

## RECOVERY THROUGH AND THROUGH

# NEWS



# GRAM

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### W POSZUKIWANIU DROGI DO WYJŚCIA

Dawid A.

Patchway, Bristol, UK

*(Translation on page 9)*

Historia chłopaka, który przez uzależnienia stracił prawie wszystko, ale dzięki jednemu telefonowi i grupie ludzi, odzyskał zdrowie, rodzinę i pieniądze. A przede wszystkim odzyskał samego siebie.

#### **„Najlepszym wyjściem jest nie wchodzić.”**

To tekst z plakatu w korytarzu poradni uzależnień, do której uczęszczałem na spotkania jako nastoletni chłopak, na plakacie postać otwierająca drzwi.

Pamiętam dokładnie przekonanie, że chciałem o tym wiedzieć zanim otworzyłem te drzwi i wszedłem. Chciałem, aby poradnia była moim wyjściem z tej sytuacji, chciałem... Ale było już za późno. Nie widziałem już możliwości wyjścia, nie trafiały do mnie słowa terapeuty, który próbował zawrócić mnie z tej drogi, nic nie było w stanie mi pomóc...

Byłem ofiarą przemocy domowej ze strony ojca, czułem się jak zwierzę trzymane w klatce - bite, obrażane, rejestrujące same okropności, nie chciałem żyć. Bezsilność i ból towarzyszył mi przez większość czasu, tylko alkohol i narkotyki potrafiły je uśmierzyć. Otwierały mi usta, sprawiały, że destrukcyjny gniew duszony w środku i rozrywający moją duszę na strzępy, znajdował ujście. To było zawsze przyczyną moich problemów i ciężkich przykrych doświadczeń. Schemat się pogłębiał, a ja nie byłem wtedy świadom tego strasznego mechanizmu, który sterował mną i tego, że krzywdzę siebie, mych bliskich i przypadkowych ludzi, którzy stawali mi na drodze... Stałem się więźniem nienawiści i ciągłej niezaspokojonej potrzeby odurzenia się. Stałem oboma nogami w bagnie, które wciągało mnie powoli na dno...

#### **W poszukiwaniu drogi do wyjścia.**

Jeszcze dwukrotnie byłem w ośrodku uzależnień, ukończyłem terapię i wyszedłem z wiedzą o tym, jak działają uzależnienia. Zdawało mi się, że to wszystko powinno wystarczyć by już nigdy nie wrócić do nałogu, rzeczywistość była zgoła inna. Zacząłem znowu sięgać po alkohol, z czasem pojawiła się trawka i inne substancje psychoaktywne, pociąg zaczął się powoli rozpędzać i gdy się zorientowałem, że jadę znów pełną parą, było za późno

by się zatrzymać... Zorientowałem się, że ta cienka granica, której nie widziałem została przekroczona i znalazłem się po drugiej stronie lustra. Straciłem wolną wolę, dotarłem do miejsca, w którym nie mogłem przestać, potrzebowałem brać by móc funkcjonować, nie potrafiłem żyć bez używek pomimo tego, że wiedziałem i czułem, że umieram...

Byłem martwy mentalnie, mój duch był złamany, o wolnej woli nawet już nie myślałem, życie kręciło się wokół uzależnienia. Po kolei traciłem wszystko, co w życiu ważne - rodzinę, bliskich, a co najgorsze straciłem siebie...

Umierałem każdego dnia od nowa, nie mając siły i odwagi by poprosić o pomoc, ale w końcu zrozumiałem że sam nie dam rady. Zadzwoiłem do człowieka, który spotkał się ze mną na krótką rozmowę po czym zabrał mnie w pewne miejsce.

#### **Znalazłem właściwe drzwi.**

Na początku nie wiedziałem jeszcze co to jest za miejsce ani jak to działa; wiedziałem tylko, że ludzie mieli ten sam problem co ja, łączyło nas to samo uzależnienie - z tą różnicą, że oni znali oni drogę wyjścia. Drogę, o której istnieniu nie miałem pojęcia, drogę do wolności, drogę do pogodzenia się z przeszłością i zrozumienia tego, co się ze mną działo przez lata.

W tym miejscu odnalazłem odpowiedzi na większość moich pytań, zrozumiałem i zacząłem poznawać siebie na nowo, poznałem wielu zdumiewających i inspirujących, dających nadzieję i przykład wyzdrowienia ludzi. Przewartościowałem swoje życie, uwolniłem się od obsesji brania i picia. Dziś pozostaję trzeźwy, odzyskałem rodzinę, moi bliscy wracają do mojego życia, odnalazłem drogę do wybaczenia, nienawiść zaczęła roztopiać się a moje serce i umysł otwierać. Przechodzę przez wspaniały proces zdrowienia i odzyskuje szacunek do siebie i innych ludzi, uczę się miłości i akceptacji, dzień po dniu, krok po kroku...

To wspaniałe miejsce, gdzie odzyskałem zdrowy rozsądek, świadomość, wolność wyboru, przebaczenie, tolerancję, akceptację i miłość to wspólnota C.A. Polska.

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

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

Attn: [doo@ca.org](mailto:doo@ca.org)

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## RECOVERY THROUGH AND THROUGH

By Leslie R.  
Mission, Kansas, USA.

I remember coming into the rooms at 19 years old, thinking my life was over. I would never have fun again. I would never again get to be the "wild child" that I thought I was. Life was over at 19.

