



March 2018 Issue 03/18

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Staying clean in Isolation

Submitted by: Mike B

I'm Mike and I am an addict. I got clean in Winnipeg on October 7, 1985. After got clean, I went to university as a mature student; in April 1991, I graduated with a Bachelor's of Education. I moved to my home community, Sandy Bay Ojibway First Nation, 2 1/2 hours from Winnipeg. I started to put other priorities ahead of my recovery. My new teaching job, I was trying to stay one or two classes ahead of my students. Second, my sick relationship, saying I was "working" on my relationship, but in reality I was trying to fix her! I was involved with service, on the executive of the CANA, RD for the UMR and on the World Policy Committee. Meeting attendance dropped from 5 or 6 a week, to maybe 1 meeting every two weeks. I lost contact with my sponsor, and as for "working these principles in all our affairs..." I was quite lacking! I stopped working with newcomers, and thought everything was fine! By mid-November 1991, I was in such inner turmoil and pain all I wanted to do was die! I did not want to pick up, because I was too afraid of surviving a relapse and having to live the hell of active addiction again. I really didn't want to die, in a moment of sanity, in November I drove the 2 1/2 hours to a meeting. At that meeting I had a spiritual awaking, "I am an addict with the disease of addiction; there's no known cure. I had to put my priorities in order... recovery has to be number 1. I started going to meetings. Something I heard in my early recovery, "just put 1/2 the effort into recovery that you put into finding ways and means to get more." I reconnected with my sponsor. I began to live my steps and practice these principles in all my affairs. I became aware of the "I can't, we can" idea. I cannot do this alone; I never could and will never be able to. After living in Sandy Bay for 7 years, I moved to Portage la Prairie. October 1998 I opened Clean & Free; we have two meetings a week. Another group opened up in Portage and now Portage, has five 5 meetings, I attend 3 meetings a week, sometimes more. I am no longer in physical isolation...

Top Ten Reasons for Avoiding Service Work: 1987

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1. "I don't have enough clean-time." *(Give away what you've got. We have enough twenty-year people at WSC to save the world – don't worry.)*
2. "I'm not ready yet." *(When will you be ready? You don't have to dress formal. We'll pick you up at 7:00. Can you be ready by then?)*
3. "I've been to area service – it's a zoo. I don't want to upset my serenity levels... I'm so fragile." *(Serenity without a little stress can be unhealthy. It has been known to cause cancer in laboratory animals.)*
4. "I hate service-work people, especially H&I-types. They all have tattoos that say "Mom: The Cause of My Addiction" and "Work the Steps or Die!" *(Pick your own favorite passage out*

of the Basic Text – we know a great tattoo parlor. Besides, H&I-types are pussycats anyhow.)

5. "I can't get into service work. I work "in the field" and I get enough recovery at work. Besides I wouldn't want my patients to see me there." *(Why not settle on one hat. That professional hat's getting too small for your head anyhow.)*
6. "Too much travel involved." *(Willing to go to any lengths ...)*
7. "I don't know ... I don't know what I could do." *(We train. OJT is our way of life.)*
8. "Well, I'm not much of a joiner." *(It beats the Marines. It's not just a job, it's an adventure!)*
9. "Somebody else will do it." *(Yeah ... sure ...)*
10. "I'm too busy working the Steps. Excuse me ... I see a foxy newcomer over there and she needs me to help her turn her will over." *(Keep coming back ...)*
L.D., New Jersey

March Events

- Sat. Feb. 24th – S.O.S. will be closed. Meetings will resume the following Saturday at 125 Sherbrook St.
- Sun. Mar. 4th – Will T is speaking at New Beginnings
- Thu. Mar. 8th – Ron M. is celebrating 9 years at Clean and Free in Portage la Prairie
- Sat. Mar. 17th – S.O.S. is having a 'St Addi day' potluck after the regular meeting (8:15-10:30pm)
- Sun. Mar. 18th – Maggie K. is celebrating 27 years at New Beginnings
- Sun. Mar. 25th – Allan F. is celebrating 6 years at New Beginnings

