

MID-HUDSON AREA OF NARCOTICS ANONYMOUS NEWS & INFORMATION

NEW MID-HUDSON AREA WEBSITE

We are now able to more effectively carry the message of HOPE in our local communities. Help us with our efforts by sharing our webpage with anyone that may find it helpful.

www.mha-na.org

MID-HUDSON AREA OF NARCOTICS ANONYMOUS

HELPLINE NUMBER

855-99-4HOPE



About Our Newsletter

Greetings from Narcotics Anonymous. This newsletter is being generated and maintained by the Public Relations committee of the Mid-Hudson Area. If this newsletter was forwarded to you and you would like to be added to our monthly email list - please email us at mhanapublicinformation@yahoo.com and let us know.

PLEASE FEEL FREE TO PRINT AND DISTRIBUTE

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H & I Committee

About Hospitals and Institutions

H & I, as it is known within the fellowship, is another committee comprised of recovering addicts. This committee ensures that people seeking recovery through Narcotics Anonymous, that do not have full access to regular NA meetings, can here our lifesaving message.

Typical H&I presentation/meeting locations are:

- Prisons and Jails
- Rehab treatment facilities and Detox
- Adolescent institutions

Intent: to simply introduce those attending to some of the basics of the NA program. Hopes are that the individual, upon leaving the facility, will get to an NA meeting and find themselves comfortable and somewhat familiar with the NA program and the fellowship.



Typical Public Relations setup used at community gatherings & events

What does Public Relations do?

The role of the PR committee is to ensure that clear and accurate information about NA is available to the public. The demand for information about our fellowship is greater than ever.

The Narcotics Anonymous message is "that an addict, any addict, can stop using drugs, lose the desire to use and find a new way to live." Our relations with the public enable us to share this message broadly so that those who might benefit from our program of recovery can find us. We perform public relations service to increase the awareness and credibility of the NA program. We share our message openly with the public at large, with prospective members, and with professionals.



What is available on our website?

- Meeting locations and times
- Calendar events
- Information about NA
- Virtual meeting information
- Links to the NA World website
- Links to various committee contacts

www.mha-na.org

Narcotics Anonymous World Services

- Find the answers to any question you may have about NA on the world website.
- Purchase NA literature
- Find membership statistics
- Read about NA history
- Find resources for professionals
- Learn how to start a meeting
- Event calendar
- Contact information

WWW.NA.ORG

What is the Narcotics Anonymous program?

Narcotics Anonymous is a global, community-based organization with a multilingual and multicultural membership. NA was founded in 1953, and members hold nearly 76,000 meetings weekly in 143 countries today.

NA is a nonprofit fellowship or society of men and women for whom drugs had become a major problem. We are recovering addicts who meet regularly to help each other stay clean. This is a program of complete abstinence from all drugs. There is only one requirement for membership, the desire to stop using. We suggest that you keep an open mind and give yourself a break. Our program is a set of principles written so simply that we can follow them in our daily lives. The most important thing about them is that they work.

There are no strings attached to NA. We are not affiliated with any other organizations. We have no initiation fees or dues, no pledges to sign, no promises to make to anyone. We are not connected with any political, religious, or law enforcement groups, and are under no surveillance at any time. Anyone may join us regardless of age, race, sexual identity, creed, religion, or lack of religion.

We are not interested in what or how much you used or who your connections were, what you have done in the past, how much or how little you have, but only in what you want to do about your problem and how we can help. The newcomer is the most important person at any meeting, because we can only keep what we have by giving it away. We have learned from our group experience that those who keep coming to our meetings regularly stay clean.

What happens at an NA Meeting?

"If you're new to NA or planning to go to a Narcotics Anonymous meeting for the first time, it might be nice to know a little bit about what happens in our meetings.

The information here is meant to give you an understanding of what we do when we come together to share recovery. The words we use and the way we act might be unfamiliar to you at first, but hopefully this information can help you get the most out of your first NA meeting or help you feel more comfortable as you keep coming back.

Showing up early, staying late, and asking lots of questions before and after meetings will help you get the most out of every meeting you attend......People have all sorts of reasons for attending NA meetings, but the purpose of each meeting is to give NA members a place to share recovery with other addicts and help each other recover.

