



NACONNECTIONS

HAMILTON AREA SERVICE COMMITTEE OF NARCOTICS ANONYMOUS



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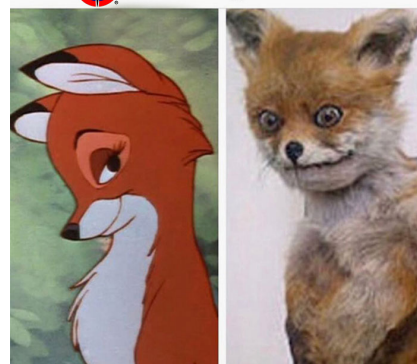
WELCOME TO CONNECTIONS!

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TO SUBMIT AN ARTICLE, EVENT OR CREATIVE PIECE, PLEASE EMAIL CONNECTIONSNA@GMAIL.COM

me in my profile pic vs. me in the zoom meeting



DID YOU KNOW?

Narcotics Anonymous holds more than 70,000 weekly meetings in 144 countries around the globe?

*Source: NA Membership Survey 2018



12 STEPS - HAIKU

SUBMITTED BY BETHANY L.

Step 1:

More than a problem,
I admit devastation;
A weakness that kills.

Step 2:

Hope is beyond me,
I look elsewhere for succor,
Hope shows me a path.

Step 3:

I welcome new light
And choose to follow the way
That leads to healing.

Step 4:

My actions caused pain,
But I cannot be afraid
To account for all.

Step 5:

I admit my loss
To begin my slow healing
My soul feels lighter

Step 6:

Looking upon them,
My faults cling closely to me
They need to depart

Step 7:

I dismiss my pride:
Though they were long part of me
My sins must wither.

Step 8:

More than just their names,
There must me a desire
To make my wrongs known.

Step 9:

Wisely I review
Those hurt by my base actions
And humbly voice them

Step 10:

My daily review:
Thoughts about my transgressions
Help me admit them.

Step 11:

I confer with God
Not asking for what I want
But what I can do.

Step 12:

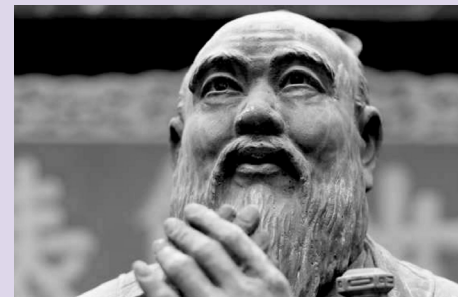
The sleep is over
I share songs of awareness
To keep myself whole

THINGS I'VE PICKED UP ALONG THE WAY

BY ANONYMOUS

- NA is a 12-step fellowship - Do the 12 steps.
- Honesty, Open-mindedness & Willingness are indispensable spiritual principles. Indispensable means necessary, necessary means required. It is required that I get honest, have an open mind and be willing to do the work and take suggestions.
- If you do the work, you get the results, if you don't do the work, you don't get the results.
- Integrity; learn what it means.
- We don't have to like everyone, but we need to love everyone.
- Be grateful for the people in your life, not resentful for the ones that aren't.
- How will I know if it is God's will? God's will aligns with spiritual principles.
- Fake it till you make it - Act on spiritual principles even if it is not natural for you in the moment.
- Remain teachable. I don't know, what I don't know.
- Do something different, you don't know if it will work or not, as you have never done it.
- NA can continue to go on without me, but I cannot live without NA.
- We love you until you love yourself, and part of your job is to pass it on.
- NA works all the time, 24/7, it takes no days off.
- Our message is hope, our promise is freedom.
- You are not weak, you are powerless.
- Where is your higher power in this?

"It does not matter how slowly you go as long as you do not stop."



QUOTE BY
CONFUCIUS



Her name was Bev

Taken from the NA WAY - Oct 2019 by Brian S, Ontario, Canada

I'm Brian and I'm an addict from Niagara Falls, Canada. I am grateful beyond words for the Fellowship of Narcotics Anonymous. One of the countless gifts I've received through NA is the relationship I've developed with the God of my understanding.

