



NORTHERN NEW ENGLAND NEWS

April 2004

Issue 2

"A Newsletter concerning the Recovery & Activities of the Northern New England Region of NA"

Northern New England
Regional Service Committee
PO Box 1274
Saco, ME 04072

Granite State Area of NA
PO Box 5171
Manchester, NH 03108
603-645-4777
<http://www.gsana.org>

Seacoast Area of NA
PO Box 512
Greenland, NH 03840
603-645-4777

Southern Maine of NA
PO Box 53009
Portland, ME 04101
1-800-974-0062
www.namaine.org

Contents:

Surrendering My Will	3
Letter from Editor.....	4
Meetings Needing Support.....	5
New Meetings.....	5
Suggested Future Topics	6
Area Announcements.....	6
NA Birthdays	7
Fun Page.....	8
Calendar.....	9

Total Surrender

I came to the Fellowship of N.A. beaten emotionally, spiritually and physically. I could not function or face life without the use of drugs. The people in N.A. were unlike the people in the streets. I tried to "fit in" with my drug associates while escaping from them through some twenty years of addiction. N.A. showed me love, care and understanding which I did not know how to accept. Members told me to look at the first step. During my addiction, I substituted different drugs, confirming that I wasn't an addict. When I could not get the drug I wanted, I would switch to another. The First Step of NA told me I was powerless over my addiction, I automatically substituted; "I am powerless over drugs". To fit in, I said I was cross-addicted, dual-addicted, poly-addicted, a drug addict or a dope fiend. After being clean for a few months and looking at the first step, I realized I was caught up in chemical denial. I still had all my old hang-ups and thoughts. I had to totally surrender to the fact that I was powerless over my addiction. Only then could I start on the road to recovery with the help of N.A.

Thank you N.A. for showing me what addiction really is and for saving my life. Living clean helps me to work on my addictive personality. Now I can face life on its own terms with the help of the N.A. Program, other members, and my loving, understanding, forgiving God.

Reprinted with permission from the NA Way

Complacency or "What if this is as Good as it Gets?"

Complacency in one's recovery is usually associated with old-timers. At what point in one's recovery complacency occurs, however, is unclear. Now the term old-timer has always conjured up for me an image of some saliva-dripping old fool, while old salt, virtually the same thing, projects more of a warm, earthy feeling. After years of participation at NA meetings as a clean addict and having ticked off more than just a few newcomers, it is safe for me to willingly accept and claim the designation of old salt. Yet, the question still needs to be asked, "Does describing one as complacent in their recovery apply simply to old-timers?" While only the individual recovering addict can finally decide this for him or herself, it is probably safe to assume that complacency may be applied to describe anyone at anytime in recovery.

Experience has taught us to use the 12 Steps of Narcotics Anonymous to recover and gauge our progress in recovery. Measured progress in recovery can be ascertained by answering the following, amongst other, questions:

(Continued on page 2)



The Northern New England News is a bi-monthly newsletter of the Northern New England Region Service Committee of NA. The newsletter is published by email. Submissions are eagerly welcome. For the June issue, the deadline is May 15th. Submit articles to: nnewsletter@yahoo.com



Note:

If you have not received your copy of the newsletter or you are having trouble with the formatting due to a different version of software, please send us an email and we can re-send the document in another program. nnewsletter@yahoo.com

Complacency or "What if this is as Good as it Gets" (continued from page 1)

"What step am I working on at this time; What step is of particular concern to me right now in my recovery; Is there one step particularly nagging at me to fulfill and hence achieve a greater sense of recovery?" On the other hand, you may have heard it said that at NO time in recovery will we ever work the steps PERFECTLY past the first one. Often my initial reaction to this thought is, "If that is the case, why work the steps at all...I'll never get them right?" At just this point it is important to bring myself up short and repeat the common experience that I didn't enter recovery to become PERFECT, but simply to get clean. Those old-timers when I was starting out repeatedly told me that if I wanted to stay clean, the path to recovery was through working the steps. They told me we are placed in a universe of law, cause and effect, and we are free to choose how we live our lives, and there are consequences to the decisions we make. If we make the wrong decisions, we will suffer the consequences. If we jump out of the 30th floor of a building, the steps teach us that our will and our lives are still in God's care, we will still be loved and forgiven all the way down, but this grace will not save us from a sudden and unpleasant stop.