If you are not an addict, look for an open meeting, which welcomes non-addicts. If you're an addict or think you might have a drug problem, we suggest a meeting every day for at least 90 days to get to know NA members and our program"

(excerpts from IP #29, "An Introduction to NA Meetings")

NA literature is also a great source of information about our program.

Our Basic Text, Narcotics Anonymous, or our information pamphlets (IPs) are a good place to start. Most meetings offer IPs for free, while books are generally sold at the group's cost. Most of our literature is also available to read on this website via links.

To begin, we invite you to read IP #22, "Welcome to NA". Please come to our meetings and "Keep Coming Back!

The News in Narcotics Anonymous of the Mid-Hudson Area - UPDATED

Narcotics Anonymous is thriving again in the Mid_Hudson Area of NY. We have many meetings open, NA events are happening, PR is attending community events and H&I is bringing meetings into facilities.

Narcotics Anonymous continues to create an atmosphere where addicts can come together and share with one another how we stay clean one day at a time. We don't have to die or end up in jail. We can live a life free from the horrors of addiction. We can clear the wreckage of our past and live a life full of hope. Lost dreams are reawakened.



Narcotics Anonymous is not a secret society. Our members are anonymous but our fellowship is not. We meet regularly to help each other stay clean. We are a spiritual and not a religious program. We learn to live without the use of drugs by applying spiritual principles in our lives. It is an individual program that a member can create for them. We have no rules. However, many find that a path has been created by our predecessors. That path has

applying spiritual principles in our lives. It is an individual program that a member can create for themselves. We have no rules. However, many find that a path has been created by our predecessors. That path has been proven to offer the most success. They have shown that through the understanding and application of the 12 steps, peace, serenity and harmony can be attained through humility. This newfound humility creates an existence where we no longer wish to be served but to serve. This seems fitting given the disease of addiction is cored by our self-obsession. We no longer wish to be understood - we understand. We no longer point the finger and live in a world of blame- we now own our part. Where we were a seeker of forgiveness - we forgive.

These are some examples of the miraculous things that happen to some in Narcotics Anonymous. We come from a dark, ominous, isolated chamber filled with death and despair. We find that our lives can be filled with love, support, compassion, empathy, success, family and friends.

None of this is possible until we put down the drug. NA is a program of complete abstinence. However, "complete abstinence" is a goal. Any addict is welcome in Narcotics Anonymous whether you are still using, withdrawing, drinking alcohol, smoking weed or on replacement drug therapy. It doesn't matter......you are a member if you say you are. You will be welcomed with a hug, loved and supported because many of us have been right where you are. We only encourage you to keep coming back. Keep coming to our meetings. It cost you nothing yet the rewards are great.

Finally, the Hospitals & Institutions as well as Public Relations committees would like to make themselves available to any professionals, institutions, facilities, public officials, schools and departments.

Public Relations can meet with anyone interested in learning more about Narcotics Anonymous. Let's discuss bringing a meeting into your treatment center through our H & I efforts. Do you need NA literature to

display for your clients? How about a NA presentation for your staff. We are always happy to share what NA is and isn't, how we can help or how it works.

Again, we are by no means a secret society. We are a life-saving, 12 step fellowship in the community. Many do not know that we do recover in NA. Our goal, through this newsletter, is too inform as many people as possible, that have direct contact with individuals struggling with drug addiction, that "THERE IS HOPE".

NA meetings are open in Dutchess, Ulster, Greene and Columbia counties. Please visit our Website or direct your clients there to find one close by.

