

NA TODAY

Free Publication

Of The Australian Region

How to create an atmosphere of recovery welcoming to newcomers. Plus recovery in a pandemic.

July 2020



Dear Members,

Covid19 restrictions are finally being eased and some of our groups are now (or in the very near future) able to host face to face meetings again.

Even with the easing of restrictions there are many venues which will not be able to support the same number of members as they did prior to the pandemic. As such, many groups are choosing to run meetings in “Hybrid mode”. Hybrid meetings include both a physical presence and a virtual or online presence.

Just as the NA website transformed to support virtual meetings, we now have the capability to display meetings with both a physical and virtual presence for a meeting. Whether groups are returning to face to face format, running hybrid mode, or remaining online, we can accommodate your situation.

If groups need to update their meeting for any reason, (EG. Return to face to face, change of venue, hybrid meeting, meeting closure etc), please submit a meeting update and we will respond to your requests in a timely fashion.

Click on the “Meetings” Menu and select “Meeting Update” form and choose the options that apply for the changes you’d like to make for your group.



Narcotics
Anonymous
AUSTRALIA
1300 652 820

Meetings

New to NA

Outreach

Upcoming Events

Professional

Home

All Meetings

Searchable Map

Meetings by Area

Online Meetings

Join and Participate in
Online Meetings

Online Meeting
Guidelines

Starting an NA Group

Meeting Update Form

Online Meeting Update
Form

WELCOME TO NA

If you think you might have

Narcotics Anonymous is a nonprofit for
problem. We are recovering

we have found through our group ex

NYMOUS AUSTRALIA

want to stop using, we can help.

3 women for whom drugs had become a major
rly to help each other stay clean.

value of one addict helping another is without

parallel.

Front cover artwork donated by Caroline Z, back cover donated by Rob F, Bunbury.

Inside This Issue

International Events	4
Leaning In	5
To change one thing in the time of a pandemic	6
30 Days Out the Rehab	7
Creating an atmosphere of recovery for newcomers	8,9
Mahmoud Ch Irani	10
New NAWA Rainbow Recovery Meeting	11
NA Today Thing Adz	12
Singapore Newsletter	13
Poetry	14-17
First 30 Days (drumroll)	18
Cartoons	19
Early Recovery not in a relationship- far from alone	20
The Relapse	21
Creating an atmosphere of recovery online during a pandemic	22-24
Virtual NA Flyer	25
Creating an atmosphere of recovery continued	26
Welcome to Narcotics Anonymous	27
NA @ home 2020	28

The NA Today Magazine belongs to all members of Narcotics Anonymous. Its mission 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 "any addict can stop using, lose the desire to use, and find a new way to live."

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 simply 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.

Send us your experience in recovery, your views on NA matters, cartoons, ideas etc to:

natoday@na.org.au

Fellowship Service Office
Unit 34, 112-122 McEvoy St
Alexandria NSW 2015
P 02 8399 2453
F 02 8399 2454

NA TODAY IS ALSO LOOKING FOR NA TODAY 'AGENTS' WHO REPRESENT THE MAGAZINE AND SOLICIT CONTENT FROM MEMBERS IN THEIR AREA. FOR MORE INFORMATION GET IN CONTACT WITH US VIA THE EMAIL BELOW.



**NA NATIONAL HELPLINE
1300 652 820**

**FOR MEETINGS IN AUSTRALIA
AND OTHER INFO**

WWW.NA.ORG.AU

So, we've got a bit of a mixed bag for you this issue.

The original theme that was proposed by one of our subcommittee members was creating an atmosphere of recovery that is welcoming for newcomers. NA Today, as a service subcommittee of the Australian region, is just as responsible for creating that sort of atmosphere as meetings are. It can be quite daunting to write for the mag, so we here at NA Today encourage our agents to get members in their area to write on their first 30 days, as everyone can write about this, and it is so important we share the space with the newcomer, welcoming them to tell their story. As such, we have many articles in this issue that describe people's first 30 days in early recovery. If you enjoyed reading the mag, why don't you drop us a line and let us know about your first thirty days. It was the first thing I wrote for the mag a few years ago now.

But we have been unable to ignore the elephant in the room. Although we have no opinion on outside issues, the NA fellowship is a part of the world, and has been drastically affected by Covid- 19. Many of us have struggled to achieve that much needed sense of connection given the imposition of isolation. We have many articles about recovery in the time of Covid, including some

reproductions from a sister publication from the Singapore fellowship. This inclusion marks the first bi-lingual issue of NA Today.

We have a few items that combine the theme of creating an atmosphere of recovery during the pandemic. Personally, I'm a member of an online group, and have been for many years, where I am secretary and chair. During the pandemic we were flooded with new members. It forced me to take my service commitment a little more seriously as my group was under a lot of pressure, as many online groups struggled with the increased numbers until other meetings went online. Part of the atmosphere of recovery involved the spiritual principle of being patient and welcoming with new people unfamiliar with our format.

We have articles which crowd source strategies that have been employed to welcome newcomers in the time of Covid, as well as an article detailing some of the efforts of longer term online groups.

It seems as if Covid has also been a time of great productivity for some of us. Sometimes we need to be denied to go outside in order to be forced to make the internal journey! We received a very high volume of poetry this issue, which I think reflects the fact that many members have taken the opportunity of restrictions.

INTERNATIONAL EVENTS

Obviously, most international conventions have been cancelled, but it's never been easier to connect with our international brothers and sisters. Here is a small selection of some of the interesting online events going on all over the world.



