



**NARCOTICS**

**ANONYMOUS**

**PRODUCTIONS**

# **NA TODAY**

free publication of the australian region

October 2010



**The NA Today Magazine welcomes articles from all readers. Articles can be your own story, experience, strength and hope, a response to any article that has appeared in the NA Today, or can simply be a viewpoint about an issue of concern in the NA Fellowship.**

**Articles should be no more than 800 words, and we reserve the right to edit. All articles must include a name, address, and phone number. First names and last initial will be used as the signature line unless the writer requests anonymity.**

**The NA Today Magazine belongs to all members of Narcotics Anonymous. Its mission therefore is to provide recovery and service information, as well as recovery-related entertainment. In keeping with this mission, the editorial staff are dedicated to providing a magazine which is open to articles and features written by members from around Australia, as well as current service and convention information.**

**Foremost, we're dedicated to the celebration of our message "that a addict can stop using, lose the desire to use, and find a new way to live."**

**The NA Today presents the experiences and opinions of individual members of Narcotics Anonymous. Opinions expressed are not to be attributed to NA as a whole, nor does publication of any article imply endorsement by Narcotics Anonymous, The NA Today, or the Narcotics Anonymous Regional Service Committee.**

**The NA Today Magazine welcomes the participation of its readers. Send us your experience in recovery, your views on NA matters, cartoons, ideas etc to:**

**natoday@na.org.au**

**or to the**

**NA Today  
c/- Fellowship Service Office  
1st Floor, 204 King St  
Newtown NSW 2042**

**Editor: Caroline M Vectors: Tim B & Kitty I**

## **Editor's Note: What is the NA Today?**

If only editing this magazine and putting it together was both stress-free and without controversy! But sadly this is not always the case. Last edition there was an article about getting clean on the street versus going to a rehab. It was written by an anonymous addict, exploring a point of view and first appeared in an edition of the *NA Today* in 2000.

As stated in the front of every *NA Today* magazine, the *NA Today* “presents the experiences and opinions of individual members of Narcotics Anonymous. Opinions expressed are not to be attributed to NA as a whole, nor does publication of any article imply endorsement by Narcotics Anonymous, the *NA Today*, or the Narcotics Anonymous Regional Service Committee.”

The article in question was the point of view of an individual member, on a topic that clearly is of interest to many members. NA itself has no views on this issue. As we all know, NA has no views on any outside issues, and that includes the efficacy of treatment programs in relation to other paths to recovery. If you want further clarity, the traditions of NA are a good place to start reading.

My personal opinion on the matter is that it takes what it takes to get clean and that is different for everybody. I got clean through going to rehab but I know people who got clean on the street through doing meetings, meetings and more meetings. All that matters is that you get there.

So as you read this magazine, please remember that it is written by individual recovering addicts for other individual recovering addicts to read. You guys write it and I just put it together. It's for you, the members of Narcotics Anonymous. So let's keep it that way (or else it will get boring and we hate that...)

## **A Compass in Your Recovery**

I often think in pictures. I see images in my minds-eye that I use as analogies of my recovery. One of these is the image of a compass.

A compass is used by travellers to point the right direction. Let's imagine that the best possible direction addicts could travel in is north and using is travelling south. If you are heading directly north you are doing everything possible for a perfect recovery. You are not using. You have a sponsor. You ring your sponsor. You do service. You avoid old playgrounds, playmates and playthings. You are following all the suggested things that keep you safe.

But who has a perfect recovery? Take another look at the compass. If you are travelling NNW or NNE you're still heading in a northerly direction. It may not be as direct as north but you're doing pretty good really.

What if you have just got into a new relationship or started a new job? You are still going every week to your home group, but your priorities have shifted a bit. These new activities have diverted your attention from your compass a little bit, but you are still heading in a north-easterly direction. Not disastrous. You're still heading north.

It has been a few months since you got to a meeting. You're making plenty of money at the new job. The relationship is not as rosy as it was in the beginning, but you're working on it. At this point, you might be heading either east or west. Not heading north, but not heading south either.

You have bumped a couple of your old using buddies. They know you're not using. You feel that you can handle it. You haven't used for months now and you don't intend to. You'll be alright. Direction? Maybe south-westerly or south-easterly. You have started to head away from the path that will provide

you with happiness and safety.

