

THE BUZZ

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By Young Addicts, For Young Addicts

As young members, most of us didn't come to Narcotics Anonymous looking for a new way of life. We were just tired of the lives we had. We spent a lot of our time feeling angry, lonely, hurt, or scared.

Getting high was the only thing that seemed to help, but drugs quickly began to make life even harder. We were tired of the pain and confusion, but we didn't want to consider the idea that drugs were making our problems worse. Regardless of whether or not we thought we were addicts, the idea of giving up drugs was hard to imagine. If we did consider stopping, the idea usually didn't last long.

If this sounds familiar, you might be like us.

We've learned:

- We weren't too young to be addicts, and we're not too young to get clean.
- We stopped using and are discovering a new way of life.

You may not see young members in the meetings you go to, but if you stay clean and keep coming back, you'll find us. When we came to Narcotics Anonymous, we saw how members treated each other. We saw something honest and real. We listened to other addicts share about not having to use drugs anymore. We listened as other addicts talked about walking through fear, about living the NA program, and about being free to have a different kind of life. Other people in our lives seemed to be trying to control us, but NA members simply offered their experience, strength, and hope. They told us that we never had to use again, even if we felt like it. We began to feel like we belonged. Because we didn't always see other young members in the meetings we went to, we wondered if maybe we were too young to be addicts, or too young to get clean. With support from other members, we stayed clean anyway, and we made connections with people of all ages in Narcotics Anonymous.

We may not have used drugs as long, but we've learned that addiction runs much deeper than our drug use.

When we first came to NA, it was easier to relate to people with similar backgrounds or people who used the same drugs as us. After getting to know other addicts, we realized that we experience similar thoughts and feelings—no matter how old or young, or where we came from.

I Was Underage

If our decisions have to be approved by a parent, guardian, or another adult, we may not always be allowed to go to NA meetings or make other changes suggested by the program. One choice we can make for ourselves is to stay clean. It might be a while before we're free to live the way we want to, but we can hold onto our choice of recovery, even when it's tough. When we can make it to meetings, members tell us they believe in us and that we can stay clean if we hold on, ask for help, and take suggestions.

Relapse

As young people in recovery, we may have friends in NA who go back to using once they get out of trouble. It hurts to see people leave NA, especially people we've gotten close to. Recovery has done so much for us that we hate to imagine our friends suffering in active addiction. No matter how much we may want to, we can't make anyone want to stop using. We simply try to be a living example of what recovery has to offer. We share freely what we've been given. Some addicts will not want what we have. We share our hope so they'll know where to find it when they're ready to try something different. We can remember that our literature says, "There may be times when relapse lays the groundwork for complete freedom." We stay close to members with clean time who can relate to the pain and frustration of seeing people come and go. We remember that although we're young, we can stay clean for the rest of our lives by doing it one day at a time. Our literature and experience affirm that "we have never seen a person who lives the Narcotics Anonymous program relapse." For more information about relapse, see Chapter Seven in the Basic Text, *Narcotics Anonymous*, titled "Recovery and Relapse" or the *Recovery and Relapse* informational pamphlet.

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"MASQUERADE"

FALL BALL

"THE MASK MUST GO"

OCT. 2, 2010

**SEE FLIERS FOR MORE
DETAILS**

**OR CONTACT ARVIS S.
OR MIKE P.**



By Young Addicts, For Young Addicts (cont.)

Am I Really an Addict?

Before coming to NA, many of us thought our drug use was a normal phase, a natural part of growing up. We may have tried to use our age as an excuse, but it soon became hard to deny that the drugs weren't making life any easier. We could act like we didn't care about things, but deep down we knew that we were making more sacrifices than we wanted to for drugs. When we found NA, we felt like we might be too young to get clean. We might've thought addiction was just a physical thing, and that addicts had to use certain types of drugs for long periods of time to become addicted. But we heard in meetings that NA describes addiction as affecting us in three main ways: mind, body, and spirit. The problem was less about what the drugs were doing to us and more about how we were using the drugs. The drugs didn't have to be habit-forming or physically addictive for us to develop a problem. Our use of drugs was wrapped up in obsession, compulsion, and self-centeredness. We thought obsessively about drugs and the using lifestyle. We used compulsively when we didn't want to or told ourselves we wouldn't, and we couldn't stop once we started. In total self-centeredness, we sacrificed anything to feel different, even if it meant hurting ourselves and people who love us. Most of the time we were left feeling resentment, anger, and fear. We related to members who shared those types of feelings, even if their drug use was very different from ours. We realized that the types of drugs didn't matter. It didn't matter if we only used on weekends or if we used before, after, and during school. We lost control of our drug use and did things we weren't proud of in order to keep using. We ended up feeling alone and ashamed. For addicts, using *any* drug leads us to the same loss of control and feelings of hopelessness. Just because we're young doesn't mean that addiction is any less deadly for us. We can make a decision to stay clean whenever we're ready. When we hear members share about hitting bottom, we know that our bottom is whenever we stop digging. The only requirement for membership is a desire to stop using, so anyone who finds NA, young or old; can have a chance for a new way of life.