I couldn't have been more wrong. My life was not only just beginning, but was going to evolve in ways I could have never imagined.

As I became a part of the fellowships of A.A. and N.A., it was 1981 and C.A. hadn't started yet, I felt a part of at last. I made friends. I had a sense of belonging. I found my tribe. I began to find out who I really was, without the drugs and alcohol that I had been using since I was 12. I went back to school and got a college degree. I started into a career in real estate development and I became very successful. I felt like my life finally had meaning, that I was a productive member of society. I had arrived, just like in Bill's story.

But as my life became fuller and richer, I found I had less time for meetings, I spent less time on my spiritual program. I let all of the things that recovery had given me take me further and further away from my recovery. I began to think that I didn't need a Higher Power to guide me and that I didn't need other addicts in my life. I looked around at the beautiful life I had created and I said to myself "I did this, me, by myself". Humility went right out of the window.

What I know now is that I was once again running on self-will, that was going to run riot in my life. I began to think that I was "the one", that I was cured of alcoholism and addiction. I started to think that I could use and drink again. Today I know that this was my disease. Cunning, baffling and powerful, it told me what I wanted to hear, that I could control and enjoy my drinking and using, which is the great obsession of every abnormal drinker. The Big Book of *Alcoholics Anonymous* speaks of two powers, a Higher Power and the Power of the Fellowship. Neither of these powers were a part of my life anymore. It was not a question of if I would drink and use again, it was only a question of when. I was without defense against the first drink.

So, at over 14 years sober, I picked up a drink, telling myself that if it becomes a problem again, or gets out of control, I will just get sober again. I couldn't have been more wrong. By picking up that first drink I had triggered my disease, an allergy of the body and an obsession of the mind, coupled with a spiritual malady. If someone would have told me that it would be 8 long years before I made it back to the rooms, that I would destroy everything in my life, give up everything that I loved. That I would suffer pitiful and incomprehensible demoralization on a daily basis and would spend the final 2 years of my relapse wanting to die every day. I would not have believed them. But that is exactly what happened.

My story could have easily ended here. I could have died, I could still be using. But I am one of the lucky ones. I made it back.

I had a moment of clarity. I hit a bottom that propelled me back into recovery. I came back into the rooms of A.A. and N.A. I had the gift of desperation. I was willing to do anything and everything to be sober again. I was so grateful to be clean and sober again. However, neither fellowship had that magic that I remembered feeling at 19. An old friend, sober for a long time, told me to check out C.A. I knew of C.A. but had never been to a C.A. meeting. At 6 months sober, I walked into my first C.A. meeting. I heard the readings and I felt the old magic again, more powerful and stronger than ever before. I heard parts of my story in those readings, I knew I would do anything and everything to stay, to stay sober, to stay in recovery, to stay in C.A. I took every suggestion I heard. I got a homegroup and a sponsor. I worked the steps right out of the book and I changed. I healed and I grew. I began to sponsor others. I did every workshop and Big Book study that came my way. I ran at my recovery, full speed. I took service commitments. I became an active member of C.A. The three legacies of A.A., unity, recovery and service came alive in my life again. Today, over 20 years later, I am more committed to my recovery than I have ever been, because my life keeps getting better. I have homegroups all over the world. I am sponsored and I sponsor. I have service commitments, currently serving as a Delegate for the Greater Missouri Area and on the Public Information World Service Conference Committee. I am inspired by the members with whom I serve. Their love and dedication to serving.

C.A. has enhanced my recovery to new heights. I have a Higher Power of my own understanding and my own experience that gives my life guidance, direction, meaning and purpose. I have amazing friends in recovery all over the world that I love with all of my heart. I am living the spiritual principles of the program to the best of my ability every day. I am not perfect, but I try to do my best at everything I do. I try to do the next right thing. I remain willing to grow along spiritual lines. My kind, loving and very wise sponsor inspires me to higher levels of spiritual growth. I have a life filled with meaning and purpose again. I am happy and healthy in mind, body and spirit. I will never again forget that my recovery is a gift I am given on a daily basis through my relationship with my Higher Power. The three legacies of C.A. are alive in my life; Hope, Faith and Courage. As promised, I am Here and I am Free. Recovery is in my life through and through!!!

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## REMOVING THE WALLS

Jennifer S.

Kathleen, Georgia, USA



My name is Jennifer and I am a cocaine addict and alcoholic. The picture above is of the newest member of the Pacific Group of Manuel Antonio, Costa Rica, a titi monkey.

He is not the first wild animal we have had, we have had many sloths, and one day when we were setting up the chairs, we found a Fer de Lance, (a deadly snake), which was noticed just before someone sat down in his seat!

Our group has never had any walls, for 20 plus years we met in a tiki hut overlooking the rainforest.

Why would anyone start a meeting in the jungle, you might ask?

When my best friend and my husband died within a year of each other, I was so full of grief that I could hardly breath.

All I could tell people was that moving to Costa Rica was a "God thing"!

But I knew that it was a way to honor my sober deceased husband's memory. I got my answers in meditation and by asking for very clear signs.

I took a leap of faith with my 3-year-old daughter, coming to this jungle, sight unseen, not knowing a soul! I brought our 8-year-old declawed cat and microwave! Most people thought I was crazy, but I knew it was God's will.

