



*Bucks County
Clean Sheet
* Spring Edition **

*Narcotics
Anonymous*

Approaching step four

Under the guidance and direction of my sponsor I recently moved from step three to the “dreaded” fourth step. I have been clean for over two years now and have heard many different addicts share their experiences on step four. Some say there is nothing to be afraid of, for these are all things we have already done and we just need to put pen to paper. On the other hand, there seems to be an overwhelming amount of fearful feelings shared by addicts when discussing this step. Being the fearful addict that I am, those are the shares that stuck out in my mind the most moving on to this step. I know in my heart though that there really is nothing to fear. In my third step I made the decision to continue in the step process and four is the next in line so I must move forward. Many addicts have told me that the real recovery starts with the fourth step. I must say that I am excited in a way to do this inventory because for the last few months I have felt like I have just kind of been floating in space. Yes I still attend meetings, talk to my sponsor and people in my network, but I just feel as if I have to dig deeper into myself. Find myself. I believe with the help of my sponsor, higher power and friends, I will overcome my fear and continue on this path of recovery.

Anonymous

5th Step

In our literature it says in the Fourth Step, "We write a fourth step as if there were no fifth step." In the same sense we can't talk about step five without talking about step four. In step four we make a searching in fearless moral inventory of ourselves. We search within ourselves to look at our resentments, relationships, self-centeredness, and everything in between. This step is critical in sorting through the wreckage and destruction from active addiction and our lives before Narcotics Anonymous. Step five is, We admitted to God, to ourselves, and to another human being the exact nature of our wrongs.

My experience with this step took a lot of vulnerability and open-mindedness. When I had completed my fourth step I then read every page aloud with my sponsor. Exposing the things that I thought I would never tell anyone else. I then later read it aloud to God, and to myself in the mirror. In the beginning, I was scared that this step would make me realize how bad of a person I am. That bringing to light all of the damage from my past would lead me out to use. Instead, this step worked completely opposite in my life.

After going over my fourth step with my sponsor I felt a great sense of freedom. Knowing that I no longer had to keep secrets from my sponsor, God, or myself. By reading out the wreckage of my past, it allowed me to move forward with my life and realize that, although these things happened, I am not the same person anymore. This step allowed me to realize that a certain amount of change has already happened in my life and if I continued to work the steps of Narcotics Anonymous and live by spiritual principles, the change would continue.

In doing this step I also gained awareness of my patterns and reactions. With the guidance of a sponsor and my foundation in the fellowship, those same patterns and reactions can be diverted. As long

I was to remain open, honest, and willing I don't have to be the same person I was. I came to a point where those patterns and reactions became uncomfortable. Being aware of them and continuing to act on them made me uneasy in my recovery. It was then that I was told "I'm right where I am supposed to be". I was then ready to begin Step Six.

Q & A on Step Six

"We were entirely ready to have God remove all these defects of character." - Step Six of Narcotics Anonymous

1. What were your thoughts or fear on a six step?
2. How did you overcome these feelings?
3. How did your sponsor guide through these obstacles?
4. were you willing immediately or was there defects you wanted to hold on to? Explain.
5. Did seeing a seventh step held you back on completing your sixth?
6. How did you feel as you went over your sixth and went onto your seventh?

1. My main fear was the unknown. Although I had experience with discovering things about my true nature, I was afraid that I would be found out. I was afraid of rejection from others if they learned about my defects of character. I was afraid of allowing myself to feel the pain that my defects can create within me. I kept projecting and thinking I knew how defects were affecting my life and I also drove (and still sometimes drive) myself crazy trying to understand why I do the things I do instead of just accepting them.

2. I just kept on going. I just kept in contact with my sponsor, prayed, shared honestly in meetings, kept showing up to meetings when I felt vulnerable and kept in close contact with members who had previously worked the sixth step.

3. My sponsor taught me that everyone already knows my defects but they love me regardless. She is patient, honest, gentle and very loving and reassured me that even tho I'll never be perfect, I'm still a good person. She gave me the strength and courage to continue on this path. I kept going because I believed what she told me and knew that working a sixth step brought forth change in her life so it would bring forth change in my life too.

4. Some defects such as dishonesty and spite were defects that I was willing to let go of immediately. Self-centeredness, anger, and fear are ones that I still live in because im convinced i need them for protection from the outside world. it's okay because I am willing let a higher power work on my spirit and that's all that I need to worry about as long as I have a place in the steps. 5. No, seeing a seventh step did not hold me back from completing a seventh step. If anything, at that point I wanted relief so badly that I was willing to continue moving forward so I could allow my higher power to continue to help me.

5. My experience with six and seven is that I just can't tell the difference between the two. I was just hyper aware of my true nature and also the nature of other people. I felt raw and vulnerable but for the first time in my life I began to feel human and started to realize that I'm no different then anybody else.

