

# NA TODAY

Free Publication

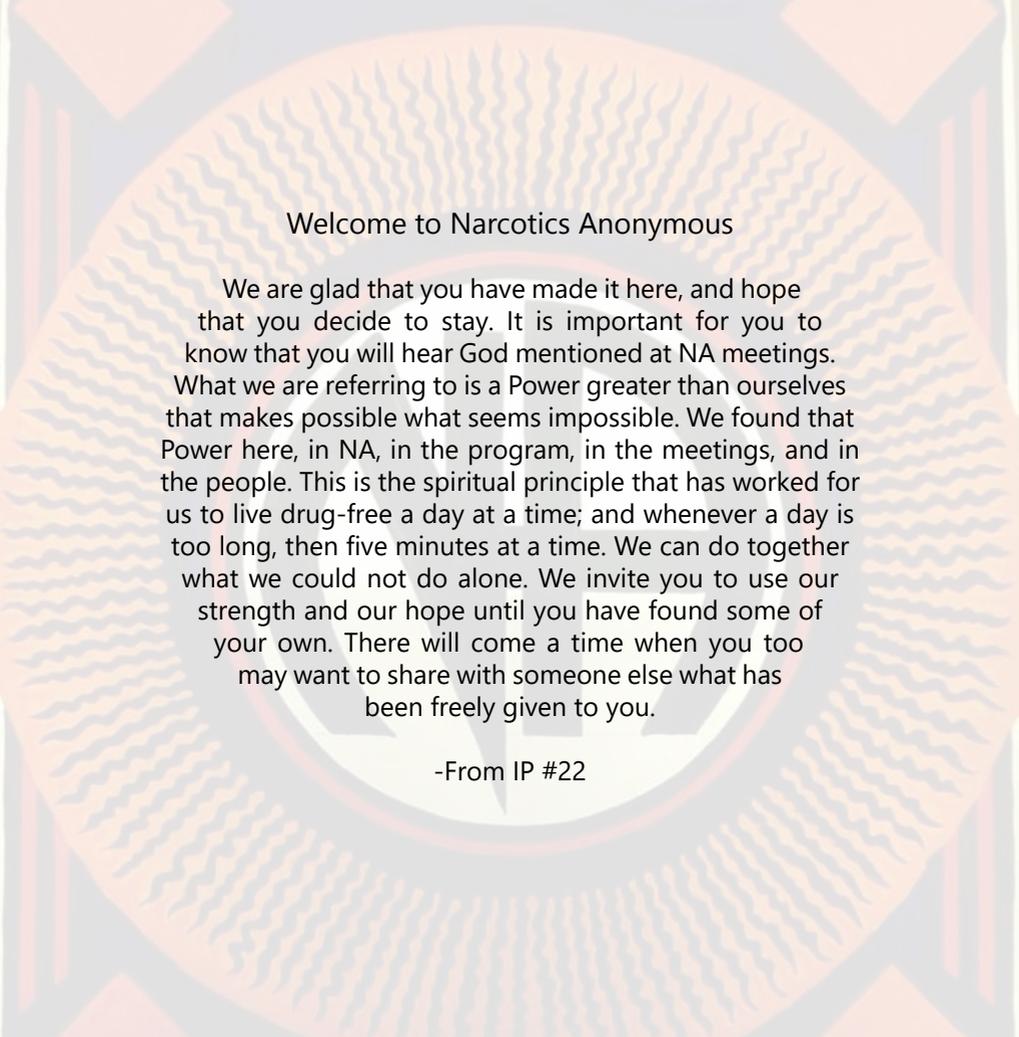
Of The Australian Region

Fellowship Unity in Adversity

End Year 2022

WE ARE  
ALL  
ONE





## Welcome to Narcotics Anonymous

We are glad that you have made it here, and hope that you decide to stay. It is important for you to know that you will hear God mentioned at NA meetings. What we are referring to is a Power greater than ourselves that makes possible what seems impossible. We found that Power here, in NA, in the program, in the meetings, and in the people. This is the spiritual principle that has worked for us to live drug-free a day at a time; and whenever a day is too long, then five minutes at a time. We can do together what we could not do alone. We invite you to use our strength and our hope until you have found some of your own. There will come a time when you too may want to share with someone else what has been freely given to you.