For the first year after I started the meeting, not 1 soul entered the meeting, and twice I was ready to drink.

I made a bargain with God sitting in the meeting alone and said, "If I don't get someone in my meeting, I am going to pick up". Fifteen minutes went by, nobody! I gave God a reprieve and said, "I'm going to read my mail while waiting". I opened up an envelope which contained my first Loners Internationalists envelope and it started with the preamble. There were many shares from sponsors and loners alike and at the end was the Serenity Prayer. At the very bottom it said, "This has been a meeting in print of 4500 sober members in Loners Internationals." God answers prayers in a big way, it was the biggest meeting I had ever been to!

Further down the lonely year of sitting in the meeting week after week alone, I gave God another ultimatum because I needed a meeting! All of a sudden I heard a voice in my head say "Who says there have to be two PEOPLE in a meeting, you only need 2, you and me! This is going to be an 11th step meeting, for 30 minutes you pray out loud and then you listen for 30 minutes by meditating. And don't forget the Serenity Prayer at the end."

Mind you I had more than 2 meetings that year, and it was by going to any lengths! I flew with my daughter to a meeting, she had just graduated Kindergarten in her bathing suit and they let her fly in it (Remember this is the jungle, so jungle rules! Once off the plane we had to take a boat to a location called Mosquito (Zancudo) and it lived up to its name. I have never been so attacked by mosquitos. A

couple there had a weekly meeting so we had an open meeting so my daughter could attend, just the 4 of us.

Another time we took a "Chicken bus" four hours in the sweltering heat with standing room only. We got to the meeting location and found the person chairing the meeting. He said, "Since it's just the 3 of us including my daughter, let's just chat!"

I said, "Say the F——G Preamble." I was desperate for a live meeting, and I am so grateful to God that the 8-hour round trip bus ride contained a meeting in the middle.

Through another one of God's gifts I bought a small hotel & restaurant and had this great sober idea to put in the menu, "If you are a friend of Bill W, ask for Jennifer." I missed seeing the eyes of another sober person, and a lot of people asked what it meant but it still didn't produce anyone in recovery.

After a year, Bill from Laguna Beach walked through the door of the meeting. I asked, "Are you in the program?" When he said yes, I couldn't believe it, I said "Will you be the speaker today?" He looked around the room and said, "But there is no one here!" I said, "By you walking through that door, the meeting has doubled in size!"

He was the grand sponsee of Clancy so we asked Clancy if we could call it the "Pacific Group Jungle Style". Clancy not only said yes but he brought a whole group of sober people to one of our conventions and was our Saturday night speaker. (Our group was so small that we had 2 conventions a year to keep us sober by bringing in fresh blood).

I am so grateful to say that thanks to God, I have 42 years of sobriety, one day at a time.

The two morals of this story are

"Don't drink even if your butt falls off" (and taking a drink just adds one more problem to your life, it doesn't solve anything.)

"Never ever quit before the miracle happens!"

I am living proof of that! Keep coming back!

Did you know that "Sloth" is in the *The Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions* three times

This is a picture of 2 sloths we rehabilitated, Patty and Grubby



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## **THIS IS MY STORY AND I AM STICKING TO IT**

Rose L.  
Littleton, Colorado, USA

My name is Rose L. and I got clean on June 7, 1989. I ended up through treatment center in Denver via an attempted suicide. The thought of living and doing cocaine. The rest of my life scared me as much as not doing cocaine the rest of my life. So here I am. When I got to clean and I was about 35 days sober I went to an AA meeting in Denver. Cocaine anonymous was really small back then and I think we had about eight meetings a week. I ended up going to a Thursday night meeting at a place called Porter Hospital and I saw the same people there that came to an H and I meeting when I was at Mercy Medical Center. It gave me some hope. I'd like to talk about what it was like, what happened and what it is like now SINCE I've been clean. No sense in rehashing all the horrible stuff I did or how I got hooked on cocaine. The truth is I was powerless over it and I couldn't stop so I ended up here.

What I have found over the years of sobriety is that it's just not enough to be clean. I lasted about eight years doing that, went through a divorce, bad behavior in thinking, and somehow managed to stay clean through it all. So when I got divorced in 1997, I was sitting on my sponsors couch, complaining about the state of the world, Don told me to find a message. And I remember saying out loud..."Good Lord all we have to do is not drink or use and get through the tough day."

I also found out that my bread and butter was going to be sponsoring other men and women. I only sponsored about three people in my first eight years of sobriety and I remained spiritually sick. But starting in about 1998 I started to go to an H and I meeting every single week. There I met a bunch of people that just wanted to know how to get the voices out of their head and how to not drink or use on a daily basis. So I found my Purpose in life. So except for the pandemic in 2020, I've gone to at least one H and I meeting every single week since 1998. I tried to share a message of hope but I also let people know that you're not gonna get this by sitting on your butt. I've gone through the death of my siblings, death of my fellow addicts, death of my beloved dogs, a cancer diagnosis in 2014, and through all of that I didn't pick up or drink. And through all of that, I go to a meeting every day even in my 34th year. So that is my message to you...

Go to meetings until you really wanna go to meetings. Offer yourself to sponsor fellow sufferers. Allow yourself to go through the bumps in the road with Grace. You don't ever have to use cocaine or drink again a day at a time. And that's my story and I'm sticking to it.

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## **MY DISEASE, THAT VOLCANO**

By Tai Marie B.  
Colton, California, USA.

