



# 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.



# FEBRUARY **2022** ISSUE



*Photo by: Chandan Chaurasia*

## H.A.W.S.O.B. **UPDATE**

### **Latest news from our World Service Office Board**

It's time for the lovely monthly opportunity to stay up to date with all things Heroin Anonymous. For those of you Mainline subscribers that are new, the HAWS board is compiled primarily of HA members who meet monthly to tend to HA business throughout the year.

---

**Contact The Mainline Bulletin:**

All correspondence will be filtered by our H.A. bulletin committee at: [haworldbulletin@gmail.com](mailto:haworldbulletin@gmail.com).  
We can also be contacted through our website at: [www.heroinanonymous.org](http://www.heroinanonymous.org)

---

Exciting news! The newly formed Outreach Committee has slaved away on their electronic devices attending countless inactive meetings to find the hidden gems of thriving HA zoom meetings! The list of HA zoom meetings is now completely updated and available on the website! Enjoy exploring the 28 different virtual HA meetings all across the U.S.

The Outreach Committee is also reaching out to new and small HA areas around the country to encourage them to send representation (delegates) to the HA World Service Conference this summer in Phoenix, AZ, as well as providing fellowship and support. We are also hoping to connect with any HA members who speak Spanish that are willing to connect with Spanish speaking newcomers or members. If this sounds exciting to you, email [HAWSOutreach@HeroinAnonymous.org](mailto:HAWSOutreach@HeroinAnonymous.org) to get involved!

Are you a service work junkie? Do you nerd out on 12-step Traditions and Concepts instead of finding them dull and depressing? Do you want to be a part in making sure that HA is here for years to come? Then service with the HAWS board may be right for YOU!

Our nominations committee is continuing to screen applications, interview, and recommend candidates to join the board. We are accepting applications for the following position:

**At-Large Voting Member:** This position is for new members to the board. It's sole function is to show up and help us to discuss and vote on decisions; eventually these members join other committees and may be asked to fill other roles.

If you are interested, please send service resumes, references, and inquiries to: [hawssecretary@gmail.com](mailto:hawssecretary@gmail.com)

In loving service,

Anna A., HAWS Outreach Chair

- - - - X

---

Contact The Mainline Bulletin:

All correspondence will be filtered by our H.A. bulletin committee at: [haworldbulletin@gmail.com](mailto:haworldbulletin@gmail.com).  
We can also be contacted through our website at: [www.heroinanonymous.org](http://www.heroinanonymous.org)



---

# THE LIFE OF AN ADDICT

## Personal Story: Igor S. - Seattle, WA

My name is Igor S. I was born in 1984 in the Soviet Union. In 1994, my mother, brother, grandma, and I moved to the USA. There was hope. My mother knew that we had to leave so my brother and I could have a better life. Isn't that the reason most people go?

We moved to South Philly in 1994. I was ten years old, and by 13, I was already using alcohol and marijuana daily. How else was I going to fit in? My mother was overworked and trusted her sons to do the right thing. My brother found his circle in Northeast Philadelphia with other Russian kids. And me? Well, I found my guidance on the streets of South Philly.

Three kids in the neighborhood schooled me on how things get done in the community. At the age of 15, I walked around with bags of cocaine in one pocket and stacks of cash in the other. I was living the dream (or so I thought). I would see violence daily; I would see dead bodies often. I remember coming to my girlfriend at the time, Alexis, and telling her that I was scared. She told me she had something to make all my fears disappear. I remember her taking out a wax bag with a stamp on it. The logo said suicide; it was a bag of dope.

I knew what it was and I had such a fear of it. It ended up being the best and worst thing that ever happened to me. Dope and I were one. I was in love. It filled a void. It

gave me a sense of strength, confidence, and it made me feel indestructible. My mom moved us to the great Northeast Philly, where there was a significant Russian community, and I saw a different way of life, but by this time, it was already too late because I was neck-deep in my addiction. My mother was diagnosed with Non-Hodgkin's Lymphoma.

Fast-forward a little, I was in a faith-based program, doing outreach work, living in NY, two years clean and trying to help other addicts. I met a girl who became my wife. My mom was able to see her grandson before she passed away. I relapsed hard after my mother's death. Even while she was dying I didn't know how to deal with the pain. My suicide mission ended with an extended stay at a NY hospital.

