



## Passaic County Area February 2011 Newsletter

### Our Gratitude Speaks



#### Step Two

The first thing we do in this Program is stop using. At this point we begin to feel the pain of living without drugs or anything to replace them. This pain forces us to seek a Power greater than ourselves that can relieve our obsession to use.



The process of coming to believe is something that we seem to experience in similar ways. One thing most of us lacked was a working relationship with a Higher Power. We begin to develop this relationship by simply admitting to the possibility of a Power greater than ourselves. Most of us have no trouble admitting that addiction had become a destructive force in our lives. Our best efforts resulted in ever greater destruction and despair. At some point we realized we needed the help of some Power greater than our addiction. Our understanding of a Higher Power is up to us. No one is going to decide for us. We can call it the group, the program, or we can call it God. The only suggested guidelines are that this Power be loving, caring and greater than ourselves. We don't have to be religious to accept this idea. The point is that we open our minds to believe. We may have difficulty with this, but by keeping an open mind, sooner or later, we find the help we need.

We talked and listened to others. We saw other people recovering, and they told us what was working for them. We began to see evidence of some Power that could not be fully explained. Confronted with this evidence, we began to accept the existence of a Power greater than ourselves. We can use this Power before we begin to understand it.

As we see "coincidences" and miracles happening in our lives, our acceptance becomes trust. We grow to feel comfortable with our Higher Power as a source of strength. As we learn to trust this Power, we begin to overcome our fears of life.

Basic Text pp 24:25





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### Our Second Tradition

FOR OUR GROUP PURPOSE THERE IS BUT ONE ULTIMATE AUTHORITY – A LOVING GOD AS HE MAY EXPRESS HIMSELF IN OUR GROUP CONSCIENCE. OUR LEADERS ARE BUT TRUSTED SERVANTS; THEY DO NOT GOVERN.

BASED ON THE INTERVIEW OF CHRIS W. BY KEVIN P.  
THE 2ND TRADITION

**Kevin: What process of reaching group conscience have you witnessed?**

**Chris:** I've been a part of several different processes. One was early on at the Home Group level, Home Group Members sitting and discussing what business we were going to handle. We'd discuss things until everyone was done talking then we'd vote on it. I've witnessed a similar process at the area level. We'd discuss until we were ready to vote. If people had questions they'd ask, if they had something to share they'd share it. I've seen people argue until an answer was reached. Recently, in my Home Group we'll sit down and consult our traditions. Once everyone was informed of what the traditions said we'd vote. That was probably the most principled process I've seen. Another thing we used to do in my old area is say the service prayer and we'd change the word "write" to "work".

**Kevin: From your experience, what happens when decisions are reached without group conscience?**

**Chris:** What I've seen it do is cause harm spiritually, mentally, emotionally, and physically. When decisions are made without group conscience, when any service decision at any level is made without group conscience it violates our traditions and our concepts. It removes spiritual anonymity from our service structure. It creates chaos and controversy and when that happens addicts die from the horrors of addiction. It's full of ego and it's nothing but personality over principle.

**Kevin: How do you think group conscience guides us in fulfilling our primary purpose?**

**Chris:** I believe it has the ability to do that or not. Just like our literature says our members can apply their spiritual awakening to their group decision and group conscience. When we've done those things we learn to practice surrender. Surrender to our traditions and to what our traditions and concepts tell us to do. By surrendering and consulting those guiding documents we invite a loving God into those decisions and can reach group conscience the N.A. way.

**Kevin: How does group conscience help maintain our unity and common welfare?**

**Chris:** Without group conscience there is no unity or common welfare. Like I said, it allows us to invite a loving God into our service decision and unify behind our traditions and our concepts and the principles that are contained in them.

**Kevin: What do you think is the primary role of our leaders?**

**Chris:** Very simple, to serve with surrender to our guiding documents and to remind those of us in service what our guiding documents tell us we can and cannot do.