-From IP #22

*Would you like to see your artwork on the cover of NA Today?*

*Please send through at your highest resolution for consideration to: [natoday@na.org.au](mailto:natoday@na.org.au)*

*This issue's front cover and back cover were kindly donated by anonymous members.*

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**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**

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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**

## Hello everyone

The theme of this issue is “fellowship unity in adversity”. I never quite understood what unity looked or felt like, it was a foreign word and concept until I walked into the rooms of Narcotics Anonymous. Connection with others and staying connected to fellowship has kept me clean throughout my recovery.

However recovery isn't always easy and sometimes we can find ourselves in hardship and tough situations, such as the pandemic, but somehow Narcotics Anonymous always finds a way to connect.

Adversity can create hardship; however, I have witnessed fellow addicts grow and recover through adversity. We go through so much in our lives and learn to lean on one another within the fellowship and strengthen the characteristics that we have already developed within ourselves.

I know within the loneliness and isolation that can come from adversity in life can make me feel like I don't belong within the fellowship. However, I need to push away from that sort of thinking and reach out to my sponsor, the people who love me unconditionally and pick up my meeting attendance.

This allows me to develop the connection, love and support that I get through the unified front of the Narcotics Anonymous fellowship.

This program has taught me that I am never alone, that we as a whole fellowship will never be alone, there are meetings online or right around the corner and if I can't get to a meeting, even if my mind is fighting against me, I should always at least pick up the phone.

It is our job to make the fellowship a safe place to be united so that every individual can have a place to come to no matter what adversity they are facing. We are a unified fellowship, we are the place of connection... a place we call home.... a place of love and unity.

*Yours in Ever Loving Service and  
Gratitude*

*Jacki*

# International Events

The 3rd Asia Pacific Forum Convention 'Courage to Change', will be held from Friday 3rd of March, to Sunday the 5th of March 2023, at Gorkha Rangamancha Bhawan, Darjeeling, India. The Asia Pacific Forum, Indian Region, and the Darjeeling ASC are personally inviting you to celebrate with us in Darjeeling. Set amongst the foothills of the majestic Himalayas, APFCNA3 will surely be a memorable NA event.



**DARJEELING, INDIA**

**Courage to Change**

# Strength, Unity & Hope

For some reason my hometown has always had difficulties establishing and sustaining a regular NA meeting. Over the years groups have started and stopped a few times.

This could be due to the fact we are sandwiched between two very healthy regions in the Gold Coast and Far North Coast which offer a wide variety of meeting formats every day of the week, or the fear of broken anonymity in a small town.

Whatever the reason (and it definitely wasn't a lack of need) if you wanted to feel the *love and support* on offer from the program you had to jump in a car or hop online and go find it away from home.

In November last year, with covid guidelines finally starting to relax and everyone getting back to face-to-face meetings, all the stars aligned, and our meeting opened. We *secured a great venue* in a prime location with everything we needed to foster the atmosphere of recovery.

As a home group member, I was so stoked! To have a mix of people from across the community ranging from decades of recovery to people in treatment facilities, to people straight off the street and

everything in between meeting every week just minutes from home felt like a true blessing.

I just couldn't live thinking the 'gremlins' who were going to *kidnap* me were under the house waiting for mum to go out and I would be left alone. And no, I didn't think they were *gremlins*.

I thought I was the sickest of the sickest and I lived with debilitating and chronic stress, and it led me to two uncompleted suicides. The meetings were averaging 10-20 people per week and were running along beautifully until February this year when *disaster struck* our region.

The flooding across the east coast had devastating impacts for so many people and the heart wrenching tales of survival and loss, some witnessed firsthand, are something that will be forever burnt into my mind. People lost everything they had, and we lost our venue.

It's hard to *comprehend* the scale of destruction faced by many communities, pictures on social media and TV only capture a part of what is going on.

Underneath the obvious physical damage is an undercurrent of

fear, uncertainty and despair. During this time, I got to see the best and worst of humanity.

To have members go out of their way to help me personally and see them dig in around the region assisting with clean up, food drops, providing services, co-ordinating major efforts or just checking in was incredibly uplifting.

The way the wider community rallied and *supported* each other was just amazing and has shown me how *beautiful* people really can be.

After the flood we were told the repairs to the community centre would take 6 months at best and there was more pressure than ever on other suitable venues.

We were far from the only group to lose their room and the flood relief also took up valuable spaces.

