



A Gift Called Life

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"Where Addicts in the Capital Area and abroad share their experience, strength and hope"

July2008

CAPITAL AREA of NEW JERSEY

Issue No. 21

Step Nine

By: Melvin C. Plainfield

"We made direct amends to such people wherever possible, except when to do so would injure them or other"

AGCL: Why is making amends necessary in this process?

Melvin: Because it essential to do so if we want to continue to go on with our recover. Often because of the life style we did things that we are not proud about and we always look for the opportunity to try and make things right.

AGCL: What does the Basic Text mean when it says we made direct amends?

Melvin: My understanding is when you go directly to the person you have harmed and you do the things necessary to make things right.

AGCL: Why is it suggested that you get some clean time before trying this step?

Melvin: Well you can't do this step using, it won't be sincere. If you are still using the person will most likely not take you sincerely, you mine as well just go back home and don't even think about this here process.

AGCL: Why is it important to do the Eighth Step before you try and do an ninth step?

Melvin: The Eighth Step talks about we become willing to make amends. If you don't understand what is going on in this step you probably won't do it right. In the eighth step we make preparation mentally to go on to actually go head on to the next step. So we can make amends to them people, places or things that we have harmed. The Eighth Step is essential so we can strip down and see the harm we have caused.

AGCL: Have you done more than one Ninth Step?

Melvin: I've done at lease three Ninth Steps with my sponsor. I also have four sponsees I've done Ninth Steps work with.

AGCL: What was your first experience like?

Melvin: My first experience was a liberating one, because I did a lot of people harm. In the process of recovery you get yourself better and you go out and make amends to the people you have harm. The eighth and ninth step deal directly with this and my experience was that I became liberated.

AGCL: Did you experience any fear while doing this step? And if so how did you get past it?

Melvin: Yes, and basically I pray. More importantly I call more experienced members in the fellowship. I also would use the literature to help out in this process because in NA we never have all the answers and the God of our understanding always put these thing in our path so we can get the understanding. It talks about it in the chapter "What Can I Do". It tells you to read this program and get the best understanding as you understand.

AGCL: Why is it important to go over the list with your sponsor before going out trying to make amends to these people?

Melvin: Because it might be some people and something you don't need to have on there. It might be something on there that might cause you even greater harm, so it is necessary to go over your list with your sponsor. But you must be totally honest with your sponsor about why these people, places and things are on there.

AGCL: What is the benefits in working

this step and is their time fram on making amends?

Melvin: The benefits for me is a liberating thing. In the eyes of society we are always going to be look upon as addicts. So now the benefits here is they finally see us doing things to try to make right what we have done wrong for so many years. Personally there is sometime when there is a time frame and in other times the opportunity presents itself, but we don't harm others.

AGCL: How can we hurt someone if this step is not done right?

Melvin: Because we need to understand the active nature of what we've done. That is why it is so crucial that we work the steps leading up to this one. You can actually hurt people by bringing up things from the past, that maybe best kept in the past. But again that is through prayer, so you can get to understand what these things are.

Step NINE

Many of our sincere well-wishers may be reluctant to accept our recovery as real. We must remember the pain that they have known. In time, many miracles will occur.

Clean time speaks for itself. Patience is an important part of our recovery.

A lot of courage and faith goes into making amend, and a lot of spiritual growth results.



A Gift Called Life

**Tradition Nine
Interviewer Vern**

“Hugh S From Plainfield”

“NA, as such ought never be organized, but we may create service boards or committee directly responsible to those they serve”

AGCL: What Area are you from and how much time do you have?

Hugh: I'm from the Plainfield Area and I'm coming up on 21yrs clean as of Aught first.

AGCL: So you are an Old Timer?

Hugh: Call it what you want I'm a young man. “laughter”.

AGCL: What dose the Ninth Tradition means to you?

Hugh: To me the ninth tradition separates the fellowship from the program. Our primary purpose is to carry the message to the addict who still suffers and we have a variety of ways we do this. Service Boards or Committees are some ways that we do this. For example we have Public Information to let the public know that NA is around. We have H&I to let the hospital and institution know that NA is here. It is people out there just like there patients who have found a new way of life and they can to.

