



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.



SEPTEMBER **2022** ISSUE



Photo by: Joanna Kosinska

Greetings from the HA World Services 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 H.A. members who meet monthly to tend to H.A. business throughout the year.

The HA World Service Conference was held in July in Phoenix, AZ, and went wonderfully! There were some exciting changes to H.A. we'd love to share!

Contact The Mainline Bulletin:

*All correspondence will be filtered by our H.A. bulletin committee at: haworldbulletin@gmail.com.
We can also be contacted through our website at: www.heroinanonymous.org*

-
- An **H.A. Book Task Force** has been created to explore what the fellowship is looking for in an H.A. book! Attached at the bottom is the flier and link on how you can fill out the survey.
 - **H.A. World Merchandise** may now be created to be sold. Keep up with future mainline bulletins for an announcement on new arrivals to the H.A. shop. See below for an art request.

ART Request: *Are you creative or artistic? Do you have ideas for cool H.A. merchandise?* Sweet! If you would like to contribute art or merchandise ideas for H.A. use, please send to HawsSecretary@HeroinAnonymous.org

Virtual Meetings: *Do you want to attend an H.A. meeting 1,000 miles away from your very own couch? Do you find it interesting to hear heroin addicts from another region share their experience, strength, and hope?* We have 27 active zoom meetings in 9 different states! Go to the HeroinAnonymous.Org, click meetings, and click the link for online meetings. Make sure to convert the time zone! Email HawsWebmaster@HeroinAnonymous.org if you notice any inaccuracies or want to add a meeting.

HAWS Positions: Looking for more involvement with H.A.? 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. If you are interested in the following positions, please send service resumes, references, and inquiries to: HawsSecretary@HeroinAnonymous.org

- **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 H.A. They may be an expert in recovery fellowships, non-profits, or possess various business skills that they wish to volunteer for the good of H.A.

In loving service,

Anna A., HAWS Outreach Chair

HawsOutreach@HeroinAnonymous.org

Contact The Mainline Bulletin:

*All correspondence will be filtered by our H.A. bulletin committee at: haworldbulletin@gmail.com.
We can also be contacted through our website at: www.heroinanonymous.org*

SELF-IMPOSED SEPARATION

Personal Story: Kaleb P. Grants Pass, OR

Before coming into this way of life, I was in and out of 12-step fellowships for a decade, suffering from heroin addiction. I remember being nudged toward AA. I was told "The strong recovery is found in AA," and "AA is where you go to STAY sober—it doesn't matter if you used other things, as long as you used alcohol." I was told to replace the word alcohol with whatever I would like; whatever my problem was.

After ten years around Alcoholics Anonymous I had surrendered enough of my will to approach these steps. The suffering became unbearable and God showed me the grace that was needed. As I read the AA book, some parts were hard to understand at first, while other parts talked about me in a way I could never understand before and in a way I had never seen or couldn't quite put my finger on. I related in depth with this book. As a result, I got sober.

Although I had recovered, I still felt separate. Separate from the rest in AA. I felt I needed to convince myself that alcohol was my real problem. That my heroin use was a substitute for that problem. I was still in collision, still disturbed, and justifying to myself why I was

there. In addition, I wasn't relating to what I was hearing in the meetings.

Around eight months sober, working steps 10, 11 and 12 on a daily basis, I started to experience a lot of arrogance. This pushed me farther and farther from the fellowship. Eventually I stopped going to meetings. I thought they were doing it wrong, that they didn't read the book enough, that they didn't practice these principles right, and they were not effective in carrying this message.

I became heavily influenced by Chapter Eleven of the Big Book, "A Vision For You." Close friends and I started to do 12-step work in our houses. One of the guys I was working with was so situated that we had multiple prospects detoxing on couches, spending a few days or weeks at his house. We started taking these guys through the steps. Ironically, we were all heroin addicts using the big book of Alcoholics Anonymous to find a new way of living.

After just a few months of this, a distant friend invited me to an online meeting of Heroin Anonymous.

