



# THE MAINLINE

AUGUST 2016

*Greetings,*

*We write you as representatives of Heroin Anonymous World Services (HAWS). This informational bulletin's purpose is to increase communication between the groups of Heroin Anonymous throughout the world.*

## FROM THE HAWS WEBMASTER COMMITTEE

We plan to launch a new HAWS web site at [www.heroinanonymous.org](http://www.heroinanonymous.org) on or before Monday, September 12th. We are excited about the new site because it will have a new look, better organization so you can find what you are looking for quickly, it will be compatible with mobile devices, and more. Because we have had to manually transfer all of the listed meetings to the new web site, it is possible that we made errors in doing so. After September 12th, please check the web site for any meetings you might be familiar with and notify us of any errors by sending an e-mail to [hawswebmaster@gmail.com](mailto:hawswebmaster@gmail.com). Thank you for letting us be of service to the fellowship!

## CARRYING THE MESSAGE

Spreading the message of experience, strength, and hope is the greatest asset we have in this program regarding the maintenance of our primary purpose. Our members learned what they have from those who have trudged the road to happy destiny before us. I have grown from spreading the message to newcomers and those in hospitals and institutions (H&I); I find I learn more about myself by talking to others who constantly

remind me where I came from. I have gained many lasting bonds with women, which was difficult for me in the past. I am certainly not alone in this exponential gift.

In Toledo, Ohio, as well as many of our surrounding areas, heroin has become something that is predominant in the news and social media, and it surrounds everyone. Most of the crime here is directly related to the use or sale of heroin. People are losing

their battle on a daily basis. It breaks my heart. Almost anyone you speak to knows someone struggling with opiate addiction. The hospitals and institutions committee is an amazing tool to help other addicts like me. This committee allows me to take my horrible story and turn it into something positive. Because of what I've been through, others may relate, learn, and possibly save themselves years of struggle. I feel like

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I'm able to fight back against something that helped me hate myself for so long, and little by little I've put myself back together.

The women I meet are inspiring at times and frustrating at others. It is difficult when I know there is hope for everyone, but sometimes people can't see it for themselves. I have noticed that regularly meeting with the same women, week after week, allows them to open up and be a little more forthcoming with their feelings and challenges. After one woman shares her personal journey, another almost always shares how their story related and helped. When they realize they can be useful and help others, they find hope. These are beautiful moments. Coming from a treatment facility myself, my story shares a common bond with the women I meet. It's a good starting point. An H&I meeting is a good format to teach things like how to behave in a meeting, various jargon definitions, how to meet people in the

fellowship, the difference between various formats, and closed versus open meetings. I had never attended a 12 step meeting before I recently started working for my sobriety. The same is true for many of the women with whom I meet. When I was in treatment, a meeting was brought to us and I learned how to function in the fellowship. This set the scene for my growth and I am happy to attempt to do the same for these women.

The first three steps being the foundation for good sobriety, they are discussed in great detail at some of the H&I meetings I've chaired. To really understand the "ins and outs" of the first three steps is instrumental to performing the rest of the steps. The women seem very intrigued to learn how to begin getting out of the mindset of despair and self-loathing. Understanding the first three steps certainly seems to help with that. They ask many questions and are very eager to find out how to get started. Sometimes it would take three meetings

to get through one step in the 12 and 12. I love seeing that hunger. It keeps me striving to be a better person than I was yesterday.

In some cases, an H&I meeting is the only meeting these women get to attend. I can see how much it helps. I hear things like, "I can't wait to get off restriction so I can go to some outside meetings". These women are getting excited about H.A. before they have even attended an outside meeting. That is amazing. Getting excited about being sober and overcoming the fear that one cannot live without synthetic assistance was my driving force in very early sobriety. It seems that I am also a middle ground for some of the women who don't get to attend outside meetings. It is hard for them to get phone numbers for women in the program that aren't in their facility. I like to have at least a few women that are always willing to let me distribute their number. I hope that if these relationships start early they may have something to latch onto when they exit

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the facility. It also paves the way for possible sponsorship and getting in the habit of calling someone every day even when the phone weighs a ton.

As far as the traditions go, I have a little bit of trouble getting the women interested. I explain that this is what keeps this program going and has kept A.A. alive for years. That being said, I think the basics get across. They understand anonymity and the need for it, that the only requirement to be a member is the desire to stop using, not necessarily abstinence and that spreading the message and helping others to find sobriety is the primary purpose.

This committee is a great place for newcomers to get involved. To be able to tell someone with less than 90

days that their story can help and they are more than welcome to be a part of something is encouraging. I also think a newcomer's excitement is contagious and they can more closely relate to new clients in the facility. We all want to be useful and a part of something. That's what fellowship is for, right?

The things I have written here are only my account of my experience which is the only thing I can speak on. However, I can see a change in my fellowship as a whole directly due to the H&I committee. We are getting members from treatment facilities and institutions more regularly and they are even brought in by the facility sometimes. It is so great to see that what we do inside helps each individual enough that they believe in

the fellowship and pursue it upon release from treatment or detention. I can also speak on how I am personally affected. I absolutely love my fellowship and this program. The H&I meetings I go to are usually some of the best I attend throughout the week. The raw honesty and desperation is humbling. I'm reminded of what it was like: the fear, being unsure, getting emotions back, trying to repair relationships and so many other things that help me not shut the door on my past and remember their importance. It is amazing to be a part of something that can help someone not only save their own life but others as well.

