



Inniú

**A Newsletter for
NA in Ireland**

Fourth Edition
March 2011

A Bridge to Normal Living



“Our disease involved much more than just using drugs, so our recovery must involve much more than simple abstinence”

When we first find NA there can lot of comfort in holding on to the programme for dear life. But the programme is not just meetings and fellowship. It is a set of basic principles that guide us to becoming responsible productive members of society. Being clean gives us the freedom to make positive life choices, and accept life on life’s terms. We ask every day for Serenity, Courage and Wisdom to do what we need to do. The following pages are members’ experiences on dealing with career, creative projects, family, and faith in recovery.

This Newsletter is NOT official NA Literature, its is a forum for Irish Members to share their experience, strength and hope. All input is the wide and varied personal experience of NA members, and does not represent NA.

The IRSC Literature Chair has put up a new section on the NA Ireland website (www.na-ireland.org) - “locally produced literature – service material.” There is the Irish Parents and Carers handbook, NA Ireland Strategic Plan, Irish Convention Guidelines and suggestions for running one, a history of NA literature. All of this you can download and use at workshops etc. There is also all issues of the newsletter, If you would like to be on a mailing list so we can let you know when a new issue is out, contact us at [**irscliterature@gmail.com**](mailto:irscliterature@gmail.com)

***“As we recover we gain a new outlook on being clean,
life can become a new adventure for us”***

I came into recovery through a treatment centre truly beaten, life really messed up, broke, no job skills, no job, never drove a car, never been on a plane, just wanting to stay clean. As recovery started I came to NA and after a bit got a job training as a phone technician. There was something in me that wanted to get on, have dreams, do things, go places. Maybe some of it was ego, maybe not. But I had dreams and as recovery went on they started to come true. My marriage broke up when I was 7 years clean, and having to now take care of an ex-wife and 2 children, I started to think what can I do to survive financially? At the time, my job was offering redundancy, and at the same time opportunities came my way to start my own business. Destiny, fate, God's will? It would seem that way. Despite my fears and struggles along the way, things fell into place, business grew, and I have to say things well beyond anything I originally dreamed of happened.

All this time I was going to meetings, trying to figure out how to use the program - the steps, my Higher Power's will - not always so easy to figure out when there's a lot of self will going on too. That I believe is the key to recovery - getting the balance between wanting things, and on the other hand knowing when it's right and when it's not. Often self will comes in and tries to make it happen when it just doesn't, while other things just fall into place.

My own belief is that somehow life happens, moment by moment, and inside me is a guiding intuition showing me the way to go. At times in my life I have really resisted that, at other times gone against what was happening. So I learnt what it is to go with the flow. I have been fortunate, blessed maybe, but I have come to believe that all our lives are guided by that unseen force which touches our lives. When I am quiet, listen to that inner voice, when opportunities come and they feel right, take them. Don't be afraid to go for what I really want. Life is for living - a far cry from where I came from. I have done everything I have really wanted to do in recovery, gone where I wanted. I will continue to do that as long as I am alive, though the most important things for me have changed as recovery progressed.

I often think back on what a messed up life I lived in addiction, and what has happened since. I would never have believed it. I am forever grateful to the fellowship of Narcotics Anonymous for what it is made possible in my life. Without direction I was lost. NA has showed me the way to live, and live life to the full. The story continues - moment by moment, day by day. Who knows what is coming next. What an adventure! Go for it!

Eamon W., 28 years clean, Co. Wicklow

“We can enjoy our families in a new way and be a credit to them rather than an embarrassment or a burden”

Since giving birth to my children I always wanted the best for them - I was totally unaware I had the disease of addiction, I had no clue. With the help of my parents I kept my children through active addiction. As long as I had a roof over our heads, food on the table, and the best clothes on them, then I was doing good.

