

NeverAlone sfv

SAN FERNANDO VALLEY AREA OF NARCOTICS ANONYMOUS NEWSLETTER

Jan / Feb 2012



As promised, here is Part II of "A Conversation With Pepe" - an interview that was published in the first SFV newsletter in May 1989. We are grateful to be able to share the words of a much loved & respected predecessor. If you missed Part I, pick up the Nov/Dec 2011 Newsletter at a meeting or visit the archives:

<http://nasfv.com/html/newsletter.html>

There are two ways of seeing it. There's a way that the ego sees it and there is a way that God sees it. The way that the ego sees it is that someone is attacking you, and your best defense is to attack back, or to separate yourself from them. And when you separate yourself from your brother, you're alone again, and you're lonely and you're lost. The way God looks at it is that no matter what your brother's doing, in truth what he's doing is calling for your love. He's calling for the love that he really believes he doesn't deserve.

And it doesn't stop there, because if it stopped there what would I be saying is look how enlightened I am and how spiritual I am and my poor brother needs to be helped. No, I have to continue to say that the call for love that I see in my brother is the same call that I am calling to my brothers for; I may not do it in that way but I do it every day in different ways.

And that's the same call for both. Because there are only two calls in this universe, one is "I love you" and the other is a call for love. All of us are looking for somebody to love and someone who will love us. I don't care who you are or how bad you think you are, every person in this world would like to be loved, that's our basic, basic drive.

So that love that I see my brother calling for is my

identical love. So when I give it to my brother, by no attacking him, who am I giving it to? Myself. When I give him my love I'm the one who receives, because we have to give away in order to keep it. In order to keep what we have, we have to give it away.

Giving and receiving are synonymous. It's a beautiful concept, and it's true, and it works. I know it's changed my life - changed my perception. I'm not the angry man anymore. Because I see the truth. And like you've had many times, know the truth, because the truth will set you free from these misperceptions that we've had all our lives. It's these misperceptions that we are different or that I'm better than you or that you're better than me. And we're not. They are only beliefs - erroneous beliefs. This is a really powerful, powerful, spiritual path, this Twelve Step Program we're involved with.

See the thought system of this whole fellowship is love. That's the thought system that this fellowship teaches. And the thought system we believed in before we got here is the thought system of fear. In fact, fear is the only defect of character, because there are only two thought systems in this universe, the thought system of fear and the thought system of love. There are only two thought systems and we believe one or the other to be true every

minute of our lives, even when we are asleep.

There is never a time when we can believe in both of them at the same time, because love and fear cannot co-exist. We can not worship two masters at the same time. That's impossible. But we know what fear is all about and like I said, we only have one defect of character, because fear manifests itself in many ways - anger, resentment, lust, jealousy, imagined lack, violence - but it's all fear.

And it's the same thing with love. Love manifests itself in many ways, in understanding, patience, giving and sharing, in kindness and gentleness. And that's what our program teaches. In order to feel this love we have to give it - we have to give it away in order to feel it. And it's in giving and sharing that we understand what we really have.

I never thought I was a patient person until I started being patient. I never thought I was a giving person or generous person until I started doing it. I always thought - and this is my own self-image that I made - that I was selfish that I was not good and I was lacking, and I had nothing to offer. That I was lazy, that I was ugly, I was unlovable. That's what my best thinking got me here; that's what I'm capable of making.

Now this program is teaching me who I really am. That's my problem, basically - I don't know who I am. The image that I have made of myself is the person I believe I am. And because I believe that's who I am, that's probably why I act that way.

If I believe I lack, I have to set up circumstances in my life in order to experience that lack, that way I prove to mind that what I believe about myself is true. Because if I believe in lack, and I experience plenty, I'm contradicting my own thinking. So I have to experience what I believe in order to prove to my mind that what I believe is real. And not only that, I also invite people into my life who agree with my opinion of myself. If I believe that I am worthless, then I'm going to invite people into my life who will treat me like a worthless person.

So you see, I'm responsible. I'm not that victim that I always thought I was. I made the decision, and that's what my will is all about. My will means thinking. Free will means free thought. I have the power to believe whatever I want to believe in. So if I can align my will and God's will - which is the thought system of love - that's where the answer is at. And God's will will show me that my will is an illusion. It's not true. It's a bunch of baloney that I've made, and the reason why I made this is basically I'm insane.

