

EVENTS

Greater Orlando Area Monthly Bicycle Ride

Sun, September 4, 8am – 10am
Monthly on the first Sunday,
Seminole Wekiva Minor Trail Head
<http://orlandona.org/wp-content/files/flyers/announcements/bikeflyer-file-1304295798.jpg>

Coast Area *Presents* Regional WeekendDouble

September 17-18, 2011*Sunset
Tree Guest Suites 12200 Tamiami Trail North, Naples
34110, For hotel reservations call: 239-593-8733 When making reservations mention code: South Florida Region Rate: \$79.
Jake K 954-931-0871
<http://www.sfrna.org/pdf/activities/444.pdf>

Mid-Coast Area ** *Presents* MCCNA at the Hilton

September 30-October 2, 2011
100 Fairway Drive, Deerfield Beach, FL. 33441.
Reservation call 1-800-624-3606
Contact MCCNA Chair Elaine - 772-216-4549
<http://www.sfrna.org/pdf/activities/394.pdf>

River Coast Area 23rd Annual Campout

Sep 23 – 25, 2011
Where7360 Erin Road, Weeki Wachee, FL 34607
http://rivercoastareana.org/23rd_Annual_Campout_Flyer.pdf

10am Group of NA Soft Ball and Picnic at Merritt Park *Its Free!*

316 SW 2nd Ave Delray Beach, FL 33444
Saturday, October 8th 2011 Noon-4pm*

H.A.C.N.A. (HEARTLAND AREA CONVENTION)

Fri, October 14, 3pm – Sun, October 16, 1pm
3200 RIVER RANCH, RIVER RANCH, FI
<http://www.nafheartland.org/HACNA%20registration%202011.pdf>

TCCNA V

Fri, October 28, 4pm – Sun, October 30, 1pm
Where555 NE Ocean Boulevard, Stuart, FI
Hutchinson Island Marriott Beach Resort & Marina Room
Nights \$115.00 Registration Forms will Be out soon NA is not affiliated with this location

H&I Gratitude Dinner Les Violines

Banquet Hall 10500 NW 77th ct, Hialeah Gardens,
7:00pm - 12:00am - Dinner @ 7:30pm, Speaker 8:30p
Ticket cost \$25.00 Contact Denise @ 786-488-5366

MCCNA XI Karaoke Night Fundraiser happens

Sept. 17th 2011 at Crossroads Club, 1700 Lake Ida Rd.
\$5 Donation. 8:30 Speaker, raffles, food for sale more info call Julia 561-702-2562

Kick Ball Recovery

Sun Sept 18th for the BUNGA BUNGA POOL PARTY - 3301 Farragut St in Hollywood FL as well as Sun Oct 16th KICK BALL RECOVERY - Park 15 Ave & Jefferson St in Hollywood FL more info write to kickballrecov...@yahoo.com

First Coast Area Convention of Narcotics Anonymous XI

Sept 23rd-25th at the Sawgrass Marriot Resort and Spa – 1000 PGA Tour blvd. in Ponte Vedra Beach, FL 32082 All reservations must be made by sept.8,

Weekend *Presents* Rainbow Weekend

November 11-13, 2011*Rainbow 14\$20
Fort Lauderdale Marriott North, Fort Lauderdale
For more information: Ed K.
Registration Chair 305-505-5323flyer
<http://www.sfrna.org/pdf/activities/411.pdf>

North Dade Area 24 Hour Room

November 24, 2011
Thanksgiving Dinner, Meeting & Dance
Opa Locka Clubhouse 1290 Ali Baba Ave,
Opa Locka Contact Charles E. 305-796-9558*

**BBQ*

September 27th, 2011
Quiet Waters Park, 401 South Powerline Rd., Deefield Beach, FL 33442 - park entrance \$1.50 per person Pavilion 8 near Ski Rixen Hamburgers, Hot Dogs,



Anniversaries



Shawn – 18 months
Sarah B. – 18 months
Byrd – 9 years
Andy – 1 Year
Lynn – 2 years
Brent – 2 years
Dave – 2 years
Patricia – 5 years
Keith – 13 years

Groups

Saturday Night Alive meeting celebrated 15 years

THE HEART OF NA

The All Inclusive Disease

By: Christine L

“Self-obsession is at the heart of our insanity.” IP No. 12 The Triangle of Self-Obsession.

The disease of addiction is both a continuing and progressive illness. Simply meaning that even when we put down the drugs our illness still remains and continues to progress within our mind, body, and spirit. Addicts' unique ability to self-obsess is what keeps us sick as well as insane. When we come into the rooms of Narcotics Anonymous we quickly begin to realize that drugs were only a symptom of our problem that in fact, we as individuals were our problem. Addiction is a disease that involves so much more than just the use of drugs.

