



CA San Diego Newsletter

Toll Free Hotline (866) 242-2248

<http://www.casandiego.org>

Don't Sit On It

Don't sit on it. Whatever you do, don't keep it in, don't let it fester, don't give it run time in your head. It can make you physically ill. Let me explain...

When I had about 3 months sober (on my second go-round in the program), my sponsor had me working on my fourth step inventory... That's just fine and dandy, and I knew if I wanted to keep what I had, and progress in the program, I had to do it. I'd already done one inventory, but I'd left some key things off the list that I was too ashamed to share. As a result, those things I knew were skulking around in the dungeon of my mind were working overtime, assisting the disease. The Gremlin In My Gray Matter actively promoted my sick thinking, and at six months, I went out again. I hated going out. It's not a fun date.

So with my new sponsor, I was determined to work harder. I had the tools, I could rebuild me. Sort of like the Six Million Dollar Man.... Although I was just hoping for the six dollar version. I'm broke and I'm cheap. Emotionally and spiritually, I was so far down that if I tried to step out of the gutter, I still wouldn't be at curb level. I knew, and was deeply afraid of, those items I left off my inventory that had to go on my second inventory. But I took a deep breath, kissed the tattered remnants of my pride goodbye, and

got to it.

If I do say so myself, I wrote a Fabulous Fourth!! I wrote -everything- down, everything that popped into my head from my fourth grade music teacher who wouldn't let me sing in the choir ("My dear, you sound like a male bullfrog during mating season! I cannot have you singing Jingle Bells sounding like George Clinton!" then I had to look up George Clinton... and became a lifelong fan!) to the time I threatened to cut off a fellow cheerleader's hair for being...well for being herself, really. And we all know what cheerleaders are like. And yes... with trembling hands and sobs that wracked my entire body, I wrote down the really horrible, nasty, emotional wounds. The things that whip around in your mind suddenly and give you a terminal case of the cold jitters at unexpected moments, like when you're trying to deal with rush hour traffic and the next thing you know you're having a mental flashback and hyperventilating. The things that make you RUN for relief. And not in a good way.

So having written the Great American Inventory, what did I do with it? I balked. Seriously, completely, forcefully balked. I flat out refused to drop my fifth step. I would think about making an appointment with my sponsor, at times I would even call her and chat around the subject, but I could not bring myself to actually do it. What in the name of Satan's sausage sandwich would she think of me? She would run screaming. She'd call the cops. She'd have me committed. I kept pushing the idea out of my mind like a glass of sour milk. It stank to high heaven, and I wouldn't go near it.

My sponsor is a lovely woman. Truly terrific and she really understands me. She gives me enough leeway to work things out on my own if I can. And sometimes, she gives me just enough rope to hang myself with. Her motto is "when you're in enough pain, you'll do the work." And she's right. I sat on that inventory for four months. During that time, I couldn't pray, I could barely eat, I had horrific nightmares, and gradually, I began to suffer from excruciating migraines that had me actually thinking about suicide. I was in the hospital for them a couple of times. But I didn't put two and two together.

At about eight months sober, I had The Day. The day we all dread knowing may come. The day we're going to drink or use again, because we cannot go on as we are. The choices are limited. And I'd been told by several medical authorities that if I chose

to use my drug of choice again, even one time, I would probably end up in the back of a coroner's van. I chose to kill myself anyway. But God had different plans for me.

A very close family friend just happened to show up just before I was about to pick up again. He never just drops by. Ever. But he did that day, and he saved my life.

I quickly discarded the drug, because I knew if he saw it, he'd take me straight to the hospital. Not knowing what else to do, I went to my meeting that night, with him...he stayed at my house that day because he said he felt like he should be there, and he didn't know why. But I did.

I started crying the minute I walked into the room and couldn't stop. I dropped the truth about what I'd intended to do. I couldn't take the constant migraines anymore, I said. I can't stand the pain and I want to die. That was all my sponsor needed to hear. She kidnapped me and wouldn't let me out of her sight until we'd gone over every little detail of my inventory, compiled a list of persons I had harmed, and did a lot of praying. It took the better part of two days, in a couple of long sessions.