My disease infiltrated my family, my children, my job, and my world. It took over everything. It took away nearly everything it touched besides my life. It destroyed my marriage, my children, my mother, my sisters, everything. I have spent the last five years hanging on to what was left as well as trying to build new. My recovery is a constant work in process. A constant give and take over will and faith. A constant mind running with lies, self-hate, emotion, silent struggles while trying to remember what I have learned to not enter that mind of mine alone. My recovery has not brought back all that was lost. I don't think it was meant to. I have been taught so much here in these rooms; learning it wasn't ever the pills or the booze. It was me and I fueled that disease like a mass volcano erupting on the world.

Today that volcano is being silenced by God, Fellowship and Service. Like my disease I use my recovery in my whole world. I use it at work to deal with

clients or disgruntled employees. I use it at home when my mother checks my bank account. I use it with my children who still flinch as I raise my tone of voice. I also use it when I am sitting in a meeting watching the woman next to me pour a cup of coffee as she shakes. Like the disease I was instructed to use recovery in everything I do, through and through. Recovery has taught me who I really am. Good and bad. Hurtful and honest. Raw and uncensored. It has taught me what I want and what I need. It has taught me about a God I never wanted or thought existed. Recovery is woven between all the threads of my personality, relationships, responses and choices. It's a thick, new, malleable fabric that has put together the broken parts of me. My recovery has to be intertwined in everything, or else the disease comes staining these fresh pressed recovery linens of me.

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## TO THE NEWCOMER

By John N.  
Lynnwood, Washington, USA.

You don't know me, and I don't know you.

I don't know what your favorite color is, your favorite food, or the type of music you like. In fact, I wouldn't be able to pick your face out of a crowd. Yet I know you.

We may be strangers, but I know you, because I was just like you.

I know the feelings and the fears you have.

I know what it's like to be terrified of not getting high, yet, terrified of getting high again.

I know what it's like to absolutely hate what you've become, because I hated who I had become too.

I know what it's like to be up for many days straight, being overwhelmed with crazy thoughts and paranoia. I've been there, and done that. Many, many times.

I know what it's like to not be able to look someone in the eyes, because I've felt that same shame too.

I know what it's like to absolutely hate the person in the mirror. Because, when I would look at the mirror, I hated myself too.

I know what it's like to have so much guilt and shame, that it eats you up inside. I had that guilt and shame, and felt that pain inside too.

I know what it's like to have the gut wrenching remorse because of the life you were leading, because I led that life too. Just dreading my mere existence for what I had become.

I know what it's like to ache and crave something so badly that it felt like you were dying inside. I've had those same aches and cravings too.

I know what it's like to ache all the way to my bones, and obsess for the drugs so badly, that the only relief is to use again.

I know what the fear of getting caught feels like.

Yet, I also knew that getting caught might be the only thing that saves me. Because, I've had those fears and those feelings too.

I know what it's like to cry alone because of who you have become. Because, I have cried those lonely tears too.

I know what it's like to just want to give up, to not care if you lived or died, because I have had those same thoughts too.

I know what it's like to walk through life, full of fear. I walked that walk, and I was afraid too.

I know what it's like to feel utterly hopeless and useless; I had no hope for years.

I realize that I'm a stranger to you, and you have no idea who I am. But just know, that even though I don't know you. I do. I was just like you, and I do care.

You are worth this chance you have been given. You are worth this new start you have.

There are many people just like me and you, who have recovered from a seemingly hopeless situation and now have normal, productive lives.

You can too.

You are not alone in this.

We were all just like you. Now we walk freely, happily and with purpose.

I have been doing this "Clean and Sober" thing for a while. Life for me didn't end when I quit using. It just started.

So even though I don't know you, I have optimism for you, hope for you, and I want you to find happiness.

You deserve it.

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## FROM THE PROGRAM TO HELPING OTHERS

By Quinn B.  
Wisconsin, USA.

My service to C.A. started by walking into an H&I committee meeting with 45 days of sobriety. I wanted to spread my message throughout the CA of Wisconsin area. Thankfully the committee members had more sobriety than me and put the brakes on. They told me I could tag along with some members to existing H&I meetings and if I worked the program, I could then lead a meeting.

Well, that is what I did and before long I was holding an H&I meeting in the treatment center where I got sober. I did that for 2 yrs. I went on to be a delegate and have held just about every service position in our

meetings and area. I am still very involved with our area as chair of our Unity Committee.

From the day I walked into the H&I committee, I knew I was on the right path. I have met and made so many friends because of being of service it is truly hard to explain. Also, I have learned a lot about myself. Good and needs improvement! I am so grateful to be able to give back to the Fellowship that saved my life

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## 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.

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***BEING OF SERVICE***

***DEADLINE:  
JULY 8, 2023***

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## IN SEARCH OF A WAY OUT

By Dawid A.  
Patchway, Bristol, UK

*(Translation from page 1)*

The story of a boy who lost almost everything due to addictions, but thanks to one phone call and a group of people, he regained his health, family and money. And above all, he regained himself.

### **"The best solution is not to enter. "**

It's text from a poster in the hallway of an addiction clinic I attended as a teenage boy, and a figure opening a door on a poster.

I remember vividly the belief that I would have known about it before I opened the door and walked in. I wanted the clinic to be my way out of this situation, I wanted ... But it was too late. I no longer saw the way out, I did not hear the words of the therapist who tried to turn me back from this path, nothing could help me...

