



## OUR GRATITUDE SPEAKS

WHEN WE CARE & SHARE WITH OTHERS THE NA WAY

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### PRACTICING THE PRINCIPLES OF OUR TRADITIONS

Passaic Area Newsletter  
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#### TRADITION TEN:

*"Narcotics Anonymous has no opinion on outside issues; hence the NA name ought never be drawn into public controversy."* Having no opinion on outside issues protects the NA group from straying from its primary purpose. In our personal lives, we learn that it is okay to say: "I don't know. I have no opinion on that." We don't have to express our opinions on everything. Minding our own business, we refrain from giving unsolicited advice and begin to respect other people's right to their own opinions. By practicing the principle of self-restraint, we are better able to keep the focus on our growing self-awareness and developing relationship with a God of our understanding.. Read the chapter in the Basic Text on the Tenth Tradition. Read the chapter in It Works: How and Why on the Tenth Tradition. "Exercise" Write answers to the following:

1. What does this tradition mean to you?
2. What does this tradition mean to NA?
3. What is an outside issue?
4. When does an NA member's opinion get mistaken for NA's opinion?
5. How could NA's name be drawn into public controversy?
6. What effect could being involved in public controversy have on NA?
7. How do we deal with internal controversy?
8. The spiritual principle of this tradition is humility.

Define in your own words the spiritual principal in this tradition. Look up and write the definition from the dictionary.

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#### Dear NA member

We hope you will find personal growth, understanding, and empathy in this Passaic County Area Newsletter. We pray you will be moved to a new level of insight into your recovery and the valuable place you occupy as a member of Narcotics Anonymous. The purpose of our newsletter is to invite members to engage in a journey of recovery. We believe that these stories are presented in a manner that encompass the diversity of our fellowship and is reflective of the spiritual awakening described in our Twelfth Step.

#### In Loving Service:

Dennis B. / Editor

Geoff C. / Copy Editor

Danny G. / Reporter

Iris G. / Secretary

## "Our common welfare should come first, personal recovery depends upon NA unity"

So what is unity? According to the Dictionary, *a condition of harmony*;

Then What is NA unity? Let's first figure out what exactly is NA. NA is a 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. NA isn't a service or a structure, however those of us who do service or are part of the service structure are most defiantly NA. My personal recovery depends upon my ability to apply the principle of Unity with *other people within the fellowship*.

So my personal *recovery depends* upon NA unity.

This is not to say that I won't be able to stay clean if I act a fool and perpetuate dis-unity. The point here is personal recovery. I can work the steps or not, go to meetings or not, get a sponsor or not. And I may still be able to stay clean.....or not. The point here is personal **recovery** (repetition strengthens and confirms). We all know those who are clean but have no recovery. Some eventually realize this and recommit to the principles of the program some never do. We are an diverse bunch of self centered people who gather together day after day check our attitudes at the door, and walk into the rooms of recovery looking for that which we couldn't find in drugs. We learn to stop isolating ourselves in body and mind. We look for similarities and stop focusing on the differences. We accept the idea that others seem to have found what we are looking for, and although they look different from us, have a different "DOC" or are otherwise simply "not our type of person" we take their hand when they offer it to us, trying to believe that just maybe we too can find a new way to live. This is unity. This is the combination of several different musical notes joined together to create a chord.

30 days 60 days 6 months, all seem like an eternity. we survive 24 hours at a time. Hope grows with every successful day. As our recovery matures and our world becomes larger and more fulfilling, so too must our recovery mature. The Traditions give a new perspective to our recovery. NA unity becomes larger than simply our home group, larger than our area, our region. Many of us who have not had the ability to travel, have little grasp on the concept of a "World wide" fellowship. We watch TV, go to movies, maybe even have attended a convention or two and still our perspective is limited. I lived for the first 28 years of my life in the north east. When I moved to Texas, life was so incredibly different it was almost hard to imagine I was on the same planet!! It wasn't better or worse, just *DIFFERENT*. So then what does Unity mean in this context? I have had the privilege to meet through email, and other media, addicts from Sweden, Kathmandu (Nepal), Bangladesh, (thank God for Internet translator!!), countless states in USA, and Canada. Through my conversations I have come to believe that NA unity means that *ANYWHERE* there is an opportunity to share the message of recovery between addicts, my recovery becomes a richer more meaningful experience. It is in practicing these Spiritual Principles that Unity exists.... All over the world. **These** are the ties that bind us together We all know what "the message" is, right? We know what we say when someone asks us, we see it written, hear it said a thousand times if we stay clean long enough. I find, however that words are simply words, and useless ones at that if allowed to simply collect dust up inside my head. Addiction prefers that words stay inside our mind. As addicts we all know too much. it's the ability to wrap our mind and heart around an idea, concept or (spiritual) principle that is where we truly learn to *LIVE* the program. "We have never seen an addict who lives the NA program relapse". How then, do we live this principle of Unity? How do we **share** our message of recovery with a worldwide fellowship? Well one thing that I had to get with was this business of "sharing". When we share in a meeting it is a reciprocal conversation, right? We are different, but the same. We strive to hear as well as to be heard. This sharing with one another enriches our personal recovery. I love the definition of harmony as it applies to unity. In order to achieve a chord in music it requires different notes. In order to achieve unity within the fellowship, it requires different ideas, opinions and voices to achieve what we call a "group conscience" or consensus. There has been much talk in the fellowship about "consensus based decision making" Consensus is based on the belief that each person has some part of the truth and that no one has all of it (no matter how tempting it is to believe that we ourselves *really* know best!) It is also based on a respect for all persons involved in the decision being considered. We need to be a fair and reasonable person of integrity who has the fellowship's best interests at heart. There are no perfect groups or perfect individuals, but for consensus to work the members must be honestly willing to do their best. All voices are equally valued in order to create the solution that works best for the fellowship as a whole. Acceptance, humility, open-mindedness, willingness, anonymity, are all essential elements for us to practice if we are to take the First Tradition away from the grasp our head where our addiction resides to the depth of understanding necessary to allow our Higher Power to guide us to the True meaning of this Tradition. *I'm Simply an addict My name is Anonymous*