Contact The Mainline Bulletin:

All correspondence will be filtered by our H.A. bulletin committee at: haworldbulletin@gmail.com.
We can also be contacted through our website at: www.heroinanonymous.org

I remember her telling me one of her sponsees was sharing there. I remembered what I had heard about Heroin Anonymous years before. That "they don't have strong recovery," and "It's not a strong fellowship to be a part of." My mind was opened just enough to not only attend to see what HA was all about, but I even invited a friend with me to the meeting. I'll never forget the look on his face when he got to identify as a "heroin addict" in a meeting for the first time. What I saw in him was comfort, joy, and a sense of belonging. He shared unlike I'd heard him share before, withholding nothing. To watch the loneliness in him vanish through identification and being a part of showed me exactly what we were doing there that night.

From that moment on I started reaching out to other members of

H.A. to talk to them about the fellowship, the application of the program, and later the service structure.

Eventually I joined a homegroup in H.A. because I found this is where my experience can be of maximum service. During the time I've been a member of my H.A. group, I've had experiences I don't think I could have anywhere else. My homegroup gives me that same sense of belonging I saw in my friends eyes at the first meeting. I no longer feel alone standing for these principles. I know now that I was never alone. Singleness of purpose has brought me into a position where I can give myself fully to this program.

-Kaleb P.

- - - - X

GOING TO **ANY LENGTHS**

Personal Story: Sahar S. New Jersey

When my sponsor asked me what I was willing to do to stay sober this time around, I gave her what I thought to be the right answer. "I'm willing to do anything, of course!" I was discouraged and defeated

coming back from a five month run after having been sober for a year.

I was expecting my sponsor to be pleased with my answer, but she was not. She said that I had only taken the steps and suggestions that were

Contact The Mainline Bulletin:

*All correspondence will be filtered by our H.A. bulletin committee at: haworldbulletin@gmail.com.
We can also be contacted through our website at: www.heroinanonymous.org*

easy to accept and that I had been behaving in ways that were incredibly selfish and dishonest as a sober woman. I realized that I had not been willing to do much to stay sober. Living a life by spiritual principles would mean that I would have to take some bold corrective measures which would be uncomfortable. That scared me.

Fear and discomfort were to be avoided at all costs. I spent years layering heroin and resentment on top of my fear so that I could try to live comfortably. That worked for some time until no amount of heroin nor any story I would tell myself could cover up the intense feelings of fear, guilt and remorse that I carried with me every moment of every day. I would get off heroin thinking that abstinence would solve all my problems. After a few days sober, I would get uncomfortable and full of fear. Unwilling to feel anything difficult, I would return to heroin.

My sponsor asked me if I was really ready this time, and I told her the truth, which was that I really hoped so. I was told that I would have to move through the 12 steps quickly and seek my higher power diligently if I were to have a chance at recovering. Unsure of how to turn my life and will over to God as I understood him, I made the third step decision to go through with the rest of the steps. After my fifth

step, the desire to use heroin was lifted. The cracked door I had left open for God swung open the moment I was truly honest with another human being. I finally saw that God could solve all my problems, if I let him and was willing to take some action.

Although I had this profound spiritual experience where I got to see the power of my Creator, there were still some questionable parts of my character that I was holding onto. In particular, I was still a thief. I had been stealing the entire time I was sober and I knew that if I kept on with this behavior, I would surely use again.

Yet I couldn't stop. Just like with my heroin addiction, I was going to need God's help: a miraculous gesture to remove this character defect of mine. I tried putting some extra money in the Seventh Tradition basket at my homegroup every time I stole. I tried getting honest with various friends and my sponsor about my behavior. I tried asking God to remove my obsession to steal. Yet I kept on stealing.

After the fourth or fifth time I got honest with my sponsor about my stealing escapades, she told me that if I wanted to stay sober and stop stealing, I would have to take the stuff I had just stolen back to the store. She told me to find a manager and tell them what I had done and make a proper amends for my

Contact The Mainline Bulletin:

*All correspondence will be filtered by our H.A. bulletin committee at: haworldbulletin@gmail.com.
We can also be contacted through our website at: www.heroinanonymous.org*

stealing. I balked at this suggestion and considered firing my sponsor right there on the spot. Then I remembered that I had agreed to go to any lengths for my sobriety and that meant that I would have to take some pretty drastic action, face my fears, and be willing to be uncomfortable. After much time in prayer about this amends and consulting with my partner about the possible outcomes including imprisonment, it was laid on my heart that I had to be willing-and I was. I made that amends and that very day, my obsession to steal was lifted in the grocery store parking lot. I have never been tempted to

steal since. I was full of fear and I was uncomfortable but I was finally willing to trust God and give this program an honest try. The moment I became willing to take any and all action is the moment I began to have a spiritual awakening.

