



A Gift Called Life

agclnewsletter@aol.com

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

May 2008

CAPITAL AREA of NEW JERSEY

Issue No. 19

STEP Seven

By: Lavon "Capital Area"

"We humbly asked him to remove our short comings"

AGCL: What is meant by being humble?

Lavon: It means that I am going to God with a sincere heart, because God knows if I am not sincere then nothing will be removed. So I really need to be sick and tired of myself so I can go to God.

AGCL:What is the difference between a character defect and a shortcoming?

Lavon: Character defects are a part of our personality that have been blown out of proportion and a shortcoming is the actual act on the defect.

AGCL: Why is humility so important in this step?

Lavon: Humility is recognizing who I really am; my weakness and my strengths. I need to be ok with who I really am and understand my place in the world.

AGCL:What is meant by being honest in this step?

Lavon: Being honest is like the same thing with humility. I need to be honest to admit and recognize who I really am.

AGCL: Does God remove all your shortcomings for good?

Lavon: No, most of my shortcomings have just been arrested. I need to participate and be aware of them and recognize what I am capable of doing.

AGCL: Has anyone ever pointed out a shortcoming to you and you got defensive about it?

Lavon: Of course! That is usually my first reaction, is to get defensive. Because I'm still a human being and sometimes it's not easy to take a look at yourself until you sit back and look at yourself.

AGCL:What is meant by Step Seven being an action step?

Lavon: It is an action step because I just can't just say the words to this step and sit back and expect things to happen. I must take part in monitoring my behavior, because I can ask God to remove something but he's not going to do it unless I'm sincere. So I need to practice these principles in doing what I need to do so they can be removed.

AGCL: In the seventh step it is said "that if we are careless and fail to grasp the spiritual meaning of this step we may have difficulty and stir up old trouble", What is meant by this?

Lavon: Because I am about to embark on another step which is the eighth step. If I'm not monitoring myself and doing what I need to do in the seventh step, getting my defects and shortcomings in check, I'm going to stir up old trouble in the next step. Because I can't go into the next step with stuff like rationalization and denial as excuses why I can't put someone on my list. I need to be careful with this step while I'm doing it and be sincere.

AGCL: If I knowingly keep doing the same thing over and over is that a shortcoming?

Lavon: Yes

AGCL:Why?

Lavon: It's a shortcoming because I keep acting out on the defect. Because a defect is there but they don't cause harm unless I act out on them. Until I'm humbly ready for them to be removed I'm going to keep acting out.

AGCL:Alright I'm talking about you, if you have been acting out on a shortcoming when is it likely for you to come to God?

Lavon: When I'm sick and tired of myself. I actually take a look at myself and how I'm not only hurting me but other people. I look at myself and say I'm tired of you and I go to God with it. Because I'm really ready for it to be gone now, because I'm tired of hurting people.

AGCL: Thanks for sharing.

Lavon:Thanks for letting me share.

Step Seven

The Seventh Step is an action step and it is time to ask God for help and relief. We have to understand that our way of thinking is not the only way; other people can give us direction. When someone points out a shortcoming, our first reaction may be defensive. We must realize that we are not perfect. There will always be room for growth. If we truly want to be free, we will take a good look at input from fellow addicts. If the shortcomings we discover are real, and we have a chance to be rid of them, we will surley experience a sense of well-being.



A Gift Called Life

Tradition Seven

Ted (Burlington)

“ Every NA group ought to be fully self-supporting, declining outside contributions”

AGCL: What does fully self-supporting mean to you?

Ted: It means dignity to me. We handle our own business as members. A fellowship that pays together stay together.

AGCL: Why should every group stay fully self-supporting?

Ted: Because “ We will not put our freedom on the line” no matter which ever way a lower power tries to infiltrate and destroy this God given program. We stand for something today, “ We demand the right to be fully self-supporting”

AGCL: What about if a group was guaranteed that there would be no strings to the contributions?

Ted: We still don't go for anything like that in Narcotics Anonymous. We stand on our principles no matter what. Nothing ever has no string attached.

AGCL: What if the group can't pay its own way and someone wants to help the group just one time is that ok?

Ted: That is a trick question, One is to many and a thousand is never enough. Policy clearly states “ we decline all outside contributions”

AGCL: What about one member keeps putting up money to keep a group going, is that still fully self-supporting?

Ted: Our literature states that sometimes members who can afford it put in a little extra to help support a group. But “we cannot allow them to give more than their fair share because this can cause disunity and controversy.

AGCL: How has this tradition helped you in your recovery?

