

Reaching Out

April 2023



H&I meeting in Indonesia

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*“Yes, we are a vision of hope.
We are examples of the program working.
The joy that we have in living clean
is an attraction to the addict
who still suffers.”*

Basic Text, “How It Works”

From the Editor

We would like to welcome all of you to the NA World Services newsletter, *Reaching Out*. We hope that the contents of this newsletter will assist you in your recovery or H&I efforts. There are three sections to *Reaching Out*. The first section, "From the Inside," is filled with letters from incarcerated addicts, sharing their experience, strength, and hope as they find and maintain recovery from addiction through NA.

The second section, "From the Outside," is an opportunity for Hospitals & Institutions subcommittees to offer their experiences obtained through carrying the NA message of recovery to addicts who are unable to attend regular meetings. You may also find personal experience from those members who heard the NA message on the inside and are now living and enjoying life on the outside.

The third and newest section, "Transitioning from the Inside to the Outside," features members sharing about successfully transitioning from treatment, a hospital, or an institution to living on the outside. We encourage submissions for *Reaching Out* from members and H&I subcommittees. Please consider that we are more likely to publish articles that focus on how NA has helped an individual to recover while incarcerated rather than those that concentrate on the horrors of drug use. Send all submissions to *Reaching Out*; NAWS, PO Box 9999; Van Nuys, CA 91409-9999; USA, or to fsmail@na.org.

GET INVOLVED AND HELP US CARRY OUT OUR FELLOWSHIP'S PRIMARY PURPOSE!!

Our planned publication deadlines are as follows:

Issue	Deadline
July 2023	15 April 2023
October 2023	15 July 2023
January 2024	15 October 2023

And finally, did you know that electronic subscriptions to *Reaching Out* are free? New issues will be emailed to you four times a year.

To sign up, visit www.na.org/reachingout.



From the Inside

Dear Reaching Out,

My name is SH. I have three children who are blessed to be with family instead of in the system. You would think after missing my children for more than a year and choosing them I would be able to stop using, but I didn't. I'm back in again, trying something different.

Instead of talking about "war stories," I'll tell you about recovery. Previously, I never gave NA a chance. Today, through NA I am able to see that when I overdosed and was brought back to life by the paramedics and then was sent to prison, it was a positive event.

Although I made some bad decisions in my past, they do not define me today. I just must stay positive and do the next "right" thing. I can be a better person since I was given a second chance. Through my Higher Power, anything is possible. One day I will be able to give back what was so freely given to me. Thank you, NA, for my life and recovery.

SH, Texas

Dear Reaching Out,

My name is SA and I'm an addict. I've been clean since 2010. There is little doubt I was born an addict in a household of active addiction. As far back as I can remember, my family was using. Many of these family members died as a result of their addiction.

I found my first NA meeting at a three-quarter house and attended my first meeting under the influence. I was very fearful I'd be "found out." There were even children there; it was embarrassing. Soon I was arrested again and got my first Basic Text; I read it cover to cover and still read it today. I've been to many NA meetings while incarcerated over the last ten years. I

have a sponsor and look for ways to be of service. Not always just service in NA, but service, because I have learned it is a Spiritual Principle.

The other day I was sharing at our regularly scheduled NA meeting that “my life has never been better.” How can that be for a guy in prison? By working the NA program, my life has completely changed. Yes, every aspect has changed in some way. These changes are the result of awareness, surrender, and growth that cannot be restricted by the walls that surround us.

So, what does being an NA member mean to me? It means everything. Keep coming back; it works!

SA, Arizona



Anonymous, Iran

From the Outside

Dear Reaching Out,

I am an addict named CM from Connecticut. The message was hope and the promise was freedom. At first, I had a hard time believing these men had the cleantime they spoke of because I couldn't understand how I would get five minutes on the other side of the barbed wire, let alone five years. However, I kept coming, and the message became clearer each week. I was given some basic suggestions.

Go to a meeting your first day or night out, raise your hand, get some phone numbers, find a home group, take service commitments, get a sponsor, do stepwork, have a relationship with a loving and caring Power greater than yourself, and don't use **NO MATTER WHAT!**

This blueprint on how to live my life has given me what attracted me to the program®“a life beyond my wildest dreams.”

Today I have the honor to serve H&I and carry the message that was freely given to me. I am a direct product of H&I. Recently I had the honor to speak on behalf of our regional committee during our yearly convention. It was emotional because as I looked into the room, I was surrounded by men who served me, men I served, and men I have the honor to serve with. What a miracle.