I believe my spiritual journey began when I started praying every day as a newcomer. Daily prayer was suggested by other NA members, and I was willing to do anything to stay clean, so I prayed. It felt robotic and empty at first, but over time those prayers started to feel more meaningful. When I had a few months clean, my Higher Power told me that I was on the right path by showing me spiritual "coincidences."

I had about six months clean and I was at a candlelight meeting. For some reason, at candlelight meetings addicts tend to "dump" all their problems on the table. At that point in my recovery, I was not interested in your problems; I wanted to hear solutions! I thought to myself, "Take up your problems with your sponsor!" I was like a grumpy oldtimer with six months clean!

Inevitably, a man started sharing about something depressing. I was so irritated that I was about to get up and go outside for a smoke, but just before I got up to leave, he started sharing about a woman named Bev, a member of the Fellowship who had recently passed away. I thought to myself, "Bev? Who's Bev?"

Then it hit me. I had met Bev once. We had a conversation about the importance of sitting through a meeting until the very end, and not getting up and leaving early. I recalled our conversation as I was about to get up and leave! It was as if Bev was saying to me, "Sit down. You're gonna listen to this guy share. You're not gonna leave until the meeting's over." For me, that was my first awe-inspiring spiritual experience.

My one-year medallion was another spiritually enlightening experience for me. It was an extremely fulfilling celebration of NA working in my life. My blood family and my NA family were meeting and mingling for the first time. Somebody had just happened to donate a fancy one-year medallion to my home group, so I didn't even have to buy one.

Everything fell into place. The meeting was going well. There were tears and laughs, and the speaker rocked! And then my sponsor got up to present me with my medallion. He said, "Brian, this medallion was donated by a very special woman who's no longer with us. Her name was Bev."

**Picture submitted
and approved by Bev's
loving daughter Daylin.*



SURRENDER

Submitted by Anonymous - Author Unknown

Enlightenment and the freedom it brings are always imminent but our very efforts to catch hold of what we are seeking may prevent us from discovering what is already there.

There is the image of the man who imagines himself to be a prisoner in a cell. He stands at one end of this small, dark, barren room, on his toes, with arms stretched upward, hands grasping for support onto a small, barred window, the room's only apparent source of light. If he holds on tight, straining toward the window, turning his head just so, he can see a bit of bright

sunlight barely visible between the uppermost bars. This light is his only hope. He will not risk losing it. And so he continues to strain toward that bit of light, holding tightly to the bars.

So committed is his effort not to lose sight of that glimmer of life-giving light, that it never occurs to him to let go and explore the darkness of the rest of the cell.

So it is that he never discovers that the door at the other end of the cell is open, that he is free. He has always been free to walk out into the brightness of the day, if only he would let go.



WORD SEARCH

SUBMITTED BY JESSICA C.

SPIRITUAL PRINCIPLES

P	W	H	D	O	F	L	S	H	O	D	V	W	Z	L	E	T	R	X	R
H	G	W	I	L	L	I	N	G	N	E	S	S	H	P	I	H	D	W	G
N	U	O	P	G	D	R	J	H	W	Z	B	G	U	H	L	R	B	A	D
C	K	N	P	A	W	D	O	I	N	D	I	H	M	A	C	A	R	G	K
Y	O	Z	C	E	C	K	Z	R	C	C	M	W	I	X	D	Z	E	C	B
E	J	U	C	O	N	C	P	I	A	Q	J	H	L	J	I	N	U	O	B
N	F	S	R	S	N	M	E	R	V	Q	I	I	I	P	S	A	Q	M	E
H	Z	A	J	A	F	D	I	P	P	I	X	K	T	A	C	I	R	P	C
F	Z	T	I	O	G	I	I	N	T	N	K	Z	Y	T	E	C	O	A	I
F	O	I	G	T	P	E	X	T	D	A	E	P	X	I	R	M	N	S	G
R	Z	R	N	N	H	K	R	H	I	E	N	U	S	E	N	F	S	S	B
O	X	D	G	T	T	C	G	K	N	O	D	C	X	N	M	D	Y	I	W
E	D	Q	T	I	E	H	M	M	E	G	N	N	E	C	E	F	O	O	P
I	I	O	F	R	V	G	O	R	V	G	O	A	E	E	N	P	E	N	D
I	Q	V	A	M	U	E	R	N	E	U	O	H	L	S	T	F	W	H	C
V	X	M	L	G	S	S	N	I	E	O	J	O	S	L	S	V	P	K	A
W	O	P	Z	J	L	R	T	E	T	S	Y	P	O	H	O	O	N	T	X
X	I	Y	C	X	Z	I	R	Z	S	Y	T	E	A	W	C	V	O	Z	T
M	R	N	X	F	C	J	M	I	W	S	X	Y	Q	P	G	G	E	L	F
C	C	Z	W	D	N	C	O	M	A	F	X	I	X	Y	I	L	Q	O	N

