



THE NA TIMES

Phoenix – West Valley – East Valley

October 2023

Step 10: “Continued to take personal inventory and when we were wrong promptly admitted it.”

I Lived to Tell – Step 10

The 10th Step saved either my life or at least my body from severe harm. Let me explain: About four months into my recovery on a Friday evening, I was preparing to go to a nearby meeting. Running late, I was in a hurry. However, I first needed to say goodbye to my husband in the other room watching TV. Impatiently, I explained that I was going to a meeting and should be home in one hour or so.

He did not pay much attention, which forced me to repeat my words. I was now running later and did not appreciate his inattentiveness. I angrily repeated myself and stomped off. Getting into the car, my HP reminded me of the 10th Step. Do I leave and do it later or promptly do it now?

The step says: “**We continued to take personal inventory**”. It was my impatient attitude that needed inventorying.

And “**When we were wrong promptly admitted it**”. I knew I had to apologize right then before driving off.

I turned off the ignition, jumped out to the car and admitted I was wrong with my attitude and yelling. Apology accepted and kisses exchanged. Whew – I felt better and now ready for a meeting. That took less than five minutes.

One of the crossroads I take is known for accidents. I think because it is a very long, red left turning light. Impatient drivers drive through the red light frequently. I probably would have been one of those impatient drivers.

Coming up to this intersection, I had to go around two badly crushed cars that had collided less than five minutes ago, resulting in one fatality and one very badly injured (I later learned). That could have been me.

I will never know, but I thank my HP for reminding me to 10th Step promptly when needed.

Kathy M.

Tradition Ten: “NA has no opinion outside issues; hence the NA name ought never be drawn into public controversy.”

I have lots of opinions. As an addict, I’m sure I have more than most.

Somewhere along the line, I learned to base my decisions on no real information whatsoever. Opinions became my facts, the facts on which I based my beliefs and actions. I could wield them in whatever way that served me, pretty much always leaving destruction in my wake. The sickness in me thrives on drama and controversy. That’s part of the insanity of my disease. More than ever, I’ve come to understand that opinions are not facts. They can be divisive and create disunity when shared. That’s where Tradition 10 comes in.

The traditions are the icing on the cake for this addict. The 12 steps of NA have changed my life. They have taught me to live life daily and have given me the freedom to recover. The 12 Steps teach me how to deal with me on a daily basis. The traditions tell me how to deal with others, inside and outside of the rooms. They give me some simple guidelines on how home groups should act, and interact, as well. Using the traditions helps me fight against my disease by giving me some real information on how I should be acting. They help me practice sanity.

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Our primary purpose is to carry the message to the addict who still suffers. The 1st Tradition tells me in order to do that, I must strive to preserve unity at all costs. Tradition 10 not only protects my sanity, it also protects our unity. NA only cares about what I want to do about my problem and how our members can help. That seems simple, doesn't it? Recovery. Everything else is an outside issue. Medication? Outside issue. Counseling and other mental health services? Outside issue. Medical diagnoses? Outside issue. Even things that are seemingly recovery based aren't within the scope of NA to dictate. Isn't taking a narcotic an inside issue? Don't they tell us what is okay and what is not? No! Sometimes that is still a hard concept for me to grasp.

I've come to see that everything in my life doesn't have to impact my recovery. If I am willing and choose to do the work, I can recover no matter what. I can stay clean regardless of what job I have, where I live, what diagnosis I have, and what medications I take (for me). No matter what. Since being clean impacts every part of my life, my recovery does still apply in all these areas. That's why I still seek guidance from a sponsor on how to best incorporate spiritual principles into daily living. Tradition 10 puts the ball in my court.

NA does tell me certain things for a fact. Some things they don't need to have an opinion on. They know it works. Which is: how to work the NA program, regardless of any of these things. Going to meetings, working with a sponsor, using spiritual principles, remaining accountable, and asking for other addicts' personal experiences. These things can keep me safe and have been shown to work no matter what else is going on. This is the idea I try to live by.

