



# New Attitudes

Bergen County, New Jersey P.O. Box 738, Little Ferry, NJ 07643

bergenarenewsletter@yahoo.com

# New Year... New Life

## NA in NJ

### Greater Newark Area Convention V

The Greater Newark Area will be hosting it's fifth convention 'Against All Odds We Do Recover' on January 30, 2009 at the Teaneck Marriot at Glenpointe. The hotel is located at 100 Frank W. Burr Blvd., Teaneck, NJ in Bergen County. For hotel reservations call (201) 836-0600 direct or 1-800-992-7752. Rate: \$109.00/night (mention NA).

### Speaker Jam/Basketball Tourney/ Dance

The Capital Area Fundraising Convention Committee is hosting a Speaker Jam/ Basketball Tournament/Dance on February 7, 2009 beginning at 12PM. \$8 for adults and \$4 for children. Location: Donnelly Homes Community Center, 875 New Willow Street, Trenton, NJ. Visit [www.capitalareaofna.org](http://www.capitalareaofna.org) for more info.

### Valentine's Day Karaoke & Dance

NJRCNA XXIV F&E Committee with MCASC ACTIVIES Committee presents. Dress to Impress - come out and shine Prizes awarded for best dressed. Feb, 14, 2009: Knights of Columbus, 24 Patrick

Every year I had made the same resolutions. Lost weight, stop smoking; try to be a better person, save money. I think we all get the picture.

This year I did not have any resolutions. I never followed them anyway. Everything I did to improve my life came when I was willing to do it. I had been struggling with sponsorship as my sponsor decided after 4 1/2 years that she did not want to sponsor me any longer. She told me she no longer believed in the program as she had been shown through education that there were many different ways to recover.

I am far from thrilled at the notion of starting all over again. My 1<sup>st</sup> Step had to be exercised here. I am powerless over Sponsor 1. That did not stop me from obsessing over it. I had heard another addict say when he and his sponsor split; it felt like the end of a marriage.

New Years day I woke up at noon, something I have not done in a very long time. I had missed the afternoon meeting. I live across the street from a meeting I never go to. For some reason I was pulled in that direction and after an afternoon of boo hooing I went across the street to the meeting.

The usual format was suspended for the holidays as, the holidays are hurricane season. The meeting was rather small considering the area I was in. The magic number had been 5 that night. Five years clean, 5 years free, and five months without smoking. My turn came and I shared of how five years ago I was locked in a cell and had no idea where my life was going. Who knew that I would be sitting in a meeting 5 years later?

Now they say a Higher Power, God, The Dude Upstairs, speaks though people, I finished sharing and the next to share was a man I have known since I came in and he has been clean a long time. He said that his resolution for the year was to stay out of other people's stuff. It was exactly what I needed to hear. My life is so productive when I stay out of other people's drama. No matter what happens in my life I will be ok. Hurt is just a feeling and it will go away. I adopted right then and there this wise man's resolution in recovery.

Will I do it perfectly? No. I will stumble and get a new tool to use. I will embark on a new journey with new people. One can't have too many friends. ~ Donna

### 2009 New Attitudes Newsletter Committee

Liz A.

Contributions and new materials are always welcome. For more information contact the newsletter committee.

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

Basic Text, page 101

# Awareness of Self...

I was in a long distance relationship for the better part of three years up until recently. I spent three years planning my life around this person and sitting on my hands waiting for my life to begin. I spent three years believing everything this person said to me, even though my heart was telling me it was not all true. I ignored all the signs from my higher power because I didn't want to let go. I molded my life around this person's, even going so far as planning to uproot myself and my recovery to live closer. I loved this person and against my own will I convinced myself that this was the journey I was meant to be on. As it turns out I am an expert at fooling myself!

In the rooms, I shared about my feelings for this person. I told other addicts how I struggled to understand why certain parts of our relationship lacking and then chalked it up to 'well, you do have to compromise in relationships' or 'he's just not where I'm at!' I spent hundreds of thousands of dollars to see this person and send them gifts and make them happy. I did everything I could to keep my relationship in my life and held on with my claws for as long as I could, even when it hurt, and it often did.

I had become a parasite. I felt that I required this person to live. I made their happiness, my happiness. If they were falling apart, I was falling apart. I had spent more than two years in Narcotics Anonymous and I had quit drugs and alcohol. I had received many of the benefits of staying clean and I was so grateful for the gifts. But I was no closer to knowing myself and loving myself than when walked into my first meeting. All my clean time had been spent living for someone else.

I spent money on this person that I wouldn't spend on myself. I bought gifts that I would not buy myself. I had to ask myself why! I came up with many answers but the exact nature is this: I didn't want them to leave, because then, I'd have to look at me.

I spent my entire life trying to fit in. I did whatever I needed to so that I could be accepted by other people. It's pretty easy to see why I ended up using drugs! One of the beautiful miracles of recovery is that once you gain an awareness in recovery, it is nearly impossible to pretend you don't know. When people relapse they say 'when you go out after having some clean time, using is not the same,' and I believe it's the awareness that makes it so. Just for today, I am aware of my *lack* of awareness about *myself* and I will not hide in someone else to avoid me.

