

Now I live  
 I was dead but now I live  
 Show my gratitude as I give  
 I had a hole I could not fill  
 Down deep inside of me  
 I was stoned  
 I could not see  
 What was happening to me  
 I drank like a sponge  
 All I could get  
 So many blackouts I regret  
 When that stop working  
 I turned to drugs  
 Trying to fill that hole  
 I came mighty close  
 To killing my soul  
 My drug of choice  
 Was more, more, more  
 Of anything I could score  
 From acid to pot and pills  
 I thought I found a lot of  
 cheap thrills  
 They enhanced the alcohol I  
 drank  
 I watched my life as it  
 sank  
 By the grace of God I  
 did not die  
 I was so lonely  
 Yet I could not cry  
 Watching my life pass me by  
 All I could do was deny  
 Then I got honest  
 Faced my ways  
 With the help of the 12 step  
 program  
 God brightened my days

Now I live to give it away  
 I'm so grateful and blessed  
 today  
 I work my program from  
 Morning until night  
 No longer do I rebel and  
 fight  
 I have this peace deep in-  
 side  
 No longer do I dwell in  
 false pride  
 Daniel M  
 10/22/2000

ADDICT

ADDICT ADDICT  
 YOU ARE SO STRONG

ADDICT ADDICT  
 IT TOOK YOU THIS LONG  
 SO DON'T LET ME DOWN  
 AND GUIDE ME ALONG

FOR YOU ARE THE ONE  
 WHO BROUGHT ME THIS LONG  
 TO BRING OUT MY HAND  
 AND GUIDE THOSE ALONG

FOR YOU ARE THE ONE  
 WHO TAUGHT ME SO WELL  
 TO HELP THOSE IN NEED  
 THAT ARE GOING TO HELL

FOR YOU ARE THE ONE  
 WHO GAVE ME MY NAME  
 SO LET'S NOT WASTE IT IN VEIN

FOR THOSE WHO REACH  
 IN NEED AND DESPAIR  
 YOU ARE CALLING ME THERE

SO SHOW THE CARE  
 FOR WHICH YOU'HD  
 AND CARRY ME ALONG  
 TO THE NEXT LITTLE KID

FOR THOSE ARE THE ONES  
 WHO WON'T DO YOUR BID

IF WE CAN STOP THE NEXT LITTLE KID

ADDICT ADDICT  
 YOU ARE SO STRONG

FOR YOU ARE THE ONE  
 WHO CARRIED ME ALONG  
 ALL I ASK IS  
 FOR THOSE IN DESPAIR

ADDICT ADDICT  
 YOU ARE NOT RARE

SO DON'T PLAY NO GAMES  
 I KNOW YOU'RE THERE

FOR THIS I SEEK

FOR THIS I FIND  
 WITH ADDICT AND ME TOWING  
 THE LINE

FOR YOU ARE THE ONE  
 WHO HELPED ME FEEL PAIN

FOR YOU ARE THE ONE  
 WHO HELPED ME GAIN

ALL I ASK IT TO KEEP ME  
 HAPPY AND FREE  
 FOR TODAY  
 I AM ME

FOR YOU AND YOUR GUIDANCE  
 YOU AND YOUR STRENGTH  
 ALL I CAN SAY IS... THANKS!

by Keith B. 12/17/97 (2:30 AM)

UPCOMING  
 EVENTS

FELLOWSHIP IN  
 THE FIELD 11  
 JUNE 22ND 23RD  
 24TH 2001.

CANDLEPIN BOWL-  
 ING PARTY SAT.  
 MARCH 24TH 9PM  
 TO MIDNIGHT

FALL LEARNING  
 DAY 2000 OCT 21,  
 2000 10AM TO 10PM  
 AUBURN ME. CON-  
 TACT SO. ME. WEB-

SIGHT FOR  
 MORE INFO.

WINTER UNITY-  
 FEST 3 FEB 2ND  
 3RD N 4TH AL-  
 FRED ME.

Our primary pur-  
 pose of carrying  
 the message to ad-  
 dict who still suf-  
 fers was a huge  
 success with  
 GSACNA!  
 Thanks to all of  
 you who attended  
 and served :^)

The next issue of  
 The Northern New  
 England Regional  
 Newsletter will be  
 published in  
 March, 2001. If  
 you would like to  
 submit an article or  
 any other fodder  
 please have it in to  
 us by the first week  
 of February to give  
 our committee time  
 to look it over for  
 submission. Other-  
 wise, have a nice  
 recovery day!!

# THE INTERDEPENDENT

The Newsletter Published  
 for the Northern New Eng-  
 land Region Of NA



Volume 1  
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 November  
 2000

This newsletter is published every other month of  
 the year for the addicts in the Northern New Eng-  
 land Region of Narcotics Anonymous. To have  
 this newsletter sent to your home, send five (\$5)  
 dollars for a years subscription to: NNERNL P.O.  
 Box 242 Belgrade, Me. 04917. Send your name,  
 address and phone number.

