



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

Heroin Anonymous World Services  
Monthly Bulletin

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



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# FEBRUARY **2020** ISSUE



Photo by *Donnie Rosie*

## A DAY OF **SHARING**

### **A message from the Heroin Anonymous World Services Office Board**

Recently, Alcoholics Anonymous invited representatives of various 12-step fellowships to the General Service Office in New York City for "A Day of Sharing". We were proud to have been among the invited, and enthusiastically sent two of our members to participate. During the event, our representatives met many of the individuals who perform vital roles in the functioning of A.A., discussed topics such as publishing and outreach, and toured the General Service Office. One of the H.A. representatives is a H.A. World Services board member, and briefly recounts his experience here:

*"The Day of Sharing at the A.A. General Service Office (G.S.O.) included staff or board member representatives of eight 12-step fellowships including Al-Anon, Cocaine Anonymous, Narcotics Anonymous,*

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*and more. A.A. staff members introduced themselves and their roles, and provided presentations pertaining to licensing, literature, communication, and other facets of the fellowship. A highlight of the day was a round-table open discussion where each representative provided an update on their fellowship, 'or whatever they wish'. H.A. reported that it is a young but promising and influential fellowship, and we are having a real impact on many people's lives who wish to stop suffering from heroin addiction. This was well-received by the other groups who participated and the support and offers of advisement we received from them was overwhelming. Importantly, many of the most controversial topics that exist within the groups of H.A., we found, are also operative in other 12-step fellowships. However, and as many of H.A.'s longer-standing groups have also discovered, the desire among the fellowship to maintain Unity always seems to win out. Much of the growth of H.A. has occurred due to its cooperation with other 12-step fellowships, therefore I am happy to report that in the Day of Sharing, we gained many more important allies that are happy to guide us in achieving our Primary Purpose, and we can only hope to return the favor in the years to come."*

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## **CLOSING IN: HA WORLD CONVENTION**

### **HA World Convention Update (August 28-30, 2020 in Atlanta, GA)**

We are only 6 Months away from the 3rd ever HA world convention, August 28-30, in Atlanta GA. Now is the best time to pre-register, and book your hotel!

<https://heroinanonymous.org/convention/>

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## **LITERATURE UPDATES**

### **A message from the Literature, Chips, and Formats Committee**

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Hi Mainline readers! We of the Literature, Chips, and Formats Committee are honored to be of service to your fellowship and help create and design new materials to better promote growth and pass along the message of Heroin Anonymous. Over the last year we have worked diligently to touch up or replace the "What is a Sponsor," "Higher Power," "Who is a Heroin Addict," and "What is a Home Group" pamphlets. We also updated the singleness of purpose of Heroin Anonymous and passed the HA preamble.

Over the upcoming year we plan to tackle other items that the fellowship has deemed important. These include revising the "Step One," "What is Heroin Anonymous," and "What About Other Drugs" pamphlets along with replacing or revising A Pathway to Freedom and releasing a meeting starter kit booklet.

As servants of the fellowship at large we feel that it is vital for us to follow the group conscience of its members, and in order to do so we could really use your recommendations. As some of the topics we will be covering are currently contentious issues of debate in Heroin Anonymous, it is our hope that by being transparent and receiving the most feedback from the fellowship as possible, we will be able to produce useful and unifying documents.

Although we may not be able to settle the debate this year or even in the near future, we hope to use this as a sort of steering committee to gauge the consciousness of the fellowship.

If you have any recommendation on any of these topics or if there is a reading you would like to see, a pamphlet you would like replaced, or you have ideas for formats you would like to see conference approved, please email your recommendations to the LCF Committee Chair at [hawswritingchair@gmail.com](mailto:hawswritingchair@gmail.com). All referrals will be considered!

Over the coming year we will also be touching up "A Way Out." We have already received a few referrals on this matter and are hoping to receive others so we can produce an agreed upon and long-lasting product.

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Additionally, we are looking for members of the fellowship who are interested in joining our committee. If you feel strongly about the literature that is developed for Heroin Anonymous or would like to find out more about what we do, please contact the chair. There are no requirements to become a member of our committee and you do not need to be an elected delegate to join. Our committee is open to all members, and all committee members have an equal voice and voting rights within the LCF committee.

