



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.



MAY **2022** ISSUE

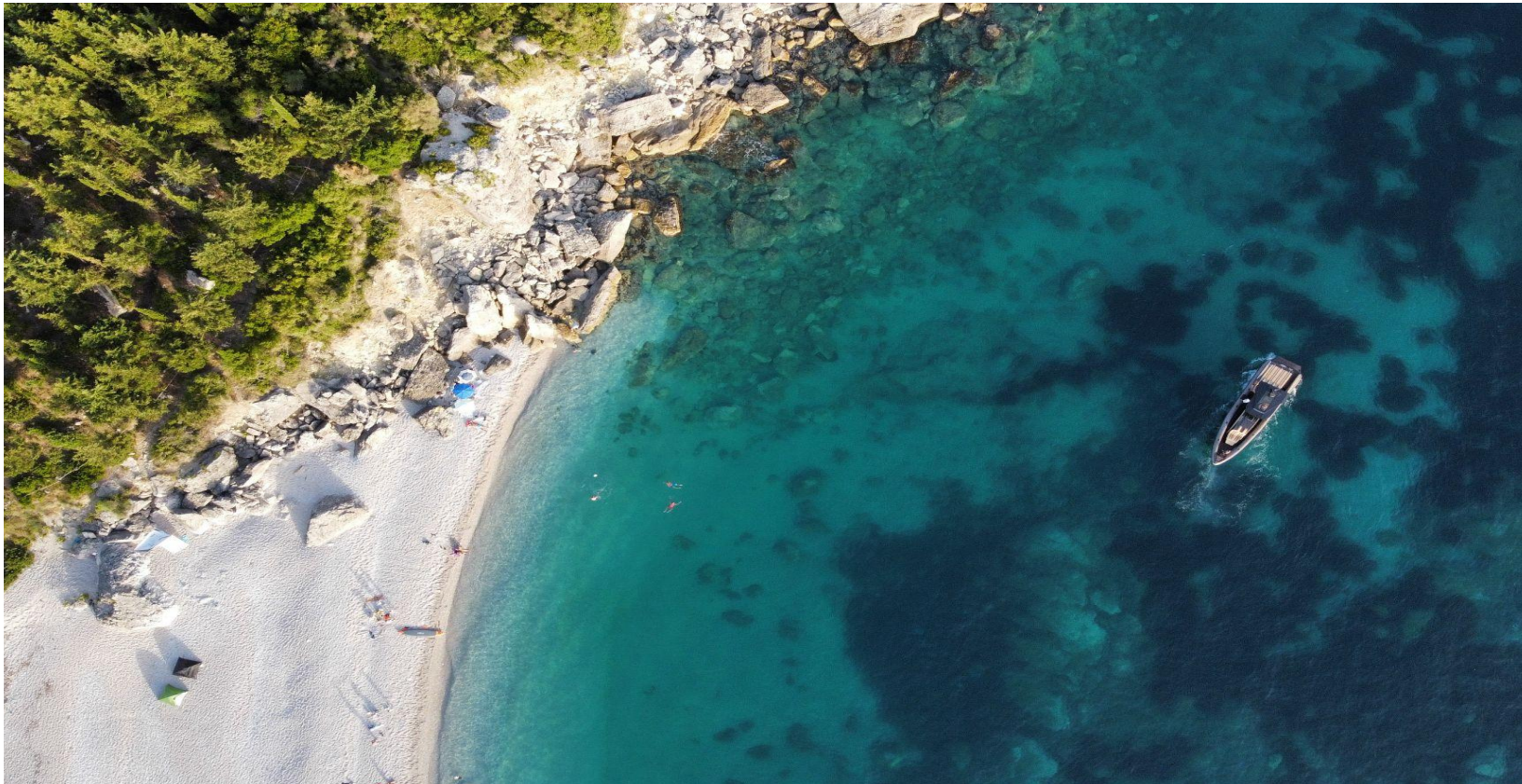


Photo by: Xhulio Selenica

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

Latest news from our World Service Office Board

Here is some information to help you 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 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 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.

Got questions about chips and literature? What about a hope to speak with the HA world service Public Information chair? Looking to reach out to anyone on the HAWS board from trustee to advisor? Well lucky for you, we are unveiling some fresh, new, and official emails for all of these positions. I'll update you all next month when the email addresses will be live and on the contact page of our HeroinAnonymous.org website.

Do you love HA and talking to HA members? Well, look no further for a service opportunity: The Outreach Committee is reaching out to new and small HA areas around the country to build connection, unity, and provide support when needed. If this sounds exciting to you, email HAWSOutreach@HeroinAnonymous.org to get more information!

Speaking of Outreach, our committee works to keep the meeting list on the world website accurate. Please check your homegroup or any meetings in your area's information on the website for accuracy and if there are any discrepancies (time, date, location, contact info, etc.) email HAWSwebmaster@gmail.com to correct it.

