



September/October 2016

How It Works (a Funcoast series on the steps and traditions)

Step 9. "We made direct amends to such people wherever possible, except when to do so would injure them or others."

So who are such people? That was Step 8, and in the last newsletter. LOL.

Wherever possible. Sometimes it's not possible because someone has passed away or can't be found. In those cases, I obviously couldn't make a direct amends, but I can still make amends. I can stay clean; I can write a letter; I can do some service work for the fellowship or my community. I can do something that would show I am trying to right my wrongs.

In financial instances, I can obviously pay back money. Most major institutions are happy to make arrangements. Obviously not the dope man, which could definitely injure me. Another option could be to make a donation to my favorite charity. Just food for thought.

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In the case of relationships, I must be very careful. I don't want to cause harm to someone by maybe bringing up very hurtful memories. It's not fair to make myself feel better by hurting someone else.

Let's face it: it's all about me. As with any step, it is always best for me to pray with my higher power and let him show me the best thing to do, and to remember "First thought, wrong."

Step 10. "We continued to take personal inventory and when we were wrong promptly admitted it."

I'm not going to tell you anything you don't know or haven't heard at a meeting before, but maybe this time something will be different. I didn't make any of this up - it comes from other recovering addicts and my own experience, strength and hope, and mostly from the help of my higher power.

Of course, if you ask me, I am never wrong. Of course that would be in the hours that I am asleep. More than once a day, sometimes, depending on the situation, I have to check myself. I can find myself being short or rude or pushy or controlling (I know you get it!) with a co-worker. I have to be able to humble myself to admit that, hopefully at the time of my actions. Of course I don't like it, it's not fun, but it is the right thing to do. I want

to stay spiritually fir, so I have to act spiritual (What a concept! Of course it's not mine).

At the end of the day, when I am hopefully recalling my actions for the day, I can be happy with myself and know that I was the best person that I can be, that I was kind and loving to other people, that I didn't hurt anyone, and that I can sleep with a peaceful heart. The one person, or really two - myself and my higher power, need to be included in that. I need to thank my higher power for another day, and I have to be sure I didn't tell myself that I wasn't the best person that I could be.

Anonymous, Funcoast Area

Tradition 9. "NA, as such, ought never be organized, but we may create service boards or committees directly responsible to those they serve."

The first time I went to area service at 90 days clean, I thought the people that spoke up ran NA. I remember well being at times impressed and at times dismayed that one guy was "responsible" for all of our meetings for H&I, while another lady was "in charge" of all of our activities. I thought they must be really important people.

As I learned something about

our traditions, and saw these people answer questions (of the nice and sometimes not as nice variety) at area service, I began to realize that they were not actually in charge of much, although they had assumed some responsibility. That responsibility, at least as our literature understands it, is actually to the groups, who were represented at the ASC. Our ninth tradition is very specific about that direct accountability, which led me much later in my recovery to question how much autonomy the service committees can and should practice. While the discussion (and sometimes bickering) at the ASC often seemed pointless to me, I did come to understand it as a mechanism for the groups to guide the service boards and committees this tradition talks about.

I also indirectly came to understand this tradition through seeing similar groups outside of NA attempt to organize services. I have a brother who is involved in another 12 step program and have seen his group attempt to provide services that in NA are handled through our service committees. The group often seems focused on those services, rather than on how to best carry the
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message to the newcomer in their meetings. Even as an outsider, seeing what that takes from the home group makes me grateful to be part of a service structure that is organized enough to let my home group focus on serving the still suffering addict who shows up to our meetings, rather than providing services that could be organized by the subcommittees.

Controversial as this opinion may be, my understanding of the ninth tradition makes me cautious of the organizational changes to the world service structure that are currently being explored by the fellowship. These changes include separating committee service meetings from those of the group representatives, and I don't fully understand how the structure would account for the direct responsibility this tradition calls for. If addicts in the area have input into this, I would love to see it published in our Newsletter.

-Anonymous

Tradition 10. "Narcotics Anonymous has no opinion on outside issues; hence the NA name ought never be drawn into public controversy."