I was a victim of domestic violence on the part of my father, I felt like an animal kept in a cage - beaten, insulted, recording only horrors, I did not want to live. Powerlessness and pain accompanied me most of the time, only alcohol and drugs could relieve them. They opened my mouth, made the destructive anger strangled inside and tear my soul to shreds, find an outlet. This has always been the cause of my problems and hard unpleasant experiences. The pattern deepened, and I was not aware of this terrible mechanism that controlled me and the fact that I was hurting myself, my loved ones and random people who stood in my way... I became a prisoner of hatred and a constant unmet need to get intoxicated. I stood with both feet in the swamp, which was slowly dragging me to the bottom...

### **In search of a way out.**

I was in an addiction center twice, completed therapy and came out with knowledge about how addictions work. It seemed to me that all this should be enough to never return to addiction, the reality was quite different. I started to drink alcohol again, with time weed and other psychoactive substances appeared, the train began to slowly accelerate and

when I realized that I was going full steam ahead again, it was too late to stop... I realized that the fine line I couldn't see had been crossed and I found myself on the other side of the mirror. I lost my free will, I reached a place where I could not stop, I needed to take to be able to function, I could not live without stimulants despite the fact that I knew and felt that I was dying...

I was mentally dead, my spirit was broken, I didn't even think about free will anymore, life revolved around addiction. One by one, I lost everything that was important in life - family, loved ones, and worst of all, I lost myself...

I was dying every day all over again, not having the strength and courage to ask for help, but in the end I understood that I could not do it alone. I called the man who met me for a short conversation and then took me to a certain place.

### **I found the right door.**

At first, I didn't know what this place was or how it worked; All I knew was that people had the same problem as me, we had the same addiction - except they knew the way out. A road I didn't know existed, a road to freedom, a way to come to terms with the past and understand what had happened to me for years.

Here I found answers to most of my questions, understood and began to get to know myself anew. I met many amazing and inspiring people, giving hope and examples of recovery. I re-evaluated my life, freed myself from the obsession with taking and drinking. Today I remain sober, I have regained my family, my loved ones are returning to my life, I have found the way to forgiveness, hatred began to melt and my heart and mind opened. I go through a wonderful healing process and regain respect for myself and other people, I learn love and acceptance, day by day, step by step...

This wonderful place where I regained common sense, awareness, freedom of choice, forgiveness, tolerance, acceptance and love is the community of C.A. Poland.

\*\*\*

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### **Tying Up Loose Ends: “Cocaine Anonymous” - Early Beginnings** by Cameron F. CAWS Archive Chair

The earliest known date for the name “Cocaine Anonymous” was used in October of 1979 – A New York drug counsellor, John Burrell launched a special treatment group for coke users calling it “Cocaine Anonymous.” (Albany Student Press, October 12, 1979. p. 9) Later, on November 20, 1979, on WBAB Radio with Joel Martin, the topic of discussion is Cocaine Anonymous and John Burrell is featured as the founder of Cocaine Anonymous. (Newsday Nov. 20, 1979. p. 104).

Cocaine usage and abuse was running so rampant throughout the country and quite prevalent in the Los Angeles Area, that in August of 1982, the Beverly Glen Hospital on West Pico Blvd., in Los Angeles took out ads in entertainment trade publications such as Billboard, The Hollywood Reporter and Daily Variety—as well as the Westside edition of The Times offering help to those with cocaine, alcohol and drug dependencies.

Working at the Beverly Glen Hospital, Psychotherapist Allan Rosenthal called cocaine “the most psychologically devastating” drug and developed a voluntary \$7000 - 21-day program, which included detoxification, drug education and intensive individual and group therapy. By the fall 1982, the program has 17 adults and six adolescent in-patients. Rosenthal said the hospital offers one of the most specialized treatment programs against cocaine addiction in the nation, he stressed that in-patient treatment offers no guarantee of permanent recovery. In fact, he said, the long-term recovery rate of cocaine abusers “is so small that I will not work with anybody privately unless at the end of the first month of treatment” they join an ongoing self-help group such as A.A. (LA Times, Dec. 26, 1982 p. 208)

### **Contemporaneous Beginnings**

#### **1) The Beverly Glen Hospital Meeting**

In the late fall of 1982, Allan Rosenthal suggests to Chip P. to start a 12 Step “Cocaine Anonymous” meeting at the Beverly Glen Hospital. Chip rewords some A.A. preambles and changes them to Cocaine Anonymous and asks his friend, Bobby N. to be the first C.A. speaker. In addition, the Beverly Glen hospital provided a room for the weekly, free “Cocaine Anonymous” meeting which was open to drug abusers. The hospital also provided a small room with an answering machine for taking inquiries about the getting help with cocaine abuse. Chip P. stated that this was really the first central office for early

Cocaine Anonymous. By December of 1982, the group averages 30 people in attendance. Allan Rosenthal said the response from doctors and other health-care professionals has been “so overwhelming” that he envisions a mushrooming “Cocaine Anonymous” organization in Los Angeles, complete with a telephone hotline, literature and an administrative office.

In the fall of 1982 (date unknown) Tom Kenny, director of alcoholism services for the Motion Picture and Television Fund, a charitable organization supported by contributions from people who work in films and TV, approaches Allan Rosenthal and inquires about the Beverly Glen Hospital program for the treatment of cocaine addiction and wanted to know more about the program and Allan’s approach to recovery.