DEAF AND HOH MEETING LIST



SUNDAY 9:00 PM EST
 MEETING ID: 558 544 927 NO PASSWORD

MONDAY 1:00-1:30 PM EST
 MEETING ID: 558 544 927 NO PASSWORD

TUESDAY 1:00-1:30 PM EST
 MEETING ID: 558 544 927 NO PASSWORD

WEDNESDAY 1:00-1:30 PM EST
 MEETING ID: 558 544 927 NO PASSWORD

THURSDAY 1:00-1:30 PM EST
 MEETING ID: 558 544 927 NO PASSWORD

FRIDAY 1:00-1:30 PM EST
 MEETING ID: 558 544 927 NO PASSWORD

SATURDAY 1:00-1:30 PM EST
 MEETING ID: 558 544 927 NO PASSWORD

POKHARA AREA NARCOTICS ANONYMOUS ONLINE MEETING LIST THROUGH ZOOM




**ZOOM MEETING ID - 981-116-6784
 PASSWORD- 753614**

SUNDAY :	12:00-1:15PM & 6:00- 7:15PM
MONDAY :	12:00-1:15PM & 6:00- 7:15PM
TUESDAY :	12:00-1:15PM & 6:00- 7:15PM
WEDNESDAY:	12:00-1:15PM & 6:00- 7:15PM
THURSDAY:	12:00-1:15PM & 6:00- 7:15PM
FRIDAY:	12:00-1:15PM & 6:00- 7:15PM
SATURDAY:	12:00-1:15PM & 6:00- 7:15PM

Helpline no: 9806608808

N.A.N.A. 24/7 MARATHON MEETING

MEETING ID 558-544-927

SPONSORED BY "IT WORKS HOH & WHY" & "A10 ISLAND CONNECTION" GROUPS OF NARCOTICS ANONYMOUS OF MASSACHUSETTS

SOUTH AFRICA NARCOTICS ANONYMOUS OUTREACH / ONLINE (FD)

MEETING ID: 2915183591
PASSWORD: 13398

JUST FOR TODAY

09:00 AM

TOPIC/LITERATURE

13:00 PM

STEPS & SPIRITUAL PRINCIPLES

19:00 PM

6A STD TIME
 (MINUS 2 HOURS FOR EST/EST - MINUS 9 HOURS FOR PST - MINUS 1 HOUR FOR UK TIME)

EVERYDAY



LEANING IN...

The last couple of months have been crazy exactly what I needed in my recovery.

I came in over 22 years ago. Got clean 9.5 years ago and have always been grateful for every single day clean. However, over the last few months before March I had started to slip away. I was still doing meetings but mostly just so that I could see my friends before or after the meeting rather than for the meeting itself. I had fallen into that place where I was judgemental and not really listening to people as I had **“heard it all before”**.

When we went online and physical meetings had closed I super quickly started doing meetings in LA and NYC as I had travelled there a few times and really wanted to re-do some meetings I had done before. In the very first meeting I heard someone with decades of clean time say LEAN IN. He has been told from the moment he

came to NA that he just needed to lean in. If there was something he didn't like or didn't feel connected to he just needed to lean into it. I immediately thought I just need to lean into the Zoom platform. And I did!!!!!!!

Since that very first meeting in LA I have gone back to my early recovery and am doing 2 meetings a day. A US one in the morning and an Aussie one at night. Sometimes 2 US ones in the morning. I have heard things said probably a thousand times before but often hearing it from a different person or someone that I don't know and don't have the background associated with I have heard it differently. **I have once again heard the message and not the messenger.** Covid has given me a kick up the bum I needed in my life and my recovery.

YIS

Jo

To change one thing in the time of a pandemic.

I never really understood the NA saying, ***“you only need to change one thing, everything”***. New into recovery I thought, what more could I possibly change, I’ve stopped taking drugs, I’ve been to multiple rehabs, and I’m being honest about my using. But I was fooling only myself, my using did not stop, it was simply on pause. It has taken a global pandemic for me to realise what it takes to change everything and stay clean.

For nearly a decade I didn’t know who I was. To change one thing, everything, for me, is to understand who I am, that I can be the person I want to be, a better husband, father and human being. The pandemic has given me the opportunity to do this. Being in isolation with my family has kept me away from the people, places and things that always made me feel uncomfortable, think that I could never move on from my past, and feel like using.

Core to our disease is mental isolation, the feeling that you cannot possibly function like the rest of society and that no one else could possibly understand you.

Physical isolation with my family has gifted me an amazing opportunity to stop and realise that I am somebody, a good father, husband and person. However, one day the pandemic will end, and my next challenge will be an exit from physical isolation, whilst maintaining mental freedom.

Mark,

Sydney

The day I left the rehab was an emotional roller-coaster. I was leaving early and wasn't too sure it was a good idea. In fact, everyone around me, including my peers and workers reminded me the fate of those before me. I knew they were right but I left anyways.

There was a feeling of excitement to be leaving what felt like a jail. That feeling quickly turned to fear as I sat outside the rehab waiting for the bus. I didn't want to use, I knew that.

and anxiety had started to dissipate. Those feelings were replaced with something resembling hope. I started to feel this gig might actually work.

Days turned into weeks. **I was starting to feel more comfortable and connected with members.** I grabbed every number I could. I humbly accepted suggestions. I got a sponsor and dug into the stepwork. It wasn't long before i was doing 3 meetings a day. I started to believe

30 DAYS OUT THE REHAB

But the feelings of fear and loneliness were so overwhelming.