AGCL: Why is Tradition Nine so important?

Hugh: Because this Tradition talks about how the fellowship gets served. We have the fellowship and it says organized “as such”. As such means there are no hard rules of recover but we need to have direction a focal point. That focal point is our Fifth Tradition. We need these committees

and service boards to help get the message out and that is what the Ninth Tradition does.

AGCL:How do you apply this Tradition in your daily life?

Hugh: That is kind of a hard one. The reason why I say this is because, I can look at my family and see where my personal recovery depends on NA unity. Now my family depends on us being a unify family, but we don't have service boards or committees. We do all have a role to play and that is how I look at it.

AGCL: What are the benefits we get out of this Tradition?

Hugh: One of the benefits that spring out to me is it suggests that you get a commitment in NA. If it was not for these service boards and committees there would be very few places that we could get a commitment to serve in NA. The reason that this is important is that we always says those in the middle don't fall off the edge. When you are involved in helping someone else your life gets better, at least it did for me. I've been everything from the coffee maker to the chairperson of Area and at one time I was the only person on the PI commitment. When I want to vote on something I would go around the table and vote. I don't want to sound like an old timer or like I'm preaching but the newcomer don't get involved as much as they should or as much as I think they should, put it like that.

Because the fellowship is still growing so there are some people involved. I was raised that way but there is going to come a time when people are not going to know what to do. So it is vital that we serve these service boards and committees.

AGCL: Do you have difficulty formulating this Tradition in your life?

Hugh: Yes, sometimes. Like I said everyone has a role to play in my family. I have control issue my wife who is also in recovery has her own control issues. One thing I've learn in the ninth tradition is to do my role. As long as I do my part I don't have to worry about anyone else.

AGCL: What is your interpretation of an NA meeting?

Hugh: An NA meeting is when two or more addicts who follow the Twelve Steps and the Twelve Traditions for the purpose to seek recover. Real simple.

AGCL: I would like to thank you Hugh for sharing with us because you are truly a source of information and we thank you for sharing.

Hugh: thanks for letting me share.

A Gift Called Life



Service



Sanity

CAPITAL AREA SERVICE SUB-COMMITTEES

CAPITAL AREA CONVENTION COMMITTEE
 Beverly Q. - Chair. Carmen P. - V. Chair
 (609) 558-8084 (609) 516-5515

FUNDRAISING SUB-COMMITTEE
 Kim H. - Chair. Cindy F. - V. Chair
 732-278-9428 609-775-6479

HOSPITALS & INSTUTIONS
 Chairperson
 Kalane W.. - 609 -638-7443

OUTREACH
Needs Supports

CAPITAL AREA CONVENTION PROGRAMMING SUB-COMMITTEE
 Nate D. - Chair Charlotte F. Vice Chair
 609-802-6496 609-481-8407

CAPITAL AREA POLICY CHAIRPERSON
 Kevin A. (609) 954-6389

CAPITAL AREA ACTIVITIES SUB-COMMITTEE
 Van. J.- Chair Sylvia R. -V. Chair
 Chair
 609-433-4873 609-475-2359

ARTS and GRAPHICS
 Readus E Chairperson 475-5094
 Wallace W Vice chair 477-9239

PUBLIC INFORMATION
 We are in need of support and trusted servants
 Be a part of the NA Help-line!

HOTEL & HOSPITALITY
 Lee I- Chair Phyllis A Vice Chair
 609-448-3422 609-371-8431

We are in need of support and trusted servants

WEB-SITE
 James
www.capitalareaofna.org
 CHECK OUT OUR WEB SITE

H & I - IS IN DESPERATE NEED OF SUPPORT
 They meet every 3rd Sunday at the Ewing Township Police Station at 6:00 pm.
 For more information call the H & I Chairperson listed above



WE CELEBRATE CLEAN TIME!

