

THE BUZZ

CENTRAL MINNESOTA AREA OF NARCOTICS ANONYMOUS

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Working Step Four in Narcotics Anonymous

"We made a searching and fearless moral inventory of ourselves."

Searching and fearless

Step Four calls on us to be searching and fearless. We are asked to look carefully at ourselves and to get beneath the self-deceptions we have used up to now to hide the truth from ourselves.

At this point we need to emphasize that being thorough is not the same as being perfect.

There aren't any *perfect* Fourth Steps. We do the best we can to be as thorough as possible. With diligence and perseverance, we write as honestly as we can. Expecting perfection from ourselves can sometimes be a way of putting off writing our Fourth Step.

Moral inventory

When we first heard the word *moral*, some of us had misconceptions of what that meant, while others had no understanding at all. Morals are simply values, the principles that we choose to live by today in our recovery.

Of ourselves

It is important to remember that this is *our* inventory. It is not a place to list the faults or wrongdoings of others. When we look at our lives in this way, we see that the nature of our wrongs, our character defects, are the characteristics in our lives that are in opposition to spiritual principles. Our inventory, then, is a process of discovering how our character defects bring not only us, but also others, pain and discomfort and how our

new life, founded on the Twelve Steps, is one that can bring us serenity, comfort, and joy. Out of the Fourth Step we discover those things that get in our way and those things that work for us.

General guidelines

When we are ready to begin, we ask God to help us to be searching and fearless in this inventory. Some of us even write a prayer at the beginning of our inventory. The important point is that we sit down and start writing. As feelings surface we must be willing to face them and keep writing. Some of them may be uncomfortable or disturbing, but no matter what happens, we know that God is with us. We can feel good about the fact that we are taking positive action for our recovery. We then ask a loving God to help us, and try to remember that what we write is between ourselves and the God of our own understanding. To keep from getting bogged down, stay in touch with your sponsor.

Newsletter Submissions
please contact Krista W.

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Literature orders can be
submitted to Tom T.

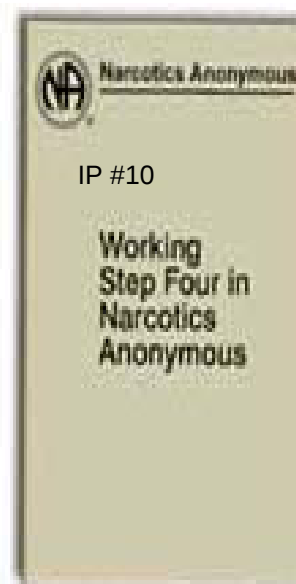
tomternes@gmail.com

Outreach Road-trips

Randy P. 320-250-6761

If you're looking for a way to give back what you've been so freely given, jump in and join one of the sub-committees.

**Look for it
at your
meeting**



WORKING STEP FOUR.

In meetings around the world, every April, one can hear addicts voice their fears and reservations over doing a forth step. Like a spring tonic, it can have a bitter tang, a copper after-taste and a sweetly refreshing result. A good tonic will help the body rid itself of all contamination and useless bits we store during a long winter's huddling.

This "tonic" we call a Fourth Step begins as a hunger. The type of gnawing need to begin the growing season under a cloudless sky with shining tools and warm earth, free from weeds and conquering worms. We flip the soil over, exposing the useless weedy roots to the cleansing sun where it breaks down to feed the good vine which bears our sweet fruit.

We are not so unlike the earth or the cycle of life and death which is the true spirit of nature and spirituality that we cannot see the sense in the lessons of the garden.

The forth step has an element that many think does not belong in an analogy about gardening. Moral: what is it? Is it society's demand that we become good and righteous citizens, walking the strait and narrow, blindly obedient to all the laws of the land and the God of someone else's understanding? Are we to list every immoral act we ever performed, every blunder or hurt we authored in the name of our disease? Are we

EXPECTED to know what is or isn't moral at this stage of our recovery? Absurd as it sounds, we are not expected to list any of these things. We are asked to simply identify the feeling that drove us to commit all our acts as addicts. Our "Addict" is a separate and very real being that has grown within us from the moment it awoke. It is immortal and remains within us even after decades of good quality recovery. Like a pale sucker root of some creeping weed, it shrivels in the light of day or in the light of awareness. When we write our inventory and make it real by putting it on paper, it is subject to the effect of our own eyes. It can be read and made as thin as the paper it was written on. Seen for what it is, how can it remain the dreadful secret we have ruined ourselves trying to bury all those years.

Once a 4th step has been written, it is no longer renting space in our soul. That free space might just as well be filled with a program that promises life and not a forced march under the burden of all our "Addict" shame and guilt. If it is truly thorough, no remnant of the original parasite can find its way into the place we grow today. If airborne seed takes root in our garden, the tenth step

serves as the light weeding good gardeners do to give their gardens every opportunity to thrive. Temptation never takes a day off after all.