NA is all inclusive for the simple fact that we as addicts know our problem isn't a specific drug or substance. Instead of focusing on the substance itself we focus on the feelings behind our selfish, self-seeking behaviors that we use to feel good about ourselves and ultimately get outside ourselves. Drugs, including alcohol, are only two of the behaviors associated with this vicious disease.

When I first came to NA I was drawn in by the all-inclusive nature of this disease. My name is Christine and I am an Addict. It was that simple for me. Not only was I physically addicted to drugs, but I had addict thoughts which lead to addict behaviors and actions. Putting down the drugs was one thing, however once I did that I was left with myself. And ultimately I was the problem. In recovery my disease has worked its hardest to get and keep me miserable, sometimes it succeeds. It does this by feeding my addict side and fighting my program of Narcotics Anonymous side. The program teaches me that rationing my food, over exercising, excessive shopping, and fast driving are not healthy choices, however my disease makes these choices seem enticing. Because of the all-inclusive nature of this disease, I can go to any NA meeting worldwide and talk about those aspects of my addiction. For that I am truly grateful for the program of Narcotics Anonymous.

After I put down the drugs I often found myself still acting out in self-seeking behaviors. Many of us will continue to do behaviors characteristic of our disease in an effort not to focus on the feelings that are behind those behaviors. We often continue to do things that make us feel good about ourselves, or to get us outside of ourselves. Many of us shop, eat, stop eating, engage in dangerous non-drug related actions, have promiscuous sex, get involved in new relationships, obsess over old relationships, inflict self-injury, gamble, drive fast, search for love, and much more. These are all behaviors associated with the disease of addiction.

Just like the consequences I endured during my active drug addiction the consequences of my behaviors and actions non-narcotic related cut me just as deep, if not deeper. The pain alone of my non-drug related consequences was unbearable; after all I didn't have the drugs to mask it anymore. Through step work, using has become 'not an option'. These actions are common among newcomers; however they are just as common in people who have some time as well. I sometimes lose sight as to why I am a member of Narcotics Anonymous and get caught up in the whirlwind of emotions that my behaviors are helping or preventing me from feeling. When I feel validated by others I feel loved and at times will go to any length to keep that feeling. Other times when I am not getting that validation I turn to actions that will prevent the feeling of loneliness. Either way I am actively acting out in my disease.

The self-centered, egotistical addict that I tend to be is generally the last to realize when I am acting out, just as I was the last to realize I was addict and have a problem. My family, friends, supports, and sponsor pointed out my faults and actions with complete honesty. I choose not to hear them until I had the willingness to be honest with myself. At this point I was brought back to step 1, again I am powerless and my life had become unmanageable.

It isn't until the hurt and the pain of these actions is great enough that I made a decision to take a deeper look at myself, to truly analyze the internal feelings that which makes me act externally. First I must (a) trust God, (b) clean house, and (c) help others. The format for which doing so is laid out in the 12 simple steps of Narcotics Anonymous. The steps don't clear up the wreckage of any of my past actions; in fact I am still feeling the wrecking of some of my addictive thoughts and actions today. The steps gave me a freedom from active addiction. Not just the active addiction of using, but the active addiction of my eating disorder, excessive need to clean, and compulsion to shop. The steps gave me the tools to combat my obsessions and compulsions that are non-narcotic related as well as the tools to never pick up a drug again. This program is continuing to work for me on a daily basis simply because of the all-inclusive nature of my disease. Narcotics Anonymous doesn't ask me what I am addicted to; the program and people in it simply accept me for who I am. My name is Christine and I am an addict.

“If we stay clean, and can learn to practice these principals in all our affairs, a miracle happens. We find freedom— from drugs, from our addiction, and from our self-obsession.” IP No.12 The Triangle of Self-Obsession

Submission Information

To submit an article, send it to midcoastnewsletter@gmail.com, Articles can be anything that is recovery related and remember we could edit the article to make it fit into a given space.

We meet the LAST TUESDAY OF THE MONTH, at 6:00 pm at PANERA BREAD® in Delray (right at Linton and Federal)

We are **NOT affiliated with PANERA BREAD®

The Heart of NA is a newsletter written and published by addicts for addicts. The opinions, views, experience, etc. contained herein are those of the individual and not those of Narcotics Anonymous as a whole

STEP ARTICLE

Step Two

By Andrew

Before I was asked to write on the second step, there was a second step meeting. And after I was asked, there was a second step meeting. I didn't plan on going to these second step meetings. I took these gifts from my higher power as pieces to my learning process. Because sometimes when I don't rigidly plan, things seem to tie together pretty nicely.

