



## OUR GRATITUDE SPEAKS



PASSAIC AREA NEWSLETTER  
PASSAIC COUNTY AREA SERVICE, PO BOX 5439, PASSAIC PARK, NJ 07055  
[Newsletter@passaicarea.org](mailto:Newsletter@passaicarea.org)

FEBRUARY 2009

### STEP 2

NA BASIC TEXT

***"We came to believe that a power greater than ourselves could restore us to sanity."***

**"A Minimum of Concern"** By Stacy P.

When I had less than 30 days clean, an old timer told me after I shared that "You're practicing a 2<sup>nd</sup> step and you don't even know it". I had no idea what he meant when he said that to me. After I kept going to meetings and started working the steps, I began to understand what he meant. I practiced a 2<sup>nd</sup> step when I walked through the door of my very first Narcotics Anonymous meeting. When I came to NA, I was spiritually bankrupt, thoroughly beaten and was open-minded to try a new way of life because my way wasn't working anymore.

I started coming to meetings and saw people living and enjoying life without the use of drugs. I saw people making something of their lives by going back to school and repairing the wreckage of their past. It gave me hope that maybe – just MAYBE – I could reap the same rewards.

I can only speak for myself when I say that there are many days when I passed over this step with a minimum of concern. I tried to fill that "void" with everything BUT what I was supposed to fill it with. I was looking to get a feeling to forget a feeling. I was looking for that instant gratification that brought me nothing but long term suffering. I was looking for outside validation to try and heal my insides. Bottom line – I was trying to fit a square peg into a round hole. It didn't work.

I have come to learn there is a difference between a "Higher Power" and a "Power greater than myself". My Higher Power is ALWAYS a Power greater than myself, however, a Power greater than myself is not always my Higher Power. Like, my sponsor is not my Higher Power, but she is a Power greater than myself. Same with meetings, friends, my boss, my mother, my cats, etc. – all Powers greater than me, but not my Higher Power.

Step 2 talks about a Power greater than ourselves "could" restore us to sanity. This step does not say that it "will". I have to make the effort to tap into that power, ask for help and allow help to help me. Stick and stay for a little while and learn about the insanity in your life. Insanity has a different definition for me today. Insanity is not repeating the same mistakes and expecting different results – insanity for me is doing the same things that cause me unmanageability, knowing what the results are and doing them anyway!

Today, I have the awareness to do my best NOT to pass over this step with a minimum of concern. I have goals and aspirations today and as long as I keep coming, stay clean a day at a time, and continue to tap into the "Power of We", anything is possible...

## STEP TWO

*For a few years I had been a user, it was a form of an escape from my problems, a boost to my draining energy, the strength I need it to keep going, it wasn't about getting high it was about getting better, of course it was all a lie of my addiction.*

*I was lost in my addiction I couldn't function with or without it" any more, confusion in my thoughts where tormenting my days, I couldn't tell the difference from reality or psychosis.*

*I was an emotional wreck, there were no mornings for me, no peaceful nights of sleep, I couldn't stop using and I was never able to even try to stop using!*

*It was a chain a sick cycle of drug abuse, no tomorrow ever got there to my rescue.*

*I knew it had to be a greater power than my addiction to make me stop; I couldn't do it by myself.*

*One day I busted in a loud cry facing to the sky I knew that up there was the higher power I need to put a stop to my dying days. I ask to God to help me get clean, I didn't want to use any more, I was tired of being a slave to my addiction.*

*God heard my prayers! My words were sincere, my tears many, and the pain I carried inside of me was intense.*

*I ask God to help me get clean, I surrender my addiction to him, I let God work his way i to getting me clean, it was a relief in my heart that night I went to jail; it was his way, the beginning of my recovery,*

*Nothing or no one made me change! But by surrender to my higher power I was able to get clean.*

*Now I know that the foot prints on the sand don't belong to me.*

*Thank you God of my understanding, God of Love, "My God" Sylvia B.*

## TRADITION 2

### BASIC TEXT

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.

Addicts making decisions.

The problem:

"Higher mental and emotional functions, such as conscience and the ability to love, were sharply affected by our use of drugs." ("Who Is An Addict?" page 4)

"By nature, we are strong-willed, self-centered people, who are thrust together in NA. We are mismanagers and not one of us is capable of consistently making good decisions."

"There is often a vast difference between group conscience and group opinion, as dictated by powerful personalities or popularity." "We must constantly be on guard that our decisions are truly an expression of God's will." ("Tradition Two" pages 60 & 61)

Our solution:

"By working the Steps, we learn to depend on a Power greater than ourselves, and to use this Power for our group purposes." ("Tradition Two" page 61.)

One ultimate authority -- a loving God.

Having God as our ultimate authority frees us from having addicts call the shots. By limiting that authority to "God as He may express Himself *in our group conscience*," we force our leaders to avoid doing anything alone. Our understanding of our ultimate authority is deliberately ambiguous. Since NA has no opinion about who God is -- or who God isn't -- no individual or group has the right to define which particular God is in charge. The Second Tradition does not place any limitations on my personal understanding of Higher Power. The "Basic Text" does not require that my personal understanding be that of a loving God -- **this is only a suggestion.**

In matters regarding the NA community, I can agree to *think of* "our Higher Power" as loving, setting aside my personal understanding of Higher Power.

### Leadership qualities

Some examples:

#### Humility :

willing to ask for help  
willing to take suggestions  
leads by example, rather than mandate

#### Integrity:

willing to listen  
able to compromise  
able to stand fast on sound principle  
Skills that are helpful in some cases  
communication skills  
organizational skills  
discernment and foresight

#### Why does it matter?

We delegate responsibility to these leaders.

