



# 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.



# APRIL **2020** ISSUE



Photo by [Sergey Shmidt](#)

## HOW DO YOU READ **THE MAINLINE?**

### **Mainline Format Update and Survey Request**

Dear Mainliners,

As you no doubt noticed, the Mainline underwent a format and design facelift at the beginning of 2020. It was our intention to freshen up the design while also making it more friendly for our internal editors and formatting designers during the publication process. The

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only people we DIDN'T consider or consult during this process was YOU! OUR READERS!!!

Now that you have had a couple months to read the Mainline in its new format, it felt like the right time to ask for feedback. Lay it all on us! The good, the bad, and the funky.

Click [HERE](#) to complete the super short, 2 minute survey!

We are always looking for ways to better serve you, our amazing audience of loyal subscribers. The feedback we receive will help us include your preferences in phase 2.0 of the Mainline's redesign. The goal for this phase is to optimize our format for the way the majority of you actually read the Mainline, so we can ensure our design is tailored to that experience!

Thanks in advance for helping us out! You'll love what we come up with. We promise ;-)

ILAS,

Aiden F.  
Mainline Committee Chair

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## NEVER ONCE HAVE YOU **LET GO**

### Meeting Spotlight: Joey M. – Phoenix, AZ

The effect produced by Heroin Anonymous was more profound than anything I'd ever experienced. At the beginning of 2016 I was copping dope with a buddy, and at that point, I had been through detox

multiple times and in and out of 12 step fellowships. I had seen that the program worked but was never willing to hear those people's suggestions. We were in this parking lot. I remember so desperately

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wanting to get sober in that moment, but that thought was diminished once again by the sight of the dope man walking up to the car. I remember thinking that night, the only way I was going to get sober was in HA.

It was until September 2016 that I arrived at a treatment center 3 days sober and still detoxing. I walked into an H&I meeting, and I heard this man say, "My name is \_\_\_\_\_ and I'm a heroin addict." Instantly I listened. At that moment, I could relate with nothing more and nothing less. Later that night, the only kid I knew from the treatment center approached me and said they were going to a meeting, an HA meeting. "Do you want to go?" Instantly I jumped up, changed my clothes for the third time that day, but this time, not for the detox sweats. Little did I know, this night would have an impact on my life that I wouldn't realize until over three years later.

We arrived at a halfway house in central Phoenix on a Monday night, and the parking lot was packed. I was terrified. I didn't understand why it was 30 minutes before the meeting time and there were so many people in the parking lot. I sat

with that same kid from rehab and just kind of watched you guys. I was smoking a cigarette, trembling and sweating. I saw many people talking in groups and laughing and hugging, and for some reason, I thought for the first time in 5 years of failed attempts to get sober, "God, I want whatever it is that these people have".

That night I identified myself as new and, for the first time, as a heroin addict. Not one of you judged me for this. After the meeting, about 10 people rushed me, grabbed me and never once have you let go. That meeting was my home group for the first two years I was sober. Thanks to everyone in HA, my mother has a son, my siblings have a brother, my nephews and niece have an uncle. Most importantly, the newcomers I come into contact with have a sick heroin addict who understands them and has a way out of their suffering that was so freely given without profit motive. To all who are reading this, I hope you find the same junkies I found who grab you and never let you go.

-Joey M.

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# I FOUND FREEDOM IN PRISON

## Personal Story: Nicole P. – Perryville Prison, AZ

As I sit here in prison and I think back to when I was in my addiction and how I thought I would die using, I cannot imagine myself ever getting sober. I am so thankful for my Higher Power, who is God, for letting me live after twelve overdoses, after being in the hospital with MRSA in my blood and lungs, and surviving the countless dangerous situations I was in while homeless. I am also grateful for Him putting me in this "time out".

Before I was introduced to drugs, my first addiction was self-harm. I started cutting when I was thirteen years old due to depression, not feeling right about myself, and after being molested and raped. After about a year or two of cutting, I started drinking and using drugs. When I was seventeen, I got really bad on meth, but when I found out I was pregnant with my son, I quit cold turkey. After my pregnancy, I started drinking every single night.

A year later, I was introduced to oxycodone, which I was prescribed because of a toothache. I quickly fell in love. For the next two years of my oxy addiction, I had my daughter, got married to the man who introduced me to oxy and moved from California to Arizona. After a year of living in Arizona, my husband talked me into using heroin instead since it is so much cheaper. About

five months later, I started slamming.

My life went downhill from there. My kids and I were living with my mom when I first started using needles. She quickly found out, gave me a couple of chances to stop, and when I didn't, she kicked me out and kept my kids. At that point, I honestly didn't care if I lived or died. I was so reckless in those first six months that I overdosed ten times. For the next three years, I was in and out of the hospital and jail.

I was finally arrested for the last time in October 2017, and I was sentenced to four and a half years in prison. A little over a year into my sentence, I was clean, but I wasn't working a program or doing anything for my recovery. When my closest friend moved yards, I was so upset that I immediately wanted to get high.

Fortunately, thirty minutes after she left, there was a Heroin Anonymous meeting and a Crystal Meth Anonymous meeting later that night. Ever since, I have been working hard on my recovery. Shortly after that, I found a sponsor and got into a twelve step based recovery class that they offer on the yard called, "Wellness in Recovery." After that I took the twelve step recovery based class called, "A Way Out". Three times I was asked if I would become

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a facilitator, and I gladly accepted.

On top of being a facilitator, I am also a sponsor and a grand sponsor. I am so lucky to have the privilege to watch women transform and grow in their recovery and to help them along the way. I am so grateful for what Heroin Anonymous and the steps have given me! Yes, I am in prison, but I have never felt as free as I do now. Aside from my freedom, I am genuinely happy. I have peace in my life. I love myself, and I actually have hope for my future. I made a promise to myself that I am going to help as many women as I can while I am here. I want them to have the freedom and sense of serenity I have gotten from this program.