### Release Form

The following release form must accompany all submissions to  
**“Our Gratitude Speaks Newsletter”**  
Mail to Passaic Service Area P.O. 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 board and committees from any claim by myself, my successors and / or assignees.

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Witness: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

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 2nd Sunday of the month on 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 to attend.

#### Passaic County Area Subcommittees Contact Information:

**H&I:** [handi@passaicarea.org](mailto:handi@passaicarea.org) (2nd Sunday of the month @ 460 Lafayette ave. Hawthorne, NJ @ 10: am)

**PI:** [pi@passaicarea.org](mailto:pi@passaicarea.org) (1st & 3rd. Friday of the month @ 460 Lafayette ave. Hawthorne, NJ @ 7:30 pm)

**Activities:** [activities@passaicarea.org](mailto:activities@passaicarea.org) (2nd. & 4th Tuesday of the month @ 17 Pompton ave. Pompton, 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) (March -3rd Tuesday of the month) (April to July / 2nd Tuesday of the month) @ Crooks & Lakeview ave. Clifton, NJ. @ 5:30 pm.

#### WHAT DOES THE LITERATURE SAY?

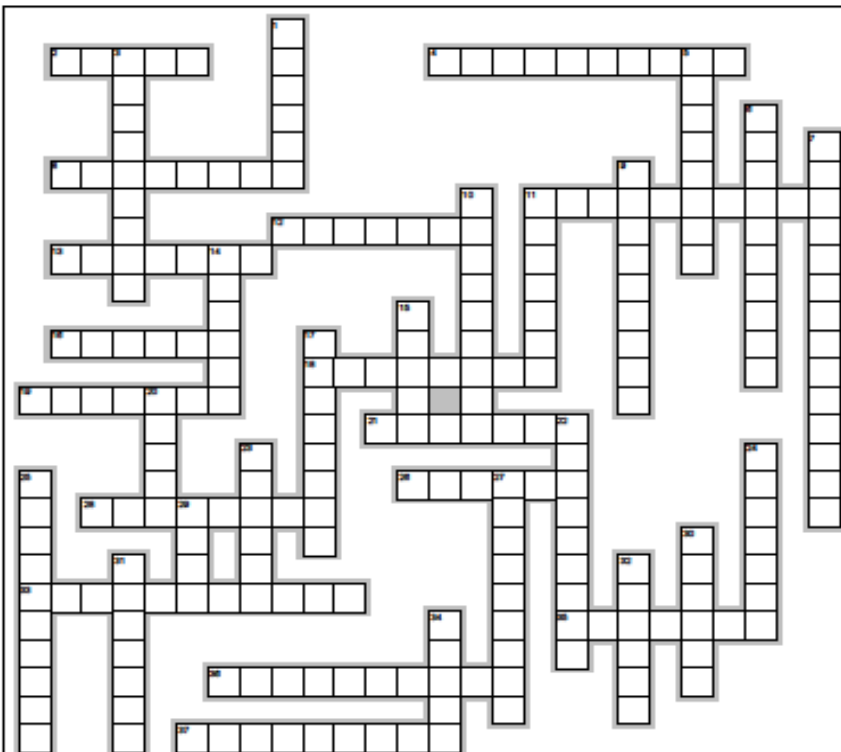


*Trusting the NA Way:  
Reading the Literature*

**When we show the courage necessary to speak our mind, while also showing respect for one another, we can be confident that we act in the best interest of the Narcotics Anonymous Fellowship. By insisting on thorough discussion of important issues, the worst we can do is take a little of each other's time; at best, we protect the fellowship from the consequences of a hasty or misinformed decision.**

**Twelve Concepts for NA Service: page 20**

## Tradition Five "It Works"



Learning to use our literature helps us stay clean, the solutions are always in there.