The relationship is on-again, off-again. Your partner is threatening to kick you out. They can't stand the lies and bad moods. One of your old using mates wants you to help out with a break and enter. You're still not using, so you justify that if you do this one job and make some money; your life will turn around again. You are now on the slippery slope. You're not looking at your compass, but if you did you would see that your course is now SSW or SSE.

South is using; the first beer, the first bong, the first jab or line.

But, no matter where you are standing on the map of your life, you can always stop. Have a look at your compass to see what direction you have been heading in and make a decision to turn and head in a northerly direction. Slightly north or true north. It is up to you.

You don't need to start using to pull this compass out and start using it. It is now in your mind and you can avail yourself of it whenever you wish. If your meetings have dropped off a bit lately, and you haven't done any service for a while, stop and turn to the north.

Michael G



## **We do not see things as they are - we see things as we feel**

Hi, I am a grateful member of NA and it gives me great joy (as opposed to mere pleasure) to have the opportunity to share some of my story. I used opiates for many years, bouncing from heroin to codeine to opium poppies to methadone to codeine to heroin to methadone to morphine (and back to heroin) and then buprenorphine...then the obligatory switch from the witch to the bitch - cider, wine, vodka laced with the occasional taste of speed, ice, ecstasy. It was this latter cocktail that finally brought me to my knees.

*Flashback to Rock - Bottom Flats...*

*Dateline - Beyond ordinary constructs of linear time*

*Spatial Co- Ordinates - Far Gone...last seen somewhere near Alpha Centauri...*

Yes, I had been living on a diet of buprenorphine and vodka (or copious quantities of red wine) for long enough to have lost all trace of time. I did know what year it was and that in itself was one of the mysteries of modern science. I was living with a poor unfortunate woman who had taken pity on me when I became homeless and I was at that point in my using where if I didn't drink enough I would go into the DT's, yet if drank more than that I would suffer alcohol poisoning. I had been dancing on this tight rope of death for some time and not surprisingly I had ended up in hospital emergency rooms with boring regularity. On this particular night I had been trying to teach my friend guitar and I had an uneasy feeling. Before too long I felt my hands and arms metamorphose into useless lumps of meat as I vainly tried to grasp the neck of my guitar only to have them flop off.

Motor functions critical. Major Tom - call Mission Control. Small problem - Mission Control has been hijacked by a nasty band of evil gremlins fighting under the flag of Alcoholic Dementia. I think my brain is overheating - the ship

can't take much more of this, Captain! End of the line.

Like the proverbial little boy whistling in the dark I suggest that we go to bed. I am full of premonitions of doom and dark foreboding. This is It, over the top. Tonight we will be taking you to a place far beyond the Twilight Zone...a world of pain and suffering, a virtual Hell. To cut a long story short I suffered the death of a thousand cuts, was witness to my own execution as I mounted the Gallows of my Mind and realized with perfect horror that my girlfriend was actually a KGB agent whose primary purpose was to have me liquidated.

The whole catastrophe.

A few months after this I found myself in rehab and being taken to meetings every day. For me this was the right place to be as it threw me into the company of other recovering addicts (including the staff and management) and I was able to experience the mystical experience of one addict helping another. Yes it was confrontational, yes it wasn't always easy, yes it was at times hilarious, yes it was insane (was that anything new?) it was a trip! At thirty days my body heaved a huge sigh of relief, at sixty days my brain started to return to normal and around ninety days I experienced the first glimmerings of that elusive thing (or not-thing) of what is called a spiritual connection. It was like someone switched the lights on, it was like having sight restored after being blind for as long as I could remember. However, I still wasn't done yet.

After three months at the rehab, I was released (I use that word because that's how I looked at it) and went interstate despite concern on my behalf. In a small country town I relapsed on a standby of my opiate past - dihydro-codeine bitartrate (that's extra strong codeine for the uninitiated). As a result I landed back in rehab. Truth - nothing changes if nothing changes...so what did I do different this time? During my previous stay I had done everything possible in my own mind

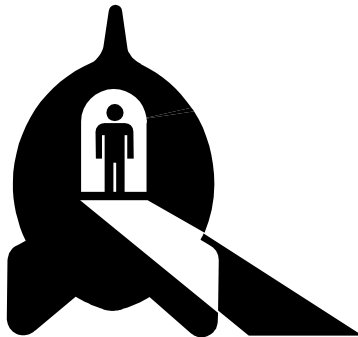
to assist me in my recovery apart from you guessed it - prayed like a motherf#ker (that's extra strong prayer for the uninitiated).