Ted: The seven tradition has given me hope that “ anything is possible for me in recovery” as long as I strive to live by the spiritual principles that are contain in this tradition.

AGCL: What is suggested a group should do if they can't be fully self-supporting?

Ted: We pull together and work together to help that group. We might put on events to help that group raise funds, but we stay vigilant in our policy and practice Gods will.

AGCL: OK we help that group and they still can't stay fully self-supporting, should that group then take an inventory to see if they can stay afloat ?

Ted: Yes, at that point a group conscience should take place in regards to the feasibility of the group.

AGCL: OK, what if a church lets a group meet in their building for free is something wrong with that?

Ted: Yes, its still an outside contribution. We must pay some amount of payment to that facility.

AGCL: In the seven tradition in the Basic Text it is said “that our dependence has shifted from the thing around us to a loving God and the inner strength we get in our relationship with him”. What does that mean to you?

Ted: There is no materialistic solution for a disease that is spiritual in nature. Recovery is a inside job. Work the steps or die.

AGCL: Thanks for sharing

Ted: Thank you for letting me

Tradition Seven

Being self-supporting is an important part of our new way of life. For the individual, this is usually quite a change. In our addiction, we were dependent on people, places, and things. We look to them to support us and supply the thing that we found lacking in ourselves. As recovering addicts, we find that we are still dependent, but our dependence has shifted from the things around us to a loving God and the inner strength we get in our relationship with Him.

A Gift Called Life

Word Scramble by Cathy

- | | |
|-----------------------|----------------------|
| 1 vyrceocer _____ | 11rgestirg _____ |
| 2 prtaiysiiuaty _____ | 12 ntyui _____ |
| 3 slinrepcip _____ | 13 cnetosovnin _____ |
| 4 rdtostaiin _____ | 14 sntegiem _____ |
| 5 ysnhteo _____ | 15 xeineeprec _____ |
| 6 segilwsnli _____ | 16 stnrshget _____ |
| 7 pniddoemne _____ | 17 dGo _____ |
| 8 pnososr _____ | 18 hpeo _____ |
| 9 giasnrh _____ | 19 plosielfwh _____ |
| 10 rwekotn _____ | 20 hpiesapns _____ |
- Recovery, Principle, Honesty, Open Minded, Sponsor, Network, Willingness, Sharing, Tradition, Spirituality
- Experience, Hope, God, Fellowship, Unity, Strengths, Convention, Meetings, Happiness, Triggers

CAPITAL AREA SERVICE SUB-COMMITTEES

<p align="center">CAPITAL AREA CONVENTION COMMITTEE</p> <p>Beverly Q. – Chair. (609) 558-8084 Carmen P. – V. Chair (609) 516-5515</p> <hr/> <p align="center">FUNDRAISING SUB-COMMITTEE</p> <p>Kim H. - Chair. 732-278-9428 Cindy F. - V. Chair 609-775-6479</p>	<p align="center">HOSPITALS & INSTUTIONS</p> <p align="center">Chairperson Kalane W.. - 609 -638-7443</p> <hr/> <p align="center">OUTREACH</p> <p align="center">Chairperson-Lavon (609)649-7710 Needs Supports</p>	<p align="center">CAPITAL AREA CONVENTION PROGRAMMING SUB-COMMITTEE</p> <p>Nate D. - Chair 609-802-6496 Charlotte F. Vice Chair 609-481-8407</p> <hr/> <p align="center">CAPITAL AREA POLICY CHAIRPERSON Kevin A. (609) 954-6389</p>
<p align="center">CAPITAL AREA ACTIVITIES SUB-COMMITTEE</p> <p>Van. J.- Chair 609-433-4873 Sylvia R. -V. Chair 609-475-2359</p> <hr/> <p align="center">ARTS and GRAPHICS</p> <p>Readus E Chairperson 475-5094 Wallace W Vice chair 477-9239</p>	<p align="center">PUBLIC INFORMATION</p> <p>Mike L. - Chair. 609-516-0495 Sherry A - V. Chair. 609-394-7237</p> <p align="center">We are in need of support and trusted servants</p> <p align="center">Be a part of the NA Help-line!</p>	<p align="center">HOTEL & HOSPITALITY</p> <p>Lee I- Chair 609-448-3422 Phyllis A Vice Chair 609-371-8431</p> <p align="center">We are in need of support and trusted servants</p>
<p align="center">WEB-SITE OPEN</p> <p align="center">www.capitalareaofna.org CHECK OUT OUR WEB SITE</p>	<p align="center">H & I - IS IN DESPERATE NEED OF SUPPORT</p> <p align="center">They meet every 3rd Sunday at the Ewing Township Police Station at 6:00 pm.</p> <p align="center">For more information call the H & I Chairperson listed above</p>	



WE CELEBRATE CLEAN TIME!

