

# NA TODAY

OCTOBER 2006

Free Publication of the Australian Region

commemoration  
NA 30 years on

dangers in  
meetings

take the  
steps off  
the walls?

rogue  
fellowships

NA is not a  
dead fish



## from the editor




Hello Everyone. In the interests of rotation, our chairperson has moved on to another service position and a new committee has formed. This committee encourages contributions through stories, articles and cartoons. We are not really after poetry at this time.

If you wish to contribute, it would be preferable if the work is in word format and emailed. You can submit your work in any form, but if it is handwritten, it should be short and legible. Articles should be no longer than about 1200 words.

**Send all contributions to:**  
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second half of the meeting



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# 30 YEARS ON

In the wake of the 30 Year celebration of NA in Australia, it is important to remember all those people who sat in the rooms on their own, waiting with the faith that others would follow.

NA in Australia may well have begun in Melbourne 30 Years ago, but it didn't really kick off in a big way until nine years later in Sydney, where it grew slowly for a couple of years then exploded in popularity, going on to become the nation wide fellowship it is today.

A similar phenomenon occurred in LA back in 1953. The original group waned for nearly a decade before exploding in popularity some years later. During this time, a member called Jimmy K who is often thought of as the founding father kept the group alive, sitting in meetings with few, sometimes no other members. The picture on the opposite page is one of his original drawings when he was designing the symbols for NA. It was found in his garage a few years after he died and has been archived as a piece of our history.

It is important to remember all the members who sat in empty rooms waiting for us, all over Australia and the world. Those who believed enough in our fellowship to put in that effort and wait. To those people at this 30 year mark, thank you.



# THE PINK JUMPER

I leaned forward in desperate curiosity, trying in vain to see what was happening in the front seat.

"Oops" said Pete sheepishly.

Now, as a junkie there are several words that you never want to hear whilst your drugs are being prepared. "Oh Shit" is up there, as is "that fucking c#^t". "Oops" however, is unique in that it almost exclusively implies operator error of some description, which in this case it certainly did.

"What, what, what?" I groaned like only a good junkie could.

"Sorry bro, I spilt water on yours, ya gonna have to shoot it aye".

For almost two years I had sought solace in the fact that I only smoked heroin and as a result didn't consider myself a real junkie. I was more like a 'part-time' junkie, but that was all about to change. A new desperate chapter in the coffee stained, dog-eared book of my existence was about to open.

I swore at Pete with a tone of resignation, a tone I imagine should be reserved for cursing the hangman right before the floor was about to open and gobble you up for eternity. A couple of moments passed and I offered my arm through the gap between the front seats, tilting my head to stare out the window at the nocturnal happenings of Hyde Park. I watched a homeless man climb up on to a bench and forcefully jump down, as if he was trying to squash an aluminium can. I felt a small prick - "mmm, not too painful". The man climbed up on the bench again... blackness.

When I woke up everything was white. Lights were beaming into my eyes, blinding me. At last, they had come to take me home? People stood around me mumbling soft sentences that became entangled in a seamless orgy of consonants and vowels. As my vision became more acute I realised, alas, I wasn't on the mothership at all, but rather, in an emergency room. The clothes I had been wearing lay on the ground next to me, sawn in half by some spiteful doctor. He was still holding the little circular saw. The whole thing seemed melodramatic. Big nipple things stuck all over my chest, a heart rate monitor, white coats, concerned faces. I wanted everyone to calm down.

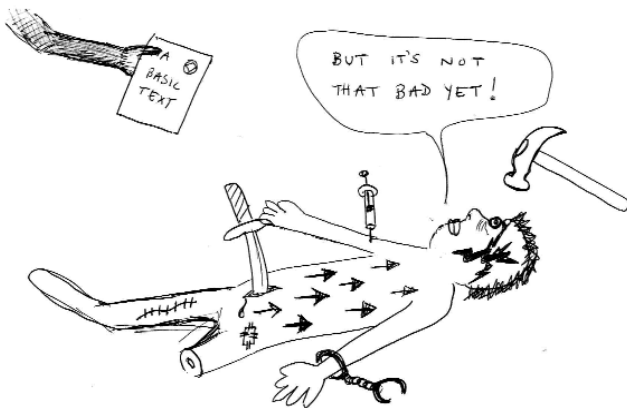
I sat up in my trolley and tried to collect myself. The crowd dispersed other than one doctor who, sounding compassionate and concerned, initiated a short discourse on something or other, 'why injecting

heroin is bad' I guess. I nodded in bewilderment, trying to give the impression that I understood and agreed with everything he was saying. Pete came in to the room clutching his girlfriend's small, fluffy pink jumper in one hand. "Fuck, you has us worried there bro" he said, flinging me the atrocious looking pink cardigan. "You've got to be kidding me" I said holding it up to the light.

Perfect! I marched out of the hospital - plastic nipples on chest, gauze on my wrist and a pink cashmere jumper suffocating my 85 kg frame - much to the amusement of those gathered in the waiting room. I shot them a look of contempt and continued out the door. Pete told me he was going home and that he thought I should do the same. Easy for him to say. He was dosed to the eyeballs, while I on the other hand, was in the grips of a vicious Narcane headache. I went and scored again. I wanted to shoot it, but didn't really know how. I knew who did though. And that is really the beginning and the end.

