



A Gift Called Life

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

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CAPITAL AREA of NEW JERSEY

Issue No. 23

Step One

By: Lucy P

" We admitted that we are powerless over our addiction and that our lives had become unmanageable ."

AGCL: What makes you powerless?

Lucy: Things that I can't control. Things that I try to control, but can't so I just surrender.

AGCL: What does the disease of addiction mean to you?

Lucy: Something that I can't let go I struggle for.

AGCL: How can the fellowship help you with your first step ?

Lucy: By being there for me, giving their experience, strength and hope.

AGCL: In this step it is said that we have no other choice but to completely change or old ways of thinking or go back to using, why does it say that?

Lucy: If we continue doing the same things we were doing we are going to get the same results. So for that we have to change our ways or we will go back to using.

AGCL: When this step talks about being powerless does that mean we are powerless over everything?

Lucy: There are something we can control. We are powerless over drugs & life on life's terms.

AGCL: What does unmanageability mean to you?

Lucy: I am unmanageable right now. Spending a lot of money, doing things I'm not suppose to do. Paying bills late.

AGCL: How are you trying to change the unmanageability in your life?

Lucy: I am going to try to change by mailing my bills in early. I am just learning how to live, it isn't easy.

AGCL: What is meant by a part of our disease is total self-centered?

Lucy: I think its all about me. I think the whole world revolves around me, but it isn't like that. I have to think about others I can't be selfish.

AGCL: How do you live the spiritual principles in this step?

Lucy: I give it to God the things I can't control. I accept things the way they are no more denial.

AGCL: If I'm not using drugs does my disease just stop?

Lucy: No. It is only arrested.

AGCL: What is a reservation?

Lucy: It means that I put something in the back in case I need it. Thinking that one day I might be able to do just one.

AGCL:What is the freedom we get from living the steps?

Lucy: I don't have to use no more, don't have to struggle no more.

AGCL: What do you get when you have acceptance?

Lucy: I know that I don't have to fight anymore. I just have to deal with life on life's terms.

AGCL: Thank you for sharing with us on the first step.

Lucy: Thanks for letting me share.

Step One

"We have found that we had no choice except to completely change our old ways of thinking or go back to using. When we give our best, it works for us as it has worked for others. When we could no longer stand our old ways, we began to change. From that point forward , we began to see that every clean day is a successful day, no matter what happens."

Basic Text pg. 22





Birth in Recovery "Peggy"



My name is Peggy and I am an addict. I have three years clean and this is my first child. This is a miracle to me and the most beautiful thing that I could have ever imagined could have ever happen to me. I keep a grateful attitude at all times, even though there were some complications when she was born I still keep my trust and faith in the God of my understanding. Working in the process of recovery has helped me keep the focus and know that there is hope in all situations. By working the steps I know that I have a God who can do anything. Look at me I am a living example, my God also helps me through the PMS times. God is always there in the moment when I'm in need. Through the pain and struggle God was and is with me, also through the beauty of a life that was inside of my body God was there. Through the grace of God my child is doing well today and she will be coming home on Sunday (9-27-09). I delivered her on (9-19-09) I'm looking forward to her coming home. I just got to remember that God is in charge and I just got to keep applying the spiritual principles in my life to the best of my ability. I now know today that we do recovery and I must stay in the process a day at a time. If I can stay clean and recover so can you and miracles do happen, I have a beautiful baby girl and that is a miracle for an addict like myself.

Thank you for letting me share with you Peggy.





A Gift Called Life

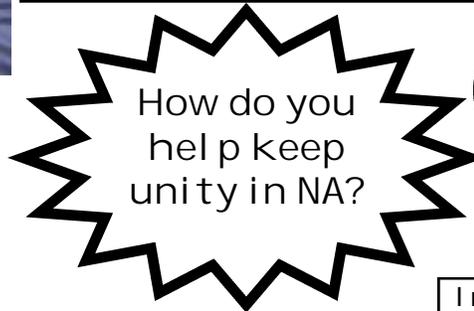
How much do you know? It is in your Basic Text.