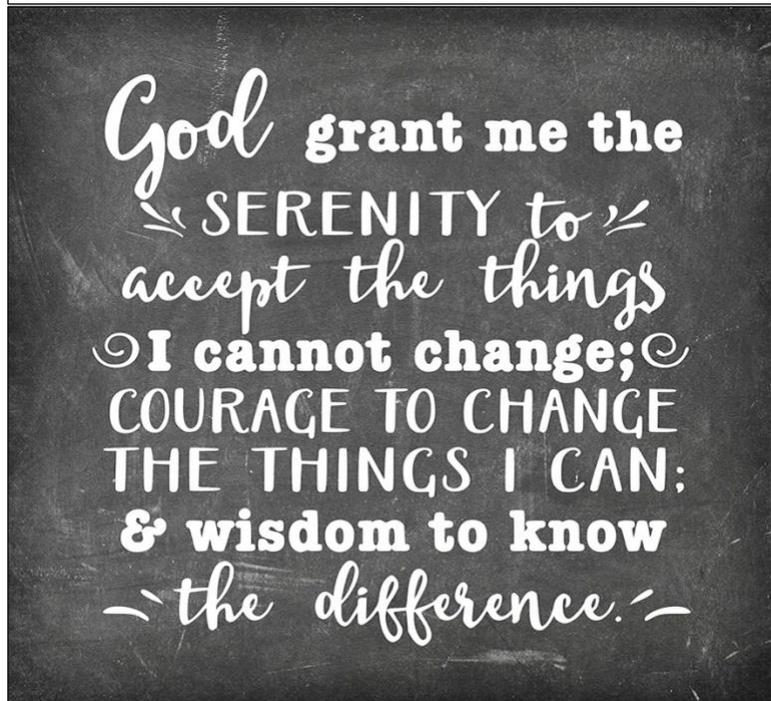
Tradition 10 doesn't tell me not to have opinions, or not to share them. On the contrary, NA strives to provide freedom to the recovering addict, and doesn't presume to tell me what to do. (Wouldn't having personal opinions be an outside issue, anyway?) What it tells me is that I do not speak for Narcotics Anonymous. It tells me, in my personal program, that I need to interact and share in a caring way, so that the message does not get misconstrued. Just by being a member of this fellowship, anything I say or do can reflect onto the fellowship. I don't speak for NA, but what I say can be taken as the stance of this fellowship. I attempt to stay away from opinions within the rooms at all costs.

I strive to remain mindful. I say “I” and “me” in meetings, and stick to what I do, not what anyone else should do. There are no ultimatums here (due to the 3rd Tradition, “...the only requirement for membership), and I can simply provide suggestions. There is no true black or white answer for any of this. We are all so different. Nobody can tell me whether I am clean or not in this program. NA doesn't attempt to tell me how to deal with things outside the scope of the 12 Steps, and their way of recovery. That's why I feel safe here. That's why this is my home. Enough addicts leave on their own accord; we don't need any help finding reasons to leave the rooms. Without the traditions, unity would be a distant idea.

Discord drives addicts away, the literature tells me this. When addicts leave, they die. Tradition 10 helps there be less differences, so I can better look for the similarities. I then can have a real shot at this thing. It keeps those outside of the program from having any ammo to use against the fellowship. We are the best chance we have.

Just for today, I can be loving, and contribute to the safety of NA for everyone in the rooms. Just for today, I can try to incorporate Tradition 10 into my dealings with others, and within my home group and service areas. Just for today, through the traditions, NA gives me the freedom to recover from the seemingly hopeless state of addiction. For that I am grateful.

Katie C.



None of us get to NA without a great deal of “life experience.” As we move into the service arena, those with great organizational skills may serve as secretaries or on an activities committee, while those who excel in accounting may become group, area, or regional treasurers. We may come to NA only with “street skills”; however, the longer we stay clean, the more we learn new things and begin to build a career. Therefore, our skills we develop over the years become instrumental to running the “business side” of Narcotics Anonymous.

Since we may come from completely different backgrounds and professions, as we work together in NA, we at times may offend others with our opinions or our actions. The 10th Concept offers us a solution to these perceived “offenses.”

How exactly, though, does the 10th Concept work? Once offended, it’s helpful to chat with our sponsor about the issue. Writing about it, sometimes doing a mini-tenth step that goes something like: “Dear God – these are my fears and resentments,” can help us clarify why we are hurt and allow us to vent on paper so we don’t end up exploding with anger.

