

THE TWELFTH STEP

NEWS GRAM

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JOY & PAIN LOSS & GAIN

By Norma Jean L.
Chicago, Illinois, USA

2020 was a year of pain, confusion and utter heartbreak. It was for me and countless others. The world as we knew it shut down on March 13, 2020 as the deadly virus raged around the world. For a while my life was centered on watching numbers. I watched how many cases were reported, how many deaths locally and globally, the percentage of infected rise daily and the phase of closure we were currently in. I became obsessed with the daily updates from the white house, our governor and our mayor on the state of the chaos. On March 17 I still carried out my civic duty as coordinator in the presidential primary election. My new grandbaby Sevyn was born that day. My sponsor and I have worked the election for many years. We compared notes and funny stories throughout the day via phone calls and text messages.

On March 20 we had a deep conversation on what my next level of service would be. My term as WSC delegate had come to an end and I felt the need to take a short break. She told me I had a wealth of information and knowledge to share and it was my responsibility to carry the message...forever! She always gently suggested service for me by saying "you would make a great _____." Whatever was open to be filled. We talked again on the 23rd of March as she sang happy anniversary to me two days early which was odd. She said she needed to sing it to me right then.

On Friday morning the 27th of March my sponsor's mother Marie called me and asked me to pray for Vanessa J. because she was hospitalized on oxygen down in Peoria, Illinois. This information troubled me tremendously. Not 15 minutes later she called me back and said Vanessa was being put on the ventilator. My heart sank but I tried to remain hopeful and prayerful. I checked in with Marie daily only to hear "no change, keep praying". Marie and I plotted on ways to sneak in to the hospital. She missed her only child and I missed my friend. The doctors tried taking

Vanessa off the ventilator but her oxygen dropped immediately and had to be put back on. I petitioned everyone I knew for healing prayers for my friend. On April 8th Marie died in her sleep. I felt like the wind had been knocked out of me. She must have died from a broken heart. I believed Marie was going to Vanessa and tell her to fight or come and rest. Three days later the answer was clear. On April 11th the doctors said they could do no more for Vanessa. Her lungs had deteriorated beyond repair from the ventilator. It was time to say goodbye. I video called her husband while he was with her. I asked him to put the phone to her ear and I spoke my last words of unconditional and undying love to my sponsor, my sister, my best friend, my mother, my daughter, my road dawg, my roomie, my mentor, my confidant, my sounding board, my biggest supporter and my own personal cheerleader. She fought the good fight. She touched so many lives all around this world. She was loved by everyone she met. That evening around 7:30 they removed the ventilator and Vanessa graduated from this program and went to be with her higher power. Job well done, good and faithful servant. My heart began to bleed.

On April 19th I contracted the corona virus and fought for my life for weeks. Thank God for praying family and friends, the program of Cocaine Anonymous, the Fellowship and the 12th Step. As I lay in that hospital bed all I could think of was my strong desire for grace and mercy to continue to carry the message of hope. "I'm not done yet God. I am your servant and I have so much more to give." I thought of my last conversation with Vanessa. I could hear her saying, "God could and would if He were sought. Fight Norma Jean!" One day at a time I began to get stronger being motivated by the knowledge and power of the 12th Step. I had a spiritual experience right in that bed. I must continue the good fight.

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When was the last time you reviewed your Area contact info on the ca.org website?

Is the phone number on the Telephone Directory page correct for your Area?

Is the website address for your Area correct?

<https://ca.org/meetings/>

If you see any discrepancies, please ask your Area Delegate to provide the updated information to WSO.

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(The A.A. Book *Alcoholics Anonymous*, the book *Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions*, the books *Hope Faith & Courage Volume I*, *Hope Faith & Courage Volume II* and *A Quiet Peace* are used with permission.)

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TWELVE STEPPING A COUNTRY

By Nadya F.
St. Petersburg, Russia

I will start with the end.

In March 2020 we celebrated 11th anniversary of C.A. Russia in St. Petersburg.

For the moment there are two C.A. groups in St. Petersburg, one of them provides seven offline meetings per week, the other - two online five offline meetings per week. We started online meetings during the pandemic in March 2020 and it really was amazing. There were Russian speaking members from different Russian regions and abroad visiting our meetings, and we also set numerous speaking meetings with foreign speakers, and that went really great!

Though C.A. Russia has existed for 11 years already, it is still young.

It's quite evident that there were A.A. and N.A. groups in St Petersburg for decades before and our first members came from there 11 years ago.

First there were three to four people who came from parallel 12 Steps programs and decided to start C.A. in St. Petersburg. They got some help with C.A. materials from abroad - huge amount of *HFC* books translated into Russian (only God knows who translated that and passed to us, the translation is not approved by WSO still yet), preambles and some English pamphlets.

I have no idea who passed this huge portion of *HFC* books to us but we would not have grown as a Fellowship without them. At the same time, it caused some misunderstandings - people here are not familiar with royalties procedure and we don't sell this book - anyone can get it for free as I can remember. Sometimes we sold it during our conventions for the last three years and just put the money to 7 Tradition. It reflects greatly how good willing yet maybe uninformed we've been. Sure, it's cool to have all these books, but it's a total mess at this point yet.

But let's get back to the actual growth of C.A. Russia.

For a long time there were three to five people attending the meeting which was on seven days a week. But some six years ago the quantity of members started to grow. It was a time when I started going to C.A. meetings and I became a real witness of our Fellowship growth and development. Before I was going everywhere - N.A., A.A., C.A.... just not to stay lonely. And I discovered that there was a special atmosphere at C.A. meetings that attracted me and some other people. So, we were expanding, annual C.A. anniversaries in the beginning of March turned into conventions during the last three to four years.

Our first international visitors were this English couple from Cambridge in 2016, they came through St. Petersburg on a personal trip and found our C.A. meetings. I had the honor to translate their shares and everyone who was in the room was much touched by their stories.

Due to WSO support, starting 2017 we invited different C.A. members from Europe and England to share at our annual conventions and got their experience with gratitude and respect.

Russian C.A. members showed live interest to the Fellowship developing and we started Area meetings monthly, we elected servants to the most significant positions: area chair, delegate, H & I chair, and PI chair.

By the way we went to hospitals and rehabs long before the H&I meetings were set (approx. in 2017-2018), we are following this nice tradition with pleasure and enthusiasm for a long time already (before the lockdown of course). This is our primary purpose and we love it.