JUNE

Crystal H	6-15-08(3-15-08)	6 days
Terrance B.	6-19-08(9-15-08)	9 months
Freddie M.	6-20-08(3-20-08)	90days
Linda P	6-24-94	14 yrs
Barry H	6-30-02	6yrs

JULY

James G	7-3-08 (04-3-08)	90 days
Lois H	7-7-08 (10-7-07)	9months
Shirley A.	7-10-05	3yrs
Vernal S.	7-11-03	5yrs
Devin E	7-13-05	3yrs
Cheryl M.	7-22-06	2yrs
Susan S	7-28-07	1 yr
Carman B	7-28-08(1-28-08)	6months

Please submit your anniversary via email or committee member before you celebrate.

Remember when you celebrate, we all celebrate. Your anniversary is evidence to the newcomer that NA Works!

OUTREACH

PLEASE SUPPORT THESE GROUPS WITH YOUR ATTENDANCE WHEN GROUPS FOLD ADDICTS DIE

Sign of the Time - Mini Police Station, Stuyvesant & Hoffman Aves, (Trenton) Mon. Wed. Fri. 6:00 pm - 7:30 pm (St. IWHW)

How are you Living - Shiloh Baptist Church Lower Auditorium (Trenton) Calhoun & Belvidere Sts. Sat. 7 pm -8:30 pm (OSD)

Early Morning Recovery - Bethany Presbyterian Church (Trenton) Hamilton & Chestnut Aves. Tues. 8:30 am - 10:30 am (BT/OD)

Fresh Start -First Presbyterian Church 100 Scotch Road -Ewing Tues. 8:00 pm -9:30 pm (OSD, Hrl)

The Only Requirement -Bethany Presbyterian Church (Trenton) Hamilton & Chestnut Aves. Wed.. 8:00 pm - 9:30 pm (TDOS)

Hightstown Group -First Presbyterian Church Main St. (Hightstown) Thurs. 8:00 pm - 9:15 pm (L,D)

New Direction -Bethany Presbyterian Church (Trenton) Hamilton & Chestnut Aves. Thurs. 9:00 pm - 10:30 pm (OSD)

Our Message is Hope. Our Promise is Freedom
42 Arctic Parkway Local 175 Union Hall, Ewing

Sat. 7:00 pm -8:30pm (St/D/IWHW)
Non Smoking Meeting, Candlelight

Stop & Surrender - 1 Kingsbury Sq. East Tower Sat. & Wed. 11:30 am - 1:00 pm
IS IN DESPERATE NEED OF TRUSTED SERVANTS

Drug Free Group of NA - 24 Club of Princeton Rt. 206 and Rt. 518
Entrance in rear Next to Good Year. Sun. 7:30 pm-9:00 pm

Just for Today - Turning Point Methodist Church 15 S. Broad Street
Fri. 8:00-9:00 pm

Enough is Enough Tues. 8pm 24 club Princeton Rt. 206 and 518
Entrance in rear next to Good Year

CAPITAL AREA EVENTS

Hope without Dope Speaker Jam Stuyvesant and Oak Lane, Tues July 22,2008 6-9 pm 6 speakers

Capital Area Convention Fundraising Committee Presents
Family and friends Day Picnic/Volleyball Tournament # 1 on
July 26 2008 & # 2 on August 23 2008 12noon- Dusk Place John O.
Watson Park Contact: Kim H 732-278-9428 & Stephanie 609-943- 8399

Capital Area Convention of Narcotics Anonymous "A New Horizon"
March 13-15 2009 Clarion of Cherry Hill, NJ Route 70 East & Interstate
295 Cherry Hill, NJ 08034 Capital Area Fundraising Convention
Committee

Stop and Surrender is having a 21 Counties Speaker Jam
Time: August 16, 2008 11am -9pm
East Tower Community Room 1 Kingsbury Square

Serenity Prayer

God, grant me the serenity to accept
the things I cannot change, the
courage to change the things I can,
and the wisdom to know the
difference.



Third Step Prayer
God, take my will and my life,
Guide me in my recovery.
Show me how to live.