After sorting out accommodation, I headed straight for a meeting. The meeting had a few old timers and reminded me that there is a way out. All my ideas in the past had failed so I committed to giving it as hard a go as I could.

The next few days I attended a bunch of meetings. They were quite uncomfortable without my buddies from the rehab at my side but I persisted desperately. I came early and left late to open myself to the fellowship. Several days later, a remarkable thing happened. My fear

this to be the most important thing in my life and all things good that can happen, will follow so long as I continue on that path.

Fast forward a few months and I'm amazed at how much I've changed already. I finally found what I needed to do. It's as clear as anything and just keeps getting clearer by the day. Its already changed my life and I'm only 6 months in. God only knows where it will take me and I'm more than happy with that.

Anonymous

Back in 1989 I walked into my first meeting whilst in a detox. I don't recall being welcomed at all, but I certainly felt at home. Eventually in 1991 I committed to recovery and have been attending since.

My first home group was the Fremantle steps meeting for close to 10 years. It was close to home and had people with "time up". It was a big group with 5-6 regular group members. It was well organised and always had a secretary or person to set up. This helped me be the group member I am today.

Creating an atmosphere of recovery that is welcoming to newcomers.

Fast forward 2020. I still have a home group and probably been in the same group for the last 7-10 years.

Why have a home group? Well here I turn up every week, except special family events, every week year after year (yes I know a day at a time). I developed relationships and got to know my home group members on a deeper level. At my home group I feel comfortable. The format of the meeting is relaxed, and I particularly enjoy that casual relaxed atmosphere of recovery. Sponsees and other fellowship members know that I will be there if they want to talk or catch up. Time and ability to have space to catch up has become more difficult for myself as life has changed and developed. The format of your home group is subject to the collective groups thoughts, relationships and interactions. We have a fairly informal relaxed approach, this is not for everyone and each group has the autonomy to run in a format as long as we follow the traditions and fulfill our primary purpose. This is the atmosphere your meeting will radiate to others.

So what is the primary purpose of a group? ***"To carry the message of recovery to the addict who still suffers".***

How do we do this or how we make an atmosphere welcoming. Firstly, you have a group-not an individual. Within that group if you are welcoming, you will hopefully be open to have people from all walks of life. Different age, cultures, sex and or sexual orientation, spiritual and or religious views. Our group covers many of these-I love the diversity. It's not written anywhere but

we /our group encourage group members to turn up early at the meeting, say 20- 30 minutes beforehand, to help set up. This isn't in stone we just encourage each other. This helps having the meeting set up before people arrive. Then rather than someone rushing around frantically setting up as you walk in, there is an atmosphere where there is lots of banter, conversations, joking around, hugs and handshakes as people arrive. Nothing shouts welcome more.

We have group chat for our home group members so we can all chat through the week. This capitalises on the fact when we get to the meeting we have talked and therefore have created space for other people especially new people to the group or newcomers. We generally know if a group member isn't showing up that night and why, being supportive we usually ask for "a note from Mum". We also then know who's likely to turn up early/on time and be responsive in doing our bit. (It doesn't always work like this-just to keep it real)

In Willagee's group conscience we keep on the agenda. "How do we welcome people? Remember if there is a new person- please go say hi and show them around. We encourage if it's a male then one of us males says hello. If the person is female one of our female home group members says hello. Then just the welcoming basics: where is the tea/coffee, the bathrooms etc (when you're nervous just knowing the layout provides some comfort, as is knowing where the toilet is). We may explain the format: we have a chairperson who will invite people to speak, people clap after, and at the end we stand in a circle holding hands and show them the serenity prayer is on the wall so they can at least read it.

We celebrate newcomers attending the meeting every week and offer the opportunity to share in the meeting. This helps identify new people who may need some support. We also encourage each other as home group members to, after the meeting, say hello, provide a meeting list etc.

When the meeting closes for me it would and is easy to get hooked up in conversation with sponsees, home group members etc. Though the biggest thing I can do is lead by example, excuse myself from conversation and welcome the newcomer. This isn't a chore. **Without the newcomer we cease to exist, they are as the saying goes "the most important person at any meeting"**. So come on down to your local group. Get involved-make a difference. Be the welcome you would like. I'll be at Willagee on Wednesday night-hope you like hugs!

YILS Paul N, Willagee WA

MESSAGE OF HOPE IRAN.

A few days ago I was asked to speak at an NA convention at Alvand prison in Hamedan, Iran.

Convention?!! In prison!! In Iran!!! Unbelievable.

However, I was excited to participate since I myself had received the message of recovery while in jail myself. I looked forward to traveling the 3 hours from Tehran to speak at this prison. Hamedan used to be the capital of Iran and is one of the most ancient cities in Iran and the world. She was a centre of culture, education and civilization.

We arrived at 8:30 am on September 5th, 2018 to Alvand prison. I was joined by 40 other members of Narcotics Anonymous. We all looked our best. I have to mention when members of H&I visited me in prison there were only 3 volunteers at the time to carry the message, today there are over 85 carrying the message of hope and recovery in Iran.

Alvand prison is one of the most violent and notorious prisons in Iran. When we arrived at the prison there were 1500 inmates gathered in the prison stadium including the prison warden and other staff. Alvand has a

population of about 4900 prisoners. 1300 hundred of these are clean and identify as members of Narcotics Anonymous. There are 10 meetings a day at Alvand. H&I visits the prison 6 times per week and each month holds 4 workshops including one convention per year.