In 2019 some fellows from Moscow started C.A. there but it didn't catch on, so they closed, and I hope one day it would be running there again.

In 2019 me as an area chair and our delegate went to the Regional Assembly in Berlin and later on I went to the World convention in Stockholm.

What can I say... Foreign experience is priceless, I'm grateful I could go there...the original C.A. spirit and atmosphere definitely were there and I brought it back and carried the C.A. spirit to our Russian C.A. members. We even translated into Russian a workshop booklet from the Stockholm World Convention and discussed it once a week during several months after our meetings. It brought hope and unity to us at that time and it was just amazing!

In autumn 2020 I left my area chair position in St. Petersburg and moved to Warsaw, Poland.

Though it's a rough time now, I go to online C.A. meetings and have some online service, I hope when this pandemic is over, I'll find like-minded people and we will start C.A. in Poland.

Good luck to us all.

Meanwhile I enjoy online meetings and surf all over the world!

Today I may call myself a grateful C.A. member, I found my sponsor there, my freedom and my hope.

MA VOLONTÉ DE SURVIVRE / MY WILLINGNESS TO SURVIVE

Par: Claudine S.
Montréal, Québec, Canada

Je m'appelle Claudine, et je suis alcoolique et toxicomane.

En disant ces mots tous les jours, je fais constamment ma première étape. Je m'identifierai toujours ainsi pour ne pas perdre de vue la raison pour laquelle je suis en rétablissement et pourquoi il est si important de suivre ce simple programme. Au début, je voulais simplement arrêter.

Quand éventuellement j'ai été complètement vaincu, j'avais deux choix. Le premier était de mettre ma vie en danger et le deuxième était de demander de l'aide. Je suis ici maintenant, alors j'ai pris le peu de fierté qu'il me restait et je suis allé demander de l'aide à ma famille. Ils m'ont accueilli comme on accueille un nouveau dans les réunions. Pas de jugement, pas de haine, juste des bras ouverts et beaucoup d'amour.

Ensuite, j'ai eu une liste de réunions des Cocaïnomanes anonymes, car à l'époque, je pensais seulement que j'avais un problème de drogue et en aucun cas j'étais alcoolique, même si je buvais toujours. Je suis entré dans une salle de réunion le 21 juillet 2014 à 12h. Quelqu'un m'a serré la main, m'a donné une chaise et un café (je ne sais pas pour toi, mais je trouve que le café dans les salles est délicieux). Je me suis assise et j'ai pleuré. Je n'avais aucune idée des étapes, des traditions, de la prière de la sérénité et je ne pouvais pas plus m'en foutre de Dieu. Je savais simplement que je me libérais de quelque chose et je me sentais bien, malgré toute la noirceur qui m'entourait.

J'ai pris mon jeton du nouveau et j'ai continué mon chemin. Je buvais toujours, mais je me disais que c'était bien parce que ce n'était qu'une ou deux bières et que je ne prenais pas de drogues. C'était bien jusqu'à ce que ça ne le soit plus et que je doive arrêter complètement.

J'étais saoule assise sur le trottoir d'un dépanneur à 3h30 du matin et j'avais 20\$ dans ma main. J'avais deux choix, appeler mon dealer, ou appeler un membre. J'ai appelé le membre.

Le 23 août 2014, j'ai pris un autre jeton du nouveau et j'ai vraiment admis que j'étais impuissante face à l'alcool et toutes autres substances qui altèrent le comportement. Je voulais faire n'importe quoi pour rester sobre, je n'étais pas prête pour toute cette histoire

de Dieu ou de Puissance Supérieure, mais j'ai continué à revenir et j'étais dans les réunions tous les jours. Je faisais du café, je préparais les salles, je donnais la main à tout le monde, je me suis délaissé de certains amis, je rendais des comptes à ma famille tous les jours de mes dépenses et de mes déplacements, mais l'essentiel est que je restais sobre.

Finalement, la douleur en moi a commencé à disparaître, mais j'avais besoin de quelque chose de plus, de quelque chose de puissant. Tu te demandes peut-être quelle est cette chose ? Et bien c'est Dieu tel que je le conçois ou une puissance supérieure à moi-même. Ceci, mon ami, est la clé de l'équilibre dans ma vie. Sans ma puissance supérieure, je ne serais pas là aujourd'hui. Petit à petit, j'ai commencé ma relation avec ma puissance supérieure qui a évolué vers quelque chose de si beau et de si magique et chaque jour, cette merveilleuse relation continue de grandir.

Pourquoi ? Parce que je prie, parce que chaque matin je demande à mon Dieu de décider de ma journée, parce que lorsque je pense que je fais quelque chose de mal, je demande tout de suite le pardon. Parce que sans Dieu, je serais une âme perdue. Je suis impuissante devant tant de choses et en ne contrôlant pas ce qui se passe, j'accepte ce qui se présente à moi. Sans Dieu, je suis en colère, pleine de ressentiment, effrayée et hors de contrôle. Je médite tous les jours ; je refais mes étapes avec le gros livre avec un être humaine merveilleuse qui me montre qui je peux être et me guide. Je m'implique dans les fraternités, je suis RSG, j'accueille le nouveau et l'ancien parce que ce simple programme a été conçu pour l'alcoolique ou le toxicomane qui souffre encore. Je partage ce que j'ai appris et j'écoute ce que les autres disent. Par la grâce de mon Dieu, j'ai appris à être responsable, à prendre soin de moi, à être reconnaissante et surtout à être sobre. Sans ce programme spirituel, je n'aurais pas été capable de survivre à 2020. Quand je pense à tout ce que la fraternité m'a donné, je ne peux qu'être reconnaissante et remplie de gratitude.

Ils disent "êtes-vous prêt à tout faire pour vous rétablir ?". Oui, je l'étais et je le suis toujours. Les promesses se réalisent si vous y travaillez toujours un jour à la fois.

Articles in the NewsGram express the individual
opinions of C.A. members
and not necessarily Cocaine Anonymous.

