



HOPE, FAITH & COURAGE

WRITE LINES



A NEWSLETTER WRITTEN BY C.A. MEMBERS FOR C.A. MEMBERS IN HOSPITALS AND INSTITUTIONS

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If you have any comments or questions related to this publication, or would like to contribute an article please email: hi@cauk.org.uk

Are you looking for the easier softer way?

I am a hopeless addict. I came into the rooms of Cocaine Anonymous because I had tried every other way to control my drug use. I wanted to use successfully but after countless vain attempts I found that for me it couldn't be done.

When I came into Cocaine Anonymous I had nowhere else to go.

I started using mind altering substances from an early age because I liked the effect it produced, I liked the way that it made me feel different, better about myself – alcohol and drugs were my solution to the way I felt about myself and the world around me.

When I used I felt confident, accepted, funny and sociable, drink and drugs did for me what I could not do for myself.

Eventually the drugs stopped working and I found myself taking more and more, still unable to obtain the high that I was so desperately seeking. I became paranoid and isolated; I no longer wanted to use drugs sociably. My morals and beliefs went downhill

and I was doing things to get drugs that I said I would never do.

A life using drugs was no longer fun for me.

I needed to stop and I wanted to stop. I tried every method I could think of to stop. I changed my friends, I changed my partner, I moved town. I changed everything in my life – except myself!

Nothing worked, I couldn't even get a day clean, I was using against my will and I didn't know why.

When I came into the rooms of Cocaine Anonymous, beaten by my addiction, I finally learned about my problem...

ME – I AM THE PROBLEM!

I was told that I suffer from an illness and that I am allergic to alcohol, this made sense too, as I knew from past experiences that I have never been able to have "just one". I understood powerlessness because I had never had the willpower to resist any drink or drug. The members of C.A. seemed to know what they were talking about

and I was willing to try anything - as I had tried everything else.

I did what was suggested and got a sponsor who guided me through the Twelve Steps. I now understand that just stopping using is not enough for me, without drink or drugs in me I still have this illness and so I continue to work the Steps in my daily life to ensure that I remain clean and sober one day at a time.

Today I have been clean and sober for over four years, my journey has been amazing and today I have a life better than I ever imagined possible. I have at last found the feeling of ease and comfort that I so desperately sought all my life.

If the Twelve Steps of Cocaine Anonymous weren't worth doing, I wouldn't do them – but I do!

If, like me, you are looking for the easier, softer way, congratulations you have found it: Cocaine Anonymous!

Come join us - We're here and we're free!

COCAINE ANONYMOUS HELPLINE

TEL: 0800 612 0225

WWW.CAUK.ORG.UK

H&I - Put Me on the Road to Recovery

This is the story of how uplifting it has been for me in my recovery, to carry the message to others still in active addiction. This has only been possible because the C.A. message of recovery was carried to me by members of H&I, whilst imprisoned. This was in the very early part of 2007.

My first encounter with a 12 Step programme was in the early parts of 2002, again whilst in prison. This came after using mind-altering substances for some twenty-seven years. As I only took the first five Steps the inevitable happened, I relapsed. Despite having only worked part of the prescribed solution I did manage to remain abstinent for a few years and believed for a while I was in fact cured and maybe not even one of THEM ADDICTS! Of course this attitude smacked of arrogance, which soon turned into complacency. I turned into the typical "dry drunk", using whatever I could to change the way I felt as long as it did not involve mind-altering substances. I wrongly believed I would be ok. So sex three times a day, long hours at the gym, frequently comparing myself to others, working illegally, associating with people using and isolating myself with my partner became my way of life. Of course with all that going on I had no time for meetings, which in my head were "full of obsessive robots".

Unsurprisingly I relapsed and was soon back in prison for breach of parole licence conditions. It was then that I started to go back to fellowship meetings. I particularly found that the message carried in Cocaine Anonymous meetings appealed to me very much. I was impressed by the way H&I members appeared to be living the principles of the Twelve Step programme. The message they carried was that by consistently taking actions suggested by their sponsors, in line with the principles outlined in the Big Book of Alcoholics Anonymous they had benefited enormously. They shared that an integral part of their recovery program involved working with other alcoholics/addicts, which, being a very selfish and self-centred individual was a concept I had always shied from. "Why would I want to help others? I mean I have more than enough of my own problems to deal with! Let alone those of others."