Complacency in the dictionary (*The American Heritage® Dictionary of the English Language, Fourth Edition*) is defined as, "A feeling of contentment or self-satisfaction, especially when coupled with an unawareness of danger, trouble, or controversy." Therefore, first of all it is a feeling and clearly a deceitful feeling at that. Smugness comes to mind. Couple the terms denial and narcissism and this could also apply. Now remove the thought of complacency and it sounds like a definition for addiction. And we all know the consequences for that...jails, institutions, and death. This is not a good thing.

If the answer lies in the steps, "How do I guard myself from becoming complacent?" Sometimes we hear the words paraphrased to say, "Well I've tried the steps and found them wanting, besides..." You can fill in the rest of that phrase as I have often tried. It usually ends like, "...my life is going so well, and who needs the steps? Besides, they take up time I don't have. The fellowship is where it's at for me. There I don't have to let people really get to know me. You know that young sweet thing who attends Tuesday night I'd really like to get into..." Or, "Right now things are so bad I just need to get back to 'normal', nothing seems to be working."

It's certainly true in my recovery that working the steps has been a challenge. Here is where it is good for me to remember the rest of that phrase, "There are those who have said that the Steps have been tried and found wanting; I say the Steps have been wanted and hardly tried." They are a challenge, one to be overcome. And, you know, every time I let the steps work in my life, the results have always been good. Not a feeling of contentment or self-satisfaction, but one of humility in knowing that the results were not mine, but came from a greater source of power, a power more infinite than my mere mortal being. Thank God.

Member Southern Maine Area

DISCLAIMER:

The opinions expressed here do not necessarily reflect the views of NA as a whole, the NNE RSC, nor the Newsletter Ad-Hoc Committee.

Surrendering My Will

When I came into this Fellowship, people told me to keep coming back, work the steps, to pray, read the literature, and listen to others. After coming to an understanding of the first two steps and using them every day, I feel like a human being again. I've always believed in a God but I didn't have trust and faith. I've been praying to a Higher Power and going to meetings every day. The things I need come in bits and pieces. Usually, only when I've tried every other way, I realize then that it is time to surrender.

In my understanding of God, all you have to do is ask for help and try not to make the same mistakes over again. When I've done that, I feel a calmness and happiness in my heart that wasn't ever there before. Each morning I turn my day over to my H.P. to do with it as is seen fit. Sometimes during the day I have to turn situations over to Him, so that I may have tolerance, patience, strength, guidance, or whatever it is that I need to do my God's will. It helps me to get a better perspective on things and a better attitude. I can see little things happening to me and others in my life.

My will has been quieted quite a bit. I'm thinking of others' feelings and situations. It feels good to care and try to do my best. I feel as if someone's looking over me, making sure I'm not into something I can't handle. I like that. Even though I can't touch it, I believe with all my heart. Even tough times are a little easier now. I seem to be getting a little more patient and considerate. I don't have to know everything or butt into other peoples' affairs. I still pray that my God will shut my mouth and I decided a while back that I wanted to turn my will and my life over to the care of God as I understand him. Its taken time to grow and trust in that decision, to put it into action in my daily life. My thinking is changing, I pray, I try not to be so self-centered and self-willed or so "know-it-all". I figure when I know something I know it, if I don't I'll keep my mouth shut.

Having some control over actions is neat for me because I never did before. I never tried and didn't use my Higher Power. My H.P. can control me even when I can't control myself. All I have to do is ask. I ask a lot. This has helped me stay out of trouble, and not get into risky situations that I may not be able to get out of. I try to stay away from situations like this completely. I'm not a super human or a God and I can't control other people or their actions.

