

NARCOTICS ANONYMOUS NEWSLETTER IN HAMILTON AREA

OCTOBER 2023 ISSUE



<https://nahamilton.org>



Welcome to the Narcotics Anonymous newsletter of the Hamilton Ontario area! We are part of a global organization dedicated to helping those affected by substance abuse and addiction. We offer support through our meetings, group activities, and events. Our aim is to provide a safe and supportive environment where members can share their experiences, strength and hope, while learning from each other. We also provide resources and information to those seeking help. Our members come from all walks of life and have all kinds of backgrounds and experiences. We believe that no matter how long someone has been using, they can find relief from addiction. We offer a wide range of activities to help our members feel supported and empowered. This includes organized meetings, group activities, and events such as movie nights, game nights, and recreational activities. We also have a volunteer program to help our members pursue their goals. Our newsletter contains updates on our activities, upcoming events, and other helpful resources. We strive to provide our members with the support and resources they need to get, and stay clean. We hope you will join us in our mission to provide support and resources to those affected by substance abuse and addiction. Thanks for joining us!



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WHO WE ARE

A member of Narcotics Anonymous (NA). Membership is not limited to addicts using any particular drug. Those who feel that they may have a problem with drugs, legal or illegal, including alcohol, are welcome in NA. Recovery in NA focuses on the problem of addiction, and not on any particular drug.

