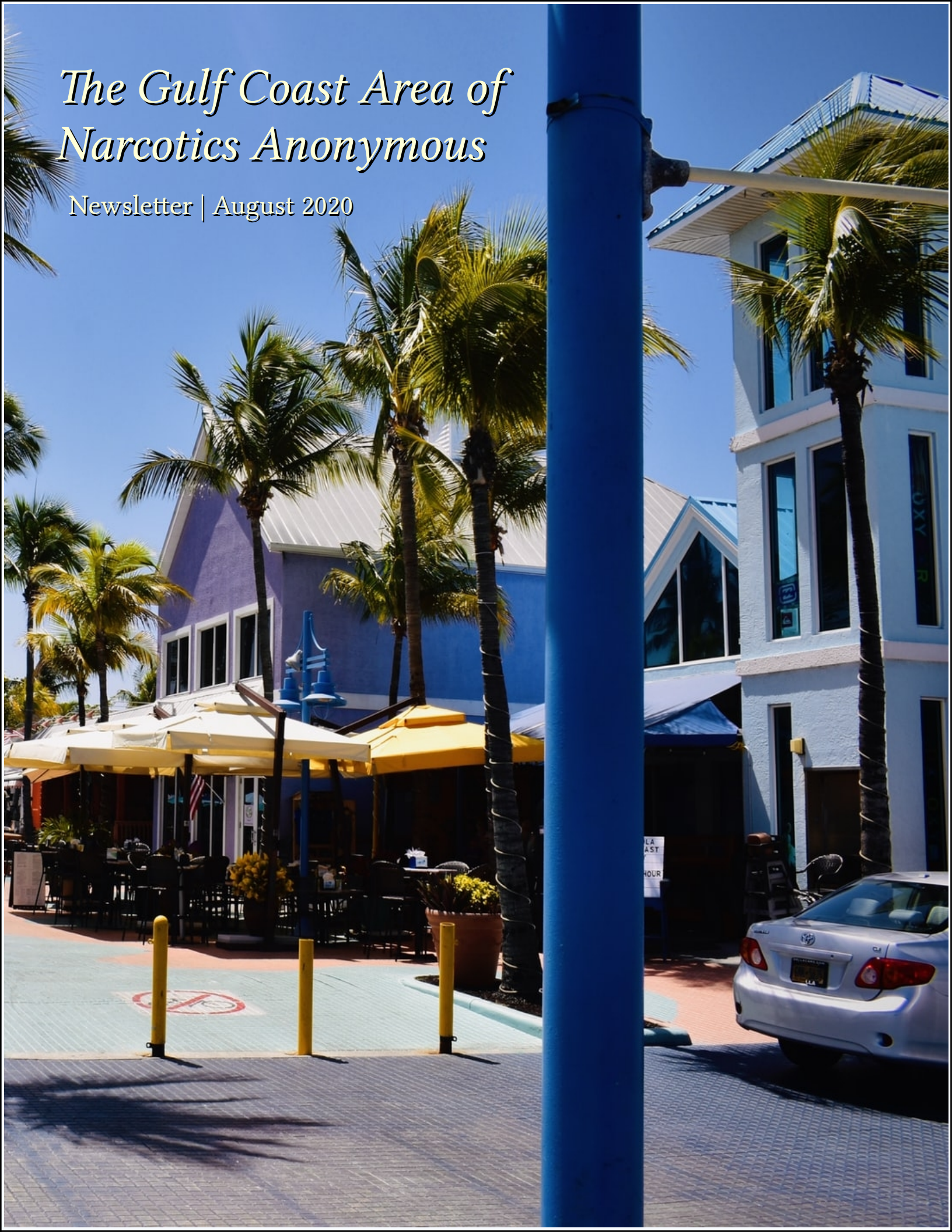


The Gulf Coast Area of Narcotics Anonymous

Newsletter | August 2020





You Are Not Alone

Physical Meetings Stay Open in the Gulf Coast Area

Physical meeting attendance is booming in the Gulf Coast Area. Narcotics Anonymous takes no stance on outside issues, but due to recent spikes in COVID cases and school coming back into session, safety is a priority. 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. It is our responsibility to ensure that we do everything we can to keep our meetings open in these trying times. Check the Gulf Coast Area of Narcotics Anonymous calendar at nagulfcoastfla.org for more information on various attendance regulations and safety suggestions. Further, digital 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. Feel free to reach out to us with updates to make sure this list is complete!