Since then I have been fortunate enough to have stayed clean for two years and eight months plus. I don't know if I will ever use again. From what little I know, I know that is not up to me. Many beautiful and wonderful things have happened to me since that time, most of which are indescribable so I won't try. My higher power is beyond words - the nearest thing I can approximate it to is Love, however I am fully aware that is a word and therefore something that people are free to disagree with and that's ok too.

Love is the energy I feel in the rooms and I love that NA juice as it has saved my life. What I can relate is that all the good things in my life have grown from the inside out and not from the outside in. Soon after I moved out of rehab and back to the city I wandered into a second hand bookshop and came upon the words "We do not see things as they are- we see things as we feel".

And that's been the story so far.

Anonymous





## The Top Ten...

This edition we'll be looking at the top ten signs you need a new sponsor...

1. You've ended up with more clean time than them
2. They're sleeping with your ex-partner
3. They're sleeping with you
4. Their income is mainly derived from drug sales
5. ...or house breaking...
6. They tell you their gambling problem is "no big deal"
7. They don't think recovery necessarily involves 'change'
8. They don't think that busting disqualifies them as a sponsor because they know a lot about recovery (see no.1 )
9. They couldn't tell you how to get to a meeting if your life depended on it (and it does)
10. They think they're cured.

## **NA, anonymity, evolving technology, outside enterprises, individuals and service**

I am a relatively new member. My name is not important, other than at the level of accountability. I feel that this open forum is the proper medium to voice this concern, whereby others can respond with any difference in opinion.

Since coming to the fellowship of Narcotics Anonymous I have done my utmost to act with integrity and live by the spiritual principles of this fellowship. Recently I have become involved in service and accepted a position as part of a convention entertainment committee. I have begun making a film for our convention and included individual credits for persons involved. I protected anonymity in that I did not list individual's full names; however there has been some conjecture within my peer group and concern from older members who feel that this should not have occurred.

My motivation behind the credits was out of gratitude and to express my thanks to those who gave their time and efforts to the production. I strongly believed at the time that credit was due and that gratitude should be expressed. I also included a Director's credit for myself. How can I take credit for service if we are all to be faceless and nameless? I see the error in this judgement and agree that as members we should maintain anonymity at all levels of service; acting graciously and with humility without a personal agenda.

Where I did not act alone and received the go-ahead from the other committee members, I now have come to see that these oversights may not be in line with the traditions. I have had many differing opinions and have encountered some difficulty finding resolution as I find no clear cut answers.

There appear to be many grey areas however this again is open to interpretation. I note that in this publication not all

contributing are anonymous. It's my understanding that this is to ensure accountability which I strongly agree with. A voice hiding behind anonymity allows freedom to do and say whatever they wish without repercussions. Safeguards are important, accountability is important. I must stress this is my own personal opinion. I am given a voice and choose to be accountable.

As for any personal agenda, my motivation behind my involvement in this project was purely out of inspiration. As a newcomer I was truly inspired by the work of previous NA entertainment committees and my love of film prompted me to apply for the position. It has been my sole focus for many months and my motivation is to carry a strong message of recovery and promote nothing other than the opportunities for amazing kinship, spiritual prosperity and fun made available to me and many others through this program.

It seems to be increasingly difficult to protect anonymity with evolving technology. Mistakes are being made, albeit accidentally. People have publicly disclosed the names of members or promoted NA events through technology such as mobile phones, the internet, Facebook and Twitter. This is of great concern, and it is extremely important that members' anonymity is protected.

We are taught that our public relations policy is based on attraction rather than promotion and to maintain anonymity at the levels of press, radio and film. I feel that is where the lines become blurred, particularly if the film is an NA production with all participants' involvement willing and consensual with the understanding that the film will not to be commercially distributed or shown publicly outside of NA and its members.

As a whole I have found this project extremely difficult logistically and dealing with individuals and their personalities. I have had a lot of support but feel that certain people's in-

volvement has been limited to critiquing the work of others and I must sadly report that it has been quite discouraging and made me question my own involvement. Moving forward from this negativity I have become more driven to ensure that the work continues. To all those involved in service keep at it, it's for the betterment of NA as a whole. As an individual I really appreciate your efforts, I am clean today because of this fellowship and all those who make it what it is. To the amazing cast and crew that is NA thank you.

Times certainly seem to be changing; evolution is inevitable but to what degree is left to NA as a collective not to individual members.

