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*"In the spirit of anonymity, we remember that no individual member or group is more important than the message we carry. The single requirement for membership helps ensure that no addict need die without having a chance to recover." (It Works: How and Why, page 150)*

# Anonymity

## The spiritual foundation

Anonymity: The spiritual foundation	1
From the editor	2
Uncovering the nature of anonymity	3
Our readers write...	4
The spirit of anonymity	5
Anonymity is the spiritual foundation	6
Death and anonymity	7
Anonymity	7
The misconception of anonymity	8
What does anonymity really mean?	8
Anonymity	9
A member's thoughts on anonymity	9
What Tradition Twelve means to me	10
Recovery Lit Questionnaire	10
Anonymity: It's a group effort	11
"It doesn't matter who..."	12
Seeking the "inner 'no name'"	13
H&I Slim	14
Picture this	15
Themes and Deadlines	16
Calendar	17
WSO product update	20
Home Group	20

IN THIS ISSUE

September 2002 marks the twentieth anniversary of *The NA Way Magazine*. In this issue of the magazine, we hope to offer a small snapshot of how the NA Fellowship's recovery journal has grown. We have gathered some articles submitted to the *NA Way* over the years that addressed the topic of anonymity, the theme for this issue, in addition to a number of recent submissions.

The magazine was first published as a monthly journal in a 5-by-8-inch format. The covers for those early editions were very simple in design, but became more sophisticated as the magazine evolved. The "old" *NA Way* called itself the "international journal of the NA Fellowship," though it was published only in English and 95 percent of its material came directly from the English-speaking NA communities of North America.

Today we strive to incorporate material from our members all over the world. While technology has made this effort somewhat easier, we still publish fewer articles from non-US members than we would like. We hope this will improve over time.

The "new" *NA Way Magazine* was created in 1997 by the World Service Conference in an effort to fulfill its editorial intent of being an international journal. The current format of the *NA Way* is 8½ by 11 inches. Subscriptions are free, and the magazine is published quarterly in January, April, July, and October.

We've traveled along an interesting and winding path during the last 20 years, from those first 60 or so paid subscribers for an English-only version to today's 125,000 subscribers to a magazine that is published in English, French, German, Portuguese, and Spanish. We look forward to the day when our recovery journal can be published in *all* the languages of *all* our members!

Thank you, and happy anniversary, *NA Way!* ♦



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**THE  
INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL  
OF  
NARCOTICS ANONYMOUS**

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EDITOR

Nancy Schenck

COPY EDITORS

David Fulk  
Lee Manchester

TYPOGRAPHY AND DESIGN

David Mizrahi

PRODUCTION COORDINATOR

Fatia Birault

EDITORIAL ADVISORY BOARD

Susan C, Dana H, Marc S, Sheryl L

---

**World Service Office**

PO Box 9999  
Van Nuys, CA 91409 USA  
Telephone: (818) 773-9999  
Fax: (818) 700-0700  
Website: [www.na.org](http://www.na.org)

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## From the editor

It's hard to believe 20 years have passed since *The NA Way Magazine* made its debut! For this special anniversary issue we delved into the magazine's archives, looking for articles on anonymity. While reviewing those articles, I found myself struck by the indefinable power of this amazing program. Reading the thoughts and heartfelt sharing of members who were published in those earlier editions brought back so many of my own personal experiences in early recovery. You see, I got clean in November 1982—just three months after *The NA Way* began—and many of my thoughts and our opinions were reflected in those articles. It has been uplifting to work on this particular issue—especially when I see how much our fellowship (and myself) has grown over the years.

Just a reminder: One of *The NA Way's* goals is to include the sharing of as many non-US members as possible so that our magazine truly reflects the global fellowship that NA is becoming. However, for whatever reason, we hardly received any articles from outside the US on the topic of anonymity. We hope that in the future this will change. We hope to one day get an equal number of articles from both our US members and our non-US members, giving our recovery journal a true international flavor. So, send those articles in ... now! ☺

Here's to another 20 years of celebrating our recovery!

Nancy S, Editor

*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.

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*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."*

**The following is an introduction letter from the inaugural issue of *The NA Way*, September 1982, Volume 1, Number 1.**



Dear Fellow Member,

We have some exciting news. The 1982 World Service Conference of Narcotics Anonymous has formed a new subcommittee to "administer the publishing of a monthly magazine on recovery from addiction the NA way."

*The NA Way*, our magazine, can become a reality with your help. We need articles on recovery from addiction, personal experiences on sharing our message of recovery, spiritual and inspirational articles, tales of humorous and thought-provoking growth experiences, stories about becoming productive, responsible members of society, reflective one-liners with impact, personal and group experiences in practical application of our traditions. *We need your input.*

Charter subscriptions will cost \$8.00 for twelve issues until the end of the Twelfth World Convention of Narcotics Anonymous. We believe this will be enough to get us started. A financial report will appear in each issue so there will be no question of accountability.

We will print all articles anonymously. Your support will help make our dreams a reality: to have a monthly forum for NA recovery, a journal to unify our fellowship worldwide.

In loving service,  
*The NA Way*

## Uncovering the nature of anonymity

Anonymity—it's right there in our name: Narcotics Anonymous.

Merriam-Webster says that anonymous can mean three things: "that something is of unknown authorship or origin; something is not named; or something is lacking individuality or distinction." In our program, the first definition does not really apply, while the second and third definitions can be applied to us in meetings, in service, and in how we deal with society.

We know the origins of our program. We also know about the authorship of our written materials. We know that all of our literature has been written by recovering addicts. While we may not name the members who actually wrote the words we read every day in meetings and at home, we do know that they came from groups and committees of recovering addicts just like us. All of our literature has been vetted and approved by the fellowship as a whole. This is why we can look in our *Just for Today* book each day and say, "Wow! That applies to what I'm going through today."

We can look at our newest recovery book, *The Narcotics Anonymous Step Working Guides*, and know that the reason we get so much out of using them in our step work is that recovering addicts, just like us, had input into their development and approval.

The second definition of anonymous is that "something is not named." This definition seems to apply to us when we share in recovery. When we listen to people sharing in meetings, we are taught to listen to the message and not the messenger. If we stop listening to what somebody is sharing just because we don't like his or her personality, we may miss out on something that will help us to stay clean.

When we share what we hear in a meeting with a friend or sponsor, we practice this definition of anonymity by not revealing the name of the person we heard share. In order to safeguard our security, we don't reveal the names of those members we see in meetings. What is important to us is that a recovering addict is sharing his joys and pain, his problems and solutions, and his experience, strength, and hope.

This definition also applies to our dealings with society away from NA meetings. We do not disclose our full names or use celebrity spokespeople when we participate on panels. If we did, the spotlight might be moved away from our message and onto the person sharing that message. What happens if a celebrity spokesperson relapses? The public will think that our program does not work. *We know* what really happened—a member had a reservation in his or her program and chose to use—but the public may not understand.

When we share our message with the public, it does not matter who the person is who shares the NA message, just that it is shared. What matters is that our program works for every addict who *wants* to get clean, not just a select, famous few. This is why we remain “unnamed” in our public relations practices.

The last definition, “something lacking individuality or distinction,” applies to us in our public relations efforts and when we do service. We strive to never act alone whenever public information work needs to be done. If we did, as hard as we would try not to, we would draw attention to ourselves as individuals. When we participate in health fairs, introduce ourselves to a new treatment facility or jail, or meet with health care professionals, the focus needs to be on Narcotics Anonymous, not on the presenters. By keeping our personal stories out of our presentations and never doing this kind of work alone, we provide less of an opportunity to be seen as individuals.

In service, we give of ourselves without expecting anything in return. We practice anonymity in service by not seeking distinction or accolades. We may recognize when a member has done a good job. It feels good to be noticed. However, if we take a position because we *want* to be noticed, we may find it necessary to reassess why it is we are doing service in the first place.

Anonymity is very important to us in Narcotics Anonymous. It is the foundation of the traditions that guide the way we behave with each other and the rest of society. Practicing anonymity reminds us to keep our focus on our spiritual program of recovery and not on our members. What is important is that our message is carried, not *who* is carrying it. Anonymity helps us all to keep our focus on what is truly important.

Bryan W, California

## Our readers write...

### Dear NA Way,

Arriving at my 14<sup>th</sup> NA birthday, I reflect on the state of NA in my area of New York City (Queens). As sure as we change with age, so has the fellowship—in some ways for the better, in some ways not.

For me, NA is the best and only recovery game in town. It is my path to continued recovery from addiction, as well as to spiritual growth. It is a place for meeting with other people who understand my disease, and a place to “keep it green.” It is a proven program of recovery where all addicts are accepted in spite of their differences or similarities.

One thing that is bothering me is that many of the people who entered recovery around the same time as I did—even some of those who held the door open for me—are no longer seen at meetings. When I run into them, I am told that they have started attending another twelve-step fellowship because they are no longer “getting what they need in NA.” They say that there are not enough people with time in NA and that there is a lack of discipline and order in our rooms. They are tired of hearing the same people with the same problems sharing all the time.

I try to evaluate what these people say in a nonjudgmental way. I ask myself: “Am I part of the problem, or part of the solution?”

I need to stay and show those people just entering the doors of NA that it is possible to put together substantial amounts of clean time, that you can lose the desire to use drugs and find a new way to live. I can share my experience of how taking positive steps can bring positive change, and I can develop a new outlook and achieve hope. I can have gratitude for the little things as well as the big things. I can show that this program survives by selfless service, whether at the group, area, regional, or world level. Just occupying a seat on a regular basis at a home group is a form

of carrying our message. By attending business meetings and being part of the development of group conscience, I can help a meeting run well. Sponsoring newcomers and leading by example is a great honor and responsibility.