The HAWS PI Committee will be hosting their first ever open house to better help you and your group spread HA's message in your community and help your groups and areas grow. **Open House will be on Zoom June 12th at 6pm EST. Meeting ID: 896 2991 3279 Password: HAPI.**

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 of making sure that HA is here for years to come? Then service with the HAWS board may be right for YOU!

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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. The sole function of this position 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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H&I WORKS IN CONNECTICUT

Personal Story: Dean D. - New Milford, CT

On November 13th, 2021, I was fresh out of detox and entered a rehab in Danbury, CT. From the moment I got to the facility, I couldn't stop crying as I thought of my brother David. The only time I had been there was to visit him back in 2018.

November 13th was not only my brother's birthday, but my new sobriety date. He had succumbed to alcoholism the year prior. Being spiritually bankrupt, I couldn't quite grasp it at the time, but God was working in my life then.

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Later that night, lying wide awake on the top bunk, tossing and turning in a cold sweat as I tried to sleep, I couldn't help but obsess about drinking hand sanitizer to relieve my withdrawal symptoms. My mind raced, full of fear and terror as I reflected on where heroin had taken me. In a state of pure hopelessness and desperation, I got on my knees and prayed for God to help me get through the night.

The next day, the clients were talking about how these men brought an H.A. meeting into the rehab on Sundays. "H.A.?" I thought. I'd never heard of it. I sat in the living room, sick as a dog, waiting to see what this was all about. Two men walked in confidently with Big Books in tow and their heads held high. They had that glimmer in their eye and seemed happy and content. I knew at that moment that I wanted what they had and was willing to do whatever it took to get it.

I can vividly remember the first time I said those words out loud. "Hi, my name's Dean and I'm a heroin addict." I spent 5 years in A.A. introducing myself as an alcoholic, despite never having a drinking problem. I would share about "drinking" when I was really talking about my struggles with heroin addiction. I never quite felt a part of the group and felt like no one knew what I was going through after each relapse.

I knew I had to do something different this time. The more I looked around for the men that had what I wanted, the more I realized they all talked about the program as outlined in the Big Book. It wasn't long before I found a sponsor and we immediately got to work. One night after a meeting, while talking to my sponsor, I proclaimed, "I need to do a 4th step." He agreed, and with two weeks sober I started to write. I knew the sober house I wanted to go to before I even entered rehab.

As "luck" would have it, the manager was also a member of Heroin Anonymous. The more I got to know him, the more I began to respect him and his experience with the 12 steps, and his passion for H.A. I had never heard the words "singleness of purpose" and the more he explained why the Fellowship of H.A. was for me, the more interested I became.

One Thursday night, we went to our home group "Right Side of the Tracks" in Danbury, CT. It was the greatest experience to finally be able to talk openly about my heroin addiction. We could laugh at the crazy things we did in active addiction, things that only another heroin addict would understand. We had recovered from a hopeless state of mind and body. It was truly a gift to finally identify with others who were living in the solution.

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Every Friday night we drive down to West Haven, CT, to another group called "A Way Out". It's truly a blessing to be surrounded by like-minded people who have a passion for seeing the Fellowship grow in Connecticut. I've grown close to some of these people and have learned more than I could've ever imagined. Often, the group will go out for dinner afterwards; the camaraderie is unlike anything I've experienced.

I personally know two other members who found their way into H.A. as the

result of an H&I meeting, one of whom I was in the rehab facility with. February 13th was a powerful day for me. Not only did I celebrate 90 days of sobriety, but it was also the 2-year anniversary of my brother's death. I truly believe I wouldn't be where I am today if it weren't for those two men that walked into the rehab that Sunday night. I found my purpose here in Heroin Anonymous and I'll keep coming back!

-Dean D.

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RECOVERY FINALLY **MADE SENSE**

Tradition Twist: Alex M.- Seattle, WA

Tradition 5: "Each group has but one primary purpose—to carry its message to the heroin addict who still suffers."

The Heroin Addict who still suffers is a heroin addict without a solution, in or out of active addiction. There are many people who come in and out of the rooms of Heroin Anonymous who don't know what

the solution is, or truly even understand the problem, and it is the primary purpose of the group to transmit that message.

My name is Alex, and I am a heroin addict. I have been clean and sober since September 13, 2014. I was an addict long before I ever tried heroin, but the day that I did it became my drug of choice. It took me

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a really long time to find the rooms, and then once I did it took me a really long time to figure out how to stay sober. I was in and out of other fellowships for years, and it wasn't until I got involved with Heroin Anonymous that I was able to achieve long-term sobriety.

The disease of addiction is not a substance, it's a physical allergy, and a mental obsession. No matter what a person's drug of choice is, it's the same disease, and the same solution. So why was I unable to stay sober until I found HA? Because along with addiction to heroin, and other opiates, comes a certain lifestyle that can hardly be understood by anyone who has not experienced it. I am more equipped to help another heroin addict who has had the same experiences with addiction that I have because we are similar people. I am also more equipped to win over the confidence of, and carry the message of HA to, another heroin addict rather than someone who is unfamiliar with heroin addiction.