Chris M.  
Byron Bay

## **“What is Outreach?”**

This is a question often asked of those of us who have become involved in this part of service within NA. When the question was asked we found ourselves challenged to try and define what 'Outreach' actually was and often found ourselves floundering for an explanation.

So we got together and looked to some of our approved literature for a nice, concise and succinct definition. Hey! We found one on the first page of the NA Outreach Resource Information and it states: *'The main purpose of Outreach is to help overcome the isolation that hinders the growth and survival of our groups.'* That's it in a nutshell, but that definition or explanation leads us to asking more questions – primarily, “How do we actually help bring this about?” Desperately, we found ourselves quoting Basic Text mantra to each other, like – ‘This sounds like a big order, and we can't do it all at once ... easy does it.’ With a collective sigh of relief – we ploughed on!

So we decided to put the actual definition of Outreach to one side for the moment and we reflected on the actual fellowship of NA and what it means to us, personally. We found ourselves looking at relationships within the NA family – our collective NA family. We all agreed that we do recognise the ‘warm and fuzzies’, the secure comfortable feelings that we have when heading into our own home groups. For some of us it is not unlike our ‘natural family’ get-togethers.

There are people there whom we feel that we know so well, some of them we trust and love, and some that we are a bit reserved with, maybe even scared of. We know and share in their life’s battles along the way - their triumphs and the defeats and they share in ours, likewise. We know of their vulnerabilities and their strengths. We no longer want to exploit them but have found that our tendency is more akin to nurturing and support. And just like our ‘NA family’ relationships there are many varying degrees of dysfunction and so many varying degrees of recovery and enlightenment, too. All together, it doesn’t matter how we feel at any given time; whether we are connected to the bigger NA fellowship or feeling isolated, alone or whatever, in recovery – the meeting is open and our NA family is there for us.

**“How important is that?”**

How important it is that we share our stuff and keep it alive! For those of us involved in Outreach we have found that this is absolutely essential to help keep us alive in recovery and a huge motivating factor of why we are in service positions of our home groups and also why we are involved in service positions within Outreach; at Area and Regional levels. It is to help make it possible for members of our NA family to stay alive in recovery too, to have the support and love that we enjoy in our world of recovery. More often than not, some of the members that hopefully benefit from Outreach we don’t even know that well, just like distant relatives, it doesn’t matter – as they belong to our ‘NA family’.

So the more we all thought about Outreach as a concept the more we realised that it is something that everyone does in NA as soon as they start to share in recovery.

- Whenever addicts in recovery pass on new found wisdom and clarity to others, in and outside of meetings - that's Outreach.
- When home groups get involved by travelling en masse to support other meetings in regional or outlying areas - that's Outreach.
- As areas come together and look at ways of supporting and establishing new areas or remote groups - that's Outreach also.
- Established national fellowships who seek to support fledgling groups in other countries that haven't been exposed to our Steps and Traditions - that's Outreach too.

So back to the nutshell - I guess we all thought that the old adage of 'I can't – We can' could be the Outreach banner. We know that we didn't get recovery instantly or easily – and that the longer we stick with it the more we realise that recovery is a continual process. And as we reach out for recovery we are all, by nature, active in Outreach.

YIS

Regional Outreach

Anyone interested in getting involved within Outreach please contact Rob A at Outreach sub-committee [outreach@na.org.au](mailto:outreach@na.org.au)

## **The Ongoing Journey**

I have been in recovery a long time. I started using when I was young and finished using when I was young. I have basically lived my life in NA, sharing with other addicts. I do not regret a moment of this life. It has been rich and meaningful unlike the misery that came before, that soulless existence searching out the next empty drug.

But things change, recovery moved along – I've heard it many times before, people saying they have some time up now and they want to be more a part of normal life, stuff like that. I've never had that. I've always felt the overwhelming commitment to this thing that gave me back my life. I don't even question any more. I just do it.

Recently I had a baby boy with my beautiful partner. Life has delivered me all the gifts that I was too down on myself to hope for. Nearly every time I have been given something excellent in life, like love or money or success it has struck me like a sadness, like I don't deserve it or something, but this is different. It is a bit like recovery in that I don't feel like I have a choice – I have to change the nappy, feed the partner, wash the sheets etc or things simply won't function properly, just like recovery. If I don't go to meetings, share my truths, try to give a shit about the newcomer, my life edges downward again towards negativity and self-loathing.

