



Vol 1 | Issue 4
September 2018

Straight from

The Horse's Mouth

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We want to hear from you!

To inspire our readers and acknowledge milestones in this journey, we would like to feature your story in one of our upcoming newsletters. Please send us a personal article, art or poem depicting your experience with addiction and/or alcoholism to:

@Horsemouth

Greetings,

We write you as representatives of Heroin Anonymous Long Island Area (HALIA). This informational bulletin's purpose is to increase communication between the groups of Heroin Anonymous throughout the world.

“Faith Without Works”

A common experience, one that we all go through, is that the more abundant the blessings in our life, the less we have faith and take action. Often our lives become so busy, things which once were a priority in our lives fall to the wayside. As we continue to grow in understanding and effectiveness, often members of our fellowship share about striking an all-elusive “balance.” A simple quote, that can be used as a guideline to balance is, “faith without works is dead.” If we are honest, this principle could lead us toward balance and an ongoing integration of the two parts. However, some might attach to either faith or attach to action, tipping the scales of balance to one side. Some of us use faith to enjoy their own quiet time, or perhaps to discover new insights, only to proclaim their spirituality, or share a “gem” in a meeting. While, “work-ers,” “do-ers,” or action-based members, can get caught up in over-involvement. Neither seems to be the balance that Bill W. hoped to affirm.

Our literature outlines a spiritual (faith) program of action. By faith, it suggests the deliberate seeking of God through a willingness to detach from those things that block us from God, the self-centeredness, and the character defects (our nightly review is our 11th step, not our 10th, which is an exercise in faith that teaches us to deflate the ego and detach from that which blocks us). Faith is a cleaning service for the house or soul, that constant renewal of leaving the “old ideas and prejudices (self)” behind and awakening to that “inner resource.” Similarly, action, does not mean busyness or “do-goodism.” Do-ing, is holding a heavy commitment toward involvement, in other words, attending 2 meetings a day, having 50 sponsees, becoming a service-junkie, which has never equated to a greater sense of well-being, and more often burdens our spiritual fitness rather than exercises it.

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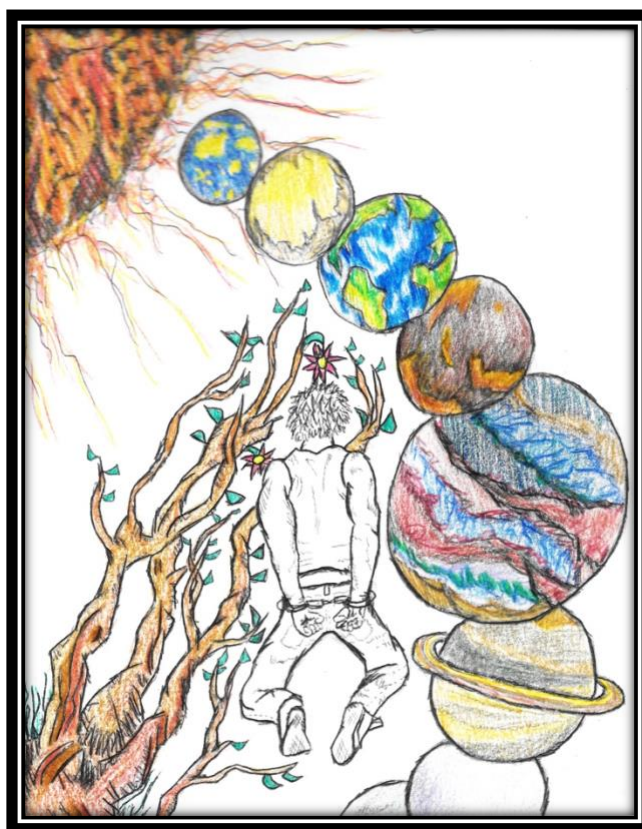
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Faith Without Works continued. . .