Traditions have come slowly to me over the course of my 22 years of recovery. As a result, I understand the importance of Narcotics Anonymous as a worldwide fellowship not having an opinion on any outside issues. I can remember in my active addiction having many debates, some that turned into very heated, divisive

arguments or even fights, which ultimately often caused loss of respect for me and my debater. As I have come to understand NA as it relates to my spiritual development, I see that NA needs to maintain respectability in the community and the world at large in order to maintain its effectiveness. I am a member of NA and I value our impact on individuals seeking freedom from active addiction. I found that freedom in a fellowship that offers addicts spiritual principles, not individual opinions on issues of no consequence to our getting and staying clean!

Walston B,
District of Columbia, USA
Reprinted from DC Link, DC Area Newsletter

Lowell Prison

Greetings from the forest area of NA. I am an addict named Maggie and I have been doing the meetings at Lowell prison for approximately 5 years now.

We currently have 4 different meetings going on, 3 on the main unit and 1 on the reception side. Having the privilege to go in the prison and join the women in their NA meetings has given me the best high I have ever gotten in my life and the best tools for my recovery to be a good productive member of society.

To be able to see first hand that an addict any addict can lose the desire to use and find a new way of life and apply the spiritual principles even in prison to their lives has given me total proof that this program works.

I keep in touch with many recovering addicts that have gotten out of prison and I am totally amazed how they came to be believed that they need this program in order to continue their recovery even when they get out of prison. The only real problem that I have is that their is only one of me .I am in great need of help to continue the meetings in Lowell prison I can't do it alone I need other recovering addicts to plant that seed and show that they are not forgotten and their not alone in their recovery process. Most of us addicts have pushed our lives right to the edge of sheer death, we are so beaten that the only place left to go is recover and find a new way to live. Speaking for one of the inmates she recently said what else is there to do? I can't die that didn't work for me. I am here now in prison. When I gave up the fight and started changing the way I think I won even in prison this is the happiest I have ever been in my life. This is one of the many recovering inmates that I have worked the steps with. Sponsors what a wonderful way to bond with a sponsee come into Lowell and show the sponsee how to set up meetings show them what gratitude is really about. Coming into the prison system is a win-win situation for all women and men in the NA program please. The inmates cannot have a meeting without you and you cannot truly have the most humbling recovery without them.

- Maggie C NA

Writing Steps for Recovery (Behind the Walls)

Our vision is to carry the message that any addict can stop using drugs, lose the desire to use, and find a new way of life.

The Florida Region of Narcotics Anonymous has now helped introduce 23 self-sufficient NA meetings in FL and beyond; including, Coleman Federal Penn, Alabama, NW FL, Georgia, and South Carolina. The process began 7 years ago with the 'Pen Pal' project and developed into free-standing meetings; for inmates and by inmates. Many of these men and women are eager to work the steps and become involved in Narcotics Anonymous prior to release. The Florida Region of Narcotics Anonymous is working to realize our primary purpose by further implementing the "Writing Steps for Recovery (Behind the Walls)" initiative.

How can I help? Join the "Writing The Steps for Recovery (Behind the Walls)" project. This can be your next step in further carrying the message. Through "Writing The Steps for Recovery (Behind the Walls)", you have another opportunity to share your experience, strength, and hope; give back to an addict seeking recovery what NA has given to you.

If you are interested in gaining a State or Federal clearance or for more information and guidelines on the program, contact Gilbert O. at 813.245.5399.

Ask An Addict

“What is the difference between humility and humiliation?”

An attitude of humility is not the same as humiliation, nor is it a denial of our good qualities. On the contrary, an attitude of humility means that we have a realistic view of ourselves and our place in the world.

(It Works How & Why p. 49)

Humility was an idea so foreign to most of us that we ignored it as long as we could. When we first say the word “humbly” in Step Seven, we may have figured it meant we had quite a bit of humiliation in store. Perhaps we chose to look it up in the dictionary, only to become even more confused by the definition. We didn’t understand how “lowliness and subservience” applied to recover. To be humble does not mean we are the lowest form of life. On the contrary, becoming humble means we attain a realistic view of ourselves and where we fit in the world.

(Just for Today, p. 324)

We developed a little more humility with the awareness of the exact nature of our wrongs. We began to understand that humility and self-loathing are incompatible and can’t exist at the same time.

(It Works How & Why p.83)

Humility is a puzzling concept. We know a lot about humiliation, but humility is a new idea. It sounds suspiciously like

groveling, bowing, and scraping. But that’s not what humility is at all. True humility is, simply, acceptance of who we are.... Humility simply means we drop all pretenses and live as honestly as we can.