-A Member of the H&I Committee in Toledo, OH

## MEETING SPOTLIGHT

"Stick to the Solution" Group – Saint Louis, MO

Deep in the heart of South Saint Louis, at the corner of Rogers and Humphrey, sits an unmarked two story building. Without much investigation, it looks like a quaint little town home. If you drove by on any Wednesday night, you would notice the wide mix of people outside smoking, vaping and laughing! Little would you, know they are all recovering heroin addicts. There are even children running around playing and laughing, because there are several parents who attend. This building, called the Alano Club, is the location where we hold our

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Wednesday night 8:30 pm Heroin Anonymous meeting. The "Stick to the Solution" (Stick Format Meeting) meeting of Heroin Anonymous originally began with only two members. Eventually, they stepped down and three members from another H.A. meeting stepped in. April of 2016 marks our meeting's fourth year at the Alano Club. This



meeting has now become a solid home group that started with five members in 2013 and now has 15 home group members who attend our monthly group conscience meeting. We also have an average attendance of 30 people every week which is certainly a change from our average of 8 people back in 2013. Our meeting has grown so large that we had to move to a bigger room in the building to accommodate the growth! There was a time, in the beginning, when not a single member could raise their hands for having a year or more of sobriety. Today, thankfully, more than 10 of us are able to that! We are so blessed and grateful to have H.A. in Saint Louis and I am proud to call the Wednesday night, "Stick to the Solution" meeting of Heroin Anonymous, my home group. Together, we share our experience, strength, and hope with each other to solve our heroin addiction. We do recover!

"LIFE WILL TAKE ON NEW MEANING. TO WATCH PEOPLE RECOVER, TO SEE THEM HELP OTHERS, TO WATCH LONELINESS VANISH, TO SEE FELLOWSHIP GROW UP ABOUT YOU, TO HAVE A HOST OF FRIENDS-THIS IS AN EXPERIENCE YOU MUST NOT MISS!"

-ALCOHOLIC ANONYMOUS PG. 89

I wouldn't miss it for the world!

-Tiffany S.

## ONE HEROIN ADDICT'S RECOVERY

Hello, all. My name is Adam L. and I am a heroin addict. I was born in raised in the suburbs of Youngstown, Ohio. My sobriety date is 6/13/13 and the first HA meeting I attended was "Up With Hope, Down With Dope", which is held every Thursday night at

7:45 p.m. I made that meeting my home group and it's still my home group today.

My sponsor "suggested" I get active after attending this meeting for a couple weeks so I signed up to make coffee. That was my first experience doing service work. I can see

today that making coffee may have very well kept me sober for the six months I was assigned to that position. That was the only HA meeting in the area at the time.

Over the next couple of years, numerous other meetings started to sprout

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from that single one. Today, we have six outside meetings in our area. Around mid-2015, a small group of my anonymous friends and I pondered the idea of a Hospitals & Institutions meeting. We got together following the H&I guidelines World Services provided for us and were each voted into a different service position. We met up the following month, and we discovered a lot of facilities were skeptical since we are a relatively new fellowship. A new treatment center was just opening their doors at that time. I was going there to visit a patient and ended up discussing H&I with its clinical director. He was more than happy to have us, and asked when we wanted to start.

I printed out all the readings and meeting formats and called upon a few other willing addicts for help. We showed up at the treatment center a week later armed with the message of Heroin Anonymous. The Sunday Night, "Never Say Die", closed meeting met for the first time in August of 2015. The H&I Committee continues to meet,

and now we have four H&I meetings in the area!

I have been the chairperson and an active speaker almost every week since our formation. Speaking in treatment centers and detox facilities is by far my favorite form of service. I have to regularly be reminded of the hopelessness, desperation, and power of my disease. The longer I stay sober, the further I get from that pain. Coming into a detox, I am reminded of that pain and also of the blessing that my sobriety is. I must carry the message to stay sober! What better place is there than in a hospital or treatment facility?

It is also is a great platform to find newcomers that want to go through the steps. I sponsor a number of heroin addicts that I met for the first time at an H&I meeting. Many in turn are now active in H&I, and they share how their sobriety started when they were in treatment. They understand, as I do, that having service positions keeps them accountable.

I know from the bitter experiences of others that my sobriety depends on my

service to other addicts. There are plenty of days I don't want to chair at H&I or find speakers. I do it regardless, because I know my life depends on it. It always surprises me, although it really shouldn't, that every time I leave an H&I meeting, I feel better. Our fellowship is growing and by sticking to the traditions we continue to carry the message of Heroin Anonymous.

A new detox center opened in our area this month. They called us to bring a meeting in! We showed up the next day. The first H&I meeting in that detox was HA. I am so grateful to have the opportunity to participate in H&I.

I owe everything good in my life to Heroin Anonymous and the Twelve Steps. The work I put forth in H&I and other aspects of my recovery are miniscule compared to what HA has given me. I am free from the suffering of my heroin addiction. I have a purpose for my pain. My purpose is God given: carry the message to the still sick and suffering.

-Adam L.

*If you would like your meeting featured in our meeting spotlight, or have any other content you would like to submit, please feel free to contact us at the email listed. Thank you!*

*- Heroin Anonymous World Services Board*

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