

phasize self-admission of a particular issue. Although the only requirement for membership is a desire to stop drinking (or using drugs, purging, etc.), for fellowships that adhere to the Third Tradition, it is in this spirit that members often open their address to the group along the lines of, "Hi, I'm Pam and I'm an alcoholic (or drug addict, bulimic, etc.)" — a catchphrase now widely identified with support groups

Sponsorship

"Sponsors share their experience, strength, and hope with their sponsored... A sponsor's role is not that of a legal adviser, a banker, a parent, a marriage counselor, or a social worker. Nor is a sponsor a therapist offering some sort of professional advice. A sponsor is simply another addict in recovery who is willing to share his or her journey through the Twelve Steps."

— from NA's Sponsorship, Revised¹

In twelve-step programs, a sponsor is a more experienced person in recovery who guides the less-experienced aspirant ("sponsored" or variously, "sponsored") through the program. Newcomers in twelve-step programs are encouraged to secure a relationship with at least one sponsor.¹ A vast array of publications from various fellowships emphasize that sponsorship is a "one on one" relationship of shared experiences focused on working the Twelve Steps.¹

Sponsors and sponsored participate in activities that lead to spiritual growth as defined by the Twelve Step Process. These may include practices such as literature discussion and study, meditation, and writing. Completing the Twelve Steps implies being competent to sponsor to newcomers in recovery.¹

Sponsored typically do their Fifth Step with their sponsor. The Fifth Step, as well as the Ninth Step, have been compared to confession and penitence. Many, such as Michel Foucault, noted such practices produces intrinsic modifications in the person—exonerating, redeeming and purifying them—it unburdens them of their wrongs, liberates them and promises their salvation.¹ The personal nature of the behavioral issues that lead to seeking help in twelve-step fellowships results in a strong relationship between sponsored and sponsor. As the relationship is based on spiritual principles, it is unique and not generally characterized as "friendship." Fundamentally, the sponsor has the single purpose of helping the sponsored recover from the behavioral problem that brought the sufferer into twelve-step work, which reflexively helps the sponsor recover.¹



N.A.S.H NEWS

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Happy holidays to everyone from N.A.S.H

ISSUE 6 VOLUME ONE



Date: November 2007
For more information on the work of
N.A.S.H Call us today 07-880-952-144



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8. Alcoholics Anonymous should remain forever non-professional, but our service centers may employ special workers.
9. AA, as such, ought never be organized; but we may create service boards or committees directly responsible to those they serve.
10. Alcoholics Anonymous has no opinion on outside issues; hence the AA name ought never be drawn into public controversy.
11. Our public relations policy is based on attraction rather than promotion; we need always maintain personal anonymity at the level of press, radio, and films.

Anonymity is the spiritual foundation of all our traditions, ever reminding us to place principles before personalities. Process

Twelve-step programs symbolically represent human structure in three dimensions: physical, mental, and spiritual. The disorders and diseases the groups deal with are understood to manifest themselves in each dimension. For addicts and alcoholics the physical dimension is best described by the "allergy-like bodily reaction" resulting in the inability to stop using substances after the initial use. For groups not related to substance abuse the physical manifestation could be much more varied including, but not limited to: agoraphobia, apathy, distractibility, forgetfulness, hyperactivity, hypo mania, insomnia, irritability, lack of motivation, laziness, mania, panic attacks, poor impulse control, procrastination, self-injury, suicide attempts, and stress. The illness of the spiritual dimension, in all twelve-step groups, is considered to be self-centeredness. This model is not intended to be a scientific explanation, it is only a perspective that twelve-step organizations have found useful.¹

The process is intended to replace self-centeredness with a growing moral consciousness and a willingness for self-sacrifice and unselfish constructive action in twelve-step groups, this is known as a spiritual awakening or religious experience. This should not be confused with abreaction, which quickly produces dramatic, but ephemeral, changes. In twelve-step groups, "spiritual awakening" is believed to develop, most frequently, slowly over a period of time.

12. In accordance with the First Step, twelve-step groups em-

to those fellowships, or to remove gender biased or specifically religious language.¹

The Twelve Traditions

The Twelve Steps are accompanied by the Twelve Traditions, twelve guidelines for group governance as developed by Alcoholics Anonymous through its early formation in order to help resolve conflicts regarding issues like publicity, religion, and finances.

Most twelve-step fellowships also adopted these principles as their structural governance. In AA, the empathetic desire to save other alcoholics resulted in a radical emphasis on service to other sufferers only. Thus "the only requirement for AA membership is the desire to stop drinking." Similar membership guidelines were adopted by other fellowships. The Twelve Traditions of Alcoholics Anonymous are as follows.