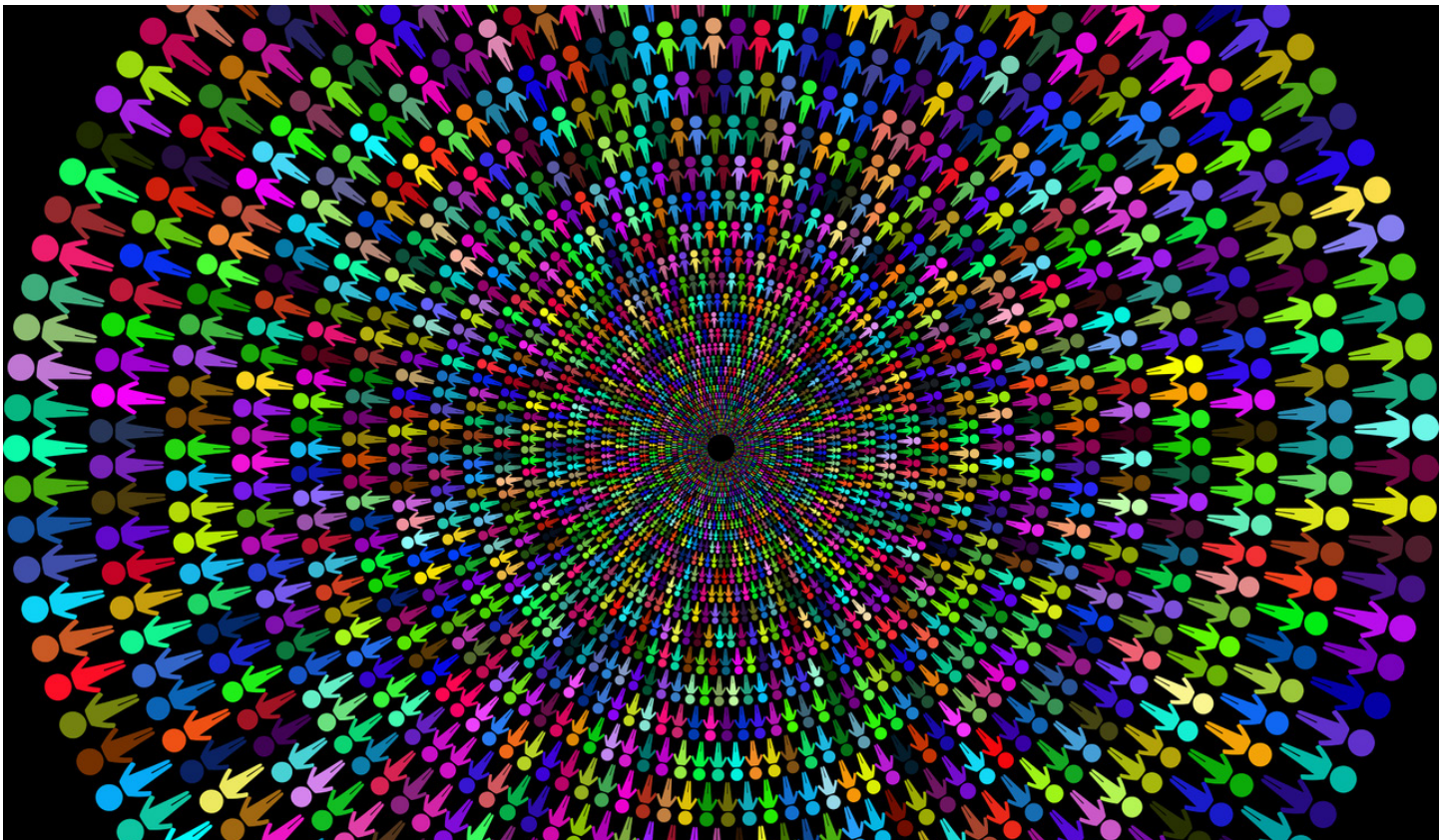
WHAT WE ARE

Narcotics Anonymous is a nonprofit fellowship or society of humans for whom drugs had become a major problem. We are recovering addicts who meet regularly to help each other stay clean.



WHERE WE ARE

Most NA meetings are held regularly at the same location. There are two basic types of meetings; those that are open to the public and those that are closed to the public (for addicts only.) NA meetings are informally structured. The function of any meeting is always the same. To provide a suitable and reliable environment for personal recovery.





FOR THE NEWCOMER

You don't have to be clean (drug free) when you get here, but after your first meeting we suggest that you keep coming back and come clean. You don't have to wait for an overdose or a jail sentence to get help from N.A., nor is addiction a hopeless condition from which there is no relief from the desire to use drugs.

WHAT IS OUR MESSAGE

What is our message? The message is that an addict, any addict, can stop using drugs, lose the desire to use, and find a new way to live. Our message is hope and the promise of freedom. When all is said and done, our primary purpose can only be to carry the message to the addict who still suffers because that is all we have to give.



AN ADDICT ALONE IS IN BAD COMPANY

Having difficulty dealing with reality? Call someone in NA. Ask people at meetings to write their name and phone number on a piece of paper or add it to your contact list on your cell phone, so you'll have an alternative to being in your own bad company.





MEETING FORMAT LEGEND

B: Beginners	BK: Book Study
BT: Basic Text	C: Closed
D: Discussion	JT: Just for Today
LC: Living Clean	O: Open
QA: Question and Answers	So: Speaking only
VM: Virtual Meeting	WC: Wheelchair

HELPLINES

English	(888) 811-3887
French	(800) 385-7247
Farsi	(888) 377-7881

SERVICE MEETINGS

Hamilton Area Service Committee: It's on the 3rd Saturday of each month at 170 Dundurn Street South at 10:00 am



Date and Time	Name of NA Group Meeting	Address	Meeting Format Legend
Sunday: 9:30am (1 hr)	Gage Park Group	Gage Park Hamilton ON, L8M 1N6	O
Sunday: 7:00pm (1½ hr)	Courage to Change	170 Dundurn Street First Unitarian Street South Hamilton ON, L8P 4K3	O, D, JT, WC, BK
Sunday: 7:30pm (1½ hr)	Clean and Free Group	1831 King Street East Hamilton ON, L8K 1V8 (Anglican Church of the Nativity at Barons)	O, BT, So, WC
Monday: 7:00pm (1½ hr)	An intro to Narcotics Anonymous. (This meeting is designed for peopple who are new to NA so you can get your questions answered and find the help you need)	(Virtual Meeting)	B, QA, VM
Monday: 7:30pm (1½ hr)	H.O.W. Group	100 West 5th Street Hamilton ON, L9C 3R2 - Enter off Fennell outside the auditorium (Saint Joseph's Healthcare, Enter off Fennell Ave, through lobby to Seminar Room A217)	C, D, WC, BK
Tuesday: 7:00pm (1.25 hr)	Mountain Freedom Group	1300 Fennell Avenue East Hamilton ON, L8T 1T6 (Bus: Upper Kenilworth to Fennell)	O, D, WC, BK
Wednesday: 7:00pm (1½ hr)	New Beginnings Group	1 King Street Stoney Creek ON, L8G 1G7 (Stoney Creek United Church)	O, D, JT, LC



