



# Meeting Makers Monthly

## Gulf Coast Area of Narcotics Anonymous

Volume 24, February 2012



An older Cherokee man is teaching his grandson about life. "A fight is going on inside me," he says to the boy. "It is a terrible fight and it is between two wolves.

One is evil. He is anger, envy, sorrow, regret, greed, selfishness, arrogance, self pity, guilt, resentment, inferiority, lies, false pride, superiority and ego.

The other is good. He is love, joy, peace, hope, serenity, humility, kindness, benevolence, empathy, generosity, truth, compassion and faith.

This same fight is going on inside you and inside every other person." The grandson thinks about it for a minute and then asks his grandfather, "Which wolf will win?" The old Cherokee replies, "The one you feed."

*ILS, Anonymous*

### REPUTATION

The hardest thing to rebuild  
Is a sullied reputation  
It takes a lifetime of commitment  
And a heart full of dedication  
And commitment is not just saying  
That something will be done  
It must be followed with the deeds  
To be granted pardon for even one  
Of the things that built poor reputation  
And ruined the face of one and many  
As a part of group too  
There is work a plenty  
And yes, a new reputation can be built  
And old misdeeds forgiven  
With taking and making commitments  
The spirit must be driven  
And not falter in the wake  
Of outside desires so vain  
For number one is to take the reins  
And be relieved of causing pain  
By walking with a destiny  
Of not causing more injury to others  
By taking up the course of love  
We can again be one with our brothers

Gary S

Courage has many faces.  
Courage is a parent, raising a child alone.  
And lonely. But smiling.  
Courage is saying no, even when it makes you unpopular. Because it also makes you strong.  
And you'll like yourself a lot more.  
Because courage builds the one thing no one can give you, except yourself.  
Self respect.  
We have visions of the mighty. The powerful.  
The Brave.  
But that's not courage.  
Courage is as simple a thing as telling the truth.  
Even when it hurts.

12 Steps I Took I took one step, began to moan  
I can't do this on my own  
I took two steps, began to pray  
restore me God, today  
I took three steps, gave up my will  
maybe God loves me still  
I took a fourth, I looked inside  
Nothing more would I hide  
And on the fifth, I said aloud  
I've done some wrong, and I'm not proud  
I took six steps, and got prepared  
To lose the defects, I was scared  
Now I'm at seven, take them away  
God for this I pray  
And on eight, the list was long  
Amends to make for all the wrong  
I took nine steps, put down my pride  
Forgiveness asked, I will not hide  
Ten steps I take each day I pray  
Make amends along the way  
And on eleven I prayed to know  
Each day His will, which way to go  
I took twelve steps, I'm like a bird  
To others now, I spread the word....

*ILS, Anonymous*

**24 HOUR HELPLINE 866-389-1344**

Dear Ones,

For all of you who have come to the miracle of NA before me I say "Thank you". If it was not for your endeavors to "carry the message" I would not have the opportunity to be alive and well.

I came into the NA fellowship with a shattered life and broken spirit. The disease of addiction had me on my knees. Through the grace of a Power greater than myself I was given the gift of desperation.

My 1<sup>st</sup> meeting was at the Bridge to Recovery group on the island. Beaten down by self will God led me to this powerful group. I came in terrified, humiliated, and unable to stop crying. I was met with compassion, understanding, and assurance that I had at last come home. As I sat listening to others share a certain peace came over me. I even found myself laughing as a fellow member shared his story with a heartfelt sense of humor. "When we accept ourselves, we can accept others into our lives unconditionally, probably for this first time." (IP 19, Self-acceptance) By the end of the meeting I was finally able to look into the eyes of a woman who assured me I could stop using if I was willing to make the effort to do so.

I have been attending meetings ever since that blessed day, heeding the suggestions offered and have found a path home to the God of my understanding. Realizing I have much to learn and with the help of you, my fellow traveler, I can now live with assurance I never have to return to the emptiness of using again, one day at a time.

May peace find a resting place in your heart, dear reader, and may you feel refreshed by the Light of the God of your understanding. As the Irish saying goes:

"May the road rise to meet you,  
May the wind be always at your back and  
until we meet again may God hold you in the palm of His hand."

Peace,  
Sonora M

## **12 Rewards of Recovery**

1. Hope instead of desperation.
2. Faith instead of despair.
3. Courage instead of fear.
4. Peace of mind instead of confusion.
5. Self-respect instead of self-contempt.
6. Self-confidence instead of helplessness.
7. The respect of others instead of their pity and contempt.
8. A clean conscience instead of a sense of guilt.
9. Real friendship instead of loneliness.
10. A clean pattern of life instead of a purposeless existence.
11. The love and understanding of our families instead of their doubts and fears.
12. The freedom of a happy life instead of the bondage of Addiction.

*ILS, Anonymous*

Every day I seem to become more and more amazed at the discoveries and life lessons that God provides me on a regular basis. One of the very first epiphany's, discovery or awakening (or whatever you may call it) that I had in recovery was with the 1st Step... "*We admitted we were powerless over our addiction and that our lives had become unmanageable*".. I would say, I was about 6 months clean at the time and I was going over my life quietly in my car while I was driving.. when BOOM! Something or someone or maybe it was God gently whispering to my heart, that had let me in on a little secret.... but I will get to that in a moment. See, every day I was waking up, praying, meditating and honestly admitting that I was an addict. However, my dilemma was that my life wasn't so unmanageable (so I thought), so how could I admit that my life was unmanageable? After all, I had a great job, was in a fairly positive and harmonious relationship, I was well on my way to being a good son again etc, etc... Where was the unmanageability?

