

The Gulf Coast Area of Narcotics Anonymous

Newsletter | June 2020





Return to Form

Physical Meetings Back in the Gulf Coast Area

After months of digital meetings, several venues have once again opened their doors to the Gulf Coast Area community. Narcotics Anonymous takes no stance on outside issues, but the safety of its members is important.

When making the choice to attend physical meetings, please adhere to the rules of the establishment, as well as any recommendations from the Center for Disease Control. Check the Gulf Coast Area of Narcotics Anonymous calendar at nagulfcoastfla.org for more information on various attendance regulations and safety suggestions. Further, ZOOM meetings are still available every day for addicts who do not wish to attend meetings in person and these meetings will remain active for the foreseeable future.

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GENERAL GUIDELINES

- Wear a face covering at all times
- Maintain six feet distance from other attendees while sitting or standing
- Use hand sanitizer after touching door knobs, chairs, tables, books, etc.
- If hosting a meeting, sanitize all items used during the course of the meeting
- Do not touch your face or eyes
- Do not pull your face covering down while speaking
- Do not attend if you have been in contact with someone sick, feel sick yourself, or have traveled recently
- Respect the concerns of others at all times

SUNDAY	
9:30AM – 10:30AM	The Ultimate Weapon Freedom Clubhouse
6:00PM – 7:00PM	Not Quite There Yet Freedom Clubhouse
MONDAY	
10:30AM – 11:30AM	Down & Dirty Freedom Clubhouse
12:00PM – 1:00PM	Sick As Our Secrets Reflections Park
7:00PM – 8:00PM	Clean & Serene Cape Connections Church
7:00PM – 8:00PM	Filling the Void Freedom Clubhouse
7:00PM – 8:00PM	New Beginnings Grace Church
TUESDAY	
10:30AM – 11:30AM	Down & Dirty Freedom Clubhouse
12:00PM – 1:00PM	Sick As Our Secrets Reflections Park
WEDNESDAY	
10:30AM – 11:30AM	Down & Dirty Freedom Clubhouse
12:00PM – 1:00PM	Sick As Our Secrets Reflections Park
7:00PM – 8:00PM	Just For Today Freedom Clubhouse
THURSDAY	
10:30AM – 11:30AM	Down & Dirty Freedom Clubhouse
12:00PM – 1:00PM	Sick As Our Secrets Reflections Park
FRIDAY	
12:00PM – 1:00PM	Sick As Our Secrets Reflections Park
7:00PM – 8:00PM	Dare to Win Freedom Clubhouse
8:00PM – 9:00PM	Bridge to Recovery Beach Baptist Church
SATURDAY	
7:00PM – 8:00PM	Hot Topic Group Freedom Clubhouse

Please note that none of the listed facilities are affiliated with Narcotics Anonymous.



Sick As Our Secrets

The Gulf Coast Area's Experiences with a Changing World

~ As the COVID crisis continues, addicts in the Gulf Coast Area are trying to return to their normal lives. But, many are attempting to sift through the wreckage instead of simply sweeping it away. Below are some thoughts from local addicts on their lives post-lock-down. ~



"My mom would make fun of me if she could see me now. Carrying around little bottles of hand sanitizer. Wiping down door handles. Wearing a face mask. Actually covering my mouth properly when I sneeze and cough. What. A. Trip. But, what I didn't realize was how much like my mom I was going to start acting! I'm getting so mad at other addicts in these meetings. Like, little boy, the mask goes over your nose. Or, little girl, you can't pull the mask down when you share, that defeats the purpose. You're grounded! But, at the same time, at least they're trying. They're bringing the masks, they're sanitizing and whatnot. That's almost not enough, though. If you can't try to keep yourself and others safe, how much effort are you putting into your stepwork? I shouldn't think like that – I know it's important not to take other people's inventories. But, that all being said, I can't keep my side of the street clean if you keep sneezing all over it..."