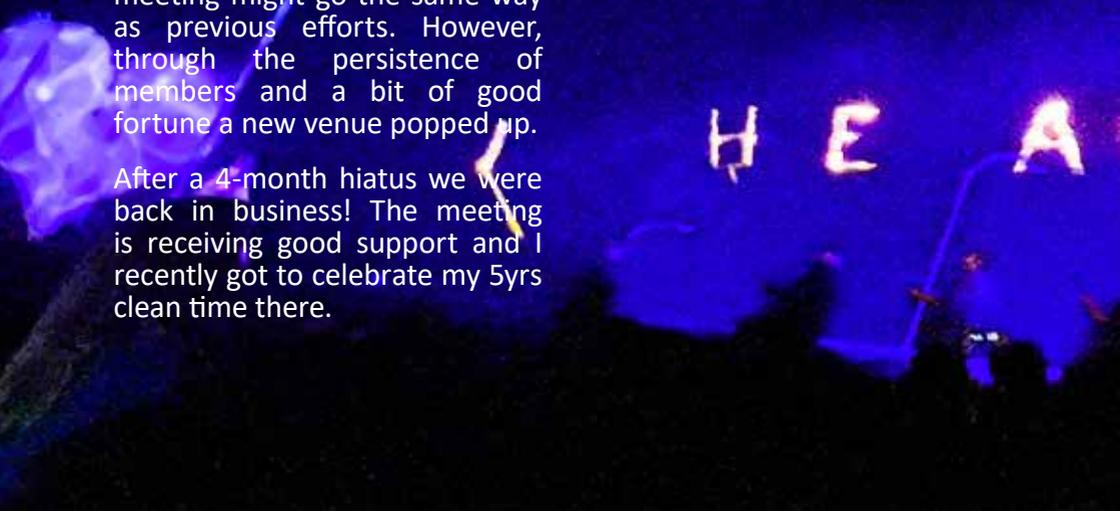
For a time, it looked like the local meeting might go the same way as previous efforts. However, through the persistence of members and a bit of good fortune a new venue popped up.

After a 4-month hiatus we were back in business! The meeting is receiving good support and I recently got to celebrate my 5yrs clean time there.

*I'm so grateful to have the support of N.A in my life and in my hometown especially when things get tough.*

I know there are people around me who will show up no matter what. I hope we can continue to share our message of *Strength, Unity and Hope* in the local community for all the people out there in active addiction who are yet to find a new way of life.

**Jonny Trees**



# Home

I've learned during my life  
That home is not a place.  
It's a fellowship  
It's a room that makes you laugh  
Humans who see your worth  
Who loves your unicity  
And want happiness for you.  
It's someone who understands you,  
Never judges you  
Who stands by you.  
And in the end it continues to love you.  
Undoubtedly.  
Home was never a place  
Home is a fellowship you find when  
you're at the bitter ends looking for  
salvation  
Home is your sponsors heart  
Someone's heart is the safest place you  
can possibly be.  
Home is she.  
Home is he.  
Home is where we stand together.  
Home is us.

- A Grateful Member

how PRIVILEGED  
YOU ARE... TO  
BE PASSIONATELY  
CLINGING TO  
WHAT YOU LOVE

THE FORFEIT OF  
HOPE HAS NOT  
DESTROYED YOU

- A Grateful Member



- Alan P

## Tradition 1

It's easy to point to one another  
when looking for someone to blame  
it's easy to notice a difference  
but for what is the same  
but differences do not define us,  
I wish people just didn't care,  
but people are assholes wherever you go,  
and that is one thing that we share

- Anonymous

# Unity in Adversity

when adversity barges in, an  
uninvited guest kicking down  
your door

and it looks you in the eye,

tells you that everything is  
hopeless, set in stone, never  
changing, never getting better.

and when adversity causes your  
doubts and fears to come and  
roar once more -

you take a breath...

and the fellowship comes in,  
pushes adversity away and leans  
on your shoulder and says to you  
-

"a world - my world, your new  
world - it's waiting out there, you  
know,"

and you simply nod slowly, softly,  
disbelief etched in every part of  
your face.

and the new world nods back and  
you think to yourself

surely, since this is the world I've  
been searching for my entire life

and you let the fellowship take  
its outstretched hand and you  
believe,

and you believe that there is  
something out there for you,

believe in hope, in a brighter  
future.

clean.

and you believe and you let it  
happen

a day at a time

and you believe

because what can we do but that,  
after all?

and adversity scoffs at the notion,  
even as it backs away,

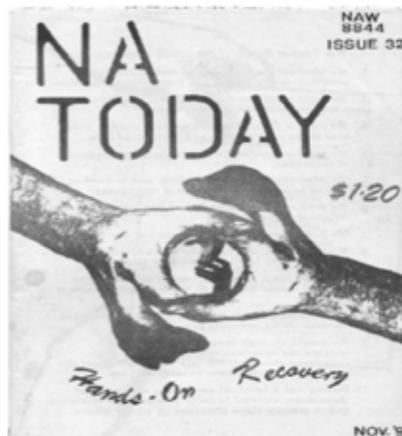
and you squeeze the fellowships  
hand

and the world watches you go  
and

you continue to believe.

and cling to hope

## A Grateful Member



IF YOU WANT TO USE DRUGS  
WELL THEN, THAT'S YOUR BUSINESS!  
IF YOU WANT TO STOP USING DRUGS  
THEN, THAT'S OUR BUSINESS!

