



Reflections

THE **Third** TRADITION

The only requirement for membership is the desire to stop using.

Step 8

We made a list of all persons we had harmed, and became willing to make amends to them all.

PERSONAL STORIES

MEMBERS SHARE
THEIR EXPERIENCE,
STRENGTH AND
HOPE ON FACING
LIFE ON LIVES
TERMS,
STAYING CLEAN **NO**
MATTER WHAT,
AND **KEEPING OUT**
OF COMPLACENCY
WITH EXTENDED
LENGTHS OF CLEAN
TIME

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Personal Stories

No Matter What

In recovery, I've experienced times that are celebrated and times that are not.

I was fortunate to have found the love of my life. Richard and I met at an NA meeting one night.

We went out for dinner the next night and were never apart from then on. Right off the bat we acknowledged that our recovery came first. Throughout our entire relationship, we never had an argument. We disagreed at times, but we respected each other's opinions. You see, we didn't just love each other; we were in love with each other and were great friends.

Then came the diagnosis: Richard had stage four cancer, and we realized our time together was coming to an end. Richard would pass at home. That day, I was an

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Personal Stories

emotional wreck. My NA family showed up, and I was surrounded by love and support beyond belief.

I am one of the fortunate ones. Although I had to experience great loss, I also got to experience great love. NA taught me that I can get through anything without using. I've been able to celebrate life rather than dwell on death because NA has taught me how to be okay with experiencing emotions, acknowledging them, and moving forward, while also having the freedom to pursue anything I'm willing to work for. The love of my life has passed, but he will never be gone. I have a higher power that now holds Richard, and for that, I am forever grateful.

I see him in the eyes of others at meetings, and I catch myself smiling. NA has indeed given me a life where I have willingness, strength, courage, and hope, no matter what.

- Katy S.

Personal Stories

Complacency with Clean Time

Why must we remain diligent about the recovery process? Some of us with extended lengths of clean time/recovery find ourselves in a place of complacency with our program. It is so easy to stay on the couch and watch Netflix, movies, or just scroll on our phones instead of going to a meeting. I find myself making excuses, such as “I’m tired after working all day,” or “I’ll go tomorrow,” and sometimes tomorrow can be dragged out until a few days later.

What I know is that my disease waits patiently, ready to pounce on any chance it can get to return me to the misery I was in before I got here. I know at times I find myself stuck in a rut, going to the same meetings, hearing the same stuff from the same people (which is not true, it’s my disease talking to me), and for me, that is when I need to change up some things in my recovery. I’ll start going

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to different meetings, meetings that I have never been to, just to change things up. Picking up my step work to dig into what is going on with me. I don't usually say, "I don't know what's going on," because I do; I may just not want to look at it. I know for me, I need to put more energy into maintaining my foundation, kind of like a tree. We need to water the tree so the roots are firm in the ground and deep. When the hurricane hits, my tree is solid and firm, so it doesn't get blown away. That is what I have done with my foundation in recovery: solid, deep, and firm, so when crap hits the fan, I know I will be ok. Trust me, over the years, I have had some really hard times, but my recovery and friends in NA helped me get through them.

On page 50 of the basic text, it says, "Boredom and complacency have no place in our new life. By staying clean, we begin to practice spiritual principles such as hope, surrender, acceptance, honesty, open-mindedness, willingness, faith, tolerance, patience, humility,

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Personal Stories

unconditional love, sharing and caring.” When I become complacent with my recovery, most of those spiritual principles go out the window, and I find myself acting out of my defects. Regular meeting attendance and getting back to the basics are what my program needs. This is so common in our fellowship, and we must stay focused on what has helped us stay in NA and live better lives. Recovery is a gift, and we need to take care of this gift of recovery if we want to keep it.

Yesterday has come and gone
Tomorrow isn't here yet
Today is the gift, stay in the present

- Love and kisses to all, Amy C

Consider sharing your experience, strength and hope to our community by writing for the September Newsletter's Personal Stories Column!

Step Eight

“We made a list of all persons we had harmed, and became willing to make amends to them all.”

When I worked my first 8th step, I had over 2 years clean. My foundation was solid, and I practiced the HOW of the program daily, so beginning the writing portion of Step 8 was just that. I took the direction literally when the program says, “we do this step as if there were no Ninth Step.” I didn’t worry about the actual amends because NA told me not to yet. When I read over the different ways Narcotics Anonymous defined “harm”, my perspective was broadened that much more.