"When I started coming back to meetings, I thought I was going to be surrounded by all my friends. But that didn't happen. I hoped that because I wasn't seeing them in online meetings that they were just holding out, waiting to come back to the real thing. What I didn't expect was for them to have relapsed and to just not be around. Maybe I'm just being morbid. Maybe I'm overreacting. But, these people went from being a huge part of my life, people I saw almost every day or every week at a meeting, who called me, who picked up when I called them, to not existing at all. It's been weeks. And I keep waiting, hoping that they're going to show up and talk about how their cellphone plan got canceled or how they got stranded in a far off European airport due to the virus. Something fantastical. Something not realistic. Something not like, 'Hey, I relapsed and I'm not coming back.' I've got to have hope. So, I'm going to wait and pray. Mourning the unknown is pointless."



"I hate to say it, but this whole year might be the best thing that has happened to me in my recovery. I had gotten complacent. Everything was 'good enough.' Good enough job. Good enough health. Good enough relationships. Good enough recovery. I hadn't stopped to think about the fact that I was barely getting by. I thought that if I questioned whether or not I was happy, I was being ungrateful. With the world blowing up in my face – losing my job, relationships, my safety nets – I had to step back and ask what I had I really done for myself in my recovery except... exist in in it? It really became change or die, like the old timers like to say. Am I going to go back to being just OK? Or am I going to do something that makes surviving my disease worthwhile? The only thing holding me back is fear. I figured that I wasn't scared anymore now that I was clean. Now I see that I'm just scared of different things. Success. Happiness. Change. Growth."



Alone, Together

Thoughts on Isolation and Anxiety in Recovery

Weeks of isolation has taken its toll on the Gulf Coast Area of Narcotics Anonymous. Many addicts spent the past several weeks learning how to cope with being alone with their recovery. Some struggled. Some did not. But almost all have experience, strength, and hope to share.

I want to share myself with other people for once. Not because I'm lonely, but because I've got a lot to give.

I learned that I was actually cool with being me. I like me. I'm a pretty neat dude. I've never thought that before.

I don't wait for people to talk to me anymore. I go up and shove myself right in there. And if they don't like it, I can find someone who does. I can't panic about being liked all the time!

I got to know who was real and who was fake. Maybe that's harsh. But, I was able to trim some people who were using me out of my life. It hurt. But, I feel so much better and happier.

I didn't know if I was going to make it. I didn't know if I wanted to make it. But, I was able to call my sponsor. Go to online meetings. See faces. People. And I'm glad I'm still here.

I ain't never had people check on me before. But, they did this time. Just a text now and then really makes you feel like you're a real person.

I figured out I wasn't as introverted as I thought. I'm actually kind of a people person. Which is weird and kinda grosses me out, but I guess I shouldn't complain.

I got so used to not going to meetings, I was surprised with how giddy I got getting all dressed up to go to one. They'd become so normal that it's nice that they feel special again. It makes the people there feel even more special, too.

Being alone with my recovery taught me that I have to water it like a garden, even when no one can see it. I can show it to everyone later, when it's still healthy and green instead of dead.

I got clean online. And now I get to come to meetings? It's like I leveled up! I can't wait to see what's next.





Letter from the Chairperson

Now! More Than Ever!

To the Gulf Coast Area,

Been a rough few months, hasn't it?

The Gulf Coast Area needs you to get **involved** now, more than ever. Whether it's coming up with ideas for the newsletter or any other commitment you can think of, the Gulf Coast Area needs **your** help.

Please, reach out to me via email at:

newsletter@nagulfcoastfla.org

Or, call me directly at **239-339-3512** with anything you'd like to see in the newsletter. **Your** ideas need to be heard and seen – this newsletter isn't meant to be the product of one person.

And, if the newsletter isn't your thing, ask anyone you can get your hands on about how you can get involved in area service at any level. You are an **essential** part of my and every other addict's recovery, no matter what you do!

Thank you for letting me serve,
Nick H.