



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.



MARCH **2022** ISSUE



Photo by: [Lazarescu Alexandra](#)

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

Latest news from our World Service Office Board

Greetings from the HA World Services 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.

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The HAWS board is happy to announce we have fully restocked chips that have been unavailable. The HAWS board is continuing to work with the world conference committees to prepare for the HA World Service Conference in Phoenix, AZ in July this summer. Speaking of the conference... registration for the conference is live on the HA website under the conference tab! If you plan on attending, you may now register and book a room.

The Outreach Committee is 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. If this sounds exciting to you, email 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 positions:

- **At-large Voting Member:** This position is for new members to the board, its 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.
- **Non-Heroin Addict Advisor:** This is someone who is not a member of HA. They may be an expert in recovery fellowships, non-profits, or possess various business skills that they wish to volunteer for the good of HA.

If you are interested, please send service resumes, references, and inquiries to: hawssecretary@gmail.com

In loving service,
Anna A., HAWS Outreach Chair

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A REAL SENSE OF BELONGING

Personal Story: Sahar S. - Mount Laurel, NJ

There wasn't a price I would not pay to be cool. Although my parents weren't religious, I grew up with a real intimate relationship with my higher power. I prayed every night and felt so loved and so at peace.

If you asked me, when I was a little girl, what the most important thing to me was, I would have told you God. As I got older, that relationship started to change as I became aware of other people and what they might be thinking. The moment I found out God wasn't cool, I quickly sacked that relationship because I wanted to be cool now and God wasn't cool. And in that moment, fear entered my life as I became obsessed with wanting to feel like I belonged and was loved. The more I realized I could never feel like enough, my fear turned to resentment real quick. It became everyone's fault that I didn't belong. I shaved my hair into a foot tall mohawk and stuck up my middle fingers.

Following this drastic reinvention of myself came real darkness, sadness, and pain. I felt so angry towards the world. If there was a God, why would they make me this way? No matter how much people tried to pour into me, it was never enough. I started to hate myself. My death wish was born, and I was

determined to blot out every good thing about myself. Years of addiction, prostitution, and hurting everyone who loved me did the trick.

I hear all the time in meetings how heroin addicts never felt a part of from as early as they can remember. This was certainly my truth. What I know now is that most people, addict or not, felt this way at some point in their life. We aren't unique in that sense. However, most people figure out how to live. I couldn't do that. I didn't know how to live with myself. The only way I knew how to get by was to try to feel nothing at all. When heroin stopped making me numb, the suffering took on new meaning. Despite heroin not working anymore, my body still demanded more and my mind thought of nothing else. By the grace of God, I landed in the path of a woman who had recovered from addiction and knew how to help me.

My wonderful sponsor is not a heroin addict. She suggested to me after a few years in another fellowship that I attend an HA meeting and see what it was all about and see if I could be useful there. I drove over the bridge into Philadelphia and went to my first HA meeting. When I heard that first person introduce themselves as a heroin addict, I

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felt, for the first time since I was a child, a real sense of belonging. Joy came over me as I knew then I had truly come home. I finally found my people in Heroin Anonymous.

Since that first HA meeting, a fire has grown in me to do everything I can to help this fellowship flourish and grow. Most people in my area hadn't heard about HA so I knew there was some work to do. I assembled a homegroup and started South Jersey's second HA meeting. We made business cards. We combined forces with Southeastern Pennsylvania and formed an Area.

I've been in contact with some amazing heroin addicts across the country who have been so supportive and helpful in teaching me about higher levels of service in HA. I never cared about being in service other than at my homegroup, but I know now that if I want HA to be available to all heroin addicts for years to come, I better take an interest. I have finally found where I belong and I am responsible to make sure that if a heroin addict needs help, they know how to find it too.

- Sahar S.

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WHY I STUCK AROUND

Tradition Twist: David E. Atlanta, GA

"The only requirement for H.A. membership is a desire to stop suffering from heroin addiction".

These unassumingly powerful words are probably the dearest to my heart of all the traditions of our fellowship. You see, I spent my entire life prior to finding H.A. desperately trying to conform to various unspoken requirements for membership. I never really felt like I truly belonged anywhere, so I fabricated various personas that checked all the boxes that the

various groups I wanted to be a part of were looking for in a member. In my professional life I was polished, professional, confident, formal, and well spoken. With the people I used and sold drugs with I was almost the exact opposite, I dressed grungy, talked and acted tough, and swore a lot. With my family I appeared responsible, high achieving, and like I had it together. With my old high school friends I was the life of the party... etc. etc. etc. None of it was really me. My entire life was a façade of trying to be what I

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thought everyone wanted me to be to the extent that even I had no idea who I really was. It was only through the 12 steps of this program that I would eventually learn who I am and it is only because of the third tradition that I stuck around and was able to work those steps.