Our leaders should be able to carry out responsibilities

We need to be able trust that the job will be done effectively.

We delegate the authority needed to carry out responsibilities.

Our leaders should be less likely to abuse authority.

We need to be able trust that the job will be done responsibly.

With permission from The Twelve Traditions Workshop sponsored by:

The Washington-Northern Idaho Region of NA

St. Helens, Oregon, October, 1991

outline of Cliff W's workshop presentation



## FEBRUARY CLEAN DATES

CONGRATULATIONS KEEP IT GOING!!

DONNA B	2/24/01	8 YRS
BILLY K	2/5/07	2 YRS
MATT H	2/22/07	2 YRS
MIKE P	2/7/06	3 YRS
SAM M	2/26/95	14 YRS

### EARLY MARCH

DANNY P	3/07/08	1YR
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**EMAIL WITH YOUR FIRST NAME,**  
**LAST INITIAL AND CLEAN DATE AT:**  
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PLEASE BE AWARE THAT IF YOU GIVE YOUR CLEAN DATE TO THE NEWSLETTER, THE AREA WEBSITE MAY COPY IT TO PUT ON THEIR CALENDAR SO LET US KNOW IF YOU WANT IT IN BOTH PLACES OR JUST HERE IN THE NEWSLETTER.

### DANCING WITH ADDICTION BY DENISE P

THE FIRST TIME WE MET, I FELL IN LOVE HE ASKED ME TO DANCE,  
HE ASKED IF HE COULD LEAD  
I WILLINGLY FOLLOWED.  
HE HELD ME TIGHTLY  
WHISPERED GENTILE, COMFORTING  
WORDS IN MY EAR.  
I ASKED HIM... "WHY ME?"  
HE SAID.. "I'VE WATCHED YOU FROM  
AFAR, UNTIL I KNEW YOU WERE READY.  
I BELIEVED THAT WE WERE MEANT TO  
BE TOGETHER.

HE TOLD ME HE WOULD BE THERE FOR  
ME, THAT I WOULD WANT NO OTHER.  
HE WAS RIGHT!  
HE CONVINCED ME THAT I WAS  
WONDERFUL AND I BELIEVED HIM.

HE TOLD ME TO TRUST HIM, AND  
ALTHOUGH I HESITATED...  
I ONCE AGAIN CHOSE TO BELIEVE HIM.  
HE PROMISED TO BE WITH ME AS LONG  
AS I WOULD HAVE HIM; AND I WANTED  
HIM DESPERATELY.  
HE TOLD ME HE WOULD WASH ALL MY  
FEARS AWAY, AND POOF...MY FEARS  
WERE GONE.  
I KNEW WE WERE MEANT FOR EACH  
OTHER.

HE SAID I WOULD NOT FEEL PAIN....  
I DIDN'T.  
WHEN I ASKED, "WHAT I SHOULD DO",  
HE REPLIED, "NOTHING".  
WHEN I ASKED "WHERE I SHOULD GO",  
HE REPLIED, "NO WHERE, JUST STAY  
HERE".  
HE ASSURED ME THAT I COULD DO  
WHATEVER I PLEASED  
HE WAS NEVER UPSET.  
HE COURTED ME FOR A VERY LONG  
TIME, UNTIL THE WOOING WAS DONE.  
HE HAD SAID I WOULD NEVER FEEL  
ALONE, BUT LATELY I DID.  
WHEN I CRIED OUT FOR COMFORT, HE  
WOULD SHOW BUT ALWAYS LEAVE.  
WHEN I BEGGED FOR HIM TO SAY, HE  
WOULD SAY, "JUST FOR A WHILE".  
WHEN I FINALLY CRIED FOR HIM TO GO,  
HE WOULD SAY....."TOMORROW".

ONE DAY I SAID, "YOU REALLY NEED TO  
GO", HE JUST SMILED.  
THEN I TOLD HIM I WANTED TO DIE,  
HE SAID...."SO WHAT".  
I WAS SHOCKED.  
I THOUGHT HE WAS MY FRIEND, MY  
LOVER.  
I ASKED HIM, "HOW CAN YOU DO THIS  
TO ME?"  
HE ANSWERED SIMPLY, "BECAUSE YOU  
LET ME".  
THE DAY I LEFT HIM,  
MY FIRST DAY CLEAN,  
WAS AND IS THE DAY I ACCEPTED THAT  
OUR RELATIONSHIP WAS OVER!!!!!!!  
WE WERE NEVER MEANT TO BE.

**HELP!!!!!!!**  
**ARTICLES NEEDED!!!!**  
**THIS IS YOUR NEWSLETTER**  
**SEND US YOUR IDEAS, POEMS,**  
**ARTICLES, PICTURES, QUOTES,**  
**ANYTHING RECOVERY RELATED**  
[newsletter@passaicarea.org](mailto:newsletter@passaicarea.org)

**THANKS TO THOSE WHO HAVE SUBMITTED!**  
**KEEP IT COMING AND IF YOU DON'T SEE IT THIS**  
**ISSUE IT WILL BE USED IN A LATER ISSUE.**

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Sharon C. / Newsletter Chair

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Mail to Passaic Service Area P.O. Box 5439 Passaic Park N.J. 07055-9999 or hand deliver to Sharon C. - Chair or by signing the online Certification below.

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.

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

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EACH MONTH WE WILL DO A STEP AND TRADITION CORRESPONDING WITH THE MONTH SO ANY SUBMISSIONS ON THAT WELCOME.

**THERE IS A LOT OF CREATIVE TALENTS OUT THERE.....**

**WE NEED THEM HERE.....**

**PLEASE SUBMIT.....**

