

Reaching Out



January 2025



NA Tanzania

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*“The heart of NA
beats when
two addicts share
their recovery.”*

Basic Text, “What Is the NA Program”

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 handi@na.org

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

Our planned publication deadlines are as follows:

Issue	Deadline
April 2025	15 January 2025
July 2025	15 April 2025
October 2025	15 July 2025

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 K, and I'm an addict. I was an addict before I even knew what an addict is. This is a disease from which there is no cure. I soldier on, hoping and praying that I am able to remain abstinent this time, that this time will be the one where I learn to maintain my recovery forever.

I am currently incarcerated, violated by parole and looking at possibly doing a third prison stint. Before this, I was only free for a little over four months. I met a woman, and we had a child shortly after. I promised that I would stop using my drug of choice. I was able to leave the drugs alone, but only because I replaced them with drinking. This led to my latest arrest, where I am now facing more time.

I am using this time in jail as best I can. I believe God has truly made this a part of my path, as I wasn't yet ready to do the best that I can with my freedom. Now I am doing all that I can to grow spiritually and gain the tools necessary to cope with the disease of addiction. I go to NA meetings and the drug counseling groups. I do the recovery, parenting, and mindfulness courses on our tablets. I pray daily. Relapse has played a major role in my recovery story, but I won't give up!

One day, I'm going to look back and say, "I did it!" I'm going to beat this disease with the constant love and support of NA members. I will win. Thank you for caring, Narcotics Anonymous.

K, Anonymous

Dear Reaching Out,

My name is KP. I was granted early release from prison. There were a lot of celebrations and happiness within my family, but it was short lived. Several days after this news, the release was

rescinded and denied. I had to face telling my family that I wasn't coming home. It was devastating, but I didn't relapse. I used what I had absorbed in NA for years as a member in prison. The Serenity Prayer helped me to avoid a relapse. My clean and clear heart allowed me to be present for my loved ones on the phone. I was able to be their strength and hope.

I was not that kind of man before Narcotics Anonymous. I would have relapsed and become unavailable. I can't express the depth of gratitude I have for NA and our community. It has been instrumental in creating who I am today. I am clean, hopeful, and continuing to count the days. I will keep coming back.

KP, California, USA

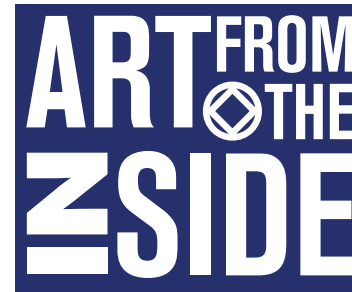
Dear Reaching Out,

My name is CS. In recovery, addicts often sit down and ask, "Where did I go wrong? What would my life be if I hadn't made the choices that led to my addiction?" There have been so many moments where I've sat down and asked those same questions, I can conclude that although I once lived a fast life, one of regret and deceit, I am grateful that I can now ask for forgiveness and furthermore, be forgiven.

I once was that person who couldn't see past the next high. I couldn't stop to realize the damage that I had done to myself or the ones that I hurt. I couldn't stop and think correctly or make any kind of choice beyond my addiction. A wise person once told me, "To see past your failure you must see your strength." That stuck with me because now that I am clean, I am noticing the strength that I have in my heart and am thankful for the freedom to right my wrongs and move forward. I want to be able to continue on the right path and get my story out there.

I look around my jail and see so many amazing women. I see so much potential for them and it gives me reason to do better. Addiction can only lead to jails, institutions, or death. I feel that I no longer fit in any of the three.

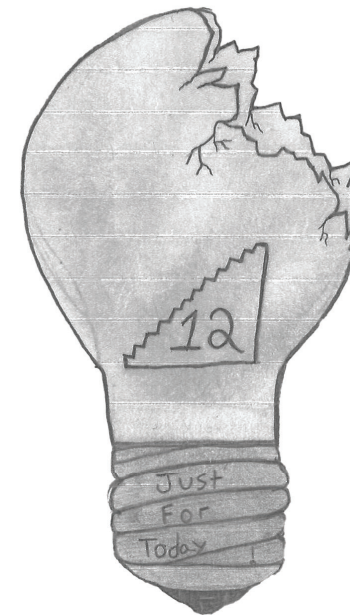
I received a bed at an incarcerated substance abuse program, and it was the beginning of the rest of my life. The support that



Many NA members, groups, and communities design recovery-oriented art. We believe that carrying the NA message of recovery is a creative act, and images provide a powerful message of the freedom we can find in NA.