Date and Time	Name of NA Group Meeting	Address	Meeting Format Legend
Thursday: 7:00pm (1½ hr)	Hope Group	166 Charlton Avenue West Hamilton ON, L8P 2C8 (Central Presbyterian Church, moved to virtual Meeting via Zoom)	O, BT, D, VM (password: <u>Recovery</u>)
Thursday: 7:00pm (1 hr)	River Edge Group	174 Caithness Street East Caledonia ON, N3W 1C2 (Grace United Church, Fellowship room.)	WC, BK
Thursday: 7:00pm (1.25 hr)	Strong Hold Recovery	720 Ninth Avenue Hamilton ON, L8T 2A3 (Trinity Presbyterian Church)	O
Friday: 5:30pm (1½ hr)	Friday Night Group	70 James Street South Hamilton ON, L8P 2Y8 (Saint Paul's Presbyterian Church)	C, BT, D
Saturday: 1:30pm (1½ hr)	Learn to Live Group	115 Stanley Avenue Hamilton ON, L8P 2L5 (Blessings Christian Church, Corner of Locke and Stanley. Parking is off Stanley)	O, BT, D



Just for today Reading (Taken from JFT reading)

Ask for mercy, not justice

“Many of us have difficulty admitting that we caused harm for others... We cut away our justifications and our ideas of being a victim.

Basic Text, p. 38



Our lives are progressing nicely. Things are going good, and each year in recovery brings more material and spiritual gifts. We may have a little money in the bank, a new car, or a committed relationship. We have a little self-confidence, and our faith in a Higher Power is growing.

Then, something happens. Someone breaks into our new car and steals the stereo, or the person we're in the relationship with becomes unfaithful. Right away, we feel victimized. “Where's the justice?” we wail. But if we take a look back on our own behavior, we may find that we've been guilty of doing what's just been done to us. We realize we wouldn't really want justice—not for ourselves, and not for others. What we want is mercy.

We thank a loving God for the compassion we've been shown, and we take the time to appreciate all the precious gifts that recovery brings. inviting place to live.

Just for today: I will pray for mercy, not justice. I am grateful for the compassion I've been shown, and will offer mercy to others.



T's Story Heaven and Hell

Hell

A little about my past: I started using drugs when I was quite young. It started off as partying here and there to full blown dependency quite quickly. Little did I know I was an addict. I just thought I was having a good time, and that good time would slow down as I got older. As the

years progressed so did my usage. I went from smoking cannabis to much harder narcotics. One doesn't realize how the years go by when they are using daily. Turns out almost 25 years flew by, and when looking back, I almost used every single day.

Which leads me to the start of my recovery. By this point I was smoking hard narcotics, but



something was different this time. All of a sudden, I started seeing smoke, every time I used. That eventually started to become flames everywhere I looked. As I would get higher the flames rose and became stronger! I realized I was suffering from psychosis. So, I thought I could manage this side-effect by only smoking a specific amount to where I hardly saw anything, and try to maintain that every time. This did not work. Maintaining this was not possible. My body's tolerance would eventually get less and less, to the point that no matter what I used I was seeing things on fire, every time I was high!

It felt as if I was in hell every time.

Even with this intense psychosis, my physical addiction still possessed me and my insanity kept me smoking. I didn't know

what to do, I so very badly wanted to quit. So, I started praying. After three days of praying, but still using, I decided that I needed to start using at work. I designed a "kit" to bring to work, and then something came over me and almost felt like it forced my hand to call my Union and tell them I had a problem. It seems that I finally surrendered.

I was accepted to a treatment centre, but first had to go to detox.

Heaven

The requirement for rehab was seven days clean. I did not think I could do it on my own, and was told that the best way to accomplish this was to go to detox. Initially, it was tough, but necessary if I wanted to achieve sobriety. Being in detox was a



“wakeup call” for me. I realized that my city truly had a drug problem. It saddened me, but also made me want my recovery that much more! After seven long days, I left detox and was on my way to the treatment centre.

The structure of the rehab had three groups and was a three week program. The groups were Juniors (week 1), Intermediates (week 2) and finally Seniors (week 3). To enter, the final process was a clean urine test before anything started. Due to this test my group went from ten to five people. I studied very hard for this test.

Starting as a Junior I was amped up and confident. I felt I truly wanted and needed recovery. But, as the days progressed into the Intermediate week I was starting to lose hope. Separating myself from the others, falling asleep in

classes and not paying attention. I stopped taking it seriously.

The Thursday before the Seniors commenced the Intermediates would have to say a speech to the seniors and vice versa. When it was time for the Seniors to speak there is a tradition of passing a torch. This torch wasn't an actual torch, but made of a paper base and paper flames cut out with each individual's name on it that it was passed down to. To “qualify” in receiving this torch, one should have shown the most growth and progress in the Intermediate's group. An older, wiser gentleman by the name of Jim was going to pass it down to one of us.