Liz

## A Step Poem...

I took one step, began to moan  
I can't do this one on my own.  
I took two steps, began to pray  
Restore me God, please now,  
today.

I took three steps, gave up  
my will  
Maybe God loves me still.  
I took a fourth, I looked inside  
Nothing more would I hide.

And on the fifth, I said aloud  
I've done some wrong, and I'm  
not proud.  
I took six steps, and got  
prepared  
To lose the defects, I was  
scared.

Now I'm at seven, take them  
away  
My God, for this I do pray.  
And on eight, the list was long

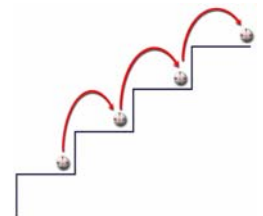
Amends to make for all the  
wrong.

I took nine steps, put down  
my pride  
Amends made, I will not hide.  
Ten steps I take, each day I pray  
I make amends along the way.

And on eleven I pray to know  
Each day His will, which way  
to go.

I took twelve steps, I'm like a bird  
To others now, I spread  
the word.....

Author anonymous



### Release Form

**The following release form must accompany all submissions to "New Attitudes Newsletter". Mail to PO Box 738, Little Ferry, N.J. 07643**

*I hereby give New Attitudes, their successors, assignees and those who act in their authority permission to publish the attached article or other written material pertaining to my personal experiences with or opinions about the NA fellowship or program. I understand that my material may be edited. I possess full legal capacity to exercise this authorization and hereby release New Attitudes and the Narcotics Anonymous fellowship and its service board and committees from any claim by myself, my successors and/or assignees.*

Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_ Witness \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

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# Doctors and Recovery - Telling on Yourself



This author is 63 years old and is definitely an "old-timer" in NA with 22 years clean. During his time in recovery, he has experienced a myriad of medical conditions, problems and diagnoses. These include but are not limited to open-heart surgery, emphysema, diabetes, chronic back pain, depression and anxiety. He has had many invasive medical procedures that required the use of controlled substances. Here is what he says has worked for him:

1. Get a good doctor. Ask your buddies for recommendations - someone who knows how to treat addicts.
2. Tell the doctor about your addiction history (not to do so is a set-up). many older addicts fall for this one. They seem to think the doctor won't give them enough pain medication, so they think they can manage it themselves. Too many old-timers relapse this way.
3. Fill out the medical history. Be sure to write something like "past history of addiction" somewhere on the form.
4. If you are concerned about your medical records (jobs, insurance, etc.) try whispering in the doctor's ear, "I'm going to tell you something but don't write it down."
5. Ask him/her not to prescribe any controlled substances unless absolutely necessary, and to avoid your drugs of choice if possible.
6. Don't be shameful. Treat it as you would an allergy to medications.
7. If addictive type medications are required, get someone to administer them to you as prescribed (spouse, roommate, lover, parents, neighbors, etc.).
8. Talk to your neighborhood pharmacist about questionable prescriptions. Call him/her aside, or on the phone. (Stick to neighborhood pharmacies. Avoid chains. Get to know the person.)
9. Talk to your sponsor and support group about your concerns. (Don't blab about your medications in meetings, you'll get too much confusing advice.)
10. Remember to get back to meetings as soon as you are able. Your body can't distinguish between street drugs and the medications you needed.
11. If you do the right things and stay in a good spiritual space, you will find that the drugs will do their job. You may feel drugged, but you won't enjoy it.
12. Keep a copy of the "In Times of Illness" NA pamphlet on hand at all times. Refer to it whenever a question arises regarding your recovery.

Morty L.

# Magic Formulas...

I remember when I was using; I tried just about every drug put in front of me. When they didn't work on their own, I tried combinations. Pills, liquor, amphetamines... none of the combinations seemed to do the trick. It was as if I was a thief trying to crack a safe or I was a chemist trying to find the right solution to make the pain stop once and for all.

In recovery, I'm still looking for my "magic formula" but it has a name now - balance. It comes with exercising my new ability to choose. The choices can be made in different combinations to find out what I like and don't like; what I want and I don't want for myself.

Life on life's terms can make balance truly feel like it requires magic to attain. Just when I think I've found it, life on life's terms rears its ugly head and shows me just how much I don't have it at all. So what do I do?

I reevaluate my priorities, make a gratitude list, and listen to other members' experience strength and hope. I look for addicts in the room that have what I want and I ask them how they got it. I ask them how they manage to sustain their now full lives and it always seems to be the same answer... recovery must come first.

The 'magic formula' of balance isn't magical after all it seems. It's found in the spiritual principles: honesty, open-mindedness and willingness. If I am honest, I can realize what exactly I am capable of and gain humility. If I am open-minded I can realize that my way isn't always the best way. If I am willing I can realize that change is possible with faith in a power greater than myself.

Balance is an art that allows me to solve the problem of myself. If I spend too much time focusing on something, I am spending too little time focusing on something else. Usually that something else is me.

With the new year, people make a tradition out of half-hearted oaths about how they will better themselves for the year ahead and resolve to reach their goals. I wonder what life on life's terms would say about these resolutions. I think about how many fall by the wayside just minutes, hours or days after they are made.

Liz