1. Our common welfare should come first; personal recovery depends upon AA unity.
2. 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.
3. The only requirement for AA membership is a desire to stop drinking.
4. Each group should be autonomous except in matters affecting other groups or AA as a whole.
5. Each group has but one primary purpose -- to carry its message to the alcoholic who still suffers.
6. An AA group ought never endorse, finance, or lend the AA name to any related facility or outside enterprise, lest problems of money, property, and prestige divert us from our primary purpose.
7. Every AA group ought to be fully self-supporting, declining outside contributions.



North South Rural Voice

N.A.S.H was pleased to be invited to participate in a new cross border initiative entitled "The North South Rural Voice" Project.

As a result we now have a seat on the community focus group which looks at issues concerning policing, community safety, new community development and protection of existing communities in border areas.

Networking across Rural Borders:

The aim of this project is to bring communities from the border region together to work towards a more equitable and fair society. The project will create the opportunity for communities to learn how to work together to contribute to the promotion of positive community relations between differing sectors of the community.

NSRV will help to link rural constituents with policy makers on both sides of the border and to facilitate all parties involved to identify and deal with rural border issues on a cross border basis.

Following an initial meeting of the N.S.R.V. 4 topics have been selected through consultation with rural dwellers and community groups as follows:

Health - to possibly include cross border access to hospital services etc.

Transport - to possibly include rural cross border transport services, isolation etc.

The Environment - to possibly include waste disposal policies, alternative sources of energy etc.

Our Community Issues – to possibly include community safety, policing, ethnic and new communities etc.

Event organiser Gwen Lanigar said " I am overwhelmed by the response from not only local community groups, but those external organisations who have turned out to support such a worthy project"



Gwen is quite right the list is impressive, much like a who's who in the voluntary and commercial community sector:-

- South Armagh Rural Network
- Rural Community Network
- County Monaghan Partnership
- N.I. Rural Development Council
- Erne Lakeland's Tourism
- Mothers Union
- Carers Northern Ireland
- Youth Action Northern Ireland
- Northern Ireland Rural Women's Network
- STEP N.I.
- Co-operation Ireland
- R.O.S.A.
- Positive aging
- Omagh forum for Rural associations
- Keady and district community imitative
- COSTA
- Cavan Community Forum
- Border minority group
- Strabane and district community organisation
- Colgan community resource
- Donegal county council

In the next issue of N.A.S.H. News we will hopefully be able to update you as to the outcome of the next stage of the talks which will include amongst the participants policy makers and government ministers.

Here, at this meeting, those identified concerns of the border communities can be developed and messages put across to those who can directly influence policy development with the aim of improving the standard of living in the border regions.

have been used to form many numbers of other fellowships for those recovering from various pathologies, each of which in term emphasizes recovery from the specific malady which brought the sufferer into the fellowship The Twelve Steps continued on page 13

These are the original Twelve Steps as suggested by Alcoholics Anonymous.

1. We admitted we were powerless over alcohol—that our lives had become unmanageable.
2. Came to believe that a Power greater than ourselves could restore us to sanity.
3. Made a decision to turn our will and our lives over to the care of God *as we understood Him*.
4. Made a searching and fearless moral inventory of ourselves.
5. Admitted to God, to ourselves, and to another human being the exact nature of our wrongs.
6. Were entirely ready to have God remove all these defects of character.
7. Humbly asked Him to remove our shortcomings.
8. Made a list of all persons we had harmed, and became willing to make amends to them all.
9. Made direct amends to such people wherever possible, except when to do so would injure them or others.
10. Continued to take personal inventory and when we were wrong promptly admitted it.
11. Sought through prayer and meditation to improve our conscious contact with God *as we understood Him*, praying only for knowledge of His Will for us and the power to carry that out.
12. Having had a spiritual awakening as the result of these steps, we tried to carry this message to alcoholics, and to practice these principles in all our affairs.

Other twelve-step groups have adapted these steps of AA as guiding principles for problems other than alcoholism. In some cases the steps have been altered to emphasize particular principles important

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DO IT BY TEXT



As you know by now the role of the National Association of Safety Homes in one of helping local communities provide places of immediate safety within their area.

An unexpected development occurred recently however that shed new light on the role of N.A.S.Ha request for help by text to our offices. Because of data protection we cannot elaborate much more other than to say that the individual was depressed and sought respite.

The matter was treated, as you would expect, with the utmost urgency and confidentiality and having consulted with other organisations better equipped to deal with this issue an informed and meaningful response returned by text.