As I walked up and down Darlington Rd in my pink jumper, asking prostitutes to help inject me, I felt strangely comfortable. I had arrived.

James B



# 20 YEARS AGO

I'd like to say that I got it from my first meeting but I can't. It took me a while, but I am 20 years clean now. My name is Paul U and this is my story.

My introduction to NA was in Sydney in the early 80's. I also attended meetings on the North Coast in those early days but it was a very different fellowship to Sydney and very different to what it is today. My first attempts to quit were while living on the North Coast and I dragged myself along to Bangalow and later Mullum but it seemed to me that the meetings were an extension of the local treatment centre. The residents and workers made up the whole fellowship then I think. I remember workers like sheep dogs rounding up the residents when I approached. I think I looked a bit crazy and drug fucked. It was at Bangalow that I was told the 'day at a time' principle. In my madness I thought that meant just not using for one day and then the compulsion would be removed. On the second day I still wanted to use so I thought it was all bullshit and I didn't have anyone's number, so I used. After a couple of months going to local meetings (the two that there was) I knew it wasn't going to work, so I took off to Sydney where the miracle eventually happened.

I would plod off to a meeting and then go home bamboozled by it all and get stoned. It seemed too simple for me but it was probably the strength in the room, that strong healing energy. I remember going along to the meeting in the hall at St Mary's church in Waverley and the air was thick with enthusiasm. That terrified me; here were shadow people glowing. I don't recall much of the message but I remember sitting on a kindergarten chair alongside a woman I thought died years earlier and that everyone seemed to know everyone else and hung out together. One of my strongest memories is seeing people that I had known from the drug scene. I presumed many of them were dead because that's what happened to lots of colleagues and here they were a few years clean.

So I got the message eventually and went off to meetings each day. I remember being excited when a night meeting finally started on Sunday because the only meeting till then was a Spiritual Growth meeting held in a detox unit. I kid you not, spiritual growth in a detox, and it was voluntary sharing, no-one was called. Arggh, sometimes the self aggrandisement was excruciating but it was where lots of people went so we would hang out together for the afternoon and night to stay safe. Another



significant memory is when there was finally a lunchtime meeting every day. I think Friday was the last day to get a day time meeting.

It was a miracle that anyone stayed clean really, especially those getting clean on the street. The meetings were concentrated in the eastern suburbs which was where the street market in drugs was concentrated. Many, if not most, of the members had done some time in and around Kings Cross. I sure did. We went to meetings around there and socialised in the cafes in Kellet Street and Victoria Street surrounded by the environment that was a trigger for many and we were really there to support each other.

The idea of spending a while celibate after getting clean hadn't taken currency and I can remember falling in and out of love at least once a week. There was such a rapid growth in membership and meetings 20 odd years ago and the hormones were exploding everywhere. Those experiences were very important in learning not to take myself too seriously and to have fun. To start living, to grab life in handfuls and stuff my face.

I suppose the thing that stands out most for me is that 20 years ago Narcotics Anonymous had grown into an entity on its own. It had its origins in Alcoholics Anonymous and I am grateful to that mob but I didn't drink alcohol and hadn't had the life experience of the members of that fellowship so to have a place where I belonged was to discover real freedom.

Paul U

**20 YEARS  
AGO**

# STOLEN GOODS IN THE MEETING

I was at a large metropolitan meeting of NA on a Sunday night recently, talking to an old timer when he began to look very agitated.

"Are you OK?" I said.

"That guy is selling hot gear in the meeting" he replied, pointing angrily at a guy in the corner.

I turned around to see a guy on the nod, scratching his face, with several phones, MP4 players, Ipods, etc laid out on the bench, displayed on a small piece of material like it was the markets. I turned to the old timer.

"That is totally out of the question...isn't it? I mean...don't you think?" but I was cut off as he strode directly at the guy, confronting him heavily.

"You don't fuckin' sell hot gear here mate", yelled the old timer.

With the attitude of a naughty teenager at school, the man on the blink replied, "It's not even hot. I am trying to have a go here. Why don't you give me a fuckin' a break. Well maybe one or two are hot, but you've always had it in for me"

"It's not about you idiot, it's about protecting the fellowship...etc"

The conversation went along those lines and became quite heated. Some minor threats were tossed about, with the stoned man eventually leaving; his stolen goods wrapped in their little blanket and stuffed down his shirt.

A couple of the younger members didn't appear to care about the guy selling the stuff and thought it was all a bit heavy, but I am in complete agreement with the old timer. A heavy boundary needed to be set and he set it. All criminal activity should be shunned in NA. We should be trying to maintain a very clean image.

I know we come from diverse places and we don't change over night, but I don't think we can afford to be confused about this. Drugs, violence and crime should be left behind on our spiritual path, especially in meetings where we are showcasing a message that we can change our lives and who we are, not just individually but as a community. It affects the image of NA very badly if we are seen to condone criminal activity. If you disagree, write back and say why!

Tony B.

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# TAKING "GOD" OFF THE WALLS

*In a recent publication by NA World Services (NAWS) there was a statement that read "There cannot be any issue more important to us, as a fellowship, than what a person finds when they walk into an NA meeting".*

I was recently talking to a friend about the challenges that people face when they seek recovery in NA. We discussed the "god" word and agreed that this is something that people raise again and again eg "I went to a meeting and saw the word "god" and decided that NA was not for me / a religious organisation etc". Many of our members say that this "word" kept them from recovery for some time and professionals have told us that it is a huge issue for many of the people they refer to our program.