The People in My Life Kept Using Drugs

When we get clean we may hear other recovering addicts tell us to give up "old playmates, playgrounds, and playthings," but sometimes we don't have a choice. We can't get people out of our lives if we live with them, go to school with them, or are locked up with them. Our friends and family members might use in front of us. This makes it tough to focus on recovery.

We know we never have to use again, but it's hard to get drugs out of our head if we see them in our lives every day. If we have using thoughts, we reach out to people in NA. If we can't reach other addicts, we can read NA literature, write in a journal, strive for contact with a Higher Power, or talk to friends or family members who don't use. We stay clean no matter what. Thoughts of using come and go, but they lose power when we ask for help.

Facing Life Events Without Drugs

Because we are young, we usually have major life events and milestones ahead of us. Facing events such as graduations, reaching the legal age to drink, birthdays, and other celebrations may seem impossible without using. Our friends and family won't always understand our reasons for staying clean, especially in situations when it's common to drink alcohol. We ask the people in our lives to support our decisions, and we need to rely on support from our sponsor and friends in recovery in these situations. We can ask NA members to be there with us if we're uncomfortable on our own. They help us remember that we can get through anything clean.

"My first NA convention was a real turning point for me. I met young members from all over. When I went to another convention months later, people who live far away still remembered my name. I knew I was really a part of NA."

More Will Be Revealed . . .

No matter how old, most people who come to NA have a lot of growing up to do. The core of our disease is self-obsession. That means that all newcomers struggle with the same childishness, regardless of their age. We learn to work a program of recovery alongside our fellow members, helping them when we can and accepting their help when it applies. We may look or feel different from older members, but we're all staying clean just for today. When we open up to other members, we learn that we have a lot more in common than we thought. Narcotics Anonymous makes it possible for addicts of any age to grow up and grow older, clean in recovery. Just for today, we have our whole lives ahead of us. By staying clean, we're free to become who we want to be.



MY Recovery

For my recovery I owe great Gratitude,
My journey began with my new attitude,
The struggles of using are in the past,
As long as my recovery continues to last,
The key to my success comes from one thing,
A blessed day with a spiritual Awakening,
It was that day I found my higher power,
To this day and even this hour,
I begin the day when I say,
You only have to handle this just for Today,
It wasn't til I thought to surrender,
That God Put an end to my recent bender.
On a quest to fill my life with happiness and cheer,
I started it out with a case of Beer,
Beer was not enough I asked myself Why?
I still had to find that ultimate High,
So with out a lot of fussin,
I was led back to my bottle of tussin,
Just this one time is what I thought
I was out of control and now I was caught
Back to the insanity of self destruction,
My life now lacked any production,
With the will to change and an open mind,
It was now certainly time to clear my mind,
I needed to get my life back on track,
There was no other way except for recovery
That's when I found my Friends in recovery,
I am happy to know that I am not alone,
I don't have to do this on my own,
I owe my life to my recovery,
Sobriety is like a great new Discovery.

By Steve'O



No place like home group

Inside The Spruce Room

For those that can't make it to the Area Sub Committee (ASC) for one reason or another; the newsletter subcommittee has chosen to add this section to highlight some things that happened there that might be of interest to some of you.

Meetings needing GSR'S and/or GSRA'S:

Monday, Focus on Recovery, GSR and GSRA

Tuesday, It works, GSR

Wednesday, You're Not Alone, GSRA

Thursday, Homeward Bound, GSR

Friday, Just For Today, GSR and GSRA

It happened at the July ASC:

Co-chair: Sam, vote today. Congratulations Sam!!!

Website: Gary, vote today. Congratulations Gary!!!

Newsletter: Kathy U. nominated; Q&A next month (Aug 22) resume' to follow.

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."

You say you have nothing to do and recovery is getting boring? Join a subcommittee and get to know some people who are active in the NA program and trying to make a difference.

You might even have some fun!!

Try it and see!

There is an urgent need for recovering addicts to take meetings into the jails and at the Willmar treatment facility.

Please leave copies of the newsletters lay out with the IP's or wherever the newcomer might have access to it.

There are a few meetings that are struggling. If you are able, try to expand your meeting attendance to at least one of these meetings.

As long as the ties that bind us together are stronger than those that would tear us apart, all will be well.

Newsletter Submissions

contact Krista W.

cmascnewsletter@gmail.com

Literature orders

can be submitted to Nita C.

320-249-7642

Outreach Road-trips

Randy P. 320-250-6761

rptower@hotmail.com

Work Cited:

- IP#13
- Recoverycartoons.com
- Steve (Steve'O) G.

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