

HAMILTON AREA NARCOTICS ANONYMOUS NEWSLETTER

MARCH 2025



<http://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!

TABLE OF CONTENTS

A message of Hope & Recovery.....	Page 4
- Personal recovery story	
- Inspirational quotes	
- A “step of the month” focus	
NA Program Education.....	Page 9
- Explanation of NA principles, steps, traditions, and service work)	
- Frequently asked questions about recovery and sponsorship	
- Clarification on misconceptions about NA	
Meeting & Event updates.....	Page 12
- Local meeting schedules	
- Announcements for conventions, or workshops	
- Service opportunities and how to get involved	
Member Contributions.....	Page 14
- Poetry, artwork, or creative expressions related to recovery	
Service & Outreach Information.....	Page 15
- Updates from NA Hamilton Area committees (HIPR and HASC)	
- Ways members can help newcomers or give back to the fellowship	
Celebrating Milestones.....	Page 16
- Announcements of clean-time anniversaries (member consent)	
Resources & Contact Information.....	Page 17
- Helpline numbers and website links	
- Contact info for local service committees	
- Just for Today	

A Message of Hope & Recovery



In this part of the newsletter we offer you a message of experience, strength and hope from one of our members (keeping anonymity). We also offer a few inspirational quotes, and we include a brief explanation of a step a month. There are 12 steps. So, step numbers will relate to the month of the year. We believe you may find similarities and hope within our members' stories, build courage and confidence within the quotes, and learn about the importance of the 12 Steps through our brief explanation of them.



Finding Light in the Darkness

Hi family, I am an addict.

There is an inherent emptiness to life that I filled with drugs. Now that I don't have drugs, I have to learn to deal with that emptiness without chemical help. I guess that's part of what we call 'living life on life's terms.' Since coming to the program, I've found some relief from this ennui through prayer, surrender to my higher power, and step work, but it seems that at every opportunity, that emptiness tries to creep back in.

I've suffered from anxiety and depression from a young age, probably since I was 11 or 12. It's a common story in NA, but I always felt different, like I didn't fit in. Sometimes I felt like I was better than others, and other times like I was worse, but always apart. I realize, as I write about this, that those feelings didn't go away with drug use; it only numbed me to them. My circle became very small, and I isolated at home, had trouble holding a job, and avoided any and all responsibilities. When I got to see my son, I was always high and didn't really spend the limited time I had with him productively. I would just use drugs and play video games, setting him to watch Spider-Man in the living room or bringing him over to my parents despite the fact that I only got to see him every other weekend.

When the pandemic hit, I was almost grateful. Everyone else was isolating at home just like I did, so I had an excuse to avoid being social. But things started to change with my son's mother. Her disease of addiction started progressing much more rapidly, and I began to see signs of neglect. My son would come to my house hungry and dirty. He said his mom slept all the time and disappeared from the house for hours on end at strange times of day and night. She would associate with strange people. I eventually convinced her that he should move in with my wife and me.

Suddenly, I was given another chance to spend time with my son. I was still using, but I made a better effort to get to know my boy and tried my best to help with his schooling and getting used to his life here in Hamilton.

Less than a year after he moved in with us, she passed away from her addiction, and he's still struggling to put back the pieces of his life.

I needed to show him a better way of life. My wife deserved that too. I went to NA and got clean.

But even now, I struggle with the desire to use. I have an amazing sponsor, and I've met some really good friends in the program, but every day I deal with that emptiness that tries to fill me up. It's not always easy, but it's always worth it.

Because I am clean, I've been able to connect better with friends and family. My relationship with my son has improved, and I've been able to be there for him in ways I couldn't before. My wife and I have also improved our relationship and communication. I feel I'm better able to fulfill my responsibilities, and I'm a better husband. I've been able to be there for my mom as well, who is very sick.

These are all gifts of recovery.

All I need to do is just keep coming back, take it one day at a time, work on my steps with my sponsor, and give back to the program when and how I can.

Thanks for listening, and happy 24.

- *Anonymous*



Inspirational NA Quotes

“One of the first things we learn in Narcotics Anonymous is that if we use, we lose. By the same token, we won't experience as much pain if we can avoid the things that cause us pain. Continuing to take personal inventory means that we form a habit of looking at ourselves, our actions, attitudes and relationships on a regular basis.”

- *Basic text, How it works*

“We have heard the phrase "principles before personalities" so often that it is like a cliché. While we may disagree as individuals, the spiritual principle of anonymity makes us all equal as members of the group. No member is greater or lesser than any other member.”

- *Basic text, The Twelve Traditions of Narcotics Anonymous*

“We must live and work together as a group to ensure that in a storm our ship does not sink and our members do not perish. With faith in a Power greater than ourselves, hard work, and unity we will survive and continue to carry the message to the addict who still suffers.”