What a paradox I was about to see and experience. Looking back I can now see how wrong I was. For a while I was feeding my disease of self-centeredness in anyway I could which, of course is a futile and fatal exercise. Due to my defect of gluttony, among others, I never felt satisfied. My only hope was to try and smash my self-centeredness. The more I get out of myself by helping others the less selfish and self centred I become and the more I feel content and happy in myself. My sponsor stressed the importance of "constant thoughts of others", so I began to put this into practice.

I have been fortunate in having the opportunity to help a number of fellow addicts. By sharing my experience I helped them decide that they were suffering from the disease of alcoholism/addiction. I encouraged two fellow inmates to join the fellowship and they both now have C.A. sponsors working with them. I say "I" and please do not misunderstand me - I realise that I am but a carrier of the message, making use of God given opportunities. One member was due to take the first three Steps but was unable to see his sponsor due to circumstances out of their hands. It was a privilege to spend time with him, ask him some vital questions, say the Third Step prayer together and then get him started on the Fourth Step. I now understand why my sponsor always tells me I help him as much as he helps me, whenever I thank him for his time and effort.

This takes me to the reason why I am writing this article for H&I. I believe I owe it to myself as much as I owe it to fellow addicts to help in anyway I can. It has taken me some five years trying to be happy not working a program, to realise it does not work. I need to work the C.A. program as outlined in the Big Book of Alcoholics Anonymous with the close guidance of my sponsor. I am still in prison at the moment, but I am determined that upon my release, which will be sometime this year, "God willing", I will continue to work with fellow addicts who cannot gain access to meetings in the wider community. I will be very grateful if I am given the spiritual opportunity to be able to help "still suffering addicts" incarcerated in Hospitals and Institutions.

JUST A THOUGHT

One definition of a bottom is the point when the last thing you lost, or the next thing you are about to lose, is more important to you than drink or drugs.
That point is different for everyone – and some of us die before we get there.

“Why Can’t I Do Life?”

“Why Me?”, “Why can’t I do life?”, “Why is my world so dark and hopeless, whilst others enjoy and embrace their day?” These, amongst a million others are questions, I asked myself every day.

Hospitals were no stranger to me; I was on first name terms with most of the staff at my local one. I spent weeks and months on the mental health wards, hungrily accepting the vast quantities of mind numbing drugs they dealt out to me. Hospitals were my haven; I felt safe, no responsibilities, no screaming children, no disappointed parents, and no despairing husband. The only commitment I had was to make sure I was on time for the dishing out of my daily "medication"- my solution to the overwhelming presence of life. This way I could opt out of life without actually hurting any one right? Wrong!, I was in agony, eaten up with guilt and remorse at my latest drinking bout and the impact it had on my family and dear children. But I felt bad about it and I promised not to do it again, and besides I was taking lots of drugs to steady my shredded nerves, so it would all be ok wouldn't it? I wouldn't snog men I didn't know, drink drive and top it all off with and overdose again, I had learned my lesson. This was my rock bottom this time....surely...

This was before I learned to true nature and gravity of my illness, I went on to drink again, overdose again, drink drive again. I lost my relationship, my home, my children, and my family. I felt like my soul had been sold to the devil. I still had a little fight left, but I resigned myself to an untimely but welcome death. I just couldn't stop the self destruct this time, and so my poor emotionally beaten father agreed to send me to rehab, a twelve step rehab. I was detoxed and introduced to the CA fellowship and the twelve steps. Gradually light and laughter came into my life, along with love and hope, so did pain, anguish, despair and fear. The latter I recognised well, but I had always numbed those feelings with valium, sleepers and alcohol. Those things didn't work for me any more though; they hadn't for a long time. In fact they had turned on me with a ferociousness I could never have imagined. I had tried other things as well to try and stay in control of things, Bulimia (for 14 years!), relationships, sex and shopping. Anything that would make me feel good inside and on top of the world. Nothing worked any more; I was faced with life in all its overbearing techno colour glory. Nothing to dull the sharpness of it, nothing to make me feel safe. I felt naked! And I drank again, wishing death.

God had other plans for me though; I was picked up off the street by the C.A. fellowship and detoxed (again). I had to

face facts, it wasn't my time to go, and I had tried long enough and hard enough after all. My only option was to give my recovery everything I had in me, it was do or die!

