

## EVENTS

### Activities -

November 24th, 2011

**Thanksgiving Dinner 11am to 4pm at Crossroads Club, 1700 Lake Ida Road, Delray Beach Free For more information call Brian 561-860-1132**

December 24th - 25th, 2011

**Christmas 12 Hour Room 11pm to 7am at Crossroads Club, 1700 Lake Ida Road, Delray Beach Free For more information call Brian 561-860-1132**

December 31st, 2011 - January 1st, 2012

**New Year 12 Hour Room 11pm to 7am at Crossroads Club, 1700 Lake Ida Road, Delray Beach Free For more information call Brian 561-860-1132**

January 1st, 2012

**New Year Day Picnic 10am to 3pm 2pm Speaker Lake Ida Park, Delray Beach Heron Pavilion Hot Dog, Hamburger, Chicken \$7 For more information call Brian 561-860-1132**

February 25th, 2012

**Hooked on NA \$30 Fishing includes picnic 8am to Noon at 301 Seabreeze Blvd, Ft. Lauderdale, FL 33316 followed by a picnic at Morikami, 4000 Morikami Park Road, Delray Beach off Jog Rd south of Linton Blvd. \$7 includes Hot Dog, Hamburger and hopefully a Fish Fry! Noon to 4pm 3pm meeting. For more information call Brian 561-860-1132**

### Submission Information

To submit an article, send it to [midcoastnewsletter@gmail.com](mailto: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

NOVEMBER 2011, Edition 1- Mid-Coast

**In times of illness...**

**Anonymous**

NA literature states that obsession plus compulsion are the main characteristics of addiction and even though now I see that I qualify in both areas it took me quite a long time to admit that I was an addict despite the fact that I never used drugs on a regular basis. I lost my husband and sister and law to cancer (each within a few days of each other). I have been very involved in a 12 step program for almost 20 years. At that time it seemed to me that I was handling the losses quite spiritually, with acceptance and peace. Some friends thought I was managing my grief to well and feared that I was sure to crash into the reality of my losses. To some, it was just a matter of when. Well, about 2 months later I started obsessing about illness, specifically cancer, and worried that about my health more and more each day. A close friend was watching her husband loose his battle with cancer, and seeing him deal with the disease reopened countless memories of how my husband had fought his personal battle. Despite an antidepressant prescribed by a doctor I steadily worsted having less ability to deal with life. After 5 or 6 on my medication, with no relief I made an appointment with a psychiatrist. It was a very difficult 6 week wait until I could see the Doctor.

Those day dragged by and each day my sickness grew, sickness of body mind and spirit. When I finally got to meet with him, he changed my medication and added a new drug to treat anxiety. It was soon after that that my sponsor from another fellowship passed away. Several months passed while I was still attending 12 step meetings but I felt much less involved or part of the groups. I wouldn't share at a meeting and I tried to do service but I was so self absorbed. I would end up mostly talking about myself and my depression. The talking got progressively worst and selfish. It was a perfect opportunity to work steps with a sponsor but had not sought help from another sponsor after my dear friend died. The strong spirituality that I once had before my loved ones dies slowly disappeared. My faith in a good and kind God of my understanding was becoming by a huge void. Maybe just maybe there was a god and he would not condemn me for taking my own life and surely understand the depths of my pain.

I had slowly narrowed my circle of friends that I had been relying on for years. When I went to meeting I did not try to hide my depression. More than a few people would share what their struggles were like. A few even confided that they had tried to kill themselves but never admitted that I had thoughts of suicide myself. Over and over I would deny any thoughts of harming myself. I told no one yet each day I would think about how I would take my life in the near future. I decided enough courage to do it any other way except taking all the pain pills my husband had left behind when he died (and there were an awful lot of them).

More and more I thought about the pills, wouldn't my family be better off with me gone? Sure it would be hard at the beginning but they would be relieved of the stress and pain of caring for me. I lived alone but had become really dependant.

One day I finally made my decision. A family member found me unconscious and spent over a month I the hospital. I had come extremely close to death. Everyone was more than surprised when I pulled out of it when I physically began to recover. My spirituality was nowhere to be found.

Nothing seemed to help until I got back to a 12 step program of narcotics anonymous meetings on a daily basis. I am still member of the group that took me in. I am convinced that without daily meetings and opening my heart to a new sponsor I would have never regained my sanity.

Life is so good today thanks to the Narcotics Anonymous program and all my supports in the rooms. I hope I can give back what has been given to me.

## STEP ARTICLE

### My experience with the 4th step

by Jeff W.