WHAT THE 12TH STEP MEANS TO ME

By Ryan P.
Lombard, Illinois, USA

My name is Ryan and I'm an addict. That was a hard thing to say for a long time, but now I'm grateful and proud to be an addict. Sound weird, let me explain. I drank and used drugs in excess. There was a time when this little escape was fun and helped me feel like I fit it. "I had arrived" as Bill W. says in the Big Book of *Alcoholics Anonymous*. But drugs and alcohol weren't my problem, they were my solution. You see I was empty inside and searching for something. Everything I tried to fill this vast hole with just disappear. I was finally given the gift of desperation that beat me into reasonableness. I became willing. All you members of C.A., and A.A., accepted me with open arms. I thought it was a scam, they'll ask for money or some favor, just wait. But you just wanted to tell me your story, let me know I'm not alone and help guide me on my way.

For this, I will be forever grateful. As I found a sponsor who had what I want and started to work through Steps out of the Big Book of *Alcoholics Anonymous* and *Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions*, I

started to get better. Physically I felt better, emotional I was healing and growing. But most importantly I was finding a power by which to live that could fill that hole inside me. I started to trust the 12 Step program and its fellows. I begin to gain faith in a Higher Power that had provided spiritual experiences. Then, as I looked back, I realized that I had a spiritual awakening. This process took many years, but it happened. My obsession for drugs and alcohol was lifted and I was a useful member of my family, friend circle, work and society.

This only happened because other addicts were willing to give to me what was so freely given to them. So now, I know, to keep what I have received I must give it away. I strive to do so daily, as we only have a daily reprieve. Most days I could do better, but I continue to try and evolve. "Faith without works is dead." So, keeping believing, keep connecting and keep giving away what you have learned to the next fellow.

JOY & PAIN LOSS & GAIN

By Norma Jean L.
Chicago, Illinois, USA

(Continued from page 1)

I needed to trust and have faith that God was not done with me yet. God has added another experience to my testimony. He is going to continue using me to carry a message of Hope, Faith, Courage and endless possibilities. I have lost so many loved ones to this virus and the disease of addiction. In the midst of all this uncertainty God has sent me three angels, Kimberly R.S., Brenda P., Lisa R., to help trudge the road to happy destiny. He also sent me another angel, Patrice F., to continue helping me in my journey.

Thank you Vanessa J., for guiding me through the 12 Steps and being my angel for 26 years. Thank you God for the spiritual awakening. Thank you God for giving me a purpose in the 12th Step. Thank you for allowing me to survive the polio virus, the disease of addiction and covid-19. Thank you for saving me again like you did that last time, and the time before that and the other time before that time and the one before that one...

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MY WILLINGNESS TO SURVIVE / MA VOLONTÉ DE SURVIVRE

By Claudine S.
Montréal, Québec, Canada

My name is Claudine, and I am an alcoholic and a drug addict.

By saying these words everyday, I am constantly doing my First Step. I will always identify myself that way to not lose track of why I am in recovery and why it is so important to work this simple program. At first, I just wanted to stop.

When suddenly I was defeated, I had two choices. I could either was to take my life away or I could ask for help. I am here now so I took the little pride I had left and went to see my family for help. They welcomed me like we welcome a newcomer in the rooms: no judgement, no hate, just some opens arms and lots of love.

Next thing I knew I had a meeting list from Cocaine Anonymous, because back then I only thought that I had a drug problem and in no way was I an alcoholic even if I was always drinking. I stepped into a meeting room on July 21st, 2014 at 12pm. Someone shook my hand, gave me a chair and a coffee (don't know about you but I find that the coffee in the rooms is actually very delicious). I sat there and cried. I had no clue about the Steps, the Traditions, the serenity prayer and I could not care less about God. I just knew that I was being released of something and it felt good, even with all the darkness around me.

I took my newcomer chip and went on my way. I was still drinking but I was thinking it was ok because it was only one or two beers and that I didn't take drugs. It was ok until It wasn't and I needed to stop.

I was drunk on the side of a convenient store at 3:30 in the morning and I had \$20 in my hand. I had two choices: call my drug dealer, or call a sober friend. I called the sober friend.

On August 23rd, 2014 I took another newcomer chip and really admitted that I was powerless over alcohol and other mind-altering substances. I wanted to do anything in order to stay sober. I wasn't ready for that whole God or Higher Power thing, but I kept coming back and I was in the rooms every single day,

making coffee, stetting up the rooms, shaking hands with everyone. I've let go of some old friends, I reported to my family every day about my spending and my whereabouts but the main thing is that I was staying sober.

Eventually the pain inside of me started to go away but I needed something more, something powerful and what is that you may ask? It's called God as I see him or a Higher Power. That my friend is the key to a balance in my life. Without my Higher Power I wouldn't be here today. Little by little I started this relationship with my Higher Power that evolved into something so beautiful and magical and every day this wonderful relation keeps on growing.

Why?

Because I pray, because every morning I ask my God to decide on my day, because when I think I'm doing something wrong I ask for forgiveness right away. Because without God I would be a lost soul. I'm powerless over so many things and by not controlling what's happening I am accepting what is coming my way. Without God I'm mad, resentful, scared and out of control. I meditate every day; I'm redoing my Steps with the Big Book of *Alcoholics Anonymous* with a wonderful human being who's showing me who I can be. I'm involved into the Fellowship, I'm a GSR, I welcome the newcomer and the old timer because this simple program was made for the alcoholic or drug addict who still suffers. I share what I've learned, and I listen to what others are saying. By the grace of My God I have learned to be responsible, caring and be grateful and mostly I'm sober. If not for this spiritual program I would have not been able to survive 2020. When I'm thinking about everything the Fellowship has giving me, I can only be grateful and truly happy.

They say "are you willing to go to any length?" Yes, I was and yes, I am. The promises do come true if you work it one day at a time.

**NEWSGRAM THEME
NEXT EDITION**

BEING OF SERVICE

DEADLINE:

APRIL 16TH 2021

ORGANIZING A HYBRID MEETING

By: Matt R.

Calgary, Alberta, Canada

What is a Hybrid Meeting? A hybrid C.A. meeting is one in which some of the attendees are in-person and other attendees join using video conferencing (a virtual meeting). We spent some time over the weekend at the North American P.I. Summit to look at how different groups have been operating their hybrid meetings, and this is a collaboration of what we've found!

Connectivity and Power Before you decide as a group to begin operating in a hybrid setting, there are some initial barriers to cross. This includes some essential technology and facilities. There needs to be some strong considerations to allow members to feel comfortable with bridging the gap into the online world, and to make the online members feel as welcome as the in-person attendees.