**spirit knows no colour!**  
**spirit knows no shame!**



**DONT BE SHAME!**  
**PUT YOUR HANDS UP & ASK FOR HELP!**



**NARCOTICS ANONYMOUS - 1300 652 820**  
**na.org.au**



- Ashleigh L

# UNITY

When we walk into our first meeting and see addicts coming together in unity, the spirit touches us even before the word gets through

*(Guiding Principles, Tradition 1).*

Unity depends on our willingness to keep coming from love, even when that seems like the hardest thing to do

*(Guiding Principles, Tradition 2).*

What we learn about unity in NA helps us figure out how to be members in our families, members in our communities, members of a team at work or at play

*(Living Clean, "Desperation to Passion").*

We learn when it's important to stand for principles, and when it's best to step aside in the name of unity, knowing that a loving God is ultimately in charge

*(Living Clean, "Why We Stay").*



- Helen P

# Living with Adversity

Living with adversity seems part and parcel with my recovery. If I could wave a magic wand and make it all easier I would. But I changed the way my brain works when I was using.

All of the beliefs I developed,  
all of the unhealthy behaviours  
about myself...

But I changed the way my brain works when I was using. All the beliefs I developed, all the unhealthy behaviours about myself and the world, they became strong. Turning that ship around isn't as simple as turning off a light.

Turning that ship around isn't as simple as turning off a light.

I relapsed a couple of years ago. Not for long though, probably for 3 months though I wasn't counting. I was about 14 months clean, and we went into lockdown and isolation, coupled being in early recovery broke me.

I'm 19 months clean again now and the more I associate with people who have a clear idea of how recovery works the easier it seems to become.

Life on life's terms for me is manageable

If I stay in contact with my sponsor, am prepared to work my steps and approach recovery as a new way of life.

From what I can estimate, there is enough of the right tools in my 12 step NA toolbox to disarm this beast of my own making.

It's not a joke hey, this stuff. But if working my recovery in suggested ways.

Appreciating that I don't have all the answers has taught me something at this stage.

The afternoon sun is shining into the driver's side window of my car while I'm trying to write this in my phone.



The glare is warm, and it's been a sunny winter day near Sydney where I live.

Worrying about if what I'm writing is good enough. My self-consciousness, you know.

If I can't get to a NA meeting this afternoon, I have one tomorrow that's marked out in my calendar.

My adversity feels a bit less after writing this.

That's interesting to me, always learning new things. I'm grateful to have been given the chance to contribute. Just for today anyway

**Luke C.**



# RESILIENCE

noun.

1. the capacity  
quickly from

toughness

The importance of our unity encourages our groups to look beyond their own little worlds to the common needs of the worldwide NA Fellowship, placing the welfare of the whole before their own.

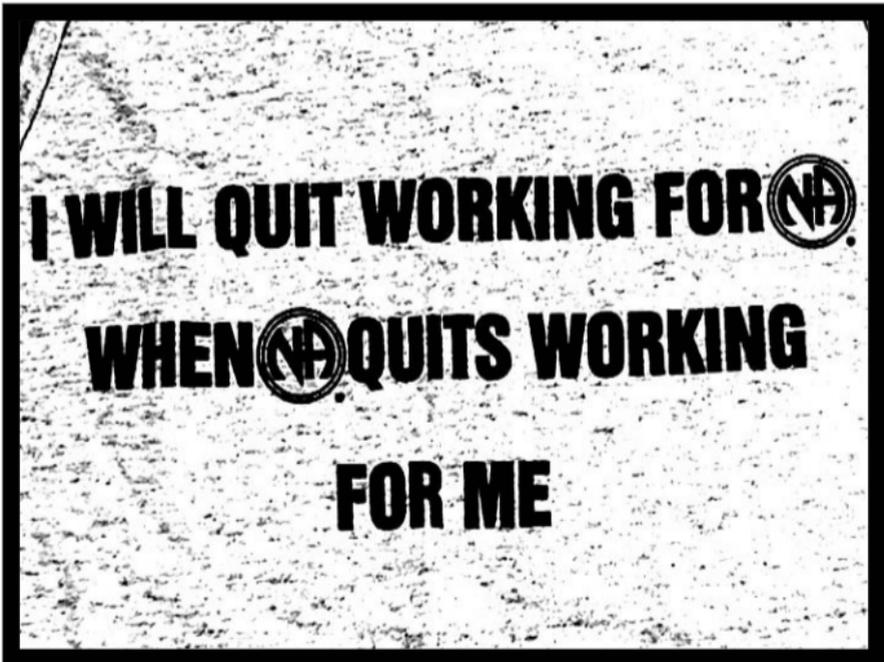
(It Works,  
Tradition 1).