So we wondered where these people actually "see" this word "god". Is it at their first meeting? Frightened, wide eyed and looking for hard evidence of what we do and who we are and what they might experience? How do they develop their ideas of what is going on?

Let's take ourselves back to our own first meeting. It is likely that the meeting was decorated with pieces of parchment-like calico with the heavily socially-loaded words of "god" and "moral" and "prayer" and other challenging words; "defects", "amends" and "powerlessness". Our eyes may have been drawn to these banners again and again as we tried to understand what they meant. If we were lucky we had a member come up to us and tell us not to worry about the words on the wall. They may have explained that NA is not a religious program and that all we needed to do was to listen to the stories and ask questions after the meeting. Or we may not have worried about the words because we were so beaten, or so stoned that we couldn't read them anyway.

Other newcomers may have also tried to listen to the sharing, but there, behind the speaker or the chairperson, were those banners with those words. Some people have reported that they did not stay long enough to get any explanations; they walked in, saw the words, waited until other people left the room for a cigarette and took the chance to go home.

So what would happen if we took the banners down from the walls so that newcomers could hear our sharing and gain hope from our stories

before they were exposed to those words? What would happen if no-one was exposed to those words without the opportunity to ask the questions that would provide clarification and address their concerns?

My friend was shocked that we had arrived at these questions. She had never been to an NA meeting without banners and was surprised to find out that they did not exist in Europe and the USA until very recently, and that any growing interest in banners has actually been created by our Region promoting them as a merchandising activity.

If the primary purpose of our meetings is to carry the message that an addict, any addict can stop using drugs and find a better way to live, do our banners really help? What do you think?

Anon



## MEMBERS IN RECOVERY WHO CHOOSE TO DEAL DRUGS

My name is Marc P and I am an addict. In my heart I am restless and struggle about those in recovery who deal drugs.

I am passionate about our program. I am like this because I have tested my recovery, pushed it to the limits and experienced the consequences and pain of that. I have surrendered to the program again and again. It showed me the way to a deeper inner knowing and understanding of self, greater freedom from shortcomings, and all of it bringing me closer to god as I understand him.

By no means do I think I am perfect or right all the time, and I will be wrong again in my life many more times over. Life has shown me over and over that me on my own is not a good thing. Fear has had me in my recovery. Holding onto what I know and being afraid to let it go. Like with drugs, it was only when I connected to the defeat did I surrender. My life depends on me opening up and showing me to you and remaining open to the experiences of others. This is the way I stay out of my own way and god gets a look in.

*Dishonesty, closed-mindedness and unwillingness are three of our greatest enemies. (Basic text, page 53)*

I have been aware of people dealing drugs in our fellowship for over 11 years. When I first became aware of it I talked to my sponsor. He shared about when the steps were written, the old AA boys would take care of it within the fellowship. That is how they could say that we are under no surveillance at anytime, but we are not doing that, so the cops are taking care of it. They know what is going on and drug dealers in recovery will get caught. He was right, sure enough, one by one they were going to gaol. But drug dealers never really disappeared, they have been among us ever since and I can only imagine the police have also. For me this kind of makes the lines from pages 9 and 11 of the Basic Text, meaningless.

*"...we are under no surveillance at any time. The newcomer is the most important person at any meeting because we can only keep what we have by giving it away. (Basic Text, page 9)*

*We don't have to settle for the limitations of the past. We feel totally free to express ourselves within the fellowship because law enforcement agencies are not involved. Our meetings have an atmosphere of empathy. In accordance with the principles of recovery, we try not to judge, stereotype or moralize with each other. (Basic Text, page 11)*

When you talk to our members in the states, they do not have the same problems as we do with an addict in recovery making a career of drug dealing because they deal with it internally like the old AA boys. They gather a few members and make it clear to the dealer that he is not welcome to attend meetings until the dealer lets go of that behavior. It is not the responsibility of one person, it is the responsibility of our group conscious. Once a group conscious makes a decision, then we act on it. We are all responsible to practice not just the first tradition, but all of our traditions.

Once a group conscience makes its decision, that those in recovery who deal drugs are not welcome, it is then the group's task to act with unity. Gather more support if you feel you need it. Then as a group, approach the member in recovery who is a drug dealer, and as a group inform him/her that they are welcome but their behaviors are not. As long as they make the choice to continue with their behavior they are not welcome in the rooms.

No one likes confrontation, I know I don't and by no means am I suggesting that any of us do this by ourselves. We are not alone, we have strength in our unity.

You might be thinking that we can not turn anyone away from the rooms, but I think by not acting, we are turning our backs on them. I feel that we, the fellowship, are not only turning our backs on creating a safe environment for the newcomer we are also abandoning those in recovery dealing drugs. A lot of them end up relapsing if the police don't get them first.

To take it one step further, it is our responsibility to care for each other and give the drug dealer in recovery the opportunity to respond in being challenged with spiritual principles. If a person chooses to continue dealing drugs and has been given an opportunity to respond, then that person in recovery that chooses to deal drugs is not welcome. They make their choice to separate, to be alone and they are responsible for themselves.

This is about caring for each other and taking responsibility for our fellowship. For me it's about our common welfare. It's about the principles before the personalities. When we know that someone is dealing drugs and

we accept that behavior we have affected our common welfare, we have jeopardized the ability to carry the message. By not acting on this issue we are co - creating the issue.