Connectivity and Power Are Required: First and foremost, you will need access to some form of power, and a stable internet connection (ideally using Wi-Fi). If a location is able to provide the internet and power needed to run equipment, this will make the process much easier to accomplish! You will also need a Laptop (or Tablet) capable of hosting a dependable virtual conferencing account. There are a number of accessible options for video conferencing, this can be decided upon at the group-level.

Audio: It goes without saying, that we also want our online participants to be heard while sharing as well, this requires a speaker or sound bar that can connect to your device, to allow virtual sharing to be heard by the room.

Suggested Additional Equipment includes: a **USB Camera** (Potentially two, you can use the laptop/tablet for one), to be able to show whoever is speaking at the podium, and also to be able to show the room. This allows connectivity for the online users to feel like they're in-person. An **Omnidirectional Microphone** is also recommended, this ensures sound quality for the online users to hear the in-person speakers, and the control to mute the microphone when switching to online sharing. Lastly, a **Monitor, Display or Projector** that can show our in-person members who's joined us in the meeting online.

Meeting Considerations: With us entering this new world of how we have to approach our meetings under this current global situation, Hybrid (or online-only) meetings have allowed our fellowship to continue to operate when we're unable for some or all of our members to attend in person.

A reminder that **Anonymity** is the spiritual foundation of all of our Traditions, we need to consider the potential implications of hosting a meeting online. Our in-person attendees should agree to the hybrid meeting, or have a space in the room where their anonymity will not be compromised. Adapting a **Modified Meeting Format** allows groups to add disclaimers for both our in-person and online members to understand that our anonymity may be compromised at the public level, and how we can maintain that while operating on an online platform. This can include: Allowing online members to keep their cameras off, a spot beside the podium to share where they won't be seen on camera, and a reminder to introduce ourselves on a first-name basis only. A reminder that the host may mute all participants, as to not distract our in-person and virtual members can be added in the format as a reminder to unmute yourself only while sharing. Per the WSC IT Committee, this Sixth Tradition disclaimer should be added into the meeting format; **C.A. is not allied with any sect, denomination, politics, organization, or institution and as such does not endorse and is not affiliated with any specific technology providers utilized to facilitate this meeting.**

As hybrid meetings continue to grow, our online presence will too. With keeping with our Traditions, and allowing our online participants to be as involved as our in-person members, the group should consider how to collect the **7th Tradition** for virtual members as well. Hosting a hybrid meeting will bring on additional costs, and it's important to consider this in creating one. There are a number of available platforms to collect from our virtual participants and can be decided at a group-level.

We must also remember; our primary purpose is to carry the message to the addict that still suffers. We need to still include our virtual members as we would if they were in person. Some considerations can be to include a **Virtual Parking Lot** for newcomers or those struggling to ask questions, exchange numbers, or connect with a sponsor after the meeting. **Sponsorship** is still vital for those who cannot attend in-person, it is suggested to adjust the meeting formats to remind members who are willing to sponsor, to consider putting their number into the chat, or to speak with a virtual member looking for a sponsor after the meeting.

(Continued on page 8)

ORGANIZING A HYBRID MEETING

By: Matt R.
Calgary, Alberta, Canada

(Continued from page 7)

The ability to **Screen Share Readings/Announcements** can make it easier for online participants to easily read, or understand any important information presented at the group-level. We can also provide access to an online **Literature Report** and instructions on how to access our pamphlets on the CA.org website. In celebrating milestones, it is important to recognize these while our members come up to take chips. This can be done through **Virtual Chips** and recognizing those online in the process of giving our chips in-person or potentially mailing physical chips to virtual attendees who pass milestones.

There are a number of variants that can be decided as a group, but we believe these are essential considerations to ensure that we are still looking at all participants as if they were in the rooms with us.

With adding this technology, it will also create additional service opportunities for members to help with online operations. We have considered these options for **Trusted Servants** to help streamline our online efforts:

Ideally the meeting would need a chairperson, in person monitor and a separate virtual meeting host and a cohort.

- **Chairperson** – Will conduct the meeting in person as per meeting format.

- **In Person Monitor** – Makes sure in person and virtual stay connected.
- **Virtual host** – Should verify the Internet connection and equipment are functioning prior to the start of the meeting. Depending on the agreed upon procedure the virtual host may be responsible for admitting virtual attendees.
- **Virtual Cohost** – Backup host to prevent online meeting from crashing, monitor security, muting, etc.

It is essential that if it is decided to offer an online platform, that the meeting does not go dark without warning, just as we ensure that doesn't happen in person. Technology issues are bound to happen, but these practices can help ensure we do not lose our virtual members while we conduct our meetings.

We're continuing to see growth in our meetings online, and this has been a widely discussed topic. We hope that this has answered some questions you may have about entering the world of hybrid meetings, with the uncertain future of the stability of our in-person opportunities, this format allows us to continue to reach the still suffering addict as we tread through these troubling times.

A reminder, that each group is autonomous and these are merely suggestions. It is important to consider the viability of being able to host an online/hybrid meeting, along with the potential costs and barriers to move through while looking to operate online.

HIGH ON H&I

By Norma Jean L.
Chicago, Illinois, USA

I was all set to start my newest H&I service work on March 16, 2020. The world around me had shut down that Friday the 13th, how ironic was that. I called the treatment center to inquire if they would allow volunteers to still come in. To my dismay they were closed as well. H&I is the lifeblood of this Fellowship. We need to constantly reach out to the new man with a helping hand and a message of hope. My idea of a perfect world is there would be no need for H&I because no one would be using drugs anymore. That world exists only in my mystical, magical mind. I was a little concerned in the beginning of the shut down about the future of H&I and C.A. as well. But that was before Zooming started booming. Thank God for Zoom and all other virtual platforms.

The corona virus may have shut down treatment facilities, recovery homes and jails to H&I but it has not shut down the messenger carrying the message of Hope, Faith, and Courage. The pandemic

has caused an increase in addiction. People are depressed and despair and hopelessness has set in globally. This is incredibly sad to me. I know I must work even harder to reach God's people who are lost and in the dark. It is my responsibility and an honor to have been chosen by my Higher Power to do this service to my fellow man.

