

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 _____

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Facility Name _____

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Reaching Out

c/o NA World Services, Inc. Ⓞ PO Box 9999 Ⓞ Van Nuys, CA 91409 Ⓞ USA
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*.

Volume 34, Number 2

Reaching Out

April 2025



A Posture in the Heart

NESSNA

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“By giving unconditional love in the Fellowship, we become more loving, and by sharing spiritual growth we become more spiritual”

Basic Text, “More Will Be Revealed”

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
July 2025	15 April 2025
October 2025	15 July 2025
January 2026	15 October 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.



“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”

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.

From the Inside

Dear Reaching Out,

Greetings from this 67-year-old inmate! Today is day 250 since my arrest. It is also day 250 of being clean from drugs and alcohol after nearly 50 years of drinking and drugging. I can't believe how good I feel physically and mentally. My mind is sharp and clear.

While that is great news, what is even better is my new relationship with the “High Hokie Fenokie”, the Power of all Powers, the Creator... yes, God! After placing all my faith in Him, the passing time has become one of serenity. I wake up optimistic, unafraid, and excited to think about the good life that awaits me upon reentry, fully clean.

I must also give you kudos, Narcotics Anonymous. I can't wait for my first meeting on the outside. Meetings are not offered in my facility unless in a special program. That hasn't stopped me from recovering by using my Basic Text and Higher Power. The combination of the two has given me the inspiration I never thought I could possess.

I have taken to creating recovery-related artwork while inside and can't wait to share it with the Fellowship upon my release. Time passes more quickly when thinking about what the Fellowship could gain from my art. Just the thought of my work possibly giving solace and inspiration to all addicts brings me great joy!

DJ, Florida, USA

Dear Reaching Out,

Misery, disillusionment, and high hopes were my realities when I was using. I was trying to change my life situation at the time by coming home to get a driver's license, social security card, and visit my father. The tables turned when I decided to use. The life of using is unacceptable. By taking drugs, I only

compounded my troubles by acting out. My altered sense of reality became my worst nightmare.

I believe in my heart that God saved my life by the courts putting me in prison. The extended stay here has helped me build a foundation. My health is good. My body is in the best shape ever. My business plans are for the good of tomorrow. I am no longer possessed by methamphetamine. Meth is a tool of the devil that destroys communities. Through prison and living the program of Narcotics Anonymous, I have learned that my dreams can replace my nightmares. I accept the challenges life offers today, and through a clearer window I am sorry for my wrongs. The gift of my recovery is living and enjoying life today.

DM, Unknown location

Dear Reaching Out,

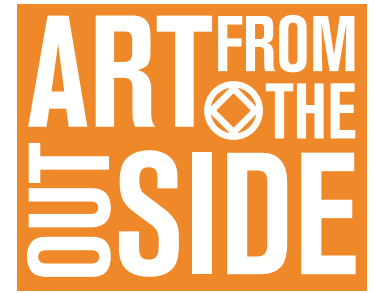
Hello, my name is EA, and I am an addict. I am writing to share my experience, strength, and hope and how I became willing to believe that change is possible through a shared experience with other addicts. Hopefully, it can become published in the Reaching Out newsletter to help inspire other addicts who struggle with this disease.

I've used drugs and alcohol for 30 years. I came back to prison yet again, under the influence. While here, I needed to do some deep reflecting and finally see how drugs have caused so many consequences on myself, my loved ones, and society.

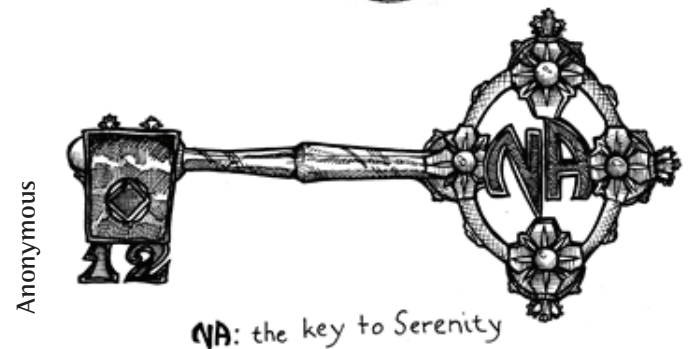
When I finally admitted that I have a problem, I learned that it wasn't enough to just stop there. I had to make the decision to turn my will and my life over to the care of God and allow my Higher Power to guide me. As of November 24, 2024, I've been 1 year clean from drugs and alcohol. I have a sponsor who guided me through the Twelve Steps, and that has helped me find a new way of life.

Recovery is not for people who need it, it is for people who want it. Today, I am proud to say that I'm clean. I'm grateful for my sponsor and the Fellowship of NA. They help keep my flame

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



TF, Pennsylvania, USA



NA: the key to Serenity



From the Outside

Dear Reaching Out,

Hello, I am an addict and my name is H. I am originally from Oklahoma but relocated to California in 2024. I came here to get some treatment for my disease of addiction. I had been incarcerated 32 times and did two prison stints. I have six felony convictions. I was labeled a menace to society. I was not welcomed in the community. I had six kids to provide for, and their mothers hated me. I reached a point where I had no longer wanted to live.