Your First NA Meeting

Some suggestions and things for a newcomer to expect when attending their first NA meeting:

- Try to get there early. Don't be surprised if you are greeted with a warm welcome hug (It's okay to decline but know that it is customary to hug in NA as opposed to shaking hands).
- NA meetings are loaded with NA literature (it is the road map by which we find our way out of the darkness of addiction).
- Pick up a meeting list (or a few)
- You will hear many things quoted from one of our books called the Basic Text. It is strongly suggested to purchase one. If you cannot afford one, most groups give them out to a newcomer or a longterm member may buy you one.
- Listen to the readings that are read at the beginning of the meeting. Again..... Listen to the readings
- You will find that many meetings open the meeting with the Serenity Prayer. If the word "prayer" makes you feel a certain kinda way..... please keep coming back! You will soon pick up on the fact that NA is NOT a religious program. The NA program is a spiritual program. Let it develop in a way that feels right for you.
- NA is a "12 Step Fellowship". You will hear talk about the 12 steps and how people learn to live differently through the understanding and application of the 12 steps. Again....let it unfold for you.
- You will hear the word God or Higher Power mentioned in meetings. We are taught early on that we must rely on a power greater than ourselves to get and stay clean. Left to our own devices, we constantly failed. When we turn our will and lives over to a power greater than ourselves (many use the group or NA or the literature) we find that we learn coping skills and alternative ways of handling things that we could not in the past.
- Listen intently to the topic of surrender. Perhaps introduce yourself and ask to hear about it. We have found that without complete surrender with no reservations, we will surely use again.
- Many meetings recognize various amounts of clean time and they do it with key tags, medallions and hugs. They are powerful tokens of accomplishment that we receive to not only feel joy in for ourselves but to also show the newcomer that we can get through a day without using and those days add up.
- We have a daily meditation book as well as a free download on your phone device. It is called "Just For Today". Many of us look at this opportunity every morning to read a positive message, educate and remind ourselves that we are an addict in recovery.
- NA is self-supporting through our own contributions. You may see a basket passed around and members are throwing a buck or two in it. If you don't have a donation don't sweat it. We have all been there and

there is no need to feel uncomfortable. Self support comes in many different forms. Picking up a chair is supporting the fellowship.

- You will hear mention of sponsorship. It is an important part of recovery. Keep your eyes and ears open and seek out someone you feel comfortable with or identify with. Say..."Hey will you sponsor me?" It may feel awkward but its an important part of recovery.
- Don't be afraid to introduce yourself when asked, "are there any newcomers?" It's a humble gesture that allows people to get to know you.
- Last but not least..... GET PHONE NUMBERS! We need a lifeline during tough periods and calling another recovering addict is just that.

GOOD LUCK AND REMEMBER.... WE JUST HAVE TO NOT USE DRUGS TODAY! THAT IS MANAGEABLE!

My second second chance

So, today is my second fourth "NAversary," or NA anniversary. I have an odd mix of feelings within me at present. My disease capitalizes on the fact that I chose to interrupt my process after 13 years clean, and it wants me to feel like a failure, but my spirit senses the true value of my experience and sees that my relapse can be used to serve others if I share about it honestly and often.

My disease focuses on those who are not here—alive or dead—and tells me that I failed them and everyone, especially myself. My spirit recognizes how deluded and grandiose such thoughts are, and tells me that to honor those we've lost or harmed, we stay in position and continue to change. My disease sits alone, hostile and resentful, self-obsessed and paranoid, closed off to love, empathy, and goodwill. My spirit rests securely in fellowship, happy and serene, selfless and open, safely vulnerable, loving, compassionate, and driven to serve. My disease is the clattering, confusing noise in my head. My spirit is the clear conscience of my heart.

Reconciliation of these manifestations lies in bridging the gap between them, not surgical separation of one from the other—and that is what recovery is for me today. Said bridge is built of honest sharing, involvement in the Fellowship, and use of our Steps. How it culminates is this: My disease and my spirit are not two separate entities, nor is either of them separate from me. They are equal parts of me, and each one needs acceptance in order to be housed proportionately. If I do not accept my disease, it will fester and grow. If I don't accept my spirit, it will stagnate and diminish. Acceptance—true self-acceptance—is required, and that is the greatest gift I have ever received. I'm so deeply grateful for this and feel so, so fortunate to have had a second second chance at this new way of life. "Thank you."

After I shared about my NA anniversary the other day, and how I've been fortunate enough to have returned after a relapse, a number of friends reached out to me to share that they, too, had gone through or are going through similar experiences. They shared their pains and they shared their hopes. If all I've been through helps just one other to find their way back, then the juice has been well worth the squeeze.