With this God given platform, I can be at a men's recovery home in Peoria, IL in the morning and in Moreno Valley in the afternoon and on to Las Vegas that night. I can even pop into the U.K. at any time day or night 24/7. Guess what guys, I can travel all over the world in my pajamas and my bare feet. This zooming has saved me gas money, plane fare and wearing my mask I am saving on lipstick. God knew just what we needed to keep H&I alive and the Fellowship going strong and by golly it is working! I am grateful to God doing for me, what I cannot do for myself. I am forever high on H&I

STEP 12 BEING OF SERVICE FOR OUR FELLOW MAN...

By Richard L.
Northampton, United Kingdom

I first found the answer to freedom from the grips of addiction by another man practicing the principles of the 12 Step program. By this time I had become a slave to addiction and totally controlled by what I now know was the obsession to use and the craving for more which beat into a state where I became open to listen and willing to do what is necessary for victory over drug addiction. I had ended up a very confused, sad, and lonely man who was lost in addiction. There were times when I would think of my life and the times I had wasted, especially when I would see old friends and how their lives had moved forward. It would be so upsetting I would sink into depression and misery; more drugs would help me seek oblivion.

I had lots of vain attempts at trying to pull away from the force of addiction and would only get so far before I was pulled back into the vacuum and be back on the wheel of using daily. That daily grind of getting and using, more harm to others, more crime, more fear, more paranoia etc.

I had become an addict of the type, that no matter how much I tried on my own thinking to get clean and move away from the powerful, cunning, baffling features of addiction my attempts would fail. My will (thinking) was insufficient.

It was a very demoralizing situation to find oneself in, although with the gift of hindsight very necessary, for I needed to reach this point if I was ever going to really surrender to the 12 Step program. That was the First Step. To surrender, to stop fighting. My surrender started with the gift of desperation.

Twenty years of drug abuse had taken me to a place in life I never wish to return, mentally, physically, emotionally broken!

That emotional turmoil took me to my first meeting in Chelsea and as soon as I walked into the room I felt safe and welcomed. I listened to the main share, then others sharing back and can't remember what or who shared but what I can remember was how I felt at my first 12 Step meeting. I felt compassion, understanding and love from people who did not know me, but they knew why I was there in that room that evening. I went back to more meetings over the next few nights and continued to feel love and care from fellow addicts. It was the feeling of not being alone and that there were people who understood me that kept me going back.

My experience was from hopelessness came hope. Sitting in the rooms gave me a break from the madness, which was so necessary; the meetings were and still are a place of sanctuary for me.

I wouldn't share I would just like to listen, until

one day I could not live with the pain any longer and I opened my voice and the last few years of my addiction came pouring out. It was a very emotional experience getting in touch with how the illness had manifested in my life and the pain I had caused myself and others... I can remember after the meeting people approached me and took me for some food, more acts of love which carried the message to me. These people cared about me....

A guy took me outside the restaurant and proceeded to share his story with me. He carried a vision to me that night, and I left thinking to myself for the first time that there really is a way out of this hell hole! I continued going to meetings over the next week or so while continuing to use and would here "keep coming back, welcome, how are you, glad you are here." These words would have impact and it was so instrumental in my early attempts at breaking free from the grips of addiction. Knowing that I was not alone and there were people who understood the nature of addiction and who wanted the best for me and would tell me to "keep coming back."

A few weeks later after getting to many meetings I was detoxing in a crisis unit in London where I was introduced to the 12 Step program of Cocaine Anonymous and a man who was fully armed with the facts about himself.

He carried to me on that day a story very similar to mine and I knew this man had an answer to my problem, his story carried weight and depth. He asked me if I was licked and willing to go to any lengths to recover. I was willing to do anything! He started to get me to read the Big Book of *Alcoholics Anonymous* from the very first page where it states that this book tells the story of thousands who have recovered from alcoholism (drug addiction). He suggested I swap alcohol for heroin or crack if this helped me identify with the nature of addiction.

I read the preface and forewords and was filled with hope. I then continued to read the book, I remember reading the *Doctor's Opinion*, and it simply blew my mind!! I believed in this great man's opinion regarding the allergy theory... the phenomenon of craving and that this is a sickness, it made so much sense. I then continued on reading the next seven chapters and continuing to identify with the illness and finding that the solution is spiritual and that I need to find a God of my understanding and that if I go through the 12 Steps I will find this power within me.

(Continued on page 10)

STEP 12 BEING OF SERVICE FOR OUR FELLOW MAN...

By Richard L.
Northampton, United Kingdom

(Continued from page 9)

Very early in my recovery it was suggested to pray, and I started to pray thanking God for helping me in my life and for keeping me clean today. I was always grateful for being clean and sober. I was taken through the Steps by my sponsor page by page of the Big Book of *Alcoholics Anonymous* sharing experiences, strengths and hopes with each other.

I surrendered at Step 1, fully conceded that I am an addict and at Step 2 I was willing to believe that a power could restore me to sanity. We then got on our knees and turned our will and our lives over to the care of God as I understood that word, saying out loud the Third Step Prayer...

My Step 4 was completed in two days and I shared it with my sponsor on day three. He then directed me to the book reviewing the first five Steps and I was entirely ready to have God remove all my defects of character and said the Step 7 prayer. It was at this moment I knew that the obsession had been removed. I felt totally at peace and ease with everything. I felt connected to all, it was an experience I am so grateful for I had come to believe that a power greater could restore me to sanity. I had a spiritual experience of the profound kind I then proceeded with the rest of the steps and started to move into the amends process my family, friends, employers, court fines, girlfriends and started to experience the Step 9 Promises, knowing a new freedom and a new happiness. We will not regret the past, nor wish to shut the door on it. We will lose

interest in selfish things and gain interest in our fellows etc.

I now started to realize that the program was working in my life and that I had a message to carry and give away. I started to sponsor actively and have continued to over the last five years and what a beautiful experience it has been. Being of service is how I continue to live this life, a clean and sober life filled with Hope, Faith and Courage.

I have so much going on in my life today, I have travelled, have some wonderful friends, have my family all back in my life (my father and grandmother passed away last year) they both watched their son, grandson get clean and start to fulfil his dreams and capabilities. I have a great job and have been studying for three years moving in a positive direction continuing to live a day at a time trying when possible to share my experience, strength, and hope.

All this has happened as a result of the 12 Step program and some willing members being of service and sharing their experience, strength, and hope.

"Cling to the thought that, in God's hands, the dark past is the greatest possession you have-the key to life and happiness for others. With it you can avert death and misery for them." Big Book of *Alcoholics Anonymous* p. 124

CELEBRATE AROUND THE WORLD

Are you talented? Are you creative? Your Fellowship needs you!

