

Clean Times

March/April 2014

www.tampa-na.org

I HAD TO SURVIVE MY SON'S ADDICTION

...in its entirety

Being a parent is tough. Being the parent of a using addict is very tough. Now I see the heartache I put my own parents through. But I had an advantage when it came to dealing with my son's addiction. I am an addict in recovery. I know something my parents (non-recovering addicts themselves) did not know – there is nothing I can do to “fix” my son. My job is to protect myself from his addiction while he stumbles down the path he chooses to follow. I wish I had come to this realization much sooner than I did. I spent much time and effort, emotion and heartache trying to fix him, without success. It wasn't until I let him go that my serenity returned.

I thought that as an addict I would recognize the signs of using in my own children. Maybe I did. Maybe it was

denial that allowed me to not see. Maybe it was ego – these were MY children, I raised them right. But my children did start using. Is it genetic? Is it “the times we live in?” Do all kids experiment? Does it really matter?? What do I do now?

My older son had moved out. His using was not directly affecting me. But my younger son did live with us. As his using progressed my husband and I had to do something. For a long time we tried to fix it. We tried to control who he hung out with, where he went, what he did. “As long as you live under our roof...” We pushed for college. He got in and then didn't go. We pushed for him to get a job. He would get one and then lose it. Get another and then lose it. We bought him cars so he could get where we decided he needed to go, made him keep track of the mileage and destinations. He wrecked them both. We bought him bikes, he left them around town. We bought him a bus pass, but never knew where he was going. Then some money went missing.

continued on pg. 3 ...

High Noon Hope

A new noon meeting started yesterday in South Tampa. High Noon Hope is the name of the new meeting and I wanted to take this opportunity to share a little on the high and the hope that inspired the name. Of course the high came long before the hope... For me to use in this church and pass out in the parking lot was a normal occurrence. My bottom was rapidly approaching. I worked countless community service hours at the church as a result of several arrests. Why I chose to work the hours at the church I used at... the hope and my God. Wow! The changes in my life over the last few years I have been in recovery are amazing. Several months ago, my daughter had the day off from school and we decided to volunteer and clean the church knowing the janitor was on leave with cancer, the same janitor that lovingly accepted me time and time again when I worked my community service hours. As we were cleaning, the Pastor asked me what I was doing for work and if I had healed from a serious accident

in 2007. I explained I run a small lawn business and do other odd jobs; I thought nothing more of it. A few days later, I received a call from the pastor advising me the church elders had discussed and decided to offer me the custodial job at the church. I was overwhelmed with joy as my thoughts went back to times I would day dream while doing community service about how cool it would be to work at this church. Lost dreams; awakened. I gladly accepted the position and after a few months I realized there's no daytime NA meetings in south Tampa. I prayed about it and spoke with several NA members as well as the church board.... I was given encouragement and the okay from both the church and the NA fellowship. Wow... from high in the church to community service hours to their payroll and now starting a meeting... High Noon Hope, MWF at 12PM, Peninsular Christian Church, 3600 W Ballast Point Blvd., Tampa, FL 33611.

Thank God. In Loving Service.
Chris M.

Inside...

Celebrating p.2

Thank you p.2

My Son's Addiction p.3

Anniversaries p. 4

Celebrating Recovery

When I was just a few days clean, the highlight of my week was to get dressed up, put on some cologne, and head to John Calvin. All week I would look forward to Friday nights. As I was asked to change people, places, and things I had nowhere to go to be sociable and meet people. As always there were plenty of people celebrating. Sometimes the whole meeting would be about presentations. I recall when I was presented with my year key tag and my 18-month key tag; wow, I felt in awe.

That 'awe' soon turned into sadness and resentment. Shortly after my milestone celebration (18-months), Radical Recovery changed locations. I caught a resentment for I had hitched rides, walked, and asked for rides; dreaming of the day I could pull up in my car with music blaring. I felt robbed.

To my surprise, The Meeting Place has set aside the last Saturday of every month at 8:30 PM for all addicts who are celebrating anniversaries during that month. They are looking for home group members to be of service. I look forward to March's Celebrating Recovery. I am going to get dressed up, wear cologne, and pull in with my music blaring. An addict can always be hopeful. Hope to see you there!



Thank You Old Timers

Thank you to every old timer who told me when I was new:

1. We are clean, not sober around here.
2. Sit down and shut up.
3. Don't come into the meeting late and act like a debutante greeting all of your friends.
4. Respect the room you are in.
5. Be of service. Stop being a taker.
6. Greet the newcomer because someone greeted you when you were new.

7. (When I had less than a year) That guy that is trying to get in your pants would give you time to get a year if he really cared.

8. (When I was brand new and thought I knew it all) You should be quiet and listen. If we want to know how to get loaded, we'll ask you a question.