- *Basic text, The Twelve Traditions of Narcotics Anonymous*

STEP OF THE MONTH: STEP 3



“We turned our will and our lives over to the care of God as we understood him.”

This step is about surrender and trust. It means recognizing that trying to control everything on your own hasn't worked and being open to guidance from a higher power - whatever that means to you. It's not about giving up responsibility but about letting go of fear and self-will, allowing something greater than yourself to help you stay clean and live a better life.



NA PROGRAM EDUCATION



If you're new to NA, you might hear a lot about **principles, traditions, steps, and service work**. Here's a simple breakdown of what they mean and how they help in recovery.

THE PRINCIPLES - "How we live"

NA is built on spiritual principles that guide us in recovery, such as **honesty, open-mindedness, willingness, humility, and service**. These principles help us stay clean and improve our lives one day at a time.

THE 12 STEPS - "How we recover"

The **Twelve Steps** are the foundation of personal recovery. They help us understand addiction, accept help, make amends, and grow spiritually. The steps guide us from being powerless over addiction to living a new way of life.

THE 12 TRADITIONS - "How we stay together"

While the Steps help individuals recover, the **Twelve Traditions** protect the NA fellowship as a whole. They focus on **unity, anonymity, and self-support**, ensuring that NA remains a safe and welcoming place for everyone seeking recovery.

SERVICE WORK - "How we give back"

Service is an important part of recovery. It can be as simple as setting up chairs at a meeting, sponsoring a newcomer, helping with the Hamilton area and HIPR committee and with NA events. **Giving back keeps us connected and strengthens our recovery.**

NA is about **hope, connection, and change**. You don't have to do this alone. Keep coming back!

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS ABOUT RECOVERY AND SPONSORSHIP

RECOVERY



1. **Do I have to believe in God to stay clean in NA?**

No. NA is a **spiritual, not religious** program. You are encouraged to find a **Higher Power of your own understanding** - which could be the fellowship, , or any concept that helps you stay clean.

2. **What if I relapse? Can I still come back?**

Yes! Relapse doesn't mean failure. NA welcomes you back with open arms. The important thing is to **keep coming back** and learn from the experience.

3. **How do I know if NA is right for me?**

If drugs have caused problems in your life and you find it hard to stop, NA might help. **The only requirement for membership is a desire to stop using.**

4. **How often should I nature go to meetings?**

There's no set rule, but it is suggested by some to go to 90 meetings in 90 days. This helps the newcomer to find a homegroup and a sponsor. The more you stay connected, the stronger your recovery can be.

SPONSORSHIP

1. **What is a sponsor?**

A sponsor is an **experienced NA member** who guides you through the **12 steps** and offers support in recovery. They've been where you are and can share what worked for them.

2. **How do I find a sponsor?**

Look for someone in NA who has **more clean time than you, works the Steps, and lives the NA principles.** Listen in meetings and ask someone you respect.

3. **Can I change sponsors?**

Yes. If you feel your sponsor isn't the right fit, it's okay to find someone else. Just be honest and respectful about it.

CLARIFICATION ON MISCONCEPTIONS ABOUT NA



1. “NA is only for hard drug users.”

NA is for **anyone with a drug problem**, no matter what substance they used - alcohol, pills or anything else. Addiction is about **powerlessness over drugs**, not the specific drug.

2. “You have to be clean before coming to NA.”

No! The **only requirement** for NA membership is **a desire to stop using**. Many people come while still struggling, and that’s okay.

3. “NA doesn’t work.”

NA has helped **millions** worldwide. It works if you work it - by going to meetings, using a sponsor, and applying the 12 steps.

4. “I can do this alone; I don’t need meetings.”

Addiction thrives on isolation. NA provides **support, experience, and a path to recovery** that many can’t find alone.



MEETING & EVENT UPDATES

FIND A MEETING!

<http://nahamilton.org/meeting/>

ANNOUNCEMENTS FOR SPEAKER MEETINGS, CONVENTIONS, OR
WORKSHOPS

ORCNA: Please make sure to register for ORCNA! This helps with the budget to plan the event. Also, look into your accommodations ASAP.

You can go on the website now <http://www.orcna.ca/> to register.

This is a survey for entertainment at ORCNA <http://www.orcna.ca/events>

NA SERVICE DAY ADHOC COMMITTEE: is having a learning day on March 29th, 2025 at the Church of Nativity. The event will start at 12:20pm with a lunch provided. The workshop will begin from 1:30pm - 3:00pm. There will be drinks and desserts served with lunch. If you are interested in volunteering please contact Brenda V.

WOMEN'S AND THOSE WHO IDENTIFY AS A WOMEN MINI RETREAT

The mini retreat is a fundraiser to have packages sponsored for newcomers to attend the 2nd Annual Women's Retreat in November entitled A Spiritual Path.