The Step Working Guides helped me deepen my understanding by listing some examples of harm that could be caused in recovery, also: “We may have gossiped about them, withdrawn from them, responded with insensitivity to their pain, interfered in a sponsorship relationship, tried to control a sponsee’s behavior...” I understood the harm in active addiction—that almost felt

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easy to identify. However, viewing things such as gossip as something harmful, one of the shortcomings I acted out on, was a new area I could start applying change in.

I believe in the step working process. I believe that surrendering *completely* to the program will cultivate change that I once deemed impossible. Today, I take my understanding of harm with me into day-to-day life and promptly accept responsibility for my behavior when I fall short. I've learned to give myself a break as I keep growing in the process, but I also hold myself to higher standards as a recovering addict. Recovering addicts don't get to cause harm because we can or because we want to.

Another pivotal piece of insight I gained through Step 8 was that my list may never be complete. If I'm not in a position of humility or readiness, I have no business claiming to be willing. It's okay to not be willing yet, but

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Step Eight

I need to be honest about that. It doesn't constitute as a license to behave however I want to. It simply means I haven't changed enough yet. My patterns of behavior need to have changed before I approach an amends. This is the purpose, I believe. If I'm not showing up differently, I will only cause more harm pretending to be different. Humility would look like accepting I have more work to do with a behavior, before contemplating an amends I caused with said behavior. Growth isn't a place I reach; it's a series of actions that shape me spiritually.

- Josie R.

We need writers for the September newsletter's Step of the Month column! We will be discussing the Ninth Step:

“We made direct amends to such people wherever possible, except when to do so would injure them or others..”

Subcommittee Meetings

Subcommittees help maintain communication, facilitate unity, and extend the reach of NA beyond individual meetings.

Sunday, August 31st

Activities: 1-2 PM

Public Relations: 2-3 PM

H&I: 3:30-5 PM

Recovery First ATX
5555 N Lamar Blvd STE H119
Austin, TX 78751

Or join on Zoom

Meeting ID: 889 2244 3433

Passcode: 643432

**Announcement from
Common Welfare:**

If you need support addressing predatory or disruptive behavior at a meeting, please reach out to Common Welfare at cw@ctana.org

Tuesday, September 2nd

Common
Welfare
meets online
from
5-6PM

Meeting ID: 823
1204 6371
Passcode: 470920

Meetings Needing Support

Last Chance

Wednesday

6:30 PM - 7:30 PM

*Yellow House Foundation
804 Leander Dr., Leander, TX, 78641*

Thursday and Sunday

Get Lit

7:30 PM - 8:30 PM

*Cedar Park United Methodist Church
600 W. Park St., Cedar Park, TX, 78613*

*Does your meeting need support? Fill out the Google
Survey under the newsletter menu item at ctana.org*

Service Opportunities

Hospitals and Institutions

H&I Literature Coordinator

Requires a minimum of 1 year clean, a minimum of six months involvement in H&I service, and in-person attendance of all H&I subcommittee meetings, barring any excused absence.

For more info, contact hiadminbody@ctana.org

Requirements:

H&I orientation, 2 years clean, and
TDCJ Approval

*Contact Merry F. (512) 775-1753, for more
information*

Halbert Unit Volunteers

H&I Facility Co- Coordinators

Facilities:

A New Entry
Cenikor
Cross Creek

Halbert Unit
New Hope Ranch
Rocksprings

*Attend the next H&I subcommittee meeting
for more information*

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED AT THE CTANA Pride Booth

August 23, 2025

**Volunteers are needed for
the following time slots:**

2 Volunteers - 10 AM - 2 PM

2 Volunteers - 12 PM- 4 PM

4 Volunteers - 2 PM - 6 PM

TICKETS ARE FREE AND WATER WILL BE PROVIDED!

Help us run our NA booth at this year's Austin Pride Festival! Volunteers will be handing out NA pamphlets, area schedules, and stickers. The 2 PM - 6 PM volunteers will also help load the NA items brought to the event into cars.

Dress for warm weather in NA and/or Pride clothes, but remember we are representing NA when choosing attire.