9. It isn't about you all the time.

10. That hurt your feelings? It's called pulling your covers. We love you too much to pretend what you're doing is ok.



Whether you are an NA member, a professional who works with recovering addicts, an incarcerated member or a member who provides Hospital and Institution service, this NA World Services newsletter may be a resource for you. Reaching

Out in its design helps incarcerated addicts connect to the NA program of recovery, enhances H&I efforts and offers experience from members who successfully transitioned from the 'inside' to be productive members of society. All are invited to share their experience, strength, and hope in the Reaching Out newsletter.

Contact Gilbert O. at 813.245.5399 or visit <http://www.na.org/?ID=reaching-out-index>

Want to change the world?

Start with the addict sitting next to you tonight, and then imagine your act of kindness multiplied. One person at a time, each one of us makes a difference.

-Judy O.

11. You think you're a princess and the rules don't apply to you like they do to everyone else.

12. No you can't give up that commitment just because you don't feel like doing it anymore. A year isn't going to kill you, however, it may help you learn how to live.

...and countless other golden things that helped and still help to pull my head out of my ass. Please don't stop telling us newer people the truth and teaching us about the real Narcotics Anonymous. Please.

-Nadine W.



I Had to Survive My Son's Addiction...continued from Page 1

Once we realized he had been stealing we determined he could not be in the house. But what could we do? He was only 19. He was my baby boy. I couldn't just kick him out; good parents don't do that to their kids. We tried to get him into treatment, but insurance denied it. So we gave him a tent and told him he could stay in the yard while he looked for somewhere else to live. Then we decided he could come in the house as long as someone else was home. But we addicts are crafty. Once in the house, he stole again. So again we said he could not be in the house. But my slender son could fit through the dog door, and steal some more.

Enough was enough. He had to go. We boarded up the dog door until we could get a smaller one. We told him he could not stay in the tent anymore. He had to go. We let him pack a bag then I watched my little boy walk away knowing he was not welcome in my home. It was not easy, but it was necessary. My efforts to be a supportive mom were a disguise for enabling this addict to continue his self-destructive behavior. In hindsight, we should have forced him out at the beginning. My husband wanted to, but I couldn't do it. Good parents don't tell their children that they are not welcome in their home. What I failed to see was that our son was already gone. He had been taken by

the addict that was now in his body. The only way to get my son back was to get rid of the addict. So that is what we did.

Of course I worried. Where was he? Was he safe? Was he warm and dry? Did he have food? My mind raced. My emotions were on edge. When it got cold or when it rained I worried more. Then, as time went by, I was finally able to work some steps on the situation. I had absolutely realized that I was powerless over what he was doing, or what was happening to him. My constant failed attempts to control him over the previous year or so had taught me that. The program has taught me that if I am powerless over something, then worrying about it is a waste of emotion. My worrying cannot affect the situation; it can only make me miserable. Then I came to realize that my son had a higher power to watch over him. That realization was my higher power helping me let go. I could finally rest on the cold rainy days knowing that whatever was happening to my homeless addict son was what needed to happen on his journey and that there was nothing I could do about it – so there was nothing for me to worry about. I was fully aware that I could get a call at anytime from a hospital or the police and that the news could be tragic. My parents got those calls when I was my son's age. But I was also fully aware that he had to

follow this path to get to his bottom if he was going to decide FOR HIMSELF that he wanted to stop using. He had grown up in a home of recovering addicts. He knew about the program and how to find help if he wanted it. And I remembered where I was at his age - deep in my addiction, destroying my life. Then I looked at where I am now – years in recovery with a life I never dreamed possible. All I could do now was hope that he could make the change that I made. I knew it was possible.

This process helped me to take a close look at my character defects of control and ego. I had recognized these defects in my 6th dealing with my son's addiction, I willingly acted out on them. It wasn't until I could become willing to stop controlling him, and set my ego aside so that I could do what we had to do, that I was able to again find peace.

I have been in recovery in this area for over 25 years and my husband and I have many friends in the rooms who watched us go through this process. They were supportive and loving. Some, with kids of their own in active addiction would tell me that they got strength from watching us. I know that sometimes the biggest benefit of going through tough times in recovery is being able to share the experience with others who will go through it, the very essence of our program's twelfth step.

Our son did start coming to the rooms. Though this is a program of anonymity, our friends would tell us that they were keeping an eye on him for us. He picked up more than one white key tag, I gave him one myself. I also picked up several white key tags when I was first deciding to get clean. Then our friends started telling me that they were seeing a difference in our son. They were seeing the change. One told me tearfully "he is free." He was staying clean: 30 days > 60 days > 90 days > 6 months. He had a home group. He was getting in the middle of the boat.