We are looking for donations for our newcomer fund and items for our silent auction.

The mini retreat is March 8th 11am to 3pm, 317 Main street East, Milton. (Grace Anglican Church)

Tickets are now available and space is limited.

\$20 fee can be e-transferred to haltonpeelretreats@gmail.com

This is also the email for questions and to get involved

SERVICE OPPORTUNITIES AND HOW TO GET INVOLVED

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.

Check out if your own home Group needs help!

- GSR & Alternate
- Secretary
- Treasurer
- Literature Representative (Some groups have a group Lit Rep)



MEMBER CONTRIBUTIONS

A poem about addiction and recovery

By: Anonymous

I miss my friends that got too high to carry the pain inside, I miss my friends man.

I miss the ones who didn't see their worth and I miss the ones that were doomed from birth. I miss my friends man.

I miss the ones that died way too young and I miss my friend for which the funeral anthem was sung.

I miss everyone who I got close to and let the demons take them away like it wasn't supposed to go down like this, can you hear me god ?

I wish things could be different, I wish they knew just how significant they are but they look in the mirror and see only scars of the battle wounds they've fought so hard to run from.

I miss my friends man, the reality is I could see the pain on all their faces consume every square inch of space that was left in their minds but couldn't do nothing, only watch them die in front of me it's like they're committing suicide and I can't save them, I miss my friends man .

I miss my friends that are fathers and brothers, I miss my friends that couldn't tell their mothers that they got high just one last time instead they closed their eyes without a final goodbye, I miss my friends man.

I miss the ones who used to laugh so bright and carry that cheer within a hug so tight. Everyone they touched became so bright but they were hurting inside and couldn't fight no more.

I wish I could bring them back but I can't, if you're struggling right now please come take my hand because I don't want to miss you too, I miss my friends man but that doesn't have to be you.

If you are interested in giving the newsletter any poetry, artwork, or creative expression related to recovery please send it to

newletter@nahamilton.org

SERVICE & OUTREACH INFORMATION

The HIPR committee is looking for help! We meet on the first Monday of every month. Next meeting is on March 3rd at 6:30 pm. Located at 24 Emerald Street South.

- If it is your first time attending, please bring ID to enter the facility.
- We need volunteers with 2 years clean 2 years record free to put on meetings at Hamilton Wentworth Detention Centre both the men's and women's units.
- We need volunteers with 6 months clean for the women's detox panel.

We also have positions available or soon to be: Chair, Alt-Chair, PI panel leader and PI alt-panel leader and alt-panel leader for women's detox

Hamilton Area Service Committee of NA (HASC) meets the 3rd Saturday of every month. Next meeting is on March 15th at 10am at 170 Dundurn Street South.

- Positions open for election are: Chairperson, Alt Chair, both RCM'S and Service system coordinator.

Please come out and be of service!

If you are interested in a service role, you MUST be present at HASCNA to be nominated.

CELEBRATING MILESTONES

(ALL CONSENTING MEMBERS)

Brie P. celebrating 3 years on March 16th at 7pm at Courage to Change

Mike Th. celebrating 2 years on March 17th at HOW Group

Wes F. celebrating 2 years on March 22 at The Recovery Room

Roy V. celebrating 31 years on March 28 at Friday Night Group

Dan M. celebrating 1 year on March 29th at The Recovery Room

Anne D. celebrating 5 years on March 30 at Courage to Change



RESOURCES & CONTACT INFORMATION

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.

Website:

<https://nahamilton.org/>

Address:

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Canada

If you EVER need help and need to speak to someone don't hesitate to
call: 888-811-3887

Just for Today

Anxiety attack!

March 1

“[The] Power that brought us to this program is still with us and will continue to guide us if we allow it”

Basic Text, p. 27

Ever had a panic attack? Everywhere we turn, life’s demands overwhelm us. We’re paralyzed, and we don’t know what to do about it. How do we break an anxiety attack?

First, we stop. We can’t deal with everything at once, so we stop for a moment to let things settle. Then we take a “spot inventory” ourselves this question: “How important is it, really?” In most our immediate attention. We can put those aside, and focus on the issues that really need to be resolved right away.

Then we stop again and ask ourselves, “Who’s in control here, anyway?” This helps remind us that our Higher Power is in control. We seek our Higher Power’s will for the situation, whatever it is. We can do this in any number of ways: through prayer, talks with our sponsor or NA friends, or by attending a meeting and asking others to share their experience. When our Higher Power’s will becomes clear to us, we pray for the ability to carry it out. Finally, we take action.

Anxiety attacks need not paralyze us. We can utilize the resources of the NA program to deal with anything that comes our way.

Just for today: My Higher Power has not brought me all this way in recovery only to abandon me! When anxiety strikes, I will take specific steps to seek God’s continuing care and guidance.