



November/December 2017

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

Best of 2017: Steps and Traditions

Since Step and Tradition 12 represent culminations of the prior steps and traditions, we wanted to present a brief "Best of" Steps and Traditions to highlight some of our amazing contributions. As we end this year, we at Clean Times want to thank all of you who take the time to share your experience, strength and hope in this column.

Steps:

Step 1: "I couldn't have anticipated how emotionally raw it felt to address how powerless I was over relationships; that my life had become unmanageable" - Anonymous Contributor

Step 2: "Practicing old behaviors does not align well in the direction of my spiritual journey through NA. I'm growing and doing better and I absolutely love it!!!" - Anonymous

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Step 3: "Letting go and having faith is a process that challenges our ego. It is no surprise that the survival of our personality and self-image feels very challenged when we surrender and have faith and trust God." - Anonymous Contributor

Step 4: "Through this personal inventory, I have been able to look at the good, the bad, and the ugly. I found out that I AM a beautiful woman, with a kind and loving heart. Thank God and Narcotics Anonymous for my life." - Maggie R.

Step 5: "There was a major gift of freedom that came from that experience. It really started to solidify my faith in the God of my understanding, things started to really change for me at that point." - Anonymous Contributor

Step 6: "After working Step 6, I was given another dose of awareness, seeing myself for who I really am, the motivating factors behind those actions and how I have previously acted on them." - Anonymous

Step 7: "When I am practicing humility, I recognize my spirit is calm, I feel vulnerable, relaxed, humble but most of all, I am being open-minded, willing and honest some of the keys to this step, more importantly learning to practice being honest with myself." - Kindell M.

Step 8: "It is difficult to envision having enough paper on which to write such a LONG list, but that reality threatens to be overwhelming. No one apparently escaped unscathed from my all-consuming self-centeredness. This addict can sink into self-pity until a loving sponsor reminds me to see the other part of this step (...and became willing to make amends to them all)." - Meredith D. (Reprinted from Clean Times August 1996)

Step 9: "I was still acting out in other ways and causing harm to others as well as to myself. Before I would be ready to make direct or indirect amends to anyone, I first needed to work the steps before Step 9. Then and only then would I be ready and willing to work Step 9 for the right reasons." - Lowell T. (reprinted from Clean Times September 1997)

Step 10: "As I continue to take my personal inventory and when wrong promptly admit it, I will become what my Higher Power meant for me to be all along: a whole human being. I must continue to take healthy risks and be aware of my defects and assets." - Herman E. (reprinted from Clean Times October 1995)

Step 11: "Over a period of time I learned that it was okay to be in the silence and that I could be in the

moment anywhere at any time with God." - John

Step 12: "So now when I arrive at the 12th step, the awakening is that the steps work and as a result there is a new found appreciation for life and others." - John

Traditions:

Tradition 1: "Regardless of my personal relationships with other people, my opinions or perceived needs, the first tradition reminds me that my life and well-being are dependent on the unity within the rooms of Narcotics Anonymous." - John M. ROTI (reprinted from Clean Times Jan. 1996)

Tradition 2: "Tradition Two causes the recovering addict to practice the principle of open-mindedness and allows us to disagree without being disagreeable." - Alvin, Addicts Salvation (reprinted from Clean Times Feb. 1997)

Tradition 3: "Then a voice said, "The only requirement for membership is a desire to stop using." The words struck me with a physical force, and I thought, "I HAVE that!" I had little left in my life, and I finally had a desire to stop - to stop bleeding, to stop hurting, to stop destroying everything I touched." - Meredith D.

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Tradition 4: "So long as practicing this autonomy does not violate our traditions, our groups in the Funcoast Area can draw on members' creativity in terms of using alternative meeting formats, and some have already started to do so." - Anonymous

Tradition 5: "Our literature says that carrying the message is what matters. We see it in our meetings when an empty room is transformed into an atmosphere of warmth and empathy. We see it when members generously give of their time and themselves to serve" - William C.

Tradition 6: "Although this tradition addresses itself to the groups, the issues it warns us about arise on a personal level too. Money, property and prestige can divert us because each of them can be used to feed self-centeredness. This tradition points us to the very personal investment each of us has in our groups and in our fellowship." - William C.