Out of the five members of our group, I was the last at the end of the table. As he approached us he started his speech. He was comparing us to the Little Rascals



starting with the first person in our group. I truly believed that person was going to get the torch, because out of all of us he definitely showed the most growth. He was so shy and quiet when he first started. Jim called him Froggy. But, all he said were a few nice things and then moved on to the next person. As he went through the group: Alfalfa, Spanky, then finally, Darla. She is a great person, a very strong female, and I thought for sure, it had to be hers. I was wrong.

He then approached me and said, “The little rascals are all playing in the treehouse except for you. You’re too big, you just don’t fit in. So this belongs to you.” As he handed me the torch, I was dumbfounded. I didn’t understand. By that point I wanted to leave the rehabilitation centre. How did I show the most growth?

After the gathering I asked Jim why he chose me? He said he didn’t remember anything. He just got up and winged it.

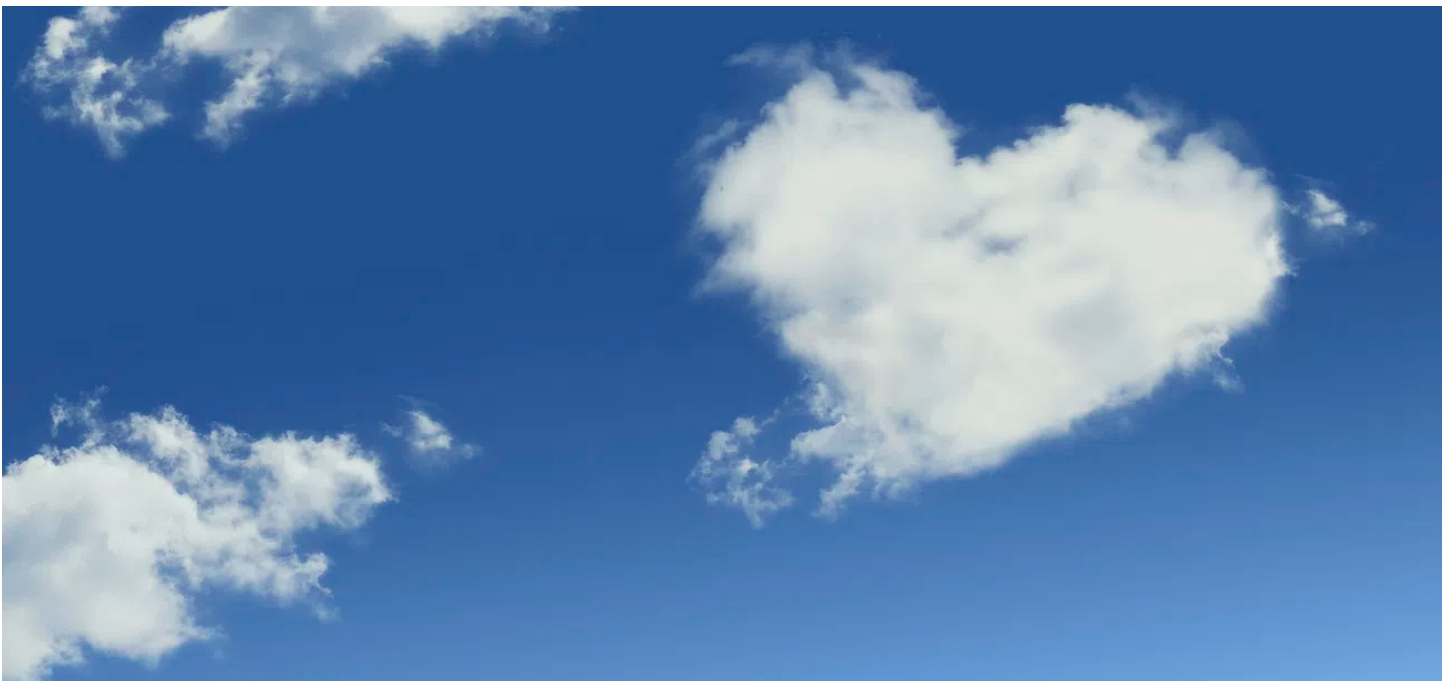
Confused, I went outside for a smoke and saw a friend that’s young but wise beyond his years, and talked to him about what happened. He laughed and said, “You still can’t see it? God telling you this is your chance? Everyone has noticed you’ve given up. This is God giving you that push forward.”