Several months ago we allowed our son back in the house. At first, we locked up everything of value and hid our checkbook and wallets. We don't do that anymore. He had a temporary part-time job and he kept it through the season. He is actively looking for another. He does what we ask of him around the house. He goes to meetings, meets with his sponsor, plays softball with other addicts. He does these things because he wants to, not because we tell him he has to.

**One day at
a time,
we have our
son back.**

A Mom in Recovery

Anniversaries - March & April

A New Way			<i>John M</i>	4/28/2011	3	<i>Jimmy C</i>	4/20/2011	3	<i>Cyrus C</i>	3/22/2011	3
<i>Mike H</i>	4/21/2003	11	Freedom From Pain			NA Speaker Meeting			Sunday Serenity		
<i>Steve F</i>	4/23/2005	9	<i>Mark F</i>	4/27/1984	30	<i>Audrey C</i>	4/9/1994	20	<i>Kim L</i>	3/18/2012	2
<i>Ashley H</i>	4/4/2006	8	<i>Julie C</i>	4/7/2007	7	Never Too Young To Recover			Sunset Solutions		
<i>Steve F</i>	4/23/2006	8	<i>Glenda G</i>	4/8/2008	6	<i>Jesse L</i>	3/12/1993	21	<i>Joe D</i>	3/17/1984	30
<i>Sandra D</i>	4/22/2008	6	<i>Tonya K</i>	4/16/2008	6	<i>Maggie G</i>	3/18/2002	12	<i>Louis G</i>	4/18/1985	29
<i>Dani P</i>	3/21/2012	2	<i>Amy M</i>	3/13/2009	5	<i>Mark W</i>	3/11/2009	5	<i>Sandra D</i>	4/25/2008	6
<i>Gary M</i>	4/10/2012	2	<i>Megan L</i>	3/28/2010	4	<i>Chyrstal B</i>	4/19/2009	5	The Sanctuary		
Brandon At Noon			<i>Neil D</i>	4/19/2011	3	New Bite Of Serenity			<i>Barry H</i>	3/15/2000	14
<i>Diana K</i>	4/17/1991	23	<i>Joe G</i>	4/8/2013	1	<i>Nora M</i>	4/5/1999	15	The War Is Over		
<i>Eric D</i>	3/12/1995	19	Grow Or Go			<i>Julius L</i>	3/30/2000	14	<i>Victoria L</i>	3/26/2002	12
<i>Eric B</i>	4/1/1997	17	<i>Laura E</i>	3/7/2005	9	<i>Tracey J</i>	3/13/2006	8	<i>Ramantha E</i>	3/11/2003	11
<i>Joe V</i>	4/10/2006	8	Happy Hour			<i>Leroy W</i>	3/22/2008	6	<i>Jamie Z</i>	3/3/2005	9
<i>Julie C</i>	4/11/2007	7	<i>Vivian H</i>	3/17/2006	8	<i>Colin C</i>	3/25/2008	6	<i>Tracy K</i>	3/13/2006	8
<i>Amy M</i>	3/13/2009	5	<i>Joe S</i>	4/10/2006	8	<i>Gretchen B</i>	3/3/2009	5	<i>Hope L</i>	4/10/2006	8
<i>Lee L</i>	3/20/2009	5	High Hopes			<i>Doll P</i>	3/26/2009	5	<i>Joe V</i>	4/10/2006	8
<i>Alysia F</i>	4/11/2009	5	<i>Donald D</i>	3/1/1998	16	<i>Carline M</i>	3/17/2011	3	<i>R.J. K</i>	4/27/2007	7
<i>Phil A</i>	4/13/2009	5	High Lie			New Life			<i>Amy O</i>	3/13/2009	5
<i>Nicole C</i>	4/28/2009	5	<i>Bud F</i>	3/7/2010	4	<i>Bertha B</i>	4/27/2007	7	<i>Sauna R</i>	3/7/2010	4
<i>Shanna B</i>	3/7/2010	4	<i>Dan A</i>	3/18/1985	29	<i>Todd L</i>	4/8/2009	5	<i>Angie M</i>	3/9/2010	4
<i>Sandra G</i>	3/27/2010	4	<i>Tom</i>	4/11/1992	22	<i>Tina V</i>	4/4/2011	3	<i>Larry M</i>	3/14/2010	4
<i>Jerry</i>	3/9/2011	3	Hope In Lutz			New Tampa NA			<i>Kristina S</i>	3/26/2010	4
<i>Donna B</i>	3/15/2011	3	<i>Sam A</i>	4/4/2006	8	<i>Brandi M</i>	3/31/1991	23	<i>Grace R</i>	3/25/2011	3
<i>April C</i>	4/8/2011	3	<i>Tom M</i>	4/20/2012	2	<i>Darrin F</i>	3/3/2006	8	Together We Can		