**Kevin: How can we help newcomers realize that being elected as a trusted servant does not elevate one's status in the fellowship, that's it's actually an act of service?**

**Chris:** The best way I feel that we can remind newcomers that it's about service and responsibility, and not power is to share with them about the steps the traditions and the concepts, about the principles that are in our guiding documents and what they tell us to do. That our service is about surrender, humility, courage, vigilance, and diligence that the services we do are not primarily for those of us that are here now but for those of us that have yet to seek a program of recovery. It's to insure that N.A. will be available. That our traditions tell us that these are the principles that keep us alive and free.

**Kevin: What do you have for the newcomer?**

**Chris:** You are any addict just like I am any addict. Any addict can get clean, stay clean, and find a new way of life. Any addict can get dirty, stay dirty, and die behind the disease of addiction. The choice is yours. Either work the steps and recover or don't and die.

**Kevin: Thank you for being of service.**





### The Chosen Few

We, in truth, are the fortunate few  
A belief we choose not to accept  
Looking upon ourselves with sheer  
repugnance  
Finding ourselves hopeless and inept

We focus in on time gone by  
Confused to why we chose this path  
Why O' Lord were we not destined for  
greatness  
Why dear God do we suffer your wrath

But it was we, who chose those roads  
A concept we've grown to understand  
No longer laying the blame upon others  
A life altering change is now at hand

You See  
We can only appreciate what we've  
become  
And value the things we have today  
When we realize it was not all that long  
ago  
All of those possessions were thrown  
away

Little by little, it all seemed to re-  
emerge  
Thankfulness for the gifts we've been  
given  
As God has seen fit to make our lives  
So unbelievably worth living

So in truth we are "The Chosen Few"  
No longer living a life of indignation  
Instead a life of which we never  
dreamed  
Grateful beyond all expectation

Matt L - S. Broward Area

### *Disease*

*I am the blanket that warms  
your neck and strangles you  
in the night.*

*I am the best friend who will  
throw a blow the second you  
look away.*

*I am the cancer you cannot  
see as I grow and take  
hold of your life.*

*I am the lover that destroys  
you from the inside out.*

*I am the innocent child with  
my claws retracted in.*

*I am the disease, I am all  
powerful, I will never die.*

*I am a Kidnapper, a liar, a  
murderer.*

*I will take everything and  
everyone you love and  
dismember them.*

*Gouge out their eyes and skin  
them.*

*I am the sugar coated  
guillotine.*

*The honey glazed shank.*

*I am the terrorist in the form  
of a song, a whisper.*

*I am the molester in the form  
of a mother.*

*I am the Killer who will make it  
all okay.*

*I am the disease, I will be with  
you always.*

*I want you dead, because I  
love you.*

*-Anonymous*



# Passaic County Area February 2011 Newsletter

## Our Gratitude Speaks



### Step & Tradition Two Word Search

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

Came to Believe

God Given Program

Sanity

Service Rather than Control

Group Conscience

Evidence

Insanity of Addiction

Trusted Servants

Open-minded

Selfless Service Works

Second Tradition

Faith

Growing Experiences

Possibility

Acceptance



## Passaic County Area February 2011 Newsletter Our Gratitude Speaks



### A HIGHER POWER

To say that I did not have a conscious contact with God when I came into the program would be a gross understatement! I felt and thought, "What could you guys offer an old druggie like me, who has been there and done that?" I had tried to find a way out for decades and thought that my way worked best. Nothing had worked before, so this "N.A." thing will probably not work either." But you notice I said, "probably", and I was willing to try something else, though I did not think this would work either. The

first thing I did right was go to a meeting, but I thought you guys were full of crap, so I READ THE BOOK! Thank God!! My actual first Step was taken many years before I got "clean" (needless to say I have taken many more first Steps on my ADDICTION, now with a sponsor). I knew I was powerless and that my life was unmanageable for many years, but I had nothing with which to follow that. I read "Who is an Addict" and the "first Step". I thought they were talking about me personally! I felt a chill go through my body when I read it. They were talking to me, the addict, but I still wasn't at any solution steps. Then I started reading the Second Step in the Basic Text. I swore I had found something real that I could use for a solution to my problems. It says in the last line of the second paragraph, page 24, "We can use this Power long before we understand it." After a while, you too, will develop a voice from within that you will recognize as a conscious contact with a God with whom you can do business.