I am so grateful for Narcotics Anonymous and H&I.

CM, Connecticut



Anonymous, IA



Transitioning from the Inside to the Outside

Dear Reaching Out,

After an 18-month commitment I was released to a transition home. I jumped out of the safety of the transition home; however, I was unprepared. I relapsed and was shortly back in jail. I couldn't call anyone because I left without a contact support list. How many of us know an addict alone is in bad company?

This time I didn't leave alone. I have NA and my Higher Power and a very large contact list. I'm having a successful transition on the outside. I plan on writing to the guys back at the institution and am living the NA way of Life. No more getting booked in and booked out for me.

BC, California

Transitioning from the Inside to the Outside

Whether you left from a treatment center, jail, prison, hospital, or institution, you are moved from the "inside" to the "outside" to be drug-free, productive members of society. We think your experience may be invaluable to others as they embark upon their transition.

We are offering questions to help stimulate your thinking so that you may want to share your experience with us; we will publish your article in *Reaching Out* to help others.

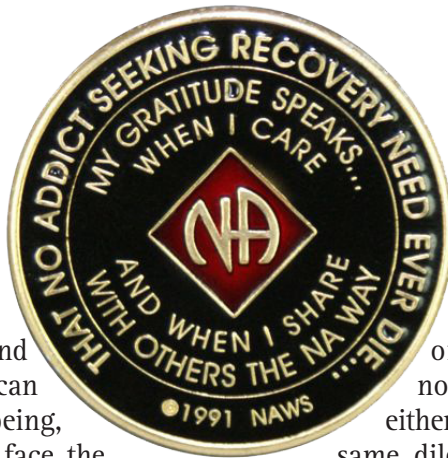
1. What did you do on the first day of your release/discharge?
2. What steps did you take to help your recovery in the community?
Do you think the transition steps are the same for addicts who are being released after 30 days or ten years?
3. What are some of the challenges you encountered when you reentered the community?
4. How did NA help you with information so that you were able to attend a meeting upon release/discharge?
5. How do you think NA may have been better able to help you in your transition, and do you have any suggestions to offer so NA may be better able to help others as they transition?

We look forward to reading your experience and providing this information to others. Thank you for helping us assist others in their transition.

CALLING ALL H&I MEMBERS!

Please submit your story to the quarterly NA newsletter, *Reaching Out*. We are looking for recovering addicts, like you, to share their experience of finding recovery behind the walls and maintaining it on the outside. Your story carries a powerful message of hope for the incarcerated addict! Thank you.

Please send your story to:
Narcotics Anonymous World Services;
PO Box 9999; Van Nuys, CA 91409,
or to HandI@na.org.



“When at the end of the road we find that we can no longer function as a human being, either with or without drugs, we all face the same dilemma. What is there left to do? There seems to be this alternative: either go on as best we can to the bitter ends—jails, institutions, or death—or find a new way to live. In years gone by, very few addicts ever had this last choice. Those who are addicted today are more fortunate. For the first time in man’s entire history, a simple way has been proving itself in the lives of many addicts. It is available to us all. This is a simple spiritual—not religious—program, known as Narcotics Anonymous.”

Narcotics Anonymous, “We Do Recover”

Order Form

Reaching Out is a quarterly, recovery-oriented newsletter made available free of charge to incarcerated addicts through Narcotics Anonymous World Services. If you will be incarcerated for at least six more months and would like a free subscription to *Reaching Out*, complete and return the following form.

Reaching Out is also available in a printer-ready format, for free download at www.na.org/reachingout

Reaching Out is also available by a 20-copy bulk subscription at a cost of \$38.05 annually. If you are interested in purchasing a bulk subscription, please complete the following form and return it along with a check or money order.

- I am an incarcerated addict (and will be for at least six more months) and want a free subscription to *Reaching Out*.
- I want to purchase _____ 20-copy bulk subscriptions of *Reaching Out* @ \$38.05 each, total \$ _____.

Name _____

Identification Number _____

Facility Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State/Province _____

Country _____ Zip/Postal Code _____

Reaching Out

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www.na.org/reachingout

ATTENTION INMATES

If you are relocating and your mailing address changes while you are incarcerated, please update your new address with us so that we can maintain your subscription to *Reaching Out*.