MASC Happenings:

(Manitoba Area Service Committee)

Outreach is planning some trips to out of town meetings in the New Year and is asking if there are any interested members willing to come long to attend these meetings. The dates are as follows:

- ~ Fri Mar 30th - Westman NA –in Brandon
- ~ Fri Apr 20th - Infinity Group in Selkirk
- ~ Thurs May 17th- Clean & Free in Portage la prairie
- ~ Sat June 30th – YellowHead Group in Neepawa
- ~ Sat Aug 4th – Howling Wolves in Thompson
- ~ Wed Sept 5th – New Freedom Group in Dauphin

If interested, email the outreach chair at outreach@mascna.org with the following info:

- Your name and contact info
- Which trip you would like to go on
- If you are bringing your own car and how many people will be coming with you

Meeting changes

- ~ New Beginnings is now at 613 St. Mary's Rd.
- ~ Recovery 1st is now at 234 Saskatchewan Ave East (back door)

IMPORTANT NOTE:

Groups in our area have asked Newline to post a notice asking for help with chairpersons. Broadway group and Foundation For Freedom are in need of trusted servants to chair meetings. Selkirk Infinity group has also asked for some support. It's important to keep the doors open for addicts seeking recovery. If you are interested and willing to chair, or help out in anyway, please attend these meetings and talk to the chairperson or a group member about how you can get involved and help out. Thank you

Profile of an Addict

Submitted by Bailey W

Q: What brought you into the rooms of N.A. Bailey?

A: I hated myself from a very young age and started using daily at the age of 14. At 16, I did well in a harm reduction program but once I started regular school again, I quickly found my drug of choice. At 17, I got into an unhealthy and abusive relationship and 6 1/2 years later, I had enough of life and in spring 2013, I overdosed on purpose. The hospital staff gave me the AFM number; I left the hospital and used in the parking lot but eventually called AFM. The intake counselor at appointment put me on the waiting list for treatment and told me I had to go to meetings while waiting and gave me an NA meeting list. Due to my living situation, I secretly started going to Broadway at noon. That's where I found a new way of life.

Q: What keeps you coming back?

A: I keep coming back because NA gave me a life. I have been clean for half as many years as I was actively using, which is a miracle. I have a career and gifts in my life that I could never have imagined. I also learned that I can only keep what I have by giving it away, to do that I need to stick around.

Q: What service work have you done in the past year?

A: This past year I started chairing Broadway noon meetings once a week. I also continue to sponsor.

Q: What has been your greatest challenge?

A: My greatest challenge this past year has been transitioning from full time Mum to starting a new career path.

Q: How did you deal with that challenge?

A: Remained close to my small circle of people. I talk to them even if I can't make it to meetings. I also utilized resources and community programs that offered extra support when I needed it. Living this program to the best of my ability has given me the tools to conquer any obstacle clean.

Q: What do you suggest for the newcomer or those that are still struggling?

A: I suggest getting to as many meetings as possible if you're struggling or new. For me, meetings open up my sometimes isolated little world. They give me a chance to build connections with other addicts who have had similar experiences and stayed clean. The steps are where I found freedom from active addiction. The only wrong way to do the steps is alone! Meetings are the best way to find a sponsor to do them with. Keep coming back no matter what.

Q: Any final thoughts?

A: Just for today you don't have to use.

All Submissions, Enquiries, and Comments welcome at any time. Please forward to newline@mascna.org

Next deadline for *time-sensitive* submissions is March 18th. **YOU** can receive a FREE electronic copy of this Newsletter by forwarding your email address to: newline@mascna.org *Material or wording in this newsletter is not necessarily the opinion of MASC or Narcotics Anonymous as a whole. All Submissions become the property of the Newline, which reserves the right to edit to facilitate publishing and ensure the NA message is carried. Articles will be printed anonymously upon request.