N.A. HISTORY

"In between conferences"

I was on a train heading for home. It was 9/14/1980. I had just left the 2nd World Literature Conference of Narcotics Anonymous in Lincoln, Nebraska. I had about a day and a half ride back to Levittown, Pennsylvania. I was physically, mentally, and spiritually spent. I was also hungry and broke. I was trying to process my feelings from the last 10 days. There were so many new experiences. I went to the 10th World Convention of Narcotics Anonymous in Wichita, Kansas and then the 2nd WLCNA in Lincoln, Nebraska. The 10th WCNA was enough to blow my mind. People from all over the country. The amount of recovery and clean time at the convention was inspiring. I then attended the 2nd WLCNA and was blessed to witness and participate in the miracle of our Basic Text while in its infancy. The 2nd WLCNA started with written material from a couple of foot lockers that were saved over many years written by addicts from all over. The writings were sorted into an outline that had chapters and sub-headings. The "cut and paste" technique was trialed at the end of the conference and a rough draft of the 1st six pages of our book were completed. This work was accomplished by praying often for God's will with the dedication of many Selfless Servants.

I hadn't slept much the past 10 days. I was very hungry but the worst thing was I had no one to share this experience with for the next 30 hours. There was so much to share with everyone back home. There was so much to do. I couldn't wait to share the 1st page of the "NA Big Book" (that's what we called it) with the Bristol Literature Committee.

When I got back everyone was excited about the 1st page of our "Na Big Book". We still continued writing on the "NA Steps" in our literature committee. It was an exciting time in our area. We were

hosting the 2nd East Coast Convention. We had formed a clubhouse committee to try and have an NA clubhouse in our area. We had a working Public Relations Committee who had a television public service announcement for Narcotics Anonymous during the Philadelphia Phillies World Series game in 1980. The amount of meetings in our area had almost doubled in the last year. Meetings were starting in Allentown at this time. The whole NA community was fired up. We all participated in everything.

I announced in every meeting that I attended that we had a lit committee and we were writing the NA Steps. I also announced the 2nd East Coast Convention Committee, and the public relations committee. On Friday night I used to go to the Oxford Circle meeting. It was a large meeting with mostly young recovering addicts. After the meeting we would hang out at a diner or bowling alley near the meeting. I would hang out until 11:00 then I would head out to the midnight meeting in Doylestown on Pebble Hill Road. This meeting would have addicts from Upper Bucks and Lower Bucks County. I would often meet an addict from Allentown there. He had started a new meeting at 10:30 A.M. on Saturday in Allentown that needed support. After the meeting we would go to his house and crash out until it was time for the meeting.

Two weeks after the 2nd WLCNA Bo (WLCNA Chairperson) called to discuss how to prepare for the next conference. He suggested that each local literature committee could work on a chapter of the "NA Big Book" prior to the next world literature conference. We could use the "cut and paste" technique in our local literature committees. We could start with editing at the next conference. He wanted to give our local literature committee (Bristol Literature Committee) Chapter 8 "We Do Recover" to work on. I thought that was a great idea. It would give so many more addicts a chance to participate in the "NA Big Book". I started announcing in meetings that the Bristol Literature Committee was working on chapter 8 of the "NA Big Book".

One Friday after the Oxford Circle meeting. A few addicts approached me about the literature committee. They wanted to know

why the literature committee met in Bristol. Most of the addicts in Northeast Philadelphia travelled by way of public transportation. They couldn't take public transportation to the meeting but they wanted to participate. Was it possible to move the meeting to Philadelphia? I told them I would approach the group about it.

I asked the Bristol Literature Committee about moving to a Philadelphia location for better access. The committee had been meeting for about 6 months now and had an identity in the NA Community. We were also writing articles for newsletters like the "Rainbow Connection" and articles for possible starting our own newsletter. Things were going well. If it's not broke don't fix it! There was some pride also. What are they going to want next? To change the name to the Philly Lit Committee? Why don't they start their own committee?

I approached the addicts from Philly the next week. What do you think about forming a Philadelphia Literature Committee? They thought that was great. I asked who was going to be their chairperson. Their answer surprised me. They wanted me to chair their committee because I was the only one in the area had been to a NA World Literature Committee. I had the experience. They wanted to meet on Tuesday night. Would I be willing to do it?

The night they picked happened to be the same night as a meeting I started in Bristol. We didn't have the term home group yet but that would be its equivalent to me. I attended it every week. It was a tough choice but I agreed to chair the Philly Literature Committee. The meeting in Bristol folded shortly after I left. I was upset about the meeting folding but I felt like I was following God's Will and I had made the right choice.

The Philadelphia Literature Committee met at Debbie S apartment. I was shocked at how many people showed up at the 1st meeting. The enthusiasm in the meeting to participate in the "NA Big Book" was electric. I chaired the meeting from the doorway into the next room. There was no room anywhere. I suggested we start on chapter 8 where the Bristol Literature Committee had left off from their last meeting. The committee wanted Philadelphia to have its

own mark The "NA Big Book" The Philadelphia Literature Committee asked if they could work on their own chapter of the "NA Big Book". I told them I would call Bo. We decided to write articles about NA recovery and see if they could be published in the "Rainbow Connection"

I called Bo that night. I told him we had a new NA Literature Committee in Philadelphia. The committee wanted to work on their own chapter of the "NA Big Book". Bo had some questions as to why there was 2 different committees. We were from the same NA Area. (Philadelphia Area of NA) After a long discussion Bo agreed to Send the Philadelphia Literature Committee the 10th chapter "More Will Be Revealed" of The "NA Big Book".