-Sahar S.

- - - - X

NOW IT SEEMS QUITE SIMPLE

Tradition Twist: Adam D. Chandler, AZ

When I first got sober in early 2015, I remember reading the Traditions on the wall of the local Alano clubs and having even less of an understanding about them than I did the steps. I could grasp the idea of Tradition One, which promotes unity amongst all groups and all heroin addicts. The Third Tradition seemed to make sense to me on the very simple level of inclusiveness between all of us who are tired of getting loaded. Beyond that, though, the rest of them just sounded like gibberish. I could certainly read them aloud in the meetings, but having any sort of an

understanding of them was certainly not there.

When I joined my first home group a few weeks after getting sober, the business meetings confused me. I never knew that H.A. was more than just a few retired heroin addicts getting together to talk, but there was a whole business to it. After a few months, I became the G.S.R. of my local group and started attending intergroup. By this time, I was starting to form an understanding of the Traditions a little bit more. I can recall sitting in business meetings and hearing people joke

Contact The Mainline Bulletin:

All correspondence will be filtered by our H.A. bulletin committee at: haworldbulletin@gmail.com.
We can also be contacted through our website at: www.heroinanonymous.org

about "we ought not be organized" when a topic would come up where someone fumbled the responsibility of completing a task. As I continued to join more service committees and work on various service levels in H.A, I often heard that same punch line referred to.

It wasn't until I was coming up on two years sober that I started attending a weekly meeting centered around learning more about the Traditions. By now, I had turned into a parrot and joked often about not having any organization whenever I did not follow through on a commitment to a group. When the weekly Tradition group I was attending got to Tradition Nine, we talked about how AA developed this.

The idea that H.A. has no organization it is not there to give us members, or our groups, a scapegoat and a way to dismiss accountability. Instead, it is there to ensure there is no ultimate authority over our groups, and to allow everyone who has an opinion, on any matter, to be able to speak freely to it.

The second half of the Tradition, which states "we may create service boards or committees directly responsible to those they serve," suggests to us that for the groups to survive we should consider forming a group to serve the group. This means organization. By allowing

the groups to maintain themselves, this removes the possibility of the fellowship developing any sort of hierarchy or control.

Over the years, I have gone back and forth on how much organization is too much or too little. The result is usually the same: it's not up to me. This is for the group or committee to decide for themselves.

The great thing about not only Tradition Nine, but all the Traditions, is that if I just let God guide me (and the group), the right answer always comes. Although this Tradition seemed to be quite the paradox when I first read it, it now seems quite simple. The fellowship that is made up of every one of us is never to have organization or authority placed on us individually but if the groups wish to persevere through all struggles which they will certainly face, it is suggested that we try to form a group to serve the group.

Keeping God always at the front of our decision making, we usually see great success in our efforts.

-Adam D.

- - - - X

Contact The Mainline Bulletin:

*All correspondence will be filtered by our H.A. bulletin committee at: haworldbulletin@gmail.com.
We can also be contacted through our website at: www.heroinanonymous.org*

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.

Thank you!
The Folks at The HAWS Mainline

Link for filling out survey-

https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSdKH-WOpwiHlkGD2y9_BWIZCianPibQ2SlorfGcdKtgO0kFzg/viewform?fbclid=IwAR30GOxyk_nsCr5rS-3gWUiby7T_ooHu2BEeRxJraR3ah2PWKCZYUUQcNlg

Contact The Mainline Bulletin:

All correspondence will be filtered by our H.A. bulletin committee at: haworldbulletin@gmail.com.
We can also be contacted through our website at: www.heroinanonymous.org

Calling all H.A. members!



FILL OUT THE

HEROIN ANONYMOUS 'BOOK INTEREST' SURVEY

<https://forms.gle/nDAXFCemqGLrE4ag6>



Created by the HAWS
Book Task Force and
distributed by the HAWS
Outreach Committee

*All correspondence will be filtered by our H.A. bulletin committee at: haworldbulletin@gmail.com.
We can also be contacted through our website at: www.heroinanonymous.org*