#### **2) Alcoholics Anonymous - The Whatever Meeting**

Tuesday, November 16, 1982, about 20 people show up at a new meeting Tuesday evening called the “Whatever” meeting at the Motion Picture Health and Welfare Fund building. A new weekly cocaine self-help meeting that was free and open to admitted drug and alcohol abusers. Tom Kenny said he “was getting a lot of calls from people with cocaine problems.

When he suggested they check out Alcoholics Anonymous, some said their problem was cocaine and they didn't think they could relate to A.A., so Tom gets together with two or three people in the industry who had overcome their cocaine habit, and started the “Whatever” meeting by word of mouth where people could talk about “whatever”—mostly cocaine abuse problems. Tom Kenny said that, to his knowledge, his group (the A.A. Whatever Group) was the first of its kind to address cocaine addiction. By late December 1982, just five weeks after the “Whatever” meeting started, the attendance has doubled. Tom Kenny said he was planning to organize more such meetings after the holidays, to deal with the expected response to a major drug and alcohol awareness effort by movie studios. (LA Times, Dec. 26, 1982 p. 208)

#### **3) The “Johnny S. Thursday Night**

At the “Whatever” meeting, someone suggests a vote be taken to change this A.A. meeting to a Cocaine Anonymous meeting, but the suggestion is voted down. Tom Kenny who was present, offers Johnny S., whom Tom Kenny invited to the “Whatever” meeting, and several others in the room that he had a meeting space available on Thursday evenings for their use. (NewsGram, July/August 1987 Vol. 1, No.2., pg 4.)

*(Continued on page 13)*

# C.A. WORLD SERVICE CONFERENCE COMMITTEES

## ARCHIVES

(Continued from page 12)

Thus on Thursday, November 18, 1982, at the Motion Picture Health and Welfare Fund building, located at 335 North La Brea in Hollywood (North of Beverly Blvd.), California, 12 - 19 people show up, including Michael G., Johnny S., Tony M., Tom K., Marshal R., Richard L., and Veronica Jo K. who, as acting secretary, calls the meeting to order with agavel and announces: "Welcome to the first meeting of Cocaine Anonymous, a Fellowship of men and women who share their experience, strength, and hope with each other and help others recover from their addiction." Within 30 days 5 more C.A. meetings start up. (NewsGram July/Aug. 1987).

How many people were present at the Thursday, November 18, 1982 meeting? According to the The Connection – Spring 1986 Vol. 1, Issue 1, there was 19 people were in attendance at the first C.A. meeting, but according to the Ventura County Star – 12 Jun 1983, Sun · Page 94, mentions that there were 12 people present at the Thursday night meeting of Cocaine Anonymous.

By February 1983, the secretaries of the first six C.A. meetings, including Charlie W., Veronica K., Gil M., Chip P., Ray G. and Kenny L. get together and formed what eventually became the first General Services Organization. (NewsGram, July/August 1987 Vol. 1, No.2, pg 4.) In April 1983, the Los Angeles Central Office was formed. (NewsGram, July/August 1987 Vol. 1, No.2, pg 4.) By July of 1983 there are 16 meetings throughout the Los Angeles area, with new groups emerging in Northern California and Chicago, IL.

### Discussion:

I reached out to the radio station, WBAB for a copy of the John Burell interview as the founder of Cocaine Anonymous but was informed the recording no longer existed. I think the notion that a drug counsellor in 1979, who most certainly had knowledge of the organization Alcoholics Anonymous, could easily make a leap to name a treatment centre group, "Cocaine Anonymous," taking into consideration that cocaine usage was rampant and problematic throughout the U.S. in the late 1970's and subsequently flooding the hospitals with patients needing help. Furthermore, I can find no mention of John Burell or Cocaine Anonymous in any publications after November 20, 1979. So it seems that Cocaine Anonymous in the 1979 disappeared as fast as it suddenly appeared.

### Question:

Who started Cocaine Anonymous in the Los Angeles? Was it Chip P. who created a Cocaine Anonymous Group in "early November of 1982" under the suggestion of Psychotherapist Allan Rosenthal? OR was it Johnny S. and Veronica K., Richard L. Michael G., Marshall R. and Tom Kenny who were present at the Thursday night meeting on November 18, 1982?

At present, The Beverly Glen Hospital Cocaine Anonymous has generally been accepted as the 2nd meeting of Cocaine Anonymous and C.A.'s first H & I meeting, but an inception date is cannot be verified. However, Allan Rosenthal and Chip P. have both stated that the meeting was taking place before Tom Kenny had established that first meeting of the "Whatever Group" of A.A. which we know took place on Tuesday, November 16, 1982. Subsequently, we know that the "Whatever" meeting led to the "first" meeting of Cocaine Anonymous on Thursday, November 18, 1982 which was that was attended by Johnny S. who is considered one of the early founders of C.A.