My God has helped me not only to get clean but to stop using cigarettes too. I don't have an overwhelming desire anymore for anything. I can stop. I have for today surrendered. It feels good not to be dependent on anything but me, H.P., and other clean people.

I feel like I'm doing the right things for me today. My God's will has quieted mine and in turn my life doesn't have the turmoil and disillusionments that it used to. Life feels good today. Praying feels good today. Helping others and being a nice person feels good. Doing my God's will feels great. It works for me today.

(Continued on Page 4)

NEVER ALONE

Surrendering My Will (continued from page 3)

Another thing that could be my God's will for me is to share my experience in N.A. with others. I believe it must be my God's will for me to do service work because it makes me feel worthy of life again. I'm a responsible and trustworthy person that others can care about and have feelings for. Step Three is a big change in my life. Through trusting, caring, sharing and being honest, I feel full today, like maybe I might have enough. I feel that with my God's help, I can continue to grow and change and do anything that is His will for me, not have to know why and how, just carrying on as best I can and not worrying.

Taking action on words that I say and think has always been hard for me, especially when I might fail. Now I pray about things, prepare, and do what my gut level feeling thinks is right, I don't just sit around and wait for something to happen in my recovery. I make things happen by going to meetings, using the phone, talking to others, and getting my "hugs" Just for today, I'm not afraid of failing or of rejection because I know my H.P. has helped me through thick and thin. If some thing doesn't happen the way I think it should, I realize my way couldn't have been my God's way that I was wrong. Even situations like that feel okay now, It is a great feeling, to not worry about trivial things, allowing myself to just move on from day to day. I get rid of what I can, change what needs to be changed, and accept the rest. I'm okay today, thanks to my God's power and love. My God's will seems right for me today. I trust and believe in my Higher Power and I know that nothing and no one can take that away from me, I'm grateful to the Spirit that flows through the people in N.A that helped me to see the truth where before I saw none, It feels good that I have this faith and trust and don't have to worry, Just For Today, Things will work out for the best, especially if I don't try to push my will into my life or anyone else life.

Reprinted with permission from the NA Way

Letter from the Editor:

Dear subscribers: We want you to know how much you are appreciated as readers of the *Northern New England News*. You will be interested to know that we have over 25 subscribers signed up at this time and anticipate more as time moves ahead and the word gets out how much you enjoy reading and passing out hard copies of your subscription. We have one major improvement in the works and have settled upon a few issues of importance to you, the members of NA in the Northern New England Region of Narcotics Anonymous. We'd like to make those issues known at this time and how we arrived at a final decision.

First, we will be using the West Virginia model for letting our readership know of individual member's clean time anniversary celebration. This will mean no names are to be revealed, only the number of years (as shown inside a medallion) with the location and time of each celebrant's anniversary.

(Continued on page 5)

Area History Coming Next Issue

Next issue we will provide a brief history of the Areas in our Region, stay tuned for more!

Northern New England Regional Meetings & Deadlines

April 15th, CAR voting deadline to get your votes to the RD

May 8th—RSC, Seacoast Area, Dover, NH - Wentworth Douglas Hospital, Central Ave (Nominations for Regional Positions)

July 10th—RSC, Bangor, ME, Acadia Hospital, Stillwater Avenue (Elections to be held)

September 11th—RSC, Granite State Area

Letter from the Editor (continued from page 4)

Obviously, in order for us to do this, we will need that information to present it properly. Now, how did we arrive at this decision? In respect of our traditions, especially 11 & 12, the decision came easy. It is clear once we send an issue out we have no control over who may view its contents, even the chance of the public taking it in. As we read through the 11th, we are cautioned to remain anonymous, even in these situations. We felt we should respect this thinking and take the high road, and once the West Virginia model came known, the decision came easy.

Second, we will be recognizing article writers simply by placing *Member*, followed by the geographic NA service area in which the person resides, at the end of their article. Again this decision came easy in respect of our traditions. You will note that the previous newsletter, sponsored by this region, also handled this in a similar manner. We have added the service area notation because of the spiritual nature of this program and the importance to serve as we are guided in our Steps and Traditions.