Thank you for letting us continue to be of service to you all.

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## THE LIGHT OF HEROIN ANONYMOUS

### Personal Story: Katie C. - Birmingham, AL

My sobriety date is July 19, 2017. My childhood was filled with sexual abuse and death. I used to lay in bed with my dad and hear all these glorious stories about his past drug use. I couldn't wait to try them out for myself. I made a promise as an 8-year-old child that I would never touch heroin, and I stuck to that promise for as long as I could. My father passed when I was 11. We moved to a different city, and that's where the trouble began.

I tried cocaine in the 8th grade just to fit in, then I quickly became a trash can addict. I used whatever was in front of me. My addiction was brought to light in 10th grade after my first overdose. I found myself in a therapist's office and under watching eyes. Because of that, I learned how to

manipulate and lie much more convincingly.

The drug use progressed to daily use over the next few years. I found myself sober for a time when school became important. A few months went by, and I was back on everything. I quickly failed out of nursing school once I relapsed. Everything went downhill after that. I met the man of my dreams and found myself living out of a car and soon met Heroin. The moment I put this substance in my body, my life was changed. Over the next few years I lost jobs, friends, cars, and my soul.

My first rehab trip, I found out I was 4 weeks pregnant. I was able to stay sober until my son was two months old. Over the next year I lost even more-- my dignity, family, and son. I found myself locked up in

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work release for a year for robbing my aunt's house. I got out of work release and found myself homeless on the streets of Birmingham still trying to find that next high.

The last day I got high, I found myself with no one at all and truly wanted to die. I picked up my phone to get a front for enough dope to die. I noticed it was a Thursday and heard a voice in my head saying, *there's a Heroin Anonymous meeting*. I literally ran to catch the meeting. That night I slept on the benches outside of the club house and went to treatment in the morning. I've been sober ever since. I found myself in a rehab and

decided to try suboxone. I stayed on suboxone for the next year and worked a program. I threw myself into recovery. I found a sponsor, worked the steps, and found my recovery family. I was able to come off the suboxone and stay sober. Today I continue to work a program daily. I help other women find the light that I found in this fellowship. Life has truly been a whirlwind since I became sober, but it's been a beautiful ride. Heroin Anonymous took me in when no one else would. I owe this fellowship my life.

- Katie C.

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## NOTHING COUNTED BUT THOROUGHNESS & HONESTY

### A Member's Experience with the Fourth Step: Justin I. – West Haven, CT

My name is Justin. I am a heroin addict and this is the story of my experience with Step 4. In my story I have used wording and excerpts from the Big Book of Alcoholics Anonymous. I decided on this approach to highlight how insanely accurate the book described my unhealthy behaviors, and also how this step revolutionized my entire outlook on life and the rest of my sobriety.

The same day I did my third step, I launched out on a course of vigorous action. I put forth a strenuous effort to face, and be rid of, the things in myself which had been blocking me. I took stock honestly. This is where the rubber met the road for me. In dealing with resentments, I set them on paper. My list held 72 people, 12 institutions, and 1 principle. I listed my cause of anger beside each resentment. I set opposite each name

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my injuries. That was the easy part. The first thing apparent was that this world and its people were often quite wrong. So at least I thought. In February of 2016 I had gotten my girlfriend pregnant. She was fed up with my heroin addiction. I remember she said to me, "Justin you're going to be a father. You'd better get your act together, or I'm leaving you". Frothy emotional appeal seldom suffices.

I've always heard it said in the rooms, "This is not a program for those who need it, it's a program for those who want it". God, did I want it. I wanted it so bad at that very moment. I've come to realize it's not even a program for those who want it. It's a program for those who DO it. This is a spiritual program of action that is laid out in the Big Book of Alcoholics Anonymous, which at the time I hadn't been introduced to yet. I had no solution to my spiritual malady.

She stuck to her word and left me during her first trimester. I hit a bottom that I never knew existed. Another man came into her life. He loved her when I couldn't. He was available for her when I wasn't. He took care of her when I wouldn't. He was a better man than I. Inevitably I missed the birth of my daughter as a direct result from heroin addiction. That man was there for my ex-girlfriend throughout the last six months of her pregnancy and was with her during the birth of my daughter while I was in a state of oblivion. I blew it.