I have come to believe that a power greater than ourselves can restore us to sanity, and sanity is truth. My mind is full of non-truth about who I am, about who you are, about what the world is all about, and about God. Everything in this world that I see is a perception that I have made in my best thinking. So I can't rely on my thinking for the answer, because what I'm doing is I'm relying on the part of my mind that doesn't know the truth. It is incapable of knowledge. All it can do is perceive and perception changes all the time, so I'm forever in doubt. I'm acting from the part of my mind which is in doubt all the time, so I have to rely for the answers on a power greater than myself that knows the truth.

And that's surrender. What we're doing is we're surrendering. And that's why we're powerless over our addiction. Because the thing we're really addicted to is the thought system - that insane thought system. Because our addiction to the chemical is the effect of the problem, which is our thinking.

That is why we are powerless over our addiction, because we do not have the ability to correct our own perception. Because the thing we would need in order to correct our perception is not our intellect, and our intellect is a part of the same thought system that is insane.

So we have to believe in a power greater than that. "Power greater than myself," self meaning a small self, the ego mind. The ego part of our mind that says, "I don't need God, I don't need you, I don't need my brother, I can do it all by myself." And the truth is when I'm trying to do it all myself, the best I can do is create more illusions. It's crazy. That's why I had to rely on a power greater than myself.

Once we take a really thorough First Step and understand the Second, and a power greater than ourselves can restore us to the truth - and we're not talking about a power outside of ourselves - we're talking about the God part of our minds that is within. It is a truth that is within us.

There is nothing we can do in order to learn the truth. There is nowhere we can go to learn it, because we already know the truth. The truth is something that we have to remember, and the meetings help us to remember the truth, reading helps to remember the truth - the truth that is within us already. Once we become aware of that truth and we turn our will and the ego mind over to the love within us, which is God's mind, that's how we live. We turn our will and our lives over to the care of God within us. Let God do it, and that way you let go and let Go. Let God do it.

For the Record

There are many misconceptions about Narcotics Anonymous, so we wish to state what NA does **NOT** do...

1. NA does NOT operate detox units, recovery or half-way houses, and is not affiliated with such facilities.
2. NA does NOT crusade, solicit, advertise for members nor try to persuade anyone to join us.
3. NA does NOT keep case records or case histories nor follow up on members or in any way try to control them.
4. NA does NOT engage in sponsor research.
5. NA does NOT make medical or psychological diagnoses or prognoses nor provide marriage, family or vocational counseling.
6. NA does NOT provide welfare or other social services.
7. NA does NOT conduct spiritual or religious services of any kind.
8. NA does NOT engage in education or propaganda about drugs.
9. NA does NOT accept money for its services, is NOT funded by any public or private sources or agencies, nor does it accept any contributions from non-NA sources.

Thank you to "Sanity" in the New Jersey Region

Forever Grateful

Each day is a record of two kinds. First is my clean date. As of this writing, I have 2 years, 3 months and 26 days. Every day is a record! Without my clean time, I would not reach my other record; living each day in the free world, experiencing life and the beauty it has to offer. This is my third writing. I live to write. First to tell my story and now to share the message of hope. My Higher Power is so great! After getting out of prison from a life sentence, I went back to prison for another term. That is how powerful my addiction was and back to heroin after that. I found N.A. through an H & I panel. I went on a ten day run after being released. I made it to a meeting, got a sponsor, got a commitment and found love, support and true friends. My friends help me today. I am now a giver, not a taker. I have my own place and a job for two years now. I am on a journey to try my best, to love and to do God's will the best I can today. Twenty-eight years of jails and prison was a crime to myself. Today I am willing to change.

Forever Grateful, David H.

Member Submissions

MY OBSESSION & MY DREAM

A Letter to My Disease by Jose R.

I was done with you long time ago when I realized that you no longer held me in handcuffs with the obsession. You see I always thought that I was going to be yours because I could not stop. I'm so sorry to deceive you. I spoke to my GOD of my own understanding & cried & begged him for hope. And you know what happened? He said in a dream, "Jose I have been behind you all along making sure you were alright, as you were walking on the streets high and looking for food I always tried my best to make sure that you ate. Don't you remember the places you went to ask for help & they denied you entry? Don't you remember going to ask for help & they denied you help? Don't you remember begging for 25 cents for a cup of water or food & they didn't give it to you? Don't you remember finding food in the trashcans & getting full & not getting sick from it? Don't you remember finding the blankets in the trashcans that kept you warm when you slept. Don't you remember sleeping for so many hours in the night & you woke up fine & happy? I sat beside you when you woke up just to see your smile & I made sure I took you to the Rite Aid store to wash your beautiful face. I have been here with you waiting for you to come back. It's really your choice. That is why I gave you my own image. So you choose". When I woke up I felt different.