The very next day the migraines disappeared completely. I could breathe. I didn't feel nauseated all the time. I think I might have even smiled a couple of times that next day. And she didn't hate me, or think poorly of me. She didn't want to toss me in the nearest mental facility. God puts people together for a reason, and when I did my fifth step, I found out my sponsor and I shared a lot of the same shameful secrets. I wasn't alone, and I wasn't the worst apple in the barrel.

Two years on, I'm still sober. But lately the migraines have been creeping back, and the stomach problems, and the fear. There's something rattling around in my mental dungeon, and I'm not really sure what it is. But I know from experience that generally speaking, I make myself sick. For whatever reason, the things that get back up in my psyche are expressed as physical illness. If I want to get well, I have to do the work. And work I will. I don't mind the writing so much. And I've gotten pretty good at the on-the-spot tenths steps. So I'll just get a pen and see what pours out. I know I'll feel better afterward.

The moral of the story is: don't sit on it. Don't put yourself between the devil and the deep blue sea. It's a long drop off that cliff, and the rope that can save your life is only a phone call away.

~Anonymous~

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1st Step

"We admitted we were powerless over cocaine, that our lives had become unmanageable."

When I got sober my sponsor had me write about the times I tried not to use. How I felt when I did it anyway. I remember how pathetic and hopeless I felt. Wanting to stop, but I just couldn't do it.

I had no problem admitting I was an addict, but I wasn't immediately ready to surrender. I didn't understand the concept. I thought I could smoke weed once in a while and be ok, and for a while that's what I did. I understood later that was having a reservation. Thank God I kept coming to meetings.

I got tired of taking newcomer chips, and started taking bogus chips believing I was clean. In the world I came from I was. But Narcotics Anonymous is a program of "complete abstinence".

I finally got honest with everyone and started telling my co-workers "no thanks" when they tried to pass me the joint. I did not realize how significant that day was. It took me many years to know it was the day I surrendered and rid myself of my final reservation. I also had to let them know they couldn't smoke around me. That was almost 17 years ago.

When I hear someone talk about fighting the disease of addiction I want to scream. "Surrender means not fighting any more."

I often heard when I was new that the war was over, but I was allowed to join the winning side.

The 1st step is important in many areas of our lives. It helped me early in recovery. I had a girlfriend who went to a recovery house in the valley. I was obsessed with who she was hanging out with and what she was doing. There was a guy there paying a lot of attention to her. My sponsor, using his own experience as an example of working the steps, told me that when he is worrying about what his lady is doing and who she talks to, he loses focus on his own life, thus becoming unmanageable. I am powerless over what she does and I need to focus on my own life and recovery. She ended up sleeping with the guy. We had been together for 3-1/2 years, and went through a lot together, I really did love her.

I was working the 1st step at the time and wrote about the things my sponsor had told me, I knew I was powerless, and if I didn't let go, my life would be unmanageable. I knew I was at an important transition in my life and I had to put myself first.

With almost 17 years, I still find myself back at the 1st step. I still haven't been able to surrender to smoking. I find everything about it disgusting and have had success for periods of time but always forgot that one is too many and a pack a day is never enough. I have also had to surrender to local casinos, I am not a compulsive

gambler to the extent I can't enjoy a trip to Vegas or Laughlin once in a while, but when I start playing in town it becomes an obsession. Besides money, my spiritual contact and my relationships with people I care about suffer.

The First Step is a great beginning for a whole new way of life and it all begins with just not using... no matter what.

~Anonymous~

Dear Readers,

Each quarter I put a Step & Tradition experience, viewpoint, etc. in this newsletter... we can't continue to do this without your support & input. Please take a moment to write something down on any Step or Tradition you have a viewpoint on. We need the experiences of our readers to carry the message to others in Cocaine Anonymous.

Please help to accomplish this goal.

Thank You,
The newsletter Chair

1st Tradition

"Our common welfare should come first; personal recovery depends on CA unity"

When I think about the 1st Tradition, I think about how grateful I am to be sober and how I need the steps and principles that CA has taught me. As I started to come to meetings, I found myself wanting to get involved in my recovery and that I needed to get involved in my recovery. After all, I had nowhere else to go. The old-timers in the meetings kept sharing about how I have to give back what was so freely given to me. They said "You can't keep it if you don't give it away and you can't give what you don't have, so work the steps mother f**** and keep coming back."