The warden spoke to me and thanked me for the work and impact the message and fellowship of Narcotics Anonymous has had on inmates and prison life. He mentioned there are fewer fights and bloodshed. He also told me how this program has affected the families of inmates. I was told 2 death row inmates had died clean. One of the inmates at Alvand shared his story from the podium. Even though he only had one leg he was full of enthusiasm for his recovery and proud of the 6 years he had managed to accumulate. His story moved all of us and touched our hearts.

As for me I am very proud to see Narcotics Anonymous is in the business of helping to heal society.

Mahmoud Ch Irani



RAINBOW RECOVERY

A NEW MEETING FOR

LGBTQIA+

ADDICTS

* **EVERY SUNDAY**

10am - 11am
from 10th February

YMCA HQ

60A Frame Ct Leederville

(this is a closed meeting)



Narcotics Anonymous

* EXCEPT ONCE A MONTH WHEN THE CITY NEEDS IT

S

A

F

E

Granted, the vast majority of Addicts do not need to assess the risk to life and limb when considering coming to Narcotics Anonymous. However, this is often the case for countless LGBTQIA+ Addicts, around the world. In many countries, LGBTQIA+ people live in fear for their lives, still... right now, and this drives us further into addiction. We learn to deny or hide who we are, who we love, where and how we live; both physically and figuratively.

We found our people and chose our new families in the clubs and in the streets; underground, in the dark. We fought, begged and fucked; thieved, hid, lied and bled to survive – just like all common or garden addicts do. Outcast, just like all addicts are outcast. But what about when we finally find ourselves the bitter ends; unable to live life with or without drugs?

"What is NA" states, "Anyone may join us regardless of age, race, sexual identity, creed, religion, or lack of religion." My homegroup, Sunday Morning Rainbow Recovery Group, in Leederville Western Australia, wants you to know "You are loved; You are valued; You are safe; and You are welcome here."

S

P

A

C

E

Our first few months coming to Narcotics Anonymous meetings, no matter how we identify, are always strange and frightening. As LGBTQIA+ people, we experience the additional concern that stems from the stigma we face by merely existing. Yes, as per the first tradition of NA "Our common welfare should come first; personal recovery depends on NA unity." One could argue that providing specialised meetings i.e. Women's, Men's, Farsi Speaking or LGBTQIA+ fortifies that unity by providing a safe space for everyone to share without fear of persecution or harm. In the same way that I will never know what it is like for a parent in addiction, that parent may never understand how I can be out and proud but internalised homophobia will always kick my arse.

So, what do recovering queers do to carry the message to the still suffering addict? What do O.W.Ls (Older, Wiser Lesbians – ha ha) do to make a Baby Dyke feel welcome? Is it appropriate for Bears to reach out to the detoxing Twink? Will there be anyone there who is "like me"? That's why we started Sunday Morning Rainbow Recovery in February 2019. We share more than "just" our disease. I am proud to tell you that we, as a team, have developed a warm and welcoming culture in our meetings. We

are quick to share our numbers and if one of us forgets to reach out, another of us has surely done so. Rest assured that your new family will always be here to help you grieve for your first chosen family, should you need to leave them behind.

Adelaide, Perth.

Our Gratitude Speaks...

"Di dalam keputusan rangkaian COVID-19, pada mulanya saya merasa bimbang bagaimana saya boleh terus menyampaikan pesanan kepada penagih-penagih yang masih menderita. Daripada bantuan teman-teman di dalam Kumpulan NA, saya bersyukur dapat menyambung semula hubungan saya dengan mereka. Walaupun ketinggalan teknologi, 12 Langkah mengajar saya untuk menerima apa jua keadaan. Dengan sokongan masyarakat hasil dari perhubungan awam NA, saya dapat menyampaikan pesanan penting buat mereka yang tidak dapat menghadiri perjumpaan kami. Lima tahun telah berlalu, dengan sokongan NA saya percaya saya tidak perlu takut."

Mubarak, 57 Years Old, Bersih Selama Lima Tahun

I am so grateful that I am still able to connect with my fellowship through the online meetings during this pandemic crisis, as for me, meetings are important and have been part of my recovery journey. Through these online meetings, I am still able to do sponsorship, stepwork, be of service, and connect with members from other countries especially the Women; and having a Women's meeting and sharing our experience, strength and hope online is a refreshing way of sharing without feeling awkward. I still miss the hugs and our 'meeting after meeting' [hang out after the NA meetings] bonding time, but as an addict practising the spiritual principles I have been told that "This too shall pass". Just for today I am grateful I am clean.

Eliza, 48 Years Old, JFT Clean & Serene

The recent pandemic gave me the gift of time. I had time to reflect on my spiritual, physical and mental health. Having been an addict for 19 years, I wanted to use this gift and focus on my recovery. I contacted a friend who attends NA meetings and enquired about the daily meetings who then set me up with the NA online meetings. All that I had been looking for and all that I needed was in the virtual rooms. The meetings online changed my life. I could attend meetings every day and on other days, I could even attend 2 meetings a day, without having to physically travel to the meeting venues. With every meeting, I grew closer and closer to the fellowship. I was blessed with kindness and love. Attending NA online meetings every day made me a whole new person. Every one's shares were deep and profound. I did not feel alone anymore. I wanted to be a better person. I was grateful for the fellowship and its members who showed their care. I was welcomed ever so warmly, even though, the NA members had not seen me face to face before. NA is to whom I dedicate my recovery to. I will keep going back, be it via online or in the physical rooms. I hope that one day I can touch the heart of a fellow addict, like how mine was touched, and I hope to spread the message of Narcotics Anonymous, Singapore. #onedayatatime.