UNCONDITIONAL LOVE
 FORGIVENESS
 INTEGRITY
 HONESTY
 WILLINGNESS

OPENMINDEDNESS
 COMPASSION
 COURAGE
 TRUST
 PATIENCE

DISCERNMENT
 ACCEPTANCE
 HUMILITY
 HOPE
 FAITH



ANGRY

RELIEVE STRESS AND GROUND YOURSELF WITH A PALM PUSH

By pushing your palms together and holding for 5 to 10 seconds, you give your body “proprioceptive input,” according to Brukner, which “lets your body know where it is in space.” I like this one because it reminds me of tree position in yoga, which is the last of the standing series postures in Bikram yoga. The palm push is like a mini, portable tree position I can pull out anytime to calm down

LONELY

STAY IN TOUCH WITH OTHERS “NO MATTER WHAT”

- Online Meetings: Feeling too nervous to attend in-person meetings? There is still a local Hamilton Area Narcotics Anonymous meeting online every Thursday evening from 7pm-8pm (see info below)
- Send a handwritten letter or postcard (old school!)
- Call people’s numbers you collect at meetings. Don’t give up until you get a hold of someone, and keep adding to your list of contacts
- Place calls using video chat services such as Facetime, Zoom or Houseparty
- Post on social media and respond to other’s posts
- Start a group chat to check in with homegroup members using any social media platform you are comfortable with.

TIRED

CREATE A CALM AND RESTFUL ENVIRONMENT

Create a room that’s ideal for sleeping. Often, this means cool, dark and quiet. Exposure to light might make it more challenging to fall asleep. Avoid prolonged use of light-emitting screens just before bedtime. Consider using room-darkening shades, earplugs, a fan or other devices to create an environment that suits your needs.

HALT SOLUTIONS
continued

**Hamilton Area of NA
Online Meeting:**

Hope not Dope

Thursdays: 7pm–8pm

Zoom ID: 850 502 399

password: jimmyk



BEING A NEWCOMER DURING A GLOBAL PANDEMIC

MARIO R. - MISSISSAUGA ONTARIO

My journey started on April 20th, 2020. When I called NA, the last thing on my mind was staying clean. After trying to stop using on my own several times, I could not do it anymore. I was about to lose my family, my job and for sure, my life.

I did not know anything about the program and my first question for the person on the other end of the call was: "Do you have or offer any counselling?" He asked me, "What are you willing to do for your recovery?" I said, "I will do anything that could help me". Then he shared his experience with me, gave me his phone number, and told me that I could call him anytime. Then he invited me to an online meeting that night.

From that moment, I did not feel alone anymore. There was something different. He was dedicated to helping me for the rest of the day until the meeting, and when I joined the meeting with him, seeing other addicts and hearing what they were sharing made me believe that there was a chance for me. I knew that there was a way out. I heard and felt the NA message for the first time. They were very happy to see me and they made me feel safe. I felt like I was welcomed into a big, warm family. That was the last day of my active addiction.

At first, I did not understand many things. I was confused, and my mind was all over the place. I described my emotions like I was on a roller coaster. I struggled at the first few online meetings, but when some members offered me their phone numbers, it helped. I never thought reaching out to other addicts would be so powerful. I knew that I was no longer alone.