A female member of C.A. approached me and offered to put me up for a few days here and there - was she mad? Didn't she know what a screw up I was? Still, I had nothing left to lose and gratefully accepted her hospitality. She took me through the steps over a few days and finally the light switched on! This was a program of action, it was not about stopping me from drinking, it was about connecting me to a Power that would save my life and my soul. It was so simple, I just had to do and not question why. I was desperate enough not to argue with her when she asked me to make my amends straight away. “You want the promises don't you?” she asked” Bloody hell, of course I do, but I'm different, this wont work for me “(I was always quick to point out the negative). She asked me to just trust the process of the Steps. I took a leap of faith and did what was suggested. About half way through my amends, I felt something changing in me, something stirring from deep inside, I felt compassion, I understood things from others perspectives. I began to see what a selfish, manipulating and deceitful person I had become. The problem was me! not the world, not people, not drink and drugs, but ME. I HAD to change; I didn't want to be that person any more. Life was never going to change for me, I'm not THAT important. But the Steps and God have shown me how to change my attitude towards people and life.

My life today is so, so different. Ten and a half months clean and sober and I am happier and more at peace now than I have ever been. It just keeps on getting better as well. I have cleared the wreckage of my past, I keep my own house in order, and I have a beautiful and loving relationship with God. With God as my anchor man, I can survive and grow from anything this world throws at me and still feel inner peace and acceptance. My children and family are back in my life, they think what has happened to me is nothing short of a miracle. I'm so full of gratitude and love for everything and everyone in my life today. I don't think about drink and drugs anymore, I think what I can do for others and what I can add to their happiness, rather than take from it. I've started focusing on my career and am studying at present. I've also opened up a new CA meeting and moved back to my local area. The Power of this program amazes me every day. This way of life is free for me to embrace, I just follow a few simple steps every day to keep me connected to God, and I pass this stuff on to others... well it would be selfish of me not to wouldn't it?

*God, grant me the Serenity to accept the things I cannot change...
Courage to change the things I can and Wisdom to know the difference*

REACHING OUT

I made it into this Program because someone else worked their Twelfth Step on me. Someone passed it on to me. Someone was out there after they got clean and sober, caring about others. I need to never, ever forget that. Had they simply gone on with their lives and forgotten about people like me who were still out there using and suffering, I wouldn't

be here today. My gratitude begins with that fact. It is with that gratitude in mind that I reach out to others, especially the newcomers. I need to have them in my life. That is where my spirituality begins.

For me, spirituality comes from caring about others. I have found that the more I focus on improving

the quality of the lives of others, the less I am into myself and my will. I feel a freedom and peace from within.

The gifts I am beginning to receive in my life are greater than I could have ever imagined.

Taken from the reading 'Reaching Out' Cocaine Anonymous approved literature. Copyright 2004

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**If you have any comments or questions related to this publication,
or would like to contribute an article please email: hi@cauk.org.uk**

WRITE LINES WORDSEARCH

THE PRINCIPLES

A	W	A	R	E	N	E	S	S	E	R	P	K	E
H	I	S	X	R	H	O	I	W	D	Y	I	C	G
S	O	S	O	T	M	P	M	I	F	Y	W	R	A
Z	U	N	I	A	T	T	N	Q	O	D	I	N	R
H	F	A	E	L	K	T	K	N	X	I	L	Q	U
R	F	O	B	S	E	L	H	Y	U	S	L	V	O
E	U	S	V	G	T	G	O	B	Z	C	I	J	C
P	W	Y	R	Y	U	Y	A	V	V	I	N	M	A
O	E	I	U	R	N	H	M	L	E	P	G	L	O
H	T	S	E	R	V	I	C	E	I	L	N	X	G
Y	Z	H	U	M	I	L	I	T	Y	I	E	M	H
W	G	C	I	J	J	H	E	R	O	N	S	O	F
Q	T	M	K	Q	Y	Y	U	M	P	E	S	K	E
T	F	O	R	G	I	V	E	N	E	S	S	D	B

awareness

faith

hope

love

courage

forgiveness

humility

service

discipline

honesty

integrity

willingness

JUST A THOUGHT

“When I focus on what’s good today, I have a good day, and when I focus on what’s bad I have a bad day. If I focus on a problem the problem increases; if I focus on the answer, the answer increases.”

The Enjoyment Wore Off

I am an addict and alcoholic and used drugs for many years – unsuccessfully! As with most people, my first years of using were good fun and I enjoyed myself... unfortunately once the enjoyment wore off I found that I was unable to stop using on my own.

I have used most drugs although my main weakness was for heroin and crack. My using took me to many dark places, both physically, mentally and emotionally, I stole, lied and cheated to anyone that got

near me and I hurt many people. I lost friends, family, jobs and my self-respect as a result.