Misconceptions about Narcotics Anonymous meetings - based on some questions Public Relations has received

"If a person is high, can they go to a meeting?" Of Course! They are the most important person in the room. They are encouraged to "Keep coming back!" see: <u>NA 3rd Tradition</u>

"On a television show, I saw an NA meeting happening and they closed the meeting with the Lord's Prayer. Is NA a religious program?" What you possibly witnessed was a Hollywood producers idea of what happens in NA. In NA, you will hear words such as prayer and God. These words usually refer to a form of communication and a higher power. NA is a spiritual not religious program. Our Basic Text tells us "Many of us understand God to be simply whatever force keeps us clean." (pg 25, 6th edition). We are free to believe in God or not. As long as we are willing to live by spiritual principles we will be able to benefit from the program. Whatever your belief you are welcome in NA.

"I was told at an NA meeting, by another member, that I was not clean because I am on a replacement drug".

NA has no opinion on whether or not you personally are clean or not. NA does not have control over an individuals understanding of who is clean or who is not. We have a service pamphlet titled Narcotics Anonymous and Persons Receiving Medication-Assisted Treatment which states: "While maintaining an emphasis on the importance of total abstinence, still-using addicts are welcomed into our meetings with special encouragement to keep coming back." (It Works, "Tradition Three") Even though any addict is welcome to attend NA meetings, those attending NA while receiving medications to treat drug addiction may be met by welcoming, accommodating members or sometimes by members who express strong opinions about medically assisted treatment. Persons may want to remember that there are usually a host of NA meetings in a community, and we encourage them to attend several different meetings to find one that they feel comfortable in.

"Tradition Ten restricts NA, as a fellowship, from stating opinions on outside issues. However, it places no such restriction on the individual member." (It Works, "Tradition Ten")

Additional information for our readers: Click on link or visit <u>NA.org</u>

<u>NA Groups and Medication</u>

Narcotics Anonymous and Persons Receiving Medication-Assisted Treatment



QR code meeting list link (Feel free to print and distribute)

Step and Tradition of the Month From our Basic Text

Step Twelve

"Having had a spiritual awakening as a result of these steps, we tried to carry this message to addicts, and to practice these principles in all our affairs."

We came to Narcotics Anonymous as the result of the wreckage of our past. The last thing we expected was an awakening of the spirit. We just wanted to stop hurting. The steps lead to an awakening of a spiritual nature. This awakening is evidenced by changes in our lives. These changes make us better able to live by spiritual principles and to carry our message of recovery and hope to the addict who still suffers. The message, however, is meaningless unless we live it. As we live it, our lives and actions give it more meaning than our words and literature ever could.

The idea of a spiritual awakening takes many different forms in the different personalities that we find in the Fellowship.

However, all spiritual awakenings have some things in common. Common elements include an end to loneliness and a sense of direction in our lives. Many of us believe that a spiritual awakening is meaningless unless accompanied by an increase in peace of mind and a concern for others. In order to maintain peace of mind, we strive to live in the here and now.

Those of us who have worked these steps to the best of our ability received many benefits. We believe that these benefits are a direct result of living this program.

When we first begin to enjoy relief from our addiction, we run the risk of assuming control of our lives again. We forget the agony and pain that we have known. Our disease controlled our lives when we were using. It is ready and waiting to take over again. We quickly forget that all our past efforts at controlling our lives failed.

By this time, most of us realize that the only way that we can keep what was given to us is by sharing this new gift of life with the still-suffering addict. This is our best insurance against re- lapse to the torturous existence of using. We call it carrying the message, and we do it in a number of ways.

In the Twelfth Step, we practice the spiritual principles of giving the NA message of recovery in order to keep it. Even a member with one day in the NA Fellowship can carry the message that this program works.

When we share with someone new, we may ask to be used as a spiritual instrument of our Higher Power. We don't set ourselves up as gods. We often ask for the help of another recovering addict when sharing with a new person. It is a privilege to respond to a cry for help. We, who have been in the pits of despair, feel fortunate to help others find recovery.