Please feel free to comment on anything you see or have read in this newsletter, especially the previous. We encourage feedback as a way of hearing about what we are doing right in the readership's eyes and learning from you as well about what we could do better. Thanks again for your support. Tell your fellow addicts to sign up where they can. Public libraries are a good place to establish an email account with one of the well known FREE providers. *Yahoo*, where the newsletter has its home is one such place. Thanks again.

Editor

Meetings Needing Support

GRANITE STATE AREA OF NA:

- 7:00 PM-DERRY, NEW HAMPSHIRE, "When At The Crossroads", Community Center 39 West Broadway HA (RT/D)
- 7:00 PM-DERRY, NEW HAMPSHIRE, "It's About Time", Community Center, 39 W. Broadway HA (SP/T/D)

New Meetings

SOUTHERN MAINE AREA OF NA:

- Tuesday, SACO, MAINE 7:00 – 8:30 PM "Tracks to Recovery" Saco Parks & Recreation Center, 80 Common Street O NC H
- Monday, HOULTON, ME 7:00 PM Salvation Army. C BT D

GRANITE STATE AREA OF NA:

- Sunday, PEPPERELL, MA 5:00 pm, "Burning Desires". It is at the Park Street Fire Station.
- Saturday, FRANKLIN, NH 7:30 PM, "Fresh Horizons, St. Jude's Episcopal Church on Central Street (next to the police station)

Suggested Future Topics

June Issue (deadline May 15)

Beginners: *Powerlessness*

Old-Timers: *Spiritual Principles*

Beginners: *Just For Today*

Old-Timers: *Humility*

What you read listed above are the topics to be used for future “meeting in print” newsletter issues. As always, if you have felt a need to write upon an entirely different topic, go for it, as long as it is related to recovery from the disease of addiction. These are intended to stimulate your writing skills for the benefit of our readership. Thanks in advance for your participation. We know what it means when it is said...”We are not alone.”

Area Announcements

- **The GSACC III Programming Subcommittee** is looking for NA speaker tapes to help us in selecting speakers for the 3rd Granite State Area Convention happening in the Summer of 2004. If you have a tape and are interested in speaking at the convention, or know someone who has a tape that you would like to hear at the convention, please give the tape to a GSACC III member or mail it to the address below. In order to be confirmed as a speaker, you must be pre-registered by June 1, 2004. Tapes must be received no later than 4/1/04. Please contact us if you need registration flyers. Minimum clean time requirements are as follows:

Main speakers: 5 years

Workshop speakers: 2 years

Meeting chairpersons: 6 months

Mail tapes to: GSACNA III Committee Attn: Programming P.O. Box 6102
Manchester, NH 03108 *Be sure to include the speaker’s name, address,
phone number and clean date on the tape!

Joining the Newsletter Ad-Hoc Committee

If you are interested in being a part of the Newsletter Ad-Hoc Committee please send an email to neadhoc@yahoogroups.com. We meet ONLINE the 4th Wednesday of every month at 8:30 PM in Yahoo Groups. Once we receive your request to participate we will give you further instructions, it’s fairly simple. (You don’t need a microphone to participate, you can type as you do in other chat sessions)

Currently we are discussing the pros and cons too many issues just as you would in face to face subcommittees. These issues include: anonymity, NA Anniversaries, improving the newsletter, and posting newsletter on web sites. We also review any articles that are submitted to the Northern New England News. All are welcome to become a member of this committee.

