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CA San Diego Newsletter

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<http://www.casandiego.org>



The Nature of Service

We must put our faith to work with action. Without the changes which reflect our personal growth becoming apparent in our lives, we experience the return of the "hollow" feeling inside which we addicts have known so well. We revert to the selfishness and egotism we have relied on in the past. To help us establish some hope for ourselves, we need evidence that CA recovery is real. Evidence which will stand the tests which are forced upon us by our disease.

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This is the great spiritual lesson of Cocaine Anonymous.

If all our program consisted of was service, no one would get sober. We must get help before we are in a position to give it. Our surrenders, our faith, our inventories, our amends and our spirituality allow us to carry the CA message. After we meet our own needs, we have something to offer others. Basing our lives in a Power greater than ourselves gives us a spiritual freedom which makes the welfare of others a valid concern to us. It is this concern for others which is a part of what attracts our newcomers. We do not play God and attempt the impossible. Recovery teaches us to live in reality. Through helping others, we ourselves are helped.

Through recovery, we are able to recognize the effect, good and bad, we have on others. Our identity as human beings increases. We find it impossible to feel good about ourselves unless we are doing good for others.

As we learn and grow in recovery, we discover that the good we do for others comes back to us. Even the most hardened and embittered of our members eventually realize that they have been given a new life by those who were able to love them until they could love themselves. Without the nature of service, there would be no CA, no newcomers, and no helping of others.

In the beginning, the giving of our meager resources seemed like utter foolishness. We were all takers, one way or another. We didn't think much of ourselves for doing it, but our disease had reduced us to the

point where we had no choice but to put our needs first. We couldn't care and we didn't share anything of importance to us. Our using ate up all our resources, and we had to replace them. As our needs are met in recovery, we find our desperate way of life fading into the past.

We see, accept and feel thankful for the help and love we receive from others. To do less for others than we receive would be a spiritual lapse. Giving makes so much sense to us because we see where we receive much more than we will ever be able to give back. When we try, we find that we have even more to give. The world is kind to its givers. Becoming a part of society is our transformation from taking to giving. When we find these truths, we have begun the spiritual transformation we call recovery.

Many members suffer greatly from the confusion between the formal service structure and the spiritual nature of service to others. Our structure is a meaningless diagram printed on paper without the life, love and wisdom only we can put into it. Many of our best trusted servants never serve in any elected capacity. Our most important member may be the newcomer, but our most important servant is the one who will be there, today, when we need help staying clean.

Anonymous

The 6th Step

“We were entirely ready to have God remove all these defects of character.”

I had to ask myself, if I was really entirely ready to have God remove all my defects of character. Do I really want to be rid of my anger, dishonesty, lust, gluttony, sloth, impatience, hate, selfishness and self-seeking? This one should be a no-brainer. Yet look at where I have ended up.

The 12 & 12 talks about us defying our instinctive desire for self preservation, that we seem bent on self destruction. We work against our own deepest instinct.

In working this step, I found that my willingness and desire for change were key. This was previously expressed in my 5th step, when I admitted to God, myself and my sponsor the exact nature of my wrongs.

By reviewing my 4th step

inventory, I got to see what my defects

of character had done to my life.

In working a thorough 3rd step, where I had a true desire and made a decision to turn my will and my life over to the God as I understand Him. This is where I made my foundation with my Higher Power.

So now I have my God remove all of my defects of character. The first step is praying to Him. This is a life long journey that I need to work on every day. It is easy for my defects to creep back into my life, but I try not to act on them. It is so easy to be caught off guard, when things are going bad, or even when things are going well.

It is said that in the 6th step we need a personality change if we are to stay clean & sober. I do this by praying to my God on a

daily basis, for freedom from my defects, but I must remember that this is a step of willingness.

Willingness is the spiritual principle of step six. Step six helps us move in a spiritual direction.

Step 2 is where I came to believe that a power greater than myself could restore me to sanity. This is another place where I started to have a relationship with the God of my own understanding.

Step 1 is where I admitted that I was powerless over my addiction, and that my life had become unmanageable. This goes to show me how the steps work if I work them in order, honestly.

Although we all have different ways of actively practicing the steps in our daily lives, we must remember that the program is where we all work toward the same goal, together.

~Anonymous~

The 6th Tradition

“A C.A. group ought never endorse, finance, or lend the C.A. name to any related facility or outside enterprise, lest problems of money, property, or prestige divert us from our primary purpose”

My experience with the 6th tradition has taught me that we as a group should focus on recovery and not the advancement of C.A. My primary purpose is to stay sober and carry the message of recovery.

I sometimes feel that if C.A had more money, then we could do more things to help the addict still suffering. There are many organizations that would like to use C.A. to promote their business. Sometimes for great means, but usually for profit.

For example, if we endorsed a drug company or a health and wellness company that advertised

a pill that helped the addict remove the addiction to use, then that company would become very profitable on the heels of C.A.