I will never forget the first H.A. meeting I attended. I walked in and sat down right as the meeting started, a jumbled mess of fear, trepidation, and uncertainty. By this point I was so broken that I wasn't even capable of putting up a front anymore. All of my vulnerability was right there on display for everyone in the room to see. So was the obvious fact that I was still a bit high from a couple hours earlier. The traditions were read as part of the intro to the meeting, but the true depth and power of the third one didn't really become apparent until a couple of minutes later when anyone who was new was asked to introduce themselves. I didn't know what to expect drawing attention to myself while being clearly high in a meeting of people who were sober, but I timidly raised my hand anyway and said, "I'm David and I'm a heroin addict". Everyone clapped and cheered and told me they were glad I was there, and it actually felt strangely sincere. Then and later after the meeting when people swarmed me introducing themselves and giving me their phone numbers one after another, everyone truly

seemed not only welcoming but even genuinely enthusiastic and excited just at the simple fact that I was sitting there, high in their sobriety meeting. There wasn't a judgmental set of eyes in the room and there were no strings attached, just real genuine love and acceptance by a group of people I had never even met before. For the first time in my life, in this room full of vastly different people with vastly different styles and personalities and backgrounds, people who normally would not mix and whom I certainly normally would not mix with, I truly felt like I belonged somewhere. I had found my tribe.

This unconditional love and acceptance based solely on the fact that I was a heroin addict who had a desire to stop suffering from heroin addiction was not only the thing that kept me coming back but was also absolutely critical to my having the capacity to successfully work the steps of the program. If I had felt a need to put up a façade with the people in the room like I had grown so accustomed to doing with everyone else in my life, there is zero chance I ever would have been able to learn to be honest enough with those same people and with myself to have the spiritual experience that the steps are designed to elicit. All of the traditions are important to the health of the fellowship, but the third tradition specifically has the

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capacity to directly save lives by assuring that no heroin addict who wants help is ever excluded. It certainly played a direct part in saving my life and I am

extraordinarily grateful for the opportunity to share my experience with it here today.

- David E.

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RIGHT OF PARTICIPATION

Concepts Column: Pat B. - Rochester, NY

Greetings Mainliners!

In our third installment of the concepts column, we will go over the next essential right contained in the 12 concepts, the "Right of Participation". Have you ever heard people complain about a participation trophy in kid's sports? Well, this is kind of like that, everyone needs a trophy for trying when it comes to service, it is our job to hand out that trophy and the "trophy" is sobriety, freedom, and growth.

Concept four states: "Throughout our Conference structure, we ought to maintain at all responsible levels a traditional "Right of Participation," taking care that each classification or group of our world servants shall be allowed a voting representation in reasonable

proportion to the responsibility that each must discharge." The history of this concept is that back when AA was building its structure there was very poor communication between paid workers, trustees and delegates, Bill saw that paid workers and board members did not get to vote at conference and certain committees and even though they gave their lives to the work, they weren't allowed to weigh in or have a voice. Has anyone ever made a decision for you, without your input or not allowing you to share your point of view? Sucks doesn't it! So, this concept was developed to ensure that we give everyone with a stake in the game a voice whenever possible.

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An easy way to imagine this is the Group Conscience at your homegroup, have you ever felt like the few loud and experienced members call all the shots? Many times, new members are confused or don't even know they can share, ask questions and vote. A good group and chairperson will inform new members that they have a vote and a voice that we need to hear as soon as they join. A home group is easy because they can really define their rules with a simple vote.

Sometimes committees are more complex, for example if just anyone were allowed to vote at the HAWS conference it would take the value out of the elected Delegate's vote which has been assigned by their areas, the local HA member has delegated their authority and right to participate to the Delegate (concept 2 glad you're listening).

Although, there are instances where lone HA members have come to conferences from an Area without a Delegate, and they are issued voting rights on the spot! This is speaking to the second part of the concept where we need a voice in equal proportion to the responsibilities we are asked to carry out. The basic idea is that if people are doing the

work and showing up for our committee or groups then we need their input, and they should be allowed to vote whenever the present guidelines allow. This is why at the HAWS Conference everyone who takes the time to serve gets a vote, the delegates, committee chairs, conference officers, board members, trustees and even our paid employee...anyone who has accepted responsibility for the future of HA gets a voice and a vote in its business.

How can this spiritual principle apply to our daily lives? It is actually very simple; we can practice Concept Four and the Right of Participation by just asking people in our lives what they think. Look for the small person, the person feeling unheard and give them a voice! One example is that as a supervisor at my job I have to make decisions that affect the daily lives of my whole department, even though I have the ability to make these changes without my staff's consent, this concept reminds me to ask people what they think and consider their point of view when making a decision.

- Pat B.

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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.

Thank you!

The Folks at The HAWS Mainline

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