CAWSC Unity Committee is looking for artwork and logo for its **Celebrate Around the World 2022**.

Artwork must contain:

- The C.A. logo, it cannot touch any of the lines throughout the artwork, whether inside or outside
- It must contain the "Celebrate Around the World 2022"
- Plus a theme. Since this year's theme was connected to the Texas CAWS Convention we are asking you create one of your own, thoughtful and creative. Can be reflective of this past year
- Deadline Friday September 3rd, 2021

Please send submissions to Pamelagriffith2002@yahoo.com, doo@ca.org, and Unity@ca.org

We will send you a release form once we receive your submission and every submission will go into archives

CAWSO
c/o CAWSC UNITY COMMITTEE
21720 S. Wilmington Ave. Suite 304
Long Beach, CA 90810 USA

NewsGram Editorial Policy

The NewsGram publishes articles that reflect the full diversity of experience and opinion found within the Fellowship of Cocaine Anonymous. No one viewpoint or philosophy dominates its pages, and in determining the editorial content, the editors rely on the principles of the Twelve Steps, Twelve Traditions, and the Twelve Concepts. The heart of The NewsGram is in the shared experience of individual C.A. members working the C.A. program and applying the spiritual principles of the Twelve Steps. Yet what works for one individual or C.A. group may not always work for another. For this reason, from month to month, articles may be published that appear to contradict one another. Seeking neither to gloss over difficult issues, nor to present such issues in a harmful or contentious manner, The NewsGram tries to embody the widest possible view of the C.A. Fellowship.

The Charter of the World Service Conference guarantees The NewsGram editor the right to accept or reject material for publication. The NewsGram staff members evaluate articles and, while some editing is done for purposes of clarity, styling, length and content, the editors encourage all writers to express their own experience in their own unique way.

Articles are not intended to be statements of C.A. policy, nor does publication of any article constitute endorsement by either Cocaine Anonymous or The NewsGram. Articles are invited, although no payment can be made nor can material be returned.



**PUT YOUR
SERVICE
SHOES
ON!**

The WSCIT COMMITTEE NEEDS YOU!!!

Exciting news C.A. is continuing work on an app for our Fellowship! We are looking for your ideas and input to find out what the Fellowship would like to see. We have a list of ideas from referrals and committee work for possible content:

- *Sobriety Calculator (referral)*
- *Find a meeting (referral)*
- *Pre-amble*
- *Who is a Cocaine Addict?*
- *We Can Recover*
- *Serenity Prayer*
- *Link to CA.org*
- *12 Steps*
- *12 Traditions*
- *Vision for you*
- *Reaching Out*
- *Meeting Formats*
- *Find events: district, area, or international*

*Let us know what you would like to see,
send an email to itcommittee@ca.org*

Join us!!!

Do you have a passion for emerging technologies, would you like to get involved send us an email to join the committee.

Subscribe to the NewsGram

For the low price of \$15 U.S. per year, you can receive 10 copies of the NewsGram to share with your friends or your group. Complete this form and include your credit card information, or enclose a \$15 check or money order (U.S. dollars only) and send to: NewsGram, c/o CAWSO, 21720 S. Wilmington Ave., Ste. 304, Long Beach, C.A. 90810-1641. A subscription form is also available for download at www.ca.org.

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Available in Bright Bronze



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NEW COMMEMORATIVE CHIPS NOW AVAILABLE THROUGH THE WORLD SERVICE OFFICE

Available in Bright Bronze



COMMEMORATIVE C.A. RECOVERY MEDALLIONS

BRIGHT GOLD w/ HIGH GLOSS, COLORED, ENAMEL FINISH - MADE TO ORDER!!!

Bill To:

Ship To:

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PRICE (USD) - \$25 EACH OR \$20 EACH WHEN ORDERING 3 OR MORE

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BLUE - BLU	PINK - PNK
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CRIMSON - CRM	TITANIUM - TTM
EMERALD - EME	VIOLET - VLT
BLACK W/ ORANGE - ORG	

If medallions are purchased alongside any other merchandise, shipping fees will be calculated seperately. Medallions being shipped within the U.S. and Canada will be sent directly from the manufacturer at a flat shipping rate of \$4.35 USD, and may be separate from the rest of an order. Please allow for 7-10 business days to ship.

*Please make checks, money orders, or chashier's checks payable to: CAWSO
Contact CAWSO for credit/debit card payments and for shipping costs to addresses outside of the U.S. and Canada.*

CAWSO

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T-SHIRT DESIGN CONTEST



FREE TO ENTER!

WIN YOUR PRINTED T-SHIRT
AND
YOUR DESIGN TO BE SOLD IN THE
OSA STORE!!

The Fundraising & Special Events Committee
invite you to design a limited edition T-Shirt!

The winner will receive their very own T-Shirt
and the winning design will be made available
for sale in the OSA online store!

All proceeds from sales will go to CA OSA.

Send your entry to
caosafundraising@gmail.com

Winner announced 17th April 2021

****Winning design will have
the approved OSA Logo added
before going to print****



IN THE SPIRIT OF TRADITION SIX, C.A. IS NOT ALLIED WITH ANY SECT,
DENOMINATION, POLITICS, ORGANISATION OR INSTITUTION.



“ TO SERVE AS A RESOURCE FOR THE C.A. SERVICE STRUCTURE IN AREAS OF EMERGING TECHNOLOGIES”

THE WSCIT COMMITTEE HAS BEEN HARD AT WORK OVER THE EXTENDED PERIOD BETWEEN CONFERENCES. WE ARE HERE TO SUPPORT THE FELLOWSHIP IN ANY CAPACITY REQUESTED PLEASE SEND US AN EMAIL AND WE WILL SEE HOW WE CAN ASSIST YOU. WE ARE ALWAYS LOOKING FOR MEMBERS WITH A PASSION FOR IT TO JOIN OUR SMALL BUT DEDICATED TEAM!! PLEASE CONTACT US, WE WOULD LOVE TO WORK WITH YOU TO HELP C.A. GROW AND THRIVE IN THIS ONLINE ERA.