SHN, Recovering Addict

POETRY FOR

Our Phoenixes

We are all merely another log
on the embers of our ancestors,

Placed on the
ashes of what was.

The warmth builds us
until we gain our flame

And ignite into what is.

Once we have given our all
and leave our heat,

Finally we give in to what will be.

Thanks, **Griffin R**

.....
**“Creating an atmosphere
welcome for newcomers.”**

Surrender to the space

Hey dear one.
The one with the shaking hands.
The one with the shivering soul.
The one that has clung to control
and lost it all.

The one that wants the mind to
stop turning on itself.

The one that can't look me in the
eye.

The one that wants to stop feeling,
yet craves feeling something more.

Dear one, I hear you.

I feel you.

I see you.

I am you.

Sit down, and listen.

Sit down and allow the love to
gently flow back in.

We welcome you into the doors of
a sacred space.

A space of feeling.

A space of healing.

A space of connection that the
drugs failed to give you.

Surrender to this moment,
surrender to the power that will
slowly unfold.

Know that you are worthy. And that
you are home.

From this day forward dear one,
you're no longer alone.

Take a deep breath, and let it sink
in.

You are loved, so keep coming
back!

Lana J

JULY 2020

Shadow Highs

They don't drink whiskey they don't get high - They ain't no angels, it's there in their eyes.

Broken & battered, shattered she crawled -

Into the shelter her fear lined the walls-

Shaking & desperate, she had nothin to give -

Raw & unkept she was too dead to live.

Into the arms of strangers she fell -

So many times this same picture brought her to hell -

Careful they held her, the paper thin thread -

Frail from the illusions that played in her head.

Gently they cradled & held her by their loving arms -

Soothed by the softness safe from the charm-

One that kept luring her time and again -

Into the hollow, of her bitter ends.

Times been the healer with each rising day -

Each minute passes brings her further away - From the sorrows that taunted & fed with the lies -

Shadows of people & places left behind in her life.

Sometimes she falls through the love she has found -

Crazed by the dragging of her heart on that ground -

Waiting with wisdom most born from mistakes -

Arms stretch open to comfort her pain.

She don't drink whiskey, she don't get high... She ain't no angel it's their in her eyes...

.....

I Love.

I've had many shadows created by all the people I have been. All the footsteps I have taken in the shoes of many life's. Nothing can change that.

Time can heal & lead me to a place of forgiveness & love for myself. First I have to look these shades of me dead on in the eye, but most importantly in my heart.

Straight into the core of each wound, every time I've hurt or been hurt.

Then I find myself.

P O E T R Y

Every facet, every tiny shred of my spirit, my soul, my heart. With love I begin to slowly gather these beautiful little pieces.

Some are so tiny. A word someone once said to me. A look or no words & to be left invisible, unseeable. Others are huge jagged gouges, torn from me. Ripped like the flesh of prey that knows it's life is ending.

Your love, you shared with me gave me the strength to begin the foraging through the valleys & mountains of my journey. You held the woven basket of my faith. Making sure the gaps where my fears had created holes were carefully covered

With self love, your faith you held me as I chose to walk back to gather every, precious piece of me.

In this I discarded many skins - each time you nurtured me through the grief of letting go of who I never was and shivering you wrapped up in the warmth of your love .

.....

I stand today

My heart is like a kaleidoscope, a stained glass window. Where all the pieces have been set together with honesty, open-mindedness and willingness. These I borrowed from you till I had found my own -

Your love you carried for self, grew my own-

A seed planted by you that was raised, fruited and now the harvest of that is mine

Love, unconditional, kind, full for myself -

Like any love this is not perfect but it's here

My higher power, my old people brought me to the gift of your promise

All of me, every cell of me is soaked through in the gratitude I float in from you all.

I am because of you and like I needed to find every piece of my heart I need every single one of you.

Thank you for loving yourself, for your heart ache, your struggles for sharing your wisdom, hope and faith -

My love honours your love

My heart is full.

.....

C O N T I N U E D

Thanks God

My name is Akbar and I am an addict.

During 26 years of using drugs, I found that nothing is better than living clean. When I was in the peak of my illness, I was thinking that I am the most happiness guy in the world. I thought those who don't use drugs are foolish!!

I supposed a man must enjoy from life and the best fun is using drugs and drinking alcohol. But after quitting that manners I saw how beautiful is the world? How beautiful is to be kindness with your family. How beautiful is to be a friend for your children.

Now I have about 9 years clean, I have a lovely time with my family and friends. I have a good job, I like the world. I love the whole people in the world and I love my recovery friends.

My gratitude speaks, because my life has changed. I pray for the NA fellowships, those who helped me to be alive and have a pretty life.

Thanks a lot for your existence.

Rhyming Step Three Prayer:

God I've decided to hand my
will over to you
Please make it clear what
You need me to do
Give me the strength to
follow that through
And let's build a connection
between me and You

Simplified Seventh Step Prayer

God, I want to give ALL of
myself to You
The good, the bad and the
ugly. The parts of me which
I understand, AND the parts
I don't
Please help me to
remove my defects and
shortcomings, so that I can
best serve You and those
around me
May all this help me to feel
connected, purposeful, and
alive,
So that I might have the will
to live beyond my Self

Cheers
Bo G

The First 30 Days (Drumroll)

No pink clouds or honeymoons for me. ***I came in desperate and NA was the last resort.*** I had no memory of a good life before drug addiction and had no belief in a good life after drugs. I said, "I want to get clean" but the voices in my mind said, "what if...but....you can't do this". I was terrified and yet I had no idea I was terrified. My whole drug career had been in the quest NOT to feel and so this new anxiety was unrecognizable. ***All I knew was that I was restless and discontent and*** uncomfortable and living in my own skin felt almost unbearable. I came to understand that with or without drugs my life had become unmanageable. My problem was no longer the drugs... it was me.

