



Meeting Makers Monthly Gulf Coast Area of Narcotics Anonymous

Volume 22

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STEP 10

Thoughts by John U.

We “*continued*” to take personal inventory and when we were wrong promptly admitted it.

We “*continued*” implies that we have already been taking a personal inventory. Indeed we have! The 4th Step of course guides us to take a searching and fearless moral inventory of ourselves. Few things are more personal than that. Step 5 has us admit our wrongs to God, to ourselves and another human being. In Step 6, we gain the willingness to be done with our character defects. This does not happen instantly. We must continually review our actions to determine the nature of our defects.

As we work Steps 4 through 9, we are forming habits of looking at ourselves, our actions, attitudes and relationships. We learn to be patient with ourselves and others as we work forward in this process of recovery. We do this to maintain harmony in our relationships with ourselves and others.

Step 10 is essentially daily repetitions of the actions we have already discovered were effective, Steps 4 thru 9. In Step 10 we might look at “*inventory*” as taking stock of our emotional state. If I am feeling resentful, fearful, obsessive, angry, etc, I might ask myself, “What is going on in my life?”

My inventory is not limited to my interactions with others. Maybe I didn’t give my employer an honest day’s work. Maybe I was obsessing on past mistakes, or chose to ignore an obligation. These “*wrongs*” may not require an apology to anyone but can be as detrimental to my spiritual condition as anything else. Sometimes what I *think* is much more dangerous than what I say or do. Through the inventory process, I must recognize these “*wrongs*”, promptly admit them and seek to correct the condition. I may want to share this with my sponsor or another appropriate person. And of course, I can always pray about it. Whatever, I must take action. As an addict, I don’t have the luxury or, really, the ability to think myself into better behavior. I need to act differently. As I continue to change my actions, my thinking and feelings change. As I make better choices, I get better outcomes. My self esteem improves. The self confidence that comes with knowing I have choices in how I behave is invigorating.

If we have developed a habit of self honesty, by the time we get to this Step we don’t even have to wait until the end of the day to take a personal inventory. We often know immediately when we have said or done the wrong thing. We must do everything in our power to make it right, *promptly*. This gives me the opportunity to recognize and admit when I have gotten off my path, so that I can get back on track as quickly as possible (and with the least amount of pain).

Through persistent effort, Step 10 can help us develop a day-at-a-time lifestyle and provide us with a daily reprieve from our old way of life.

Prayer:

Lord, thank you for expanding my horizons-
that I may see more with my limited vision.

Gary S

24 HOUR HELPLINE 866-389-1344

At the recent NAWS World Convention in San Diego CA, two members from our Area attended and have written about their time there.

My first world convention, WCNA 34 San Diego CA.

Since I have been in recovery, they have held the World Convention in some beautiful and exciting places. I wanted to go to Hawaii, San Antonio TX, and even dreamt of going to Barcelona Spain. When I found out WCNA 34 was going to be in San Diego CA, I told myself I'm not going to miss this one. I lived in San Diego for a while and have always thought of it as one of the best places in the USA to live with its great weather, good people and beautiful surroundings. Since my wife had never been to CA, I thought she would enjoy it as well. The opportunity to fellowship with NA members from all over the world would be the icing on the cake. So off we went and we were certainly not disappointed.

We decided not to stay at the pricey hotels right by the convention center and found a very reasonable hotel about 10 minutes south of downtown. This worked out really well for us although we found ourselves envious of the other members staying within walking distance of the convention. They could go back and forth at their leisure between the convention and hotel to get some R&R and avoid driving and parking. But we saved quite a bit of money and it wasn't THAT bad of a hotel.

Wednesday we ventured down to the convention to pick up our registration package and scope out the merchandise and meeting halls. After that we did some sightseeing at Ocean Beach and enjoyed a small street fair and watched the surfers enjoying a high surf advisory and braving a recent great white shark sighting.

Thursday our day at the convention started with an awesome kickoff meeting and speaker. Seeing all the members packed into a huge room was so inspiring. They selected members from places all over the world to read the readings in their native language. Having heard them so many times in the past, it was almost as if I could translate what they were saying. We had planned to attend some workshops that afternoon but ended up getting stuck in the merchandise room buying souvenirs. Next time I think I'll pre-purchase a tee shirt and a coffee mug and be done with it. Thursday night ended with the Sinbad comedy show which was hilarious. He incorporated some of his own experiences with his family's addictions and the whole crowd enjoyed it.

Friday started with another huge meeting in the morning and then the Kenny Wayne Shepard concert and luncheon at noon. He put on an incredible show and when he introduced himself as an addict with over 8 years of clean time the crowd went crazy. Later in the afternoon I was able to attend a Service Structure workshop that afternoon and learned quite a bit about the ideas and plans that may be affecting our fellowship. The Friday evening meeting was the largest meeting I've ever witnessed. The huge hall was nearly full and the 6 huge screen monitors allowed everyone to see the speakers as they shared.

Saturday we ended up taking a day trip up to Hollywood to be tourists and by the time we got back were too tired to go to any meetings or functions. On Sunday the final day of the convention, we participated in World Unity Day. This was the highlight of the convention for me. Along with everyone in the enormous meeting hall, there were people from all over the world listening on conference calls. They let quite a few of them introduce themselves and we heard from addicts from Peru to Portugal to South Africa. It was incredible. And the final speaker really shared an excellent message. It was sad to have it end but it's an experience I'll never forget. Now I'm already planning my trip to Philadelphia for WCNA 35.