HAPPY BIRTHDAY

April & May NA Birthdays

Email us your clean date, the area you are from and where and when you plan to celebrate. Send information to nnnewsletter@yahoo.com



*6 Years
Member of Granite State
Celebrating*



*11 Years
Member Celebrating*



*15 Years
Member of Southern Maine
Celebrating*



*19 Years
Member of Granite State
Celebrating*

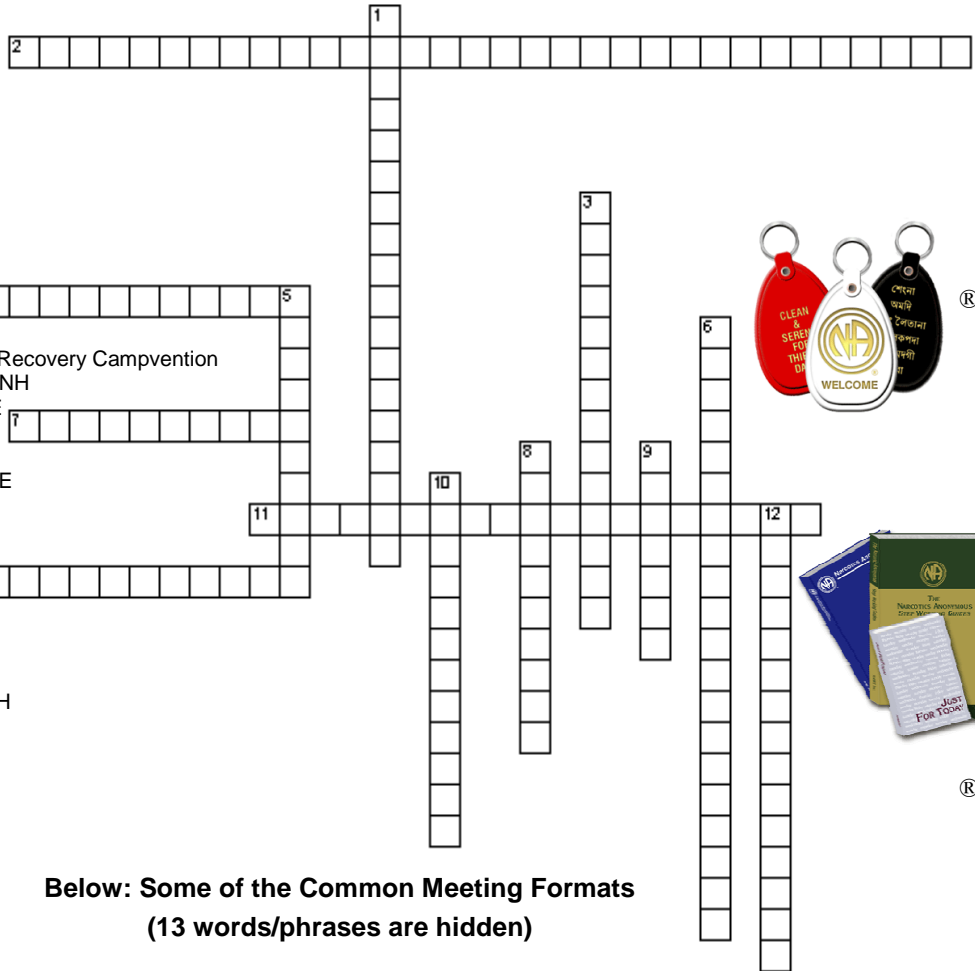


*21 Years
Member of Southern Maine
Celebrating*

Group Anniversaries Come Soon

If you would like to see your Group's Anniversary announced in the newsletter, send email to nnnewsletter@yahoo.com. If you know the Month and Year the group was formed, include that too!

Northern New England Groups—Fun Page



Across

- 2. Group that sponsors the Nature of Recovery Campvention
- 4. Noon time meeting in Manchester, NH
- 7. Sunday meeting in Kennebunk, ME
- 11. Bangor, ME group that meets 5 times a week
- 13. Candle light meeting in Augusta, ME

Down

- 1. Tuesdays in Manchester
- 3. Meeting in Lewiston that changed from Monday to Friday
- 5. New meeting in Bridgton, ME
- 6. Mondays in Augusta, ME
- 8. Saturday meeting in N. Conway, NH
- 9. Friday meeting in Stratham, NH
- 10. Fridays in the Seacoast Area
- 12. Tuesdays in Ellsworth, ME