*Through our inability to accept personal responsibility we are actually creating our own problems. (Basic Text, page 13)*

This is not about judging people. In our using and in our recovery's we have all fallen short. We have all, probably done something illegal. We are not perfect nor do we expect perfection of each other. Dealing drugs in recovery is the one of the most destructive behaviors that is having a detrimental affect on our primary purpose, which is to carry the message to the addict how still suffers. Yes this is Pandora's Box. I can only suggest that we rely on a loving god as he may express himself in our group conscious.

*The ability to face problems is necessary to stay clean. If we had problems in the past, it is unlikely that simple abstinence will solve these problems. Guilt and worry can keep us from living in the here and now. Denial of our disease and other reservations keep us sick. (Basic Text page 53)*

A drug dealer in recovery affects NA as a whole. A new comer walks into a meeting and see's his dealer in the room. I am talking about the guy he scored from the day before; I am not talking about the dealer from years ago. We also attract police surveillance, then have them sitting in our meetings.

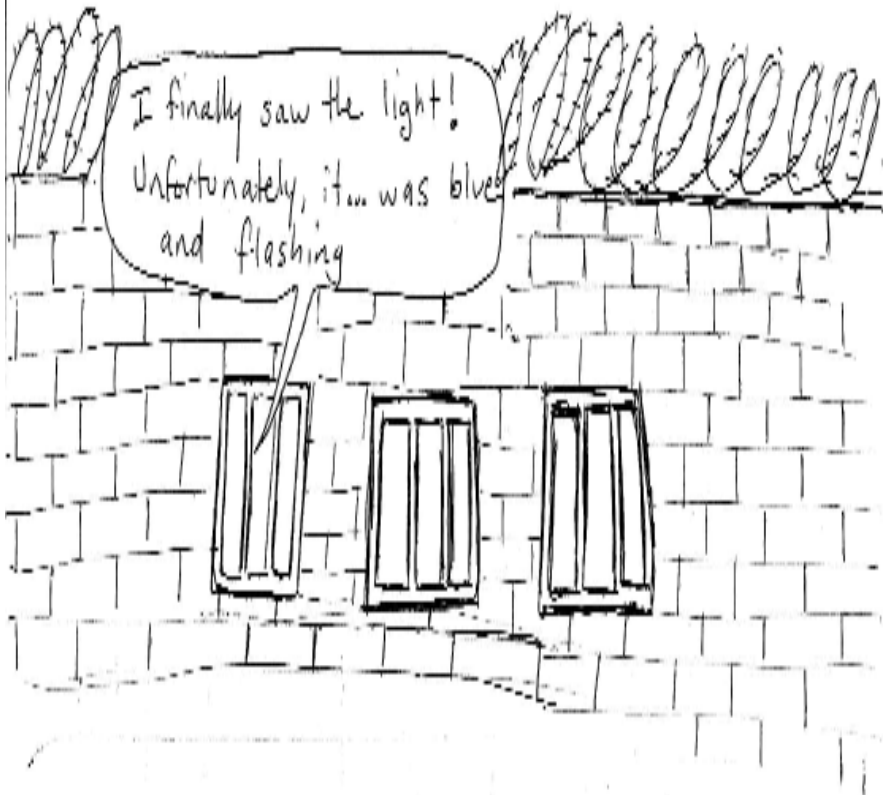
Has the lack of NA unity let down this newcomer's personal recovery?  
Are we as members taking responsibility for our fellowship?  
Are we practicing principles before personalities?  
Are we putting our common welfare first?  
Are we affecting our primary purpose?  
Does this effect NA as a whole?

After you have read this article, what are you going to do with this?

Are you going to focus on the problem, look for more problems or even create a problem with this information?  
Do you want to dismiss this as just another Pandora's Box or can you stay focused on this issue now?  
Do you want to work in the solution?  
Do we want to own our fellowship?  
Love all serve all

Marc.P. Member of Avalon Sunday, literature discussion meeting.





I finally saw the light!  
Unfortunately, it... was blue  
and flashing

H+I MEETING

## PRE-CHANGE PROCRASTINATION

When we find ourselves in the middle of a tough life change, a stubborn old pattern or yet another crappy obsession, we can find our selves at our wits end about how to move through it. It's strange because even though we know there are things that could help the situation, we find that putting them into practice can be pretty hard. Prayer, meditation, personal inventory, the steps, sponsors and the rest can seem like the last things we want to turn to when life really starts to suck. In fact before a lot of us do anything positive at all, a certain level of disappointment, depression or angst seems to be a prerequisite and then once established hard to shake. Isn't it always the case that when it's here comes the pain time, we linger before we do anything - sometimes for a long time.

A big part of our NA way is sharing and for most of us it doesn't come easy. Before we turned up, we did anything but let on what was really happening for us. No matter what, the real nature of our ups and downs was kept hidden from even our closest friends. We rarely compared our internal experience with that of others. For us life was uncharted and unreported.

