

H.A.W.S. **MAINLINE**

Heroin Anonymous World Services Monthly

Bulletin - - -

This informational bulletin's purpose is to
increase communication between the groups of
Heroin Anonymous throughout the world.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR SERVICE

Available service positions on the HAWSOB

Greetings,

It is I, your humble World Service Office Board secretary. The WSOB is currently accepting nominations for positions. One of these is that of Advisor; a position suggested to be filled by a servant with a working knowledge of the 12 Concepts, 12 Traditions, and 12 Steps of Heroin

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Anonymous, prior experience working on a Steering Committee, and the ability to attend our monthly business meetings.

We are also looking for members to soon fill the positions of Treasurer, as well as Chips and Literature Chair. If you are interested in these positions, please contact me for what the suggestions are for experience.

Please email all service resumes to hawssecretary@gmail.com .

Thank you all for your continued support in Heroin Anonymous.

ILAS, Adam D.
WSOB Secretary

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SERVING WORLD SERVICES

Shoot the Breeze Q&A: Chris G. – Hamden, CT

Carolyn : What brought you to be on the HA World Services Office Board?

Chris : I got sober in Phoenix, AZ at the age of 22. HA was only around two years old when I was introduced to it. In Phoenix, it was popular with young people but there weren't that many meetings - maybe 5-7 per week. One of the founders of HA was a prevalent member of the meetings, and being familiar with other 12-step fellowships, he had created a "bare-bones" fellowship structure for HA which consisted of these few groups, a local "Intergroup", and a "World Services" board. As I grew in sobriety and HA meetings became my primary source of recovery activities, I was lucky enough to closely interact with many of the people who were pillars of HA in these beginning years. At first, I was involved in homegroups, and then Intergroup. Around 4-5 years sober, in 2012 I was informed that HA World Services was considering holding a World Convention and I volunteered to be the

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chairperson, and thus a member of the World Services convention subcommittee. The truth is that I didn't have any idea what this position entailed, but I also knew that HA saved my life and I would do everything in my power to serve the fellowship. I ended up being chairperson of the first World Convention, which was a two-year commitment. This led me to come into contact with HA members from all over the United States as well as abroad. Furthermore, it forced me to apply the Traditions that previously I only knew in principle, not practice. This was a difficult commitment and I worried constantly that my actions would ruin the fellowship. Perhaps the convention would flop and HA World Services would owe the convention venue many thousands of dollars! Despite my misgivings and mistakes, the convention was an absolute success and frankly a defining point in my recovery. Shortly thereafter, with around 7-8 years sober, I volunteered to be a board member of HA World Services, which was located in Phoenix, and was accepted. My experience in my homegroups, Intergroup (as it was called

at that time), and the convention committee made me a good candidate for World Service as a board member.

Carolyn : What strengths do you bring to the World Services board position?

Chris : Hours-long business meetings are not for everyone. Furthermore, the business aspects of a young fellowship like HA are often quite frustrating. I didn't know I would end up experiencing these things in a service position, but by practicing the principles outlined in the book Alcoholics Anonymous, which serves as HA's basic text, I believe we constantly uncover our true identities by disposing of our ego. Over the years, I came to realize that I have a talent for organization, and could apply this skill to how HA World Services functioned as the fellowship grew, thus supporting the service structure that for many is the platform from which we grow spiritually. Maybe a better way of putting this is that HA saved me from my heroin addiction and gave me a life beyond my wildest dreams, and I found that I had unique skills to help in building the fellowship to make a similar experience available to others. Over the years, I have been lucky enough to have contributed experience and acted in an advisory capacity to perhaps hundreds of groups throughout the US. This may sound exciting, and sometimes is, but the reality is often writing boring guidelines that allow groups to run smoothly, or creating mundane spreadsheets denoting when members were nominated to

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their service positions so that the group can observe the spirit of rotation. I guess one could say I have a knack for tolerating the most monotonous tasks, which makes me a good person to serve HA World Services in this role. Conversely, I would make a terrible door greeter, and at 36 years old, coffee machines still confuse me. "It takes a village", as they say. In addition to these natural characteristics, I have grown in my professional life, which allows some specialized skills to be of use at the World Services board.

Carolyn : Have you grown in sobriety because of this service commitment?