Sometimes our character defects cannot be resolved by reflection, discussion, or even prayer. God, along with, service and fellowship, our symbol (a triangle), works together with all (the circle surrounding it). It is important that we continue to clarify these pivots in our life. When rightly sought, faith and action will always regulate, inspire, and balance our lives. Separately, they are dead-ended and trapped in self-centeredness, egoism and personality. The result is inspiration as inspired by faith, and giving yourself for others becomes action in its truest form, "though they knew they must help other alcoholics if they would remain sober, that motive became secondary. It was transcended by the happiness they found in giving themselves for others." For most of us, it is an endless dance. The warm summer months' call for many outdoor activities, fellowship events, and action and faith, which is the theme of the personal experiences you will read in this issue.

Community Art • Mixed Media



As Above, So Below

Mike G.

How blind I have been . . .

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HA's 2nd World Convention: "The Hand of HA"

Brian C., Whoopee Party



I was recently granted the opportunity to fly across country and attended the World Conference & Convention of Heroin Anonymous in Portland, Oregon. To be straight forward: I was expecting a completely different experience than God saw fit for me. My plate here on Long Island is pretty full. The gifts I've been granted are beautiful, but they can be equally as exhausting. My intention in traveling to the convention was to "escape" from my life; to shut off my current deck of cards in hopes of getting a temporary new hand. God shattered those self-seeking hopes throughout my journey to the west coast... He always has had a sense of humor. Without suffering, I have been unable to grow on my own thus far. So, in a sense, my suffering is the most beautiful gift of all. Regardless of what I wanted to happen, as always, I was gifted a deeper understanding of myself, my defects and my freedom in Heroin Anonymous.

I arrived at the conference on zero sleep. I was also pretty irritated with my near perfect flight. When I walked into the hotel and into the very first World Conference of HA, the discussion was surrounding our "singleness of purpose." Represented in the room were elected Area officials from different parts of the nation. This meeting was organized to discuss and vote on major, fellowship changing topics such as—MAT, our literature, the wording of our steps, allowing non-heroin addicts to attend, key tags, and much more. Alabama, Arizona, Ohio, Wisconsin, Georgia, Texas, California, Upstate NY, and many more states were in attendance. Everyone came together with the same goal—Unify HA worldwide and **come to understand how our fellowship grow**

and come to understand how our fellowship can grow to help more of those who still suffer.

Everyone had different opinions and hopes for what would help the addict that is still sick in our hometown. Regardless of our differences, we all respected that the event was a beautiful, pioneering moment for HA. That the conference would be the first of many and it would dictate the future of Heroin Anonymous on a global level.

What was most inspiring for me was how the solution stays the same for everyone. Here on LI we almost come from a place of "better than"... We are "*solution based*"... purists of the steps, walking the spiritual high road. Well, I am here to tell you that we are not special. (surprise). Not only is "the solution" readily available, it is literally working among and through us worldwide. It does not change for anyone, anywhere. At the conference, if your group wasn't solution based, what were you? It made me feel like Long Island is behind the other areas in a way. One gentlemen from Georgia mentioned his home group having 600 members attend regularly. Another guy from Alabama, who I presume to be younger than me, was talking about how these seething debates have been discussed without a passing vote for 12 years. I thought to myself, 'We live in NEW YORK and we're lucky to have 5 members at our meetings sometimes'.

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The Hand of HA continued . . .

Although this may seem like a negative perspective, it was just more proof that this program works. It has worked and will work for years to come. Even in the middle of nowhere, HA is saving our hopeless lives, despite any controversy or outside issue we bring in with self-will.

Heroin addicts are *different*. That's what so many Area reps were trying to communicate. That in some way, our suffering only qualifies us to help other heroin addicts. In the wise words of Ken E.—“How many heroins does one need before qualifying to be a heroin addict?” I do believe we reach a level of degradation and suffering that people of other drug choices do not experience. I also believe that, like I was taught, heroin is just a symptom of my disease. If the solution works in Texas, then it can work in Alaska. It will work for a crack head. It will work for meth user, an oxy fiend; it will even work for the hopeless pot smoker. Our broken spirits are NOT different. If anything, I feel our experience as “the bottom of the barrel” makes us even more capable of helping everyone. Now that we have become “recovered” it is our obligation to extend the hand of HA to those who need God. To those who are ready or not, regardless of how they choose to numb their pain. This was 100% a seething caldron of debate. The concern amongst some groups was that non-heroin addicts will kill the true heroin addict newcomer. “Someone that has not used dope can't help us”. I understand both sides but I don't believe I am alone in saying, our doors must stay open to all. If we turn anyone away, in my opinion, we are volunteering an indirect role in their death.

