

# Straight From The Horses Mouth



**ART EDITION**

## HOW CREATIVITY IMPACTS OUR RECOVERY

### Tourniquets & Art Kits - Lily

From a very young age, there was not much that I considered being exciting. Rollercoasters, Christmas trees, swings & parks; basically the things that are typically appealing in the way of childhood whimsy. However, I was always excited & eager to create. The mode of creating never mattered to me; whether it was through song, through writing, drawing, or even comedy skits that I would perform in my own head...creativity felt like a higher purpose.

Showing others my creations made my heart rush in a way that I couldn't describe at the time. The only thing that compared from that moment was the rush I felt the first time I picked up a drug. I remember, suddenly it didn't matter if the thoughts on the inside made it out, I was fine with dozing off & just "being". At first, of course, in my head, I made it some beautiful independent film that had great focused camera views of my nodded-out face behind my desk at my 9-5. The suffering was fine because it was artistic in a way to me. This felt like it was a steppingstone and definitely wasn't permanent like maybe it would be over in a couple of months. But the suffering became actual suffering when the consequences became real when I lost control and the using consumed my every thought, activity, and desire. All the poetry, drawing, acting, all of it fell to the wayside. People started dying, car accidents, the lows reached the pits of hell and back, and things got dark fast, chances are if you yourself are afflicted with the disease of addiction, or if you know anyone who is; you know the exact darkness I'm speaking of. It became my life, and I was sure there would be nothing else. This was a means to an end, and I would be gone before 30 of an overdose or suicide.

I came to the rooms of HA many times before I decided to stay, when I finally gave up fighting and admitted my powerlessness, went to treatment, and got into this program genuinely and wholeheartedly, my life changed entirely. My life became an independent film in a whole different way, the focused camera views were moments of overwhelming gratitude because I felt like I was here for a reason. The inspiration to create came flooding in as soon as my mind was clear and I began creating again at full speed. But this time I took on way more, I had a huge interest in music & decided to try my hand in that as well. I would say recovery changed my life but honestly, without HA & the people in it, I don't know that there would be a life to save. The big book says it best "There you will find release from fear, boredom, and worry. Your imagination will be fired. Life will mean something at last." I had the meaningful things all along, the inspiration, the family, the "book smarts" and all of that, I just didn't care whether I lived or died to use them. Today, every day I get to create is a treat and a way to honor the past me who didn't think she was worth it and all the people whom I've unfortunately lost along the way who didn't get a chance.



# HOW CREATIVITY IMPACTS OUR RECOVERY



## Paint & Movement - Kaitlin

It is a blessing to be able to paint. A gift to move my arms, to think, to be present with blue and yellow stuck between my nail beds, ink-stained palms. All of this is always on my gratitude list and I hope to never take it for granted again.

When I was active, I had the unfortunate witness of my mother losing her motor functions until she could not walk. There were no new paintings or crafts, no more short stories on our shared computer; the woman who wanted to be a writer, then, persistently trying to re-learn how to sign her name. So, no, I don't forget to thank my higher power for the gift of movement and creativity every day. To use the gifts we were given was something that was instilled in me as a child when my father made us take the stairs instead of the escalator because we could. It's ironic that it took me entering a 12-step program, to learn yet again that there is action in gratitude.

During my using days, I wished that art would be enough to keep me sober. I saw my father rely on music to get through the rough times, and my brother, a writer and a reader—I saw both leaning on “appropriate” coping skills to get by. Why didn't those coping mechanisms work for me? I painted, I journaled, and I saved 100 empty, scraped clean bags to “create a masterpiece” (that I was too afraid to glue onto the canvas “just in case”). But yet, there I was lying to my therapist again, and unable to stop using heroin. I needed something beyond just a reason to stop using, beyond normal methods so I took the stairs, 12 of them. And it worked. I was happy for the first time in my life and enjoying every second of it; but for some reason, I didn't create.

Maybe it was because I was having too much fun with my sober friends that there wasn't enough time, or maybe it was because I connected art with heroin, maybe I was just afraid to see what my art would be now that I was sober and didn't have heroin to write about. Whatever the answer, it doesn't matter, I stopped. For a while. Which is hard to imagine, as it's always been a big part of who I am. Don't get me wrong, I still tried, I still wrote, I got more into the habit of journaling, I even took a commitment as graphic design chair for a convention, and I painted...but secretly. I was embarrassed of it, which meant I was embarrassed of myself. The fear of self-expression wasn't new, but I became resentful that even after the steps, I was still afraid people wouldn't like who I was. It wasn't until, as with most things in my life, that I endured a tremendous amount of pain that I was able to turn myself around again, hokey-pokey style. HA taught me that it's never too late to start again (I already knew the hokey-pokey). I started being true to myself and opening up to people, saying what I was interested in. I learned to really let people in; everyone, not just my sponsor.