A complete understanding of a Higher Power has nothing whatsoever to do with a conscious contact with it. I say this to the newcomers or anyone having this problem. Don't get all wrapped up in a complete understanding of a Higher Power. If you're like me, you want a place for everything and everything in its place. It will never happen with a Higher Power because you aren't God. A complete understanding of a Higher Power has nothing whatsoever to do with a conscious contact with it.

My concept of my H.P. changes with each passing second and that change is good. I know for a fact that the absolute nature of my God doesn't change. He is loving, caring, greater, and knows more than me. This is what the book tells me and I believe what the Basic Text says. Your Higher Power can be anyone or anything that you want and I suppose it should meet with the guidelines suggested above, although it may take a while for you to see it like that. It should be a voice you can trust and that will lead you in the right direction, if you pay attention. It will improve your odds at staying clean!

Work and live the Twelve Steps. Please trust the N.A. Program

After 22 years on the methadone program, and a lot more than that in active addiction, I have found a way out. It is called Narcotics Anonymous. Give yourself a break!

Your humble servant in N.A.,  
Richie H.

(Reprinted from HB Jan Feb 2000)



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SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WENDSDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
<p>6</p> <p>NORTHERN NJ REGION SERVICE MEETING 65 BOWDEN RD Cedar Grove, NJ</p>						
					<p>18</p> <p>Stepping Into The Main Stream of Life Area Convention Greater Newark Area Glenpointe Marriot Teaneck</p>	<p>19</p> <p>Stepping Into The Main Stream of Life Area Convention Greater Newark Area Glenpointe Marriot Teaneck</p>
<p>20</p> <p>Stepping Into The Main Stream of Life Area Convention Greater Newark Area Glenpointe Marriot Teaneck</p>		<p>22</p> <p>Tuesday Night Live celebrating 8 Years Group Anniversary Bethany Baptist Church 275 W. Market Street Newark</p>				
<p>27</p> <p>pasta and meatball- speaker jam 1:00 P.M.- 7:00 P.M. St. Brendans Church Crooks &amp; Lakeview Clifton</p>						

# NANJ FEBRUARY ACTIVITIES



Passaic County Area February 2011 Newsletter  
Our Gratitude Speaks



Passaic County Area Activities Committee Presents

## Pasta and Meatball Speaker Jam

Sunday Feb. 27<sup>th</sup>

1:00-7:00 P.M.

St. Brendan's Church

Corner of Crooks and Lakeview Avenues

Clifton N.J.



12 steps- 12 speakers  
Food fun and fellowship  
\$5.00 suggested donation

Contacts:

K.C. L. 973-405-3292

Chrys G 201-988-6013

[www.passaicarea.org](http://www.passaicarea.org)



Passaic County Area February 2011 Newsletter  
Our Gratitude Speaks



**OPEN POSITIONS AT PCASC:**

**POSITION**

**CLEAN TIME REQUIREMENT**

VICE-CHAIR	2 YEARS
SECRETARY	2 YEARS
POLICY-CHAIR	2 YEARS
PUBLIC RELATIONS CHAIR	2 YEARS

**ALL POSITIONS UP IN  
APRIL**





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### **Two N.A. members died, and then went straight to hell. After a period of time the Devil called God.**

**Devil:** God, two people arrived here & opened an NA meeting & I don't like it!  
I want to send them to heaven.

**God:** No! If they went to hell, there must be a reason for that. Keep them there.

### **The Devil got really mad & hung up. A few weeks later, the Devil called God back.**

**Devil:** God – there are now 7 NA meetings here with 30 unfortunate souls in each group.  
I want to send everybody to heaven NOW!