The other major realization I had in terms of our Area was how ego driven some of us are. It's no secret—I am not a supporter of harm reduction and Medically Assisted Treatment. Guess what? MY OPINION DOES NOT MATTER. I am a hopeless junkie that just took a needle out of my arm...like...a hand full of years ago. How does that make me qualified to character assassinate someone on MAT. In the HA Portland Area specifically, they welcome and praise sober addicts on MAT. Why? In hopes, like me, those addicts will one day make it back, SOBER and FREE. As I approach my 3rd anniversary, it's pretty clear that I still don't know WTF I am doing. I do know that God is everything and that power alone keeps me sober. HA saved my life; if we don't slow our role here, HA could potentially die like so many of our members. Our doors on LI or even worldwide could shut as heroin becomes the Quaalude of the next generation. These outside issues, though they may be important to us personally, have no space to live within our rooms. We have lost too many people and our purpose now is to become more effective in not losing any more. As a collective whole, this should be our only focus.

I went out to the convention thinking I would get a break. I rarely slept and just wanted to get back to my life. I got to see a semi-cool city and journey down cliffs into the Pacific Ocean. I ate great food and met some cool addicts, but the *real* gift was realizing how abundant and full my life is on Long Island. The things I constantly take for granted are the things that literally keep me alive. That includes our little community of Heroin Addicts. I am beyond blessed to have made it here, and so far, to have stayed. We have something truly special — a solution that 72,000 addicts did not find last year. That number pierces through me... imagine Giants Stadium, now imagine every seat a dead addict. We have the key to their freedom and it would be miserable to think we lost a chance at helping them find it.

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Group Anniversary:

“WE ARE NOT SAINTS”

Group Anniversary



The “**We Are Not Saints**” group is hosting their group anniversary on **Monday, September 17th, 2018**. The anniversary will be held at the meeting spot located at **350 Main Street, Islip** with food & fellowship beginning at **7pm** and speaker to follow at 8pm. Come to this exciting event for food, fellowship, and fun!

We meet
at
7:00PM
located at
350 Main Street, Islip

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“Half Measures”

Frank R., Freedom from Suffering

“Just being sober in the rooms and not taking action can sometimes be just as worse as using”

Since the beginning of my journey I was always taught to be consistent with action based on the 12 steps of AA.

When I first came to the rooms I was “gung ho” about sobriety, fellowship and helping others. At one point my phone wouldn’t stop ringing with people to help day and night, and I loved every moment of it. Life had taken on a new meaning and I was finally at peace with myself. I felt I had real purpose. Throughout the first few years of my sobriety my experience consisted of multiple speaking commitments, sponsees and meetings. These suggestions that were given to me at the time were of paramount importance to my life. I saw the people before me do this and it inspired me a lot.

I’ve heard the warnings, listened to people share in meetings about their experiences with complacency, and even thought about it myself. It even says it in the Big Book of Alcoholics anonymous that resting on our Laurels will eventually lead to a life of “self will run riot”. However, I perceived myself as a special heroin addict with certain immunities to these simple ideas. Oh boy was I wrong! Over the next couple of years my character defects were on full display as a result of me changing my priorities in recovery. Meaning, work, relationships, vacations etc. came before HA

vacations, etc. came before HA. I dropped ALL of my commitments, reduced meeting attendance and sponsees were few and far between. I basically used my sponsees as sobriety maintenance the same way heroin addicts use methadone. It is amazing that I had anything to offer them. The only time I would attend a meeting is if I was asked to speak. Real humble of me. My humility turned into pride. Being miserable in sobriety is a scary place to be. Thank God I didn’t relapse.