Chris : Yes, profoundly. At almost every step of my service to HA so far, I have been required to apply the simple principles outlined in our basic text. As in almost every aspect of my life including service to HA, I have made poor decisions that in hindsight I realized were based out of

selfishness, and I have suffered as a consequence. The big book says, "God makes that possible." Indeed, I have often found God as a result of my suffering; my spirituality is sometimes derived from running back to the basic precepts practiced by the fellowship of HA when I get off track, thus transforming humiliation to humility. I wish to emphasize that even today, with over 13 years of sobriety and a life that I would not trade with anyone, I regularly pray, meditate, do step work, and work with others. Without these things, I would have never had any of the wonderful experiences I have described herein.

This story would not be complete without mentioning that while I hold my homegroups and sponsor/sponsee network dear, my service to HA World Services has allowed me to interact with the fellowship on a broader scale. Today, I have long-term friendships with HA members around the US whose circumstances may differ significantly from mine, but who have discovered the same solution to their problems. While acknowledging that spiritual practices changing *my* life was the beginning of a personal reliance upon a higher power, it has been the observation of it working in *other's* lives that has made God much bigger than I could have ever imagined.

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HOW H.A. SAVED MY LIFE DURING THE PANDEMIC

Personal Story: Sara H. – Nashville, TN

It was March 17th, one week after the tornado came to Nashville and ripped apart a lot of my community. On that morning, I felt the guilt and shame of not waking my daughter up, but as I reflect back I realize that I didn't

share that. I kept it to myself, even after going to what would be my last in-person meeting for months that night.

When I got home and still felt restless, I found myself messaging the one person I knew would have heroin. I

had also been trying to wean myself off of suboxone for more than a year at this point. The guy came, and he even offered me Narcan with it, warning me that it was strong. I explained that I already had some Narcan. "And besides, I'm not shooting it." I thought you only overdosed if you shot it.

A few short hours later, I woke up to crying. It was my mom and daughter crying as EMTs and fire rescue people were taking me out of my house on a stretcher. I had almost died. For ten minutes, my mom had done compressions on me while waiting desperately for them to come.

This was the first time in over eight years of drug use that I had overdosed.

It still took a week for me to realize I needed help. Again. On March 24th, after taking some Xanax, I went back for the sixth time in eight years to the same psychiatric hospital. I was safe there at least. They even helped me get off my Suboxone in a safe way. During my time there, I held my own AA meetings, and on March 31st I came home to my daughter, who did not want me to leave her side for days.

After I had been out for a week, I found out that my daughter's dad lost his life to this disease. He got out of prison while I was in the psych hospital and went missing on April 1st. They found him one week later in his car. He had overdosed just like I did, only there was no one there to save him. I knew that I would need help if I was going to overcome this disease.

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Thanks to Zoom, I was able to plug right back into the fellowship of Heroin Anonymous, particularly the women's group, "No Boi Allowed". They even asked me to chair meetings over Zoom in the month of April and most of May. I felt useful again. Since this wasn't my first rodeo, I knew I had to get a sponsor immediately, and I made sure to call her everyday. We would FaceTime and read the book once, sometimes even twice a week. It's all still a new normal. I continue to go to IOP virtually and attend Zoom meetings, but I am so grateful that we have this technology and don't know where I would be without it.

I also became involved in Public Information, specifically finding MAT (medically assisted treatment) programs we could reach out to. I started calling others in the program. Today I am on my 4th step, scheduled to meet with my sponsor (through FaceTime) in a couple days to do my 5th step. I now have 64 days clean and sober from heroin and all other mind-altering substances, by the grace of God. I am an emotionally present mother again, and I get to make my own mother proud again.

I still have bad days. I still crave

drugs and alcohol, but I try to play the tape all the way through because I know what's always happened in the past. Just for today, I want to do something different. I want to recover. Thanks to the fellowship of Heroin Anonymous and the support of my family

and friends, I know that it is possible as long as I continue to do the work. There is hope. We do recover. Even in a pandemic.

- Sara H.

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If you would like your meeting featured in our meeting spotlight or have any
content you would like to submit, please feel free to contact us at
haworldbulletin@gmail.com .

Thank you!

The Folks at The HAWS Mainline

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