So, which meeting came first? We have the oral recollections of Allan Rosenthal and Chip P. who claim it started first with them. We know that Tom Kenny states in his interview with the LA Times, December 26, 1982, said there already two other free "Cocaine Anonymous" programs have begun in Los Angeles. One, involving a private group (Thursday night C.A. Meeting) in Studio City, was organized by a man (Johnny S.) who attends Kenny's sessions. Another takes place (Chip P.'s meeting) at the Beverly Glen Hospital. We also know for certain that the Beverly Glen meeting and the Thursday night (November 18, 1982) meeting were the FIRST two groups of Cocaine Anonymous. In Tom Kenny's interview with the LA Times, (Dec. 26, 1982) he states that there are "already two other free 'Cocaine Anonymous' programs that have begun in Los Angeles. One, involving a private group (Thursday night C.A. Meeting) in Studio City, was organized by a man (Johnny S.) who attends Kenny's sessions. Another takes place (Chip P.'s meeting) at the Beverly Glen Hospital. (LA Times, Dec. 26, 1982 p. 208).

On a side note, Allan Rosenthal is cited as the co-founder of Cocaine Anonymous in People Magazine (October 14, 1985) in an article entitled: Heather Thomas Emerges from the Private Hell' of Drug Addiction with the Help of her Therapist Mate, written by Gioia Dilberto. Allan Rosenthal is also cited as being instrumental in starting Cocaine Anonymous in L.A. Weekly, May 18-24, 1984 page 19.

So which group came first? It would seem to hinge on how you might interpret "early November" as cited in the LA Times newspaper article.

(Continued on page 14)



# C.A. WORLD SERVICE CONFERENCE COMMITTEES

## ARCHIVES

(Continued from page 13)

My concluding thoughts as an Archivist and Historian on the matter of C.A.'s inception is this: we know that a small group of people ALL had the similar ideas in “early November 1982—a 12 Step program for cocaine addiction.

- 1) Tom Kenny and others start - A.A. Whatever Group - November 16, 1982
- 2) Chip P. starts the Beverley Glen Hospital meeting - “Early November”
- 3) Michael G., Johnny S., Tony M., Tom K., Marshal R., Richard L., and Veronica Jo K. and others - start the Thursday, November 18, 1982 meeting.

From those contemporaneous beginnings, Cocaine Anonymous now spans across 30 countries with 78 ratified C.A. Areas, holding over 6,000 meetings, both in-person and online, and attended by an estimated Fellowship of 60,000 plus members.

### Sources:

Albany Student Press, October 12, 1979. p. 9

Audio Cassette: History of C.A. with Johnny S. & Ray G. May 26, 1990, 6th C.A. World Service Convention—Phoenix, AZ, Cassette Recording No. 10525, Phoenix, Arizona: Coast to Coast.

Daltry, Laura. LA Times, Calendar: Sunday, December 26, 1982. pp. 183 & 208.)

Dilberto, Gioia. People Magazine. October 14, 1985. “Heather Thomas Emerges from the ‘Private Hell’ of Drug Addiction with the Help of her Therapist Mate.” Vo. 23, No. 16.

<https://people.com/archive/heather-thomas-emerges-from-the-private-hell-of-drug-addiction-with-the-help-of-her-therapist-mate-vol-23-no-16/> (accessed May 12, 2023)

L.A. Weekly, May 18-24, 1984 page 19.

Newsday (New York, New York, Tues., Nov. 20, 1979. p. 104

NewsGram. July/Aug 1987. Vol. 1, No. 2 pp. 1 & 4.

Ventura County Star – 12 Jun 1983, Sun · Page 94



# CALENDAR OF EVENTS

August 4-6, 2023

Texas Area Service Gulf Coast Area Convention

LOCATION:

Hyatt Regency Houston West

Houston, Texas, USA

August 4-6, 2023

CA Denmark Area Convention 2023

LOCATION:

Kirken, Dannebrogsgade 53

1660 Copenhagen, Denmark

August 4-6, 2023

CA Holland (Annual) Convention

LOCATION:

NH Hotel Leeuwenhorst, Langelan 3,

2211 XT Noordwijkerhout, Holland

August 4-6, 2023

Greater Missouri Area of C.A. Show Me Recovery Convention

LOCATION:

Unity Village Hotel & Conference Center

1901 Northwest Blue Parkway, Missouri, USA

August 18-20, 2023

2023 CA Arizona Area Convention

LOCATION:

Doubletree Resort

5401 N. Scottsdale Rd. Scottsdale, AZ, USA

August 24-27, 2023

38th Annual CALA Convention

LOCATION:

Doubletree Golf Resort, Vista Chino

Cathedral City, California, USA

September 8-10, 2023

C.A. Ireland 2023

LOCATION:

Abbey Court Hotel

Nenagh, Co. Tipperary, Ireland

August 24-27, 2023

CA Scotland Annual Convention 2023 - LIGHT THE SPARK

LOCATION:

Glynhill Hotel & Spa

169 Paisley Road, Renfrew, Glasgow, Scotland

October 13-15, 2023

Atlantic North Regional Convention

LOCATION:

BMO IFL

3550 Pharmacy Ave Scarborough, ON, Canada

October 27-29, 2023

CA Sweden turns 20, come and celebrate!

LOCATION:

Scandic Infra City

Upplands Väsby, Sweden

November 3-5, 2023

CAUK29 - 'Safe and Protected'

LOCATION:

Village Hotel

Blackpool, United Kingdom, FY3 8LL

## COMING IN 2024

July 11- 15, 2024

**The 2024 World Convention of Cocaine Anonymous (C.A.)** is coming to Holland!!!!!! Our World Convention will bring together C.A. members from all around the world to share their experience, strength, and hope. The 2024 convention is scheduled to take place in Noordwijkerhout, Netherlands, from 11 till 15 July, under the theme of "Hope, Faith, Courage." For those who are not able to physically attend the convention we will have a tailored online experience to ensure everyone can get a taste of CAWS 2024.