1. We could not _____ and _____ life as other people do. 2. We are _____ seeking _____. 3. We use drugs to cover our _____. 4. These are the _____ that made our recovery possible. 5. We realize that we cannot use _____ and _____. 6. Thinking of _____ as different from other _____ has cause a great many addicts to relapse. 7. Who is an _____. 8. No one could _____ us that we were _____. 9. We are powerless not only over drugs, but over our _____ as well. 10. Our disease is progressive, _____ and _____. 11. _____ means not having to _____ anymore. 12. We have found _____. 13. Addiction is a _____, _____ and _____ disease that affects every area of our lives. 14. We can find meaning and purpose in life and be rescued from _____, _____, and _____. 15. Only after _____ are we able to overcome the alienation of addiction. 16. It is not where we were that counts, but where we are _____.

You don't have to go past Step One to find the answers. That is not saying all the answer are in Step One. ANSWERS: Live, recovery, physical, hope, addict, convince, drugs, addicts, principles, surrender, going, alcohol, fatal, enjoy, feeling, insanity, addict, fight, surrender, incurable, live, death, spiritual, live, mental and depravity.



SPOTLIGHTS



Working together for the common good. Jen R

I try to help the newcomer feel welcome
Malcolm

I treat everyone the same there is no color difference in NA we are all one. So I help anyone who needs my support. To me we must stay together or addicts will die.
Sherman R

I remember why I'm here- to carry the message to the next addict who comes in after me.
Chris G.

By showing up and supporting the area and being a part of the whole.
Chocolate

I try to make sure the still suffering addict has the support that they need.
Matty D

I don't text or side talk while people are sharing.
Lindsay V.

I watch people and hug the person that I don't see anyone else hug and encourage them. John M.
John M.

I answer all my phone calls.
Ken C

I carry the message through commitment in my home group & H&I
Jordan A

I put in my best to practice true principles.
Kareem



One Addicts Expression through Poetry "Michelle Lee B"

So many nights I lay awake, eyes open wide, the only God I knew was the one I asked to die. My world consisted of pain, chaos and insanity. Overwhelmed by self-hatred, yet a touch of vanity. I traded in my values I would lie, cheat and steal whatever it took to get the drugs so I wouldn't have to feel. I live in degradation, humiliation and dereliction at first unaware I was in the grips of an addiction. I had no idea this disease is so damn insidious, looking in the mirror I thought what started back was hideous. So petrified to be exposed, so afraid someone would see so I wore my many masks portraying anyone but me. I could no longer deny my using was out of control, I not only lost my mind but I began to lose my soul. All out of excuses no other methods to try. I can not use successfully, get clean or die. I could no longer work at being a professional partner, at my most vulnerable moment I decided to surrender. I reached out to the God I hope to one day understand, asked him for guidance to hold tight onto my hand. I desperately turned over my will broken and battered. Admitted defeat because my whole life had been shattered. I was thrilled and relieved to find out that my disease could be arrested, my mind could be freed from the obsession by which it was infested. After spending years fueled by the getting, using and finding of dope I chose to absorb other addicts experience, strength and hope. I discovered fellowship, unity and growth that is truly autonomous. Together we do recover in the rooms of Narcotics Anonymous. I'm beginning to face my fears, my powerlessness I accept. I got a sponsor and a home group and started on my first step. I seek the help of others and identify not compare, I attend a lot of meetings and raise my hand to share. I have a conscious contact with my Higher Power and keep an open mind. I work on owning my actions and leaving my reservations behind. Taking suggestions avoiding people, place and things, picking up the phone because other addicts answer when it rings. The therapeutic valve of one addict helping another is without parallel, we all have in common the experience of living in a drug induced hell. Sometime has passed and the world seems so much brighter, fear is not a weakness I have become a fighter. Everyday is a miracle, past dreams awaken opportunities arise when the clean route is taken. Life on life terms can often be tough, but one is to many an a thousand never enough. With heart-felt gratitude I fall to my knees, your will not mine be done show me how please. The bitter end is always the same jails, institution and death. I refuse to let drugs be responsible for my last breath, when God calls me home and it's time for this body to die my soul will rise in serenity, my last moments won't be high. If you have what I want, I will follow that way so I have nothing to fear just for today. Now I lay awake at night eyes still open wide, saying this too shall pass God with you by my side.