TO VOLUNTEER, CONTACT BECKY D. AT PR@CTANA.ORG

Outreach Event

Wed, August 20th

Meeting of the Month

Your presence matters! Join us for an evening of recovery, fellowship, and NA unity by supporting the Willingness to Try meeting!

Contact Tracy B for more information.

*“Our common welfare should come first; personal recovery depends on NA unity.”
- Tradition One*

STEP ONE

**Meet for a sweet treat at the
The Chemistry Lab N7 in
Taylor, Texas.**

When: 5:30 PM

**Where: 410 W 7th St #120,
Taylor, TX 76574**

STEP TWO

**Attend the Willingness to
Try meeting.**

When: 7:00 PM

**Where: St. James Episcopal
Church fellowship hall
(south of the main building)
612 Davis St, Taylor, TX 76574**

NA World Unity

SEPTEMBER 5TH

World Unity Day Kickoff Rave

When: 9:00 PM - 11:55 PM

**Where: Recovery First ATX
5555 N Lamar Blvd STE H119
Austin, TX 78751**

MORE INFORMATION

Get hyped for World Unity
Day with a night of music
and dancing!

[https://ctana.org/event/
world-unity-day-kickoff-
rave/](https://ctana.org/event/world-unity-day-kickoff-rave/)

SEPTEMBER 6TH

World Unity Day Group Serenity Prayer Meetup

When: 10:00 AM – 12:00 PM

**Where: Recovery First ATX
5555 N Lamar Blvd STE H119
Austin, TX 78751**

MORE INFORMATION

[https://ctana.org/event/
world-unity-day-2025/](https://ctana.org/event/world-unity-day-2025/)

OR

[https://na.org/naws-
events/annual-events/](https://na.org/naws-events/annual-events/)

Save the Dates

We have a some amazing activities and celebrations going on this year! Break out your calender so you don't miss these future events!

Fellowship Development in Marble Falls

*September 20, 2025
5:00 PM – 7:30 PM*

*Bluebonnet Cafe followed
by Lake Shores Church*

Recovery in the Park

*September 27, 2025
5:00 PM – 9:00 PM*

*Fair Market on 1100 E
5th Street in Austin*

CTANA Holiday Potluck/H&I Book Drive

*December 6, 2025
TBD*

*Our Savior Lutheran
Church on 1513 E Yager
Lane in Austin*

More information coming soon! We hope to see you there!

Reflections

The Third Tradition: The only requirement for membership is a desire to stop using.

Reflecting Recovery

This writing is a spontaneous reflection on my own personal recovery journey, living with distorted programming that the god of my inner standing has graced me with the time and space to rectify and correct organically with Narcotics Anonymous. Thank you, recovering addicts, for sharing this recovery journey with me!

Life on life's terms isn't always fair or graceful, but with the steps & traditions in mind & heart, I shall have no fear. My first sponsor, god bless her soul, used to tell me: "It's all about suiting up and showing up." It's true. I do not control any outcomes. I am intending peaceful inner G always in all ways.... and I remain eternally grateful for the purifying chambers of the elements of recovery, how it is, and so it is. Peace to all.

We're All Just Addicts in NA

When I first decided I wanted to go to NA, I was barely out of high school, and my only perceptions of the people in the program came from TV shows. At the time, I couldn't have known the inaccuracy of these shows, but back then, I didn't know what I was

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getting into. I imagined the small church rooms with circled up chairs solely taken up by hardened criminals, the homeless, ex-dealers, and the like. People well beyond my age who carried sorrowful and bitter faces. Who was I to sit amongst those with decades of troubles, people who had lost so much when I felt like I had lost so little?

Against my anxiety's best efforts, I went to a meeting. I expected the worst: rejection. What I got instead was a smile and a welcome (despite being late because I stood outside the door for five minutes debating whether to stay or leave). Those welcoming smiles were not unique to that meeting; they showed up at every quiet church or small office space I went to. And that attracted me. It calmed my nerves that no one would question my right to be there. There were people older than I was, and there were people younger than me. People with prior convictions, and those without them. It didn't seem to matter what your past was or what your poison was. Age, race, gender, sexual orientation, creed, religion, grades, affiliations, class; all the categories placed upon us melted away when it became just a group of addicts in a room looking for a way out of active addiction. The dividers stopped mattering when I could see some of my life in the shares of others.