<i>Dodie A</i>	4/6/2013	1	How It Works			<i>Darren F</i>	3/30/2006	8	<i>Pat B</i>	3/2/2004	10
<i>Samantha S</i>	4/15/2013	1	<i>Ninnah R</i>	4/6/1990	24	Quest For Serenity			<i>Susan M</i>	3/6/2011	3
Daily Recovery			<i>Danny M</i>	4/30/2002	12	<i>Brittany B</i>	4/24/2011	3	Uptown Tue & Fri		
<i>Tony F</i>	3/5/2005	9	<i>Frank L</i>	4/1/2010	4	Radical Recovery			<i>Danny M</i>	4/30/2000	14
<i>Lauca</i>	3/7/2005	9	In The Middle			<i>Willie M</i>	4/5/1995	19	<i>Dennis M</i>	4/30/2002	12
<i>Tony F</i>	3/29/2008	6	<i>Kenny B</i>	3/23/1990	24	<i>Kelvin B</i>	4/8/2008	6	<i>Manny P</i>	4/18/2006	8
<i>Sharon J</i>	3/29/2008	6	Life On Life's Terms			Recovery Central			Women Do Recover		
<i>Casey C</i>	3/3/2009	5	<i>Collette B</i>	3/6/2010	4	<i>Gordon N</i>	4/11/1983	31	<i>Karon G</i>	3/27/2009	5
<i>Kim C</i>	3/3/2009	5	<i>Christopher E</i>	3/25/2011	3	<i>Bobby R</i>	4/22/2002	12	Women Of Freedom		
<i>Carmelita E</i>	3/4/2009	5	Live Or Die			<i>Jessica S</i>	4/30/2008	6	<i>Katie A</i>	4/23/2012	2
<i>Tommy B</i>	3/6/2010	4	<i>Vincent S</i>	4/25/2009	5	Recovery In Riverview			Women Of Serenity		
<i>Jim L</i>	3/12/2011	3	Mondy Meditation			<i>Tonya K</i>	4/16/2008	6	<i>Kristie</i>	3/15/2009	5
<i>Kelvin L</i>	3/29/2011	3	<i>John A</i>	3/16/2011	3	Recovery On The Northside			<i>Paula B</i>	4/2/2009	5
Emergency Room			More Hope I & II			<i>Susan F</i>	3/19/1988	26	Women's Hope		
<i>Craig M</i>	3/27/2012	2	<i>Lamark L</i>	3/24/2010	4	Renegade Recovery			<i>Jodi B</i>	4/19/1986	28
Free To Be Me			<i>Nelco C</i>	3/27/2010	4	<i>Bob R</i>	4/19/1991	23	<i>Evelyn V</i>	3/28/1989	25
<i>Stan M</i>	3/29/1989	25	<i>Sarah M</i>	3/28/2010	4	<i>Debra I</i>	3/29/2010	4	<i>Selena M</i>	3/30/1999	15
<i>Meredith D</i>	3/15/1991	23	NA 180			<i>Victor L</i>	4/7/2011	3	<i>Tammie A</i>	3/11/2002	12
<i>Victor C</i>	3/21/1998	16	<i>David R</i>	3/24/1976	38	Rise For Recovery			<i>Vicki L</i>	3/2/2006	8
<i>Michael</i>	4/2/2002	12	<i>Ron H</i>	4/20/2003	11	<i>Sharon J</i>	3/29/2008	6	<i>Terri E</i>	4/27/2008	6
<i>Bud F</i>	3/7/2010	4	<i>Bill V</i>	3/9/2006	8	<i>Aron R</i>	4/29/2010	4	<i>Meghan P</i>	3/12/2009	5
<i>Tim C</i>	3/28/2010	4	NA At The Apex			Stepping Up			<i>Meredith L</i>	3/27/2009	5
<i>Jared M</i>	3/18/2011	3	<i>Danny D</i>	4/28/1992	22	<i>Greg R</i>	4/26/1996	18	<i>Elaine D</i>	4/27/2009	5
<i>Meredith B</i>	4/2/2011	3	<i>Adam H</i>	3/28/2011	3	<i>Calvin A</i>	4/11/2010	4	<i>Cassandra V</i>	4/27/2009	5

The Tampa Funcoast Area of Narcotics Anonymous Newsletter Committee welcomes your comments, ideas, announcements, and articles. Your submissions must adhere to the spiritual principles of The 12 Traditions of NA and cannot be copyrighted material from 3rd party persons or publications. Submissions may be subject to editing in order to adhere to the spiritual principles of The 12 Traditions of NA and/or the space constraints or the group's conscience of the Clean Times Newsletter.