It is impossible to analyse the healing salve of NA meetings but there is a gift in them that keeps on giving, as long as we give back. Too many times I have seen good people go by the wayside because their life went well clean, but they didn't give back.

This new baby is a whole new way of seeing things. The moment he arrived on the planet I got to see the true grace of existence. It seemed bleeding obvious that this complex biological system was not here by accident. He was another gift

from the great beyond and yet another responsibility. I will do my best to give him the life I was never given as a child. His cot is filled with teddy bears. His fridge is filled with food. His parent's car has petrol and his blue baby book is being maintained (hmm there always seems to be a blue book).

With this child I have the opportunity to break the cycle of my family's addiction. As long as I stay clean, attend the meetings and stay focused on my spiritual path of stepping out of self, all will be well. If I follow this path I have nothing to fear.

Plus he is awesomely cute!

Anonymous





**REMEMBER...**



**NA TODAY NEEDS YOU!!!!**

**SEND YOUR ARTICLES, LETTERS, CAR-  
TOONS AND GRAPHICS TO:**

**NATODAY@NA.ORG.AU**

**OR**

**NA TODAY**

**c/- FSO**

**1ST FLOOR, 204 KING ST  
NEWTOWN NSW 2042**

## **Tales of a meandering addict**

I've been clean over 18 years and coming to NA for 20 years. Well, minus six months of that before I relapsed 18 and 1/2 years or so ago because I was fast-tracking the road to recovery in three other fellowships and a Shirley Smith Workshop.

I found home in Narcotics Anonymous. From the first shares I knew I belonged but I harboured a secret, my using wasn't long enough or dire enough and I used the wrong drugs. Back in the early 90's most addicts in recovery were heroin addicts. I was an ecstasy popping, speed injecting Hordern Pavilion dance party enthusiast (still am by the way - some old habits die hard).

That secret drove me to share harder, strive harder and look harder, the sobering shares from the floor which suggested "easy does it" "one day at a time" and "you didn't become addicted in one day" were holding me back, I was a man on a mission to kill the desire to use once and for all and getting to the core fast was the way I was going to do it. One thing I knew was that something had gone wrong at the age of 22 and I was sick and tired of the way I was living even if I had a lot of using left in me.

Mine is also a testimony of a person staying clean even when they have a lot of using left in them. I have deep gratitude to the people who stood for me staying clean when everything in me wanted to keep using, especially the guys I was in rehab with, who showed how they had been where I was at in my stage of progression and what I had to look forward to i.e. Jails, institutions, illness, broken families and death.

They showed me that I stood at the cusp of a huge opportunity for my life and they wished they had it for themselves. They didn't have to group me like that but they did and I'm eternally grateful to them for it. I'm deeply saddened that

many of them didn't make it and am always glowing when I see at least one who has. Thanks to them I know that what or how much I used has nothing to do with what's on offer in these rooms.

Summing up my recovery is simple in its complexity, I've always worked it hard but I've done it my way pretty much i.e. genuinely misguided or honestly self deceived. I prescribed myself steps, other fellowships, therapies and work according to what I thought I needed. I'd become my own sponsor prescribing for my illness. I did what I thought I needed and listened and trusted no one deep down inside; never giving myself fully to any one program.

In some way it protected me because I was a big believer in the original source of information rather than people's interpretations but my interpretations and prescriptions were very limiting too, which I failed to see. My most successful and happiest times in recovery have been when I've taken the steps off the wall and put them into my life and dived with blind faith into life even if the crashes at times have been very unpleasant.

Service helped me even if for a long time I didn't see the point and constantly was looking around the world feeling like whatever I was doing wasn't quite it and hoping someone would fix me if I shared this next bit of information, but the feeling kept coming back.

It took doing another outside course to see that I needed to give myself fully to the NA program or anything in life for that matter, in order to expect any real results for myself my recovery and my life - no half measures. I had to face life on life's terms no matter what came up inside of me and use whatever it took to hand over and keep going in the face of it without accumulating more baggage.

I'm now doing service and experiencing overall happiness in recovery knowing that I am part of the hand extending to a person in need, just as I once was. What I have so far, and I'm a slow learner, and if this is of value to anyone, is that NA is my constant for none of it is possible without the basic foundation of staying clean, live and make mistakes, try new things, the person or thing I resent the most is my biggest asset so learn to love them and see what's in it for me, don't minimise it, take and depend upon others when I need to (the service for another is invaluable to them), and trust and give myself to something before deciding what I can take and what I'll leave behind...oh and when all else fails pray, when all is well pray.