(Just for Today, p.346)

How does Narcotics Anonymous define humility, and how do I get some?

It wasn’t until we had made a real mess of our lives that we realized we couldn’t do it alone. By this, we achieved a glimpse of humility. Humility is a result of getting honest with ourselves.

(Basic Text, p. 36)

As we grow, we begin to understand humility as acceptance of both our assets and our liabilities.

(Basic Text, p. 101)

In realizing that we don’t have all the answers, we begin to find some humility. We may not grasp the full impact of what being humble means, but our open-mindedness assures us that we have found and have begun to demonstrate this valuable quality.

(It Works How & Why, p. 16)

When we honestly admit our wrongs, we find humility. The humility we experienced in Step Five grows as we again sense our humanness and realize that we are never going to be perfect.

(It Works How & Why, p. 43-44)

We are humbled by our imperfection—but let there be no mistake; humility is

the ideal state for an addict to be in. Humility brings us back down to earth and plants our feet firmly on the spiritual path we are walking.

(It Works How & Why, p. 48)

Understanding that we are not unique is a good indication of humility.

(It Works How & Why, p. 50)

Simply accepting the harm we caused increases our humility.

(It Works How & Why, p. 58)

Our humility increases as we face the people we have harmed

(It works How & Why, p. 67)

Humility in practice is the honest assessment of our strengths and weaknesses.

(It Works How & Why, p. 103)

Though each individual’s experience of a spiritual awakening varies, some experiences are so common as to be almost universal. Humility is one of these common factors. We first began to experience humility when we opened our minds to the possibility that a Power greater than ourselves existed.

(It Works How & Why, p. 82)

It doesn’t matter that we will not attain a state of perfection or complete humility in our lifetime.

(It Works How & Why p. 53)

Free to be me!!!

Sitting

Waiting

Anticipating

What will it be like?

What will I see? When

I am free to be me?

Will I participate in life?

Or continue to let it pass by?

Will I allow responsibility to set in?

OR remain a child?

Will I accept the will of God?

Or take the wheel?

Will I show up and be a part of?

Or remain in my shell?

Return to that awful hell?