I was so angry at her for that, who wouldn't be? Seems like a justified resentment, doesn't it? I turned back to the list, for it held the key to the future. I was prepared to look at it from an entirely different angle. I resolutely looked for my own mistakes. I listed where I had been selfish, dishonest, self-seeking, and fearful in this resentment. The fourth step has afforded me the ability to put myself in her shoes and see the man I was during that time in our relationship. Can you imagine the fear that she was going through watching her unborn daughter's father lose himself to heroin right before her very eyes?

I have since made formal amends to her. Our relationship is better today than it has ever been before, and I am a very active, participating parent in my daughter's life today. This is a woman I've lied to, cheated on, stole from and manipulated. She was a smart woman, she left. I would have done the exact same thing if I were her.

Next, I reviewed my fears thoroughly and set them on paper. Beside each fear I listed why I had that fear. Beside the cause of fear, I listed how self-reliance had failed me. Opposite each fear I listed what it would look like had I trusted and relied upon infinite God rather than my finite self. When I was three years old, my father left my mother, I wouldn't see him again for well

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over a decade. I never had a father in my life to support me, encourage me, teach me a trade, or give me a pat on the back and say, "Job well done, son." I'm a carpenter by trade, and I have always looked up to and admired my employers as role models. For as long as I can remember, I've always been crippled by fear of being a disappointment. Any time I made a mistake, I feared what they thought of me.

Self-reliance put me in positions where I would go above and beyond my capacity to please my boss by doing overtime when I didn't want to, working harder, working faster, and saying yes to things when I should have been saying no in order to make up for my mistakes. I thought my fears of what they think of me would subside by putting forth this effort to please them, but they only got worse.

Every morning before I set foot into my workplace and clock in, I use the prayer outlined in the fears inventory. I ask God to remove my fear and direct my thinking to what He would have me to be. At once, I commenced to outgrow fear. I had seen significant results immediately. I show up every day, I put forth an honest effort, I no longer beat myself up over my mistakes, I have become a more valuable and effective employee due to taking inventory in this area of my life. I am no longer at the mercy of this fear.

Now about sex. I certainly needed an overhauling there. I had a love affair with heroin, but I couldn't romance the needle the way I could a woman's body. Let me get to the point before I get carried away. When I took away heroin and all other substances, I used sex as a drug to get outside myself before working all twelve steps. I had caused many of my harms to others in previous stints of sobriety through my sex conduct.

On November 4<sup>th</sup> of 2017 I used again after I had acquired 11 months and 3 weeks of sobriety. I had a home group. I was taking service positions. I had a sponsor, but I balked at this portion of the inventory process. I found myself with the wrong person, at the wrong place, at the wrong time in pursuit of sex. I had no mental defense. The first time I read the portion of the Big Book that says, "If we are not sorry, and our conduct continues to harm others, we are quite sure to drink. We are not theorizing. These are facts out of our experience," I said to myself, "Ah stop it, Bill! You're totally exaggerating! What's the big deal?" This time around, I had taken heed to that message. I reviewed my conduct and listed on paper where I had been selfish, dishonest, inconsiderate, whom I had hurt, where I had unjustifiably aroused jealousy, suspicion, and bitterness, where I was at fault, and what I should have done instead. Thank God this is a part of the framework in the fourth step. I am now awake to these things. I ask God

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to mold my ideals and help me live up to them.

It boils down to one thing: Can I be considerate when I don't get my way? If sex becomes troublesome, I throw myself the harder into helping others. It quiets my imperious urge, when to yield would mean heartache. By no means have I come to these realizations by a solitary self-appraisal. I have become

awakened to these things as a result of sharing my inventory with another man who has worked the twelve steps out of the Big Book himself and God during my fifth step.

"When the spiritual malady is overcome, we straighten out physically and mentally."

- Justin I.

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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 [haworldbulletin@gmail.com](mailto:haworldbulletin@gmail.com).

Thank you!

The Folks at The HAWS Mainline



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