What now? A future a day at a time of being happy so I'm ringing my sponsor regularly, developing my business and asking for help and I'm happiest when I'm of contribution to others - that's why today my recovery is about doing service. My life ain't perfect but at least I'm no longer suffering over it.

Angelo S  
Newtown Saturday 2.30pm group

## **Growing old in the Fellowship**

Who would have believed it? Nearly 24 years later, this still clean addict is only one year off equalising his using time, 3 years off his 70<sup>th</sup> year and still very much in the rooms of Narcotics Anonymous? Not bad considering those near terminal years between 38 and 42.

Sadly, in lunch-time or other newcomer meetings where our younger members hang out, there are not so many fellow 'old boys' reminiscing about the memories derived since the 'good old' days. How did that happen? It does bring up the question of OCM members and what happens to them? Do we/they get too busy? Maybe we/they can only get to the odd night meeting or maybe, just their own home group.

Considering our beginnings, do we become too respectable, less tolerant, and more autocratic expecting more obedience from would be sponsees?

As we accumulate clean time, is it our many new roles? For the males of us it's the roles of grandfather, father, husband, partner, brother and uncle. And maybe also the advent of our own business and investments with all of those success story and management demands of cost and tax problems. Maybe it is then about retirement, travel, overseas trips, convention visits, and managing superannuation incomes. Wow! A whole new life! OOPS and how did that all happen? Oh yes, that's right, we found a way out of addiction and by way of 12 Steps, cleaned out those restraining life issues in the rooms of Narcotics Anonymous. We found freedom to do all of this other stuff and live life to the MAX!

Over the years I have developed a spiritual notion about my own aging presence in the rooms and I suspect it has to do with a basic human **longing for immortality**. Advancing age realises that there is much less time ahead than that which has passed and behoves the obvious need of gifted wisdom. Recovery as shared by the experience of elders is an empowering gift which is passed in close encounters, and remains with our incoming younger generations of recovering addicts as they also replicate their new and empowered lives. Voila! Just as we have seeded the lineage of our own biological tribe, so too can we spiritually perpetuate tribal lineage in the living memory and actions of others we have worked with in recovery. And as this tends to be pivotal, it organically remains, long after we have fallen off the tree of life.

Hmm, he thinks, although still a work in progress, it seems to work for me.

Alan W  
Victoria

## **Undercover addict**

Do you ever have the feeling in your day-to-day life that you have a secret? Like you're living a double life? That you are, in fact, an "undercover addict"? A friend of mine used this description in a share a while back (Thanks Ollie!) and it perfectly describes that feeling.

It's a little bit of the "I'm a fraud" feeling plus the "If only you knew feeling" feeling as well as knowing that it would be generally unwise to reveal your secret identity, much like how Superman can't tell anyone he's really Clark Kent...or is it the other way around...

It's not like it happens all the time and for me, it really mainly happens at work. I think that's because it's the place I'm least likely to tell anyone my 'secret identity', let alone want to tell anyone!

The result is these weird moments where worlds collide and you end up feeling like you've got a secret. It happens when people start talking about drugs and addiction, often not in a way that has any comprehension of recovery and you have to sit there and smile and nod. I once had a beautician tell me that her ex was a drug addict and how they were all f@#cked as she came towards me with hot wax. I decided, in the moment, to keep my mouth shut and murmur things like "that must have been hard for you..."

Occasionally I do just jump in boots and all and say "that's wrong, it's more like this..." Usually premised or ending with the words "and I know this because I have friends who work in the welfare sector".

The other type of weird moment is the one when you suddenly become acutely aware that you used to be a junkie. Or in my case, a homeless, thieving, lying junkie, and suddenly here you are, having tea with the Queen (or something).

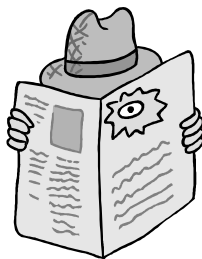
People now trust you to make decisions and to do things. Important things! It's completely insane.

These moments can be particularly odd because they are usually accompanied by an urge to turn to the person next to you and say "But don't you realise I used to shoot up heroin?" (or equivalent). This is commonly regarded as a BAD IDEA.