Once we have some clarity on the issue that offended us, we can then ask that service body’s trusted servants for “redress.” What, exactly, is “redress?” According to Merriam-Webster dictionary, it is 1) “to set right: remedy.” 2. “to remove the cause of (a grievance or complaint); 3) to exact reparation for: avenge.”

I like focusing on the first definitions because we must bear in mind the Fellowship’s critical need for unity. Our actions can impact others, and even when we are wronged, if we set out to “avenge,” we are always headed down the path of disunity.

So, we have been offended. I will say in my more than 30 years of NA service, I’ve only asked for a 10th Concept once. This is not something we see done routinely in NA because often we work out our differences without this formality. Once we determine, however, that we need to ask for a 10th Concept, what should the process entail?

First, we make an oral or written appeal during open forum to that committee or its chair, or to the group at its business meeting, if possible. We don’t want to disrupt a regular NA meeting with our own personal grievances. Technically, the group is not a “service body” within the definition of a “service body,” but I’m sure the 10th Concept applies there, as well.

Next, we await their response. Here is the key element. The 10th Concept requires a dialogue between the person who petitions for redress and the chair and possibly the members of that committee.

If the chair does not engage in *dialogue* with the petitioner, and unilaterally decides, “This is the action I’ll take to fix the issue,” that leader strays from leadership to governance. Then we run afoul of the 2nd Tradition, which states, “Our leaders are but trusted servants; they do not govern.”

Dialogue is the key to resolving any conflicts in Narcotics Anonymous. In the words of one of our NA Arizona founders, “If it’s standing between you and another person, you have to talk to them about it.”

Welcome to a new way of life!