I have the choice win or loose

It’s better than what some people choose

I no longer lie, cheat or steal

I gave myself a chance to heal

A day I thought I

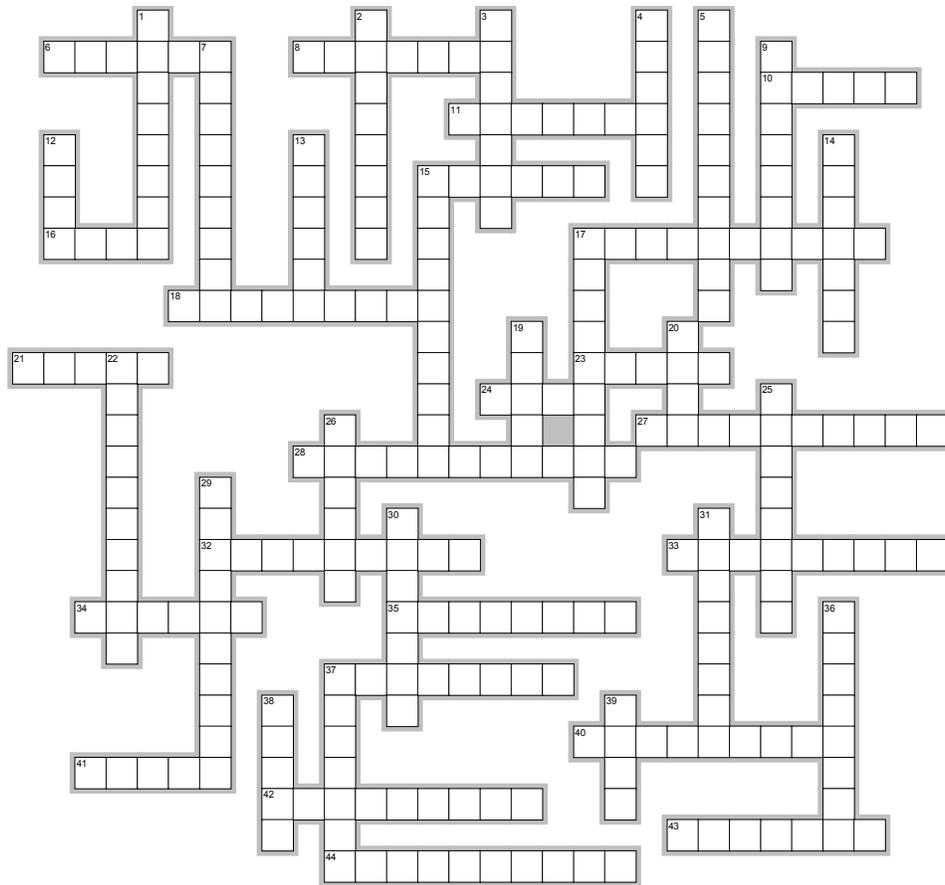
would never see

Today I am free

Free to be me!!!



48 MUSTS OF THE BASIC TEXT



EclipseCrossword.com

Down

1. "We MUST _____ what was done to us from what we did to others." - pg. 37
2. "Our Sixth Tradition tells us some of the things we MUST do to _____ and protect our primary purpose." - pg. 66
3. "We MUST realize that we are not _____." - pg. 35
4. "We MUST carefully choose the _____ who is to hear our fifth step. We MUST make sure that they know what we are doing and why we are doing it." - pg. 31
5. It is said that for _____ to be of value, the results MUST show in our daily lives." - pg. 46
7. "We MUST totally _____ ourselves to the program." - pg. 81
9. "If we have _____, it is important to keep in mind that we MUST get back to meetings as soon as possible." - pg. 80.
12. "We MUST, use what we learn or we will lose it, no matter how _____ we have been clean." - pg. 82
13. "Our experience tells us that we MUST become willing _____ this step will have any effect." - pg. 36
14. "We MUST give up this old _____ and face the fact that reality and life go on, whether we choose to accept them or not." - pg. 53
15. "An _____ of recovery in our groups is one of the most valued assets, and we MUST guard it carefully, lest we lose it to politics and personalities." - pg. 61
17. "We are people with the disease of _____ who MUST abstain from all drugs in order to

recover." - pg. 18

19. "When we are prepared, we MUST try out our newly found way of life. We learn -the program won't work when we try to _____ it to our life. We MUST learn to _____ our life to the program." - pg. 55
20. "We MUST remember the _____ that they have known." - pg. 40
22. "A second admission MUST be made before our _____ is complete." pg. 21 Explanation: It is not enough to admit that we are powerless over drugs, we MUST also admit that our lives had become unmanageable.
25. "We MUST face our _____ and our feelings." - pg. 15
26. "Eventually we are shown that we MUST get _____ or we will use again." - pg. 82
29. "We MUST give freely and _____ that which has been freely and _____ given to us." - pg. 47
30. "Assets MUST also be considered, if we are to get an accurate and complete _____ of ourselves." - pg. 28
31. "We MUST live and work _____ as a group to ensure that in a storm our ship does not sink and our members do not perish." -pg.60
36. "We MUST smash the _____ that we can do it alone." - pg. 82
37. "We MUST relearn many things that we have forgotten and develop a new approach to life if we are to _____." - pg. 77
38. "Staying clean MUST always come _____." - pg. 82
39. "We MUST use what we learn or we will _____ it in a relapse." - pg. 81