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, sneezing, or coughing
- 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
12:00PM – 1:00PM	Sick As Our Secrets Reflections Park
4:00PM – 5:00PM	End of the Road Fort Myers' Grace Church
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 Cape Coral's Grace Church

TUESDAY

12:00PM – 1:00PM	Sick As Our Secrets Reflections Park
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WEDNESDAY

12:00PM – 1:00PM	Sick As Our Secrets Reflections Park
7:00PM – 8:00PM	Just For Today Freedom Clubhouse

THURSDAY

12:00PM – 1:00PM	Sick As Our Secrets Reflections Park
6:30PM – 7:30PM	Against All Odds Fort Myers' Grace Church

FRIDAY

10:30AM – 11:30AM	Down & Dirty Freedom Clubhouse
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

9:00AM – 10:00AM	Beach Meeting Bowditch Point Park
7:00PM – 8:00PM	Hot Topic Group Freedom Clubhouse

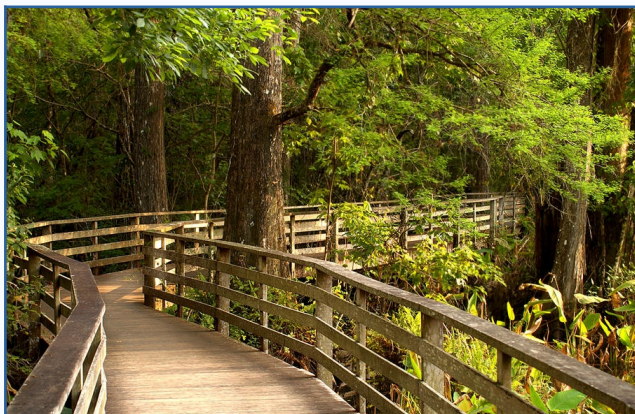
Please note that none of the listed facilities are affiliated with Narcotics Anonymous.



Recovering Naturally

The Outdoors and Recovery

Where we recover is almost as important as how we recover. While the Stepwork and meetings are crucial points in any addict's recovery, many local addicts have turned to the many beautiful parks, beaches, forests, and preserves around the Gulf Coast Area as a way to enhance their connection to themselves, their Higher Power, and their recovery. Below are some local addicts' takes on recovering with nature.



Audubon Corkscrew Swamp Sanctuary

"This place gets eerily quiet. But not in a bad way. It's soothing. I can really vibe here in a way I can't anywhere else. I try mediating in my garden but it doesn't work because I hear the cars and planes and the sirens. But when I come out here and walk, if there's no one around, it's almost like I can feel my Higher Power running through me like electricity. I'm not high on anything other than that Higher Power. It calms me, centers me, aligns something in me, I don't know. But when I leave, I leave feeling honest, true, and real – if I stay cooped up inside, I never feel like that."

Bowditch Point Park

"When I first came to Florida, I thought every meeting was going to be like this. But, like everywhere else, they're all in churches or clubhouses or whatever. Places I've seen and been in before. Places I've had to come back to after a relapse. I'm so grateful to finally have a meeting on the beach. The sand between my toes. The sun on my face. It's like nothing else. If they have meetings in heaven, I always imagined they'd be like this. But, now I don't have to wait to find out."



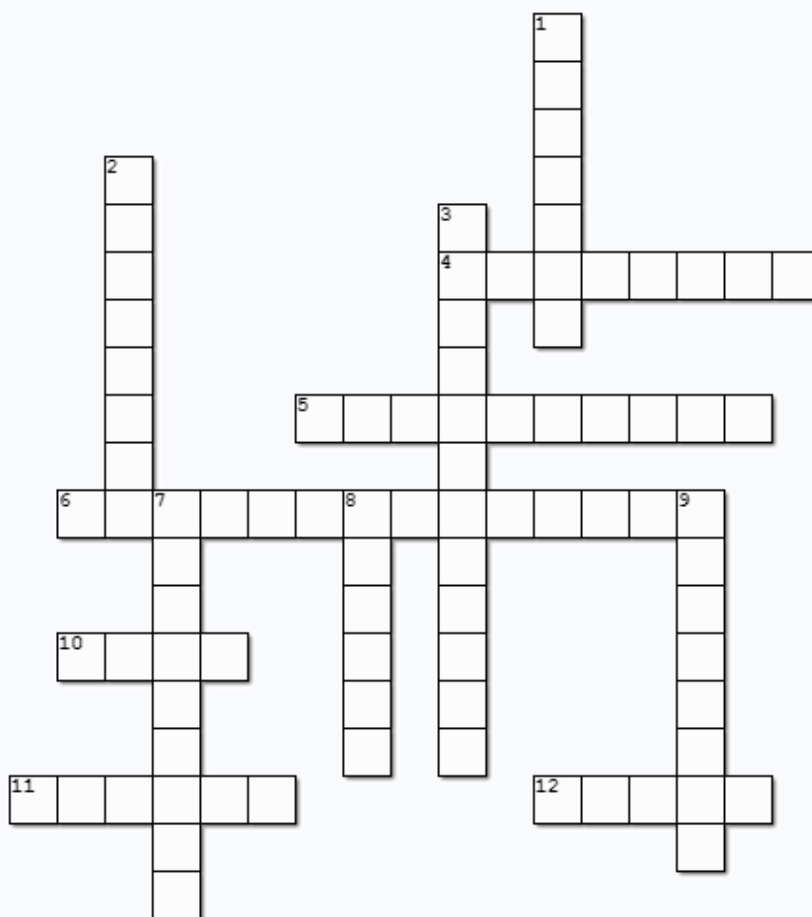
Estero Bay Preserve State Park

"What I like to do is walk my dog down to the river bed when it gets all dried out. There are these little crabs that come out of the sand and he likes to chase them. Don't worry, he doesn't eat them or anything. He just chases them and they run and run and run. Into their little holes. Safe. Happy. Content. Doing whatever they need to do to keep going. They always get away. It makes me hopeful. Maybe I'll get away some day, too."



