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AUGUST 2017

RECOVERY

In Action

Serving Southeastern Arizona

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This is a world of grey concrete and fluorescent light. The inmates shuffle in on ill-fitting orange flip-flops wearing ill-fitting orange scrubs. The smell of a non-descript industrial strength cleaner hangs in the air. They settle in on the ring of coffee-brown plastic chairs I've set out for them and, somewhat reluctantly, pick up a copy of the Little White Book - the kind with no staples in it - and take turns reading.

If you had told me, in the midst of my active addiction, that someday I would freely and voluntarily walk into a state correctional facility on my day off, I would have probably laughed out loud and told you exactly where to put that idea. I wasn't going to surrender my *freedom for anyone. Ever.

Except in active addiction...

In active addiction I surrendered my freedom daily. For years. I couldn't stop using - even after I couldn't stand it anymore. Which essentially made me a slave; the antithesis of everything I stood for...

And yet time and again, I woke up wearing those same ill-fitting orange scrubs, shuffling along in those same ill-fitting orange flip-flops wondering to myself "How!? How the @#% did I end up here AGAIN!?" after I had sworn NEVER AGAIN. Again. I'd get out and do anything and everything I thought would guarantee that I'd never land in that orange hell again: better tools; better strategies; better lawyers - everything except the one, fundamental thing that all my arrests, convictions and incarcerations had in common: My disease. My first year clean wasn't very productive. I was full of anger and resentment. Discomfort. Insomnia. I'd been clean a year, but that elusive "Miracle" had yet to find me. I don't think I did anything right that year except not pick up. But after a year, if I learned anything at all, it was that I needed to follow direction. I needed to start working a program - which is ironic, because one of the reasons I had to get clean was to finish my late-life degree program as a computer programmer. And much like a computer program, Narcotics Anonymous is a set of instructions which, if followed correctly, turn out a result. In the abstract the program works like this: Get clean. Go to meetings. Get a sponsor. Work the steps. Pick up a Service Commitment. Practice the principles in all your affairs...

By my second year clean I still hadn't experienced a single miracle. I had experienced countless ones. Little ones and big ones. I graduated, landed a good job, didn't lose the house... and didn't lose my family. What's more I was beginning to learn what it meant to be of service. Because by then, not only was my recovery about cleaning up the wreckage of my past, it was about the amazing possibilities of my future; it was about the miracle of Today. I went to meetings, found a sponsor, worked steps and, finally, began to accept Service Commitments.

(CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE)

My motivations were mixed initially and not always noble. But I was honest to the best of my ability and, what's more, eager to maintain what i'd found at last in my recovery. I'd learned to value it so much that I would do anything to keep it.

Even go back to jail...

Pima County Jail isn't my first Service Commitment. Neither is it my only one. But I've been doing it for over a year now. Once a month like clock-work.

As I write this, I've been clean three years, ten months and twenty seven days. At times it has felt like 2,054,880 minutes. Sometimes my recovery is a wellspring of joy; of fascination and growth... and sometimes it's holding on by threads. But it holds. Holding on by threads is better than holding on to nothing.

And no matter where my head has been. No matter how much i've taken back my will and forgotten the gift of desperation; no matter how much I may feel like I'm back on top; back in control... my monthly visit to the jail puts me right back where I need to be: Fresh in the memory of powerlessness in the shape of plastic, orange flip-flops under sickly synthetic fluorescent light.

In that tower of concrete and steel I am grounded and humbled. I have been here before. And I will come here again - one way or another. As I'm fond of sharing: I am only ever one bad decision away from The Jungle...

If I maintain my program, I am far more likely to walk in wearing my own shoes. And as long as I keep coming back, I get to walk out an hour later.

*Free.

-Guillermo

A year of awesome service!

"I'd like you to start thinking about getting a service commitment" were the words my sponsor gave to me in the first 60 days of recovery. A homegroup member at a group I was a regular attendee of was talking about how she had just become chair of the newsletter

committee and needed people to be of service. I asked what I could do to help and next thing I know I was hanging out in an apartment full of recovering addicts debating whether content was appropriate to be published or not. If you asked me then if I would have stayed clean for three years and ended up chairing that committee myself, I don't know what I would have told you, but here I sit about to hang up my copy of publisher and pass on the torch to another addict in recovery.

I know for a fact that I have stayed clean throughout the length of my commitment and being of service has taught me a lot about traditions and the NA service structure. I learned the hard way that this isn't MY newsletter, it is NA's and it's stewardship was entrusted to me.