April

George M	4/8/08	1 year
Tommy Z.	4/29/06	2 years
Lauren M	4/29/08	30 days

May

Marty D	5/1/02	6years
Chris S.	5/3/07	1year
Joy P	5/4/88	20years
Yvette R	5/7/08	6months
Jennifer H	5/8/08	90 days
Jamie G	5/9/08	60 days
Denise B	5/12/08	30 days
Kim M	5/16/93	15 years
Ed D	5/16/07	1year
Ibrahim S	5/20/07	1year
Carman D	5/20/08	9 months
Ayanna	5/24/94	14 years
Todd J	5/25/07	1year
Ted T	5/30/87	21years
Katrina J	5/30/08	6 months

June

David B.	6/2/06	2years
Jamie V	6/3/07	1year
Sherman R	6/3/01	7years
Connie C	6/15/98	10years

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

New Way of Life, Spiritual Awakening & Twilight Zone are having an "Our Personal Freedom depends on NA Unity" Speaker Jam on May 25 & 26 from 9am-10 pm at 50 Escher Street to benefit the 2009 Capital Area Convention

New Way of Life is celebrating their 17th year anniversary June 13 at 50 Escher St 5:30-7:30 pm

Speaker Jam/ Basketball Tournament Saturday, June14, 2008
Noon until Donnelly Home Community Center 875 New Willow St. Trenton

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

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. 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 NEWS-LETTER 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.



A Gift Called Life



Step Work - Lorain M.



What is step work? Step work is the medication to my sickness which is my diseased thinking. My illness is made up of obsession and compulsion, step work combats all of that.

Can you stay clean and recovery without doing any step work? NO!

Why not? Because just being clean is not recovery. If you're just clean and just coming around, all you are doing is hanging out. Why would you just want to do that? You can do that in the streets. Coming in here and getting committed to saving your life is what recovery is about, not just being clean. Coming in here and doing some work on yourself helps you at home, work and anywhere else, but you just can't come in here and sit around and say I'm making meetings. That is not enough you must do some work.

Can someone do step work by themselves? OH NO, Hell NO! Because I'm only as sick as my secret and it is said in the literature that we are great ones for manipulating the truth. I will manipulate myself right into thinking I am recovering and be sick as hell. This is a we program not an I program and I've got to do it with the we.

Can I just write the steps and read them and recover? No, first of all you got to get a sponsor and a sponsor who works all twelve steps not three or four, but all of the steps. You must be willing to take the guiding that your sponsor is giving. Now a sponsor is not perfect, they are just another addict who is there to guide you through the things that you have not been through like step work. You can read by yourself but you still are going to have to share what you think you learn by somebody, I suggest that you don't do no writing until your sponsor tells you to, because you are going to have questions that needs to be addressed so wait on your sponsor. I suggest that you get a sponsor who has been through the twelve steps not just some of them, all twelve!

Who should do step work? Anybody who suffers from the disease of addiction should do step work. Its like if you walk into a doctor office with a yeast infection and your itching and smelling like fish you are going to want a pill right away to combat that disease. Likewise, with the disease of addiction. Everybody should do step work who is in this program.

How do someone get started doing step work? First you must find you a sponsor. Second of all you ust ask your sponsor about doing step work. Some sponsor may say not right now then others might say lets do it right now, it depends on I believe the sponsee. I'm a sponsor and I believe that you can be here for a day and you can start step work the first day you get here, that is what I believe. How soon do you want to get better?

What are the benefits of step work? The benefits for me is that I learn about willingness, honesty, integrity, compassion, patience and tolerance. The spiritual principles that help me change my life is the benefits and when you live them you see your life improve so much. We gain something around here like a husband, a job, your kids and other things, step work will help you maintain these thing. Most of all it will help you maintain your spirit.

How do you apply these principle you talk about in your life? When you do step work in the flat book It Works How and Why, it breaks it down to you what spiritual principles that are in the step that you are trying to live. Now applying them, say you are in a situation where you've been before that you would have lied now you got to decide are you going to practice the spiritual principle of honesty or are you going to just lie? That is how I practice the principle I tell the truth instead of the lie and I must stay aware because if you don't stay aware you could use.