By no means am I perfect, nor do I live my life free of defects. I fall short often enough to make me uncomfortable and keep me coming to meetings. I believe that, as we achieve clean time and improved quality of recovery and life in general, we have an obligation to carry this message to other addicts. If we abandon the very fellowship that gave us our quality of life and our clean time, that restored some order to our life, how can we expect our fellowship to develop these same characteristics?

I understand that this may be a controversial letter, and I assure you I take no stand and make no judgments on any other twelve-step programs. I simply want to share my feelings and see if I am alone in these frustrations. I respect everybody’s right to pursue their recovery on their own terms. I just feel a duty to give back to Narcotics Anonymous what was given to me.

In gratitude,  
John K, New York

Regarding the article titled  
**Are we carrying the message,  
or the addict?**

(*The NA Way Magazine*, July 2001,  
Vol. 18, No. 3)

### Dear NA Way,

I, too, was given several addicts’ phone numbers on the back of a copy of the Little White Booklet at my first NA meeting, along with the suggestion that I get more. By my third or fourth meeting, I had a dozen or so numbers.

I had been dealing drugs for a number of years when I got clean, and I found myself with a stash of “fronted” drugs that I didn’t feel I could give back or flush, so I continued dealing for about my first 30 days. (This, by the way, is *not* an approach I would recommend to newcomers!)

Several times I found myself awake and alone in my little basement apart-

ment at 2:00 or 3:00 am with a quantity of drugs and a strong urge to use. I would pick up that 500-pound phone and call someone on my list—not having any idea of who I was calling—and within a few minutes of talking to a faceless, groggy addict, the urge would pass and I would be able to go back to sleep without chemical assistance.

Over the next few months, I tried to track down and thank the three or four addicts through whom my Higher Power had spoken and kept me clean during those difficult times of early recovery. Apparently, none of those patient souls stuck around our little fellowship. NA, at that time, was in a city of one million people and had less than 300 active members. The last I heard, there are at least 20 times that many members today!

I will soon celebrate 18 years clean. Without that list of anonymous addicts' phone numbers, including only first names and last initials, I don't think this could have happened. I am thoroughly enjoying my life today, and I, too, keep coming back.

Love and gratitude,  
*Jonathan D, Hawaii*



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*Reprinted from The NA Way Magazine, January 1983*

## The spirit of anonymity

A recent trip to a distant NA area has given me a deeper understanding of the importance of our Twelfth Tradition. In meetings there, I heard basically the same sort of recovery shared that can be heard in my own home group. I realized that far away from home I was more receptive; I didn't know the personalities behind the principles.

One evening at a member's home, I was dismayed when fellowship turned into vicious gossip. My gut was in a turmoil. Unlike the times I've participated in gossip, this was painful to me because it was focused on a friend of mine. Some of my friend's principles were made a joke of. This was especially painful for me since I also believe deeply in those same principles.

Later, at a meeting I shared on a topic that I'd heard jokes made of earlier. I shared what was in my heart, despite fear of rejection. Personal experience has led me to believe deeply in that topic. I had mixed feelings after that meeting. Some who had made jokes so easily before, thanked me for my comment and said they needed to hear my message. My message is basically the same as my friend's. My words are softer, and I'm a stranger, so personality didn't cloud the principle.

I pass no judgment on what I've experienced. I only hope to apply what I've learned more fully when I return home. I pray to remember the pain that can come through gossip about one's friend.

I've learned that for me, personal adherence to all our traditions is necessary. Anything a group should do, as a member of that group, I believe I should also do. After all, groups are made up of individuals like me, and you, and my friend.

*Anonymous*



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*Reprinted from  
The NA Way Magazine,  
December 1987*

## **Anonymity is the spiritual foundation**

Much is said in our literature regarding anonymity and its relationship to the Eleventh Tradition. So much is written about the "press, radio, and films" aspect of anonymity in our literature that we have to really look to find out how it relates within a group or within the meeting itself.

In our area, we hear at the end of the meeting: "Who you see here; what you hear here; when you leave here, let it stay here."

With this message still ringing in our minds many of us feel the presence of a Higher Power intensify as we close the meeting with a prayer in the unity circle. But, the cute little verse is immediately forgotten by some.

The meeting is a powerful tool to help the recovering addict. Each and every one of us at some point has said, "I feel safe here." The group provides the forum in which we learn to deal with life on its own terms.

We addicts are very sensitive people as a rule. Numbing this sensitivity to life, and therefore our feelings, was our way of coping with the pain of emotions. Therein came our escape from reality. We no longer reacted to true feelings, but rather to the sedated artificial ghosts of feelings which were much more acceptable to us.

This safe meeting of ours is where we again learn what we are feeling and why we are feeling it. We learn to feel all over again, and we learn how to get in touch with the sensitivity that is inherent in our emotions.

This renewed sensitivity, this reawakening of our ability to feel, spawns all kinds of emotional upheavals. Many times, we come to meetings

to share about something painful in our lives. Hurting and wanting the pain to leave us alone, we come and share what's bothering us.

Our new family listens in compassion and empathy, and when we are through, hands are raised. The experiences of the past are called to mind by individuals in the group as they share how they too have felt the same way. They look to their own past for some way to help their brother or sister whose suffering they have shared.

Some episodes of our past are bitterly painful to recall, and it is very difficult if not impossible on some occasions to share these incidents. Yet, we are "safe" in the meeting. We do have our Twelfth Tradition. Even though some things are better off shared one-on-one, we gain the full benefits of recovery and help other suffering addicts when we share in a group. A power greater than ourselves presides at our meetings, and we hear ourselves speaking of things from our past that we previously had only shared with God and another human being. Hesitantly at first, not quite believing it is our hand raised, we open up our mouths and speak words that relate to a past so painful we wished it gone forever.

This sharing of the past as an act of empathy and compassion at a group meeting, or on a one-on-one basis, is truly a spiritual event. To share of one's own self a range of feelings from utter despair to euphoric ecstasy is a talent we did not possess before coming to the fellowship. This is another small part of how the program can work in our lives to help us learn how to deal with life on life's terms.

We each want our groups to keep functioning so that when we are hurting we will be there for each other, not so that we can take inventories or carry on gossip about each other's shortcomings. And here is the other aspect of anonymity we need to remember. If, as individuals, we come to a meeting and share something of ourselves, it's most important that we come to have faith in our Twelfth Tradition. We need to be able to have faith that what we have shared will help a brother or sister and not be used to make us objects of gossip and ridicule.



*Illustration from  
December 1987 issue.*

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There will be some who gossip. There will be some who will exploit our weaknesses and shortcomings to build their own ego. But, as a rule, we must try to protect the anonymity of our family. It is up to each of us to tell our own story.

When I dig into my soul to help a suffering companion, when I share in a meeting a piece of me I would not have otherwise shared in a group setting, a power greater than myself must be motivating me, because I for one am very much afraid to tell you who I am.

I have no desire to place myself in any sort of compromising situation. Broadcasting my weaknesses and shortcomings is not my most favorite pastime under any circumstances. Yet, when I do share, in spite of myself, remembering the word anonymity, what you have heard is not me speaking. It is a power greater than myself. Left to my own devices, I choose to hide myself. Today I choose, in the spirit of anonymity, to share fully of myself if another can be helped. By choosing not to hide, I am learning how to live.

GD, Texas

# Death and anonymity

Last week I attended a funeral service for my best friend, a great sponsee and a fellow nurse. I thought her family might ask me to say a few words about her, so on the drive to funeral I started going over the high points of my friend's life in NA.

I was going to mention how great a sponsee she had been. She was the panel leader for an H&I meeting at a women's facility for over two years. She traveled with me on a few regional trips so that I wouldn't have to drive alone. Whatever might be happening, she wanted to be a participant in our regional convention, helping with registrations and attending NA members' clean time anniversaries.

She had a very close relationship with her sponsees, and she always wanted to help, even though the last year or so she was in a wheelchair. One could see her working the Twelve Steps in NA every day. She always greeted newcomers, and she always had a big hug and an even larger smile for everyone. She was an exemplary member of NA.

When her family member asked if any of her friends would like to say a word or two about their loved one, I felt the time had come.

As I was walking to the podium, I asked my Higher Power to help me find the right words to describe my friend's life. I looked around the audience and saw her daughter and grandchildren, her sisters, her family friends, and her fellow nurses all watching me as I turned to face them.

All of a sudden, I realized this was not the time to mention anything about Narcotics Anonymous. Most of those at-

tending the service had no idea my friend was an addict, and at the last minute I felt I should protect her anonymity. It was not up to me to talk about the person I knew in NA.

My first words were: "It is an honor to say a few words about my best friend and a fellow nurse." I said that her spiritual heart would live on, even though her physical heart had stopped beating. Many had felt the love she held in her spiritual heart. I know that it would be hard to forget her giving heart. She had been an excellent nurse. Her patients always came first.

I mentioned that the last time I saw my friend before her heart stopped and she was placed on life support was when I brought some pecan praline ice cream, her favorite, to her room. During that visit, we shared with one another from a very special place.