### Down

1. "The evidence of many addicts staying clean and seeking our \_\_\_\_\_ good is very persuasive." pg 165
3. "When groups conscientiously \_\_\_\_\_ this kind of integrity, their meetings further our primary purpose." pg 164
5. "How well are we \_\_\_\_\_ the message of recovery?" pg 162
6. "This concentrated focus protects the integrity of our \_\_\_\_\_." pg 165
7. "The Fifth Tradition gives our groups a great \_\_\_\_\_: to maintain our fellowship's primary purpose." pg 164
9. "The Fifth Tradition asks us to practice \_\_\_\_\_ by keeping our purpose foremost." pg 159
10. "Tradition Five is not limited to helping \_\_\_\_\_." pg 163
11. "Our \_\_\_\_\_ purpose is at the heart of our service." pg 159
14. "Narcotics Anonymous \_\_\_\_\_ to help addicts find freedom from active addiction." pg 159
15. "We don't recover \_\_\_\_\_." pg 165
17. "Tradition Five focuses the group's \_\_\_\_\_ on carrying the message." pg 163
20. "There are many ways to carry the message and meet the \_\_\_\_\_ of both

- the group and the NA community." pg 162
22. "We can live drug-free and \_\_\_\_\_ new lives." pg 160
23. "Allowing our groups to lose sight of our primary purpose may deprive an addict of a \_\_\_\_\_ to hear our message of hope." pg 164
24. "The character of the group is not its \_\_\_\_\_, however." pg 159
25. "Many meetings are \_\_\_\_\_ to carry the message to our newest members." pg 163
27. "The spiritual \_\_\_\_\_ we experience when we work the steps is also our message." pg 160
29. "Stable meetings that start on \_\_\_\_\_ carry a message of recovery." pg 160
30. "That is our message: that an addict, any addict, can stop using drugs, lose the \_\_\_\_\_ to use, and find a new way to live." pg 160
31. "Many of our members have much to offer on a variety of subjects but our fellowship has its own \_\_\_\_\_ message: freedom from active addiction..." pg 164
32. "Our primary purpose is a common \_\_\_\_\_ that unites us." pg 165
34. "\_\_\_\_\_ is one of our greatest strengths in carrying the message." pg 165

All of the words in the puzzle can be found in "It Works How And Why" Tradition Five pg 159 – 165

### Across

2. "The groups' \_\_\_\_\_ on carrying the message is so important to the survival of NA that it is called our primary purpose." pg 160
4. We lead by example, sharing \_\_\_\_\_ instead of advice." pg 160
8. "However, most groups find they cannot \_\_\_\_\_ their focus on their recovery meetings and also carry out other services." pg 162
11. "Some of the \_\_\_\_\_ we have applied to help us observe the Fifth Tradition include \_\_\_\_\_ integrity, responsibility, \_\_\_\_\_ unity, and anonymity." pg 164
12. That way, groups \_\_\_\_\_ their time and energy for carrying the message directly to the addict who still suffers." pg 162
13. "This is the most basic guideline by which groups may examine their \_\_\_\_\_ and their actions." pg 160
16. "\_\_\_\_\_ carry the message of NA: hope and freedom from active addiction." pg 159
18. "But each time our focus is diverted from our primary purpose, the addict seeking \_\_\_\_\_ loses out." pg 161
19. "Tradition Five \_\_\_\_\_ the focus of Narcotics Anonymous." pg 165
21. "All of our actions convey a \_\_\_\_\_, and Tradition Five reminds us to make it a message of recovery." pg 161
26. "When groups carry the message, the \_\_\_\_\_ of the Twelfth Step is greatly multiplied." pg 163
28. "All of these can either help further our primary purpose or \_\_\_\_\_ us from our focus." pg 161
33. "The Fifth Tradition \_\_\_\_\_ the Twelfth Step: It asks groups to carry the message to addicts." pg 164
35. Our primary \_\_\_\_\_ is the NA meeting, where addicts share their recovery directly with one another." pg 162
36. "We should try to establish a \_\_\_\_\_ for carrying the message —nothing more, nothing less." pg 161
37. "In \_\_\_\_\_, our personal differences are insignificant compared to our primary purpose." pg 165

Our primary purpose is at the heart of our service. With guidance from a loving Higher Power and a clear focus on this purpose, NA groups become a channel for the healing power of recovery. Narcotics Anonymous exists to help addicts find freedom from active addiction. **"It Works How & Why" page 159**