

HAMILTON AREA NARCOTICS ANONYMOUS NEWSLETTER

September 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!

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A Message of Hope & Recovery



In this part of the newsletter we offer you a message of experience, strength and hope from various 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.



Members Talk about Step 9

What was the hardest part about approaching Step 9 for you?

The hardest part about approaching step nine for me was not having expectations on how the other individuals would respond. I realize that I cannot take their reactions personally whether they were good or bad reactions. I understood that I have to do this for myself and "clean up my side of the street".

How did you decide which amends to make directly and which to approach differently?

It all depended on my personal relationship to the individuals. Also there's different kinds of amends. There's individual amends, there's Financial, there's also amends that had to be done to people who have passed. Also, I had to do a personal amendment to myself.

Did fear hold you back at first? How did you overcome it?

Initially, I was filled with fear. I talked to my sponsor about it and he explained his experience with amends. After hearing his experience I let go of the fear and I proceeded with my amends.



Inspirational NA Quotes

In moments of great pain, a deep stillness comes over us; in those moments, we can see the depths of the darkness within us but also the enormity of the power to which we are connected. The terrible grief we feel can bring us a conscious contact that nothing else ever could. The impulse to withdraw, to pull away from noise and crowds and even from the people who support us the most, is often a form of self-protection: We can be so afraid of shaking loose the feelings again that we barely want to move. But letting the people we trust come and support us reminds us that we are not alone, even in our coldest moments. And allowing people to help us can be a form of service to them as well: When we let someone love us at a vulnerable time, they—and we—are rewarded. The caring and sharing we talk about is a two-way street, and those of us who are practiced at giving often have a hard time letting others love us back. p. 119 (Living Clean)

It is a loving act to let others love us. When we find ourselves in a position of need, it can be too easy for us to experience it as humiliating or burdensome. But we are given the opportunity to let those who love us express that in very concrete ways. The vulnerability we experience allows us a different experience of love. It is an act of generosity to let people be close to us, and we try to understand that they, too, are going through feelings about what's happening. Our training in letting go of self-obsession helps us now: As we help our loved ones through their fear and sadness, we may find the words we need to hear to get through our own grief and pain. p.120 (Living Clean)

In early recovery, many of us move back and forth between genuine excitement at our new possibilities and sorrow for what we have lost. Some of us describe early recovery as a "pink cloud," and others tell about a long season of grief. We experience many new feelings, sometimes very quickly. We grow and change, build and lose relationships, go to meetings, and we learn. Throughout our recovery we experience new awakenings, new surrenders, and new freedoms. p. 220 (Living clean)

STEP OF THE MONTH: STEP 9

“We made direct amends to such people wherever possible, except when to do so would injure them or others” is a powerful step that can help you heal relationships and move forward in your recovery journey.

This step can feel daunting, especially if you’ve caused significant harm through your addiction. However, with thoughtful planning and the support of your sponsor and fellow NA members, making amends can be a liberating experience.



CREATIVE FOCUS

We're grateful to Joe W for courageously sharing his story in this month's newsletter. His honesty and openness are a reminder of the strength that comes from living our truth in recovery.

My name is Joe W, and I am an addict.

My journey began in a home filled with addiction. Both of my parents struggled with substances, and because of that, they were unable to care for me or my siblings. From birth, I was surrounded by chaos — physical, mental, and sexual abuse, along with constant neglect. Eventually, I was placed in foster care. I was blessed with an amazing foster family who gave me stability and kindness, but deep inside, I still struggled. I didn't really know what love was, or what a family was truly supposed to look and feel like.

When I was eight years old, my foster father — my only positive male role model — passed away. That loss shook me to my core. It was followed by more heartbreak: the passing of my grandparents, my sister in 2012, and my best friend in 2014. With every loss, the pain built up inside me, and instead of processing it, I began to fill the emptiness with unhealthy relationships, reckless choices, and eventually life on the streets as a homeless teenager.

At 16, I started smoking w**d. By 18, I had turned to alcohol. At 19, my social worker introduced me to the party and dance floor drug scene, which opened the door to an entirely new lifestyle. Around that time, I met my first husband. Our marriage lasted four and a half years, but it was marked by his abuse and infidelity. Looking back, I realize I had been conditioned from childhood to accept that kind of treatment, and I didn't yet know my worth.

After that relationship ended, my life became centered on sex and companionship. I was terrified of being alone — it felt like the worst thing that could happen. In 2010, I was dating someone who used drugs. At first, I didn't want to be involved, but eventually, I gave in. I didn't want to feel left out, and that's when I met my drug of choice.