We talked about "girl secrets," her special friends, and yes, even a few moments of gossip. She shared about what she planned for her career after she was discharged from the hospital. We hugged good-bye for the day, and I said, "I'll be back to see you in a day or two." We were both smiling; our relationship was so close. Little did I know that the next time I would see her, she would be "alive" through those machines.

One of her sponsees got up and mentioned that my dear friend was her sponsor in NA. A home group member mentioned how glad he was that "somebody mentioned her NA family." I don't know if this was right or wrong, but, for me, I knew I had done the right thing at that moment by sheltering her anonymity. I also know that we will reflect on how much we all felt her participation in NA had helped us and how much we miss her. All I know is that she was a blessing to all who knew her.

D'Etta C, Tennessee

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Reprinted from  
The NA Way Magazine,  
August 1992

## Anonymity

The Basic Text says that anonymity is "a state of bearing no name."

In NA when I speak at a meeting I try not to be drug specific, try not to share about what I did to get my bag, or share about how I used drugs. The reason why is so I can be as one with all who are at a meeting instead of being different. Also, when I don't use any of that type language, I drop my pride and ego and the comparison attitude towards people.

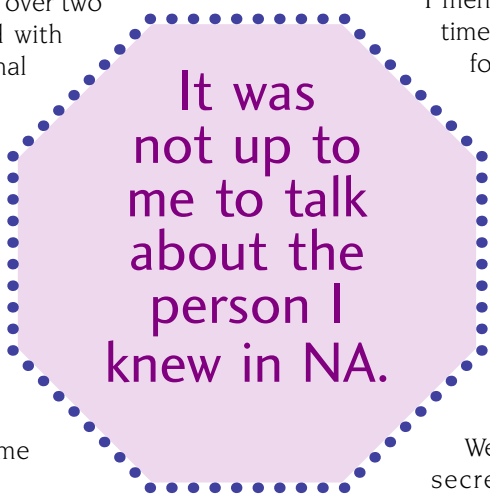
I have learned that we all have one thing in common, addiction; and recovery is what we strive for. When I got clean, I didn't have anything in common with anyone because they didn't use like me. I couldn't identify because everyone was drug specific, and I wasn't looking for the feelings behind their messages. All I heard was the drugs they used, and how they used them.

My definition of anonymity is "one for all and all for one." No one is better than, no one is less than. The only way I know to keep anonymity is by placing the principles of the Twelve Steps and Traditions before the members of NA, and by identifying myself as an addict trying to recover from the disease of addiction, trying to stay clean just for today.

When I see people who try to act like someone else or try to tell me that there is no recovery in NA, what I try to do is set an example that there is recovery in NA, and try to make myself available to people who want help in their recoveries regardless of personalities.

My whole life I felt different. By practicing the Twelfth Tradition, I don't have to be a chameleon to be a part of.

*Anonymous*



It was not up to me to talk about the person I knew in NA.

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Reprinted from  
The NA Way Magazine,  
September 1994

## The misconception of anonymity

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(Originally published in *The Recoverer*,  
the Washington-Northern Idaho  
regional newsletter)

I was sharing with a fellow addict recently. He was dismayed because something he shared in a meeting had been repeated back to him by someone who wasn't at the meeting. I told him what someone had told me about the same kind of situation.

In some of our meetings we say, "What you hear here and who you see here, please let it stay here!" well, where is "here?" Is "here" the meeting place or is "here" the fellowship? If it's the meeting place, then how am I supposed to carry what I've learned in meetings outside into my life? If it's the meeting, then how can I carry a message that has worked for thousands to John Doe over at the Drugs R Us treatment center?

I believe that when we say our catchy little anonymity statement, we refer to the fellowship as a whole. If that is the case, then why the useless resentment over one addict sharing with another about what was said in a meeting. The idea that I as an addict might be able to help someone stay clean because of what I said in a meeting thrills me to death, because maybe they'll pass it on. Isn't this the way it's supposed to be? Or, is it different when we share intimate personal feelings?

The argument is the same for "who you see here, let it stay here!" I believe that it is okay to say to another addict in the fellowship that you saw so-and-so at your home group meeting.

Our Tenth Tradition identifies "press, radio, and films" as the places we should maintain personal anonymity, not groups, areas, and regions. The tradition was written so we would not be named or identified outside of the fellowship, thus making us truly anonymous. Is it okay then if I say my whole name at closed meetings? Well, of course. Why? Well, because if I truly believe in the people who saved my life, then there should be no problem. I can see why people might hesitate to say their full names, but for me it is all a matter of choice. Recovery has entered every area of my life—work, family, friends—so, personally, I have nothing to hide anymore.

So if people come to you and say, "I heard that you said blah, blah, blah at last week's meeting," be grateful they were listening and that it helped them stay clean one more day.

Thanks for my life.

AB

## What does anonymity really mean?

Tradition Twelve says that "anonymity is the spiritual foundation of all our traditions, ever reminding us to place principles before personalities." Over the years, I have met a number of people who viewed Narcotics Anonymous as a cult or secret society. In most cases, they looked upon NA with fear because they didn't understand the group and felt that NA had something to hide. "If they want to be anonymous," they reasoned, "then they must be doing something they don't want people to know about."

In all actuality, the anonymity is there for one specific reason: the survival of the fellowship as a whole.

To truly understand the reason for NA's anonymity, it helps to know what anonymity really means. The dictionary I have before me defines being anonymous as "having an unknown or unacknowledged name." That, in essence, is

the true meaning of NA's anonymity. Instead of hiding ourselves from the outside world, we use our anonymity to strengthen our unity.

Speaking for myself, I know that when I was in active addiction everything centered around me. There were two ways to do things: my way and the wrong way! Once I came into the program I became part of the cohesive whole, something I couldn't do if I was only concerned with my own selfish desires.

This program and my relationship with a Higher Power have helped me to become less self-centered, but I know that, if I allow myself, I can very easily fall back into that "I, me, mine" way of thinking. I also know that addicts share a number of the same personality traits, so getting a group of us together, without a central focus, can only result in utter chaos.

Anonymity helps to retain that central focus by getting us out of the "I" mentality and into the "we" mentality. Instead of *me* being obsessed about what I want, *we* become concerned about what's best for *us*.

That is not to say that we always function seamlessly in NA, as of one accord. Personalities do interfere at times. After all, we are human. However, think for a moment how out of control our groups and NA as a whole would be if those personality conflicts were allowed to continue unchecked.

In NA there is no one person or select group of people who are in control. If an organization is represented by one person, then any mistakes that person makes can reflect on his or her organization. Thanks to anonymity, however, NA as a whole is greater than each of its members. Although each individual recovering addict is an important asset to the fellowship, NA is not dependent on my recovery, or anyone else's, to remain active and productive in carrying the message to the still-suffering addict.

"Principles before personalities" means just that—the principal goal of NA is to be there for the addict who seeks help. As a unified whole, we can achieve that goal. As a group of individuals, we are doomed to failure.

Ken H, Tennessee



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Reprinted from  
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## Anonymity

When I first came into the program, I thought that people with a year or more clean were just a step below God. What they had to say about recovery and living clean were, to me, from God's own lips to my ears. I listened as hard as I could. I watched them living their lives. I placed them on a pedestal. They were the gurus of our fellowship. I'm sure this did a great deal for me in my early recovery, but today I wonder what it did for them.

These people with years of clean time eventually left our area one by one. Suddenly I was the "oldtimer" of my sex in our area. I had less than two years clean. Without warning, new people were using and seeing me as I had used and seen those before me. In the years that followed, I learned what a double-edged sword years of accumulated clean time can be.

Instead of my ego, once so large and dominant, taking a back seat to my Higher Power, I noticed that to some, I *became* their HP. My ego, which needs no reason to inflate, had many reasons to do so. Even though I had my own sponsor and was doing all that I could see I needed to do for my own recovery, I went on a wild power trip. I began sponsoring more and more newcomers; at one time, I was sponsoring as many as ten people. Soon I was sponsoring people who had more clean time than me. People I had never heard of had my name and phone number written in their Basic Text. (I know because I ran into one while I was in a treatment facility.) People I didn't know by name or face were referring members to me for sponsorship. On top of this, I became immersed in service. It didn't take long before I was convinced that Narcotics Anonymous would fall apart in our area if I weren't there to keep it together.

To make a long story short, and to avoid the inevitable excuses and justifications, I relapsed. I had more than

seven years of clean time when I picked up again. We all know what happens next. We all know what using does to any addict, and that's not what I want to write about here, so I will skip to when I came back to NA some two years later.

Of course, the fellowship in my area continued growing while I was gone. Addicts were still finding recovery, and my relapse did not destroy all of NA. Thank God, there is no one who has that power. Today I believe that our Higher Power created NA, and only our Higher Power has the ability to destroy it.

I did learn some important lessons. This is what I would like to share. The spiritual principle of anonymity is that we are all of equal value. There is no one person who is more or less than any other person. My opinion has no more value or weight than your opinion. Why then do we put so much emphasis on clean time? I have no doubt that staying clean is essential for any addict who wants a life worth living. I also know that those addicts who have substantial clean time are obviously doing something that works, and that they have valuable experience to share. I know too, that when any addict has more clean time than anyone else in his or her area, they can be made to feel separate and different. Their opinion carries more weight than newer members opinions do. Where in our steps and traditions does it say anything about counting clean time? Paying attention to clean time makes each member different from the next member. Isn't this a violation of our most important spiritual principle—anonymity? In our area, after the keytag ceremony, the question is asked, "Will all who have a year or more clean time please raise their hand to show that the program works?" This, to me, clearly separates those who can prove that the program works from those who cannot prove it. I wonder why we feel a need to prove that our God-given program works. Anyone walking into a meeting, and seeing the recovery, and feeling the spirituality, will *know* that something wonderful is happening here. If we feel a need to prove NA's work, maybe we need to look at why we are feeling that way.

