.465.4329; event registration: 937.422.3681; event info: 937.361.3486, 937.223.2072; write: Dayton Area, Box 3156, Dayton, OH 45401-3156

Oklahoma: 23-25 Apr; Oklahoma Regional Convention XVIII; Holiday Inn, Stillwater; hotel rsvns: 405.372.0800; event registration: 918.289.3897; write: Oklahoma Region, 129 Lake Country, Mannford, OK 74044; www.okna.org

Pennsylvania: 9-11 Apr; Greater Philadelphia Regional Convention XIX; Radisson Hotel Valley Forge, King of Prussia; hotel rsvns: 888.267.1500; event info: 215.844.7185, 267.241.3446; write: Greater Philadelphia Region, 6212 Ridge Ave, Philadelphia, PA 19121; www.naworks.org

2) 6-8 Aug; Williamsport Area Convention IX; Ain't No Mountain High Enough; The Broader the Base, the Higher the Point of Freedom; Genetti Hotel, Williamsport; hotel rsvns: 800.321.5006; event registration: 570.327.1962; write: Williamsport Area, Box 871, Williamsport, PA 17701; www.marscna.org/wanaconvention.com

South Carolina: 18-20 Jun; GAPANAC XI; Ramada Inn, Clemson; hotel rsvns: 864.654.7501; event info: 864.859.0960, 864.843.2893, 864.506.4969; write: GAP Area, Box 1184, Clemson, SC 29633

South Dakota: 8-15 Aug; 10th Annual Sheridan Lake Campout; Hill City; write: South Dakota Region, Box 788, Sioux Falls, SD 57101; www.southdakotana.org

Tennessee: 30 Apr-2 May; NA in May; Meeman-Shelby Forest State Park, Memphis; event registration: 901.458.2456; event info: 901.722.3823, 901.413.1458; write: West Tennessee Area, Box 111105, Memphis, TN 38111

2) 14-16 May; KISS Kampout 2004; Valley View Christian Camp, Greenbrier; camper/cabin space info: 615.310.9286; event info: 615.310.9286

3) 20-22 Aug; Unity VI; Millennium Maxwell Hotel, Nashville; event registration: 615.573.0474; event info: 615.424.8488, 615.589.9550; speaker tape submission deadline: 1 July; write: Middle Tennessee Area, Box 282232, Nashville, TN 37228

Texas: 8-11 Apr; 19th Annual Lone Star Regional Convention; Living the Dream; Westin Park Central, Dallas; hotel rsvns: 972.385.3000; event info: 800.747.8972; write: Lone Star Region, 1510 Randolph, Ste 205, Carrollton, TX 75006; www.lsrna.com

2) 28-30 May; Texas State Convention II; The Journey Continues; The Victorian Condo Hotel and Conference Center, Galveston; hotel rsvns: 800.231.6363; www.tscna.org

Virginia: 28-31 May; May Campout; Hungry Mother Park/Lutheran Retreat Center, Marion; hotel rsvns: 276.628.1316

Washington: 14-16 May; Washington/Northern Idaho Regional Convention XIX; DoubleTree Hotel, Pasco; event info: 509.783.1108; write: Washington/Northern Idaho Region, 2527 W Kennewick Ave, Ste 203, Kennewick, WA 99336

2) 25-27 Jun; SWANA Freedom Retreat XXII; Lewis River Campgrounds, Yacolt; event info: 360.737.3685, 503.307.6115; write: Southwest Washington Area, Box 6085, Vancouver, WA 98668-6085; http://www.geocities.com/~wnirna/freedom_retreat04

Wisconsin: 30 Apr-2 May; Little Girl Grows Up Convention III; Ramada Inn City Center Downtown, Milwaukee; hotel rsvns: 800.228.2828; event info: 414.934.0331, 414.372.4285; write: Inner City and Milwaukee Areas, 1424 S Muskego St, Milwaukee, WI 53204

2) 28-30 May; Inner City Area Convention II; Best Western Midway Hotel/Airport, Milwaukee; hotel rsvns: 877.461.8547; event info: 414.931.0147, 414.967.8979; event registration: 414.225.3790; write: Inner City Area, Box 12452, Milwaukee, WI 53212

3) 29-31 Oct; WSNAC XXI; Recovery Rocks; Park Plaza Hotel, Oshkosh; hotel rsvns: 800.365.4485; event info: 920.688.2422; write: WSNAC XXI, 1110 Midway Rd, PMB 212, Menasha, WI 54952

Wyoming: 21-23 May; Upper Rocky Mountain Regional Convention V; The Radisson, Casper; hotel rsvns: 307.266.6000; write: URMRCNA, Box 40182, Casper, WY 82601



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