**God:** I told you, who ever goes to hell has no place in heaven (and hung up).

### **After 2 months, the Devil was very furious and he called God Again.**

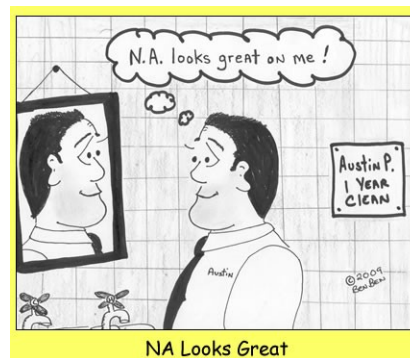
**Devil:** God! There is an Area now and they are talking about having a spiritual retreat.  
What the f%\$ is that??

**God:** Go to the group and find out what it's about (and hung up).

### **After 1,2,3 months God had not received any calls from the Devil and started to worry. On the 4<sup>th</sup> month, God decided to call the Devil.**

**Devil:** Help Line of Narcotics Anonymous, this is the Devil, an addict in recovery –

### **How can I help you?**





**Passaic County Area February 2011 Newsletter**  
**Our Gratitude Speaks**



**Release Form**

The following release form must accompany all submissions to  
**“Our Gratitude Speaks Newsletter”**  
**Mail to: Passaic County Area Service / PO Box 2226 / Clifton, N.J.**  
**07015-2226**

I hereby give Our Gratitude Speaks, their successors, assignees and those who act in their authority permission to publish the attached article or other written material pertaining to my personal experiences with or opinions about the NA fellowship or program. I understand that my material may be edited. I possess full legal capacity to exercise this authorization and hereby release Our Gratitude Speaks and the Narcotics Anonymous fellowship and its service boards and committees from any claim by myself, my successors and / or assignees.

**Signature:**\_\_\_\_\_ **Date:**\_\_\_\_\_

**Witness:**\_\_\_\_\_

*The opinions expressed in Our Gratitude Speaks do not necessarily reflect the opinion of any member of the Newsletter Committee or that of NA as a whole. All submissions become the property of Our Gratitude Speaks whether or not you sign the release form. Submissions may be edited for length, language and adherence to the 12 Traditions of Narcotics Anonymous.*

**Passaic County Area Service meets on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday of the month at the corner of Crooks and Lakeview Avenue in Clifton, NJ. Policy meeting starts at 12:00 pm. Area Service starts at 1:00 pm with a workshop.**

**All NA members are welcome and encouraged to attend.**

**Passaic County Area Subcommittees Contact Information:**

**H&I:** [handi@passaicarea.org](mailto:handi@passaicarea.org)

(2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday of the month / 460 Lafayette Ave. Hawthorne, NJ / 10:00 am)

**PI:** [pr@passaicarea.org](mailto:pr@passaicarea.org)

**Activities:** [activities@passaicarea.org](mailto:activities@passaicarea.org)

(1<sup>st</sup> & 3<sup>rd</sup> Tuesday of the month / 17 Pompton Avenue, Pompton Lakes, NJ / 6:30 pm)

**Website:** [webmaster@passaicarea.org](mailto:webmaster@passaicarea.org)

**Workshop:** [workshop@passaicarea.org](mailto:workshop@passaicarea.org)

**Policy:** [policy@passaicarea.org](mailto:policy@passaicarea.org)

**Literature:** [literature@passaicarea.org](mailto:literature@passaicarea.org)

**Newsletter:** [newsletter@passaicarea.org](mailto:newsletter@passaicarea.org)

(3<sup>rd</sup> Saturday of the month / 184 Marshall Hill Road, West Milford, NJ / 6:00 pm)