I was introduced to NA - I went to my first meeting and left thinking differently. Over the next few weeks I believe I hit my last rock bottom and surrendered. I have been clean since August 5, 2004. I went to meetings feeling hopeless, frightened, and full of shame and guilt. Slowly those feelings began to lessen. It was very tough at the start as a single parent. I did 90 meetings in 90 days, driving a 140 mile trip to get the meeting. I took up service, got a sponsor and began writing and living the steps. I soon realized that it was not the material things I gave my kids that made me a good mother, it was my time, attention, listening and communicating with them - I was not emotionally present for my children and with the help of NA my journey of a motherhood started.

At first the noise in my house seemed magnified and my kids followed me around like little chicks. It took a while to get used to, I guess we were all changing, they had their mother emotionally present for the first time in their lives and it was all new to them. I started to like how I was feeling. Slowly we all started to recover.

I have six beautiful children and getting to know them all was amazing, I had many wonderful firsts. I started to become a responsible mother, guiding and showing my children the right way in life. We started to do things together as a family, small things like watching a movie and eating together, going to the park, having fun. I worked through all the feelings I had when I came into the programme, I am truly grateful for NA showing me the way.

Two of my children are parents now, being a grandmother is a beautiful gift one that was beyond my wildest dreams. I believe God gave me a second chance, I may not have felt the bond when I gave birth to my children but I felt it when my grandchildren were born. I was there when they were being delivered, I held my daughter, wiped her brow and told her how much I loved her, as she gave birth to her own baby girl.

My children are now aged 21, 20, 17, 16, 12 and 9 my youngest child has no memories of how our life was before I came to NA. It's not easy being a parent, we have had some tough times and I have felt totally powerless over some of the choices my children have made in their lives but what I have learned if I keep on making the right choice to stay clean we all stand a chance and we can get through no matter what. Today I am a mother in recovery who through NA has found a new way to live.

Jane M., 6 years clean, Co. Down

“Dreams we gave up long ago can now become realities”

My name is Shane and I am an addict. I am clean ten years now and I got clean with the help and guidance of Narcotics Anonymous. The first two years of my recovery were spent in the constant loving and caring company of the fellowship.

I got a meeting everyday and when not at a meeting I was never very far from the company of another addict in recovery. In early recovery I was blessed with meeting people who became my friends and over the past decade I have seen both myself and them grow in ways we could ever imagine while we sat in the One o'clock meeting in Abbey Street a few months clean.

When I think back today to my life in active addiction I just remember a person who was always afraid. Someone who believed that they needed drugs to do the most simple of things like talk to another person or even go to the shops. I truly believed that the drugs I took made me a better person, better capable of following my dreams. Alas my dreams were to be very much un realized as a slipped deeper into active addiction. Eventually I faced up to the fact that drugs were stopping me from doing anything at all.

The fear I felt in active addiction didn't leave once I stopped using but in recovery I had some tools to deal with it. A sponsor, who believed in me, was of huge importance. Friends who were living clean and getting on with life were an inspiration and a God of my understanding that was always in my corner helped me overcome many of my fear of failure.

After about two years in recovery I began to follow some of the ambitions I had in life. The habit of feeling “less than” that I had learnt in active addiction wasn't as powerful as it once had been and I found to my amazement that I was actually talented in my chosen field. Sometimes this was unsettling but I learnt to accept people's compliments and today I except that I am very good at what I do.

In drug fuelled dreams I would picture myself as a writer and historian but never actually take any action to active these dreams. In recovery I began to work on these ambitions and with the support of NA I have archived most of my ambitions. I know that what one does in life doesn't equal recovery but for me getting clean was a step towards being the person my God wanted me to be. And it's not just me, in the fellowship I have watched other recovering addicts get clean, find their dreams and realize them. Today I have a new set of ambitions and a powerful belief that they can be realized. Not bad for an addict who couldn't go to the shops.

Shane McT., 10 years clean, Co. Dublin

“The idea of a spiritual awakening takes many different forms in the different personalities that we find in the fellowship”

Pain and despair are great motivators to seeking a new beginning. I remember the hellish prison of despair I felt when finally I surrendered and reached out with no reserves for recovery. And what a journey it has been!! Now, at 59, I feel healthier and more content and inspired than ever! Last year I started a business, my first ever, having taken another step on the spiritual path.