Our convention is a momentous occasion for C.A. members, you will have the opportunity to attend various meetings, speakers, workshops, and excursions. These events will be geared towards promoting the spirit of camaraderie and support, which are critical to our recovery.

One of the main objectives of the World Convention is to provide support to the newcomer. Together we can achieve this if we all bring newcomers to the convention [#bringanewcomer] and putting them "on fire", through sharing our personal stories, discussions on how we stay clean & sober, and various workshops aimed at helping our members develop and maintain their recovery. Our convention offers an opportunity for C.A. members to connect with other recovering addicts, creating a supportive and healing environment for all who attend.

Moreover, the World Convention of Cocaine Anonymous also serves as a platform to financially support the World Service Office, which is responsible for facilitating and coordinating the activities of Cocaine Anonymous worldwide. The funds raised from the event will be used to support the services and resources needed to continue carrying the message of hope to those struggling with addiction.

Our World Convention is also expected to be an occasion for fun and love. Members will be able to engage in various activities that promote sobriety, socialization, and a sense of community. Do a boat tour through Amsterdam, visit the heart of the Dutch flower industry or witness how already for centuries we are able to keep our lands dry.

In summary, CAWS 2024 in The Netherlands is going to be an amazing event that brings together C.A. members from all around the world to promote sobriety, share experiences, and provide support to those struggling with addiction. This year's theme of "**Hope, Faith, Courage**" is expected to inspire members to stay committed to their recovery journey. The convention promises to be a fulfilling and life-changing experience for all who attend.

Information and registration: [www.caws2024.nl](http://www.caws2024.nl)

In love and service,

The Service Committee, on their behalf Joost van K.

7th Tradition January-March 2023 Group or Category		
LOCATION	NAME/CITY	TOTAL
<b>CANADA</b>		
Ontario	In the Trenches Group	\$111.00
	SOCA Area	\$4,277.00
Quebec	Quebec Area	\$9,700.00
<b>Europe</b>		
UK	CA London Area	\$4,657.00
	Daily Reprieve Grp	\$113.00
	England and Wales	\$36,000.00
	Hants and Berks District of CAUK	\$147.80
	Kent District	\$1,488.00
	North London District	\$635.00
	Thalong Group	\$25.00
	Three Counties District of CA England	\$620.00
<b>Mainland Europe</b>		
Sweden	CA Sweden	\$4,595.00
<b>USA</b>		
Alabama	The Walll Group	\$50.00
Arizona	Birds of A Feather Group	\$471.00
	CA Arizona Area	\$18,000.00
	East Valley Men's Group	\$528.00
	SNL Group	\$392.00
California	Bagels By The Beach	\$200.00
	CA	\$594.19
	Inland Empire Service Committee	\$1,081.00
	OCCA	\$750.00
	One Puff Too Tough	\$1,000.00
	Richmond CA Northern California	\$100.00
	San Diego Area	\$957.00
	South Bay Monday Zoom 7pm & Tuesday 7pm Group	\$133.00
	The Moreno Valley Early Group	\$200.00
	Wednesday Women's Literature Study on OSA	\$10.00
Colorado	Colorado INC Grp	\$775.00
	Friday Night Nirvana Group	\$91.00
	Hope Not Dope Group	\$180.00

7th Tradition January-March 2023 Group or Category		
LOCATION	NAME/CITY	TOTAL
Florida	Clean By Any Means	\$122.81
	Florida Area CA Inc	\$2,775.00
Georgia	Awesome Group	\$250.00
	Beyond Human Aid Group	\$87.83
	CA Boomerang Group	\$74.40
Illinois	Forever Free Meeting of CA	\$30.00
	IACA South & West District IL	\$230.00
	Illinois Area	\$206.00
Massachusetts	Mass Area	\$111.00
Michigan	Saturday Morning Alive Group	\$170.00
Missouri	Fried Pipers and Coconuts	\$100.00
	Greater St Louis District of CA	\$200.00
	What Does the Book Say STL Group	\$35.00
New Mexico	NM Area	\$1,000.00
New York	CA New York Area Saturday Beginners Mens Meeting	\$75.00
	The One at My House NYC Group	\$250.00
North Carolina	Vision of Hope Group of CA	\$125.00
	Wednesday Meeting	\$225.00
Ohio	District of Columbus CA	\$500.00
	Ohio Sunday AM	\$100.00
Oregon	CA of Oregon	\$100.00
Pensylvania	PA/NJ/DE Area	\$2,000.00
Tennessee	Off the Rocks	\$36.00
Washington	WSCA Area	\$10,000.00
Washington-DC	Area Service (DC-MD-N VA)	\$100.00
Wisconsin	First Things First	\$60.00
	Razors Edge Meeting Milwaukee Area	\$150.00
	Uncola Meeting	\$193.00
	Wisconsin Area	\$1,000.00
<b>7th Tradition</b>	Anonymous	\$2,625.00
<b>Freedom Fund</b>		\$6,509.69
<b>Gratitude</b>		
<b>S.M.A.R.T.</b>		\$355.00
<b>Total</b>		<b>\$117,676.72</b>

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