# Save The Date

Gold Coast Area  
Convention  
17|18|19  
March 2023

Far North Coast  
Convention  
18|19|20  
August 2023

for your local area convention to be added into  
save the date  
please email [natoday@na.org.au](mailto:natoday@na.org.au)





- Angus F

Unity is the spirit that joins thousands of members around the world in a spiritual fellowship that has the power to change lives (It Works, Tradition 1)



- Anonymous

the wilted shall  
survive by  
burning  
resilience



- A Grateful Member

## REMEMBER...

**YOU CAN ONLY KEEP WHAT  
YOU HAVE BY GIVING IT  
AWAY...**



Send your articles, letters,  
cartoons and graphics to  
[natoday@na.org.au](mailto:natoday@na.org.au)

or

NA Today  
c/- FSO

Unit 34, 112 - 122 McEvoy St  
Alexandria NSW 2015

## BE LIKE SUPER GIVING POTATO.

**WE LOOK FORWARD  
TO RECEIVING YOUR  
SUBMISSIONS.**

## THE TWELVE STEPS SIMPLIFIED.

1. I CAN'T
2. GOD CAN
3. LET GOD
4. LOOK WITHIN
5. ADMIT WRONGS
6. READY SELF FOR CHANGE
7. SEEK GOD'S HELP
8. BECOME WILLING
9. MAKE AMENDS
10. DAILY INVENTORY
11. PRAY AND MEDITATE
12. GIVE IT AWAY

*Disclaimer: for the real steps, look in the basic text, literature or talk to you sponsor..*

# Fellowship Unity in Adversity

My name is Tim & I'm a grateful Recovering addict. I got clean on the 5th of June 1991 on the Gold Coast in the Queensland Area of Narcotics Anonymous. Today I Serve on the World Board of NA and am currently the Chairperson. As an active member of NA for over 31 years, I have seen Fellowship adversity in many different forms. In every instance the ties that bind us have always been stronger than those that would tear us apart. Then along came covid 19!

The World Board met face-to-face in early March 2020, right before the world changed! The focus at that time was preparing for the biennial in-person meeting of the World Service Conference 2020. By the middle of March all of that changed as the world went into lockdown!

At the time, & for a long time, NA World Services relied on literature income for approximately 90% of funding to support the Fellowship. (One such support is the sizeable discount the Australian Regional Service Office, the FSO, receives). As meeting venues mostly closed, our literature sales decreased dramatically! The number of orders had decreased by approximately 58%, with the value of those orders down 86%. NAWS faced financial ruin. Immediate and drastic action was warranted. We needed to ensure NA World Services survived and met our financial and legal commitments.

On March 18th several staff member at NAWS were laid off and all NAWS branch operations reduced hours. Two days later, California issued stay-at-home orders and more action to reduce expenses was taken. On April 3rd, 22 staff in Chatsworth were furloughed. The remaining 19 staff were reduced to 20 hours per week. Half of those remaining staff were working in production, shipping, accounting, and technology.

The other half were kept busy answering emails, supporting the WB, and providing support to the Fellowship as many meetings and service bodies made the transition to an online environment. The other Worldwide branch offices were operating under different local orders, and WSO Europe and WSO Iran were both totally closed for a period due to local requirements.

As members of the World Board, we rely on our Executive Director & Senior Managers at NAWS for day-to-day operations of the WSO. It was heart breaking getting the regular updates, and as a member of the executive committee signing off on these actions, as we all enjoyed positive & often close relationships with the staff. Seeing their lives be so severely impacted firsthand was brutal. Additionally, in early April we were forced into the decision to postpone the in person WSC & organise a virtual WSC.