This practice of wearing a clean time medal offers an ego boost to members

with years clean. It also gives them a status different from those members who have less clean time. Where is the unity in this? Where is the anonymity in this? My Basic Text tells me to take life just for today. Of course, members who have been here longer have more experience, living clean, to share. I'm not saying that this isn't a valuable part of our fellowship. I don't have the answers. I do know that in our steps and in our traditions it says nothing about counting our clean time and offering it up regularly as proof of our recovery.

I don't want to change anything. Obviously, what NA is doing is working, and working well. I just wanted to offer some food for thought for our membership. Please hear what I am saying, and understand that this comes from a heart full of gratitude and love for Narcotics Anonymous.

JB, Michigan

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Reprinted from  
The NA Way Magazine,  
July 1993

## A member's thoughts on anonymity

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(Originally published in  
*The Louisville Newsletter*,  
Louisville, Kentucky)

Just what is anonymity? A dictionary definition would be a "state of namelessness," or "a state of being without individuality." As the Basic Text says, in this way, "the I becomes the we," and we are all equal. The practice of anonymity becomes true humility at work. We realize that we are no better or worse than anyone else. As I've heard many times, "there are no big shots in NA, and no little shots, because one shot and we're all shot."

This humility at work also lets us know that we cannot use the NA name or our association with NA for our own personal gain. The spiritual substance of anonymity is sacrifice. All of our traditions remind us that we need to lay aside our drive for personal gain and work together for our common welfare. In this way, we become unified because we know that personal recovery depends on NA unity.

These are just some aspects of anonymity. I'm sure that much more could be said on this principle. The point I really want to make is that through the practice of anonymity we become humble. Through our humility, we become even more aware of our need for one another. Through this, we become unified. We work together for our common welfare, laying aside personalities. We truly live the principles. In this way, our message is carried clear and undiluted. With a clear message shared at our meetings. The newcomer who sustains us does not get lost in a barrage of mixed messages. Thus, we fulfill our primary purpose and truly grow together as a fellowship.

*Anonymous*

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*Reprinted from  
The NA Way Magazine,  
July 1995*

## What Tradition Twelve means to me

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(Originally published in *In Step*,  
the Bay Cities, California,  
NA newsletter)

My first experience with the Twelfth Tradition was at a step and tradition study meeting. Way back, when I attended this meeting, I was awakened to a totally different lifestyle than I had ever before known.

I could see the merit in studying the steps, because they were personal. In order to stay clean, I needed to learn how to work them, or so I was told. I felt a little different when it came to the traditions, but when I heard that the traditions are to the group as the steps are to the individual, I became curious. I wanted to hear and learn more about the steps and the traditions and NA as a whole.

Over the years, the traditions have become more personal to me because their foundation has my undying interest. The traditions have a spiritual foundation, the same foundation I needed in my personal recovery.

Anonymity is a principle that has great spiritual integrity; it is based on humility. What I have learned is that my life without some form of humility is just smoke. Tradition Twelve says to me that we must really practice genuine humility. Until the principle of humility was present in my personal recovery, I was suffering from a great deal of ego-driven ways.

There was a time in my recovery when I was trying to get an "A" in NA. I was doing the right thing with the wrong attitude. I lacked the all-encompassing spiritual quality of anonymity. I know now that Tradition Twelve means more than just lip service, more than a chant when it is read at a meeting.

With my continued practice of the steps and the traditions, I've learned to give up my personal desires in the interest of the common good. There is a great deal of sacrifice in the NA way of life. But, for the first time, my sacrifices are really made from the spiritual foundation of anonymity.

The second half of Tradition Twelve, "ever reminding us to place principles before personalities," has been the other way around. At times, it seems as though we are running a popularity contest. Just check out the next election of a GSR, treasurer, or secretary.

Tradition Twelve says to me that genuine humility and a spirit of sacrifice are the keys to a true understanding of God's will in action. It keeps pure our main purpose, which is to carry the message to the addict who is still suffering.

*Anonymous*

## Calling all members: Recovery Lit Questionnaire

Narcotics Anonymous literature is a vital tool for our recovery. At the 2000 World Service Conference, a motion was passed for the World Board to start an evaluation process to see whether or not the fellowship desires changes to the Basic Text and the Little White Booklet.

### **We need your help to complete our work.**

The board has created a survey with the help of a consultant. Your filling out this survey will assist the board in its task of preparing proposals for the fellowship's consideration in 2004. A component of this document is the Literature Assessment, which is on the back page of the survey.

Your opinion is important to us. We have three ways for you to return your completed survey:

1. **Mail** the survey back to the address shown at the end of the survey.
2. **Fax** it back to the number shown at the end of the survey.
3. Complete the survey found at our website. Go to **www.na.org** and select Recovery Lit Questionnaire from the drop-down menu. (The survey is available in English, French, German, Portuguese, and Spanish on the web and from the WSO.)

The research consultant who has developed the following survey will tally results to ensure that the survey results accurately represent your opinions. To maintain the accuracy of the data, please complete **just one** survey. **Thank you in advance for your help! And please ask other members to complete this survey, too. The board needs you to complete your survey by December 2002.**



# Anonymity: It's a group effort

In an effort to get a fresh perspective on something we hear in our fellowship, both in and out of the rooms, a group of us got together to read and discuss anonymity. The experience was incredible! The clean time among us ranged from one week to 16 years, helping us all to see that, in the spirit of anonymity, *everyone* has a voice in NA, regardless of where they are in their recovery.

It was good to talk about something other than "What you hear here, let it stay here" or "Even if I hate you, I need to listen to what you say because it may save my life." Don't get us wrong; these are good things to say and hear, but we don't think these phrases do any justice to the concept of anonymity.

We looked up the definition of "anonymous," and we believe the following one from *Webster's New World Dictionary* was the most applicable: "not easily distinguished from others or from one another because of a lack of individual features or character." We feel when our actions are pure and without motive, it becomes about carrying the message and not being acknowledged. When we are doing the right thing for the right reason, it isn't about who does it; it's about just getting it done.

The message of recovery is clear: freedom from active addiction. The individual person, practicing anonymity, carries that message to another addict by sharing their personal experience, strength, and hope, and offering encouragement—or maybe even just a hug.

If we are not practicing anonymity, we will let ego, self-will, and the self-preservation instinct take over. We will judge others and their actions, not their disease. We will be not helping but hindering those who are seeking recovery. We, as a fellowship, need to always remember the reason NA exists—to help addicts stop using and find a new way of life.

As we share, both in a meeting and one-on-one, we are reminded of the gifts we can receive: hope, not hopelessness; help, not helplessness; giving, not taking; being spiritually grounded, not ego-driven; and happiness without drugs. We share the message, regardless of who we *think* should hear it. In the spirit of anonymity, all members are equal, regardless of race, creed, religion, or gender, whether they're a college grad or a penitentiary grad, whether they are rich, poor, famous, or living on the streets.

Just as all addicts are equal, so are our groups, and anonymity helps us to see this more clearly. It doesn't matter how many people or oldtimers attend, or how much money the group donates, or how many trusted servants serve the group—we are all equal. Anonymity means our contributions at any level are equal.

When it comes to the service structure, anonymity plays a big part in how we get things done. The fellowship practices anonymity by allowing all ideas to be heard, even when we *think* we don't want to hear them. We look at putting on diversified activities to address even the smallest minority's interests, as well as the interests of the majority. Those of us who serve on boards and committees work to find how best to serve other addicts instead of only ourselves.

When we give of ourselves, with no strings, we have the opportunity to reap many benefits. We feel like we are growing toward being less self-centered, and this can help us build lasting relationships with those we serve, those with whom we serve, and a power greater than ourselves. By turning to our Higher Power and by practicing spiritual principles, we can start to see more of “we” and less of “me.”

We remind ourselves of our Second Tradition: “For our group purpose there is but one ultimate authority—a loving God as He may express Himself in our group conscience. Our leaders are but trusted servants; they do not govern.” It sounds like this tradition is telling us to just get out of the way!

When we are carrying the NA recovery message to the public, anonymity is critical. We need to be careful whenever we share our personal opinions in public because someone may form an opinion about NA based on our statement.

We are grateful to be clean and to be of service. Sometimes we are carrying the message when we don’t even know it. We sometimes meet in public places or wear NA merchandise. Even a bumper sticker on our car lets people know about NA. We need to remember to always try to conduct ourselves in a responsible manner.

We also must practice anonymity at the level of press, radio, and films. When we attach the identity of an NA member to a public pronouncement, our fellowship becomes dependent on that individual’s personal recovery and behavior for the outside world to make judgments about NA as a whole.

We are not a secret society. We want the world to know about the fellowship. We just need to consider these things before we set out to carry the message of recovery outside the rooms of NA.

Thanks for letting us share.