Right now I'm drinking coffee, putting pressure on myself to write this article, and listening to a newly discovered afrobeat band called antibalas. How can I tie the second step into this process? Because, these are life steps. I'm gonna write it out:

We came to believe that a power greater than ourselves could restore us to sanity.



There is insanity with in the process of writing and articulating. My ego wants me to sound like someone I'll never be. And so how do I grow and learn from that inner tangledness? It's really important to accept utter powerlessness. I have no control over these things. After admitting powerlessness, I need the immediate hope that

comes with step two. Within hope, it doesn't feel so necessary to have "control." My higher power takes control and that takes away a lot of pressure.

I've heard many things about insanity. It's doing the same thing over and over and expecting different results, not having a conscience, doing the same thing over and over again, knowing the results, and doing it anyway. I can connect with all three. When I'm stuck in insane thinking, I don't even know it. I don't have the power to acknowledge or accept it. It feels like the only reality and it feels really heavy. I could go pretty insane wondering and pondering about insanity!

Anyway, when I came to believe that a power greater than myself could restore me to sanity, it took a lot of hope, willingness, and a little blind faith to accept that I have no idea what God has to offer. And today, that feels freeing.

EDITOR'S COLUMN

Service and the Twelfth Step

By Kevin

Where does our Twelfth step lead me? This is a question (and answer) that has evolved throughout my recovery. I will start with addressing the first portion; carrying the message. There was a time when I considered that I

could actually personally carry the message. I even believed that service bodies could carry the message. It was a while before I realized that it was the group, the "We" that carried the message. The message is carried not just in words or literature. It is carried by the doors that are opened and the hugs we give freely. It is carried by those that sit around us and share freely from their heart. It is carried by the continuance of meetings and the Narcotics Anonymous program.

So where does this lead me? It leads me to recognize that showing up and being a part of groups is where I can help the *We* carry the message. The question becomes, what can I do for the *We*?. This may end up being to simply attend a meeting, sharing from my heart, reaching out to someone who is suffering or even doing service. Today this extends out for me even beyond Narcotics Anonymous to everywhere I find my higher power in action; into any group I am part of that carries my higher power's message of Love. It is the act of aligning my will to that of my higher power through the power of the *We*.

Now, where does practicing those principles lead me? That portion is easier to describe and much harder to accomplish than the first part of the Twelfth step. My first reaction or thought in any situation is to complete my will or desire. My disease is self-obsession and ever present. The 'medicine' is to utilize these spiritual principles instead of that first thought; simple enough.

Reality is putting that buffer between my first thought and searching for the right action. The spiritual principle I can practice in a situation rather than relying on automatic addict behavior. Sometimes a simple prayer gets me there. A pause or silence is never a bad thing if I take the time to go through the tool bag Narcotics Anonymous has given me. It comes easier now however it still takes practice.

So where does the Twelfth step lead me? It leads me beyond my self-obsession. It leads me to work with others, to be a part of. This is far more than just service. It takes me out of my comfort zone and joins me with others in the NA program of recovery. When I isolate or insulate myself in my 'busy' life I am ignoring the full implications of this step.

Lastly where does service fit in all this? Service is a reality as much as money and work are a part of my life outside of Narcotics Anonymous. It is necessary to facilitate the ability of the *We* to carry the message. Rent the facility; chair the meeting; manage the funds for rent and literature and beyond into the services such as Helpline, H&I and PI. Service is the smallest part of the 12th step in as much as it is only necessary if we keep the *We* alive. A meeting place, literature and a chair are useless without the *We*. We exist because of the Twelfth Step; service exists because of the "We".

ARTICLE OF THE MONTH

Finding the Right Sponsor

By Mark B.

When I awoke from a black out in treatment, I had no clue what lay ahead of me. I had heard of NA, the steps and of sponsorship but I didn't know how any of these could help this seemingly hopeless addict. Realizing that my old way of thinking wasn't working, I became a little open minded and listened to other addicts who were clean. Something they had done was working and I wanted to know the secret.

With each H & I meeting that was brought into my treatment center, I kept hearing the secret revealed by each speaker; Get a sponsor and work the steps. But "what the hell is this sponsor thing all about" I wondered to myself. One speaker told us "a sponsor is someone who has worked all twelve steps of NA and can take you through them. But most importantly, a

sponsor has something that you want". Still in treatment, semantics was still huge so "what I want" was contorted into "I don't *want* anything from anybody". That sounded greedy and I'm not a greedy person. RIGHT! More daunting was the task of asking another man to begin a relationship with me where I would share my past and even worst my feelings.