Across

6. "Some things we MUST accept, _____ we can change." - pg. 92
8. "Everything that occurs in the course of N.A. _____ MUST be motivated by the desire to more successfully carry the message of recovery to the addict who still suffers." - pg. XVI
10. "We MUST be _____." - pg. 32
11. "We MUST remember that _____ have been placed in trust that we are trusted servants, and that at no time do any of us govern." - pg. 61
15. "Some things we MUST _____, others we can change." - pg. 92
16. "In order to receive we MUST be willing to _____." - pg. 102
17. "Our disease involved much more than just using drugs, so our recovery MUST involve much more than simple _____" - pg- 53
18. "No matter how painful life's _____ can be for us, one thing is clear we MUST not use no matter what!" -pg.98
21. "To improve ourselves takes effort and since there is no way in the world to _____ a new idea on a closed mind, an opening MUST be made somehow." - pg. 75
23. "Recovery found in Narcotics Anonymous MUST come from within, and no one stays _____ for anyone but themselves." - pg. 80
24. "We MUST be done with the _____ and not cling to it." - pg. 28
27. "When we feel the old urges come over us, we think there MUST be something wrong with us, and that other people in Narcotics Anonymous couldn't possibly _____" - pg. 79
28. "We MUST always remember that as individual members, groups, and service committees we are not and should never be in _____ with each other." pg. XVI
32. "Although He already knows, the _____ MUST come from our own lips to be truly effective. Step five is not simply a reading of step four." - pg. 31
33. "We realize we MUST do _____." - pg. 78
34. "We MUST first understand what N.A. is. Narcotics Anonymous is addicts who have the desire to stop using, and have _____ together to do so." - pg. 70
35. "As with each step we MUST, be _____." -pg. 38
37. "We never know when the time will come when we MUST put forth all the effort and _____ we have just to stay clean." - pg. 93
40. "We come here _____ and the power that we seek comes to us through other people in Narcotics Anonymous, but we MUST reach out for it." - pg. 79
41. "_____ is a MUST in Narcotics Anonymous." - pg. 60
42. "In order to achieve our _____ aim, Narcotics Anonymous MUST be known and respected." - pg. 71
43. "We MUST be _____ to do whatever is necessary to recover." - pg. 93
44. "We MUST be constantly on guard that our decisions are truly an _____ of God's will." - pg. 61

I find myself at a new age in my recovery. This is my first time of double digits clean. I have never had this time ever in my life and am grateful to NA to have lead me here. I know that I haven't "arrived" anywhere but everyday life presents me something new. I find solutions today and hope for the rest. That's what I've learned in NA...STEPS - Solutions To Every Problem Serene..!

Now, I haven't worked some perfect program, I'm not perfect. I'm a recovery addict on a journey enjoying the bumpy ride. I mean bumpy in the respect that I'm just going along, things are OK. Then, I'm presented with my sponsorship tree starts changing members, my sponsor and my relationship start to change, and then I start to become complacent, I don't want to go to THAT meeting, no one understands how I feel..... and here go the bumps....!

Doing the WORK...is action! I don't get anything out of recovery if I'm not working a program. I know this but I still have to ask myself am I doing the basics and being Honest, Open-minded and Willing to do so, again and again. Change, change and change.... seems to be a driving force. If I'm not working my program how can I expect to grow. I stay stuck..!

Personally, I don't like being or feeling stuck at anything. I like to take the hits and roll with the punches, per say. Let go and move-on. So, I ask myself, what have I done for my recovery and what do I need to do to continue to grow in this process?

I want this to be clear...I never want to use again! So, with that being said, I continue to find my way home in NA. I'll be going to more meetings; service, networking and I really like our attending activities and conventions. That's what I know...and what I've learned to do here. Stay connected, ask for help and do the best I can and don't use no matter what..! I figure the rest will work its way out when I apply the "Action" needed to be healthy and to grow in my recovery.

I'm writing this because I know that I'm not the only one that has ever been where I'm at today. I know that I am not unique in any way. I know we can get to the other-side of anything clean. I am so grateful to NA for showing me how to live and knowing that I never have to use again. Even through the bumps, it is available for me to get some Good Orderly Direction, to find my way home in NA.

- Grateful in Recovery

We all say it at the end of every meeting, but how I look at, believe in, and live "Just For Today" has changed through the years.

Actually "Just For Today" hasn't changed at all, although by the Grace of God, I have grown spiritually, mentally and maybe even emotionally today.

Today when I open my eyes in the morning, the very first thing I do is kneel next to my bed and say the 3rd step prayer. I invite my wife to join me. This was one of the many suggestions my sponsor drilled into me early in recovery. First I ask Him to relieve me of my obsession and compulsion to use. I thank Him for my many blessings. I ask Him to guide my thoughts, my actions, and reactions. I also ask Him to take away my selfishness and self-centeredness so I will have the courage to reach out my hand to someone who I can be of service to. I pray for the sick and suffering inside and outside the rooms, especially my family and loved ones that suffered through my active addiction right beside me. I always ask that I might walk in love "Just For Today" and that I would be a good example of what recovery in NA is supposed to look like. I pray that when someone in the "rooms" or someone who is still running and gunning sees me and knows that I am in NA sees peace. I pray that through and with my Higher Power, I am a good example of the NA walk.

"Just For Today" I do a good bit of reading and studying NA literature, and other spiritual books. I have a "Home Group" and a very strong network. I share what I've studied today with them, usually via Email or text. I always send out my text message for today one by one; I don't enjoy getting group texts, so I don't send group texts.