Tradition 7: "And...don't forget to bring some money with you to your home group. There's an opportunity awaiting you there to quietly express your gratitude and your pride in your fellowship, by helping to support it. It's called the Seventh Tradition." - Anonymous, New Jersey, USA, January 1989 (reprinted from NA Way, April 2012)

Tradition 8: "Sure, there are professionals that work in the field of addiction treatment (which is certainly not recovery), and professionals who are also recovering addicts, but that doesn't make either of these kinds of people any more or less important or able to recover in Narcotics Anonymous." - Clean Times Staff

Tradition 9: "In order to better understand this tradition, I first

had to think about how typical service boards or committees function. In a business setting there is a boss or someone in charge, but in NA, one person is not in charge. The authority lies within the group. Everyone has a voice, from the newcomer picking up 30 days to the old timer picking up 30 years." - Meredith F.

Tradition 10: "This tradition says that NA has no opinion whatsoever on anything... except the NA program itself. By having no opinion, the focus can always remain to offer help to any addict seeking recovery." - Meredith F.

Tradition 11: "Our fellowship, over time, has gained the reputation of a serious, successful means of achieving recovery from addiction, and as a result we attract not only new members, but also the cooperation of the public in a variety of ways, including access to meeting spaces and referrals from the public and from agencies." - Anonymous

Tradition 12: "The longer I stay clean, however, I realize that my own personality is much more of a barrier to my practicing principles, and that thinking about principles in a void (with the notion that everything after "but" is bullshit) helps me overcome the parts of my personality that make it difficult to practice these principles." - Anonymous, Funcoast Area

Hospitals and Institutions Book Drive

We are collecting **Basic Texts, How it Works and Why, Living Clean: The Journey Continues and the Just for Today Daily Meditation** books for the institutions we carry our message to. We accept new and used books. Please help us continue to carry our message and the literature to these facilities. You can give these books to any H&I member or bring them to our Subcommittee before Area Service. "We only keep what we have by giving it away."

Updates from NAWS

We are writing with news about updates to the NA Meeting Search app that have just been made. The latest version has a number of improvements. You can set preferences to save your favorite meetings, send meeting info to others by text in addition to email, and set distances by kilometers as well as miles. You can also search separately for phone or internet meetings. A couple of new features have been added to the app, including a clean date component and a link to NAWS News. The app is available on iTunes for all iOS devices and Google Play for Android. We are very grateful to everyone who suggested changes and improvements. Your input has made a very big difference.

Thank you!

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.
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or via email at
gbs92101@hotmail.com

Ask An Addict

“I’m worried about getting through the holidays clean. What can I do to celebrate without the use of drugs?”

Basic Text:

“Our new friends in the Fellowship will help us. Our common effort is recovery. Clean, we face the world together. We no longer have to feel backed into a corner, at the mercy of events and circumstances. It makes a difference to have friends who care if we hurt” (p. 56)

“In recovery, our ideas of fun change. We are now free to enjoy the simple things in life, like fellowship” (p. 107)

“I found NA on a beach on New Year’s Eve. There was a group of addicts celebrating their recovery around a bonfire while I was going crazy looking for drugs....Instead of giving me drugs, they treated me better than anyone had before. They didn’t ask anything from me; they just stayed with me and that made a difference” (p. 189)

Living Clean:

“We find our kindred spirits in the rooms - people who just plain understand us.” (p. 135)

“Some of us use the word ‘family’ to describe this closeness [to fellow members] and sometimes it really can feel that way - when we have holidays together” (p. 136)

How It Works:

“Fellowship activities provide opportunities for us to relax, socialize with each

other and have fun. Conventions, dinners, and holiday celebrations give us a change to celebrate our recovery while practicing social skills. Picnics, dances, and sports days, for example, often allow our families to participate, too. We strengthen our sense of community when we share more than just meeting time.” (p. 129)

****Editor’s note:
Please see our activities listings on the back of this newsletter for information on upcoming local fellowship activities.**

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 Gilber O. at 813.245.5399.