Both committees had consistent support and worked hard to complete their work prior to the 3rd NA World Literature Conference in Memphis (that's another story) on January 31, 1981 - February 8, 1981. The committees learned how to do "cut and paste" technique that was developed at the 2nd NA World Literature Conference. This is how we used the "cut and paste" technique in our committee. We looked at the outline for each chapter. We then distributed all the written material that was sorted into the 1st part of the outline from the Lincoln Conference. We each had one or two pages of written material. We then read them so we could be familiar with the material. After everyone was finished reading I asked who had an opening paragraph or sentence for this part of the outline. Someone would raise their hand and read what they thought was a good start. If everyone agreed we cut that part out and pasted on the top of a piece of paper. Someone else might would raise their hand and say I have something that follows that nicely. There might be a couple different people with their hands up and we would read both. Some discussion would follow. One of the readers might withdraw their reading based on the other reading being more pertinent or we could determine that both pieces were important. Once we had a page full of the "cut and paste" someone would read the page. If it sounded good we continued on to page two. When we had nothing left for 1st

part of the outline we collected any unused material. We then handed out the sorted material from 2nd part of the outline. Each of us having one or two pages of written material again. We would read our work. I would then ask who has the opening sentence or paragraph for this part of the outline. We continued this way until both committees had completed their respective chapters.

This is the prayer we said before every meeting:

"GOD GRANT US YOUR KNOWLEDGE THAT WE MAY WRITE ACCORDING TO YOUR DIVINE PRECEPTS. INSTILL IN US A SENSE OF YOUR PURPOSE. MAKE US SERVANTS OF YOUR WILL AND GRANT US A BOND OF SELFLESSNESS, THAT THIS TRULY MAY BE YOUR WORK, NOT OURS-IN ORDER THAT NO ADDICT, ANYWHERE, NEED DIE FROM THE HORRORS FROM ADDICTION."

If we got bogged down or argumentative. We said the Literature Review Prayer again. Every time we said the prayer I got goose bumps because I could feel my Higher Powers presence. The atmosphere in the room became spiritual and we realized why we were there. It was a miracle watching addicts who appeared to have little skill and/or experience transform into selfless servants with distinct skills and purpose. At times it appeared effortless. Addicts were almost always respectful and helpful. We all understood that our efforts weren't just for today's addicts but it was also for the addicts in the future.

Both committees completed the "cut and paste" work on their chapters. They were ready for editing at Memphis. An addict from each committee committed to going with me to the 3rd World Literature Conference of Narcotics Anonymous in Memphis on 1/31/1981. We were all very grateful for the opportunity to be able serve the NA Fellowship.

-Anonymous

Guidelines for Submissions Articles to BCCS:

The Guidelines used for BCCS are not personal opinions of members of BCCS subcommittee. To ensure fairness and in the spiritual principles of the program, the BCCS tries to the best of it's ability to employ the same guidelines set forth by the NA Way magazine which was established by the NA World Service Board. The following The following excerpts below regarding editing is taken verbatim from the NA Way Magazine from the NA World website. For additional information visit the website at <http://www.na.org>.

The NA Way Magazine is broad-based recovery and service oriented journal for NA members. One of our roles is featuring updates and information from world services. Our editorial content ranges from personal recovery experiences to opinion pieces of concern to our fellowship as a whole, right through to humor or nostalgia about recovery. While we prefer typewritten documents, we will gladly accept handwritten materials as well.

"Editing: All manuscripts go through a review and editing process. We look for a tone that reflects a spirit of unity and mutual respect. Any article that slanders another NA member will be rejected. Explicit sexual references and all obscene and vulgar language will be deleted from published articles. Articles that are written in a "preachy or teach-y" tone may be edited to read from a more personal one. We make other edits in keeping with NA's understanding of the Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions, using standard NA language such as "clean," "recovery," and "addict." Implied endorsements of outside enterprises are deleted, as are any other references that may be perceived as being in conflict with NA's spiritual principles. Authors' names are printed using the first name and last initial, unless the author asks to be identified as "Anonymous." Opinion pieces that challenge prevailing interpretations of the Twelve Traditions are welcome, and in those cases, some of the editorial guidelines noted above may be relaxed.

In addition, submissions are copyedited to ensure ease of comprehension and adherence to the rules of English grammar, i.e., we will review and revise sentence structure, spelling, punctuation, etc. Editorial staff may also substitute different words for clarification, but content and the author's intentions are retained in the copyediting process. We do our very best to maintain the tone and voice of the author. We prefer definite, specific, concrete language and orthodox spelling. The reference books we most use are current editions of Webster's Collegiate Dictionary, The Chicago Manual of Style, Fowler's Modern English Usage, and The Handbook of Good English.

("-<http://www.na.org/?ID=naway-submissionguides> (NA World Guidelines)

Editor Notes is one suggestion...

Contribute

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