I usually call my mom, my sponsor or another addict on my drive to work in the morning. I try to make the most out of the morning rush hour traffic and it really works!

"Just For Today" I work at being the most responsible employee I can be. I try to spread kindness on the job. I have been blessed through the years to be of service to other addicts at work and to co-workers who have had a loved one who suffers with our disease. I am grateful that I can be open about being in recovery at work so that I can be of service.

"Just For Today" I do my best to keep my side of the street clean,

making amends quickly when I step out of line or "off the beam" as my sponsor calls it.

"Just For Today" I stay in conscious contact with God through prayer literally anytime and anywhere. I use to get high when I was sad, now I pray. I use to get high when I was happy now I pray and thank God for my blessings. When rough times came I use to get high, now I turn to my Higher Power.

"Just For Today" when I allow my wife to upset me, instead of getting high I can take a few deep breaths and ask my Creator for the next right thought or action and it just might be saying I'm sorry or keeping my big mouth shut. I have learned through prayer, from my sponsor and others in and out of the program that most of the time I am better off listening than talking.

"Just For Today" I still get to go to meetings almost every day. When I ask my sponsor how many meetings a week I should be going to, he asks me how many days a week did I get high? He lets me know, that would be a good number to start with.

"Just For Today" I am grateful and show that gratitude by carrying the NA message to others.

Before I go to bed at night, I reflect on my day and take a quick inventory. If I owe an amends, I take care of it as quick as possible. I make an effort to not repeat the same mistakes over and over, although I often fall short. I have to let go and let God.

It has been said, "Can any one of you by worrying add a single hour to your life?"

I get to do ALL of this "Just For Today" as long as I just don't use today, no matter what!

With Kind Blessings,
Reggie R.
Breakfast Club

Reaching Out

Whether you are an NA member, a professional who works with recovering addicts, an incarcerated member, or a member who carries the message via service with Hospital and Institutions; the Reaching Out newsletter curated by NA World Services 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 have 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. The Reaching Out publication is seeking paid subscribers to assist in supporting our continued efforts to distribute the magazine to our members housed in state and federal facilities. Ask your home group to subscribe and help us carry the message. Contact Gilber O. at 813.245.5399 or via email at gbs92101@hotmail.com



ANNIVERSARIES UPCOMING SEPT. & OCT. EVENTS

A New Way

Alex L. 09/07/1998
Taryn T. 11/21/2004
Carrie T. 11/02/2006

Grow or Go

Elvin S. 9/2/2014
Buck B. 9/10/1986
Rolando S. 9/11/2008
Brittany M. 10/3/2014
Sarah C. 10/11/2014
Shawn V. 10/22/2012

Hope In Lutz

Bob F. 09/16/1995
Betty Ann J. 11/09/2007
Melinda G. 11/10/2013
John R. 11/15/1999
Ron S. 11/16/1993
Miriam S. 12/04/2015
Jaime M. 12/09/2007
Don 12/09/1992
Richard B. 12/21/2003

Quest for Serenity

Joseph 09/13/2015
RC H. 08/23/2012

The Heights of NA

Donna C. 9/9/2011

Triple "M" Meeting

Oliver L. 9/4/2005

Women's Hope

Deb C. 9/1/1984

Anonymous

Homegroup

Michal J. 8/15/1990
Nicole M. 9/21/2015
Ben S. 9/30/2012
Nicole S. 9/19/2013

*Women of Serenity - Celebrating its 8th year
anniversary with an
Ice Cream Social
9/17/2016
715 E Bird Ave. Tampa, FL
Celebration starts @ 4PM
6 PM Guest Speaker Collette T.
NO ADDICT WILL BE TURNED AWAY*

**Tampa Unity Group
2nd Anniversary Picnic
10/1/2016 11AM-5PM
Lowry Park Pavilion 120
Come Celebrate with us
Food, Fellowship, and Fun!!**

**GROW OR GO PICNIC
11/13/2016 11AM TO 5PM
CYPRESS POINT PARK
SHELTERS 2 & 3
WE WILL HAVE THE FOOD, YOU BRING
YOU AND YOURS AND COME TO PLAY ON
THE WATERFRONT!
KAYAKS, CANOES, PADDLE BOARDS,
FISHING POLES ARE WELCOME.**

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.