I stayed clean, 24 hours at a time. I knew my own thinking wasn't to be trusted and I chanted the serenity prayer in my mind to focus my busy crazy mind. I spent my days traveling to and from meetings and learned that all my apprehension and anxiety was a fear of the future, based on my past failures. ***I came to understand that TODAY is all that really matters.*** It was other addicts faith in me when I had none in myself that got me through those early days. When I met someone with a few days more clean time than me it was the reassurance I needed to show me I could stay clean another day. I realized from friends who went back out, that it was a lot easier to stay clean than to try to get clean again.

I hung on, I carried the message, I read the literature I talked to fellow addicts I went to meetings and most importantly I took the steps off the banners and made those steps my way of life.

41 years later, one day at a time, I have no more doubts or fears about this programme. And I have come to wholeheartedly believe is that any addict who walks through the doors of an NA meeting and stays clean for 24 hours, can stay clean for the rest of their life... if they chose to. ***ONE DAY AT A TIME.***

Michelle, 41 years clean.



Early Recovery: Not in a relationship - far from alone!

I have relapse in my story, this isn't my first recovery.

My first time in recovery was very different from this one. I got into a relationship early on, in fact my partner introduced me to NA and took me to my first meeting. As a consequence, my recovery wasn't purely for myself and that was dangerous for me. Previous to this meeting, I hadn't had hope for a very long time, not genuine self-honest hope. I can be a master of bullshitting myself to survive and had to convince myself that I had hope previously to survive, so I didn't kill myself. **I tried so hard and gave everything to stay clean before NA without a program.** I had experience of temporarily getting off my drug of choice to get my hopes up, to then pick up and smash that hope into a million pieces of fear which I then believed was beyond repair. I believed that my life was over and that I was doomed. That was soon to change...

My first meeting was weird, crazy and beautiful. I remember being so scared and apprehensive, close minded and judgemental. "Why are we all sitting in a circle", "why the f**k are we holding hands and chanting like a cult", "i dont understand people using that drug, how boring, I dont relate to these weirdos", "dont hug me, what do you want from me". These were all of the thoughts from my crazy head as a damaged and fearful person. But then something special happened, I heard people who spoke my story and as I settled down into the meeting as someone was sharing who had a milestone of over 30 years and then a birthday cake came out at the end!!!! Boom!, a wave of hope washed over me. I was hooked.

I went to 90 meetings in 90 days, I got a sponsor and I furiously worked the steps doing 3 questions a day from the steps working guide. I got a morning routine (making the bed, having food, showering, reading the just for today, saying a prayer and writing a gratitude list). NA saved my life, it gave me the tools to live in life and not self sabotage. It built a life beyond my wildest dreams, but that was not enough to keep me clean. I got complacent, I put other things in front of my recovery and it resulted in me leaving NA and having two years of destruction, burning down all that I had around me (slowly enough for me to believe I was healthy, good and powerful over my disease - this life was a lie!)

This recovery has been different. Covid has been a part of this, we are so blessed to have zoom. My home group gets over 50 people Monday to Friday and we have members dialling in from all over the world. I love the zoom meetings and hope they will continue. This recovery I'm, not in a relationship, but not alone. With the strength of the fellowship and my higher power I do this together and not by myself, because by myself I cannot overcome my head. I am powerless to the disease of addiction, but together we are powerful and can thrive and have a beautiful, full and successful life.

Addict 55 days.

"The Relapse"

The relapse came as swift as the wind, pulling her off her feet and into the abyss.

Powerless, I sit by and watch as the war wages inside of her mind.

This disease, this epidemic, so cunning, baffling and powerful, I watched it tear her apart with ease.

When I saw my friend lying in the bed, dazed, in pain and confused, I couldn't help but feel the presence of God in the room.

A higher power sitting within the seat of my heart to witness the terror before my eyes.

The agonising irony of my most passionate and driven friend being swamped by the tidal wave, drowning in the endless waters of poison.

Is this fair? Is this okay?

The answer is, no. This isn't okay at all.

The epidemic we have named addiction plagues society in plain sight, and yet we don't even flinch in fright when we see the devil pulling us under in the night. So why do we allow for this pandemic of broken homes, extensive loans, agonising groans, and endless woes to continue to wreak havoc amongst the wounded children of God and hardly bat an eye.

It's time to open our eyes and see through the hellish lies that the substances are not okay.

It's not an initiation to use until you can't sense your own reality anymore, lowering your awareness to a place of hopelessness.

If we really think about it, we inject poisons into the body's we were meant to love and nurture for "a good time". Well let me tell you, I've seen enough of the good times ending. When you end back in the treatment centre you left two days ago because you couldn't handle the pain bearing down in your chest so you picked up the hit to escape your sexual trauma, the fun isn't there anymore.

When your good time ends you up in a blackout, knocking a man over in your car killing him, I think we can agree that the fun was a pointless temporary endeavour.

When you can't hold down your job, cheat on your wife, beat your best mate, crash your car, cut yourself, lose who you are, what we come to realise through surviving hell was just how pointless it really was to go through it at all.

