



THE MAINLINE

DECEMBER 2017

Greetings,

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

GIVE US YOUR WORKSHOP & PANEL TOPIC IDEAS!

2018 World Convention Update

Hi everyone,

Portland, OR is really excited about the convention coming up this August. We are in the process of creating workshops and panels for the convention and really want to know what topics and issues are being discussed around the country. What kind of workshops or panels do *YOU* think would be meaningful and useful for *YOUR* fellowship?

Here are some of the ideas the committee is already throwing around:

- How to start and run mid-level business meetings: Area, District, or Intergroup meetings.
- How to start and run a Hospital and Institutions (H&I) committee and start taking meetings into treatment centers and jails.
- What is "Singleness of Purpose" and why is it important?
- MAT and maintenance drugs: A traditions-based, personal experience panel.

Are we on the pulse here, or are there other topics we're not thinking about?

So please ask yourself: "What would my group want to learn and discuss at the HA World Convention this year?" And please let us know at - haconvention@gmail.com.

Thank you,

Paul F.

HAWC18 Steering Committee Chair

Contact HAWWS Bulletin:

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ONE HEART, ONE MIND

Meeting Spotlight – Myrtle Beach, SC

A year and half ago, a group of like-minded individuals gathered together for one common cause - to bring the solution that saved their lives to others who still suffered from heroin addiction. This small group of men and women, no more than ten, saw the need for an HA meeting in Myrtle Beach, South Carolina. The realization of this need came not only from their own personal stories, but from the countless others who were losing their battle with this disease.

We commenced on this path of altruism, that our 12th step strongly suggests. We were able to quickly get in touch with HAWS to find out the steps to start an HA meeting, received our starter kit, and hit the ground running. A local church in Myrtle Beach was willing to meet with us to discuss hosting our meetings. A few members met with the pastor and were blown away by his love and understanding. After the meeting with the pastor, he offered us a prayer and blessing. As we bowed our heads, the pastor prayed with us and asked that we be blessed with one heart and one mind during our journey of recovery. From that prayer, came the name of our new group – One Heart, One Mind.

As the first few Monday meetings went by, and the small group sat around the table for our first business meeting, we all spoke about the size of our group. We thought it likely that for months, it would be only a few of us taking up the seats in this meeting we knew was so desperately needed. We were mistaken. As soon as

word of mouth spread of the new HA meeting on Monday nights, the small group of ten became thirty, which then became forty, and still continues to grow in numbers. I personally remember the first few meetings, and talking with my fellows after. We were all in agreement that this group was divinely driven, and the purpose was and still is so much bigger than us...so much bigger than our ideas, and our desires to help the still suffering. In spite of this sense of divine purpose, we never imagined how quickly the group would grow and how quickly we would see this small seedling take root.

One Heart, One Mind now has two meetings a week, and continues to grow. The solution, the sufficient substitute, it lies at our fingertips. It lives in our hearts. What a beautiful gift it is, that we are granted the ability to carry the message to our brothers and sisters who are fighting to hang on, who are begging for a way out, and who are craving the same solution we still crave and stay desperate for.

Abandon yourself to God as you understand God. Admit your faults to Him and to your fellows. Clear away the wreckage of your past. Give freely of what you find and join us. We shall be with you in the Fellowship of the Spirit, and you will surely meet some of us as you trudge the Road of Happy Destiny. May God bless you and keep you—until then. - A Vision For You

Jim D.
Myrtle Beach

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CLEAN & FREE FROM THE OBSESSION

Personal Story: Nathan P. – Livingston, MT

My name is Nathan P. from Livingston, MT. I'm 27 years old and I'm a grateful recovering heroin addict. At the time I'm writing this, I have been clean for one year. I never thought I could get clean, and I certainly never thought I could stay clean. I have been in and out of the program, and I've done enough experimenting to know that I'm not clean today by my own power. I'm grateful, because I'm starting to understand that a day clean is a gift. Recovery is a gift. I am powerless over heroin... and a lot of other things, for that matter. In coming to accept that reality, I have been given a peace and a freedom I've never known, even before I started using. I no longer have to fight.

It took a lot of pain and desperation for me to finally get the willingness to surrender to this program. I have found that the program of recovery as outlined in the 12 steps doesn't work for me if I'm not willing to surrender to the process completely. Spiritual principles like humility, open-mindedness, and honesty don't come easily to an addict like me. I have tried getting clean so many times I've lost count.