We must grow our gardens with NO THOUGHT to the fifth step. If we do, we run the risk of growing only what we think others might like. Offering only pale and delicate fruits and vegetables might be fine for a short term but will not sustain anyone through the long winter. We must be fearless and believe in the power of this vital step. It is not designed to feed anyone other than our better angels who dearly love nothing better than a boring potato grown and put by with all the love we have for recovery.

Dig deep, plant well, weed until you are done and know that even the plainest spud begins with a white flower. Remember that while we bloom in the sun, that which sustains us grows humbly in the dark until it is time. That is the promise of Recovery.

MG

"We must be fearless and believe in the power of this vital step"

Disparity

When you are down and
out and all alone,
and feel that the world is
crumbling around you.
Don't despair
Just beware
Of things that come to you
when you pray.

For in the end
you will get what you need
For God will plant that seed
In somebody's heart
And maybe it's just a start
But in time you may
become a part
Of a Love you once lost

When all is done
Look to GOD and say
thanks
Give yourself a smile
And maybe it will last
Awhile

By
Charles W.
Princeton N.A.
Serenity Sunday

A walk through the Twelve Traditions of NA (March-April) by Doug F.

The Twelve Traditions are what we adhere to in order to make the business side of our groups and our service bodies run smoothly. "Freedom for our groups spring from our traditions. As long as the ties that bind us together are stronger than those that would tear us apart all will be well. (Basic Text pg 60)

The third tradition speaks of the only requirement for our members a desire to stop using persons, places and/or things. If we go back to elementary school these are referred to as the nouns, for those of us who happened to be paying attention that day. Desire is the basis of our recovery. In our stories and in our

experiences of trying to carry the message to the "addict" who still suffers one painful fact of life has emerged. An addict who does not want to stop using will not stop using (person's, places, and things). Without desire they are doomed, but with it miracles will happen (Basic Text 65).

Tradition four speaks of our individual group autonomy. Autonomy is defined as, "having the right to or power of self-government... undertaken or carried out without outside control." Members who came before you cared enough to reach out have put our service structures into place. They should offer help and experience

(not dictatorship) so that our road might be a little smoother. A Narcotics Anonymous group is any group that meets at a specified place and time for the purpose of recovery, "provided that it follows the Twelve Step and Twelve Traditions of Narcotics Anonymous." There are two basic types of meetings: those that are open to the general public and those that are closed, **"for addicts only"** (Basic Text 66).

GRATITUDE PRAYER

"Our gratitude speaks, when we care and
when we share with others the N.A. way,
that no addict seeking recovery need ever
die from the horrors of addiction.

Next Issue

Points of interest from IP #11

Poet's Corner

A Walk through the Twelve Steps (May-June)

Calendar of upcoming events

Editor's Choice

MNNAC XVII we belong. **Mankato, MN April 16-18, 2010**

Editor's Notes

In this issue we are exploring IP #10

**Please leave a copy of the current
Newsletter lay out with IP's or where a
Newcomer might have access to it.**

Work Cited:

- **Working Step Four in Narcotics Anonymous
IP #10**
- **Working Step 4-Mike G.**
- **"Disparity" -Charles W.**
- **A Walk through the Twelve Steps of Narcotics
Anonymous (March-April) -Doug F.**

Content of this newsletter does not in anyway represent NA as a whole. It represents the views, opinions and concerns of the CMA Newsletter Sub-committee. Any constructive criticism shall be directed to the CMA Newsletter Sub-committee. Any comments, concerns and submissions for content including but not limited to articles, poems, artwork, personal stories, events, etc. must be submitted to the CMA Newsletter Sub-committee via mail, e-mail, or in person. All submissions become the exclusive property of the CMA Newsletter Sub-committee with all rights reserved and is subject to change or editing at any time.



**Central Minnesota
Narcotics Anonymous
Spring Thing
Saturday, March 20, 2010
Radisson Suite Hotel
404 St. Germain St. W. St. Cloud, MN
Enter Through Radisson Ramp for Parking**

Prices:

**Dinner and Dancing \$15.00
(Must purchase meal tickets in advance)
Dance Only \$6.00**

Dinner

**Sliced Beef Strip Loin, Mashed Potatoes, Vegetable,
Salad and Bread.**

**The Festivities begin at 6:00 P.M.
Dinner will be served from 6:00 - 8:00
Speaker 7:00
Dance 8:00 – 12:00**



**For Info Please call: Kristen A 763-286-1655
Mike P 320-492-1099 or Arvis S 320-282-4160**