If you would like to see your art printed here, please send jpegs or pdf files to Handl@na.org, or mail to Reaching Out; c/o NA World Services; PO Box 9999; Van Nuys, CA 91409.

Kansas, USA



Arizona, USA

I was given was inspiring and has allowed me to work towards a better life. I owe that jail my life because it changed me in so many ways. I am slowly able to be myself again as I become a better mother, sister, daughter, and friend.

CS, Kentucky, USA



Shout-outs from WCNA

My name is HC and I suffer from the disease of addiction. I attended the Narcotics Anonymous World Convention this past September. Being in a setting with so many addicts all fighting for the same cause of recovery was a powerful and electrifying feeling. It helped raise the bar for my perspective on life in general. To be a part of so much comradery was awesome, extraordinary, and fascinating.

Sometimes we as addicts don't quite know how much others can care about us getting clean. This knowledge drives men like me to keep going hard in maintaining my recovery. To know that there are countless men and women like me that care beyond the normal to let their voices be heard in the purpose of recovery gives me hope. I respectfully ask that every addict reading this attend a convention when they can. It was awesome!

HC, Ohio, USA

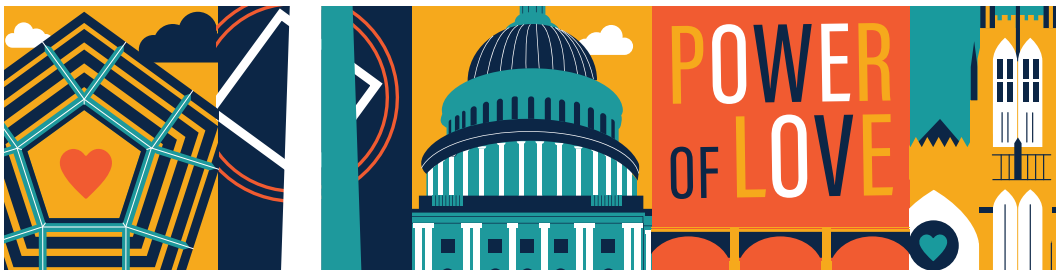
I want to thank everyone that was a part of the WCNA for making it possible for us to be a part of that special event. I had an awesome time and was inspired by everyone that was there. I look forward to being a part of the WCNA in the future. Thank you for having us and I hope you all have a blessed day!

WH, Ohio, USA

I would like to thank you all for a great convention. I hope and pray that I can attend many more. It was a blessing that you all took the time to come into our lives here in prison.

I am clean today because of members like you.

MJ, Ohio, USA



Dear Reaching Out,

My name is HM, and I am writing to share my story of overcoming adversity and rebuilding my life. I have been out of prison for a little over a year. In the past, I made some serious mistakes that led to incarceration. I understand the negative impact these choices had on myself and others. However, I have taken significant steps to address these issues. This was done through my Higher Power, therapy, my housing program, and the help and encouragement of Narcotics Anonymous meetings. I have gained valuable insights and developed coping mechanisms. I am committed to maintaining my recovery and living a productive life.

I have only dreamed of this life I am now living at the age of 51. I am the father of eleven beautiful children, and I want to make a positive impact on them, as well as on my family and friends who may think that it is too late. In six months, I regained my driver's license. After ten years of dreaming about doing it, I went to school and obtained a class A CDL truck driver license and a job. Thanks to my Higher Power I got four years clean in January 2024, and I'm pursuing my lifelong dream of going on the road as a truck driver. I pray for those who still struggle with overcoming addiction and continuing the fight. Just remember, the battle is not yours alone and through a Higher Power and NA, you can have the strength to do all things.

HM, California, USA

**GRATITUDE
SPEAKS**

From the Outside

Dear Reaching Out,

Hello, my name is GM, and I am an addict. My recovery journey began in prison, where I was serving an indeterminate life sentence. That wasn't my first prison sentence, I had been imprisoned many times before. Prison was part of my active addiction. It went hand in hand with my lifestyle choices, and those choices often resulted in incarceration. I just celebrated 18 years clean and have been free from prison since 2019. I am now living a life I never dreamed of. I am married, a homeowner, and am involved in service work.