I knew I had to do something different or I was doomed. Fortunately for me, I have many friends in this program that helped me humble myself again and return back to basics. Asking for help was not easy for me. I had to ask myself honestly “is this worth dying over”? The answer was obvious. I started praying for the willingness to be more useful to others. I also began meditating and doing a nightly inventory more thoroughly. I got a new home group which I attend weekly. These simple suggestions that I constantly took in the beginning of my journey were easily forgotten when “life happened”. I forgot that without HA I wouldn’t even have a life worth living. I believe this experience, even though it could be considered “bad” happened for a good reason. Maybe my experience of ego and pride will help someone one day realize how important it is to stay involved in this program and not take it for granted. I am beyond blessed to be once again humbled in this program. Until I see it on this newsletter of course.

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NYS HA's 1st Unity Campout: "Experience of Service"

Kaitlyn S., Hell and Back



When I first entered the rooms of Heroin Anonymous I was very close minded and stubborn, I didn't really believe that this all would work, but there was a word that seemed to be talked about at every meeting I attended: action. I've always admired those who took action and I have always been a firm believer in the power that action can have to those around us. Action, against injustice, action towards bettering our world, the underdogs and action despite what you are up against. I always had an idea of how we could better improve our world but it was hard to stand for anything when everything I did was dependent upon a substance, and eventually all my grand ideas had become nullified because no one in their right mind would take an active heroin addicts advice on how to improve the world when it was fairly obvious that could barely help myself. And when it came time to put that same action I admired into my own life and change, I resisted with everything in me. I thought it would only be a matter of using my will power and if i could only find the write equation I'd be able to stop using heroin. I set traps for myself within the people I loved...when my boyfriend gets back from school I'll stop, when my family finds out I'll stop, I'll stop because I'm working so many hours, I'll keep busy, et cetera...I would try to manipulate

the strings I was pulling in such a way that I would either have to be stupid or a genius to maneuver myself around them and yet would still find myself making that same call every day. revolutionary The term "revolutionary change" mentioned in our literature stuck out to me almost immediately. It is mentioned it the three chapters of the book I have read the most (The Doctor's Opinion, We Agnostics, and Spiritual Experience). To be revolutionary would mean that some sort of great revolution is happening within my world. In the beginning, I would constantly think of that term and what could that mean for me. Merriam Webster dictionary describes revolution as follows:

- a: *a sudden, radical, or complete change*
- b: *a fundamental change in political organization; especially: the overthrow or renunciation of one government or ruler and the substitution of another by the governed*

Drugs and alcohol were my master. They ruled what I did and what I said. It would take me places I never wanted to go, and made me lose myself in the madness. Things I held dear became second rate, the books I favored would have become surfaces for drugs or coasters...I lost who I was. and when I finally accepted that powerless part about me a change began to happen.

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Experience of Service continued . . .

I took some action, I asked for help, and I substituted my previous ruler for another for some sort of higher power and I changed. That was my first action, deciding that from there on out I will do the next right thing, which at the moment was the steps. I wrote a fourth step, I told someone fearlessly my truth. I told her who I was and learned what I have to do to be back to who I really am. I found out my real triggers to every use: my character defects and started at once to overcome them. I reluctantly made amends and I changed my behavior as best as I could. I reluctantly, after much pain began to pray and meditate every day, and I reluctantly began to help people. I say reluctantly because i didn't know if this would work, because after all, I was hopeless; but something inside of me kept pulling me deeper into this way of life, especially service. By helping people, I saw what I was incapable of seeing in myself... a psychic change. I saw the light go on in people's eyes and thus began to witness that power in my own life as well.

Heroin Anonymous gave me a voice. Previously to that the only time I was able to talk was if I was drunk/high or if you were someone close to me. I came in timid, and people pleasing. I sat in the back, I ran out immediately and told people "no" if they invited me to get food after the meeting. But once I started giving back what was given to me, I became who I always was deep down and I wasn't scared anymore. I realized I had a purpose and to have a purpose assumes that I'm taking daily action. I think What initially attracted me towards the rooms was that sense of purpose in all the people of HAs lives. I could tell that they were actually making a difference in the world, not just talking about it, doing it. And I saw that whatever change I wanted to see in the world could begin with a simple action. After all, that is how 12 step fellowships began, one person helping another; an altruistic movement. But that alone isn't the reason the rooms are so well known today, we had to reach others and luckily for us most of the founding members were traveling salesman who devoted extra time to helping other sick and suffering people to wherever they went and the fellowship grew. To be in so many different places at once it's only natural for opinions to differ. But still it flourished because despite everything, this is a common ground everyone agrees on.