That company might start it's own C.A. meeting. Further down the line, that company might have a pill program that starts off by taking a pill for breakfast, lunch and dinner then hit a company sponsored C.A. meeting at a monthly fee. That company might regulate what is said at a meeting. That company might try to control the meeting...

What if that company gets sued for having a dangerous substance in their non addictive pill and causes great harm to many people?... Then C.A. would be in great controversy...

There are so many ways that C.A. can be taken advantage of.

Many addicts feel that they have a great idea on how to improve CA.

The 6th tradition reminds us of how wonderful this program works without any outside help. That our anonymity is safe here. That we can feel safe in a meeting and that we can share our experience, strength and hope without the fear of outside influences.

I like that fact that I can go to a meeting and not have to pay a fee to get in and not have to worry that I don't have the money to make a meeting today...not have to take out a loan...not have to sign a commitment form or take a urine test or sign a progress report.

I can go to a meeting and hear recovery. I am thankful for the traditions and don't take them lightly or legalistically. Just spiritually. Which is the way the 6th tradition works.

~Anonymous~

C.A. Service Page

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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.

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:

Do you help others or help yourself?

Contact :

Cai Pamplin
newsletter@casandiego.org

Or mail your submissions to :

Cocaine Anonymous
PO Box 261411
San Diego, CA, 92126

Upcoming events

Over The Line

When: Saturday, July 24th 11am
Where: Crown Point
Cost: \$10 a person for food & game. \$5 for just food
Contact: Peter D.
Martin R.

Bowling Tournament

When: Sunday, August 15th 2pm
Where: Mira Mesa Lanes
Cost: \$15 per person, teams of 4 (must have 1 person opposite sex on team) price includes shoes & 2 games.

Contact: Peter D.

Medals will be Awarded to winning teams

Volleyball Tournament & Carne Asada

When: Saturday, September 18th 10am
Where: Ocean Beach (where Sat. Bonfire meeting is held)
Cost: \$10 a person for food & game \$7 for just food
Contact: Peter D.

Unity Day

When: Saturday, August 21st 11am
Where: Crown Point
Cost : Free event
Volleyball, lots of food, family & friends
Contact: Aimee

Sowing Seeds in Service

We hear a lot about apathy in service, and it is a big problem in CA. Ten percent of the people doing one hundred percent of the work. Others unwilling to get involved in service for whatever reason. We know it all too well.

Well this article isn't intended for those who don't do service work. I want to address those of us who do service. Before we start complaining too loud about others who won't get involved, let's take a good long look at ourselves.

When was the last time you talked to others about getting involved in service? When was the last time you volunteered to give someone a ride to a service meeting, to help them learn a new service position, or even offer to be their alternate if they were

willing to take on a service position?

How many sponsees do you have? How many of them are actively involved in service? What about the ones who aren't? Why not, as a sponsor, have a requirement: to be involved in service. "What? I can't put requirements like that on my sponsees!" Who says you can't? Your sponsees?

Service is more than just sitting on a chair and giving reports. It is also my duty as a service member to be proactive in searching for the person who will replace me when I leave the service position.

After all, who better to know what characteristics will work best for the service position than the person who is currently filling it? Who better to train the next person to fill the position than

the person who currently holds it?

Too often we see someone finish up a service position and leave their replacement clueless as to what to do—or even worse, leave the spot vacant without even attempting to find a replacement.

As recovering addicts we are here to carry the message and to sow seeds. What better way to start than to do our best to make sure that service positions are in capable hands when we leave them, to ensure that the message of CA will carry on?

Anonymous

Another 6th step experience

In doing the sixth step I have discovered that security is distorted in familiar pain. It seems safer to embrace what we know than to let go of it for the unknown.

I found my defects in step 4, and only through the hard work in the first 5 steps, am I able to be entirely ready to have god remove these defects of character. Of course the 6th step is a life-long process, but I have useless living patterns that keep reoccurring in my life that I have to be willing to let go of or I will continue to repeat them and spiral into destruction.

The work I had done in my first 5 steps helped me to see some very harsh truths about who I had become. I have felt so sick inside about how my actions have affected others in my life and around me.

I need my god to give me the willingness to become ready to let these defects go. Some are things I have done for years and are comfortable. But

they are not living by the spiritual principles I have gained and learned through this program. These spiritual principles give me a whole new life.

The drugs were merely a symptom, but in doing the 6th step I am beginning to see the whole problem. When I do not see it, my sponsor is able to help me get clarity.

In step 6 I had found that god has already removed some of the defects I thought would never leave. There is hope and we do change. We didn't have to be humiliated into being humble. The lie is dead "once an addict always an addict". In step 6 I found this implies more than just using. Our defects die in the light but we must bring them there and let go of them.

I make new mistakes today, I am human and ok with that because I don't have to keep repeating the old ones. Step six has taught me that persistence and willingness will spiral me into peace and relief. Even if I stray off track, I have a new life today. I can ask god to help me become even more

ready and I know I am headed in the right direction.