I am now free from the tight grip you had on my life. I have taken my power back from you & am now moving on with my life. How many lives you have ruined, how many lives you have taken? You wont have mine. The creator is on my side, I listen to Him now. He tells me that I need my soul a million times more than you do. Hide in the shadows if you must, the combination of the creator, my mind, body & soul can overpower you if you show your hateful face to me. All the lives you have wrecked, all the lives you have taken & left in your wake shows me that I have to respect you, rather than fear you. I respect you, yet keep you at bay. I now have strength, courage & love within, there is no more room left for you! The day that I met you it was love at first sight, today I know that it was false love. I now move on with my life, ever

The SFV Never Alone Newsletter presents the experiences & opinions of individual members of Narcotics Anonymous. The opinions expressed herein are not necessarily those of NA as a whole, nor does publication of any article imply endorsement by NA or this newsletter. To submit personal stories, poems, artwork, ideas or opinions, subcommittee news or whatever:

SFVNeverAlone@NASFV.com or

Never Alone c/o NASFV, PO Box 4143, Panorama City, CA 91412

THE PAST by Sean M.

The past seems to happen so fast, when you look back, It'll hit you like a blast. It might creep up and kick you in the ...

Back, of your mind,
This ancient thing called time
Can't be defined by a simple rhyme
Or put down in one line
And we watch it fly by
Tick tock goes that clock,

That we call life, you
gotta take it with sugar,
Spice, and everything not so nice

But in actuality the only
True reality is that which
We call now, you ask
How?

Don't sit and ponder on
Your downfalls, your regrets
Don't fret, don't sweat every time you
Let, someone down, you
Ask how?

Live your life now. Now
And only now, not yesterday or
Tomorrow don't wallow in your
Sorrows be happy for the now.
That's all you have.

Mind Change by CrookedTeeth

Newly clean my mind runs like the wind
Not even I know where it has been
Colors, sounds , light , movement, smells
send it running to the max
But now getting clean I must face some
hard cold facts
My disease kept me all alone
Going to meetings I realize drugs turned
me cold as stone
Why can't we see ourselves - until we see
another?



Saturday, January 14, 2012, The Orange County Area Cosmic Bowling Event at Westminster Lanes, 6471 Westminster Blvd., Westminster, CA. 92683. Speaker Meeting 7-8:30 pm Check-in: 8:30-9 pm. Bowling from 9 pm til 2 am. Suggested Donation is \$16 presale or \$20 at the door. Shoes are included. Contact: Tiny @ 714-414-2848 or Richard @ 562-537-7637 for more info

January 20, 21 & 22, 2012 - The San Fernando Valley Area Convention 17 "Today I Will Be Unafraid" at the Marriott Burbank Airport, 2500 Hollywood Way, Burbank

For info pick up a flyer @ your local meeting or visit:
www.nasfv.com/convention



Saturday, February 4, 2012, The Greater Hollywood Area Unity Day 23 at Musicians Local 47, 817 Vine Street, Hollywood, CA. 90038. Event starts w/Brunch from 10-11 am, Welcome Meeting 11-12, Meetings & Workshops from 12:15-5 pm. Main Meeting at 6pm & the dance from 9 until the joint closes. Tickets for this event are \$25 presale, includes Brunch & a nice Souvenir Mug, the dance only is \$10 & you can reserve a table for 10 at \$250.

Saturday, February 11, 2012, The Lost and Found Group of the Southern Antelope Valley Dinner and Comedy Show at 339 East Ave. K-8 #115 Lancaster, CA. 93535 (in the back). Celebrate our 6th Birthday! Starts with dinner at 5 pm followed by a meeting at 7 pm. Comedy Show at 9:30. Pre sale tickets are available for \$15 or you may be purchased for \$17 at the door.

Saturday, February 11, 2012, The Southern California Regional Assembly Workshop at United Methodist Church, 437 W. San Bernardino Rd., Covina, CA. 91732. The SCRAW is a service workshop for GSR's, RCM's, and anyone interested in obtaining information about the Conference Agenda Report. Starts at 9 am and registration is free. Ends at 5 pm.



Saturday, June 9, 2012, The 3rd Annual Men's Breakfast at Elk's Lodge, 2232 North Hollywood Way, Burbank, CA 91505. Breakfast at 8:30 am and the Meeting at 10:30. Tickets: \$25 per person or \$200 for a table of 8. Seating is limited so get your tickets in advance!