*Anonymous, Tennessee*

## “It doesn’t matter who ...”

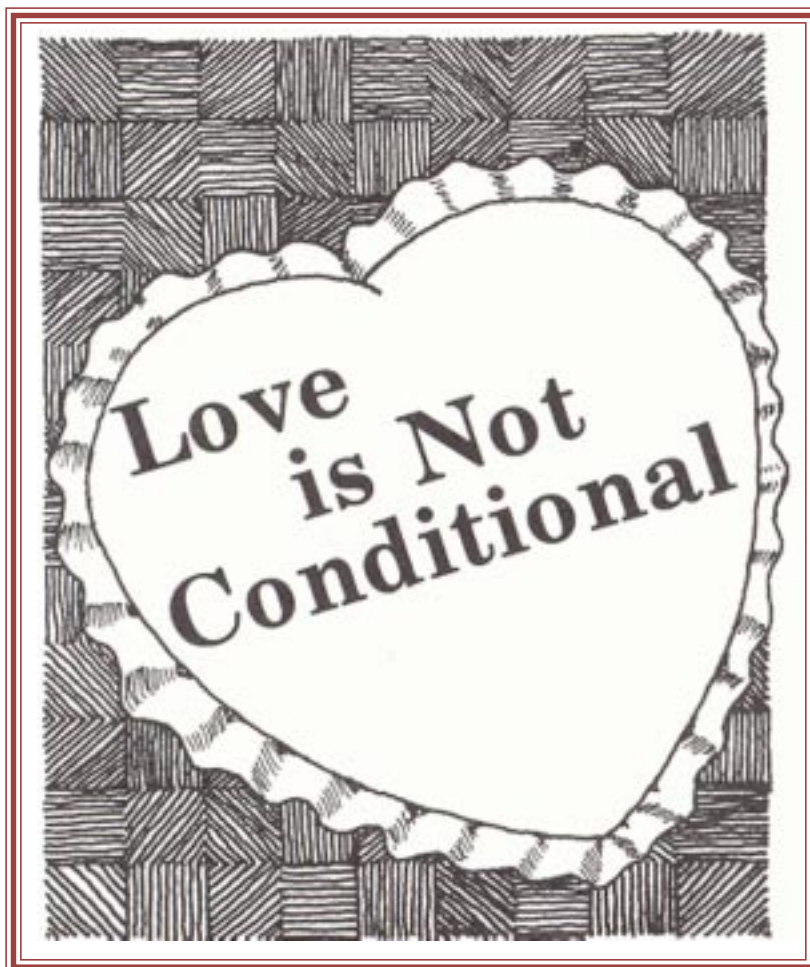
I want to share an experience regarding the love we often talk about in Narcotics Anonymous. On 20 January 2002, a member traveling through North Carolina from Atlanta, Georgia, was in a car accident. A tractor-trailer hit this member, and she was brought to the hospital in Greensboro, North Carolina. The Greensboro Area Hospitals and Institutions Subcommittee was notified, and they have been bringing meetings to this member daily. The H&I subcommittee in Greensboro could have stopped there, and no one would have asked them for more. But they didn’t stop.

These loving and grateful recovering addicts visited her on a daily basis, taking turns to lift her spirit. They brought her gifts and offered her laughter and love, as only addicts can do. These members did not know this person—she was not part of the area’s popular clique. All they knew was that one of our members was hurt, and they went into action.

Kudos and hats off to the dedicated trusted servants of H&I worldwide, but especially to the H&I subcommittee in the Greensboro Area of NA. It is so true that our gratitude shows when we care and share with others the NA way!

This member is now recovering from her injuries and doing well, and I have to believe that is due in no small part to the love and support that she received. Even the doctors are amazed at her progress. I’m not. I am, however, proud and grateful to be a part of this great fellowship.

*Anonymous, Georgia*





## Seeking the “inner ‘no name’”

When I first saw the theme for this issue (“Uncovering the Nature of Anonymity”), it sounded like the title for a Zen lesson. When I attended my first meeting, I heard the term “anonymity” during the readings. It’s the word that everyone struggles to read correctly. For some reason, maybe repetition, “anonymous” is far easier to say than “anonymity.” It is also far easier to *be* anonymous than it is to practice anonymity.

As a newcomer, I tried to be as anonymous as possible. I did not get a keytag until I had 90 days clean. The only reason I got one then was because the person handing out the keytags recognized me and kept looking at me during the keytag countdown. Being anonymous was fun—sort of like sitting on the fence. No one knew me, so there was no need to commit myself. Once I dove into the fellowship, though, my instruction in anonymity began.

I do not know what it is like in other parts of the world, but in America we tend to be a very gossip-based society. I have been to meetings all over the US, and meetings are basically divided into two parts. There is the twelve-step part of the meeting—opened and closed by reciting something (usually the concept of anonymity is mentioned at the closing of this part of the meeting).

There is also the “outside” part of a meeting—both physically and emotionally “outside.” Here, dates are made, hurt feelings are soothed, coolness is checked out, gossip is exchanged, and people show up to see and be seen. This part of the meeting is usually the total opposite of anonymity, both verbally and visually.

Ethnic differences and sexual preferences do not seem to make any difference in this phenomenon. It seems to occur in just about every NA community I have visited, and it happens in service meetings as well as recovery meetings.

The “outside” part of the meeting is the first place where an addict learns to practice their recovery. It is truly the place where an addict learns to place “principles before personalities,” to “practice these principles in all my affairs,” and it is where this addict learned the importance of anonymity.

I learn the steps and traditions from talking to other addicts. Usually I do this by doing something that makes me feel stupid; that way, my ego kicks in and makes me swear to myself never to make the same mistake again ... until the next time.

So it was with anonymity. I had been going to meetings for a little while and started to establish relationships with other people. Relationships with members of the same sex in early recovery usually lead to one thing: discussions about other people—usually the ones we are attracted to.

On the occasion I have in mind, I asked a fellow addict, someone to whom I had become close, about the whereabouts of another member. This addict had about the same amount of clean time as I did. The addict smiled at me and then quoted the tradition regarding anonymity.

I could have smacked that person right there. How could this be an issue of anonymity? We were all recovering together as addicts, right? Didn’t we share our innermost secrets with one another? And if I missed some of the secrets you shared at a meeting I did not attend, shouldn’t I have the right to catch up on those things with another addict?

The answer is, of course, no!

Whatever one addict reveals to me, either in a group setting or one-on-one, is done with the understanding that the things revealed are personal. I take what I need from the addict in the group setting and make it my own. One-on-ones, either in a sponsorship role or in friendship (for me they are mostly one and the same), are just between two people, not subject to discussion during after-meeting coffee clubs. This is true in sharing as well.

In English class (now called language arts), we were warned about plagiarism: "Never quote someone without giving credit to that person." The first time I heard something in a meeting I could use, I immediately wanted to give credit to the person who spoke it, either because I wanted to be liked by that person or because I wanted to sound good. Anonymity teaches us that whatever we heard from another addict, it is just from "an addict."

Ideally, an addict is a nameless, genderless, ageless (both in recovery and chronologically), creedless spiritual being. An addict is an addict. We can say, "An addict told me..." But it is usually not okay to say "George (or Martha or Judy or Bill, etc.), who has 27 years (or nine months or four years or whatever), told me that blah, blah, blah." This is a hard lesson to learn.

Looking into the future, I find myself targeting my Ninth Step work for the practice of anonymity—making amends to others for my actions in an anonymous manner and practicing these principles by doing things to help in my community. I have already started by joining the volunteer fire department. Other avenues I may consider later include soup kitchens, story time at local libraries, or mentoring a child.

I would like to say that, in the true spirit of anonymity, this article was submitted by *Anonymous from Everywhere*. I am on the road, however; I'm not there yet. This is Jamie from Maine.

*Jamie E, Maine*



## 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 H&I Slim,

My area seems to have this recurring issue, and I wanted to get your opinion. I am a coordinator at a facility. There is one women's pod, and we hold our H&I meeting in a library. Usually, two to six women show up. These women receive an H&I meeting twice a month. Occasionally I can't find anyone on my clearance list who can go in with me, so I've made the decision to go in by myself.

It was suggested at the regional level to read from the literature if you do go in by yourself. We read the First Step that night.

We have two opinions about going in alone:

1. If we don't go in, then we are saying NA doesn't care.
2. We don't go in alone. Period. The guidelines say a panel consists of no less than two and no more than five members. If we are not going to follow our guidelines, then why have them?

It has been pointed out that the guidelines are only suggestions. Of course, the typical comeback is always: If you are going to jump out of a plane with a parachute, we suggest you pull the ripcord. I have enough experience in recovery to know that when something causes controversy, it usually isn't spiritual. Our H&I subcommittee has become a battleground, and resentments are frequent.

Depending upon the situation, I sometimes go in alone and sometimes I don't. These women are locked up and can go two months at a time without a meeting.

I would like to know what you consider the lesser of the two evils. If we miss a meeting we may lose the facility and give NA a bad name as an uncaring organization. Should one go in alone?

*N, California*

### Dear N,

The first thing I would like to do is thank you for being involved in H&I service. Because of your passion for H&I, I can fully understand the idea of occasionally going into a facility alone. However, as we all know, we are cautioned a number of times in the Do's and Don'ts sections of the *Hospitals & Institutions Handbook* that we should not go in to H&I facilities alone. I am one who believes that the particulars in the *Hospitals & Institutions Handbook* were gathered from extensive H&I experiences, both good and bad. Although some of the details may sound conservative, I know that the point or points have been substantiated by experience.

I think the subcommittee should consider doing an inventory of the number of H&I commitments it has and evaluate whether it is successfully carrying the NA message of recovery into those facilities. Once it has examined its current commitments and the number of participating members, the subcommittee can then seek solutions rather than focus on the problem(s).