Learning the history of the twelve steps inspired me to explore the different levels of service available. And after I completed them I was able to stand for commitments at the group level, which of course is terrifying first. When I had 4 months I had the secretary commitment at my home-group, so now hiding wasn't an option anymore, people knew who I was. Eventually I got a chance to do almost all of the commitments, and with that experience I was able to join a committee and become the chairperson of the graphic design subcommittee, I was able to witness how personalities clash on big committees and how as sober people we can overcome it with grace.

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Experience of Service continued . . .

I got to see how to apply these principles to my life on a deeper level and I got to see Long Island HA grow, something that I feel so blessed to be able to say. We grew so much that it came time for us to start our own Area committee. All the groups showed up for the first meeting, and we discussed how to further grow our fellowship. For the past 2 and a half years as a General Service Representative I have witnessed the changes our fellowship undergoes, I have seen area dwindle to five people, and have seen us come together and go back to basics (we asked for help) and more people began to become involved. As we were doing this, other HA groups began to pop up all over the country, including upstate New York.

Last month we were able to take some more action and meet with the other areas upstate for a campout. I was curious about the other people in HA, and interested in what their messages were...turns out they are exactly like us. Each with individual difficulties but the same message. We learned that those groups have witnessed similar situations as our groups which is why staying in contact and is an integral part of Long Island's growth. We talked of how to grow, of what the world convention would be like and how cool it will be to meet so many members of Heron Anonymous. I used to think we were unique but now I see how we are a part of something bigger. And I am so excited to witness the entirety of our fellowship grow

Everything I do as a sober person is a step with intention and purpose. That doesn't mean that I am always right, it means that I am taking daily action. I may have great intentions today, but not always so great of action and thus I grow. Every day I learn from my mistakes the best I can and grow towards the next right thing. I'm currently traveling as I write this, yet another thing that would be impossible if not for that daily reprieve I found in HA. It's a beautiful day, I woke up and did what I was supposed to, and asked to be of service. Two years ago when area started a main push was the world convention; today we are able to give all of Long Island a voice in the direction of the future of HA. From that first (and one of three HA meetings) I went to I knew there was a spark growing, and now we're able to contribute to the world. On our way here, along the way we met someone who was running away from her alcoholic husband, we were able to give her a ride and talk to her. The possibilities of her getting a ride in the middle of nowhere yet alone with two addicts in recovery on the way to talk to hundreds of other heroin addicts in recovery is astronomical, and yet here we are. Despite the odds against me as a recovering addict here I am, sober and whole. And I only have the action I take towards a higher power's will to thank. To sum up If there is one thing I wish to say on the topic of action it is that we do, as recovery addicts make a difference in the ripples of the world. We do have a voice, we do have a reason to be here, a purpose, a direction, we help where others fail, "Though we be just a man with a book."

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Announcements

Contact your Area Chairs

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Treasurer – Matt R: heymatt574@gmail.com

Secretary – Maria B.: mebarbaccia@gmail.com

H&I – Seth: h&i@heroinanonymousslougisland.com

Chips- Beck: chips@heroinanonymousslougisland.com

Events – Alex: events@heroinanonymousslougisland.com

Website: webmaster@heroinanonymousslougisland.com

News: horsemouth@heroinanonymousslougisland.com

“All Lit Up Again” GROUP OF HICKSVILLE

IS A NEW MEETING!!

We Meet **Thursdays**
at **8:00pm**

Central Nassau Guidance & Counseling
950 S Oyster Bay Road
Hicksville, NY

Be a part of this exciting time!

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Inspire our readers and send in:

- Your experiences!
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- Your articles!
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Is in need of your support:

We Meet **Thursdays**
at **8:00pm**

****except the first week of the month***

101 Loudon Ave. Amityville
South Oaks

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