In recovery things are different. New members quickly work out that without sharing it's impossible to enjoy the relief that's on offer. We share by listening and speaking in the first and second half of meetings. How many times have we gone to a meeting stressed out and traveling rough only to find that after listening to a few speakers, our mood has somehow been readjusted? As corny as it sounds, we are absolutely serious when we talk about this as part of the magic of meetings

We hear stories of people getting through life's little moments as often as we hear about their really traumatic moments. Almost with out exception, whenever a speaker is honest about their recovery, we find we relate. And when we relate, we move from the shadow of self towards the light of fellowship and connection.

We don't tend to notice how common this stalling thing is across our different stories of change because we don't mention it. In general most of us are pretty quiet about the level of procrastination associated with growth. Although few of us would argue that it's got to get pretty bad before we move toward relief, we treat the stalling stage as some sort of consensual secret - the emperor's new clothes - the stage we don't talk about. At some level do we think that our message of experience strength and hope is watered down by reference to our persistent dawdling? Do we barely mumble about this part of our process because we think: it's not a good look or not on the program or maybe that it will discourage newcomers?

Whatever the reason, by not talking openly about how much baulking is involved in change, we risk misrepresenting our stories and the true nature of recovery. Oblique references to struggles with the 6th and 7th step or the odd self deprecating comment about how we are slow learners doesn't really capture the full extent of our intransigence. Collectively we rarely acknowledge that stalling, avoiding, procrastinating and looking for another way, is less the exception than the rule. Would it not be helpful if we shared more often about how being stuck in a pattern: is part moving forward, part getting in sync with God, part becoming entirely willing? Some of us might like to know that when we find we aren't doing the 'right thing', we aren't 'bad' or at the very least - comparative losers. I know I would.

We talk about false starts, about relapse, about coming back from a bust. These are topics that are always on the table, topics from which we assiduously strip guilt and shame. We hug the backslider and give encouragement. We say it's a slip, a lapse, a part of our recovery. Why not open disclosure about our chronic recalcitrance with other kinds of change? We talk about willingness and sometimes the lack of it, but rarely do we refer to the inevitable feet-dragging that goes with moving forward. The sad thing is that maybe by not sharing our painful experiences with our own personal 'pre-change' procrastination experience, maybe, just maybe - we are ripping each other off.

Mark C.



# Rogue Fellowship

Crystal Meth Anonymous

When I started doing NA meetings almost five years ago, I knew fairly quickly that I was in a special place and that if I was ever going to fix up my ruined life and save myself from Psychosis and save my life outright that the answer would be here. And as it turned out (so far) that has been true.

I came into the fellowship to do something about my drug problem. My disease was arrested and then I found that there was a huge amount of other benefits on offer that I hadn't bargained on but that have been a surprise bonus. I learnt how to improve my relationships, how to have boundaries, how to become assertive. I learnt how to say 'no' and how to say 'yes.' I discovered amazing friendships. I learnt how to say sorry and how to make amends, I learnt that I needed prayer and meditation and a Higher Power in my life. I began the journey to humility, I learnt about me and my defects and possible ways of living life on life's terms minimising how my defects would affect others. I learnt that there really is no 'good' or 'bad' but only actions and consequences. I learnt how to look after myself and find balance and how to be of service to others. Wow! what a lot of benefits for a tired and defeated addict who had just wanted to get clean!

That's not the topic of this article however. This article is about a new fellowship that I started with two friends over a year ago CMA (Crystal Meth Anonymous), which some people have called a 'rogue fellowship.' I have heard comments made that have come back to me commenting 'Why do they need to start this fellowship? Why don't they just get clean in NA?'

While it's true I got clean in NA it took me almost 2 years of constant relapsing and that was punishing as I would always experience extreme drug induced psychosis which was horrific. While I kept coming back to NA what I rarely heard was my story. I didn't hear a lot of Psychosis stories and stories from people around sex and crystal the drug GHB or HIV. Also what I noticed as I went to the gay N.A. meetings, guys from the gay scene would come in sit down, hear three shares about heroin and pot and they would get up and leave. I would run into them on the street at a later point and they would tell me basically that they didn't relate and they were going to continue using.

In October 2003, I went to a long term rehab in Byron Bay and there I went through the program with two guys my age who both used ice/crystal and for that six months we shared our similar experiences I watched them over half a year discuss stuff that I related to 100 percent. We were able to help each other.

At the end of 2004 there was a 'crystal meth forum' being held in Darlinghurst which I attended where the gay community was calling for suggestions on how to deal with the ice problem within the community. A study had been conducted at the University of NSW at around the same time concluding that there were over 73,000 ice addicts in Sydney alone and that the problem was now overshadowing the heroin problem in NSW significantly. A friend of mine had been to CMA meetings in the States and we offered this as a solution. I moved back to Sydney in August of 2005 and CMA was born a week later. At the first meeting there were three of us. Some days only one of us sat alone in the room. That was the first six months. One year later we have five meetings a 'Big Book study', 'a sex and sobriety meeting' 'a topic meeting', 'a Higher Power' meeting and an 'I.D./recovery' meeting. We have a pool of about 30 regular attendees and meetings averaging between 9 to 14 addicts at each meeting. Currently we get over 5 enquiries each week and last week had five newcomers come to our Tuesday night meeting including two females. An intergroup committee has been formed in the last 3 months and we have calls from hospitals and health organisations all over NSW and from overseas.