Another option your committee may want to consider is to create a membership drive. Try to get a number of willing members to commit. You may find that you have to change what you have been doing and commit to something the H&I subcommittee can actually affect. It may be that you can only commit to one speaker meeting a month, or every other week, or however it plays out. If somebody shares at the facility, they may find enough gratitude to continue participating in H&I.

Although I understand the impulse to go into a facility alone if circumstances seem to require it, especially because of lack of participation, going in alone conveys a message that might be worse than simply informing the facility that your subcommittee doesn't have the resources right now to conduct the meeting in an effective way. I believe the facility will respect the honesty.

Cutting back on commitments to a workable number carries the message that NA H&I in your area is responsible by supporting the objective that you only commit your services to what you can satisfy. Showing a level of responsibility can enhance future efforts, since those efforts may be judged by what we do today.

N, before I close, I want to give you the opportunity to determine for yourself what you consider the lesser of two evils may be. Thank you for all of the H&I service that you do, and I sincerely hope the NA message can be carried into the facility in a responsible manner until times change and more volunteers are available.

In loving service,  
H&I Slim

# 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



The Ben Lomond Library Meeting in Santa Cruz, California, has been around the area for about 15 years and is one of the longest, standing meetings in the area. There are members who still attend the meeting who helped to start it. The average attendance is about 15 people.

## Come on and stretch those creative muscles!

*The NA Way Magazine* is planning to debut a new column with our next issue in October. The column will be along the lines of H&I Slim, but related to a group's experiences, challenges, and any other issues that may arise. It will be an opportunity for members to share and/or ask about solutions to problems their group may be experiencing.

What we need now is a title for this column, and we need your help! Send in your suggestions (before 9 August 2002), and if your title is selected by *The NA Way* Editorial Board, you will receive a special prize from NAWS.

**So use your open-mind,  
and help us name that column!**

# NA Way Magazine Themes and Deadlines

## October 2002 – July 2003

You are *The NA Way*! Material for the magazine comes from NA members. We need your help to write articles for the magazine, and/or to encourage other members you know to do so, especially someone you know who has a great story to share about one of the upcoming themes. *The NA Way Magazine* is a broad-based recovery and service magazine for the NA member. Editorial content ranges from personal recovery experience (including humor or nostalgia) to opinion pieces regarding topics of concern to NA as a whole, plus standard reports from world services. Regarding the tone of an article, we look for a spirit of unity and mutual respect. We don't back off from controversy if a constructive solution is offered. We accept submissions in the same languages in which we publish *The NA Way*: English, French, German, Portuguese, and Spanish.

If your experiences relate to the topic, but do not pertain to any of the specific bullet points, no problem—just send your article in anyway. The bullet points are provided after each topic simply as a matter of reference to help stir up your creative juices, not to limit your responses to those selected points. *The NA Way Magazine* is a team effort, and we cannot do it alone or without your support.

Here are the themes for the next three issues of the magazine, October 2002 through April 2003. Note that the deadline for each issue is actually three full months in advance due to the production schedule of the magazine.

### October 2002 NA Way

Deadline (manuscripts to WSO): **1 July 2002**

**Living the Program:** How do you apply the NA program and/or how has NA influenced you in...

- ◆ Relating to your family?
- ◆ Practicing the principles in relationships—What principle do you find the easiest/hardest to apply and why?
- ◆ Working/living the traditions?
- ◆ Parenting? As a son or daughter?
- ◆ Finding balance in recovery?
- ◆ Responding to success/failure?
- ◆ Dealing with death, loss, grief, and other life-altering experiences?
- ◆ What does *working* the steps mean to you?

### January 2003 NA Way

Deadline (manuscripts to WSO): **1 October 2002**

**Facing Illness in Recovery:** What is your personal experience in recovery with...

- ◆ Medication?
- ◆ Mental illness?
- ◆ Terminal illness?
- ◆ Chronic pain/illness?
- ◆ Surgery—major and/or minor surgeries?
- ◆ Injuries?
- ◆ What is your responsibility with considering the above examples?
- ◆ What is your responsibility in dealing with the medical profession?

### April 2003 NA Way

Deadline (manuscripts to WSO): **1 January 2003**

**Our Seventh Tradition:** What does the Seventh Tradition mean to your personal recovery?

- ◆ How is self-support a privilege?
- ◆ How do the spiritual principles embodied in the Seventh Tradition affect your life today?
- ◆ How much is too much to give? Too little?
- ◆ What do you contribute? Give some examples of non-monetary contributions.
- ◆ What is your understanding of fund flow?
- ◆ Do you know how much it costs to operate your home group, area, and/or region?

### July 2003 NA Way

#### NARCOTICS ANONYMOUS' 50<sup>th</sup> ANNIVERSARY

This will be a special issue distributed at WCNA-30. We want this edition of *The NA Way* to be coordinated with the convention's theme. We will keep you posted with our progress. Stay tuned!





# 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](http://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.

## Argentina

**Cordoba:** 15–17 Nov; X Convención Regional Argentina CRANA X; Hotel Luz y Fuerza, Villa Giardino; hotel rsvns: +05.41143425464; write: CRANA X, Argentina, San Martin 66 2do 216; [www.na.org.ar](http://www.na.org.ar)

## Belgium

**Antwerp:** 19–21 Jul; BCCNA III; Easy Does It!; Centrum Oosterveld, Groenenborgerlaan 216 2610 Wilrijk, Antwerp; event info: +32.0.476.932.133; write: Antwerpen Area, Kloosterstraat 5, 2000 Antwerp, Belgium; email: [bccna3@hotmail.com](mailto:bccna3@hotmail.com)

## Brazil

**São Paulo:** 17–20 Oct; XIII Convenção Regional de NA; Serra Negra; event info: +55.11.6693.6713, +55.11.9688.1194; write: Brazil, Rua Dr, Costa Valente 144, 2o andar Sala 24 cep 03052-000, São Paulo SP; [www.na.org/13crna](http://www.na.org/13crna)

## Canada

**British Columbia:** 20–22 Sep; Women's Retreat IX; Sisters in Serenity; Camp Squamish, Vancouver; event registration: 604.767.5562; event info: 604.294.9496; write: Vancouver Area Service Committee, Box 1695, Station A, Vancouver, BC, Canada V6C 2P7

**Nova Scotia:** 16–21 Jul; 13th Annual Pig Roast and Campout; Blomidon Prov Park; event info: 902.678.8090, 902.678.7610; write: North East Atlantic Region, Annapolis Valley Area, Box 522, Kentville, Nova Scotia B4N 3X3, Canada; [avana\\_groups@mailcity.com](mailto:avana_groups@mailcity.com)

## Colombia

**Cundinamarca:** 18–20 Aug; XI Convención Regional de Narcóticos Anónimos; Bogotá; event info: +571.2315245; write: Bogotá-Colombia, Oficina del Comité de Servicio Area de Bogotá, Calle 63 #11-27 local 211, Bogotá, Colombia

## Italy

**Rimini:** 20–22 Sep; ECCNA 19; Enjoy Your Recovery; The Foschi Hotels, Rimini; hotel rsvns: fax: +39.541.345692, +39.30.9362012; event info: +39.521.775946; event registration: +39.6.8844.944; [www.na-italia.it/eccna19/uk/index\\_uk.html](http://www.na-italia.it/eccna19/uk/index_uk.html)

## Luxembourg

**Luxembourg:** 14–15 Sep; First Convention NA Luxembourg; Today's Choice; Lultzhausen; hotel rsvns: +352.091.155.355; event info: +352.22.43.87; event registration: +352.26.58.16.52, +352.091.155.355; write: Luxembourg, 100 Rue de Hollerich, BP 2399, L-1023 Luxembourg

## Mexico

**Baja California:** 18–20 Oct; Area Baja Costa; Una Década de Esperanza, A Decade of Hope; Grand Hotel, Tijuana; hotel rsvns: 866.472.6385; event info: 858.277.6438, 626.331.2027, 925.755.8885; speaker tape submission deadline: 1 Oct 2002; write: Area Baja Costa, PMB-80, Box 439056, San Diego, CA 92143

## New Zealand

**Auckland:** 25–27 Oct; 8th Regional Convention; 20/20 Vision; Celebrating 20 Years of NA; Freemans Bay Community Centre, Auckland; event info: +0064.0.25.745.611, +0064.0.9.360.7073

## Norway

**Oslo:** 27–29 Sep; Miracles Happen; Oslo; event info: +004722553543, +004722500227; [www.nanorge.org](http://www.nanorge.org)

## Panamá

**Panamá:** 16–18 Aug; Convención Regional de NA Panamá III; NA–Panamá, Panamá; hotel rsvns: 507.227.2858; event info: 507.221.9494, 507.672.7990; [NA-latina@nuestra-net.com](mailto:NA-latina@nuestra-net.com)

## Puerto Rico

**San Juan:** 26–28 Jul; Un Nuevo Despertar; Condado Plaza Hotel & Casino, San Juan; hotel rsvns: 787.721.1000; event info: 787.274.0488; write: Puerto Rico Region, Box 19311, San Juan, Puerto Rico 00910-9311

## Sweden

**Gotland:** 6–8 Sep; Frihet, Kärlek och Gemenskap, Freedom, Love, and Fellowship; Säve skolan, Visby; event info: +46736308044;

## United States

**Alabama:** 20–22 Sep; Surrender in the Mountains 2002; A Spiritual Retreat; Cheaha State Park, Anniston; hotel rsvns: 800.ALA.PARK; write: Alabama Northwest Florida Region, Box 590023, Birmingham, AL 35259