And it's a bad idea because we aim to become responsible and productive members of society and that's hard to do if you marginalise yourself. Some recovering addicts work in fields where they find it appropriate to disclose and that's awesome. I, on the other hand, have so far given my work colleagues approximately 11 different reasons for why I don't drink. Every year at the staff Christmas party they ask and every year I give them something new to see if anyone notices. So far they just occasionally look a little confused...

Basically the fact that we are in recovery is our own business, not anyone else's. It's bad enough that sometimes our own actions (generally the illegal ones for which we have been nicked) can come back and bite us on the arse without us having to expose ourselves to uninformed (at best) critique. So I know that I am going to feel sometimes like an 'undercover addict' but it's worth it to live my life free of judgement of who I used to be, not who I am today.

Caroline M.  
Canberra



## **Psychic Corner**

The NA Today is pleased to announce that we have secured the services of a famed psychic, Orac (also a famed astrologist and numerologist), to answer your deepest, most difficult life questions.

Just write in to the NA Today ([natoday@na.org.au](mailto:natoday@na.org.au)) with your burning questions and we'll ask Orac to dig deep into the spiritual realm and tell us the answers. This month's question is from Steve and he asks about relationships in recovery.

Dear Orac,

I have been clean for three years. I am in a good place right now. I have a job, a nice place to live and a big screen TV. The ex is speaking to me again and letting me see the kids. Life is actually pretty sweet. Here's the thing. There's this girl in rehab who I'm really attracted to. She's only three month clean but she seems really together. We've only really spoken at meetings but she's really hot. She wants to leave rehab and come live with me. What do you think I should do?  
p.s. Her boyfriend is currently in jail but she says she's gonna break up with him soon.

Thanks,  
Steve Z.

Dear Steve,

This is a common problem. I have consulted my spirit guide, Gandalf the semi-beige, and he has returned to me with an answer. He says "What kind of a nut-job are you" or words to that effect. Middle Earthian can be hard to decipher. Basically, the spirits do not think your plan is a wise one. Or even a sane one. In fact the spirits think you need a new plan. Something like staying away from newcomers 'in that way' and looking after your own recovery. Which sounds like a plan to me...

Good luck with that,  
Orac



## South Coast Area Convention

# Faith not Fear

### **FREE REGISTRATION!!**

Sweep away the worries of the day and the cobwebs of the week by joining us at SCANA's Annual Convention. It's sociable, it's exciting, it's informative but most of all it's fun.

After the success of 2009 we're continuing to host this fantastic event at one of the South Coast's best surf clubs - Woonona Surf Lifesaving Club, Kurraba Rd, Woonona.

### **ACTIVITIES/FACILITIES**

BBQ, wraps, sandwiches, patrolled surf beach and ocean pool, music, entertainment, great company, relaxing outdoor area

### **FURTHER INFO**

Ph - 0413 248 660

Email - [nswsouthcoast@na.org.au](mailto:nswsouthcoast@na.org.au)

Pre-book accommodation at:

Corrimal Beach Tourist Park - email: [corrimaltp@wollongong.nsw.gov.au](mailto:corrimaltp@wollongong.nsw.gov.au) ph (02) 4285 5688

Wollongong Surf Leisure Resort - email: [enquiries@wslr.com.au](mailto:enquiries@wslr.com.au) ph (02) 4283 6999

# **SPIRIT OF UNITY**

24<sup>th</sup> Year

12<sup>th</sup>, 13<sup>th</sup>, 14<sup>th</sup> November 2010

Tiona Park

The Lakesway, Forster, NSW

We have a website for all information and bookings

[www.savesou.blogspot.com](http://www.savesou.blogspot.com)

If you don't have access to the net don't despair call

Helen C for accommodation 0412 048 233

Bill R for General info 0428 299 916

Brett F for SOU's Got Talent 0412 00 55 06

## **Program**

### **Friday:**

5 pm Open and Registration (no earlier)

7pm to 8pm Supper (1 hour only)