Michelle Lee B "Hightstown Group of NA"



Being an Agnostic in the program of NA By "Alex D"

Hi my name is Alex and I am an addict. How do I stay clean in the fellowship of NA being an Agnostic (someone who doesn't believe in God)? I'm coming up on seven years clean in the program of NA. I stop believing in God when I was ten years old, my mother introduce me to religion and God but I just gave up on any idea that there is a God.

I came into the NA program at the age of 20 years old after a fight with drugs. I gave the NA program a try with the higher power thing, I even tried praying but honestly it wasn't for me so I gave up with the praying thing that they suggest in NA. I just started living my life positive and drug free! How I stay clean is: I wake up, get ready for the world, and just do positive things. I go to school, clean the house, work on the car and go to work, just positive, constructive things there is no prayer involved, religion or God. I guess you can say I live my life spiritually by using the steps, the principles that you find in the steps like honesty, open mindedness, willingness, humility and perseverance. I need to stay humble and I know that I need help from other addicts. I know that I need NA. Through the course of a day I go to meeting, and school. NA is definitely a part of me staying clean.

Even though I don't believe in a higher power or pray, basically I just stay clean. I also quit smoking. I just do good things. I work on my relationships in and out of the rooms. I call people when I need to, I go to meetings and share where I'm at if I'm going through something I talk about it. I respect other people's beliefs if they believe in God that is ok with me. I know some respectful people who believe in God and I respect them its what they believe. But for me it's not what I do and it still works for me, I'm not going to lie to people and tell them I believe and I don't that wouldn't be honest. I got to be who I am and if you can't accept me for who I am, I accept me I have come to some self acceptance. Just like one of the pamphlet says I got to get with self acceptance get to know who I am, I must be true to myself or live a lie. If anyone wants to call me my phone is always on if they need a ride to meeting I'm there for them. I give back as much as I can. There is a atheist meeting in California that I attended and I thought about have a atheist meeting in New Jersey but it was a lack of support, but if I could find enough people that wanted to start one I would be a member. But for now I'm going to keep coming back and "We do Recover".

Alex D





A Gift Called Life

Tradition One

Lori F (Trenton)

“Our common welfare should come first; personal recovery depends on NA unity”

AGCL: What is our common welfare?

Lori: Our common welfare is for us to fellowship together so we can stay clean and grow.

AGCL: Could you apply tradition one without applying the spiritual principles that our in our steps?

Lori: I feel that everything is in order for a reason and the steps need to be applied so you can fully understand what is going on. Without applying the spiritual principles in our lives we don't even have a common welfare. We have to make meetings, we have to apply the principles in our lives, we have to get a sponsor and we have to be involved in the fellowship of Narcotics Anonymous for our common welfare to go on.

AGCL: What is our message?

Lori: Our message is hope and our promise is freedom from active addiction.

AGCL: Why does your recovery depend on NA unity?

Lori: Because I just can't do it all by myself, I wish I could on a lot of days. But without you there is no me, I get my strength from the people who were here before me and those who come behind me.

AGCL: What is meant by NA unity?

Lori: NA unity comes from the people who live the principles we find in the steps. People who apply the steps and traditions in their lives because there is a lot of forces that try to come against us.

Without these people who apply the spiritual program of Narcotics Anonymous to their lives we would be destroyed.

AGCL: How do you apply the spiritual principles in your life?

Lori: I keep coming to meetings no matter how much I want to stop. I do my step work, call my sponsor and help people by being their for people who need me. I'll give rides to people who are in need of a ride even if I don't seem to have the time. Because my recovery depends on helping someone else get to a meeting. Part of recovery is giving it away and if you are not giving it away you are not going to get nothing back.

AGCL: What would you tell a newcomer when you talk about unity?

Lori: If I was talking to a newcomer I would tell them to keep coming. I couldn't explain to them what unity is but I can tell them for me it was that hug that broke the coldness that was around my heart when I first came here. That unified me with the group, because I knew that someone knew how I was feeling by the way that they hugged me. That was my unity but every body has their own story.

AGCL: Do you have anything else that you can add for us about NA unity?