**Alaska:** 11–13 Oct; Alaska Regional Convention XVIII; Millennium Hotel, Anchorage; hotel rsvns: 800.544.0553; event info: 907.522.2069, 907.349.9707, 907.332.4539; write: Alaska Region, Box 102924, Anchorage, AK 99510-2924; [www.akna.org](http://www.akna.org)

**Arizona:** 26–28 Jul; NAANA; Festival of Recovery; Dairy Springs Campground, Flagstaff; event info: 928.526.1663; 928.774.6509, 928.527.9081; write: Northern Arizona Area, Box 22533, Flagstaff, AZ 86002

**Arkansas:** 30 Aug–2 Sep; Chili Dog Chowdown XII; Mountain Home; write: Clean and Serene Group of Mountain Home, AR, Box 164, Mountain Home, AR 72654-0164

**California:** 4–7 Jul; California Inland Region Convention; Palm Springs Riviera Resort & Racquet Club, Palm Springs; hotel rsvns: 800.727.8311; event registration: 760.416.1077; event info: 760.329.1210; speaker tape info: 760.323.0169; write: California Inland Region, Box 1106, Desert Hot Springs, CA 92240; www.cirna.org

**2)** 23–25 Aug; Mountain Miracle 2002; Pioneer Trail Campground, Dodge Ridge Rd, Pinecrest; hotel rsvns: 209.533.3041; event info: 209.928.1957, 209.586.5473, 209.585.4164; write: Central Sierra South, Campout Committee, Box 5100, Sonora, CA 95370

**3)** 30 Aug–2 Sep; 12th Street Third Annual Campout Labor Day Weekend; Riverfront Park, Marysville; hotel rsvns: 530.742.6291; event registration: 530.742.1359, 530.742.6013; event info: 530.749.9139

**4)** 20–23 Sep; Southern California Regional Cruise; Cruising Not Us-ing, Recovery at Sea; Carnival Cruise Ship Ecstasy, San Pedro; hotel rsvns: 800.307.3527; event info: 818.717.1911, 323.256.2006; speaker tape info: 626.334.5858; write: Southern California Region, 1937 S Myrtle Ave, Monrovia, CA 91016

**5)** 11–13 Oct; Rainbow Convention VII; Ramada Plaza Hotel, San Francisco; hotel rsvns: 800.227.4747; event info: 415.401.7095; speaker tape info: 415.550.8393; event registration: 415.401.7095; speaker tape submission deadline: 6 Aug 2002; write: San Francisco Area, The Rainbow Convention, 78 Gough St, San Francisco, CA 94102-5902

**6)** 3–6 Jul 2003; WCNA 30; 30th World Convention; 50th Anniversary of NA; San Diego Convention Center, San Diego; write: NA World Services, 19737 Nordhoff Pl, Chatsworth, CA 91311

**Florida:** 30 Aug–2 Sep; SFRCNAX; Catching a Decade of Dreams; Doral Golf Resort and Spa, Miami; hotel rsvns: 800.713.6725; event info: 954.923.0748, 954.436.2188; write: South Florida, Box 4892, Hollywood, FL 33023; www.soflarscna.org

**2)** 30 Aug–1 Sep; FCACNA; One Message, One Vision; Radisson Riverwalk Hotel Jacksonville, Jacksonville; hotel rsvns: 904.396.5100; event registration: 904.724.8375; event info: 904.765.7034; speaker tape info: 904.387.9395; write: First Coast Area, Box 17388, Jacksonville, FL 32245-7388; www.geocities.com/fcacna

**3)** 4–6 Oct; MidCoast Convention; MCCNA 2002; Embassy Suites Boca Raton, Boca Raton; hotel rsvns: 1.800.EMBASSY; event info: 561.702.2000, 561.945.7488; write: MidCoast Area, Box 1613, Delray Beach, FL 33447; www.midcoastarea.org/mccna

**4)** 18–20 Oct; Heartland Area Convention; Real Freedom Is Possible; Grenlefe Resort, Haines City; hotel rsvns: 863.421.5004; event registration: 863.667.2087; event info: 863.647.0863

**Georgia:** 4–7 Jul; WCNA 29; 29th World Convention; Georgia World Congress Center, Atlanta; event info: 818.773.9999 ext 200; write: NA World Services, 19737 Nordhoff Pl, Chatsworth, CA 91311

**2)** 3 Aug; Midtown Atlanta Area; 22nd Anniversary; Ramada Inn and Conference Center, Atlanta; hotel rsvns: 404.873.4661; event info: 404.867.1828, 404.297.0492, 404.766.3953; write: MAASCNA, Box 5619, Atlanta, GA 30308

**Hawaii:** 30 Aug–1 Sep; 15th Annual Maui Area Gathering; Camp Maluhia, Kahakuloa; hotel rsvns: 808.283.9155; event registration: 808.572.1875; event info: 808.572.5100; write: Maui Area Service, Box 6160, Kahului, HI 96733-6160; www.na-hawaii.org/HRSC/convention.htm

**Idaho:** 26–28 Jul; Serenity in the Wilderness XV; Porcupine Springs, Twin Falls; hotel rsvns: 800.328.5257; event info: 208.736.1160; write: Southern Idaho Region, Box 261, Twin Falls, ID 83301-0261; www.SIRNA.org

**Illinois:** 23–25 Aug; Living the Dream Area II; And New Possibilities Arise; Crowne Plaza, Springfield; hotel rsvns: 217.529.7777; event info: 217.529.2122, 217.553.1833, 217.584.1642; write: Living the Dream Area, 316 West Elliot, Springfield, IL 62702

**2)** 29 Aug–1 Sep; NA South City Area Convention IV; Holiday Inn Mart Plaza, Chicago; hotel rsvns: 800.HOLIDAY; speaker tape info: 773.221.2168; write: South City Area, Box 199327, Chicago, IL 60649

**Indiana:** 23–25 Aug; 7th Annual End of Summer Celebration; Prairie Creek Reservoir, Muncie; hotel rsvns: 765.747.4776; event info: 765.287.9878

**Kansas:** 4–6 Oct; Dodge City NA Roundup; Moose Lodge, Dodge City; hotel rsvns: none; event info: 620.225.3066; event registration: 620.225.6505; speaker tape submission deadline: 1 Sep 2002; write: Dodge City Area, 2317 Fairway Dr, # A, Dodge City, KS 67801; www.angelfire.com/ia/naroundup

**Massachusetts:** 19–21 Jul; Rough-n-It in Recovery VI Campout; Cathedral Camp, East Freetown; event info: 401.835.0598, 508.667.8247, 508.675.2953

**2)** 16–18 Aug; WMACNA IX; Growing Stronger in Recovery; Sheraton Hotel, Springfield; event info: 413.519.4402, 413.568.9131; speaker tape info: 413.598.8637; write: Western Massachusetts, Box 422, Chicopee, MA 01021-0422

**Michigan:** 26–28 Jul; Michigan Regional Convention XVIII; The Miracle Begins; Downtown Raddison, Kalamazoo; hotel rsvns: 616.343.3333; write: MRCNA, Box 19336, Lansing, MI 48901-9336; www.michigan-na.org/mrcna

**2)** 23–25 Aug; KASCNA; R&R at the Fort; Camp Fort Hill, Sturgis; event info: 616.207.0498; event registration: 616.207.0498; www.r-n-r-at-the-fort.org

**3)** 20–22 Sep; Metro Detroit Regional Convention; Through Change Comes Freedom IV; Holiday Inn, Southfield; hotel rsvns: 248.353.7700; event registration: 313.864.0764; event info: 313.867.6018; speaker tape info: 248.691.2627; write: Metro Detroit Region, 220 West Nine Mile Rd, Ferndale, MI 48220; www.michigan-na.org

**Minnesota:** 19–21 Jul; Pig 2002; Country Camping Campground, Isanti; hotel rsvns: 651.451.8893; write: SSFA Pig Committee, Box 2583, Invergrove Hts, MN 55076-2583

**Missouri:** 26–28 Jul; Ozark Area; 23rd Annual High on Life Picnic; Truman Lake, Bucksaw Point Resort, Clinton; hotel rsvns: 660.477.3900; event info: 417.626.8171; speaker tape info: 417.623.3148; event registration: 417.626.8171; write: Ozark Area, Box 2923, Joplin, MO 64803

**2)** 2–4 Aug; Third Annual Up the Creek Float Trip; Riverview Ranch, Bourban; hotel rsvns: 800.748.8439

**Nebraska:** 18–20 Oct; NRCNA XIX; Howard Johnson Inn, Lincoln; hotel rsvns: 402.464.3171; write: NRCNA XIX, Box 29693, Lincoln, NE 68529-0693; nrcna@nebraska.org

**Nevada:** 12–14 Jul; California, Arizona, Nevada Convention XI; Riverside Casino, Laughlin; hotel rsvns: 800.227.3849; event info: 928.763.7646, 928.692.5282; write: CANAC XI, Box 21975, Bullhead City, AZ 86439-1975

**New Hampshire:** 2–4 Aug; Granite State Area Convention II; Sheraton Nashua Hotel, Nashua; hotel rsvns: 603.888.9970; speaker tape info: 603.880.3689; event registration: 978.649.6617; write: Granite State Area, Box 7377, Nashua, NH 03060-7377; www.gsana.org