The point is 'identification'. While I still attend NA meetings and am grateful to this fellowship for saving my life. CMA is saving the lives of people who for whatever reason were not prepared to stick it out at NA or just did not relate. I personally believe it doesn't matter how many fellowships we have in the world but the point is carrying the message and saving lives. I hear the message in AA and NA and Nar anon and SLAA but for those who come to any meeting, I believe identification is an incredibly important aspect and this is what CMA provides to those that don't identify with heroin, pot or prescription pills.

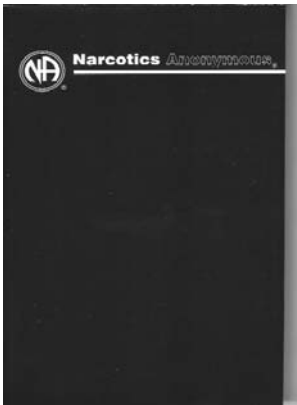
Finally, I travelled to New York in May this year and attended 2-3 CMA meetings a day. What I discovered there was the most powerfully strong 12 step meetings ever. There were 80 to 100 gay men and women in those meetings covering many different topics and aspects of the program. These people were helping each other stay alive and live better lives. The sense of fellowship and recovery there was incredible. Those addicts too happily attended NA and AA and shared their experience strength and hope with others.

My hope is that CMA will grow here in Australia as it has done in the U.S. providing a safe place for Meth addicts to come, identify and learn to live better lives one day at a time.

Stuart F.

# Basic Text Update Project

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As some of you may be aware, for the first time in a long while the Basic Text is being updated. The first half of the book is not changing but the stories in the back are. Many people from all over the world submitted their stories and there is currently a draft copy circulating. The World is asking for comment and feedback. If you are interested, simply go to [www.na.org](http://www.na.org) and select (basictext update project) from the drop down menu bar on the main page. It gives you very clear instructions as to what to do next.

**www.na.org**  
**4**  
**Basic Text**  
**Update**

# Snippet from the World Service Conference “Australia Speaks Up”

The World Service Conference of NA (WSC) is held every two years. Australia sends two representatives, Our Regional Delegate (RD) and our Alternate Delegate (AD). Recently our delegates attended the conference and this is what happened.

The whole conference is huge, a massive meeting lasting a week, with hundreds of regions and countries represented with many delegates from each. The atmosphere can be intimidating and because these events are held so rarely, a delegate only gets to go to two meetings generally, so little time to get used to them. The actual setting is like a United Nations, with tiered seating, headsets, translators and overhead signs explaining who is speaking, for what motion etc. Very scary, even if you don't speak.

During the last conference, Regions were applying to get what is called "seated" meaning they can attend the region and get a vote etc. An American region was trying to get seated and our delegates thought that because the world wide fellowship is growing quickly, and many other new nations were trying to get seated, that the WSC is top heavy with American regions, perhaps with little new to offer. Nobody was saying anything, but our courageous RD requested to speak against the motion to seat the new American region and once she had, many others plucked up the courage and chimed in with their agreement. The motion was defeated.

## FOURTH CONCEPT

*Effective leadership is highly valued in Narcotics Anonymous. Leadership qualities should be carefully considered when selecting trusted servants.*

The trust necessary to confidently delegate service authority is founded on the careful selection of trusted servants. In the following paragraphs, we highlight a number of the qualities to be considered when choosing our trusted servants. No leader will exemplify all these qualities; they are the ideals of effective leadership to which every trusted servant aspires. The more we consider these qualities when selecting NA leaders, the better our services will be.

Personal background and professional or educational qualifications, though helpful, do not necessarily make for effective leadership. When selecting trusted servants, after all, it is the whole person we trust, not just their skills. And one of the first things we look for when selecting trusted servants is humility. Being asked to lead, to serve, to accept responsibility, is a humbling experience for a recovering addict. Through continuing to work the Twelve Steps, our trusted servants have come to know not only their assets but also their defects and their limitations. Knowing that, they have agreed to serve our fellowship to the best of their ability, with God's help. Good NA leaders do not think they have to do everything themselves; they ask for help, advice, and direction on a regular basis. Our fellowship's leaders ought not be dictators or order-givers; they are our servants. Able leadership in the spirit of service does not drive by arrogant mandate, demanding conformity; it leads by example, inviting respect. And nothing invites us to respect our trusted servants more than clear evidence of their humility. Capable NA leadership exhibits the full range of personal characteristics associated with a spiritual awakening.



We depend on those who serve us to report on their activities completely and truthfully. Our leaders must have the integrity needed to hear others well, yet still be able to stand fast on sound principle; to compromise, and to disagree without being disagreeable; to demonstrate the courage of their convictions, and to surrender. We seek trusted servants who are willing to expend their time and energy in the diligent service of others, studying available resource materials, consulting those with greater experience in their field of responsibility, and carefully fulfilling the tasks we've given them as completely as possible.

Honesty, open-mindedness, and willingness, indispensable in recovery, are also essential to leadership. Any NA member can be a leader, and every NA member has the right to serve the fellowship. Effective NA leadership knows not only how to serve, but when it will serve best to step aside and allow others to take over. An entrenched bureaucracy inhibits our fellowship's growth, while a regular influx of new leadership, balanced by continuity, inspires NA growth. The effective leader also knows that, in order to maintain the distinction in service between principles and personalities, it is important to observe the practice of rotation. In some positions, trusted servants need specific skills in order to act as effective leaders. The ability to communicate well can help our trusted servants share information and ideas, both in committee work and in reporting to those they serve.