If you would like to join the Capital Area Literature Committee you may see any member of the committee. The CALRC meets at 9:30 am every 2nd and 4th Saturday of the month at Friendship Baptist Church on the corner of Broad and Perry Streets. (In the Basement). Sherman R. - Chairperson (609)920-8411, Robin F. - Vice Chairperson (609)-392-1591, Jennifer A. - Treasurer (609)977-6444, Joe J.609-227-1621 Naadira M (267)456-3151 Jamie G . You can submit your stories, poems or anniversary dates via email at : agclnewsletter@aol.com . All submissions should be received by the first Monday of each month. Receipt by this date does not guarantee that your submission will be in the next issue BUT IT WILL APPEAR IN THE NEWSLETTER upon approval of the committee. So look for it future issues of AGCL. ALL SUBMISSIONS MUST BE NA (RECOVERY) RELATED. OUR TENTH TRADITION STATES THAT NA HAS NO OPINION ON OUTSIDE ISSUES HENCE THE NA NAME OUGHT NEVER BE DRAWN INTO PUBLIC CONTROVERSY. THANK YOU FOR YOUR CONTINUED SUPPORT.....In Loving Service The Capital Area Literature Review Committee.



Why I keep Coming Back to NA-Tracey



Hi, My name is Tracey ,I'm an addict.

First, I would like to thank the God of my understanding for another day clean and having a First Step in my life. To accept that I am an addict and surrendering to the program of NA and the Capital Area for being my family, I love you.

I keep coming because I don't want to use and they told me I never have to use again, One day at a time. So, I learned how to listen and try something different besides my way. They told me to make 90 meetings in 90 days and I did at first, but something very painful happened and I never went through anything painful clean before. But they told me I had to be responsible for my recovery. I didn't know how but I kept coming and they said raise your hand, get a sponsor, get a home group, build a network of people that I could call day and night. Tell them when I was sad, mad, angry or lonely. Early in my recovery I lost my sister. I had 3 months clean and I really learned what acceptance was in my life besides using. I always ran or hid my feelings because I didn't want to deal, but God is good. I watched my sister beg for one more and wanting to die at the same time. It was hard because I didn't want to let go but my sister was ok with dying. I had to get some acceptance in my life that she was in pain and didn't want to hurt anymore. So that's why I keep coming back because NA helped me through. God Blessed me with another sister in NA and I love you Daisey. God also blessed me with a sponsor who was just like my sister Shada. So I'm grateful I was able to still be happy, I didn't have a reason to use because I dealt with that pain and talked about it. My mate had 5 years and he relapsed and I was hurt, angry, sad and scared but I keep coming and I don't use. There was a time where I thought because he was using that I needed to use too but that is not true. I still have to come and get in that circle and pray and call my network and sponsor and keep coming. There has been some other painful things that have happened in my life with my children and grandchildren but I'm so grateful for NA and that I just keep coming back. If I stopped coming back, I wouldn't be here to share my experience of a mother losing her first born child. Wow, I thank God for the work that I put in. I remember my son asking me to drop him off and I didn't want to but I did at 8 pm and I went to a meeting and at 10 pm someone had killed my baby. Wow, you talk about a reason to use, but I just kept coming back because they told me no matter what don't use. That was my reason so I thought but I was never alone. So I thank God for strength to carry his message and not allow me to lose my mind. It will be 4 years that he has passed but I keep coming and the pain will never go away, but I get better with the pain. I don't let my thinking run my life just for today.

I have a baby brother who is struggling since my mom died, he has been drinking. Alcohol is a drug so I just keep coming because I can't save him either. In the beginning I used to try to save people but this program is for people who want it and are willing to do the work. So ,I have to keep coming and stay out of God's way and when I do he is able to do his part, like when my brother called me and said that he was ready and I went and got him with my other brother who is in recovery. By just coming back I got to know some people in NA who know some people who helped me get my brother into detox and into a program. My brother got 7 months clean and took his will back, but I keep coming because I have a foundation. I belong to a fellowship of men and women who are doing what I am doing, working on self and allowing help to help. This is a we program not a me program, and it works when you do the work. Any addict can stop using drugs if they come to NA. Even when you get a job, a husband/wife, children, a house or car that gives you more of a reason so we learn to deal not use, no matter what.