Today, I am incredibly happy and grateful for the NA program and the online meetings. I have been able to "attend" a meeting every day, reach out, and do step work. I have an NA sponsor. He was the person who answered the NA helpline when I called. I cannot wait to go to an in-person meeting because when I got that message that day it was amazing. NA truly gave me the key and the tools to guide me in my recovery and start a new life. Now I can see that it works. **We do recover!**

RECOVERY JOKES

a laughing matter

You know you're in NA if:

- Emails from your friends say **HALT** or **MINUTES** in the subject line.
- Your idea of a smooth opening line is "**I really like what you shared.**"
- You don't know most of your friends last names.



Staying clean, even when I want to use.

Submitted by: Anonymous

At the start of my recovery, the desire to use was very strong, and I prayed for the day I wouldn't think about using. I'd reach out constantly, and pray all the time because that's all I knew how to do to get rid of the cravings. As time went on, and I started doing the work, the desire lessened. I started focusing on what I was doing for my recovery and less on using. I still had the thought of using, it didn't just go away as I started doing the work, but it didn't consume me like it did at the start of my recovery. I gained tools to cope with the feeling of wanting to get high that I still use today:

1. **Pray:** I stop dead in my tracks and ask higher power to help me. I usually say something like "hp I'm struggling right now and could use some help because I really don't want to use but that's all I can think of"
2. **Reach out:** I call 3 people and my sponsor. If they don't answer I send a text or leave a voicemail asking they call me back.
3. **Turn to the literature:** I start from the beginning, our symbol, because that grounds me and reminds me what our program is about. I generally read until the desire has passed, or until one of the people I've reached out to gets back to me.
4. **Stepwork:** Writing stepwork reminds me of where I want to be today, and of the reality of my disease. I find comfort usually knowing that I'm not where I was and that I'm growing in my recovery each day
5. **Reach out to see how someone else is doing.** This is something I need to do more. Generally I'll reach out to GET support but sometimes I'll reach out just to see how someone else is doing and get out of myself. It helps me to see that I'm not the most important person and that I can help someone else out even when I'm not having the greatest time myself.
6. **Journal:** Sometimes what I need most is to just get all my thoughts out and leave them on paper. It clears my mind. Usually if I start off the entry with "I really want to use right now" I find by the end the obsession is gone and I remember how horrible it got out there.

There are times, however where I choose to sit in my sh*t, and let me tell you, it causes a lot more heartache than doing the above things does. I sometimes make the decision to sit in it and stew, which isn't helpful to my recovery. But at the end of the day, I'm human and will make mistakes.

Staying clean during COVID-19 has been something all of us can probably agree, is new and unfamiliar. It was scary when meetings started closing for me at 5 months clean, and feelings of fear started to overwhelm me. I was ecstatic when online meetings started opening up and I was able to get to as many meetings as possible at any time I needed. I found it so cool to be able to travel from my couch and hear all the experience, strength and hope of other members. I found I started digging my feet into the program as best as I could, working more on stepwork, making as many meetings as I could, reaching out more, attending my sponsorship family get-togethers online, praying more, and staying clean regardless of setbacks in behaviour. It was exactly what I needed.

I was just about 6 months clean and doing all these wonderful things I'd been given the opportunity to do during this time when I had a tragedy hit when a family member passed away. It left me with a strong, constant, desire to use. I was filled with overwhelming sadness, and deep rooted anger... which meant I was feeling many different emotions at once, which was new to me. So what do you do in these times? Death is something I'm not used to staying clean through. So I did what I knew to do, reached out and spoke about my feelings... felt them, and continued to talk about it... and most importantly I didn't pick up, even though I wanted to.

Lack of in person meetings has been difficult, but I am so grateful that we addicts are resilient and there are thousands of meetings a week I can get to. I'm grateful I have addicts on the other end of the phone to reach out to. I'm grateful for the promise of freedom that Narcotics Anonymous gives me today.

We never need to be alone in this time, and that's a HUGE gift.