I remain grateful for those in the room that reminded me of myself be true. Grateful, for those who show up as themselves unapologetically. It is because of these people that when I turned around to a friend and fellow artist in the program and said "I'm just not feeling good, not feeling like myself. Like a fraud." He could know me well enough to say that it's like that with us creatives, that without painting or art we start to lose ourselves; it's in our blood. So I took suggestions and found myself in my art again, except this time I liked the person I saw staring back. They weren't the strung-out junkie anymore, she was herself again. I became more confident and met other creatives like me who pray in paint and music. Who lit the flame so that when again I fell into a rut I could have more ways to harness my emotions, rather than acting poorly. I eventually went back to school and started an art side-hustle. I became a creative writing minor to still get some creative output during school. Just like HA, I learn, I remain willing to grow, make mistakes, and turn around again. Art points me towards my higher power, and it's not a coincidence most of art history features Gods. True, it was never enough to keep me sober, but it was enough to open a connection within me and within others to point me back to the god within me. Sometimes I listen to podcasts that feature famous artists, and all of them talk of the spiritual realm and spiritual side of art. How lucky am I (are we) to experience that not just through creativity, but also through the fellowship of Heroin Anonymous that continues to inspire me every day.

## B I G G E R

BIGGER THAN THE HUMAN MIND POSSIBLY  
COMPREHENDS

LARGER THAN THE IDEA OF WHAT LIMITED  
THINKING UNDERSTANDS.

THE MORE I TRY TO FIGURE OUT  
THE LESS I SEEM TO KNOW ABOUT  
THE INFINITE ENTIRETY

IN COMPARISON TO ALL OF ME  
BUT A TINY SPEC OF A STROKE ON THE  
PAINTING  
WISDOM

THE EXPERIENCE IS MISSED IN THE WAITING  
THE MEANING OF THIS WILL COME TO THOSE  
WHO STAY THE COURSE OF WINDY ROADS  
THE TRUTH OF THIS NO ONE TRULY KNOWS  
WHAT IS CLEAR  
IS IT IS  
BIGGER THAN ME.

- JEROME





# Art Contributions From Our Members



## Keeping The Static At Bay - Walter

As I've progressed through the program, it has brought a glow to my soul. Being able to record & create songs, lyrics and poetry have helped brighten that glow immensely. Looking back at my active addiction days the only thing I made was pure unadulterated destruction. All my creativity was dead and buried. It seemed it would never be unearthed or flourish ever again. Now that I'm sober, clear-headed, and at peace with myself, my creativity has reawakened and is thriving.

To me, creativity gives my life another realm of meaning and fulfillment. I've met so many people in recovery that are talented in painting, drawing, computers, building, designing, writing, musicianship, and more. It's amazing. Creating and recording my music helps me work through many things whether I'm happy, sad, angry, psychotic, insane, or plain weird. It's a blessing that I can use creativity as another tool to keep clean and sober and grow as a person. It's also a blessing to be surrounded and supported by so many people with talents. I believe any of us can create something to express what's in our hearts and soul. If you don't think so, just give it a try. It's a beautiful thing that helps keep the static at bay.

# Announcements & Upcoming Events



HALIA'S ANNUAL  
"FORKS UP SPOONS DOWN" BBQ  
**SATURDAY, AUGUST 13TH**

**2 PM FOR THE BBQ**

**4 PM FOR THE MEETING**

Come on down for a  
day of **FOOD, FUN &  
FELLOWSHIP**



Out of state speaker, water balloon fight,  
tie dyeing t-shirts & more!

To be held at  
Heckscher State Park Field 1, East Islip  
All are welcome!

## Traditions Corner

### SEVENTH TRADITION

"Every H.A. group ought to be fully self-supporting, declining outside contributions."

# Want to get more involved?



**HA AREA  
MEETS THE THIRD  
THURSDAY OF THE  
MONTH AT 9:30PM  
5 MAPLE ST.  
BLUE POINT**

**Help our fellowship grow,  
have your voice heard &  
enjoy free snacks**

## NEW MEETING

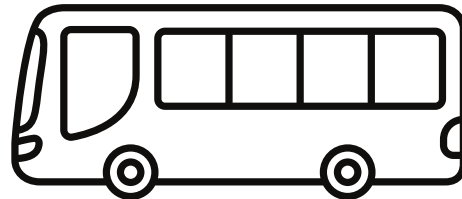
### "The Bus Stop"

7:00PM - Monday

Long Island Breakthrough Chapel

3723 Rt. 112

Coram



"The Horse's Mouth" is a bulletin sent bi-monthly with the purpose to maintain communication, of our fellowship's growth, keeping members informed of recent HA business, and requesting input on important matters from members.

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, containing no more than 400 words, depicting your experience, strength, and hope with addiction to

[THEHORSESMOUTH.HA@GMAIL.COM](mailto:THEHORSESMOUTH.HA@GMAIL.COM)