I knew others needed the meetings as well as I did so we had a common goal. To help each other stay sober by all means. Which meant to me that the old timers needed me as much as I needed them to stay sober. When it came to meeting business and elections, I didn't know much at first so I kept my big mouth shut. I observed the old timers and took notice of

the things they were doing to make sure that the meeting was always open. I saw how they collected each other's phone numbers and vowed to call each other if one couldn't make it.

I valued the meetings I went to and wanted to be there. I know that if the old timers weren't there to make sure that the doors were always open and that anyone seeking recovery is welcome, I probably wouldn't have made it. CA saved my life, and because the doors were always open, (even on holidays) an addict like me had somewhere to go.

The First Tradition saves lives because lives are worth saving. We think about our common welfare and unity as the most important thing. Notice that I said "our common welfare not my common welfare"... I have to always remember that. And that's why I do my commitment at my home group meeting and welcome the newcomers.

When I think about not showing up for my commitment to go on a date or a movie, or hang out with others not in a meeting or even when I don't want to be there. I have to remember that I have this new way of life thanks to the others that kept the doors

open, gave me direction, sponsored me and put up with my craziness. I am blessed today thanks to the 1st Tradition.

~Anonymous~

If you have found this newsletter and think you may have a problem with cocaine or any mind altering substances, Cocaine Anonymous can help. If you need a schedule of meetings in the area, please call (866) 242-2248



C.A. Service Page

Area Chairperson
Keith F.

Co- Chair
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Hospitals & Institutions
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Delegates
Peter D.

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Keith F.

Structures & Bylaws

CA Celebration
Ken S.

Literature
Tom B.

Newsletter
Cai P.

Alternate Delegates

Eric F.

Ken S.

The CA San Diego Area Newsletter Committee would like to hear from you! We are looking for cover stories, poems, comics, games, or something you think is pertinent to be added to our next newsletter. Please remember to keep it recovery related.

Contact :

Cai P

Or mail your submissions to :

Cocaine Anonymous

PO Box 261411

San Diego, CA, 92126

Develop your footing~ find your passion

San Diego Cocaine Anonymous needs your support to stay strong & keep San Diego Area unity alive!! Whatever your interest, get involved. Whether you want to take on a commitment or just help out, we would love to have you!

Call any of the above numbers for more information on how you can get into the middle of the circle of recovery.

~ Newsletter Chair~

Question for the day: If you were arrested for being a member of Cocaine Anonymous, would there be enough evidence to convict you?

Cocaine Anonymous is a fellowship of men & women who share their experience, strength, and hope with each other that they may solve their common problem and help others to recover from their addiction. The only requirement for membership is a desire to stop using cocaine and all other mind-altering substances. There are no dues or fees for membership; we are fully self-supporting through our own contributions. We are not allied with any sect, denomination, politics, organization or institution. We do not wish to engage in any controversy and we neither endorse or oppose any causes. Our primary purpose is to stay free from cocaine and all other mind-altering substances, and to help others achieve the same freedom.

Games

WORD SEARCH PUZZLE

VZTLIUGCP PCFEILERBNM
 SXLAICURCDPEMAHSPUZ C
 ELPMIS FNOISUFN OCNPOK
 UUYNFDOGFWSFRPUCEMZ F
 SEARCHING T TCEFRE PJRD
 SPIZOTSOHGMHEKSLMZ E I
 IDWRITINGE V LOSERNMDS
 MBRMOXNCFMNCCTLNONRC
 GODOSTCEFEDREMVZIROA
 SALPFFASVETHAZEFTARR
 SMNYARPIANMF TESZCEGD
 ESKALTTLEAICAGLP IFRP
 RTLECITMDCEE NINBDRCS
 TESASTTECSAWGRTEAAND
 SSCORNI TRDEFEASHRDOG
 KSPOEOSORNIFRORITTIJ
 SADSVEMCNASAPUNUNPSX
 SOESNEDRUBPRRGSIO P NS
 GRCORRRCF SUSOFAFCCES
 TCHRFWAYRPFDS PAPERTS