Eventually faith, humility, and acceptance replace pride and rebellion. We come to know ourselves. We find ourselves growing into mature consciousness. We begin to feel better, as willingness grows into hope. Perhaps for the first time we are a vision of our new life. With this in sight, we put our willingness into action.

We all have fears of being alone, of not having our physical needs met, of dying, and many others. But when our fears become obsessively self-centered, when we spend all our time protecting ourselves from what might happen, we can no longer deal effectively with life in the here and now.

We must have courage and trust. The pain is far too great in the fear of change. I have let go. It is not change that's painful, but resistance to it...

Anonymous

One Addict's Good Bye Letter To His Drug

Dear Crystal,

When we met you made me feel so good about myself, you told me I was strong, good looking and funny.

When I was with you we could talk and laugh the night away. Every few weeks at parties when we met you were always happy to see me. When I drank too much and was tipsy, you would hold me up, your seduction was so subtle.

When I moved to California, I didn't see you here and that was ok, I didn't expect you to be stalking me, but you were. When we did find each other, you again were so happy to see me and you said you always wanted to party with me. That I shouldn't party without you because together we looked so good, were so funny and smart, so I let you move in.

Then you told me you wanted to go to work with me, that I could work harder, faster, longer and

happier with your help. I really didn't want to, I wanted you as my party girl, but this time you insisted "TAKE ME TO WORK"

Some of my friends told me they dated you and to watch out, that you had an ugly side. That you could be mean and nasty. I should have listened to them, but instead I listened to you, you said I needed new friends. What I didn't realize was that from the first day we met, you needed to be fed, and you only ate one thing, WILLPOWER.

By this time I wasn't happy to see you, I NEEDED TO SEE YOU, every day all day! I depended on you to greet me in the morning, work with me during the day, and party with me every night. All the friends you let me keep only talked about you, it was always about you. Then there were those nights you weren't home. I called all your friends and you weren't there, but they were expecting you to come by. I told them I

Needed to see you, that I was sick with worry, so sick I could not work the next day.

It was then that I realized I was not me, that you consumed me and all my willpower. Now I was all about you. I also realized that we didn't look good together, that I wasn't the funniest or even fun anymore, and at work you didn't make me work harder, or faster! It was just without you, I couldn't work at all!

So this is not goodbye, but good riddance! Don't call me, don't send your friends to see me, and if I see you in public please DO take it personally when I just walk away. I've decided to make my life about me not about you!!

~ Gregg C ~

Birthdays

Peter D. 7/04/1995
Dave Pierce 7/28/1989
Brittany K. 5/18/2009
Hedy K. 5/5/2009
Matt K. 5/5/2009
Frank T. 5/6/2009
Karl 5/7/2009
Leslie G. 8/12/1994
George W. 9/12/2008
Martin R. 6/5/2007
Jeff M. 6/4/2007
Mike P. 7/10/2007
Tom B. 8/25/2008
Al P. 8/13/2005
Keith 9/8/2005
Mary S. 8/2/2008
Mike SD. 6/22/1998
Vickie K. 7/5/2009

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*It is intended to solely provide information for
the fellowship of Cocaine Anonymous.*

*We hope to communicate the experience,
strength and hope of CA members reflecting
recovery, unity and service, within the bounds of
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Cocaine Anonymous.*

*If you would like to know more about cocaine
Anonymous, The Twelve Steps and The Twelve
Traditions, please write and ask for C.A. World
Service Conference approved literature at
CAWSO, 3740 Overland Ave., Suite C,
Los Angeles, CA 90034*

*Email to: info@CA.org
or by Fax to: (310) 559-2554*

*You can call CA by phone at (310) 559-5833.
Also note that C.A. World Service Office Web
page is: www.ca.org*

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Poetry Corner

Surrounded but Alone

Surrounded but alone
Although happier than home
What am I to do with you
If all I am is stoned
There's a hole in my chest
As I bleed through this pen
Confiding with it I'm spilling ink
And wishing for an end
I can't pick up the phone
but I need to know you've called
I'm far away from home
Hoping something can be solved
Writing what I'm feeling
Isn't easy as it seems
I cant find the words to write
That spell out what I mean
I guess that's what I'm trying to find...
The pieces missing behind my eyes
Maybe one day
Our tomorrows will be new
Maybe one day
I'll find my way to you
Is it a blind leap of faith
to take a chance on a dream
Having yet to be seen
But to feel what it means
Or is faith what guides that path to our dreams
When believing that faith is fate
Yet to be seen
I used to look at the days That I couldn't have back
Twisted in the present
I wasn't ready to attack My life as I knew it...
So I blew it away
As every second passed and broke out into a new day...

But now it's changed,
I won't take it in vain
I'm gonna follow my dreams...
Because tomorrow's a new day

~Thomas C.~