I've tried everything I could think of. I've tried geographical cures, methadone and suboxone maintenance, switching to alcohol and other drugs, and detox centers. Nothing worked. Even if I made it through the physical withdrawals I always ended up using again and once I started. I couldn't stop.

By the time I was 24, the miserable existence I called life was a living hell. Every moment was torture. The pain I had been

running from for so long was so great I would do anything to escape it, but the drugs didn't really work anymore. I was unemployable and depended on others for everything. I had a habit that was impossible to maintain no matter how much I lied, begged, borrowed, or stole. I was drinking myself into oblivion to escape the opiate withdrawals most of the time.

I was too scared to die but I didn't want to live anymore. I had been steadily deteriorating. My self-destruct dial was set on high and I would shoot my Dad's sleeping pills, caffeine pills, anything I could get a hold of.

It seemed like I hit my bottom. I couldn't imagine going any lower. I got into the state-run treatment facility and completed the program in 27 days. I was able to get into a recovery house so I wouldn't have to go back to my hometown. I started going to meetings daily, got a sponsor and worked the steps to the best of my ability at the time. I got my life together, more or less, but relapsed after a year.

Looking back, I wasn't really in recovery. I was just abstinent. I had too many reservations in my program to be able to surrender fully. I was still operating on my old ways of thinking and so the way I acted was still pretty much the same and I was a miserable, anxious, irritable mess. I was still a slave to my own self-centered fear. I wasn't ready to take a real honest look at myself and the old ideas I was holding on to. I was still too scared. Looking back I was kind of waiting to get my health back and get my

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life under control enough to go back out there and give it another try.

When I relapsed, I overdosed right off the bat. I was out for three days. It wasn't fun at all but the moment I was physically able to sit up without dry heaving I went back for more. I couldn't stop. It was like that year clean never happened. It was like it was just a dream, and I had woken up to find myself back in hell. I thought I went as low as I could before I went to treatment but I was wrong.

The next 11 months were worse. Much worse. Needless to say, it took a lot of pain before I was finally able to surrender and ask for help again. I let go of the idea that if I stayed clean for a while, eventually I could control my using. I finally accepted my powerlessness over my disease. I went back to treatment, got over the withdrawals, went right back to meetings and started working the steps again without that reservation hindering me.

I made it 5 months and I was still struggling with the obsession to use. I was terrified because I didn't want to use, but somehow I knew I was going to anyway. It was almost like I didn't have a choice. Everything was going well on the outside, but I really didn't like the way I felt on the inside. I had been fighting to stay clean for a couple months, and in the blink of an eye, I just said, "Screw it!" and got high.

I was looking for relief from my feelings and the relief just didn't come. The pain was still there and I felt so guilty and scared. I was drowning in hopelessness and despair and came to the conclusion that I couldn't stay clean. It was impossible. I had given up. But then, suddenly something indescribable happened. I believe in my heart God spoke to me, and He said, "Why

don't you just keep trying?" It was an epiphany. As simple as that thought was, I would never have thought of that. I've never been able to stop before why would I this time? I realize now that if I had gotten the relief from my feelings that I was looking for in the drugs, even for a moment, I would have just kept chasing it. Luckily, that relief never came. I was finally able to accept that no matter how I feel the drugs just don't work anymore. I was finally able to let go of the idea that drugs are the solution to my feelings. I let go of that reservation and have been relieved of my obsession to use ever since.

Being clean is one thing, but being clean and free from the obsession to use is a miracle to me. It has reshaped my entire reality and I believe in God because of it. With those reservations out of the way, I was able to work the steps thoroughly enough to truly be recovering from a hopeless state of mind and body. If you told me when I was using that I could find a new way of life where I would have a real sense of purpose and meaning, the inner peace and the joy I've been looking for all along without any substances... I would have wanted to believe you, but I don't think I could have. I was too used to that cold prison cell in my own mind. I was too blinded by fear and selfishness.

I know there are millions of people still trapped in that cell like I was. I have been given the gift of recovery. It was given freely to me by the members of H.A. when they shared their experiences. They said they were where I was and they found a way out. I thought if they could, maybe I could too. They gave me hope, and that hope saved my life. It kept me hanging on and

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coming back to meetings, even if I had relapsed or wanted to use.

I am writing this to extend that same message of hope to those who need it. To be of loving service and give freely what was given to me, because that is how I

express my gratitude. I am truly grateful to be in recovery today.

Nate P.

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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