ABLE	FREE	PERFECT
ACTION	GAIN	POSITIVE
ADMIT	GHOST	PRAY
AFRAID	GOD	PURPOSE
ANGER	GROWTH	RECOVERY
ASSETS	GUILT	RELIEF
BURDENS	HONESTY	REMORSE
CARING	INVENTORY	RESENTMENT
COMPLETE	ISSUES	RESOLVE
CONFUSION	LEARN	RID
CONTRADICTION	MADE	SEARCHING
COURAGE	MORAL	SHAME
CRUCIAL	MUST	SIMPLE
DEAL	NEW	STRENGTH
DEFECTS	ORDER	STRESS
DISCARD	OURSELVES	SURFACE
FAITH	PAIN	TENSION
FEAR	PANIC	TOOL
FEARLESS	PAPER	TRAPS
FIND	PATTERNS	WAY
FOUR	PEN	WRITING

Doing the Footwork & Having Faith

I remember those first days, I was frightened, and I had no idea what to expect. I had no hope that I could stay clean. Everything seemed so bleak. I kept my coat on and stayed near the door, ready to flee at any moment.

Everyone told me to keep coming back. I didn't understand why they were smiling. I didn't think I was going to stay, even though I wanted to. I just didn't trust myself. My track record proved I could make promises, but I never kept them.

I got a sponsor. He told me I could do it. I started making friends, and I listened. I heard

about faith. They told me to develop some, to just believe.

As the days went by, a miracle happened. I started to smile. The compulsion to use had been lifted. This faith thing wasn't so bad, I thought. I only had a little, but it seemed to be enough. Each day I stayed clean & sober, my faith got stronger. Time went by, I worked the steps. I read the literature. I did service. I used my sponsor.

Now, over 4 years later, I must rely on what I learned in those early days. I must have faith and believe today just as I did then.

I've been out of work for more

than a month. I'm putting in the footwork, believing that my Higher Power is taking care of me. I left my last job after months of prayer and meditation. It had become very abusive there. I was afraid of leaving but I had to. I left, and now I am looking for a new job. My Higher Power has taken care of me so far, and I know it will continue to if I do the footwork.

Recovery has taught me that life happens, and so do problems. My first 90 days taught me to have faith and pray. CA's only promise has been fulfilled in my life. This is only the beginning. All I need to do is show up, stay sober, and believe. Everything else will follow.
~Anonymous~

Getting What I Deserve

This is my stuff, I know, but I really find it irritating when recovering addicts go on at length about how undeserving they are. I assume that they are either repeating what they heard others say because it sounds like the right thing to say, or else they think it's unspiritual to actually feel like you deserve what you have.

Just to make a point here, self worth is a spiritual principle. We are taught that we are no better than anyone else,

but we are no worse either, so I am worthy today.

Reciprocity is also a spiritual principle. I get what I give. If I live right today, then I get good things in return. In active addiction, I did bad things, and in turn I got exactly what I deserved, so why should I find it so hard to accept that, now that I live right, I still get what I deserve?

I believe that it is unfair of me to accept the blessings that my Higher Power allows me to have because of trying to be an asset and not a burden today, then turn around and show my gratitude by saying I don't deserve it.

If I truly feel undeserving, then maybe I should look at how I work my program a little closer, to see if maybe there's an unresolved issue that's making me feel this way. Just a thought.
~Anonymous~

Resentments and Forgiveness

Resentments are the one guaranteed formula for smothering your spirituality.

*When you have been wronged, a poor memory is your best response.

*Never carry resentment, because, while you're straining under it's weight, the other guy feels no discomfort at all.

*Forgiveness heals; resentment wounds.

*You can't get ahead when you're trying to get even.

*Forgive those who have wronged you ~ nothing annoys them more. There is no revenge so sweet as forgiveness. The only people you should try to get even with are the people who have helped you.

*Never is God operating in your life so strong as when you forgive a resentment and dare to forgive an injury.