There I was in a halfway house with almost five months clean living off my girlfriend's (at the time) unemployment. It was time for me to write the often dreaded fourth step. One thing was different then my previous attempts (in the other fellowship) at writing a fourth step; I had the faith (from working step three) that made me comfortable writing everything down and trusting that the process would have positive results. It is, however, a searching and "fearless" moral inventory. If I was fearful I wouldn't really be on that step. The first three steps prepared me with the principles of honesty, hope and faith. These were necessary to prepare me for what I was about to do: look at the ugly reflection and it for what it is and in doing so, figure out where certain behaviors started. I left my fourth step under the sheets on my bed on top my pillow, so at the end of the day I would have it right there to remind me to at least do something for my recovery before resting my head. I remember staying home on a Friday night to work on my fourth step. I loved how I was learning to catch myself before doing something that would lead me to carrying a resentment on someone else. I should have put a lock on it though. I remember my girlfriend asking me if I had something I should tell her. She said "I know what happened with you at the hotel room." I had no idea what she was talking about. She had gone through my step work and read about something that happened ten years prior. She thought I was writing about something current. Even knowing that someone was reading what I was once afraid to even look at myself AND using it against me, I wasn't afraid. I had learned to trust that as long as I did the next right thing, I would make it through the challenge with the courage to stay clean. I continued to stay searching and fearless with my inventory. Sometimes what I wrote made me so emotional I'd drop the pen and have to bury my face in my hands for a few minutes. I allowed myself to feel what I had to and when I had to I'd call another addict and share how I was feeling. our basic text says "we develop the ability to survive our emotions". That's something I once thought would never be possible, I witnessed it and through that I felt true growth.

### EDITOR'S COLUMN

By Elissa W

Considering where I was three months ago: living in a trailer in the ghetto of Queens and selling my ass so that I was able to get high twenty-four hours a day, five days a week (only five because the other two days I was passed out asleep), I think where I'm at today is a miracle. And, really, it's thanks to Narcotics Anonymous. I came into this program unwillingly, but through being in these rooms I actually learned a great deal about myself and about life, and I have a new perspective on

things today. This week I got kicked out of my halfway house. I didn't really understand the logic behind getting kicked out, aside of the fact that it was finally revealed to the staff that I had relapsed three weeks earlier. Although they let me stay for another week after finding out, eventually they decided that it wasn't the right place for me and I would have to move on. At first I was really upset and angry, but after a lot of thought and conversations with my Higher Power, I came to see this experience as a blessing. My perspective today is that I believe that my Higher Power didn't want me to be there anymore, and he's going to give me something bigger and better to tackle now. Looking back at my relapse, I see it as a gift because I learned so much from that experience. I used for a few hours and felt horrible, miserable, broken down, suicidal... I didn't know how to come back from that. I was scared to death and all I could do was go to a meeting. I went into that meeting feeling angry, yelling at God, and hating myself. But I came out of that meeting realizing that that is where I belong. I came back into the rooms so quickly, and it saved my life. Who knows where I would be today (probably dead) if I hadn't come back – and that was only three weeks ago. Relapse doesn't have to be a part of recovery. It happened to be a part of MY recovery, but don't think it's necessary. If you want to be clean, you can be clean. Work a good program and you can have your heart's desires. STAY. I am so thankful for this program in so many ways. I have a sponsor who I love and gives me great suggestions to improve my life. We haven't started working the steps yet, but I'm really excited to get that going. I want to change my life. I want to be a better person, a better daughter, and a better sister, and hopefully I can somewhat make up for the horrible things I did in active addiction. Honestly, where I was three months ago compared to where I'm at today, I am a completely different person. And I know that three months from now, I'll be another completely different person who is even better than I am today. I have Narcotics Anonymous to thank for that.

### ARTICLE OF THE MONTH

My name is Olivia and I am an addict. I'm going to share my experience strength and hope on my relationships thus far in recovery. When I was about 8 months clean I got into a relationship with a guy also in recovery. It started off like a lot of my old relationships in active addiction. When we don't change nothing changes. No boundaries and just rushed into things. We moved in together after a month. There was dishonesty from the very beginning. The more I stayed in the relationship the sicker I got. I began to isolate myself from others. I started picking back up old behaviors like cutting myself. The person I was with was also was using old behaviors like gambling and sexual addiction stuff. Towards the end it started to become emotionally and physically abusive. A few days after picking up my 18 month key tag I was arrested for domestic battery and taken to jail. I was in jail for 2 day. I come to NA because my addiction manifests itself in many different ways. I