I have tried almost every way possible to either stop or control my drug use and have been in and out of detoxes and treatment centres numerous times but nothing seemed to work for me, no matter how hard I tried I just didn’t have the power to do this alone. I thought nothing could work for me and there was no way out of that endless cycle of desperation and despair.

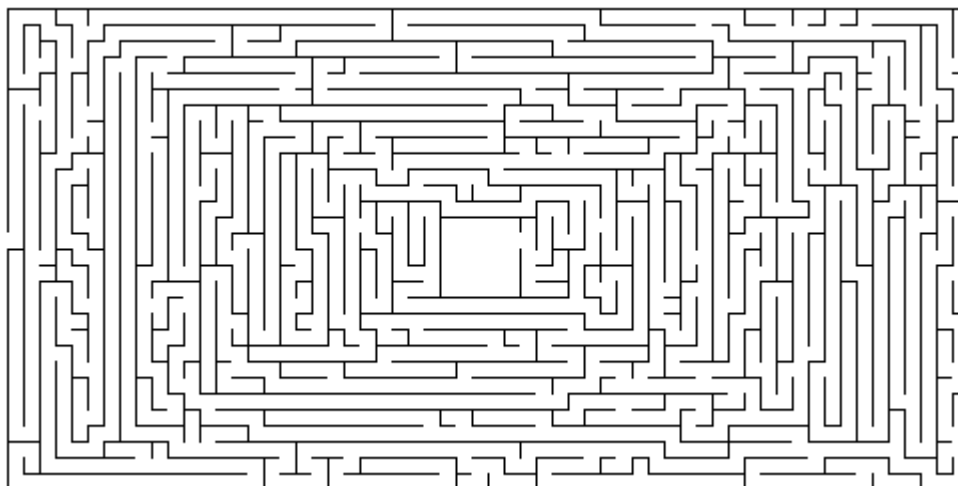
Finally I found the meetings of Cocaine Anonymous and since then my life is just getting better and better one day at a time. It is such a simple program, so much easier than the life of using that I have come from and as a result I now have friends and family back in my life, I have my self respect back but most of all I feel content and happy for the first time – all thanks to recovery through Cocaine Anonymous!

COCAINE ANONYMOUS

0800 612 0225

www.cauk.org.uk

You’ll be a**MAZE**d before you are half way through!



The Twelve Steps of Cocaine Anonymous

1. We admitted we were powerless over cocaine and all other mind-altering substances -- that our lives had become unmanageable.
2. Came to believe that a Power greater than ourselves could restore us to sanity.
3. Made a decision to turn our will and our lives over to the care of God *as we understood Him*.
4. Made a searching and fearless moral inventory of ourselves.
5. Admitted to God, to ourselves, and to another human being the exact nature of our wrongs.
6. Were entirely ready to have God remove all these defects of character.
7. Humbly asked Him to remove our shortcomings.
8. Made a list of all persons we had harmed, and became willing to make amends to them all.
9. Made direct amends to such people wherever possible, except when to do so would injure them or others.
10. Continued to take personal inventory and when we were wrong promptly admitted it.
11. Sought through prayer and meditation to improve our conscious contact with God *as we understood Him*, praying only for knowledge of His will for us and the power to carry that out.
12. Having had a spiritual awakening as the result of these steps, we tried to carry this message to addicts, and to practice these principles in all our affairs.

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The Twelve Traditions of Cocaine Anonymous

1. Our common welfare should come first; personal recovery depends upon C.A. unity.
2. For our group purpose there is but one ultimate authority -- a loving God as He may express Himself in our group conscience. Our leaders are but trusted servants; they do not govern.
3. The only requirement for C.A. membership is a desire to stop using cocaine and all other mind-altering substances.
4. Each group should be autonomous except in matters affecting other groups or C.A. as a whole.
5. Each group has but one primary purpose -- to carry its message to the addict who still suffers.
6. A C.A. group ought never endorse, finance, or lend the C.A. name to any related facility or outside enterprise, lest problems of money, property and prestige divert us from our primary purpose.
7. Every C.A. group ought to be fully self-supporting, declining outside contributions.
8. Cocaine Anonymous should remain forever non-professional, but our service centers may employ special workers.
9. C.A., as such, ought never be organized; but we may create service boards or committees directly responsible to those they serve.
10. Cocaine Anonymous has no opinion on outside issues; hence the C.A. name ought never be drawn into public controversy.
11. Our public relations policy is based on attraction rather than promotion; we need always maintain personal anonymity at the level of press, radio, television and films.
12. Anonymity is the spiritual foundation of all our Traditions, ever reminding us to place principles before personalities.

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