DO YOU HAVE EXPERIENCE WITH APP DEVELOPMENT? OUR TEAM IS IN THE EARLY STAGES OF BUILDING A MOBILE FRIENDLY MEETING FINDER APP FOR YOUR MOBILE DEVICE. WITH A BETA VERSION OF THE APP IN OUR SIGHTS AND BEFORE LOOKING TO OUTSOURCE WE ARE LOOKING FOR HELP FROM WITHIN THE FELLOWSHIP. IF YOU HAVE A PASSION FOR IT AND ARE INTERESTED IN WORLD SERVICE, WE HAVE BEEN WAITING FOR YOU!

FOR THOSE LOOKING FOR MORE INFORMATION OR POSSIBLY TO JOIN THE WSCIT COMMITTEE. WE WILL BE HOSTING AN ONLINE INFORMATION SESSION TO HELP INFORM THE FELLOWSHIP OF WHERE WE CURRENTLY ARE AND WHERE THE FELLOWSHIP WOULD LIKE TO SEE US GO. WE WOULD BE HAPPY TO ANSWER ANY QUESTIONS YOU MAY HAVE AND LOOK FORWARD TO MEETING YOU!

WSCIT INFO SESSION MEETING: SUNDAY MARCH 21ST 2021 @ 9AM PST

JOIN OUR ZOOM MEETING

HTTPS://US02WEB.ZOOM.US/J/86069918219

MEETING ID: 860 6991 8219

YOURS ILAS, ROBBY S, WSCIT CHAIR

CONTACT US @ ITCOMMITTEE@CA.ORG

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C.A. WORLD SERVICE CONFERENCE COMMITTEES

LITERATURE, CHIPS, AND FORMAT

Greetings! I hope all is well with each of you today. The C.A. World Service Conference (WSC) Literature, Chips, and Formats (LCF) Committee has been working diligently to deliver a significant number of materials both for production, and WSC approval this year. Often, our projects span multiple years, beginning as your ideas and suggestions in the form of referral submissions to become WSC approved concepts, moving through the Pamphlet, Book, or Chip Approval processes, and into publication or production.

The LCF committee is passionate about producing materials that manifest our primary purpose of reaching the addict who still suffers. As well, our efforts may include literature that supplies valuable information to the professionals with whom our members would most likely come into contact, or that clarifies the nature of addiction to the general public. Whether it is a pamphlet, book, meeting format or reading, or that hard-earned and treasured chip, our work impacts the newcomer, the old-timer, and all others in C.A. Groups and institutions throughout the world.

There is an immense amount of time and effort involved in crafting a piece of literature from a concept and taking it through our approval processes. When LCF receives an idea, either internally or via referral from a member, we carefully weigh the merits of the proposal, letting the LCF Group Conscience determine whether to proceed. If the decision is made to move forward, the submitted idea then becomes a “concept” and LCF makes a motion at the next WSC for approval, where the collective group conscience of the Fellowship makes the final determination. If approved at WSC, a draft subcommittee may spend many hours writing and refining the material, pouring themselves into each passage. When the subcommittee feels confident that the material is ready, they forward the draft to the LCF main committee, who reviews and either approves, or refers the piece back to the subcommittee for further revision. Once approved by LCF, the draft then is sent to the World Service Board of Trustees (WSBT), who check for Traditions violations or other matters which may affect C.A. as a whole. Then, in the case of pamphlet sized piece, it is submitted to the Fellowship for feedback and may appear as a motion at next WSC for an approval vote on the floor. As you may see, getting these finished materials in the hands of the Fellowship is no simple task!

Notice that part of the process mentioned above is soliciting feedback from the Fellowship. This is where YOU get to participate. This year there are several items on which we seek your input. Our creative and dedicated LCF committee members have, thus far, drafted two new proposed pamphlets and a proposed, wallet-sized, daily principles card. These materials have already been mailed to your Area Delegate(s) for distribution as widely as possible. If you are unsure how to contact a Delegate, it is suggested that you reach out to one of the trusted servants in your Group, District, or Area. Instructions for providing your feedback are listed on the drafts themselves.

What I have detailed in the above is a brief overview of just a few parts of the C.A. Pamphlet Approval process. There are several more points, and a separate process for pamphlet publication. We also have similar, but not identical, processes for approving/publishing books and creating chips. Most of your questions concerning how our processes work can be best answered by your referencing our WSC approved LCF guidelines which can be found on www.ca.org under the “Service” tab and by selecting “Service Document Downloads.”

LCF welcomes anyone with a desire to serve. Whether you are a new, incoming Delegate seeking a WSC committee to join, or an individual C.A. member who simply has a passion for our materials, we have a seat for you. You need not possess a degree in writing, nor any professional literary or publishing experience (though it is certainly welcome), even a high school diploma. Most of our members have little to no experience in such things, but one of the great things about LCF is that the opportunity exists to learn along the way.

If you have any questions or comments for us, would like to submit an idea you have to be considered as a concept, or if you’d like to join the LCF Committee, you may reach us through the forms provided on www.ca.org, and you may always reach out to me directly at lcf@ca.org for any guidance I can offer. In the meantime, I hope that you stay well and safe!

Blessings to all, In Love and Service
Justin C.
Lakeland, FL
LCF Committee Chair

C.A. WORLD SERVICE CONFERENCE COMMITTEES

ARCHIVES

How Cocaine Anonymous came to Ireland

In December 2006 after attending a convention in the U.K, it was suggested to us that we should start the Fellowship of Cocaine Anonymous in Ireland. After our return back home, we started to enquire on how we could make this possible. In a short space of time twelve of us got together and this became the first twelve members of Cocaine Anonymous in Ireland. We then began to meet at a member's house every Wednesday night; there we took up a service position each. We discussed ideas between the group for the format of our future meeting and decided on a suitable location.

After a short time, we found a premises in the Carmalite Community Centre in Dublin, where on the 7th of March 2007 we held the first meeting of Cocaine Anonymous in Ireland. We each got great hope that night because fifty-five addicts attended the meeting. We then set out to open a second meeting, on a Thursday night, which we decided through our group conscience, should be a Step meeting.

This was to happen a month later and so we began to grow. Members started to open other meetings around the city center and the suburbs, so the time had come to start an Area committee meeting. With the Fellowship starting to expand, it wasn't long before we had a meeting every night of the week in various locations around the Dublin area. Next thing we had to do was to form an H&I committee and from this we opened four meetings in a number of different detox centers around Dublin.