Although World Services was hit hard, we continued to do the best we could. The World Board and staff, continued to support NA around the world. We filled orders from Regions, Areas, Members, and institutions. Fairly quickly we were able to resume shipping to inmates who write to us requesting literature and we continued to ship to correctional institutions. We published the Filipino Basic Text, IP #1 in Georgian, and the Nepali Basic Text.

In total we published over 50 new translations in the first several months of the shutdowns and over 100 more in the year to follow that. We held service-related web meetings for PR, H & I, zones, and organized 2 virtual World Service Conferences. We also posted a new Contracts and Negotiations tool for the Conventions and Events Toolbox, and GSR Basics was posted on the Local Service Toolbox page. Also, we continued to perform the administrative work that, if it's done right, is invisible but no less important, like planning and keeping all five NA World Service locations operating at some capacity, supporting the World Board and the World Service Conference, keeping up with trademark registrations and renewals, copyright registrations, lawsuits, and the many emails, calls, and meeting to plan web meetings.

Also, we were able to complete our new literature piece, Spiritual Principle a Day – SPAD, which was approved at the Virtual WSC in April 2022. So, the World Board, along with the Conference Participants, were able to support the remaining staff at World Services to continue all this work that was accomplished. To be able to play a role in this process was an honor.

What was equally remarkable was the entire Fellowships response to the pandemic! Online meetings became our primary vehicle to carry the message & continue our Recovery journeys together! This not only “got us through” the pandemic but became an additional standard meeting platform & is now a huge part of many members ongoing Recovery routine, mine included!

During one of our NAWS hosted Fellowship Webinars, one of the guest presenters stated that she got “Clean on the Screen” and due to anxiety related issues may not have found Recovery at all if it wasn’t for online meetings! The response of material for our online meeting work was phenomenal and we now have approved material on our website!

Then there was the Invest in our Vision campaign. Prior to this cycle the World Board had identified our over reliance on literature sales and came up with the theme for the WSC cycle as “Invest in our Vision”. How relevant this became! From the onset of the pandemic the Board signed off on “ramping up” this theme due to sheer necessity rather than preference & the fellowship responded admirably.

NA went from around 10% self-supporting to 25% which, along with the wise management recommended by NAWS management, helped NAWS get through the pandemic financially. Although we have a way to go to be non-reliant on literature/product sales, the continued growth in contributions is visible and is a credit to every Member that contributes, be that \$1 in the basket or monthly recurring contributions to World Services.

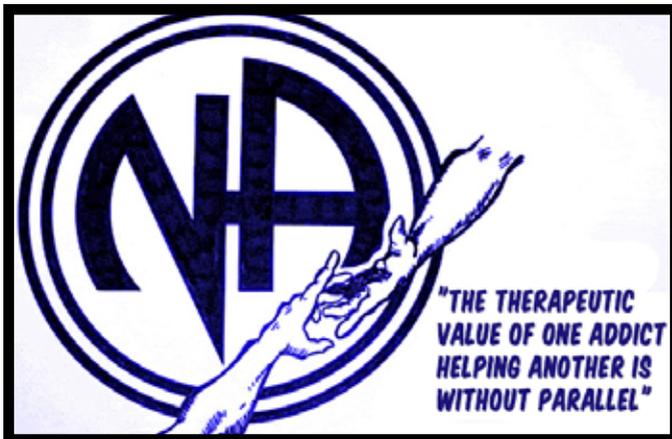
We have learned a lot together, and as with most things in our Recovery journey, we still have a lot to learn. During this first 2.5 years of the pandemic, we have lost a lot! Many members died from covid relate illness.

Many members fell by the Recovery wayside, NA events were cancelled, (Including the World Convention which was to be held in my home Region, Australia!), livelihoods were lost ...; it's impossible to gauge how many addicts were not given a chance to hear our message and were lost to addiction.

The list goes on! It is the most adversity I have witnessed in my years of being an NA Member. It did however turn out to be a test of Fellowship Unity. The ties that continue to bind us were stronger than a global pandemic! In a Service meeting I joked that addicts were born to survive an apocalypse!

I'm not sure this is true, but I am sure the pandemic has been a true example of Fellowship Unity in adversity! The Fellowship's response to the pandemic was and continues to be truly remarkable. In sheer adversity, We Do Recover!

*Yours in Service,  
Tim S*





- Matt S

# NA TODAY

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EXPERIENCE STRENGTH & HOPE

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Love  
YOU  
BaCK

to Life



We  
shall  
overcome

TABLE NO.	PERSONS	WAITER	AMOUNT OF CHECK

Thank You!