Do you have to have a God to do step work? When you first get here you don't really have to have a God but you need a power greater than you. That can be your sponsor, the group what ever but as time goes on your going to need a power a little greater than your sponsor and the group. Because it's going to come a time when no one is there and you are going to need something a little more powerful to get you through the situation that you are going through. So yes you need a God but you have to work some steps to get to the God of your understanding. It is important the third step says that you must be truthful about are belief. What ever you chose to practice is on you just make sure that it "Loving, Caring, Kind, Understanding and More Powerful Than You" Our recovery comes from God we just didn't walk ourselves in here on our own.

Is it a time period to working the steps? If you read the literature there is no time frame in the literature on how long to stay on a step. It's up to the individual but if I'm working a fourth step which is my first self honest appraisal of myself. A fourth step helps me see my patterns and my behavior, it is the turning point in step work. The individual must decide how long they are going to stay on a step, but if you stay on a step and you see yourself getting sicker and sicker then maybe you've been on that step too long. If you want to get better keep moving.

Does step work really work? Listen, I came in here when I was nineteen, I am now 37years old. I was a prostitute I had five babies and three was born to crack. Step work change me from felling like I was worth nothing it made me realize I needed to close my legs and open my mind. I have to believe that I can be faithful to me so I could be faithful to someone else. Step work help me so much I watch the things I do, I use to be violent but I'm not violent anymore. I was this scared little girl, I was afraid what people would do to me. I was caught up in anger, resentment and fear but step work made me feel like somebody. If you want to feel like somebody please work some steps.



A Gift Called Life

Young in Recovery - Jamie V.

Hi, I am Jamie and I am an addict. Saying that has its good days and its bad days. But I've come to accept the fact that I have this disease called addiction. I'm 18 years old. I had my first drink when I was 15. I can't remember the first time I had my first taste. At a younger age I would sneak sips from my family members who were drinking around me. I was 16 when I started getting high. I thought I solved all my problems. All my pain and hurt I have been through in my life I thought drugs and alcohol had all the answers. My mother who died when I was 7 from AIDS from the result of using, it has been rough on me throughout my years growing up. I've also grown up not knowing who or where my father is or if he's even alive. My mother couldn't take care of me so I was placed in foster care. I would soon experience being beaten and molested. I was then taken out of the foster home and placed with my biological mom's cousin, Tina. I soon learned that I had addictive behaviors from a very young age. I would lie, steal, and manipulate my way out of everything to get my way. Living with Tina was hard. She is gay and also had a partner who lived with us. I still never had that father figure I always dreamed of. One day Tina couldn't take anymore of my lying, stealing, and manipulating and she had enough of me. I then started living with her friend Leah who used. This is where I began the start of my addiction. I thought it was all fun and games until it became a necessity for me on a daily basis. I needed drugs. I'm not going to dwell on what it was like to use because we all know what it was like to use. I knew I had a problem so I told someone I wanted to go to a rehab. This is when I was placed in New Hope. Going to a rehab gave me a lot of opportunities to help me get better and learn a lot about myself. After rehab they suggested to go to Narcotics Anonymous and make meetings. I have been making meetings for 7 months now and have been clean for 10 months as of April 3rd. It feels so good to feel the way I do. I actually get to go through feelings and not run from them as I was doing all my life. Coming to meetings and meeting new people gives me joy in my life. I know these people actually love me and want the best for me. There have been some struggling points where I thought I was too young for recovery but my higher power got me through it and now I am doing a lot better. I know that when I have thoughts like that it's just my disease trying to bring me down but I will not let my disease get the best of me. I am going to hold on strong and get through whatever God puts in my path.

SPOTLIGHTS

WHAT IS YOUR FAVORITE PART OF NA?

My favorite part is service work. Cat D.

"More will be Revealed" Patrick F

When people share and I can identify with them. John S

The experience, strength and hope of recovering addicts. Jamie G

The unity of the circle when we pray for the still suffering addict.

Malcolm

My favorite part is being a part of something positive that is bigger than

The people that have come to care about me and the new Family I have here Jennifer H.

My relationship with the God of my understanding Gary G.

Having people around me who understand empathy. Lauren M

Real Friends Denise

Free coffee Anonymous

My favorite part is the unity Josh G

The relationship I have with God and the new people who have come into my life. Jamie V

Meeting because I learn and I can help other John A

Freedom Eva M

Meetings being clean and the new friends I have. Susan S.

Step meetings and tradition meetings E

Please Note: Due to space restriction you may not see your spotlight at the time of submission but we intend to print them ALL. So look for it in future issues of A GIFT CALLED LIFE. Thank you for your continued support. THE CAPITAL AREA LRC.