Anniversaries

Sept/Oct/Nov/Dec

Upcoming

Events & Info

A New Way

Taryn T. 11/21/04 13 years
Sandra W. 12/17/13 4 years

Brandon at Noon

Lori W. 9/7/16 1 year
Wes C. 10/15/10 7 years
Laila M. 11/16/13 4 years
Kathy R. 12/30/14 3 years
Ella C. 1/3/15 3 years
Kathy F. 1/29/13 5 years
Bill G. 1/31/87 31 years

Free to Be Me

Donna C. 9/9/11 6 years
Kenny B. 10/2/00 17 years
Rachel S. 10/11/15 2 years
Lonnie W. 12/8/15 2 years

Grow or Go

Scott K 11/25/84 33 years
Craig F 11/27/07 10 years
Kyle M 12/8/09 8 years

Hope in Lutz

Betty Ann 10 years
Melinda 4 years
John R. 18 years
Ron 24 years
Steve C. 16 years

Hyde Park NA

Reggie R. 8/19/11 6 years
Jan B. 9/3/10 7 years
Roland S. 9/11/08 9 years
Tommy K. 9/14/07 10 years
Erik N. 9/23/13 4 years
Philip G. 10/4/04 13 years
Robin S. 10/5/97 20 years
Mike D. 11/29/14 3 years

Live or Die

Michael B. 12/15/09 8 years

NA 180

Carlene M. 10/20/04 13 years
Jack R. 2/17/12 6 years

New Life

Connie W. 10/6/01 16 years
Valeria J. 10/9/92 25 years
Robert 10/25/14 3 years
Jennifer P. 12/21/90 27 years
Andrew S. 12/28/12 5 years

Radical Recovery

Alicia H. 9/13/02 15 years
Glenn W. 10/4/01 16 years
Nate M. 10/11/96 21 years
Don D. 10/31/07 10 years

Recovery Central

Valeria B. 9/15/89 28 years
Lisa C. 10/4/86 31 years
Chovonne 12/10/93 24 years
Timothy P. 12/14/02 15 years
Benjamin L. 12/17/15 2 years

Renegade Recovery

Sean H. 10/12/16 1 year

Sunset Solutions

Lydia B. 9/18/88 29 years
Mawk S. 11/3/88 29 years
Tama 11/28/80 37 years
Lori G. 1/1/85 32 years

The Heights of NA

Derek E. 12/23/07 10 years

Triple M Group

Joe Nathen B. 7/25/88 29 years
Reggie A. 8/22/98 19 years
Flex C. 9/1/97 20 years

The War is Over

TC 10/9/92 25 years
Katie F. 10/1/15 2 years
Donald C. 10/5/14 3 years
Wes C. 10/15/10 7 years
Adrena P. 11/1/84 23 years
Nancy H. 11/21/03 14 years

The Workshop

Ronald T. 10/28/90 27 years
Collette T. 11/24/10 7 years
James W. 11/29/97 20 years

Women's Hope

Taryn T. 11/21/04 13 years

Women of Serenity

Wanda L. 8/28/05 12 years

No Group Name Submitted

Dan N. 11/1/10 7 years

The Bridge Group of Narcotics Anonymous:

<http://www.thebridgena.org>

The Bridge Group was formed in December of 2008. Meetings are now registered with World Services, and we are now offering 7 meetings a week on this same phone number ((712) 832-8320, 387870#) to addicts in need. All it requires is a phone and the ability to dial long distance. Due to the prohibitively high cost of toll-free numbers, and limited 7th tradition funds, we have not been able to offer a toll-free option.

Life on Life's Terms Candlelight Gratitude Meeting 12/13/17 5:00-8:00 PM

Brandon Christian Church, 910 S. Bryan Road
This will be a potluck; please bring a covered dish to pass.

New Tampa NA Speaker Jam 12/16/16 6 – 10 PM

St. James United Methodist Church 16202 Bruce B.
Downs Blvd., Tampa,
Open NA meeting at 9 pm
Food \$5, Drinks \$1:

Guest Speakers (More than 80 years combined recovery)
Margaret W. 6-2-92
Lehman H. 7-16-90
Dennis M. 12-3-87

New Bite of Serenity Mini Holiday Marathon 12/25/17 9:00am – 5:30pm

St. Paul Lutheran Church 5103 N. Central Ave., Tampa
Food donations accepted, Everyone is Welcome.
Season's Greetings from the New Bite of Serenity
Group of Narcotics Anonymous!

Funcoast Activities New Years Dance 12/31/17 8:00 PM – 12:30 AM Seminole Heights UMC, 6111 N. Central Avenue (at Hanna) Tickets \$5.00

Soda and Water for Sale, Free Food!
Come & bring in the New Year!!

Hats, Noise Makers, etc. to be supplied at the event.

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.