Jon B

This year's WCNA 34 in San Diego

I am home now after a truly amazing experience at the World Convention of Narcotics Anonymous in San Diego. Let me start from the beginning. My friend & sponsee was very excited about the convention and thought we should go together...what a blast! I'm not usually a big convention fan with tons of people and needed time to think about it. Then it hit me...how cool would this be. I used to live in San Diego and the last time I was there was in 1985 when the 'Judge' suggested that I leave the state and go into rehab. So now, I can return for a Narcotics Anonymous Convention, absolutely full circle.

I'll back track a bit. In the early 80's I met my soon to be husband at the dope dealers house in San Diego. We married, had kids, continued using, got more insane, got arrested, got out, continued using...you know the dance. Well, as this disease progressed and we became worse, my brothers came out from New York to get our daughters before they became awarded to the state of California. Good thing because we got arrested again. This time, 1985, I was offered the 'diversion' program and desperately agreed. The Judge actually gave permission for me to do the 23 month therapeutic community rehab in New York so I could be near my daughters and family, probably to get rid of me too. That was the last time I was in San Diego.

Life went on, my husband and I moved to Florida and stayed clean together for over a 12 years. We even had another daughter, our 'clean baby'. But, *thinking of alcohol as different from other drugs has caused a great many addicts to relapse...ALCOHOL IS A DRUG.* So goes the rest of our story and the progression of this disease will bring you right back to where you left off! Being two addicts using and going insane together, we eventually divorced, and by the Grace of GOD I got arrested and did rehab again. This time a 28 day program with meetings of Narcotics Anonymous **continuously!** Unfortunately my now ex-husband has struggled with his disease of addiction for over a decade, the progression is ugly and painful to watch. We always stayed in contact but I had to detach with love for my own recovery. Some days were better than others.

One day when I saw my ex-husband and told him I was going to San Diego, his response was "take me with you, we're supposed to go together...you can sneak me in your suitcase" This was the last time I saw him. So here it is, two weeks before I leave for California and I get a knock on my door. It was the Sheriff; they came to tell me my ex-husband was found dead, a direct result of drugs. This was the knock I was waiting for for years and then shocked when it came. We did all the stuff you need to do when someone dies, kind of on auto-pilot, and then I packed for California.

He did not realize how prophetic his last words to me were. I knew he would have wanted his ashes spread out in San Diego so I 'packed him in my suitcase'. Only GOD could have arranged this, I am totally convinced!

Here I am at the convention, my friend who I was going with had a gall bladder attack was hospitalized and couldn't make it. By myself with 14,000 of my closest friends and his ashes, this all was so overwhelming for me, my hurting heart in itself was enough. The GOD of my understanding gave me the love, encouragement, guidance and strength to put one foot in front of the other. I was so blessed at the convention. The first day of workshops, I open the program book and it said GRIEF/LOSS WHEN YOUR LANDSCAPE CHANGES...my GOD is the coolest! Really, how does this stuff happen? During my time of sadness I was surrounded by healing energy and recovery 100%. The workshops and the marathon meetings saved me, I loved the entire convention and people I met. Synchronicity to the max!

I still needed to go to our old neighborhood, the anchorage at Shelter Island, and release his ashes. Let go and let GOD, completely. After I took him to the Jazz Brunch and speaker meeting, (he was going to a meeting!) it was time, and the time was right. The convention filled me enough to have the peace I needed, after all these years, to finally let go. This is a real and deadly disease, not something to be taken lightly. My hope for him over the years never was lost because I believe that any addict can get clean. Who knew that his death from using could be a message for someone out there that is at the crossroads. We are here for everyone, if you want...

Ten days after the convention I celebrated 11 years of recovery and realize I am just where I 'm supposed to be. Thank GOD for the 12 Steps and the rooms of Narcotics Anonymous! I will always have hope for the sick and suffering addict inside and outside of our rooms.

Now there is peace...rest.

ILS, Corri F.

Anniversaries

October

Rob G 1 year
Jennifer G 3 years
Wally I 25 years (!)

November

Michaela 4 years
Michael Ann 4 years
Moe 7 years

December

Daryl W 1 year
Heidi L 3 years
Jeff L 3 years
Danny K 4 years

UPCOMING EVENTS

The annual Gulf Coast Area of NA's Halloween Dance is fast approaching!



'**Clean and Scarene**' will be held October 29th, 2011 at the Grace Church - 13 SE 21st PL on Hancock Bridge Pkwy, Cape Coral. The fright-tivities start at 6:00 p.m. and goes until 10:00 p.m. A potluck dinner starts things off and then there's a Speaker Meeting at 7:00 pm followed by a costume contest, a raffle and dancing. \$5 suggested donation - no addict will be turned away. (*Grace Church is not afflicted with **Narcotics Anonymous***)



Rainbow Weekend 14 is being held November 11, 12 & 13 2011 at the Fort Lauderdale Marriott, Fort Lauderdale FL. See www.rainbowweekend.org for more information.

The **South Florida Region Service Committee Meetings** are being held November 19 & 20, 2011 at the Holiday Inn, 1111 South Royal Poinciana Blvd, Miami Springs, FL. See www.soflarscna.org for more information. Open to all NA Members.

The Annual New Year's Eve dance will be held in December – more will be revealed...

Announcements

The Treasurer has asked that, if possible, to please bring money for literature orders and Area donations to be in large bills.

We want your ideas, articles, poems, graphics and anniversaries. Please submit them to one of the following addresses: GCANANews@comcast.net OR Service Committee (ASC), Attn: Newsletter, PO Box 50375, Ft Myers, FL 33994