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February 2018

RECOVERY

In Action

Serving Southeastern Arizona

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I'm an addict. My name is Jay. I did the most unnatural thing an addict can do today. I didn't pick up. For that I am grateful to NA and my Higher Power who speaks through each one of you. My story is very simple. I had many issues growing up, feeling inferior to everyone, not "living up to my potential," just feeling different from all my peers. Then I found my solution----drugs! I became 10-foot tall, bulletproof, and thought I had found nirvana. However, my solution became my problem; I had to "use to live," and finally I began to "live to use." 11,295 days ago, on February 26, 1987, I was brought into recovery, and, by the grace of my higher power, have not had to use drugs since then. I used to hear the predecessors say, "it gets better." I'm here to say that IT does not get better. We get better! Life goes on. Just because we get clean does not exclude us from the mishaps and horrors of "life on life's terms." But if we truly work the first half of the first step, we realize how powerless we are over many situations, utilize the tools we were given (meetings, sponsor, steps, fellowship, service), and above all we don't pick-up---No Matter What!

During my 30+ years here, I have been diagnosed with Laryngeal Cancer 5 times, I have lost many close friends in NA and I have lost both parents. I had a bankruptcy, two divorces, I was an abused spouse, and I had to leave everything behind and move half-way across the country and start over. When I was diagnosed with the fifth tumor on my larynx (the most aggressive), I was devastated. I was on a corner in Boston, crying uncontrollably on the phone, and a strong desire to use came over me (I was approximately 18 years clean at the time). While the voices inside my head were busy convincing me that using would be OK, my NA voice piped up even louder, saying "A grateful Addict does not Pick Up!" I hung up, took a deep breath, and went up to the Children's brain Cancer Ward, and sat down. All the children in the room had inoperable cancer and would probably be dead within 6 months. Every child in that room was smiling. And, every parent was smiling, too! They were grateful for Just for Today. I took a deep breath (A G-d-in breath), and a wave of gratitude came over me. When I left that room, that wave of gratitude stayed with me for the next 31 radiation treatments. Meetings, my sponsor, and my support group in NA made it easy. Each day I woke up clean was a blessing. The rest would be handled by G-d.

I could go on indefinitely on how trust in NA, and faith and trust in my Higher Power has carried me through each major negative thing mentioned. Working steps with my sponsor on each travesty gave me the clarity to be able to see where I fit in in the picture, what the solution was, and the action needed to move on. Today, I do the most unnatural thing an addict can do! I don't pick up---No Matter What! I keep gratitude in my heart, and I share the message of Narcotics Anonymous—An Addict, Any Addict, can stop using drugs, lose the desire to use, and find a new way to live.

This is not my first time getting clean. Last year I went to rehab in LA and had five months clean before I relapsed. I was having a tough time with willingness and the third step (which I was on at the time). I had a very "chill" sponsor, but I knew I needed to see her more, so I found a new one. This new sponsor was part of a very strict/hard-core group called "no-nonsense." Both of these sponsors were working out of the AA text and went to AA meetings. I knew I belonged in NA but the rehab was AA based. Well, I ended up going back to my first sponsor because she was very understanding and supportive, while the other one wanted me to call her every thirty minutes, but she did always tell me to check my willingness, and that stuck with me. Today, I am more willing than ever. I believe my higher power has me where I'm supposed to be. Before I got clean this time, I had a gut feeling I would surely die if I didn't stop using. I thank my higher power every day for keeping me alive, and ask His will be done and not mine. Today I am grateful; I'm grateful for the wreckage of my past, because I know now that I don't want to go back to life I was living. I am grateful for, yet again, another chance at life.

-Ellie S

Turning my will over, let alone my life was out of the question when I first walked into these rooms. Which maybe was why I was a chronic relapser and so miserable. I thought "I've got this!" Truth is I don't "got this," and I was falling apart. It took a bad relapse leading to the end of my life as I knew it. Now, even in the hard times, where I can barely see any light, I know it's there. He's got this. I'm not perfect at letting go of things, not controlling every little thing around me, but it's progress not perfection. Life still gets hard, but I try my best to keep moving and find a solution for every problem I face. Believe it or not, most solutions are found in the steps for me, if not all of them. Somethings that I've come to realize recently is that, 1) life isn't fair, 2) God isn't testing me. It's just life. And it's up to me to let go and let God, or to yank those reigns back while saying screw you and your way. There's days I forget to pray and meditate or to wake up and hand over control, but I can always restart my day and let go of self-will. My disease wants me to think that my way's better, and I'm terminally unique, but neither is true. Gods way is better, and I'm in no way unique. No matter the situation, and no matter my thoughts. I have a higher power who cares, and loves me. And he's strong enough to carry me, so why not let him. I mean, there's still work I need to do, like steps and service, but I don't need to worry and control everything. Which is nice. There is a solution! -K.C.