Then all of a sudden a wave rushed through me as if all my stress, guilt, and pressure was released. I finally truly surrendered and cried on his shoulder. It felt so freeing, being able to forgive myself for the things I have done. Such an immense calm shrouded my body and soul.



From that moment on, everything clicked. It was as if my life was realigned once again. Paying attention to the counselors was easy and I was interested in everything they were teaching me about my addiction. Praying and meditation became meaningful and gratitude was pouring out of my soul. I was so grateful for everything.

Finally, my sobriety meant everything to me.





Matthew's Story

I was a drug addict who had been using for years. I was in a constant cycle of trying to get more drugs and making sure I had enough money to buy them. I've spent my life chasing my next high, ignoring the consequences from my drug use. I've been dabbling in and out of sobriety since high school, when I had first started using drugs. I thought I had it all under control. I've done my best to

hide my addiction from the world, and thought that it would never escalate to anything more than a few recreational activities every now and then.

But as I moved into adulthood, so did my addiction to drugs. I started using more and more, and my habit became increasingly expensive and dangerous. One day, I hit rock bottom and realized the cycle I was in. I was completely



and utterly hopeless and broken. I knew that I needed help and the only place left to turn was rehab.

At rehab, I slowly learned how to cope with my addiction. I was surrounded by others who had been in the same situation as me, and I was able to draw strength from them.

The rehab counsellors also encouraged me to attend Narcotics Anonymous meetings. At these meetings, I was able to get help from like-minded people in recovery. I talked about my struggles and successes with my peers in the group, and it was inspiring to see other people beating the odds and staying sober.

Over time, I learned how to

have a sober life and began to take control of my addiction. Eventually I got a job and rented an apartment, which helped me to further stay away from drugs.

I am now living a healthy and sober life and I credit my success to the time I spent in both rehab and Narcotics Anonymous. I am very grateful for the help and support I got from these programs and feels like I now have the tools to remain sober.



SUBMIT A STORY



Do you have a special story, experience, or moment that you would like to share? Whether it is a funny or a touching moment, we want to hear your story! We are always looking for great stories that we can share with the world. If you would like to share your story, simply email it to newsletter@nahamilton.org. Be sure to include only your first name and a brief description of your story. We are excited to hear your story and are looking forward to hearing from you!



COME AND JOIN US FOR A FUN AND SPOOKTACULAR

OCT 29TH
170
DUNDURN
ST

HALLOWEEN DANCE

POT
LUCK
STYLE

COURAGE TO CHANGE
GROUP
MEETING WILL BEGIN
AT 7:00 & THE
DANCE TO FOLLOW

SS AT THE
DOOR.

A vibrant Halloween-themed illustration on a dark orange background. It features a large, glowing jack-o'-lantern in the center with the words 'HALLOWEEN DANCE' written across it. Surrounding the pumpkin are various spooky elements: a black bat with wings spread, a white ghost with a sad face, a white ghost with a neutral expression, a black cat, a mummy, a black cat, a tombstone with a cross, a scythe, and a jack-o'-lantern with a skull-like face. There are also several small, cartoonish eyes and spiders scattered throughout the scene.



Service Work

- Are you interested in doing service work? Get involved with the Activities Committee. No clean time requirements. Please send an e-mail to activities@nahamilton.org to get involved.
- Do you have bookkeeping experience? Get involved in the service! You must have 3 years or longer clean time to qualify. The HASCNA committee is in need of a Treasurer. For more information, please attend the next HASC meeting or contact Brenda V, at secretary@nahamilton.org





NA Quote

“Do we really want to be rid of our resentments, our anger, our fear? Many of us cling to our fears, doubts, self-loathing or hatred because there is a certain distorted security in familiar pain. It seems safer to embrace what we know than to let go of it for fear of the unknown.”

(Narcotics Anonymous Book/page 33)



Thank you so much for taking the time to read the Narcotics Anonymous of Hamilton Newsletter. Narcotics Anonymous is a fellowship of individuals who share their experience, strength, and hope with each other that they may solve their common problems and help others to recover from their addiction to drugs and alcohol. We offer a safe, supportive, and non-judgmental environment for members to work together to overcome their addiction and lead productive, healthy, and meaningful lives. The Narcotics Anonymous of Hamilton newsletter is designed to keep members and the community informed on what we are doing, upcoming events, and news from our group. Our newsletter also contains stories of recovery and hope that inspire and motivate members. We hope that you have gained insight and inspiration from reading this newsletter and that it has helped you to better understand the work that we do and the lives that we touch in our community. Thank you again for your interest and support of Narcotics Anonymous and our Hamilton group.

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