I get out of prison in three months. As scared as I am, I am also ready

to get back to my two children and family. I have worked very hard to find out who I really am and to become the best mother, daughter, sister, and productive member of society that I can be. Once I get out of prison, I am going to become a recovery support specialist, so I can continue helping those who are still struggling in their addictions. I cannot wait to be a part of Heroin Anonymous in the real world. One of my goals for the future is to get into H&I, so I can bring meetings into the prisons and county jails once I am allowed to. I want to be able to show them that they can turn their lives around while they are locked up. I did, and my life has purpose and meaning thanks to this program!

-Nicole P.

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## BACK FROM THE LIVING DEAD

### Personal Story: Edrik F. – Milwaukee, WI

As a dropout pothead, I don't remember much about my childhood, but I do remember the day I first tried opiates. I was at a party and was drinking a six pack of bottled beer. I would do a line, drink a beer, and vomit. I loved it and repeated this process for all six

beers without a second thought. From the very moment I was introduced to dope, my using was the perfect example of insanity. At the time I had a job that paid 55k a year, a girlfriend, and friends I could get high and sell drugs with. I was 20 and thought I had "arrived", but all

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that followed was a permanent departure.

Over the course of a few years, I went from the life of the party to struggling to pay my rent. I lost my job, and my girlfriend left me. I began to sell what I owned, stole from my roommate, and car shopped in nice neighborhoods. I sought out easy hustles just to get well. I became ashamed of my life and who I had become, but it only drove me deeper into despair and isolation. I reached out to my family, and they got me into an outpatient program. They put me on a "maintenance" drug. Things seemed to turn around when I got some of my material things back, but inside nothing else had changed.

It was only a short time before I started dealing drugs again. I got two jobs and moved out of my parents for the second time. I bought and owned things again, which some would say defines manageability, but I hadn't changed as a person. I hadn't grown at all and thought everything would be different this time, that my knowledge and experience was enough to make things work out without actually having to change my actions.

Things swiftly slid downhill, and in less than a year, I wound up at a far worse bottom than I ever thought could happen for me. I started shooting up and lost both of my jobs in the same month after stealing from them and lying about it. I sold all of my valuables once again and stole from my friends. My apartment became a drug house, and I lived in filth. I hadn't done my dishes for 8

months, and black mold slowly engulfed them. I started letting homeless users off the street stay there if they would get me high. I let addict prostitutes and strippers I met stay over and turn tricks there. I got arrested twice and went to jail. I rented out my car to drug dealers and got drugs fronted knowing I couldn't pay for them. Eventually my car got towed, and I couldn't afford to get it out of the lot. I got my nose broken by a dope dealer and sold myself for drugs. I scoured ashtrays for cigarettes, even smoking stale butts off the street. I flew the sign and pan-handled. I started crossing moral lines I told myself I would never cross. Shortly after being evicted and living on the streets, I got myself into residential treatment, with a seemingly infinite amount of shame and hopelessness inside me. Talk about pitiful and incomprehensible demoralization!

Defeated, I knew that there were these 12-step meetings on the hospital grounds. I checked one out in desperate need, and they welcomed me without judgement. It was the Friday Night Lighthouse meeting of Heroin Anonymous, where months later I would have the privilege of serving as a GSR. In that meeting I met heroin addicts who, unlike the ones I met in treatment, knew how to stay clean and enjoy life without drugs. They were happy and smiling, like a big family does at a reunion. I was lonely, miserable, and felt hopeless, but they assured me they were once like me and could show me a way out if I wanted it. Wanting that more than anything else, I

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sought it out with the desperation of a drowning man. Born out of this was an admission that their way of life worked, and mine had not, an admission that I could not use drugs and live the way I intended to. If I wanted freedom, I had to have a complete overhaul, assessment, and inventory of the self-centeredness that was so deeply rooted in the way I lived. I started believing in and following a way of life outlined in the steps that centered around living by spiritual principles. In doing so, I found a power by which I could live that provided me with relief. My sobriety date is August 4, 2016 but my recovery started the moment I chose to let that power into my life. By removing the fear, resentment, and pain that had been blocking me from sanity, it not only solved the using problem, but my social, financial, and self-conscious insecurities as well. Treating the spiritual malady was a simple solution that really worked.

Since then I've found a real sense of peace and acceptance with who I am, where I am, and what I can become. I'm finally free and no longer hide or hang my head. I have real friendships and genuine relationships that I cherish dearly. I've experienced the amazing opportunity to grow alongside people in recovery, and yet I've seen countless others go out and relapse. I've grieved the death of many

friends due to this disease and mourn the loss of those still suffering on the streets. Looking back, I can appreciate the miracle of being alive. I have survived experiences that many of us don't make it out of or stay trapped in. That's why I share my story today, to provide my experience and show that there is a way out for anyone willing to work for it.

My recovery has come full circle, and I've found great purpose in carrying this message to other heroin addicts. It's my belief that part of God's will for me is to give back to the fellowship that saved my life, and being of service from a point of gratitude really gives me joy! I sponsor a handful of guys in the program, working with them one-on-one through the steps and supporting them without judgement. I've held service positions at every level of Heroin Anonymous for the majority of my sobriety. These things help me stay clean and bring such a sensation to life that I wouldn't trade it for anything! It's not perfection by any means, but I've been transformed into a new person. I've been brought back from the living dead and been given the chance to share my experience with the next generation of heroin addicts.

-Edrik F.

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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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