was addicted to this person. This relationship had landed me in the bitter ends. Jail. I went through one of the most painful spots in my recovery after that. I started acting out with men. I was trying to fill that void inside. I had thoughts of using for sure. But when I got out of jail I immediately went to my home group and shared about it. And I kept sharing about it. For me emotional pain is a big trigger for me and has almost taken me out but pain is also a huge motivator. For me I didn't want to use because there is no excuse to use. I wasn't going to let the excuse of a break up take me back out. NA told me I'm not responsible for my disease but I am for my recovery. I played a huge part in the sickness but I didn't want to admit it. I had to take responsibility for my actions. I reached out to the people in NA. They saved my ass. I didn't have to get high over painful feelings. I never have to use again. I got my old sponsor back and began to really work on me. I am currently in another relationship. But as I work on myself and become healthier, the better people I attract. I try to live the spiritual principals of this program and apply them to my relationships. Honesty is the first one. I am honest with my boyfriend now. That's where a healthy functioning relationship starts. And that goes for any relationship. And as far as the second step and second principal, I figured out what didn't work in my last relationship so I don't carry it on to this one which is not repeating that insanity and having hope that I can become healthier. In my relationship now we don't live together, we give each other space and we go to separate meetings. We are working on ourselves day by day. We call each other out on our BS. I didn't listen to the suggestion "don't get into a relationship in your first year, but I think it was a huge learning experience in my recovery. It was my process and I don't think God gives me more than I can handle. I got through it and came out the other side. right now I'm still working on that relationship with my higher power which is a tough one for me but I ask other people in the program about it and their experience. We all learn from each other here in NA and that is beautiful. I am forever grateful for narcotics anonymous. Without this program I wouldn't have known how to have healthy relationships. That's all I have. Thank you :)

### SUB-COMMITTEE OF SERVICE

#### A Celebration of Recovery

Workshops and marathon meetings, Pool parties and dances. An evening spent with old friends and the midnight hour with new friends. The rush that comes with the clean time countdown and the murmurs and nods to the speaker as their words capture our hearts. These moments and more can be our experiences at an NA convention, whether it is local to our area or our region or if it casts a wider net such as the East Coast Convention or World Convention. When NA was young these events could cause an explosion of meetings and areas to develop from the excitement and contact with different members of the fellowship. Today the impact is not as severe as NA has matured and developed to fit the local populace. The

local convention, such as MCCNA (Mid-Coast Convention of NA), certainly still has its impact on both those new in recovery and those that have been in the program for years. The service required for our convention probably exceeds that of any other subcommittee in the Mid-Coast Area. A complete admin is needed to coordinate with the internal subcommittees, make agendas and timelines, maintain recordkeeping, liaison with the hotel, and to secure and track income and expenses. The MCCNA Chair, Vice-Chair, Treasurer, and Hotel Liaison are elected by the Mid-Coast Area groups, while the Secretary is selected internally. A regimen of internal subcommittees with their own members is needed. Fundraising is busy for at least a full year providing activities that can generate funds to support the convention, requiring many members to help man the events. Registration too is generating funds while keeping records of the paid registrants, along with banquets and other paid activities for the convention itself. Merchandise is procuring bids and products to fundraise through the year and have a stock available for the convention. Programming is soliciting speakers and setting up the schedule for workshops, hopefully well in advance. Convention Information is notifying local facilities and prepping information for the convention attendees. Serenity Keepers requires a huge pool of members to maintain the facility while the event is happening. Marathon provides hourly chair people to keep a meeting available at all hours. Hospitality provides around the clock refreshments and a place to rest or play at all times. This barely describes the effort needed to make the convention a success and already requires hundreds of man hours and thousands of dollars. The committee meets regularly throughout the year dealing with the many issues that come up. The stress can be far more than in any other subcommittee of the Mid-Coast Area inviting flaring tempers and hurt feelings during the long meetings. The stress does not end at the subcommittee as the groups themselves sense the concern over funds and manpower at the monthly ASC(Area Service Committee) meeting. MCCNA may request extra funds from the Seventh Tradition monies from the groups inviting rigorous questioning from the GSRs(Group Service Representatives).

There are many members of the Mid-Coast Area that support the convention and have for many years, while there are others that believe the resource cost in manpower and monies is far too great a cost to pay. The tension and conflict that the convention brings to the Area may be outweighed by the fellowshiping brought out during the actual event; that is a measure we must all take regularly as we watch the saga that is MCCNA unfold. Personally I support the convention, though I certainly believe in more prudence when it comes to the more extravagant aspects that often come about by members spending groups' funds. There can be so much benefit to the fellowshiping that occurs. Could this happen on a less grand scale? I believe so. Perhaps there will be a time when we look at our motives – as we do in our recovery – and make some changes. Until then; see you next year at MCCNA