Here's where those gentle whispers came in and I heard things like "you're not the humblest of men, you get angry very easily, you struggle with control issues, you have very little tolerance of others, you still lie, you are a people pleaser, definitely judgmental and are an over reactor". This is when it hit me... It's not my terrestrial or material life that is unmanageable; it's my spiritual life that is unmanageable!!! At that moment, it was as if God then, turned on a film projector and ran the movie of "my life" on a big screen in my head. It took me as far back as I could remember, which is about the age of 3.. and I could remember my mother having to tie my leg to my bed when she put me down for a nap and after she left the room I untied it, climbed on top of my dresser and jumped out the second story window of our home just so I could play on my swing set.. Absolute disobedience and Divine Intervention happening at the same time... because most 3 year old children, I doubt would survive that type of fall. God had a plan for me!!

So as I continued to review the story of my life I realized that I never really had any type of spiritual life or manageability. Hence, it was time to implore (to beg urgently or piteously, as for aid or mercy) a new manager... and that manager was God. So, I called my sponsor at the time to share with him this great discovery... and as he chuckled he said "Now you have finally completed Step 1"... So, at that moment I had a renewed outlook and faith that if I continue to allow God to be my NEW manager of not only my terrestrial life, but my spiritual life...ALL will be well. My friends, I can tell you this... All is well in my life today, 4 1/2 years later. I continue daily to connect with God from the moment my eyes open and thank him for allowing me to have another day to be of service to Him, Narcotics Anonymous and all those I may come in contact with throughout my day. I lovingly ask my NEW manager to keep me clean and remove all things that may become obstacles to my recovery. Guess what? My days, are generally, really great days!! I have peace today thanks to Narcotics Anonymous and a beautiful understanding of, what I consider one of the most, if not THE MOST important step on our journey in recovery. I will close by saying, that I wish all of my brothers and sisters in Narcotics Anonymous a joyous, peaceful and wonderful journey on your road to a better life... One Day At A Time

*ILS, Anonymous*

### **Keep Coming Back**

I will always remember my first Narcotics Anonymous meeting. I was scared and nervous, but I remember all of that melting away as the meeting started. Soon I realized, "This is where I need to be." I could relate to what I was hearing. Listening intently, I was amazed that there was a group of people just like me. By the end of the meeting, I felt much more relaxed and really glad that I found my way there. A few people approached me after the meeting to greet me and give me a phone list, and to tell me "Keep Coming Back."

Approximately two weeks after that first meeting, I had what I choose to call a "Spiritual Experience." I realized that after many years of using every day (morning, noon, and night), that I was an addict and that drugs ruled my life. I never wanted to get high again. I feel very fortunate that this happened. I knew I could not get clean on my own, so I made a decision to make NA a part of my life.

The first thirty days were very difficult. My body was changing, mentally and physically, and I felt very strange. NA gave me a program I could believe in and follow. Soon I started looking forward to getting to meetings and sharing my feelings, as well as listening to others. I began to feel more comfortable and soon started talking to people after the meetings. Everyone was very supportive and I knew they really cared about me and my recovery. I was even nominated back then for the refreshment commitment, which I gladly accepted. Being of service has been an added boost to my program.

It is hard to put into words how my life has changed. I am very grateful and happy. My self-esteem and self-confidence has improved tenfold. I have never been more proud of anything I have ever done. These freedom from active addiction moments are very precious to me and I wouldn't trade them for anything.

"Keep Coming Back"  
"It works---if you work It"

*ILS, Anonymous*

# Anniversaries

## February

Liz A 1 year  
Margie S 1 year  
Alex J 4 years  
Darla L 10 years

## March

Jules S 1 year  
Brain A 2 years  
Chris A 3 years  
Tom F 3 Years  
Wendy H 14 years  
Tom K 20 years

## April

Matt S 1 year  
Bob C 11 years

# UPCOMING EVENTS



The **Gulf Coast Area of NA** is hosting a picnic Sunday, March 5th at the Lakes Regional Park starting at 11:00 am. There will be a Speaker followed by volleyball. Food donations are welcome. See a flyer at your Home Group for more information.



The annual **Recovery In Paradise Spiritual Retreat 20** will be held on April 27 - 29, 2012 at the Sugarloaf KOA, FL. See [www.floridakeysna.org](http://www.floridakeysna.org) for more information.



# Announcements

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

The Saturday night group **We Are One** is in need of trusted servants – multiple service positions are available.

New meeting! **Lost Dreams Awakened** Sunday's at 7:00 pm at the Dunkin's Donuts on 904 Cape Coral Parkway. The format is a Speaker Step Meeting.

The **Lehigh On Recovery** meeting has moved to 705 Leeland Heights Blvd (Faith Lutheran Church) – Monday's 8:00 pm to 9:00 pm and the Friday meeting now meets from 6:30 pm to 7:30 pm. The Wednesday noon meeting has been cancelled.

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