Lori: Our common welfare will die if more people don't take up an active participation in their recovery. We need people to step up and be a part of our area. We need activities in our area and we need people to be a part of service. Service is a very important part of giving back and it was the only thing that bridged me with other people in the program of Narcotics Anonymous. My thing is if you struggle with relationships get in service it will teach you how to better serve and share some of those hard things about relationships. No matter what happens here you got to keep coming back to get what God has in store for you.

AGCL: Thanks for sharing.

Lori: Thanks for letting me share.

Tradition One

We learned that those who did not continue to be an active part of the fellowship faced a rough road. The individual is precious to the group, and the group is precious to the individual

We follow this way of life by example rather than direction.

Basie Text Pg. 62

A Gift Called Life

How do I deal with emotional balance in recovery? John- Hightstown

Some days are better than others. For the most part I stay out of my own head. I stay in service, I make a lot of meetings and turn it over to God. That doesn't always necessarily take away the feelings, because the feelings are what they are. I have been going through some stuff lately that are real emotional. I call my sponsor and my network, I rely on my true friends, that know me. The friends that I can show my feelings to. I try to rely on God because he is the final author, He has the last say so. However that doesn't mean I don't want to put my hand in it, but through this program I have realized that it's not about what I want or think I need. It's what God has for me, that's best. It's tough sometimes because we run on emotions a human beings and we want to do and manipulate the situation to have that peace and calmness. Some days I just don't have that, I get caught up in the feelings, but through it all I just don't have to use drugs or people. Some days it sounds like an option, to take away that pain of the emotion. But I know the pain of using will be far greater than the pain of the emotion. Time heals all things, heals a broken heart and the emotions that you're going through. It just takes time, the program and getting a better understanding of where I'm at, what's good for me what's not good for me . Relying on my first step, and understanding that my life can be unmanageable. Knowing that I have a God of my understanding and really turning it over to God, using the steps, writing on my fourth step and learning about what makes me tick and what doesn't and taking it one day at a time.

CAPITAL AREA SERVICE SUB-COMMITTEES

<p><u>CONVENTION COMMITTEE</u> Barry. Chair. V. Chair 609-209-5920</p>	<p><u>HOSPITALS & INSTITUTIONS</u> Heather K.. - Chair 609-</p>	<p><u>PROGRAMMING SUB-COMMITTEE</u> • Kevin A- Chair . Lorie Vice Chair</p>
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<p><u>ACTIVITIES SUB-COMMITTEE</u> Greta-Chair OPEN .-V. Chair</p> <hr/> <p><u>ARTS and GRAPHICS</u> Chairperson Vice chair</p>	<p><u>PUBLIC INFORMATION</u> Chocolate-Chair (609)393-2389 We are in need of support and trusted servants Be a part of the NA Help-line!</p>	<p><u>HOTEL & HOSPITALITY</u> Chair We are in need of support and trusted servants</p>
<p><u>WEB-SITE</u> Malcolm (609) www.capitalareaofna.org CHECK OUT OUR WEB SITE</p>	<p><u>H & I - IS IN DESPERATE NEED OF SUPPORT</u> 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</p>	



WE CELEBRATE CLEAN TIME!

SEPTEMBER

Matthew G	9-28-08	1 year
Dave B	9-29-07	2 years
Jonathan W	9-30-08	1 year

OCTOBER

Lizzy F	10-1-08	1 year
Gary M	10-2-90	19years
Kenny G	10-2-06	3 years
Rick C.	10-3-08	16 years
Doris O.	10-4-93	16 years
Greg G	10-12-08	1 year
Jen R.	10-30-02	7 years

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 - 93 Spring St (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)
IS IN DESPERATE NEED OF TRUSTED SERVANTS

Our Message is Hope, Our Promise is Freedom
42 Arctic Parkway Local 175 Union Hall, Ewing
Sat. 7:00 pm - 8:30pm (S/D/IWHW)
Non Smoking Meeting, Candlelight

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

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

CAPITAL AREA EVENTS

“Activities Committee” **Drop the Mask Speaker Jam from 2:00– 10:30&Dance from 10 to 2:00am 10/31/09** Bethany Presbyterian Church, 400 Hamilton Ave Trenton, NJ \$2.00 Suggested Donation

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 the Chairperson Bill. 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.