N.A.S.H has since learned that the person concerned took the advice offered and sought the appropriate help.



Readers letters:

A cry from the heart – A Mothers letter:

As many of you will know N.A.S.H is always happy to print your letters if they can help others find inner strength or offer guidance and support. Until now, another first for us after the unexpected initiation of our text service, this service had not been used by our readers and it is with the utmost and sincere thanks that we print the heart rendering and disturbing account of one mothers experiences in bringing up a child who has lost his way in life. In her letter J talks of the twelve step program, you can find out more about this support service on page 8. Below is a transcript of J's letter for anyone who finds it hard to read the original reproduced on the next page:-

I had an ordinary family myself, my husband and four children. Three older and one late one, the oldest was a grand child (meaning good) and went on life's journey. The middle two met with drugs and alcohol in their mid-tens, family life as I knew it was gone. Thanks to Family support and lots of ups and downs in the home, boundaries having no place with them Child P went down the road no mother wants to see. Homeless due to his addiction and the behaviour that went with it, P's goal in life changed from hard worker to looking for his next drink /drug. He didn't care for himself, property, or others he would have before his addiction. This child who I nurtured and loved and cherished attacked me with a knife one night and only for outside intervention I had no doubts of his intentions!! He had no recognition of me due to the substances he had taken What parent can be prepared for this situation, what parent can be prepared to see the body of their child walking around but inhibited by power which I could not comprehend. I am thankful today that I love my child unconditionally and have let him go with love....on his own journey... and I on mine thanks to family support and the twelve step program...a power greater than I

Caring Hurting Parent

Name and contact details supplied

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L'Derry, Lisburn, Lurgan,

Newry, Omagh

Court Witness Service

028 9023 2523

A mothers burden or labour of love?

I had an ordinary family, myself my husband and four children. Three older and one late one. The oldest was grandchild went on life journey. The middle two meet with alcohol and drugs in their mid teens. Family life as I knew it was gone. Thanks to family support and lots of up and downs in the home, boundaries had no place with them and child P went down a road no mother wants to see, homeless due to his addiction, and behaviour that went with it. P goal in life change from hard worker to looking for next drink/drugs. he didn't care for himself, property, or others as he would have before his addiction. This child who I nurtured and loved and cherished attacked me with a knife one night, only for outside intervention I had no doubts of his intention as he had no recognition of me due to substances he had taken.

What parent can be prepared for this situation what parent can be prepared to see the body of their child walking around but inhabited by power which I could not comprehend, I am thankful today that I love my child unconditionally and have let him go with love, on his own journey and I on mine thanks to family support and twelve step program a power greater than I.

Caring Hurling Parent.



The Twelve step Program!

Overview of twelve-step programs

The way of life outlined in the Twelve Steps has been adapted widely. The effects of Alcoholics Anonymous recovery within the family unit providing improved quality of life resulted in fellowships like Al-Anon; substance-dependent people who did not relate to the specifics of alcohol dependency started meeting together as Narcotics Anonymous; similar groups were formed for sufferers of cocaine addiction, crystal meth addiction and other chemical dependencies. Behavioral issues such as compulsion and/or addiction with sex, food, and gambling were found to be solved for some people with the daily application of the Twelve Steps in such fellowships as Gamblers Anonymous, Overeaters Anonymous and Sexual Compulsives Anonymous. Other groups addressing problems with certain types of behaviors include Clutterers Anonymous, Debtors Anonymous and Emotions Anonymous. Over fifty fellowships composed of millions of recovery members, all based in the same principles, are found around the world.

History

For more details on this topic, see History of Alcoholics Anonymous.

Alcoholics Anonymous (AA), the first twelve-step program, was founded in 1935 by Bill Wilson and Dr. Bob Smith, known to AA members as "Bill W." and "Dr. Bob", in Akron, Ohio. They established the tradition within the "anonymous" twelve-step programs of using only first names. In 1953 AA gave permission for Narcotics Anonymous to use its Steps and Traditions.

As AA was growing in the 1930s and 1940s, definite guiding principles began to emerge as the Twelve Traditions. A singleness of purpose emerged as tradition five: "Each group has but one primary purpose -- to carry its message to the alcoholic who still suffers." Consequently, drug addicts who do not suffer from the specifics of alcoholism involved in AA hoping for recovery technically are not welcome in "closed" meetings for alcoholics only. The reason for such emphasis on alcoholism as the problem is to overcome denial and distraction. Thus the principles of AA

HAVE A SMILE ON US! A bit of nostalgia



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