Unknowing how to ask another man on what seemed like a "man date", I did like any good manipulating addict would do; I had someone else do it for me. When at an outside meeting, I asked a tech if she knew anyone willing to sponsor and if she would introduce me to him. I was introduced to a man who was younger and in another fellowship. I didn't care at the time who he was as a man, I really wanted a name on paper so I could attain passes to leave treatment. I quickly realized he wasn't for me.

Already hard to call a man I didn't know, when he didn't answer my calls; I felt rejected and as if I was annoying him. When we finally met to do step work, we did the first three steps in one hour which left me unfulfilled. It wasn't a difficult task to end the relationship when I moved into a halfway house twenty minutes away.

I found my next sponsor at the first meeting I attended on a regular basis. He attended the meeting daily. When he spoke, I like what he shared.

Most importantly, he remembered my name and made a point to say hello making him the ideal sponsor. Again, my thinking was wrong. He didn't come early or stay late at the meetings, he didn't answer my calls and every time we scheduled to meet; he broke the engagement. Disenfranchised with sponsorship, I quit calling him and decided that I didn't need another man to help me.

It wasn't until I had over six months before I got the sponsor I have now and that was because I was forced by my halfway house. I am forever grateful to them for helping me see that I did need this relationship. Having a little more understanding of sponsorship, I began looking for the man who had what I wanted. That meant I first had to look at myself and see what areas of my life where lacking. Not an easy task for an egotistical addict like myself to undertake. But when I saw him, I knew he was the one right away.

He was the first speaker I heard while in treatment and God put him back in my life. This was no coincidence. When he shares in meetings, he shows emotions without fear. People respect him not for his possessions but for the man he is; a good man. This is what I wanted to become. I asked him to sponsor me and that was over a year ago. I have learned much from this man. Not just from his words but more importantly from his actions. I try to emulate him in many areas of my life. I do service, I come to meetings early and stay late, I now sponsor and help my sponsee's anyway I can. I am forever indebted to him and hope one day I can be half the man he is. Thankfully, my higher power led me to the sponsor who not only had what I wanted but what I needed.

SUB-COMMITTEE OF SERVICE

PI and this NA Member

By: Sarah "Boston"

Public Information is a vital part of both the NA fellowship and my personal program of recovery. The purpose of the Public Information Subcommittee is to inform the public that Narcotics Anonymous exists and offers recovery from the disease of addiction. PI provides information about how and where to find NA by establishing contacts with all organizations, agencies, educational institutions, businesses, media, and presentations to interested persons. PI gives information and answers questions regarding NA, the NA program, NA purpose and availability.

Anyone who has seen a meeting schedule in a waiting room, a poster for the helpline number on a community events board or a phone book listing for NA has seen PI at work. But PI is also more than just this purpose.

Public Information has given me the chance to give back to both NA and my community. By carrying the NA message to the public, PI provides me with a direct, simple way to make a difference in the lives of others. My experience with PI has given me a working knowledge of the 12 Traditions and 12 Concepts. In early recovery I met my sponsor through my involvement with PI, and saw firsthand that the rumor "there's no lengthy time in NA" was a blatant lie. My PI experience has helped me to understand the importance of anonymity and what NA's public relations policy was all about. PI has educated me on how every individual member of NA has a personal responsibility to represent the fellowship in the behaviors we have in public, and apply spiritual principles in all our affairs. Personal reputation and the reputation of the program are inseparable when people outside the fellowship are aware of our involvement. Everything I do reflects NA as a whole, and PI is the subcommittee that taught me that.

Public Information has also taught me the importance of NA being a visible and available solution to the still suffering addicts in our community. The service of PI has an effect on the worldwide fellowship. There need never be an addict without the chance to experience the new way of life that NA offers, but without a strong dedicated PI committee that is often the case. NA can provide vital, reliable, positive services to the community, through meetings, literature, presentations, and individual members being aware of their role in NA's public image.

PI has helped me to understand how to live spiritual principles. I need to act with integrity and honesty if my goal is to serve PI and the community in a consistent and reliable manner. That means not taking on more than I can handle, but not being selfish in my time. When looking to share information about NA with those outside the fellowship I need to be respectful of the listener's goals, and values so that there is an attitude of mutual respect and flexibility. NA has given me back my life, and made that life worth living. PI helps me in my effort to show my gratitude for NA and help the still sick and suffering. I am honored to get to be a part of others ability to recover, while at the same time receiving an expanding education on how to apply spiritual principles in all my affairs.



THE HEART OF NA

WE WANT TO HEAR FROM YOU!!!!!!

To submit an article, send it to:

midcoastnewsletter@gmail.com

Articles can be anything that is recovery related and remember we could edit the article to make it fit into a given space