Organizational skills help trusted servants keep small service responsibilities simple, and make straightforward even the fulfillment of complex tasks. Leaders capable of discerning where today's actions will take us, and of offering us the guidance we need to prepare for the demands of tomorrow, serve Narcotics Anonymous well. Certain educational, business, personal, and service experiences may suit a recovering addict more to one type of service commitment than another. We do ourselves, our fellowship, and our trusted servants a disservice when we ask our members to perform tasks they are incapable of fulfilling.

When we carefully consider the leadership qualities of those we ask to serve, we can confidently give them the room they need to exercise those qualities on our behalf. We can allow effective leaders freedom to serve, especially when they demonstrate their accountability to us, reporting regularly on their work and asking, when necessary, for additional direction. True, our leaders are but trusted servants, not governors; yet we also expect our trusted servants to lead us. If we select them carefully, we can confidently allow them to do so.

Effective leadership is highly valued in NA, and the Fourth Concept speaks of the qualities we should consider when selecting leaders for ourselves. However, we should remember that the fulfillment of many service responsibilities requires nothing more than the willingness to serve. Other responsibilities, while requiring certain specific skills, depend for their fulfillment far more heavily on the trusted servant's spiritual maturity and personal integrity. Willingness, spiritual depth, and trustworthiness are strong demonstrations of the kind of leadership valued most highly in Narcotics Anonymous.

We should also remember that NA's leaders are not only those we vote into office. Opportunities for selfless service arise wherever we turn in Narcotics Anonymous. NA members exercise personal leadership by helping clean up after a meeting, taking extra care to welcome newcomers to our fellowship, and in countless other ways. As recovering addicts, any of us can fulfill a leadership role, providing a sound example, by serving our fellowship. This modest spirit of service to others forms the foundation of our Fourth Concept, and of NA leadership itself.

from A Guide to Local Services



# Asrologica With Bek Astrologica With Bek Astrologica With Bek Astrologica With Bek Astrologica With Bek Astrologica

**RaM**

you aren't always the sharpest tool in the shed but you are really good for some jobs and your talents need to be appreciated. Often your efforts are not noticed. You need to speak up and let the world know how essential you are. You have flown under the radar way too long Airies. Its time you got a standing ovation and a big bloody bunch of flowers or a trophy. We would totally be struggling without you. In fact you may not be the sharpest tool because you are the fucking key to open the bloody shed. Raise your profile and get some loving - in fact demand it. Best step: Twelve

**bULL**

you can be rather blinkered sometimes, the obsessive addict part of you is particularly concerning. You refuse to open your mind to the suggestions of the rest of the universe or respect the impact you have on it. You take direction when it suits you. The universe will not allow this for too long and will need to reset the balance soon. There is something you really want. Give up now and take notice of what is happening around you, otherwise you will lose it and we know you do not like to lose things. Be careful, you are missing a crucial ingredient that is literally surrounding you but you cannot see it. Stop and take a look. Best step for now: nine

**twiNs**

you need some nonsense. Be cheeky. You are a funny person but you are sensible. Responsibility is good however harmless and meaningless fun needs to feature more in your life for the next 3 months. Go buy a water pistol from a two dollar shop for \$2.25 and fill it up with cool clean water. On a hot day go to a café with outdoor seating facing the street and squirt it at people passing by- they may appreciate it and maybe they won't. You are cute enough to get away with it. If you are a boy do not urinate in the water pistol as that is not funny. Best step for now: seven

**CRab**

you need to understand that letting go does not work if you let go of MOST of it but keep a bit to yourself. You cannot select what bits you want to keep when letting go of a big issue or relationship. You ain't fooling the universe with this seemingly well adjusted ability to accept things have changed and no matter how well you articulate your acceptance of the situation your job is by no means complete. So my little crab friend be honest and really surrender - no more walking sideways (for today anyway) Best Step for now: three. Best day for a meeting: Thursdays or days beginning with T

**LEO**

you are the zodiac pussy cat that has the ability to be totally endearing as well as completely feral depending on which way your spine is positioned. Straighten it. Stretch it. I don't want to sound like a pestering mother but your posture sucks big time. It's like gravity is messing with you and your attempts to keep your back up just makes it worse. The more you get your back up the weirder it gets so just exhale find your centre. Relax and stretch out like a cat in the sun - even ask a close friend to scratch you under the chin and rub your tummy. Best step: eight

**vIRGiN**

size does matter. You are not big enough where it counts and some parts are not petite in the right places. It's not supposed to matter but your head still spends a lot of time and energy on it. It's just not how you wish it was, like in the magazines or on the television. No one has it exactly how they want it. The magazines sell because they market your lack of self acceptance forever selling you an image that is not attainable. You are beautiful exactly the way. The universe cannot wait until you see it too. We even love that pimple you will get on your arse three days after reading this. Your lucky step is 7. Best day for a meeting: today.