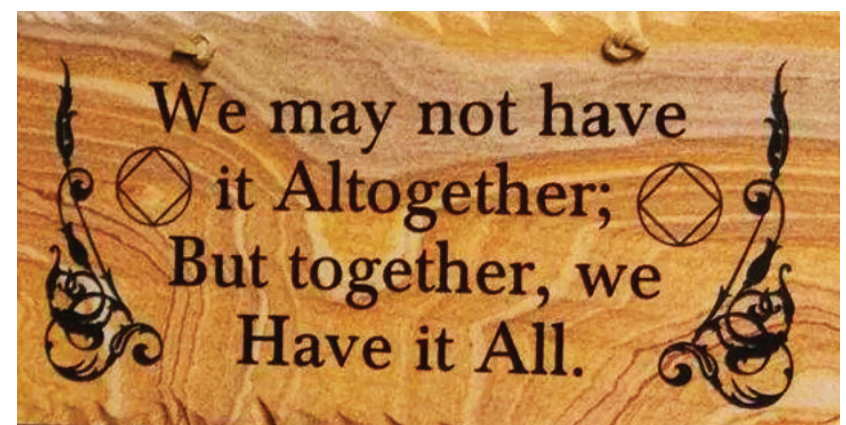
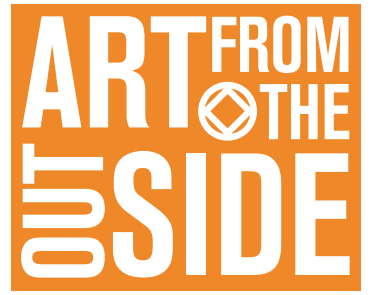
Since my release, I have been a participant and panel leader in two H & I meetings. Within two months of release, I was attending my first panel meeting and entering a correctional center in which I was incarcerated in the late 1970s. This was a surreal experience. After moving to a new community, I set out to bring the NA message to a local correctional center. I connected with the associate warden of programs and started a virtual meeting. The meeting is still going on to this day.

Currently I am continuing service with the regional public relations subcommittee. I have two positions that allow me to continue working with the incarcerated addict. As the Jail Liaison, I fill the literature requests from the institutions and try to connect NA volunteers who are interested in carrying the message from inside. As the "Written Steps to Recovery Coordinator," I connect incarcerated members who request a step-mentor with outside members that have volunteered to help guide them through the steps.

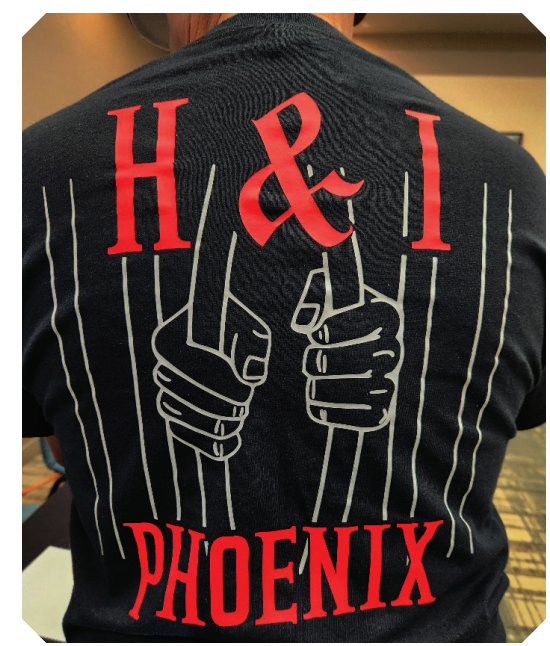
Remaining active in Narcotics Anonymous keeps me balanced. My personal program of meeting attendance and step work is the bedrock from which I can reach out to those who may struggle as I once did. We each have our own journey; recovery is possible for every one of us.

GM, British Columbia, Canada

Many NA members, groups, and communities design recovery-oriented H&I T-shirts. We believe that carrying the NA message of recovery is a creative act and art. Please share your H&I T-shirt pictures with us! We would like to showcase your art. HandI@na.org



Woodblock artwork, Tanzania



H&I t-shirt, Arizona, USA

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.



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.



“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*.