**New York:** 26–28 Jul; NNYRCNA; Promise of Freedom XIV; Clarion Hotel University, Ithaca; hotel rsvns: 800.257.6992; event registration: 315.492.4234; event info: 315.446.0310, 315.492.4234

**2)** 30 Aug–2 Sep; BASC; Recovery in the Woods XVI; Pioneer Camp and Retreat Center, Buffalo; event registration: 716.891.9172; speaker tape info: 716.885.8784; write: Buffalo Area Service Committee, PO Box 64, Buffalo, NY 14207; www.nawny.org

**3)** 13–15 Sep; WNYRNA VII; Eighth Wonder of the World; Days Inn, Niagara Falls; hotel rsvns: 800.DAYSINN; event registration: 716.862.4563; event info: 716.877.5309; write: Western New York Region, Box 151, Buffalo, NY 14207; www.nawny.org

**North Carolina:** 19–21 Jul; NHACNA IX; When at the End of the Road; Sheraton Imperial Hotel and Convention Center, Durham; hotel rsvns: 800.325.3535; event info: 919.667.1321, 919.490.5154; speaker tape info: 919.681.4556; write: NHACNA IX, Box 25043, Durham, NC 27702; <http://mwbr.net/newhopena>

**Ohio:** 27–28 Jul; Growing Up in Recovery; St. Joseph Church, Cincinnati; event info: 513.361.0680, 513.546.1029; event registration: 513.241.6447; write: GCASCNA, 1310 Race St, Cincinnati, OH

**2)** 2–4 Aug; Diversity Weekend; Recovery Is Not a Drag, Act Two; Embassy Suites Hotel, Cleveland; hotel rsvns: 216.523.8000; event info: 216.781.8114, 216.221.3582, 216.533.1160; write: Double Trouble Group, c/o Diversity Weekend, Box 543, Lakewood, OH 44107; email: nadiversityweekend@msn.com

**Oklahoma:** 19–21 Jul; 8th Annual Humpin' Down the River; War Eagle Recreation, Tahlequah; hotel rsvns: 918.456.6272; event info: 918.825.1294, 918.434.3272, 918.342.4803; write: Hump Day Group, 64 Irving, Pryor, OK 74361

**2)** 19–21 Jul; Roman Nose Spiritual Retreat and H&I Fundraiser; Roman Nose State Park, Watonga; event registration: 620.442.4494; event info: 918.352.3540; write: Plains Area/OK Region, Plains Area, 702 S McDonald, Stillwater, OK 74074; <http://okna.org/pasc/RomanNose2002.html>

**Pennsylvania:** 2–4 Aug; Ain't No Mountain High Enough VIII; Fulfilling the Dream; Genetti Hotel, Williamsport; hotel rsvns: 800.321.1388; event info: 570.326.4949, 570.321.0465; speaker tape info: 570.327.6321; write: Williamsport Area, Box 871, Williamsport, PA 17703

**2)** 16–18 Aug; BASC 11th Annual Spiritual Retreat; Rose Point Campground, New Castle; hotel rsvns: 724.924.2415; event registration: 724.283.5314; write: Butler ASC, Box 2657, Butler, PA 16001

**3)** 16–18 Aug; Little Apple Area Campout Convention; 21st Annual Birthday Celebration; Olivet Blue Mountain Campground, Hamburg; event info: 610.248.3939, 610.703.2263; www.laanabc.org

**4)** 23–25 Aug; The Journey Continues VI; Camp Harmony, Hooversville; write: Laurel Mt Highlands Area, Box 52, Ebensburg, PA 15931; www.lmhana.com

**South Carolina:** 23–25 Aug; CCANA; Welcome Home VII; Clarion Town House Hotel, Columbia; hotel rsvns: 800.277.8711; event info: 803.739.0334, 803.465.1752, 803.782.9091; write: Welcome Home Convention, 709 Woodrow St, Box 418, Columbia, SC 29205

**South Dakota:** 2–11 Aug; 8th Annual ADRNA Campout; Elk Creek Resort, Rapid City; hotel rsvns: 800.846.2267; event info: 605.787.5609; write: South Dakota Region, Box 788, Sioux Falls, SD 57101-0788; www.southdakotana.org

**2)** 20–22 Sep; South Dakota Regional Convention V; Cedar Shore Resort, Chamberlain; hotel rsvns: 888.697.6363; event registration: 605.338.6169; speaker tape info: 605.338.6169; speaker tape submission deadline: 15 Jul 2002; write: South Dakota Region, Box 788, Sioux Falls, SD 57101; www.southdakotana.org

**Texas:** 26–28 Jul; Recovery by the Sea XVIII; South Padre Island, Cor-

pus Christi; event info: 361.387.9867; event registration: 361.241.9812; write: Coastal Bend Area, Box 331367, Corpus Christi, TX 78463-1367

**2)** 16–18 Aug; 76th Texas NA Unity Convention; The Redwood Lodge, Whitney; hotel rsvns: 877.694.3422; event info: 972.254.4115, 281.420.7684

**3)** 30 Aug–1 Sep; 8th Biannual Convention; Recovery for You in 2002; Intercontinental Houston Hotel, Houston; hotel rsvns: 713.627.7600; event info: 713.728.1524, 713.856.5115, 281.970.8949; write: Houston Area, Box 7617, Houston, TX 77270-7617; www.hascona.com

**4)** 6–8 Sep; CTCANA II; One Disease, One Program; Quality Inn Northwest, San Antonio; hotel rsvns: 210.736.1900; event info: 210.662.4834, 210.645.1763

**5)** 4–6 Oct; Frolic in the Woods; Garner State Park, San Antonio; hotel rsvns: 512.389.8900; event info: 210.699.4806; www.eanaonline.org

**6)** 11–13 Oct; Northside Area Convention; Chain-of-Lakes Resort, Cleveland; hotel rsvns: 832.397.4000; event registration: 281.446.8734; speaker tape info: 936.441.1644; event info: 281.923.7454; speaker tape submission deadline: 31 Jul 2002; write: Northside Area, Texas NA Region, Box 3594, Humble, TX 77338; www.nacna.org

**7)** 18–20 Oct; Best Little Region Convention XV; Holiday Inn, Midland; hotel rsvns: 915.697.3181; event info: 915.368.0515, 915.682.2946, 915.363.8159; speaker tape submission deadline: 15 Aug 2002; write: Best Little Region, Box 1245, Odessa, TX 79760

**8)** 19–21 Oct; Fort Worth Area Convention IV; Fort Worth; speaker tape info: 817.441.1841; speaker tape submission deadline: 1 Aug 2002; write: Fort Worth Area, FWACNA IV, Box 122028, Fort Worth, TX 76121

**Vermont:** 16–18 Aug; Green Mountain Area; Back to Basics XVIII Campout; Wallingford Lodge, Wallingford; event registration: 603.585.9453; write: Green Mountain Area, Box 6414, Brattleboro, VT 05302; www.gmana.org

**Virginia:** 2–4 Aug; Almost Heaven Area Convention XVI; 4 Center, Front Royal; hotel rsvns: 540.635.7171; event info: 304.262.8824, 304.725.6812

**2)** 18–20 Oct; OLANA Unityfest X; Reaching for Hope in the Face of Despair; Holiday Inn Chesapeake, Chesapeake; hotel rsvns: 757.523.1500; event info: 757.562.2244, 757.934.1462, 757.562.3079; speaker tape submission deadline: 15 Jul 2002; write: Outer Limits Area, Box 1063, Franklin, VA 23851

**Washington:** 5–7 Jul; SWANA; Freedom Retreat XX; Wa-Ri-Ki Camp Grounds, Washougal; hotel rsvns: 360.735.7519; event info: 360.737.3685; write: Southwest Washington Area, Box 6085, Vancouver, WA 98668-6085

**2)** 2–4 Aug; Everett & North Puget Sound Areas; Together We Can Retreat; Pioneer Trails RV Resort and Campground, Anacortes; hotel rsvns: 360.651.8101; event info: 425.210.2424, 360.321.1595, 360.424.7785; write: Everett/North Puget Sound Areas, Box 12862, Everett, WA 98206

**3)** 20–22 Sep; Spiritual Connection XIX; Cornet Bay Environmental Learning Center, Whidbey Island; event registration: 360.715.3821; write: North Puget Sound Area, Box 1924, Mt Vernon, WA 98273

**Wisconsin:** 25–27 Oct; WSNAC XIX; Renaissance of the Soul; Radisson Hotel & Conference Center, Green Bay; hotel rsvns: 800.333.3333; event info: 920.430.3744, 920.490.9446; write: WSNAC XIX, Box 175, Green Bay, WI 54305-0175

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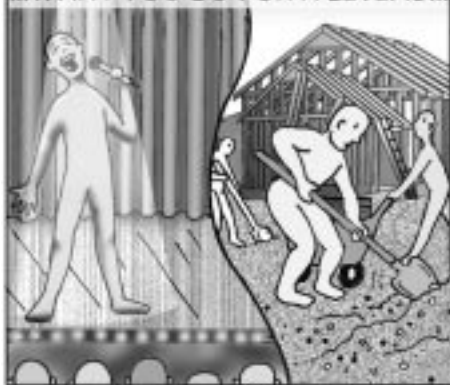
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...WHAT YOU DO FOR A LIVING...



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...WHERE YOU COME FROM...



...HOW MUCH CLEAN TIME YOU HAVE...



...OR WHAT YOU LOOK LIKE.



IT MEANS WE ARE ALL EQUAL

IN RECOVERY.