Thanks for letting me share, Capital Area if you don't understand what you just read. Just don't use and you will have a story too.



A Gift Called Life

Our Lives Written by: Chrissy A. 90 days

Whether smoking, shooting or even snorting cocaine never comes with a label or warning. It's cunning, baffling and insidious too, makes us do things to our people as well as ones we never knew. Would we sell our bodies maybe our children too? This drug doesn't care how we get it or what we'll do. Living the life as we once knew it, no longer exists. Anything we do puts our lives at risk. Beat ourselves till we can no longer see anything, except this drug we now eat ,sleep and breathe.

Junkies and crack heads is all we know and have truly become. The damage and the I'm sorry's are too late, it's already done. When for that same moment we ache to embrace, here comes the dealers, off again Satan's drug chase. The embarrassment, the guilt, all of our shame, the wreckage is all part of this wicked game. As a former active drug addict , who was not too long ago just like you, truly surrendering is the only thing left to pull you through. Get on your knees, beg, plead mostly pray. Ask your Higher Power to keep you clean just one more day. God will lead you to a program and he'll promise you hope to live life another way. It's a program that saved my life. It's all the love in these rooms of NA.

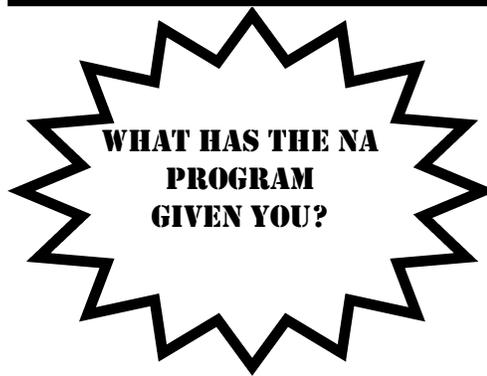
SPOTLIGHTS

It has given me a better perspective on my life.
Robin F.



The gift of feeling again.
Joy M

A new way to live " with some rules"
Arnold T.



Freedom from myself
Ronnie W.

Given me my life back is the greatest gift. I am living happy, joyous, and free.
"E"

The gift to a new way of life and opportunity to raise my daughter clean.
Dawn S.

The NA program has awakened spirit. A new spirit is within me. I choose to live this new way in recovery. Thank God for my recovery, my family, co-workers, sponsor and meetings. I am able to be a productive member of society. Vivian B

A fresh start and a brighter future. I love my life now and my NA family. I can do things that I never thought possible.
Bernice W.

It has given me inspiration
Richard H



A Gift Called Life



**HEAR YE! HEAR YE! CALLING FOR SERVICE
ALL CAPITAL AREA NA MEMBERS!!!!!!**

How Step One is helping me right now

My name is Will I. and I have three an a half months clean, and my sponsor has me working on Step One right now. Step One has helped me in many ways, especially the spiritual principles. Before my clean time I didn't know how to be honest, I did not have an open mind, neither did I have any willingness, and I sure had a problem with acceptance. In these three an a half months things have been changing; Listening to others share their experience with me, I'm able to learn how to apply these principles in my life. I've learn how to be willing and have an open mind and most of all how to humble myself. The First Step is my solution to my problems, and thank God I am working on this step with my sponsor.

"ATTENTION" FYI

Capital Area of Narcotics Anonymous
Members
If you are interested in what's going with any committee or sub-committee in the area, their meetings are open and you can attend the meetings. If you have a home group, attend your home group's business meetings. The groups GSR has the written report from the previous Area Service Meeting which contains written reports from all committees. Check the Area Meetings list for days and times of those meetings. However, all committee meetings are not listed in the meeting list. The area committee and sub-committee members listed on Page 7 of AGCL you may contact one of the members for day and time of the meetings if it is not listed on the meeting list.

Addicts Experience With Service

Hi, my name is Geni and I am an addict. I am the RCM (Regional Committee Member) for Capital Area and I have been asked to let you know the job of an RCM. As a RCM I take the conscious of our Area to the Region of NJ. My vote as the RCM, tells what we as an Area have decided on such issues as new literature, policies and anything that may effect us and NA as a whole.