We help new people learn the principles of Narcotics Anonymous. We try to make them feel welcome and help them learn what the program has to offer. We share our experience, strength and hope. Whenever possible, we accompany newcomers to a meeting.

The selfless service of this work is the very principle of Step Twelve. We received our recovery from the God of our under- standing. We now make ourselves available as His tool to share recovery with those who seek it. Most of us learn that we can only carry our message to someone who is asking for help. Some- times, the only message necessary to make the suffering addict reach out is the power of example. An addict may be suffering but unwilling to ask for help. We can make ourselves available to these people, so when they ask, someone will be there.

Learning to help others is a benefit of the Narcotics Anonymous Program. Remarkably, working the Twelve Steps guides us from humiliation and despair to acting as instruments of our Higher Power. We are given the ability to help a fellow addict when no one else can. We see it happening among us every day. This miraculous turnabout is evidence of spiritual awakening. We share from our own personal experience what it has been like for us. The temptation to give advice is great, but when we do so we lose the respect of newcomers. This clouds our message. A simple, honest message of recovery from addiction rings true.

We attend meetings and make ourselves visible and avail- able to serve the Fellowship. We give freely and gratefully of our time, service, and what we have found here. The service we speak of in Narcotics Anonymous is the primary purpose of our groups. Service work is carrying the message to the addict who still suffers. The more eagerly we wade in and work, the richer our spiritual awakening will be.

The first way that we carry the message speaks for itself. People see us on the street and remember us as devious, frightened loners. They notice the fear leaving our faces. They see us gradually come alive.

Once we find the NA way, boredom and complacency have no place in our new life. By staying clean, we begin to practice spiritual principles such as hope, surrender, acceptance, honesty, open-mindedness, willingness, faith, tolerance, patience, humility, unconditional love, sharing and caring. As our recovery progress- es, spiritual principles touch every area of our lives, because we simply try to live this program in the here and now.

We find joy as we start to learn how to live by the principles of recovery. It is the joy of watching as a person two days clean says to a person with one day clean, "An addict alone is in bad company." It is the joy of watching a person who was struggling to make it suddenly, in the middle of helping another addict to stay clean, become able to find the words needed to carry the message of recovery.

We feel that our lives have become worthwhile. Spiritually refreshed, we are glad to be alive. When we were using, our lives became an exercise in survival. Now we are doing much more living than surviving. Realizing that the bottom line is staying clean, we can enjoy life. We like being clean and enjoy carrying the message of recovery to the addict who still suffers. Going to meetings really works.

Practicing spiritual principles in our daily lives leads us to a new image of ourselves. Honesty, humility and open-mindedness help us to treat our associates fairly. Our decisions become tempered with tolerance. We learn to respect ourselves.

The lessons we learn in our recovery are sometimes bitter and painful. By helping others we find the reward of self-respect, as we are able to share these lessons with other members of Narcotics Anonymous. We cannot deny other addicts their pain, but we can carry the message of hope that was given to us by fellow addicts in recovery. We share the principles of recovery, as they have worked in our lives. God helps us as we help each other. Life takes on a new meaning, a new joy, and a quality of being and feeling worthwhile. We become spiritually refreshed and are glad to be alive. One aspect of our spiritual awakening comes through the new understanding of our Higher Power that we develop by sharing another addict's recovery.

Yes, we are a vision of hope. We are examples of the program working. The joy that we have in living clean is an attraction to the addict who still suffers.

We do recover to live clean and happy lives. Welcome to NA. The steps do not end here. The steps are a new beginning!

Tradition Twelve

"Anonymity is the spiritual foundation of all our Traditions, ever reminding us to place principles before personalities."

A dictionary definition of anonymity is "a state of bearing no name." In keeping with Tradition Twelve, the "I" becomes "we." The spiritual foundation becomes more important than any one group or individual.

As we find ourselves growing closer together, the awakening of humility occurs. Humility is a by-product that allows us to grow and develop in an atmosphere of freedom, and removes the fear of becoming known by our employers, families or friends as addicts. Therefore, we attempt to rigorously adhere to the principle that "what is said in meetings stays in meetings."

Throughout our Traditions, we speak in terms of "we" and "our" rather than "me" and "mine." By working together for our common welfare, we achieve the true spirit of anonymity.