Once I found HA, recovery finally started to make sense. I could be myself in HA, and didn't have to try to conform to any non-heroin addicts standards. I could share freely about the things I had done and been through without having to worry about shocking anyone. I was finally able to hear, and understand the message. I began to understand my disease, and the original program of

recovery finally began to make sense. When I replace the word alcohol with heroin I am able to see that what we are doing in HA with heroin addicts is exactly what Bill, Bob, and the first 100 men and women did with alcoholics. I can see that it worked so well for them because they were all alcoholics, similar people, similar lifestyles, and they had singleness of purpose. They carried their message into hospitals and sanitariums, the same way we carry ours into jails, detoxes, and treatment centers.

I have no interest in going to other fellowships, or carrying the message of HA to non-heroin addicts because, due to my own personal experience, I believe in singleness of purpose, and I believe that there are people better off to do those things. I have found my home in HA, as well as my purpose. Heroin Anonymous unquestionably saved my life, and so now it is my responsibility to pass this gift that is the message of HA to the heroin addict who still suffers so that it can save theirs, too.

-Alex M.

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CHOOSING OUR **FEARLESS LEADERS**

Concepts Column: Pat B. - Rochester, NY

Hey there Mainliners!

I am writing this article on the afternoon of 5/16/22; today is my ten-year anniversary of being sober.

I want to start out by saying how grateful I am for the fellowship of Heroin Anonymous. We started the first HA meetings in Rochester, NY when I was about 5 years sober. The year after HA came to my city, my life got incredibly difficult.

Family illnesses, along with a few self-imposed interpersonal crises led me to an emotional bottom I did not know was possible. Looking back, I can say without a shadow of a doubt that becoming involved in Heroin Anonymous saved my life. I had been active, but stale, in another fellowship and had it not been for the massive excitement and call to service in building our local fellowship, I would have slipped away and used. Thank you all for my life.

This is a good segue into our discussion about Concept 9, which states: "Good service leaders, together with sound and appropriate methods of choosing them are at all

levels indispensable for our future functioning and safety." Now this might be super confusing since we are often told that "no one is in charge of HA, we have no boss, only the Group Conscience!" Well, this is only half true...It is often said that the 12 Concepts are an extension of Tradition Two, which says that the Group Conscience is our ultimate authority, but we DO have leaders and they are really our trusted servants.

What this concept means to me is that we are led by example in HA, whether it's a sponsor showing us how to walk through the steps, a secretary making sure a meeting is run in a fair and timely manner or a delegate traveling across the country to make sure my homegroup's voice is heard at the conference.

Someone needs to step up to the plate and we need them to be the best person for the job, our lives and the lives of unborn addicts may depend on it. Bill W., AA's founder, wrote an article titled "Leadership In AA: Ever A Vital Need". I would highly suggest checking it out, but I will summarize it a little...

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Essentially a good leader in Heroin Anonymous is someone who is well, emotionally sober, practical, forward thinking, level headed and fair.

Now am I saying that we can't let anyone who is rough around the edges hold a service position? Absolutely not. What I believe this concept implies is that we should use our votes in the Group Conscience to select the best possible person for each position. We select someone with reliable transportation to open up our meetings, someone financially responsible to manage our money, and someone who needs to come out of their shell to be a greeter.

Furthermore, this concept shows that when there is a leadership role on the table, someone who speaks for the Group Conscience or performs a vital task, they should have the needed skills. Some ways that groups and service entities assure this is to have candidates for certain roles provide a service resume or give a verbal statement about their qualifications to the voting body.

In fact, on the H.A.W.S. Board we have adopted an entire personnel sub-committee devoted to selecting and electing the best possible candidates to lead as trusted servants for Heroin Anonymous.

Another tip I have come to live by is avoiding giving vital roles to people because "it will be good for

them." We should give them a job they are qualified for because Tradition One says we need to consider the health of the fellowship before the individual. In our elections we must ask ourselves, "How can this person help the heroin addict who still suffers?"

So, what does all this have to do with my sob story about HA saving me from my mid-sober-life crisis?

Everything! Let me explain. Heroin Anonymous, like any new organization, relies heavily on leadership. We all know that one person who started like six meetings, sponsored a whole halfway house, or went to all the treatment facilities alone in one day to get H&I commitments. I am not in any way saying that to be a good HA you must overextend yourself, like some do (I have certainly had to learn my limits over the years). What I am saying is that none of us would be here if someone hadn't busted their butt to keep the door open or show us the way.

In my city, we were blessed to have a small group of "leaders" involved in starting the first few meetings.

A few of us were blessed to have strong backgrounds in service and the Traditions. This built strong homegroups based on the principles of the program. We had an abundance of sponsors and were forming active service committees within months.

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When Heroin Anonymous came calling, and we needed delegates to attend the first conference, I was ready to try and fill a leadership role, not because I am special, or because it fed my ego, but because I was the best person for the job at the time.

And so, I urge you to ask yourselves in all that you do, "Is this the

best possible way to help the next sufferer? Who is the best person to help us fulfill our purpose? And am I letting the good be the enemy of the best?"

-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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