It's time to grow up. Put down the drugs and pick up your integrity from the floor.

Luke J.

I posted the following question on some social media sites to crowd source what sort of solutions and approaches people had been coming up with:

Hello everyone. I was wondering, how are you all attracting and welcoming newcomers in the new online space? What do you or your group do?

Here's some responses I got (Editor).

.....

It starts with propping up the new "room" and making sure the "doors" are open. Then staying in communication with current members about the rapidly changing environment. A member listed all the days and times of the meetings on the area Facebook page. Right now, it's more about damage control than expansion. The area has a meeting scheduled. I'm sure there will be discussions about PI, H&I and meeting schedules. I'm sure new people have fallen through the cracks as well as some members. The important thing is not to simply shut the doors and hope things will return to normal when it's all over.

CREATING AN ATMOSPHERE OF RECOVERY ONLINE DURING A PANDEMIC.

Wesley S

.....

I reach out on Chat and private message my phone number say Hi. Keep coming back.

Paula B

.....

On a Group level, a fellow PR member and I established the first virtual meeting in our Area in anticipation of Ohio's lockdown response to the pandemic. Because we are new and were never a f2f meeting, we are a small group.

We meet twice per week in the evening. We get 3-6 newcomers per month. We welcome them specifically by name, and engage them in as much conversation as they are willing to participate in,

similar to how we would in a f2f meeting. If they have their video off we gently invite them to share their image so we can all get to know each other better, but it's not a requirement.

Our group decided to be a non-smoking and non-vaping meeting, so we ask that people turn off their video when they want to smoke. Some people find it very uncomfortable to watch a screen full of people puffing out smoke because it strongly reminds them of the drugs they did. While we acknowledge that people are in their own homes, we also want to protect our newcomers and old timers alike (similarly, we would ask that a diabetic not prepare a syringe full of insulin while on video).

We frequently share the main screen and show all members how to get to the free, downloadable IPs and other literature available from NAWs.

Our meeting is a literature study, and we make a PDF of the selection that we are reading that week. We upload that PDF into the chat section of Zoom so that newcomers can download it and read it again later. The short selections come from the Basic Text, It Works How and Why, or Living Clean (we rotate every other week between the texts, focusing on Steps 1, 2, 3 or 12 from the Basic Text / It Works, and reading Living Clean in order). Based on the FIPT we are in accordance with the guidelines for distributing literature within our group. Members who are willing can add their phone numbers to their names so that newcomers can copy them down.

We think we do a good job of welcoming the newcomer to our virtual meeting, but we know that we know only a little, and are open to hearing other people's ESH.

NACentralOhio.org

Paul M.

AN ATMOSPHERE OF RECOVERY CONTINUED.

As a Virtual Area we have of course had a web presence in the form of our www.higna.org.uk website for a number of years and have steadily been increasing the number of newcomers finding and attending our groups over that time. That site and our groups have also been linked to via the ukna.org website's original Online meetings page in various formats as well as other Area and Regional websites around the world, and are listed in all the printed and e-book versions of the UK meetings lists as printed and distributed by the UKSO service office. We have maintained a steady stream of that information and of our existence on social media since the Highlands & Islands groups were first started in 2011.

Prior to Covid we had been producing and distributing flyers and small business cards of our service in a variety of ways for a couple years or more, either directly in face to face groups or at service meetings or NA events etc. A number of our members had been distributing those items in outside locations such as service providers' offices, needle exchanges, doctor's surgeries libraries and other similar places. Those flyers and cards are still clearly available for download and distribution on the website although do now need updating.

Up until this year we had also had the opportunity to deliver and facilitated a number of service workshops, both in person and virtually, highlighting the history of remote recovery services in NA and the existence, at that time, of the relatively small number of virtual meetings that were available as a resource for isolated members.

After our working in collaboration with many members around the world the www.virtual-na.org Virtual meetings directory site went live in May of 2019 which up until the beginning of this year, we believe, contributed enormously to the number of newcomers and longer term members finding us and attending our groups. What has occurred since then has seen an obvious and extraordinary growth in the fellowships virtual presence and as we speak the number of

Virtual NA

NA Meetings Online & by Phone



Bringing Narcotics Anonymous Meetings to Remote or Isolated Addicts from around the world who may, for whatever reason, be unable to attend local face to face meetings.

Virtual NA is a globally based collaborative service resource project whose primary focus is to provide a meeting search for both Online and Phone line meetings of Narcotics Anonymous hosted from different countries around the world.

www.virtual-na.org

For more information please send an email to admin@virtual-na.org

AN ATMOSPHERE OF RECOVERY CONTINUED.

new members finding them and getting clean in them has grown exponentially.

More directly at the start of the pandemic we sent out a form letter to a number of nationally recognised TX facilities managers in the UK highlighting the basic equipment they would require and some suggestions on what kind of facilitation they may need to deploy in order to enable their locked down clients to attend and participate in virtual meetings safely, along with offering them the opportunity to discuss and arrange specifically targeted H&I meetings if they wanted them.

As we move forward as a Virtual service body supporting our groups in the areas of both PR & H&I and we begin to think about what happens next in our own development, that is dependent on how the rest of the service structure reacts to that now heightened awareness of remote recovery services and whether or not they are willing to engage and work with us in the spirit of unity to collectively develop those services. In the meantime we as long term virtual groups will continue to do what we have always done to seek yet more and creative ways to carry the message to the still suffering addict as best we are able to with the limited resources available to us.