STEP TWO

All the words and clues are derived from the section on Step Two in the Basic Text.



Across

4. Repeating the same mistakes and expecting different results.
5. That which becomes trust.
6. Until we took Step One, we were full of...
10. What forces us to seek a Power greater than ourselves.
11. Where the strength to move into action comes from.
12. It is not where we were that counts, but where we are ____.

Down

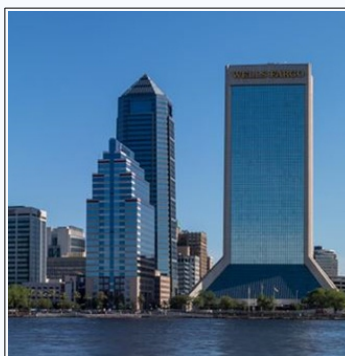
1. Progressive, incurable, and fatal.
2. When we see a Higher Power working in someone's life.
3. We can call it the group, the program, or God.
7. A destructive force in our lives.
8. That OTHER person who decides FOR us in our recovery.
9. What we have to change so we don't go back to using.



Long Distance Relationships

Views from Around Florida on Recovering in 2020

~ Depending on which addict you talk to, virtual meetings are the greatest thing since sliced bread or the absolute worst thing to ever happen to a person living in recovery. Regardless of our thoughts on meetings held on digital platforms, the benefits of these meetings are immense, especially regarding connecting addicts across great distances. Addicts who have moved out of the Gulf Coast Area have been able to reconnect with their old home groups, and local addicts who might not be able to travel have been able to attend meetings virtually in other cities, states, and countries. Below are some thoughts from fellow Floridians from outside the Gulf Coast Area on what it means to be able to connect and recover digitally. ~



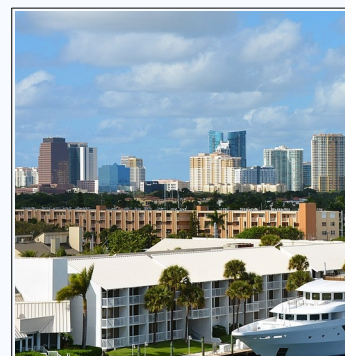
Jacksonville

“So yeah, I moved up here from Cape Coral around three years ago. Couldn’t deal with having a sponsor I only talked to over the phone, so I let him go. Hello, irony! Here we are and now I only get to talk to my new sponsor over [virtual meetings]? Kinda crazy how my Higher Power basically **told** me to grow and deal with it. Anyways, new sponsor tells me that I need to get on more meetings that aren’t local to quote-unquote broaden my scope. So, being stubborn, I go find the meeting code for my old area and **BAM**, who’s sharing? My old sponsor. Small world. Sharing about what sponsorship means to him, no less. We hadn’t really talked more than once or twice in the years since I’d moved. But, I messaged him after the meeting, and we’ve been talking every other day or so since. Feels good to hear from him again, I feel like I regained part of my recovery and I **won’t** let it go again.”



Orlando

“My mother lives in Fort Myers. I had to move for work. She’s not in the rooms, but I didn’t really know how to work my computer all that well before this whole pandemic thing started happening. I was the least tech-savvy of her daughters! Always have been – but this world we’re living in made me adapt. I had to learn how to really use my computer, and thanks to addicts here in Orlando and down in Fort Myers, I was able to figure out how to set up my own online room and **invite** people to it! So, naturally, I made one up and got my mom in on it. She works in a tech field, which is crazy given how computer illiterate I am. And she was so shocked to hear that I set this all up – what she didn’t know was that I’d gotten all my sisters in on the call, too. She’d been so **busy** that she had barely gotten to talk to us and she almost cried. It was so neat – and I wouldn’t have had the **courage** to learn a new skill if it weren’t for the online meetings here in NA!”



Fort Lauderdale

“I relapsed and wound up in over here in the place I used to party the most – Lauderdale. That was a long time ago. I didn’t want to come back to Fort Myers for treatment or anything like that. I stayed over here, did it the hard way, went to 90 in 90, you know the rest. Yeah, that was **years** ago. I’ve got a decade under my belt now. And in that time, I’d use things online chat rooms to voice-call my old crew back in the Fort. When the COVID showed up, this stuff was old hat for me. I knew how to work it. I was able to help some of my sponsorship family get set up on their computers and stuff. It was **wild** – I never really messed with commitments beyond coffee and chairing and stuff like that. But, when this hit, I became a celebrity – I felt really useful in my recovery community for the first time in, well, ever. Heck, I’m even considering doing an H&I commitment after this all blows over. I like being a **PART OF**.



From the Chairperson

Reach Out and Help Support Your Newsletter

To the Gulf Coast Area,

We need 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. The area is getting more lively as the months go on – addicts are starting to post fliers online to share new messages of hope, experience, and celebration. Expect to see notifications regarding these online meetings in future issues.

Please, reach out to me via email at:

newsletter@nagulfcoastfla.org

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

Thank you for letting me serve,
Nick H.