The longer I stuck around, the more I got to know those around me, and the more comfortable I got sharing my experiences. At no point was I told I didn't belong, no matter how hard my imposter syndrome told me I had not suffered enough to be here. I wanted to

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get clean, and that was enough for the people in the rooms to accept me.

Our literature spoke to me best in early recovery when it talked about our third tradition and ideas respective to it. “One of the most important lessons we learn in Narcotics Anonymous is that addiction is much more than the drugs we used” (JFT December 14). Our third tradition stayed stuck in my mind and better helped me feel at peace with my place in this program. No one needs credentials to be a member of Narcotics Anonymous; your seat is earned simply because you are here. That kind of inclusivity is priceless.

I Don't Decide Who Belongs—And Thank God for That

Before I ever walked into a 12-step room, I had already heard the angry echoes of addicts who felt pushed out or judged by the fellowship. I heard the stories of those who carried deep resentments about what happened inside the rooms, not just outside of them. I was terrified to come here by the time I got out of treatment. And while I am powerless over other people and how they show up, how they work their program, or whether they're coming from love or fear—I've learned that I do have a choice: to respond with neutrality and kindness, especially when someone is struggling.

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As the Third Tradition states:

“The only requirement for membership is a desire to stop using.”

Of course, we also have the right and responsibility to maintain safety within our meeting, as predatory or harmful behavior is never acceptable.

“We do our best to safeguard those who are vulnerable without making others feel unwelcome.”

—Guiding Principles, Tradition Three.

But outside of those clear boundaries, our job is not to gatekeep recovery.

It's to carry the message.

Over the last year, I've witnessed how easily some 12-step fellowships can slip into judgment, debating among themselves what counts as an 'honorable' program, or dismissing someone's recovery path because it looks different from our own. I've seen members pushed away for not “doing it right,” or for simply saying the wrong thing, and using the wrong verbiage, even when they were still showing up, still trying, still clean for one more day. And I've watched how these moments can drive people not just out of meetings, but back into active addiction.

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“We learn to avoid the tendency to focus on others by keeping the emphasis on personal recovery.”
(It Works: How and Why, Step Ten)

I don't have the power to decide who belongs here—and thank God for that. If someone comes to an NA meeting and doesn't use during that hour, and treats others with basic respect, then, according to our Third Tradition, they belong.

That's it. It really is that simple.

So I'll keep showing up. Not because I have all the answers, but because I know what it feels like to need a place to land. My job is to stay clean, work my steps, and offer the same grace that was offered to me when I walked through the doors, no matter how many times it takes.

The reflections column is an opportunity for the CTANA community to reflect together on a collective topic. Next month's topic is:

“Recovery begins when we start to apply the spiritual principles contained in the Twelve Steps of NA to all areas of our lives.”

- It Works How and Why: Step 1

Creative Works

The Other Shoe

There is so much fear in a lie,
Every nerve comes under fire.
Like a forgotten house in a sandstorm,
It's like the upstairs window left wide open.

Still we project parasitic delusions
By pasting them over the light of day.
In the same way a cloud takes form
When beheld by wild, but erroneous eye.

Witless hearts recite blades of speech
Honed in on polygraphic people.
You lose in the end, pass or fail.
Hang your shoes above and wait below.

Somewhere a fool stabs a voodoo doll of himself
He let the first shoe hit him square in the nose,
Caught by a projection

for the other shoe to drop.

of a thin white line;
He waits below it,

- *Max G.*

Creative Works



- anonYmouse

We need your support!

We, at the CTANA Newsletter, would like to express our heartfelt gratitude to everyone who has contributed to and supported the CTANA Newsletter. Your submissions, feedback, and participation have helped this publication grow into a meaningful resource for sharing experience, strength, and hope within our fellowship. It's because of your involvement that we are able to carry the NA message and foster unity amongst our community.

Currently, we are looking for members who would like to write for the Personal Stories column, sharing their perspective on an aspect of their recovery, as well as members who would be able to write on their experience with Steps 9, 10, 11, or 12. If you would like to be of service, please contact us at:

newsletter@ctana.org.

You can also participate in the newsletter by submitting your creative works, or reflections on the topic of the month by filling out the Google Survey under the Newsletter menu item at ctana.org