The third step is key to sanity in my program. After coming to believe we find out if we are ready to take that next step. For me making a decision to turn my will and my life over to the care of God as I understand him (I do have an issue with the sexist presentation of (him). Having said that, this step is key for me and is not only the most important one but the most used one on a daily basis for me. Praying for God to work his will in my life is a big friggin prayer. It takes me and my will completely out of the picture and if I could keep me out of it throughout the day, my days would be free of strife, and very peaceful. The reality of it is my ego is much too big for its own good and I throw my will in there way too much. When I do that, things go astray in my recovery. Insanity is repeating the same mistakes over and over and over and expecting different results. Thus, why I say "the most used step, for me." You'd think we would get it after the first 10,000 times! My will has definitely lessened over the years of my life, clean time, and recovery; but my addiction loves it when I take the wheel thinking I know what I'm doing (do you see the theme here), that I know best. The saying: "our best thinking got us here," is said for a reason. I have to suffer when I'm in charge for as long as it takes for my hubris to be put in check. Sometimes it takes me longer than other times, but when I'm done making myself suffer I do have an option to relieve myself of my own will. It's a choice both ways. I choose to do things my way or I choose to let go things I cannot control. God helps me tell the difference between the things I can and cannot change, otherwise I'd be lost in my will. Which is not a good place for me.

-Richard W

Upcoming Events in and around AZ

Sponsor/Sponsee Luncheon & Speaker Meeting, Sunday, Feb. 11, 11 a.m., 235 E. Guadalupe Rd., Gilbert

'80s Party (with dinner & speaker meeting), Saturday, Feb. 17, 6 p.m., 1407 N. Second St., Phoenix

Northern Arizona Convention Speaker Jam Fundraiser, Saturday, Feb. 17, 12-4 p.m., 630 Park Ave., Prescott

Regional GSR Assembly, Saturday, Feb. 24, 9 a.m., 8802 N. 19th Ave., Phoenix

MACCNA IX, March 9-11, 2018, Yuma (see convention site for registration and more)

Deep South Campout Committee Meeting, Saturday, March 10, 10 a.m., Len Roberts Park, Sierra Vista (more info: Scott A., 520-508-9113)

March Metal Madness VII, Sunday, March 18, 10 a.m.-6 p.m., Kiwanis Park, Tempe

CAR/CAT Voting (Regional GSR Assembly), Saturday, March 31, 10 a.m., 1915 N. Casa Grande Ave., Casa Grande

Sedona 23rd Campout, May 10-13, Chavez Crossing Campground, Sedona

Beyond Arizona

WCNA 37, The Magic is Still Real, Aug. 30-Sept. 2, 2018, Orlando, FL

Mexico

CREMEX XXI, March 15-18, 2018, Santiago de Querétaro,

CABCNA XIII, April 6-8, 2018, Mexicali, B.C.

COANA II, June 8-10, 2018, Puerto Peñasco, Sonora

NEXT MONTH'S TOPIC!

Living Clean ch. 4: "Our Physical Selves."

Learning to live in our bodies isn't easy. Each of us has different ways of seeing ourselves. It's a relationship (self-acceptance); Letting ourselves go; Sex; Thrill-Seeking and Adventure; Wellness and health; Illness; Disability; Emotional and Spiritual Crisis; Aging; Death, dying, and living with grief; Courage. We can see amazing harmony in our lives just by being aware of what's happening inside ourselves—physically, emotionally, and spirituality.

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

Contact bash@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.



Groundhog Speaker Meeting:
1st Sunday at 12:30pm, 3rd Saturday at 4pm

Meeting Changes, Support, Service Opportunities

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

Mount Lemmon Bash needs some support! They are in needs of 4 subcommittee chairs! Please talk to a committee member, the next committee meeting is the 1st Sunday at 1 pm!

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 ~

Kickball in the Park, Sunday, March 18, beginning at 11 a.m., Reid Park, Ramada 10 (closest to Country Club & 22nd St.); Lunch served at noon (bring a dish to share); fund-raiser and logo contest for Mt. Lemmon Bash; \$5 suggested donation (no one turned away)

SEAZNAC IV, Sept. 28-30, 2018, Sierra Vista (see convention page for more details)

Happy Birthday!

Proof that the program works!

Kati M. 2/12/13

Jose C. 6/6/16

Jay B. 2/26/1987

Desirae F. 2/28/17

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

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.