**Below: Some of the Common Meeting Formats
(13 words/phrases are hidden)**

J I T U R C Q O R N J T J W C Q R L E C
 I T W O R K S H O W A N D W H Y I Z L W
 P S T E P T R A D I T I O N T T K O I G
 W W P U T I D K B E G I N N E R S P Q P
 R Y L Z K P C I C B Y Q D R D E P N H F
 J U S T F O R T O D A Y A A D A E F S Y
 N O I T U T I T S N I T D M L P A K B A
 F H H D P D D I S C U S S I O N K A D H
 C E Z A K V H Y R R W Q G Y T E E L L K
 D Y T X E T Y R E V O C E R V O R Z U I

Across: 2. One promise Saturday Mtg. in N. Conway, NH; 4. Serenity for Lunch Noon Mtg. in Manchester, NH; 7. Free at last Sunday Mtg. in Kennebunk, ME; 11. Nightingales Candle Light Mtg. in Augusta, ME; Down: 1. Grateful Where Not Dead Bangor, ME Group meets five times a week; 3. Unwashed and Somewhat Slightly Dazed Group sponsors the Nature of Recovery Campvention; 5. Choices Friday Mtg. in Stratham, NH; 6. Room Full of Miracles Tuesdays in Manchester; 8. Warm and Slightly Fuzzy Mondays in Augusta, ME; 9. Live and Kickin' Tuesdays in Ellsworth, ME; 10. Just For Today Fridays in Seacoast Area; 12. Changing the Lie Mtg. in Lewiston changed from Monday to Friday; How it Works New Mtg. in Bridgton

April 2004

Northern New England Region of NA – Calendar of Events

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
<p>April 4th Granite State Area 12 Noon H&I Sub-Committee Mtg. before ASC</p>	<p>April 4th Granite State Area 6 PM Board of Directors Meeting Manchester, NH</p>			1	2 Brothers in Spirit 5th Annual NA Men's Retreat Notre Dame Spiritual Center, Alfred, Maine April 2, 3 & 4, 2004	3 Southern Maine Area 5 PM – 12 AM Nature of Recovery Fundraiser Treat Memorial Library
<p>Granite State ASC 4 Manchester, NH 1:45 PM Seacoast ASC Dover, NH 12:00 Noon-4:00 pm</p>	5	6	7	8	9	10 Granite State Area 12 Noon Camp-Out Committee with a pot luck dinner, meeting starts at 1PM Pembroke, NH
11 Granite State ASC 10:30 – 12 Noon Activities Comm. Hosting Annual Egg Hunt Concord, NH	12	13	14	15	16	17 Southern Maine Area Noon – 4 PM Learning Day Kennebec Mennonite Church Augusta, Maine
18 Granite State Area PI Subcommittee 12 Noon at Blakes Webster St. Manchester, NH	19	20	21	22	23	24 Southern Maine ASC 12 Noon Bangor, Maine NA Dance 9 PM – 12 AM Brewer, ME at the VFW
25	26	27	28	29	30	

May 2004

Northern New England Region of NA – Calendar of Events

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	
May 2nd Granite State Area 12 Noon H&I Sub- Committee Mtg. before ASC						1	
Granite State ASC Manchester, NH 1:45 PM Seacoast ASC Dover, NH 12:00 Noon-4:00 pm	2	3	4	5	6	7	8 NNERSC 12 Noon Seacoast Area hosting Region Dover, NH
9	10	11	12	13	14	15	
16	17	18	19	20	21	22 Southern Maine ASC 12 Noon at Church of Holy Spirit Portland, Maine	
<u>23</u> 30	<u>24</u> 31	25	26 Granite State Area 6 PM PI Subcommittee Beford, NH	27	28	29 Granite State Area Activities Subcommittee Hosting first softball game of the season, TO BE ANNOUNCED Manchester, NH	

Coming in June: Southern Maine—Nature of Recovery June 4-6 South China, Maine
Granite State Area—Fellowship in the Field Campout XIV! June 25-27 Bethlehem, New Hampshire