9 pm Sharp Opening Meeting

### **Saturday:**

8 am, Breakfast

10am, Meeting in Conference centre

12pm, Lunch

2pm, Meeting in Conference centre

5.30pm, Dinner

6.30pm, Sunset Meeting Green Cathedral

8 pm games for kids

9pm to 10.30pm SOU's Got Talent

### **Sunday:**

8am, Breakfast

**Registration:**

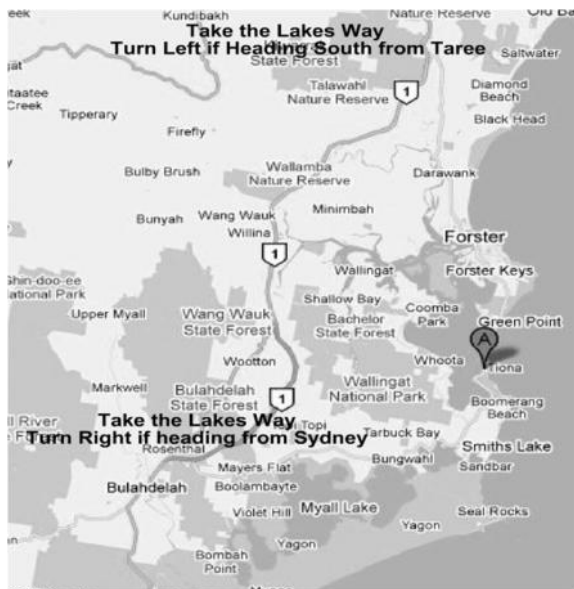
Working \$25  
Non Working \$15

<b>Meals:</b>	<b>Adults</b>	<b>Kids u/12</b>	<b>Kids u/3</b>
All meals	\$55	\$30	\$0
Per Meal Rate	\$13	\$6	\$0

**Accommodation**

4 Person Cabin \$160  
6 Person Cabins \$240  
Single beds available only \$40 for a two night stay

**See website for up to date availability or call Helen C**





**WE WANT YOU!**

## Calling all acts! Calling all acts!

*Want a chance to win a new 81cm HD LCD TV*

*Then join us at the Spirit of Unity 2010, all you have to do is enter in the Talent show on the Saturday night. We are calling on acts of all kind, singers dancers poetry readers jugglers, we don't care if you can spin on your head and smoking a cigarette while making a cup of coffee sharing how you feel with your sponsor then WE WANT YOU!*

# SPIRIT OF UNITY'S GOT TALENT

1st prize is a brand new 81cm HD LCD TV valued at \$499

2nd prize is a \$100 gift Voucher

Peoples Choice award is \$50 gift Voucher

15 entries only so be quick sign up now see below

Any type of act, eg: Dancing, reading poetry, singing, standing on your head, wood chopping, comedy or whatever

There will be 3 Judges who will look at 3 categories Presentation, Execution, Quality = 10 points for each category max total points 90

So if you think you have got what it takes to be SOU's next big act then sign up today

Please be mindful of these basic Suggestions (RULES),

1) 3 minutes per act (please let us know if you need more time absolute max time is 5 mins)

Note: you will have 2 min's to set up, 2 minutes for judging

2) All acts will take place indoors so please note any dangerous acts eg: fire juggling etc must let us know in advance

3) The only equipment we can supply is PA inc microphones and stands, limited lighting & Stage (if you need specific equipment please let us know in advance and if we can cater for it we will)

4) Please be mindful that Children will be present so watch out for colourful language and or sexual references.

5) your act will be drawn out of a hat at random and placed on the notice board you will be notified in advance of your successful entry and act Number, so please note when your act will be on and be ready as the show will start at 9pm and finish no later than 11pm.

To enter send an email with you details including your name and contact phone number to [sougottalent@gmail.com](mailto:sougottalent@gmail.com) or the best option, go to [www.savesou.blogspot.com](http://www.savesou.blogspot.com) and booking in your act online



12th  
13th  
14th  
November



**2010**

**21<sup>ST</sup> Convention of**

**The Western Australian Area of Narcotics Anonymous**



# FELLOWSHIP SERVICE OFFICE

## FSD HOURS:

TUES 10AM TO 3PM

SAT 10AM TO 2PM

## ENQUIRIES AND PHONE SALES:

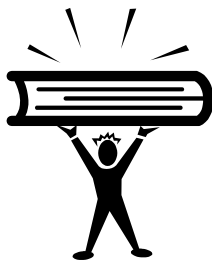
MON 10AM TO 2PM

TUES 10AM TO 2PM

WED 10AM TO 2PM

SAT 10AM TO 2PM

ON-LINE ORDERING ALSO  
AVAILABLE ANYTIME FROM  
[WWW.FSO.COM.AU](http://WWW.FSO.COM.AU)





it works

**NA National Hotline  
1300 652 820**

**All other info @  
[www.na.org.au](http://www.na.org.au)**