My wife was just so tired when she found out I was using the day of my birthday that she chose to join me in my misery. She was eight years clean. Shortly after her relapse all hell broke loose. Without putting too much detail, we ended up in a different state, living out of motels with two kids. We spent all the money we had on drugs and DCF took the kids. She knew that to get the kids back she had to get it together. She did. She got a job, an apartment, and did absolutely everything they told her to do. She hasn't looked back since. I'd already been in Philly, Boston, Oregon, NY, and Seattle running from

---

Contact The Mainline Bulletin:

All correspondence will be filtered by our H.A. bulletin committee at: [haworldbulletin@gmail.com](mailto:haworldbulletin@gmail.com).  
We can also be contacted through our website at: [www.heroinanonymous.org](http://www.heroinanonymous.org)

---

myself, dealing with abandonment and neglect.

I found myself on the West Coast living like a hobo in Everett, shooting meth and heroin. It just gets worse. Today I have 16 days clean and sober; this drug has taken

everything and everyone from me. I have a sponsor and started working on my steps. I have no idea what I am doing, but I am doing it differently, whatever it is.

- Igor S. Seattle, WA

- - - - X

## TRUSTED SERVICE

**Tradition Twist: Woody W. - Akron, OH**

On January 3rd, 2022 I celebrated my thirtieth year of sobriety. While I like to think that during that time I have passed through the well known stages to the enlightened status of "Trusted Servant," experience has shown that most of us spend a good deal of time "bleeding" before we ever get there. I have noticed that the key factor in this great apotheosis is just this: if you cannot or do not trust in the group's conscience you will never become a trusted servant. In order to be a "Trusted Servant" one must also trust in the judgment of those you serve, trust in the veracity of this process we call the Group Conscience, and believe that the group's decisions are indeed guided by a "loving God." To be a trusted servant you must trust in the process of the Group Conscience. The way that I understand Tradition One today has enabled this transition

for me. "Our common welfare should come first; personal recovery depends upon H.A. unity." A trusted servant looks back at Tradition One knowing full well that what is best for HA is truly what is best for each of us.

Along the way I've discovered a few principles that give me insight into the purpose of the Twelve Traditions. The Twelve Steps help us to get better personally. We have a spiritual solution which helps us to get better by understanding the nature of our Character defects: selfishness, self-centeredness, dishonesty, fear, and lack of consideration for others. For me this was guided in part by the four absolutes...the four absolutes are the exact opposites of the character defects (if selfishness has been the problem then it follows that unselfishness is the solution).

---

Contact The Mainline Bulletin:

All correspondence will be filtered by our H.A. bulletin committee at: [haworldbulletin@gmail.com](mailto:haworldbulletin@gmail.com).  
We can also be contacted through our website at: [www.heroinanonymous.org](http://www.heroinanonymous.org)

---

I've become aware that when we come together as groups, the groups themselves also suffer from these same character defects that we have as individuals. They are selfish, self-centered, dishonest, and fearful. No matter how altruistic they may appear to be, they tend, at times, to be inconsiderate of the views and circumstances of the other groups about them. The Twelve Traditions enable us to overcome these shortcomings and to successfully work together as groups.

I have been working with members of my ABC's of Sobriety and Naked Lunch groups and alongside those in our Intergroup Council, District, and Area for long enough that I have confidence, even without my hand involved, that they will do what is best for the group. I have seen so much growth within these meetings and the people who inhabit them that I can pass along the keys or passwords and be assured that God and the Group Conscience will do the rest. That doesn't mean that I don't have to be there; that road leads to complacency. I do have complete faith that my home-group members can do whatever is necessary to provide things vital to maintain a warm, safe, and nurturing atmosphere at these groups.

Over the years I have developed a rule of thumb that I use as a litmus

test for accurate decision making. Whenever we have to make decisions concerning our HA Groups or H.A. as a whole, I ask myself, "What message are we carrying? Are we within the scope of our Traditions?" If the message is correct, I then ask myself, "How best can we carry it?" This keeps our primary purpose in focus and at the same time eliminates a lot of frivolous activity that only results in carrying at best mixed messages, or in the worst scenario the wrong message. These are tools I try to pass along whenever possible.