*Being offended is your disease's way of getting you out of the will of God.

*When you don't forgive, you are ignoring it's impact on your destiny. Resentment is a prolonged form of suicide. How much worse are the consequences of resentment than the causes of it!

*People need love most when they deserve it least, so forgive someone every day.

~Anonymous~

Strung Out On Life?

Talk about placing unrealistic expectations on ourselves. I go to 3 meetings a week, do service work at the group level and the area level, and work over 40 hours a week. I also try to spend as much time as possible with my wife and children, take care of my home and yard, and do my own maintenance on my cars.

Before I came to CA, I was in jail most of the time. I had no job, no home, and no cars. It's a miracle that I still had a wife. The thought of going a day without using was something I considered impossible.

I must always remember that without recovery I will not have these things that seem to take up all of my time. But if I get so carried away with work and service

that I have no time to work my steps or talk with my sponsor, I may forget that recovery is about learning how to apply spiritual principles in my life inside and outside the rooms of CA.

I'm an addict, and I can get carried away with everything I do. Learning how to be a productive member of society is a matter of living life on life's terms without letting life overwhelm me. The thing that helps me the most when I get strung out on life is to go back to the basics of recovery.

~Anonymous~

The stories herein are views of the individual contributors. No endorsement by CA is to be implied.

Birthdays

Autumn R. 2/08/2009
Ken S. 3/23/2000
Mike R. 2/04/1988
Jomi S. 3/26/2006
Aimee C. 1/07/2006
Eric F. 3/13/2006
Mike L. 5/01/2008

Courage to Change

Change is not something recovering addicts accept willingly. There are times when we will cry, cuss, fight and resist change with every ounce of energy we have.

Even if we know the change we are going through is for the better, we still may not want to go through it, and will try our best to convince ourselves we are better off right where we are, even if we know where we are is causing us nothing but pain and misery.

The ironic part of this, of course, is that when we were in active addiction, we were constantly changing. Changing jobs, homes, friends, lovers, our lives were all about change.

And how many times did we completely change everything about ourselves—just picking up and taking off, leaving everyone and everything behind, to go to a strange place surrounded by people we didn't know to start all over again—without even thinking twice about it?

So why is it that there are times in recovery when even the smallest wrinkle in our plans

causes us to run around in a panic like Chicken Little screaming "the sky is falling"?

After all, aren't we all living, breathing miracles? Shouldn't that be enough to show us that we can get through anything with the help of our Higher Power and the Fellowship?

For me, I find that the times when I am most willing to accept change and know that everything will be okay no matter what, are the times that my faith is at it's strongest. And my faith is at it's strongest when I align myself with the will of my Higher Power, and instead of asking in any given situation "What should I do?", I ask "What does God want me to do?"

Courage to change. Courage is the direct result of faith, and faith is the direct result of taking action and allowing the God of my understanding to guide me where He wants me to go, then following, knowing that anything He will lead me to, He will lead me through.

~Anonymous~

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*Submissions by members of our fellowship
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Cocaine Anonymous

P. O. Box 261411, San Diego, CA 92126

Web Site <http://www.casandiego.org>

Toll free Help line

(866) 242-2248

Poetry Corner

The Sunrise

As I sit here on the front porch
And wait for the rising sun
I think about the battles I've fought
And the freedom that I've won
But the war is far from over
You know it's really just begun
Because I have yet to free myself
From all the things I've done
Today I'll ride into battle
Armed with strength from my God
'Cause I know the enemy is out
there
But I'll just greet him with a nod
I've met him, oh so many times
And he always looks the same
I know him as my Addiction
But you may call him different
names
I wouldn't call him the "Devil"
Although they must be tight
'Cause he'll come creeping right up
on you

Invading your dreams at night
He'll jump right up in your face
Swear that he's your best friend
Take you down a long hard road
Then abandon you in the end
So if you ever meet this dude
Smile, just shake his hand
Tell him "Thanks for sharing"
But I've got other plans
Then pull out your bag of tools
And cut him down to size
Then you'll be free to sit on the
porch
Thank God, and watch the sunrise

~Anonymous~