The Southern California Regional Cruise Committee of Narcotics Anonymous invites you to sail north to Alaska on the "Reaching New Horizons" cruise. Departing August 26, 2012 with a planned return on September 2, 2012 from Seattle Washington. For this trip you will need a Passport and Reservations. Payment plans are available and a link is provided on the flier. It takes a whole committee to plan an event such as this. If you are interested in becoming part of the the committee or would like more information about this event please contact Steve S. (818) 326-8009. This event is by pre sale only!



Help Wanted!

The Regional Sponsorship Behind the Walls Committee needs volunteers to assist in sorting out mail from inmates seeking recovery. Currently there are approximately 10 months worth of backlogged mail from incarcerated men & women who are waiting for a response from NA. These are people who want to achieve freedom from the internal prison we are all familiar and are willing to work the NA program from behind prison walls. By not answering their requests, we are denying them that gift we on the outside sometimes take for granted. There are 366 days in 2012 - if you can give one Sunday morning of your time to help get SBTW caught up with the mail distribution, please contact Guy P. @ 818-720-8065.

Let's not forget those who need our help!

To grow physically, one must take something in.... such as food & drink.

To grow intellectually, one must take something in... such as knowledge.

To grow spiritually, one must **GIVE...**
*Don't limit yourself...
Be of service & GROW!*

Subcommittee Spotlight Freedom Behind the Walls

Here in the San Fernando Valley Area of Narcotics Anonymous we have a subcommittee known as NA Freedom Behind The Walls. Our primary, and only, purpose is to provide a sponsor to work the 12 steps of narcotics anonymous to those people who are incarcerated in an institution and not able to meet potential sponsors at local NA meetings.

Although some addicts do have exposure to Narcotics Anonymous prior to being incarcerated, many do not, and their first exposure is through Narcotics Anonymous meetings inside the institution or through visits from H&I panels.

Following a request by a potential inmate/sponsee we are able to assign a sponsor who has worked the 12 steps. The sponsor contacts the inmate via mail and assists in working with the sponsee, providing all necessary NA approved literature free of charge, until they are released.

It is a tremendous way to freely give back. We have found that anyone, regardless of circumstances, has the right to sponsorship and can attain freedom even if incarcerated.

Guy P.
Chairperson, NAFBTW

SUBCOMMITTEE INFO - DON'T BE APART...BE A PART OF!

NA FREEDOM BEHIND THE WALLS Committee meets at 7:pm on the 1st Tuesday of each month at Denny's, 16575 Sherman Way in Van Nuys. Chair: Guy P. - 818-720-8065 / BehindTheWalls@NASFV.com

ACTIVITIES Committee meets at 6pm on the 3rd Sunday of each month. United Methodist Church, Room 7, in Reseda (Lindley & Saticoy). SFVActiv@NASFV.com

CONVENTION Committee meets at 7pm on the 1st Friday of each month. Cri-Help, 11027 Burbank Blvd., No. Hollywood

Chair: Aaron S. - 818-424-9345 / SFVConvention@NASFV.com

HOSPITAL & INSTITUTIONS (H&I) Committee meets on the 1st Monday at 8:15pm. Valley Plaza Rec. Center, 12240 Archwood St., No. Hollywood Chair: Jim F. - 818-261-6002 / HI@NASFV.com

PHONELINES Committee meets on the 2nd Sunday - contact Chair for info. Chair: Lil G. - 310-350-0827 / SFVPhones@NASFV.com

WEBSITE Committee contact Chair for meeting info. Chair: Beau M. - 818-425-3552 / WEBSITE@NASFV.com

PUBLIC INFORMATION (PI) Committee contact Chair for meeting info. Chair: Justice B. - 818-486-0727 / SFVPI@nasfv.com

NEWSLETTER Committee meets the 1st Monday of each month at The House of SPAM (call for directions) Chair: Pamela Mc - 818-268-2444 / SFVNeverAlone@NASFV.com

ASC Meeting will be held on the 2nd Sunday of every month at the United Methodist Church in Tujunga 9901 N. Tujunga Canyon Tujunga, CA 91042 ASC Chair: Jerry L. 818-825-0565 areachair@NASFV.com

NA WORD SEARCH

DONOTDOTHISISMEETINGS

I S E Y L A M Q S E R O S N O P S H Q
N C W H Z Y F X Y G B D V P X C R Y J
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anonymity
courage
faith
fellowship
freedom
gratitude
higherpower
honesty
hope
meditation

openminded
powerless
serenity
service
spirituality
sponsor
stepwork
traditions
trust
unity
willingness