## sCaLes

you are a cardinal sign which means you rule your element. You are the king of the sky, the air, the oxygen we breathe. You have big ideas and think so universally sometimes you forget to come down to earth. Engage with the other elements - roll in the dirt, go for a swim then warm yourself by the fire. Go collect some friends and have a talk about the every day stuff. Your head is going to take you away if you don't take action and get back in your body soon. People think you are a bit loopy but it's hard to communicate with mere earthlings when your perspective is so worldly. Come back. We miss you and I know it gets lonely. Best Step: ten

## sCoRPion

well everyone thinks you are the sexy sign that is all about taboo. Your flower is the orchard which is supposed to be the most sexual flower because it represents female genitalia and then there is the sting on the scorpion thing. Reality check Scorpio, you are just a simple soul that likes things to be real. Unfortunately the world is full of a significant amount of bullshit and you are sensitive to it. Do not despair, there are some good people out there but you really need to pull your socks up and put in the effort to find them. You will find several toads before you find a true friend. Keep searching though because they will indeed save your life. Lucky step 1

## ARCher

calm down cranky pants. You may not notice this but there are little things that shit you that seem small enough not to need attention. They are totally freaking out your natural equilibrium. Your mental health is seriously going to start some funky weird stuff if you do not start some internally calming stuff. I'm not saying become a hippy but start to only give energy to things that matter - look inside rather than react to the outside. There is an infinite population of really annoying people in the world and you will kill yourself reacting to them all. Go to a meeting and keep your eyes closed. Best Step for now : two

## goAT

you need a plan as you really don't know what you are doing. Nothing is wrong yet you feel lost. It's okay. Your plan doesn't have to be long term or fancy. Just something that helps you understand how today fits. It can be weekly, monthly or yearly. Just something that reminds you that you are exactly where you need to be. If you cannot find a plan that fits then please trust the universe has a brilliant one for you and you might just need to remind yourself of that. Don't go ruthlessly sticking to a plan for the sake of it... it has to be flexible - as soon as you feel it's not right for you listen to that guidance. You are an earthy soul that needs to have your feet on the ground so maybe take off your shoes. Best step: four

## WatERLady

everything is a new adventure with you and you have such a fresh outlook that you have the gift of being able to see things that others cannot. You are the youngest of the zodiac and just like a child you do not discriminate. You see the truth in all its colour and tragic beauty. Your job is to figure out how to communicate the truth. Start with your own. Tell a Pisces if you find one in your travels as they have been around so long they may have forgotten what it was like to see things for the first time. New things are hard but with your energy you'll figure it out in the right time. If you get tired take a nap even if it's day time. Best step : Eleven

## fiSh

you have been around the bush, up the garden path and have followed the yellow brick road way before anyone ever heard of Dorothy. You must be tired but have not yet mastered the art of sleeping while awake. What you need is a good cup of tea and a really attentive listener, followed by some comfortable silence. This is a time to pause. You are too on top of things even though you may not realize it. So relax kiddo it's all smooth for a bit and you really need a rest. Best step for now: five

Български

Nederlands

Slovenčina

Bahasa Melayu  
Українській

বাংলা Türkçe

Manipuri 中文

Moldoveneasca

English

Suomalainen  
Bosanski

Tungumál

### NA World Services Vision Statement

All of the efforts of Narcotics Anonymous World Services are inspired by the primary purpose of the groups we serve. Upon this common ground we stand committed.

日本語

Our vision is that one day:

עברית

- Every addict in the world has the chance to experience our message in his or her own language and culture and find the opportunity for a new way of life;
- NA communities worldwide and NA World Services work together in a spirit of unity and cooperation to carry our message of recovery;
- Narcotics Anonymous has universal recognition and respect as a viable program of recovery.

Latviete

Slovak

Français

As our commonly held sense of the highest aspirations that set our course, our vision is our touchstone, our reference point, inspiring all that we do. Honesty, trust, and goodwill are the foundation of these ideals. In all our service efforts, we rely upon the guidance of a loving Higher Power.

hrvatski

Polski

MAGYAR

فارسی

Tagalog

Norsk

Русский

عربي

Brasileiro

Ελληνικά

Español/Italiano

Deutsch

Bahasa Indonesia

Dansk

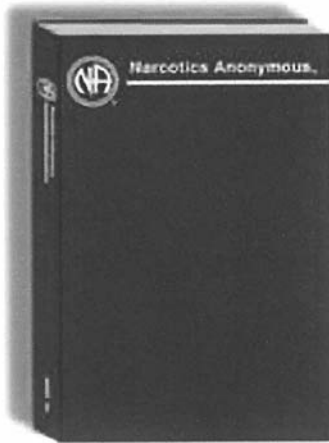
Svenska

Anglicized

हिन्दी

Portugues

# FELLOWSHIP SERVICE OFFICE PRODUCT CATALOGUE PAGE



*You know this little sucker, the Basic Text. Highest selling piece of literature ever. Well, meet mini me Basic Text, our answer for an empty pocket. Same book, everything except the stories, "sub-size me please" For exactly the same price: \$18.70 inc GST within Australia*



*New medallions with regular numerals instead of roman numerals. Check [na.org.au](http://na.org.au) for details*

*New basic text audio CD  
\$18.70 inc GST*

*New steps working guide on  
audio CD \$39.00 inc GST*



For all accurate and up to date information on NA products, go to [www.na.org.au](http://www.na.org.au) and click the link to FSO



# [www.na.org.au](http://www.na.org.au)

narcotics anonymous  
national helpline

1300 652 820

PADMOUNTED  
SUBSTATION  
NO. SC 754117

BLACK EMS

for all information go to  
[www.na.org.au](http://www.na.org.au)

courage to  
change the  
things I can

wisdom to know the difference

god grant me the  
serenity to accept  
the things I cannot  
change