The RCM is to the area, as the GSR is to the groups, we carry the message of the members, NOT our own thoughts and feelings. Six times a year 10 areas meet all throughout our region to discuss the business of NA. RCMs are a part of the information line making sure information is delivered accurately and promptly from or to the GSRs and back again to the Region, which continues the flow to the World. We are the mail carriers of NA. We find out what is happening in NA around the world and vote according to the conscious of our Areas.

RCMs also organize workshops for new information coming out in NA; recently we had a Literature review workshop here in the Capital Area. We went through the new IP's one paragraph at a time and discussed it thoroughly, to come up with a group conscious that will represent CASC. A well rounded RCM needs to have knowledge of the 12 Step, Traditions and Concepts of NA, it also helps greatly to have knowledge of Robert Rules of Order. Taking notes and clear listening skills are also great to have. But as in most service of NA many of these skills are learned and developed along the way. So, as I was told when I first came in, learn to listen and listen to learn YOU just might be the Capital Area's next Regional Committee Member. Yours In Service, Geni L.



Old Timer Interview with James H (Plainfield, Area)

- AGCL: What is your interpretation of the message of NA?
- James: That if you have a problem with drugs you can come to NA and get some help and find a new way to live.
- AGCL: Why do you keep coming to NA meetings and what do you do to maintain your clean time?
- James: I keep coming because I am a recovering addict and NA meetings keeps me in touch with people who are moving in the same direction that I am, staying off of drugs. I've try for many years trying to do this on my own and never accomplished anything alone. From 1972 to 1980 I was in a program four times and I always went back to doing the same thing, using. But when I found NA or should I say when NA found me their where people who were just like me who help me stay clean, one day at a time, that is why I keep coming to NA and I've been here for 26yrs. I know they say if you take the insanity out of a person that person is still there. So if you take the drugs out of the addict he/she is still there so I need to keep coming to meetings.
- AGCL: How do you keep an atmosphere of recovery in an meeting?
- James: By sharing my experience, strength and hope. When every I share in a meeting keep the focus on me. If it's a topic meeting and it starts getting away from the topic when I share bring it back to the topic to what every the meeting is on.
- AGCL: Have you ever been in service in NA? And if you have how has this service work help you outside of NA?
- James: I've been in service since I've started in NA. If I'm not a chairperson at meeting I would be involved in some kind of committee my pet one was PI public information. I stay involved and I have serve in every position on a group level and every position at the Area level, and hold a couple of positions at the Regional level. I think that it is very important that we try to give back what was so freely giving to us in service work. Because its only like 10% that do 100% of the work. This is why I try to give back because its only a couple of us who do the work and we need help. We need new blood to come in because if we stay in a committee too long we will start thinking this committee is our committee. That is why I try to talk to all my sponsees to get in service work.
- AGCL: Do you make yourself available to newcomers who look to you for help or do you separate yourself because of your clean time?
- James: Sometimes I feel that way, I don't want to get close to newcomer because I feel that they are not going to be around that long. I feel that they are going to go right back out, but I over come that. So yes I greet them at the meeting and I'm also available for them if they need a ride, I also give out my phone numbers to them and I talk with them after the meeting.
- AGCL: How does sponsorship help you?
- James: Sponsorship help me to stay grounded, keeping the focus on me. I feel that I belong to a sponsee family who don't believe in given advice. We give our experience, strength and hope. Sometimes I wind up sponsoring my sponsor because he might need some help in a particular area that I have experience with. My sponsor is most important because he is there to guide me through the steps of NA.
- AGCL: Do you still have difficulty turning your will over to the God of your understanding?
- James: Yes, I still have difficulty because now that I got 26yrs I think that I got it. But I know from past experience that I am going to go through some ups and downs in life. However when it get to difficult for me to deal with, then I will turn my will back over to the God of my understanding. I don't turn my will over on a regular basis, however when my ass is in hot water then I will turn it over.