I am grateful for that opportunity and for the trust of the fellowship. The newsletter has been an awesome part of my recovery for the last year and I look forward to passing the torch. I got to see the work I was doing and how it paid off in real ways when I was feeling the most down and out about it. I never thought that I would see being of service as anything more than a chore but it really was a gift and the experience has left a lasting impression on my recovery.

I want to thank all the people who submitted their writings, all the people who disagreed with me and sent feedback, my sponsor, the readership, and the fellowship of NA as a whole. Thanks for letting me be of service

- Jesse A.

Happy Birthday!

Proof that the program works!

Dan J.	08/06/1980
Michael M.	08/04/1991
Brandi	08/27/2016
Bryant	08/27/2016
Shawn	08/27/2016

If you have a clean date birthday of one or more years, please email it to Newsletter@natucson.org

Upcoming Events in and around AZ

SEAZNA PR and H&I Wants You! - Get involved, contact PR Chair, H&I Chair or Phone Line Chair

Mt. Lemmon Bash 2017! - Sept 29-Oct 1, 2017, White Tail Campground

Western Service Learning Days Event -
Sept 16th 4pm-10pm, Spaghetti Cook-Off
4pm-6pm, Speaker Jam 6pm, 800 E. University Blvd

SEAZNA Outreach Road Trip! - Aug 23rd, 7pm, "No Matter What" Meeting, 3020 E. Tacoma Street, Sierra Vista, (community Center), Meet at Starbuck on Campbell & Broadway at 5pm, outreach@natucson.org

SEAZNA Elections - All members attending may vote

- Sept 10th, 1pm (**one hour prior to ASC**)
Convention Chair & Treasurer
- Sept 16th, TBA, Convention Vice Chair, Secretary, Vice Treasurer, Hotel, Hospitality, Registration, Programs, Welcoming & Information, Merchandise, Arts & Graphics, Promotions & Events, H&I
- Oct 8th, 1pm (**one hour prior to ASC**),
Chair, Vice Chair, Secretary, Treasurer, Vice Treasurer

NEXT MONTH'S TOPIC!

Recovery and Relapse

For some addicts, relapse is a part of their story. What experiences do you have with relapse? How have you or someone you know coped with a relapse? How has relapse affected you, either through another member or yourself? What has your experience been with recovery AFTER relapse? Send your stories to newsletter@natucson.org

Subcommittee Service

SEAZNA Area Service Committee
2 p.m. on 2nd Sunday of each Month
Streams in the Desert Lutheran Church
5360 E. Pima St. (west of Craycroft)

Activities Subcommittee
Contact activities@natucson.org

Hospitals & Institutions Subcommittee
12:30 p.m., Second Sunday of the month
Streams in the Desert Lutheran Church
5360 E. Pima St. (west of Craycroft)

Mt. Lemmon Bash Subcommittee
Contactbash@natucson.org

Newsletter Subcommittee
Contact newsletter@natucson.org

Outreach Subcommittee
Contact outreach@natucson.org for more information.

Phoneline Subcommittee
Contact phoneline@natucson.org

Public Relations Subcommittee
Meeting held on line, contact pr@natucson.org for details

Phoneline is looking for Spanish-Speaking volunteers to be of service! (phoneline@natucson.org)

AREA EVENTS & ACTIVITIES

Please check the website www.natucson.org for updates and more information



Activities Goes Bowling: 1st Sunday of the month, 4:00pm, 1010 W. Miracle Mile, \$1.29 (+tax) per game, \$1.29 (+tax) for shoes, fun & fellowship



Medallion Night and Potluck: Last Monday of the month @ First United Methodist Church (915 E. 4th street). Show up at 7 if you are getting a medallion (1 year or more) meeting starts @ 7:30pm.



Underground Speaker Meeting: 3rd Monday each month.

Meeting Changes, Support, Service Opportunities

Women's oriented meeting ~Twisted Sisters
Meets on Saturday at 5:30 pm with a rotating format. It is an open meeting. Address where we meet 800 Taylor Dr (St Andrews church) Sierra Vista AZ.

Want to share your Experience, Strength, and Hope?
Submit your recovery related stories, poems, jokes, etc. to:
RECOVERY IN ACTION
(newsletter@natucson.org)
Don't know what to submit?
Ask your Sponsor for ideas!

~ AREA EVENTS ~

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Submission Disclaimer: All material submitted becomes property of the Newsletter Sub-Committee and will be edited for content, length, and clarity of the NA message.