We have heard the phrase "principles before personalities" so often that it is like a cliche. While we may disagree as individuals, the spiritual principle of anonymity makes us all equal as members of the group. No member is greater or lesser than any other member. The drive for personal gain in the areas of sex, property and social position, which brought so much pain in the past, falls by the wayside if we adhere to the principle of anonymity. Anonymity is one of the basic elements of our recovery and it pervades our Traditions and our Fellowship. It protects us from our own defects of character and renders personalities and their differences powerless. Anonymity in action makes it impossible for personalities to come before principles.

Events In and around our Region: Geographical Areas include but

are not limited to - Ulster, Dutchess, Greene, Columbia counties. The Capital District. Southern Adirondacks. Berkshires. Green Mountain of Vermont

SERENITY IN THE BERSHIRES CAMPOUT COMMITTEE PRESENTS:



New Years Eve Celebration

FOOD FUN & FELLOWSHIP

SATURDAY DECEMBER 31ST ST STEPHENS CHURCH 67 EAST ST PITTSFIELD MA (ALLEN ST ENTRANCE)

> DINNER 530PM -6:30 SPEAKER 7PM-8PM DANCE 8:00 PM -12:30AM

TICKETS ARE AVAILABLE \$20.00 FOR DINNER & DANCE \$8.00 FOR THE DANCE

RE INFORMATION CONTACT DEB G. (413) 441-9385 CAMPOUT COMMITTEE CHAIR.



5th Annual **NA Speaker Jam and Holiday Dinner**

Hosted by the You Are Here Group of Narcotics Anonymous

Saturday, December 10, 2022 5pm to 10pm Marlborough Community House*

> 160 Main Street Marlborough, NH



5:30 p.m. - 6:00 p.m. NA Speaker (1) 6:00 p.m. - 7:00 p.m. Dinner 7:00 p.m. - 9:00 p.m. NA Speakers (3)

\$ 15.00 Suggested Donation Includes home-cooked Holiday Dinner with all the fixins' (Including vegetarian and gluten-free offerings)

You are Here Group is a member of the Green Mountain Area of Narcotics Anonymous, www.gmana.org



MID-HUDSON AREA NARCOTICS ANONYMOUS FOR THE LOVE OF SERVICE III PRESENTS A ONE DAY CONVENTION FUNDRAISER

Speaker Jam & Dance!

Saturday, December 17th, 2022

1pm - 5pm: Speaker Jam

Dance follows at 5PM

161 Mansion Street. Poughkeepsie

Food. Soda & Water will be sold

7ickets are \$5

Contact: Kelly B (845.902.0506)



Earry 7 (845, 728, 2123) BE PRESENT FOR THE GIFT!

CONTACT INFORMATION:

• MID-HUDSON AREA OF NARCOTICS ANONYMOUS WEBSITE:

WWW.MHA-NA.ORG

• NARCOTICS ANONYMOUS:

WWW.NA.ORG

• ABCD REGION OF NARCOTICS ANONYMOUS (CAPITAL REGION):

WWW.ABCDRNA.ORG

Events: https://abcdrna.org/events-calender



- •BERKSHIRE COUNTY AREA OR NARCOTICS
 ANONYMOUS: www.berkshirena.com/
 Berkshire Area Events https://berkshirena.com/
 coming-events
- GREATER NY REGION OF NARCOTICS ANONYMOUS (DOWNSTATE):

WWW.NEWYORKNA.ORG

Events: https://newyorkna.org/calendar

- NA RECOVERY LITERATURE (TO PURCHASE BOOKS AND MISC.): www.na.org/webstore
- FREE NA LITERATURE: www.na.org/?ID=ips-index
- MID-HUDSON AREA PUBLIC RELATIONS: MHANAPUBLICINFORMATION@YAHOO.COM
- MID-HUDSON AREA HOSPITALS & INSTITUTIONS: MHANAHANDI@YAHOO.COM



- MID-HUDSON AREA HELPLINE (SPEAK TO AN ADDICT): 855-99-4HOPE
- North East Zonal Forum: www.NEZF.org