We now have many meetings in Dublin detox centers through our H&I committee. We have Public Information and a 24-hour helpline number in operation. We of Cocaine Anonymous Ireland wish to help the worldwide Fellowship to enable us to carry the message affectively to fellow drug addicts that have not reached the rooms of Cocaine Anonymous yet.

Ireland was ratified as a C.A. Area on August 31, 2010 at the C.A. World Conference in Los Angeles, CA.

Tell us about the history of your C.A. Area

<https://ca.org/service/world-service-conference/archives/area-history-form/>

The C.A. Virtual Museum, Curator
<https://museum.ca.org>

Cameron F.
CAWS Archive Chair
archive@ca.org



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AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF ORIGINALITY**

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With this document, I, the undersigned Cocaine Anonymous (hereinafter referred to as "C.A.") member, hereby grant permission to COCAINE ANONYMOUS WORLD SERVICES, INC., a California corporation (hereafter referred to as "CAWS") and COCAINE ANONYMOUS WORLD SERVICE OFFICE, INC., a California corporation (hereafter referred to as "CAWSO"), their successors, assigns, and those acting on their authority, to publish the attached material entitled or described as follows:

I further acknowledge and agree that:

1. I possess full legal capacity to exercise this authorization and hereby release CAWS and CAWSO from any claims by myself, my successors, and/or my assigns regarding the attached material.
2. This transfer includes the assignment and transfer of any and all claims I may have to United States and foreign copyrights, claims of authorship or origination.
3. I am the author of this work, i.e. this work is completely original and I have not used any third party source(s), in part or in whole, to create this work unless said third party source or sources are given full credit within the body of this work and further that said third party or parties have given written permission for said use, copies of which are attached hereto.
4. CAWS and/or CAWSO may change, modify or revise this work to whatever extent either or both deem necessary. I understand that, if selected for publication, this material will be edited in keeping with C.A.'s understanding of the Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions. Submissions will also be copyedited to ensure ease of comprehension and adherence to standard rules of grammar and punctuation as well as current CAWS and CAWSO style guidelines. In addition, editorial staff may also substitute different words and/or revise sentence structure for clarification. I further understand that this material may be retitled and/or reprinted in more than one CAWS or CAWSO publication.

Signature: _____

Date: _____

Name (please print): _____

Address: _____

Phone number: _____

E-mail address: _____

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

April 16-18, 2021
A New Freedom
LOCATION:
May 7-9, 2021
Atlantic South Regional Convention
LOCATION:
October 1-3, 2021
2ND Annual Kansas Area State Convention
LOCATION:
October 29-31, 2021
2021 Midwest Regional Convention
LOCATION:
Renaissance Saint Louis Airport Hotel 9801 Natural Bridge, Saint Louis, Missouri, USA
May 26-30, 2022
C.A. WORLD SERVICE CONVENTION
LOCATION:
Hyatt Hotel in Austin Austin, Texas, USA



**THURSDAY MAY 26 - MONDAY 30, 2022
MORE WILL COME, STAY TUNED!**

7th Tradition October-December 2020 Category or Group

LOCATION	NAME/CITY	TOTAL
CANADA		
Ontario	SOCA Area	\$2,904.80
British Columbia	CA British Columbia	\$375.00
UNITED KINGDOM		
England	CA Bury St Edmunds - Monday Night	\$190.02
	CA Kent District	\$328.68
	CA London Area	\$6,615.50
	CA Sussex UK	\$644.04
	CA UK Meeting	\$20.00
	Hants & Berks District	\$274.90
	North London District CA	\$1,050.00
	South Central District UK	\$1,513.68
MAINLAND EUROPE		
Netherlands	CA Back to Basic	\$473.09
	CA Gouda Holland	\$91.66
	Chiel Bos - Charlotte Kohlertuin Nether-	\$912.00
Sweden	CA Sweden Fundraiser	\$100.00
USA		
Arizona	C.A. Northbay Service Group	\$600.00
California	CA Moreno Valley	\$10.00
	CA Northern Calif	\$1,000.00
	CA San Diego	\$2,543.99
	East Valley News Group, Tempe Arizo-	\$1,360.88
	Grp Let's Get Free	\$465.50
	Inland Empire Area Service Committee	\$125.00
	OCCA	\$1,420.00
	Recovery Work Shop Santa Ana	\$102.00
	Richmond CA - Come to Believe	\$350.00
	Roxbury Ancient Masters	\$300.00
	CA Central Service Board of South Florida	\$232.44
Florida	District of Fort Meyers FL	\$330.00
Georgia	Grp Line By Line	\$100.00
Illinois	I.A.C.A. INC Southwest Distrct	\$127.15
Maryland	CA Area Service (Maryland)	\$25.00
Michigan	CA Saturday Morning Alive	\$100.00
Oklahoma	CA Greater Saint Louis District	\$100.00
	CA Oklahoma District	\$75.00
New York	Cocaine Anonymous New York, Inc.	\$1,500.00
Nebraska	Monday Night Miracles	\$170.00
Oregon	C.A. of Oregon	\$200.00

7th Tradition October-December 2020 Category or Group

LOCATION	NAME/CITY	TOTAL
Pennsylvania	CA PA/NJ/DE Warrington, PA	\$300.00
South Carolina	There is a Solution	\$13.90
Texas	Friends in Austin Grp.,	\$50.00
Wisconsin	CA of Wisconsin Inc	\$1,310.60
Anonymous	Anonymous	\$6,705.84
Freedom Fund	Freedom Fund	\$7,170.23
Gratitude		\$139.66
S.M.A.R.T.	Smart Program	\$470.00
Total 7th Tradition		\$42,890.56

GET \$.M.A.R.T.

SAVE MY A\$\$ RECOVERY TRANSFER

DID THE FELLOWSHIP OF COCAINE ANONYMOUS SAVE YOUR A\$\$? DO YOU WANT TO SHOW YOUR APPRECIATION? JUST FOLLOW THESE SIMPLE STEPS!!

- * *STEP 1: Log into your Bank Account*
- * *STEP 2: Go to "PAY BILLS"*
- * *STEP 3: Create a monthly recurring payment (\$2, \$5, \$10, ETC) AND*
- * **SEND TO:** CAWSO
21720 S WILMINGTON AVE., STE. 304
LONG BEACH, C.A. 90810-1641 USA

THAT'S IT!! JUST SET IT UP AND THEN YOU DON'T HAVE TO WORRY ABOUT

*Typically a free service with most bank accounts