Early in my sobriety I was told that I should have not just a sponsor, but also a service sponsor. It was made clear to me that effectively carrying this message was essential not just to my own sobriety but to the lives and good health of others as well. Our service structure is chock full of amazing opportunities to do just that! Just like in working these steps for our personal recovery, we can certainly benefit from a little help and guidance in practicing these Traditions from those who have walked this path before us. Those who take the time to do so and who share this knowledge with others are those that come to mind when I reflect on the term "Trusted Servants."

- Woody W. Akron, OH.

---

Contact The Mainline Bulletin:

All correspondence will be filtered by our H.A. bulletin committee at: [haworldbulletin@gmail.com](mailto:haworldbulletin@gmail.com).  
We can also be contacted through our website at: [www.heroinanonymous.org](http://www.heroinanonymous.org)

---

# KNOW YOUR RIGHTS

## Concepts Column: Pat B. - Rochester, NY

Alright service junkies, it's time to get down to business! Today we will introduce the "rights of service" beginning with Concept Three. Many of us may have shouted "I know my rights!" at various authorities during our addiction, usually a grasp at control during an uncontrolled nose-dive. What if I told you that when doing service in HA, you have four rights that are written into the Concepts and our structure, and that these rights can bring our fellowship and personal lives closer to our goals?

The first right we will discuss is the "Right of Decision" which is contained in Concept Three:

As a traditional means of creating and maintaining a clearly defined working relation between the Groups, the Conference, the World Service Office Board and its service corporation, staffs, and committees, and of thus ensuring their effective leadership, it is here suggested that we endow each of these elements of World Service with a traditional "Right of Decision."

So, what does this mean? Didn't the previous Concepts and Tradition Two literally say the opposite: the groups and God are the final decision makers? I'm glad you are paying attention. Basically, this concept boils down to trust. When

our Group Conscience guides us to elect a "Trusted Servant" such as a GSR, Coffee Maker, Secretary, or the Area Delegate, we are saying, "We trust you enough to do this task for us and we are electing you because we believe you will respect our wishes and usually act on them directly. However, we also understand that many aspects of service will require free thinking and on-the-spot judgement, so when that happens, we stand by your voice to determine our conscience."

There have been times in my own service journey where I have gone to a committee or conference with specific guidance from the addicts I represent, but due to new information or inspiration I have voted in the opposite direction than requested. This right in Concept Three actually encourages and protects this behavior, as long as I can be accountable and responsible when reporting back to my group or area about the decision. This can be applied anywhere. The coffee maker can decide what brand to buy and the secretary can alter their report within the guidelines established by the Group Conscience. I must remind you this is about trust. If I violate this trust, if my "Right of Decision" is misused or causes too much disunity, then the Group

---

Contact The Mainline Bulletin:

All correspondence will be filtered by our H.A. bulletin committee at: [haworldbulletin@gmail.com](mailto:haworldbulletin@gmail.com).  
We can also be contacted through our website at: [www.heroinanonymous.org](http://www.heroinanonymous.org)

---

Conscience can choose to elect a different representative.

Let's look at how this applies to our personal lives. I know that I have been told I have "trust issues"... ask my exes. So, when I am in a relationship or friendship, do things go smoother when I allow people to make their own decisions within the boundaries of the task?

Have you ever had a partner do the grocery shopping only to give them a hard time about what they chose? Did they get mad? Boom! Concept Three could have helped you. Another easy example is at a job with a supervisor. Someone may still be

your boss or have final authority like the HA groups do, but a good boss will give you a task and let you make it your own. Nobody likes to be micromanaged.

In conclusion, the "Right of Decision" from Concept Three says we ought to elect people we trust and give them the freedom to lead and make decisions when they need to. Thank you for taking the time to explore this concept with me. Next month we will talk about the "Right of Participation!"

- Pat B. Rochester, NY

X X X



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

---

Contact The Mainline Bulletin:

All correspondence will be filtered by our H.A. bulletin committee at: [haworldbulletin@gmail.com](mailto:haworldbulletin@gmail.com).  
We can also be contacted through our website at: [www.heroinanonymous.org](http://www.heroinanonymous.org)