A Gift Called Life



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

ADDICTS EXPERIENCE WITH SERVICE

Hello Capital Area the Convention is Back

Attention Capital Area we need everyone to come out and support our Convention. This Convention is not just for the Trenton groups, it's for the Capital Area and we would like all groups to come out. Groups can send their GSR to the Convention committees' meeting and find out what is happening. You as a member of the Capital Area can stop in on your own at the meeting and find out and give a suggestion on what you think might be nice. I don't know what kind of entertainment they are going to have, maybe you might want to go and ask or any other questions you have. Don't wait for the Convention and then say you didn't like something. Here's your chance to give your groups or your own input.

The Literature Review Committee is calling out to the Princeton's Groups, Hightstown, Hamilton, Cranbury, Trenton, Ewing and Bordentown come on out this is your Convention give some input. The Committee meets every first Sunday at 1:30-3:00PM at 400 Hamilton & Chestnut Bethany Presbyterian Church.

Our Convention is on March 13-15 2009 come on and get your early registration now lets make this a wonderful Convention.

Capital Area Literature Review Chairperson Sherman R.

"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.

Convention Chair

To Our Area Service Family,

I would like to say that we finally made it **THANKS** to the Capital Area. We have officially confirmed Clarion of Cherry Hill, NJ as our location to host our Convention for March 13 – 15, 2009.

We the Committee need 100% cooperation for this event to be a success, therefore we are asking everyone to register at the hotel by 2-13-09. When making reservations you need to dial (856)428-2300 and reserve under Capital Area Convention 2009.

If your interested in participating in other events that we plan on hosting for the Convention, feel free to contact Registration Chairperson/Chocolate at (609)433-0726 or V. Chairperson Lynn T (609)851-7052.

Should you be interested in getting involved on the Convention level, I have furnished a list of all Committee members at your request.

We as a committee are proud to have been a part of "A New Horizon" and look forward to the upcoming year.

In loving Service,

Beverly Q.

Capital Area Convention Chairperson

CAPITAL AREA CONVENTION COMMITTEE

Executive Planning Committee Members:

Beverly Q. – Chairperson Pamela S. – V. Chairperson Joanne K. – Secretary
Carmen P. – Treasurer Thelma P. – Asst. Treasurer

Sub-Committee Member:

Kim H. – Chairperson Fundraising Stephanie M. – V. Chairperson
Nate D – Chairperson Programming Charlotte Mc – V. Chairperson
Chocolate - Chairperson Registration Lynette T. – V. Chairperson
Barry H. – Chairperson Merchandising
Kevin A. – Chairperson Convention Info. Stephanie M. – V. Chairperson



Geographical Change In Recovery

I moved from NY to NJ with 2 yrs. clean with my husband who had 5 yrs. clean, from a big established area where we've both participated in group and area level service. I'm now coming up on my 7 yr. anniversary and my husband's 10th. Starting over in a new area wasn't easy for me. I was looking at the differences rather than the similarities. I made meetings in different areas around where I live and didn't open up or connect. I sat with the nonsense in my head, with the things I disliked for many months and didn't make regular meetings anymore. I felt like the fellowship here was weak.

After the family, my marriage, and myself were suffering, (only when the pain got great enough) I started attending meetings regularly again with more of an open mind. I then joined a home group that was near my home and realized how lax they were on opening and closing the meetings on time. So I've always been told by my sponsor that if there's ever anything I wasn't pleased with that I was bringing up to a group, I better be prepared to step up and take that commitment. So I did. I chaired the meeting, then my husband did. Then I realized that the church wasn't being paid their full rent and I knew that the money was there. There was actually more than one occasion where the funds mysteriously disappeared. I took the treasurer commitment and somehow even after the rent was paid we always had literature available and even a few bucks donated to area. The church themselves thanked me for the positive changes the group has made. There has been stability for the first time in years with that group.

We experienced resistance from some closed minded group members because we came from another area. It got to a point where we needed to make a meeting after that meeting because we felt worse then we did when we first arrived. We've been taught that we are only responsible for the effort and not the outcome. What wound up happening was after praying on it and speaking to experienced members and our sponsors we realized that we had to let God's will be done. After experiencing this for some time we've realized we weren't getting what we needed from a home group so we searched and found a new place to call our home group for the last three years now. They are a warm, welcoming, stable, loving and caring environment. All the home group members clean time added up comes to more than 100 years of clean time! It comes down to sticking with the basics. Raise your hand, get phone lists, use them regularly so you have a strong support group, make regular meetings, do service and get and use an NA sponsor who has an NA sponsor. Let this be a lesson for anyone switching areas, not to waste time all jammed up, look for the group your comfortable in and get connected to recover.

From an addict name Roe " Burlington Area"