Steve

Welcome to Narcotics Anonymous

My name is Jodie and I am an addict, if you are a newcomer, I hear you, I see you, I am you.

I still remember walking into the rooms of Narcotics anonymous a frightened desperate shell of a girl who was at the bitter ends of her using. The women's meeting, I attended was warm and welcoming, but I didn't know how to speak and felt really awkward with the greetings from the other women. I sat in the corner and listen to what they were saying, I remember thinking that I was not like them and my using was way more horrific..... like don't they know who I am?

I was so disconnected from myself and had turned up to NA with a truck load of denial and I didn't feel like the obsession and compulsion part of this disease that other members were sharing about was relevant to me even though I had 20 years of addiction to suggest otherwise. I had tried many treatment facilities and always got into a relationship with some other resident and would eventually relapse due to feeling fear or any other emotion that I would arise. However, I kept coming back as the message of hope that NA members were sharing was carried and I finally heard that I did not have to use again, and the feeling was the most profound realization that I ever had. There was a way out and I was longing for a better life for me and my 8-year-old son.

The degradation I experienced towards the end of my using, that feeling of hopelessness, that feeling of not liking who I had become, my ego that would manifest in a grandiose manner so I could continue to keep using kept me separated from even knowing what was good for me. I needed a drastic overhaul, so I got myself a sponsor and started working the 12 steps. Thank God, I was about to be saved from myself and live a life beyond my wildest dreams and this happened very quickly.....I mean not having to get on each day was a miracle, that feeling of putting my head on the pillow with a big smile on my face knowing I never had to use again was all I needed to be living a life that I never thought was possible for me.

I have recently celebrated 15 years clean and am truly grateful that NA has been there for me over the years to catch me when life on life's terms can seem a little harsh to a sensitive soul like me. I have received so many gifts from fronting up to be part of the NA fellowship, I have travelled to Brazil and America to hear the message carried in other Countries, to be part of a Worldwide fellowship is a comforting and proud knowing that we in fact do recover. In fact no one knows better than NA crew how to step up, show up and carry the message of hope to anyone that needs to hear this. If you are new to NA, we have got you and I am cheering you on and believe that you can stay clean if you want to but get a sponsor. They are the most valuable resource on offer and my beautiful sponsor certainly saved my life on a daily basis.

In gratitude
Jodie WA

NA @ HOME MEETINGS

Call the **local landline** number for your state and follow prompts enter meeting ID followed by the hash key (#) and use star key and four (*4) to mute / unmute

(OR) download the [BlueJeans](#) app, 'Join as guest' and enter the meeting ID

#	DAY	TIME (SYD)	MEETING NAME	MEETING ID	
01	MON	12:00	Lunch Meeting	907613904	<p>AUSTRALIAN VERSION TIMES ARE SYD LOCAL TIME</p> <p>SA (08) 7070 8060 QLD (07) 3123 4461 VIC (03) 8400 4256 WA (08) 6365 4437 NSW (02) 8103 4256</p> <p>MEETING ETIQUETTE</p> <p>Welcome to NA @ Home</p> <p>If you are able to please arrive 5-10 minutes early to say hello to other members before the meeting</p> <p>Arriving early will ensure your place in the meeting (<i>BlueJeans is currently limited to 100 persons per meeting</i>)</p> <p>During the meeting please ensure your microphone is muted this allows speakers to be heard clearly</p> <p>If calling in from a phone then use *4 to mute and unmute otherwise use the mute button on the application</p> <p>During the meeting please ensure not to use the chat box as this is considered cross talk</p> <p>You are welcome to direct message other members or moderators during the meeting. Please be respectful at all times.</p> <p>Please ensure to have your video off when entering the room and keep your video off for the duration of the meeting.</p> <p>Meeting moderators may mute & turn videos off while the meeting is running.</p> <p>Please treat the NA @ Home meetings respectfully as you would your own home group.</p>
02		19:00	Long Term Recovery	611333554	
03		21:00	Just for Today	980923411	
04	TUE	12:00	Lunch Meeting	907613904	
05		19:00	Basic Text Study	776967424	
06		21:00	Just for Today	905578095	
07	WED	12:00	Lunch Meeting	907613904	
08		19:00	Women's Meeting Just for Today	800330959 865025294	
09		21:00	Steps & Traditions	633699380	
10	THU	12:00	Lunch Meeting	907613904	
11		19:00	It Works How & Why	573701848	
12		21:00	Just for Today	501143121	
13	FRI	12:00	Lunch Meeting	907613904	
14		20:00	Glebe Hybrid Meeting	790184928	
15		21:00	NA @ Home Speaker	523140721	
16	SAT	12:00	Lunch Meeting	907613904	
17		19:00	Ask It Basket	482943120	
18		21:00	Steps & Traditions	440409702	
19	SUN	12:00	Lunch Meeting	907613904	
20		19:00	Just for Today	926266442	
21		21:00	Living Clean	631374919	
<p>A comprehensive list of online Narcotics Anonymous meetings is available at:</p> <p>www.virtual-na.org</p> <p>An addict, any addict can stop using, lose the desire to use and find a new way to live</p>					

NA TODAY

Download your copy from www.na.org.au
Subscribe to receive the latest copy online
cartoons, archives, humour, events & MORE



WANT'S YOU!

CONTACT NA TODAY to become an AGENT
for your local area.

Submit your own article and share your
EXPERIENCE STRENGTH & HOPE

ART WORK POEMS ARTICLES

e-mail your submission to natoday@na.org.au