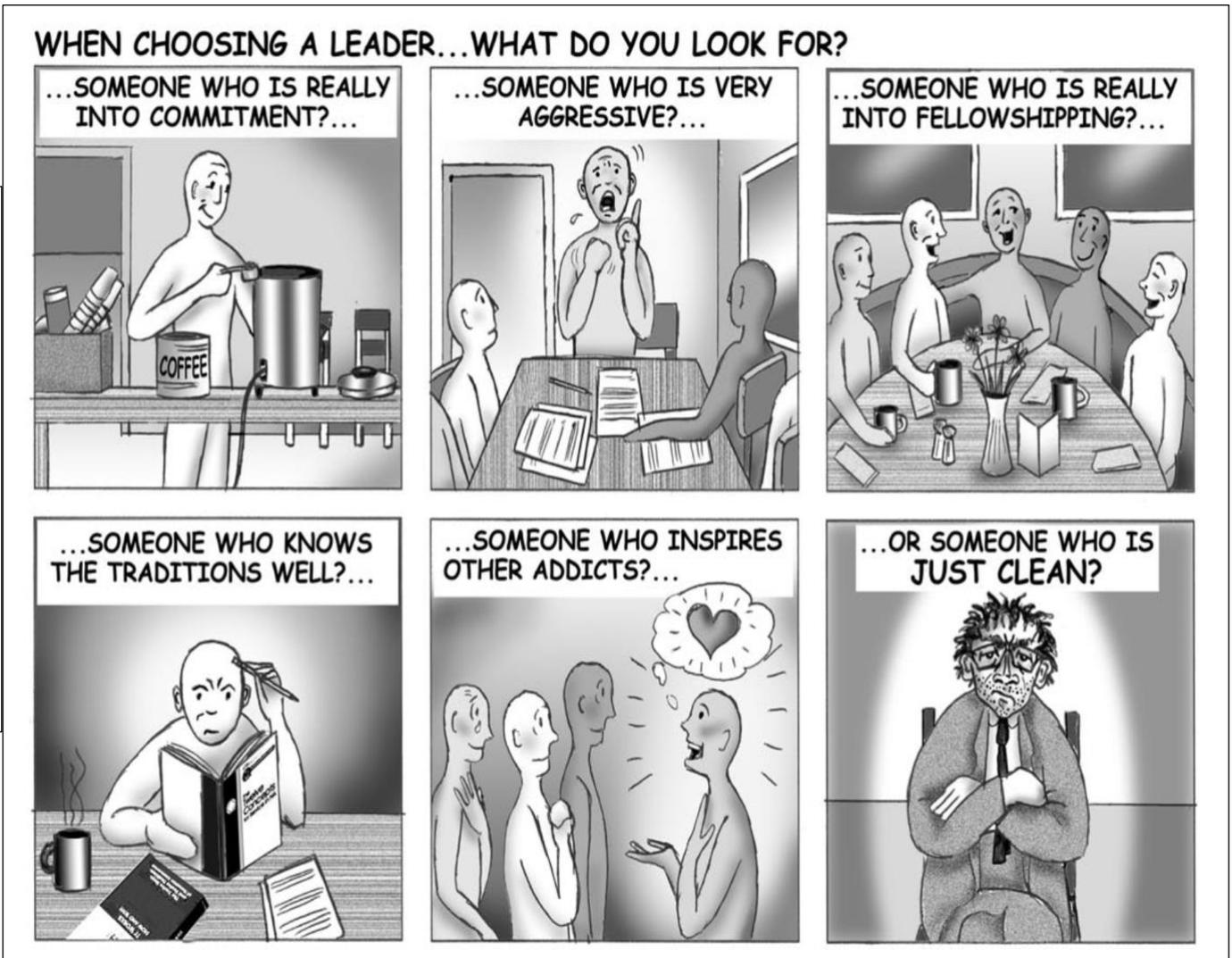


UPCOMING EVENTS

Check out *Arizona-NA.ORG* for more Details

<p>NYE Fall Fundraiser & Speaker Jam</p>	<p>5:00pm Saturday, October 14th</p>
<p>28th Annual Bluesfest</p>	<p>10:00am Saturday, October 22nd</p>
<p>EV Skyline Serenity Hike</p>	<p>10:30am Saturday, October 28th</p>

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(Volume 22 Number 1)



Sponsorship Behind the Walls

Sponsorship in Arizona for inmates is 100% voluntary and can begin with just a letter of willingness to participate. Once your message of interest has been received, your initial projects to be completed will be sent to you. After completion, a sponsor is then assigned to work with you as long as the communication remains open. Your Sponsor will send you an initial welcome letter letting you know who they are and how to further reach them with "Step Work" and other correspondence. This method of sponsorship is useful for those who are serving six months or longer than six months from their release date.

Where to mail your letter:

Arizona Region of Narcotics Anonymous – H&I
PO Box 1351
Phoenix, AZ 85001

While you wait to hear from us, search out your unit for existing NA meetings and begin attending. In the meantime, let us welcome you to Narcotics Anonymous, **Arizona Sponsorship behind the walls.**



A. Write to us about:

1. What did using cause you to lose or give up/away?
2. Where did you first hear about Narcotics Anonymous?
3. What have you gained from working a program of recovery?
4. If you are working with a sponsor:
 - a. Is he an inmate?
 - b. Someone from before?
 - c. Or from writing to "Sponsorship behind the walls"?
5. What keeps your interest in NA alive?
6. How long will you remain incarcerated before release and your concerns for that eventful day.

B. Guidelines for writing:

1. Keep your story concise and fit it on one page or less.
2. No need to over emphasize with cussing.
3. Please don't write with excessive details about the drugs or drug class which you used.

C. Once completed send your story to:

East Valley Prison Coordinator
PO Box 5264
Mesa, AZ, 85221



Inmates! Show your creativity

We would like to publish your artwork. **The NA Times** - Phoenix, West Valley, East Valley – is looking to involve the members of the fellowship **Behind the Walls**. Send your artwork and a piece of your recovery story to us for publication (Keep the artwork clean and recovery related).

Send to:

Narcotics Anonymous Prison Coordinator
PO Box 5264
Mesa, AZ 85221

29th Annual Blues Fest 2023

Fellowship
 Games
 Raffle
 Speaker Meeting
 10:00am

Bands All Day
 Karaoke
 Open Mic
 Food
 Drinks
 Music starts at Noon

Unity
 Through Fellowship
 8am - 5pm Sunday, Oct 22nd
 Rubin Romero Picnic Area,
 Kiwanis Park, Tempe

Second Stage Talent/Karaoke Signup Will L: 602-339-7659
 Chair: Walter J 480-294-9806 Food Chair: Wayne K 602-695-6679