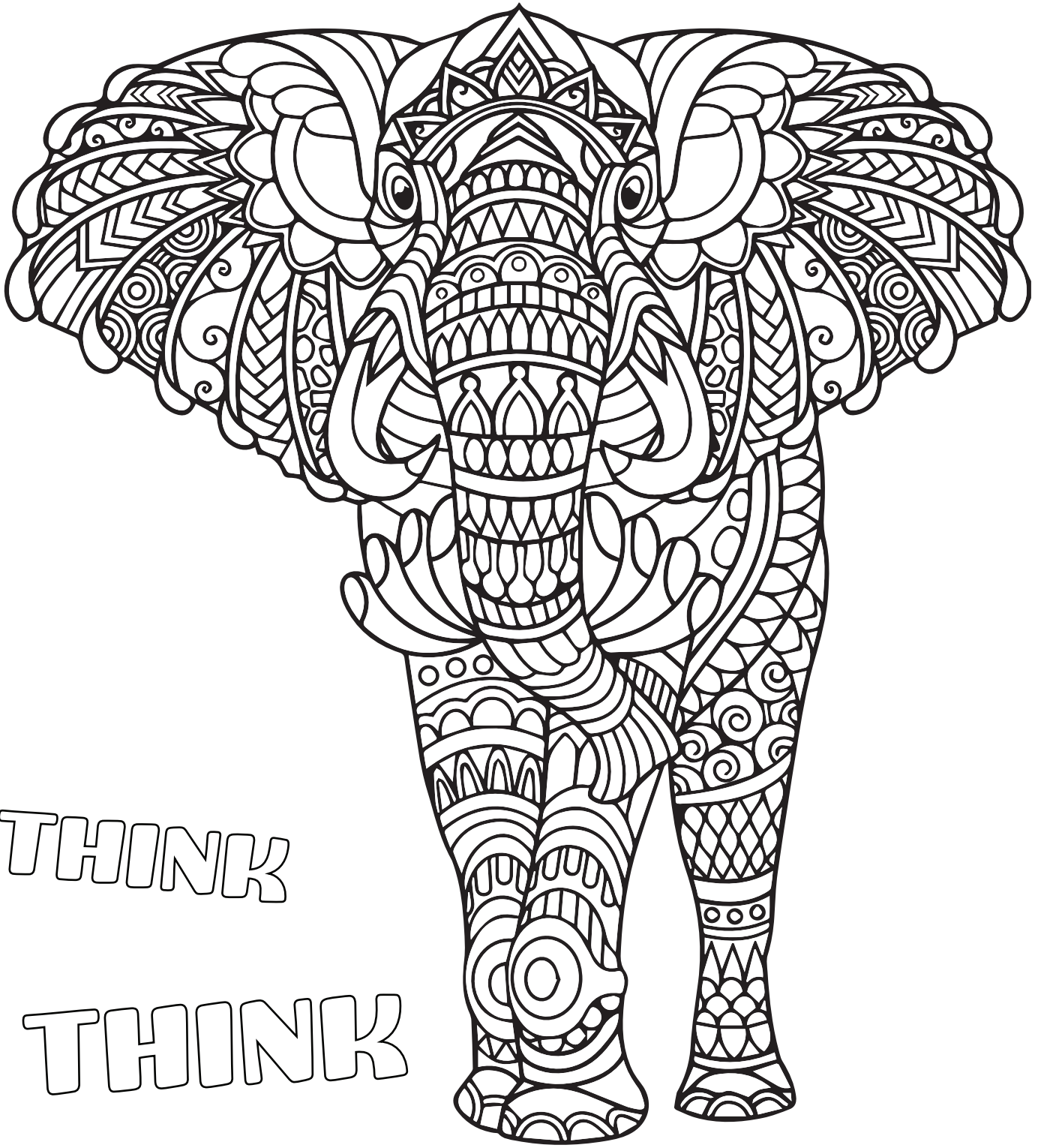
Cockiness
is a



RED
LIGHT
INDICATOR

KEEP
COMING
BACK





THINK

THINK

THINK

DON'T QUIT
BEFORE THE
MIRACLE
HAPPENS