NA gives us the freedom to find a God of our understanding. We all have a personal journey, we take it with the support of the programme, but it is our own journey. That road I got on reluctantly having great resentment against God, who I felt let me down when my mother was killed has led to embracing many different avenues.

After a dawning belief in a H.P when I felt the beauty and sheer power of a sunset, I set sail on the paths of Quakerism, then Buddhism, Sufism, always interspersed with moments of no religion and Catholicism, the religion of my birth. I also go to see Amma when she comes to Ireland for the wonderful atmosphere of peace service and good will. One day I visited a community and felt at home. This is MY journey and I am very glad that no one mapped it out for me as what suits you may feel all wrong for me.

Now I am on the path of Christianity and I feel truly loved and secure and able to trust that all will be well. I even get parking spaces now!! Being a Christian means I have to let go of being terminally cool and risk being laughed at and its about time! I feel deeply grateful to my son whose involvement with a music festival, brought this about. A bit like when I drove to treatment, “what on earth am I doing now, I must be mad!”

I think my moments of madness have been the sanest in my life, thank you my God! Its so much more fun to be grateful than resentful, to see the beauty rather than the emptiness. I am so grateful that as a recovering member of NA, I have been given freedom to explore what fits for me in all areas of my life.

Diana P., 27 years clean, Co. Westmeath

Events and News

The **Irish Regional Convention** NA 2011 will be held at the Tower Hotel in Waterford from the 28-30 of October. Flyers / more info to follow.

The 27th **European Convention** of NA will take place this year in Malmo, Sweden, from 12-14 August. For info go to www.eccna27.org.

The 34th **World Convention** (WCNA 34) Spirit of Unity will be held from 1-4 September in San Diego, California. NA members from all over the world will meet and celebrate their recovery. The weekend is packed with speakers, workshops, and a wide variety of entertainment. If you can't make this one, 2013's will be in Philadelphia, and 2015 in Central or South America. For more information go to www.na.org - services to members - world convention. By the way, the 2013 Convention will be celebrating NA's 60th (!) anniversary. Is it time to grow up :-)?

The Southern Area Workshop & Events Sub-committee held its first event (postponed Xmas party) the 19th of February in Cork. They had workshops on Being a Parent in Recovery and Home Groups & Service. A crèche was organised. There was food and dancing. The event was a big success so thanks to all who took part. We will be holding the next one:

Saturday 4th June at Ambassador Hotel, Cork.

Workshops from 5pm till 8pm with creche.

Finger food from 8.15. Music and dancing 8.30pm - 12.30.

Tickets are €20.00.

One workshop will be on H&I the other is open to suggestions from the fellowship. Contact Dave W (W/E committee chair)

086-4092501, davewalker31@gmail.com.

The Regional H&I Committee now has a telephone number. It is 086-409-2501. Please contact us with any queries.

The IRSCNA **AGM** will take place on the last Sunday in May, in Bachelors Walk. ALL services positions are up for re-election. EVERYONE WELCOME. The benefits of doing service are many and wonderful, why don't you come take a look and see what's needed. If you don't want to join a committee, you can just sit in and maybe get a feel for something that may interest you at a later date

The NA World Service Office (**NAWS**) **Annual Report 2010** has been published. It may answer a lot of you questions. There is a comprehensive financial report, information on all activities carried out, fellowship development, plans for fellowship services, a membership survey with information on all meeting in the world . Go to www.na.org and look at “periodicals and reports”.

The **Na Way** is no longer printed. You can download it from www.naway.org. There is an archive of past issues too.

The Topic of the next issue in July will be “**Beyond our Wildest Dreams.**” Please send along your experience, thoughts, stories, poems, artwork on this topic. Also send along any NA related announcements.

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All quotes in parentheses and bold from the Basic Text.
Front cover photo taken by Irene C. at Western Area Love Session Dance last summer (Mary C. and baby bump).
Back cover art by Mark G.



Mark G, Dublin, 2010