I had been through several treatment centers but never to NA. Coming to California, I was able to get into a great detox center that introduced me to the rooms of Narcotics Anonymous. Since then, my life has been filled with more than I could ever dream of. I've got a sponsor who's been right by my side through this journey of recovery. I feel like there's absolutely no way I could be where I am today without his guidance. He's helped me connect with some very great people who are also in recovery.

Through fellowshiping, I've found many new ways of having good times and socializing without the use of drugs. I am also finally employed. NA has helped me to learn to love myself by having love for others. I have a Higher Power, and I've built back trust with my family and children. I am surrounded by friends who are clean. I'm now a man of my word and can follow through with my commitments. The power of love that comes with this program gives me hope for a better future.

H, Oklahoma, USA

lit every day. For all the addicts out there still struggling with drugs and alcohol, give the Fellowship of NA a chance. You might just like it, and I promise you that it is a better way of living. I've always heard of people finding peace and freedom inside of an institution, and now I understand how. God bless you all.

EA, California, USA

Dear Reaching Out,

My name is JR, and I am an addict. I first got high when I was 11 years old, and I abused drugs for another 22 years. My life was unmanageable, and I spent most of it in juvenile hall, jail, and prison.

On 15 January 2004, I hit rock bottom and was sentenced to 61 years to life. I lost everything I owned and my family. I was depressed for years, but I was able to heal by reaching out to Narcotics Anonymous World Services. They blessed me with literature and a free subscription to Reaching Out. With that, I was able to learn how to work the Twelve Steps and apply them in my life.

I currently am incarcerated in California, and I attend NA meetings every Friday. It is a blessing to be around a group of men who are maintaining their recovery. We uplift and encourage each other to stay clean one day at a time. When we have guest speakers come in from the outside it is always a treat. Some of them have 30 or 40 years clean and they help us avoid relapsing by sharing their wisdom and experience. As a result, they are saving lives. Thank you, Narcotics Anonymous, for creating a program that works.

JR, California, USA

Dear Reaching Out,

I'm RR, and I'm an addict. My clean date is 1 November 2017. What a miracle it is to finally have embraced being clean, but even more so to have enveloped my life in recovery.

My former sponsor used to tell me, after I confessed to relapse time and time again, "How can you relapse from something you were never working in the first place—recovery?" I only strung several days of cleantime together without doing the work to keep it.

I always insisted on taking my will back, believing that I was better at controlling my life than my Higher Power. We all know how that turns out. I'd routinely scroll past my sponsor's number in my phone, hesitating briefly as my gut cringed and then proceeded onward to the phone numbers that he suggested I delete. Having reservations in my program was holding me back greatly.

One of the key elements missing for me, besides my faith, was doing service work: giving back to others what was so freely given to me. Now it is my most cherished and enjoyable aspect to my recovery. Though I have a sponsor on the outside, prayer, and the steps, it is the service work that I do that truly keeps me clean.

Every day I face potential chaos while incarcerated, and many days I miss the goals that I set for myself. Through it all, my Higher Power still has my back. How grateful am I!

RR, Colorado, USA

**GRATITUDE
SPEAKS**



Transitioning from the Inside to the Outside

Dear Reaching Out,

I am 24 years old and I'm an addict. My name is CH from Oklahoma, and I'm in a rehab for my use of drugs and alcohol, beginning the transition process. I have three kids, two of them are in the system. My oldest son is with my dad. I love NA and what it has done for me in my recovery process. I attend meetings every day, and each time I listen to people share, I get emotional. I read the Basic Text, and each time it is something that deeply touches me. I am still on Step One and trying to grasp the reality that I am an addict. I came to realize that yes, I am powerless over my addictions and need some structure to rid myself of the evils that prevail my brain. NA has given me some insight.

I cry and share my story in hopes that someone like me will get the help they so desperately need and deserve. Each day I learn a little more about myself. I have become more compassionate. Through NA, I know that I am not the only one who suffers. I opened up to complete strangers and they did not judge me. They cry with me; they express feelings. I found my new family in recovery. I feel at home. One night at the NA meeting I told my story and was told by the others how proud they were of me to open up. One man told me "Welcome home."

When my kids were taken, I stayed high to conceal my feelings of shame and guilt, pain and suffering. I found here that I no longer have to do that. I have never felt as much love as I do in the rooms. We all stand together in this life of recovery, and that's what families are supposed to do. I cannot put into words how much I love NA, but I can tell you it has brought me new hope. I know I can do this and stay clean. I also know that I can't do it alone either. Today I don't have to. I have a loving family and fellowship to help me.

As I sit here, I always remember the saying "one is too many and a thousand never enough." I love that today I am making a change for the better. It is scary and not easy, but well worth the try. Every day I must work on my recovery and do it one day at a time. Thank you for letting me not be alone.

CH, Oklahoma, USA