...and other persis-  
 tent rumors

"It's a selfish program"

I thought that when *It Works: How  
 and Why* was published, I would at  
 last be freed from having my ears as-  
 sailed by hearing, "This is a selfish  
 program." After all, it says quite  
 clearly on page 117, "Narcotics

Anonymous is not a selfish pro-  
 gram." I suppose the people who  
 routinely claim that this is a selfish  
 program haven't read *"It Works:  
 How and Why."* Could that be a  
 coincidence? I have to be fair. Peo-  
 ple don't usually invoke the  
 "selfish program" statement in re-  
 sponse to requests to do service or  
 to carry the message.

In fact, it's just the opposite. They'll go on a Twelfth-Step call because "they can only keep what they have by giving it away. See, it's a selfish program." I don't dispute the fact that carrying the message practically guarantees that our own recovery will continue. I just hate it being the primary focus when we're trying to help someone else.

### **We have no leaders"**

Once upon a time in a faraway region (I can't say where or when because I don't want to embarrass anybody), someone with more than five years clean and quite a bit of experience in NA ser-vice said, "We have no leaders. That's government!" Speechless for nearly a minute, I tried—diplomatically—to clean up this mutilation of our Second Tradition. I said something like, "Well, maybe some-one should check because I could have it wrong, but I thought the Second Tradition said 'our leaders are but trusted servants; they do not govern.'" I was trying not to humiliate the person who insisted that we have no leaders. I'd heard others assert that NA has no leaders before, but they're usually pretty new and haven't done any service beyond the group level. Since it came up the way it did, I felt compelled to write to *The NA Way* to try to curb the spread of this weird misquote, seen as a

"better than" description. I've listened to a lot of addicts complain about those "arrogant" people (trusted servants) who all look so "affluent" and "talk like English professors." So many of us hear the phrase "leadership qualities," and we think we don't qualify.

But leadership qualities aren't based on wealth, or even a good education (though an education probably helps somewhat in that opportunities to develop leadership qualities seem to arise more often during the course of higher education). The leadership qualities that we need most in Narcotics Anonymous are those that make things happen—not through force or manipulation, but through consistent effort. I don't believe we've done very well with training our trusted servants on some of the basics. Say you're chairing an area phone line committee. You have a meeting once a month and you have 21 weekly phone line shifts to fill. Currently, you have two of those slots filled (by your sponsees because you made them do it) and your once-a-month meetings have become kaffeeklatsches. You make an announcement at every meeting you attend (four or five a week) that the area phone line has lots of open slots and you really need people to fill them. Then the meeting closes with the Serenity Prayer. You hang out for a while, but nobody approaches you about taking a phone line slot. You also report your problem each month to the ASC. You may even make

flyers for all the GSRs to hand out at their meetings. It's what the phone line chair before you did, right? The problem is that getting people to do service is much harder than that. People need to feel a sense of responsibility. They need to know that their eight hours on the phone once a week is actually going to make some kind of difference.

### **A Gift of Recovery**

Recently I was at an NA meeting and I mentioned to a recovering addict that I have known for a long time that I had to go to visit my family. The addict's response was "I am glad that I don't have a family" That got me to thinking about how glad I am that I do have a family. Not only my NA family, but my blood relatives as well.

When I came into Narcotics Anonymous in the 1980s, I was 23 years old and did not have a good relationship with anyone, especially my family, I was full of hate and resentment, and blamed everyone I could on my rotten miserable life. I was convinced that my family hated me, why wouldn't they, after all I put them through. I was such a mess; the only thing I knew was that I needed to be different. In these Narcotics Anonymous meetings I was being offered what was called "new way of life". At the meetings I learned how to listen, how to share, how to empathize, how to care about others, and also how to care about myself. My first six months clean I lived at my parent's house and it was very difficult. They

did not understand anything about addiction or recovery. I was vulnerable and raw, and just beginning to learn how to live clean. We had many arguments about why I was going to meetings all the time, why I was never home. In fact they said I was no different, I was just not doing drugs any more. Little did they know that I was beginning to build the foundation of my recovery, of our recovery. As time went by, the only thing that they really knew about NA was that since I began attending NA meetings, I stopped being sick and getting arrested. Over the years I have learned to develop meaningful relationships with the people in my life. I love my family very much today. We are great friends, one of the miracles of recovery. There are so many gifts in my life that are a result of living the NA Way. The addicts in the rooms have taught me so much. My sponsor has taught me so much about unconditional love. That's the wonderful thing about our spiritual principles, is that eventually we understand that we have to live them in our daily life, not just when we are at meetings. With help from the NA fellowship and the spiritual principles, I deeply understand that long-term recovery is possible. And when we carry the healing message of NA in our hearts, we may learn that things that we never dreamed possible are now our reality. In short NA WORKS!

Chris R.