At first, my use was occasional. I told myself I had it under control. But by 2017, I was in a new relationship with a man I thought was perfect. We used together, and soon, weekends of partying turned into weeks of constant use. The relationship grew violent and toxic. He would leave and come back repeatedly, and each time, he dragged me deeper into the cycle of addiction, abuse, and

self-destruction.

By 2018, I was desperately trying to control my drug use, but I couldn't. I reached out to someone I knew from the rooms — a man who would later become my sponsor — but at the time, I wasn't ready. I convinced myself that meetings weren't for me, that recovery wasn't possible.

It wasn't until early 2019 that I finally broke down and admitted I couldn't keep living that way. I tried running from my pain by moving across the country, chasing new relationships, and starting over in different places, but no matter where I went, I always ended up in the same place: broken, homeless, and desperate.

Then one day, I reached my breaking point. I picked up the phone and called my friend from NA. I told him I needed help. He brought me to a meeting — and that was the beginning of my recovery journey.

Today, I attend meetings weekly. I'm slowly building a life I can be proud of, one day at a time. I know that if I ever pick up again, I'll lose everything and end up right back where I started — homeless, alone, and afraid. NA has given me something I never thought I'd have: hope, belonging, and a family that supports me without judgment.

I now share my story at meetings and gatherings across Ontario and beyond, because I believe that being open about my past can help others see that recovery is possible. Life is not perfect — I still face struggles. Recently, I lost my job in funeral services after standing up for myself against discrimination. Even though an internal investigation was done, nothing was resolved, so I chose to take a stand and let lawyers handle it. It hasn't been easy, but I've learned through recovery that my voice matters, and that I no longer have to submit to injustice or remain silent.

Despite everything I've been through — the trauma, the loss, the addiction — I refuse to let those experiences define me anymore. They are part of my story, but they are not the end of it. I know today that I deserve love, respect, and happiness. One day, I hope to meet the right partner — someone who values me for who I am. But whether that happens today, tomorrow, or years from now, I finally believe I am worthy of it. Most importantly, I no longer live trapped inside my trauma.

My name is Joe W, and I am an addict — but just for today, I am clean.

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/>

Courage to Change now has a Women's breakout meeting the last Sunday of every month. Unless there is a celebration, then it will be moved.

Recovery softball league! Come join us EVERY SUNDAY from 10am - 1pm for softball practice. Activities committee has rented out a field for the summer. Show us your skills and join us during NA tournaments throughout the summer. All are welcome!

****Flyer attached at the end of the newsletter****

ANNOUNCEMENTS FOR SPEAKER MEETINGS, CONVENTIONS, OR WORKSHOPS

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)

SERVICE & OUTREACH INFORMATION

The HIPR committee is looking for help! We meet on the first Monday of every month. Next meeting is on July 7th 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: Alt-Chair, PI alt-panel leader and alt-panel leader for women's and men's detox

Hamilton Area Service Committee of NA (HASC) meets the 3rd Saturday of every month. Next meeting is on July 19th @ 10am ●
Positions open for election are: Alt Chair, RCM 2 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)

Mary A celebrating 2 years on September 7th (Clean & Free)

Joe W celebrating 1 year on September 14th (Clean & Free)

Mike T celebrating 2 years on September 14th(Courage to Change)

Aaron B celebrating 1 year on September 17th(Find a New Way)

Krista A celebrating 5 years on September 21st(Recovery in the Park)

Brian W celebrating 48 years on September 22nd(HOW Group)



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/>

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

Just for Today

September 1

Real Values

"We become able to make wise and loving decisions based on principles and ideals that have real value in our lives."

Basic Text, pg. 101

Addiction gave us a certain set of values, principles we applied in our lives. "You pushed me" one of those values told us, "so I pushed back, hard." "It's mine" was another value generated by our disease. "Well, okay, maybe it wasn't mine to start with, but I liked it, so I made it mine." Those values were hardly values at all - more like rationalizations - and they certainly didn't help us make wise and loving decisions. In fact, they served primarily to dig us deeper and deeper into the grave we'd already dug for ourselves.

The Twelve Steps give us a strong dose of real values, the kind that help us live in harmony with ourselves and those around us. We place our faith not in ourselves, our families, or our communities, but in a Higher Power - and in doing so, we grow secure enough to be able to trust our communities, our families, and even ourselves. We learn to be honest, no matter what-and we learn to refrain from doing things we might want to hide. We learn to accept responsibility for our actions. "It's mine" is replaced with a spirit of selflessness. These are the kind of values that help us become a responsible, productive part of the life around us. Rather than digging us deeper into a grave, these values restore us to the world of the living.

Just for today: I am grateful for the values I've developed. I am thankful for the ability they give me to make wise, loving decisions as a responsible, productive member of my community.