



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.



OCTOBER **2022** ISSUE



Photo by: Richard Hodonicky

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.

Contact The Mainline Bulletin:

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Do you want H.A. to write a book? Have concerns about this process? We would love to hear from YOU! Please take the following survey. See attached flyer to share with your homegroup. This survey is open to all H.A. members and closes November 30th.

H.A. BOOK INTEREST SURVEY: <https://forms.gle/nDAxFCemqGLrE4ag6>

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](https://www.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

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I NEED TO REMAIN CONNECTED

A Step Ahead: Matt C. Brooklyn, NY

Step 10 - Continued to take personal inventory, and when we were wrong, promptly admitted it.

When I first entered the rooms, I wasn't sure of two very important things: (1) what I really suffered from, and (2) what I needed to do to recover from whatever that was.

Through the 12 steps, the big book, sponsorship, and the fellowship, I learned both. First, I realized I suffered from heroin addiction—that is, that I lacked the power to control the amount I took once I started, and that I lacked the power to stay stopped. Second, I learned that if my “dilemma” was powerlessness, I needed to gain access to Power; a Power greater than myself.

My next question was: how do I gain access to a Power greater than myself? My sponsor assured me that the 12 steps would enable me to do just that. He said that the process of the 12 steps is like a treasure map that leads me to the treasure—a connection to a Higher Power that will solve my problems. So, I started the process of recovery and embarked on the journey through the 12 steps.

By the time I had gotten to the Tenth Step, I had already gained access to something greater than myself. It wasn't something that I could define or rationalize, but it was something that I could feel. In my heart, I knew, and still know, that I was connected to a Power greater than myself. But having just “gone through” the steps, for me, was and is not enough. Even though I have gained access to a Power greater than myself, I need to remain connected to that power.

That's where Step 10 plays a critical part in my life. It helps me identify, on a daily basis, what it is that is blocking me from my connection with God. Those things that stand in my way on a daily basis, that sow discord into my life, are resentment, fear, selfishness, and dishonesty. And they do crop up—on a daily basis. So, when - not if - these four things crop up, I have two choices. Either let them fester, and disregard the instructions in the Big Book, or, follow the directions in the Big Book by asking God to remove it, discussing them with a fellow, making amends if I had harmed anyone, and importantly, turning my thoughts outward to someone else.

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In my experience, following the directions in the Big Book works out best. When I don't, it is miraculous how "small" resentments or fears blossom and can grow into a massive fear or resentment that then has the power to dictate my actions. One small example comes to mind. In my last job, I had at the time what was my dream job. But, I was getting more and more responsibility. Afraid to say "I can't take on anymore work" for the fear of my employer thinking I'm "not good enough," I always said yes. I said yes until months went by with an overwhelming load of work—one that was completely unmanageable, taking up nearly all day almost seven days a week. In turn, I started to resent my job, my employer, and eventually, I even left the job that I had once dreamed about for it being incompatible with any work-life balance. But, in hindsight, I had set the ball rolling - I was too afraid to tell the truth! Had I brought this fear up to a fellow the moment it cropped up, I have the curious feeling that I would have just told the truth to my employer—that I was overworked and burnt out—and, at that point, I'm positive that my employer would have assisted me in my workload. (I know this because, as I was getting ready to leave the job, me and my employer actually spoke about this!

Oh the stress and spiritual turmoil I could have been spared...).

With this experience in hand, at my new job, I am sure to Tenth Step any such fear that may (and will) come up. I know that if I don't, the fear or resentment or whatever it is won't just go away - it'll grow and grow until I'm blocked from the Power greater than myself, and begin to live by self-propulsion once more, finding myself in yet another unbearable situation.

The Tenth Step allows me to remain connected to the Truth - that if I ask God to help rid me of the fear by having faith in the Power of God - everything will be perfect; because everything is. It is a magical tool in the spiritual tool kit—one that, if worked, has the power to ensure that every day I can stay close and connected, by watching out for the things that will block me from God. And, when I am not blocked, I get a wonderful sense of ease, serenity, and comfort in sobriety—essentially, I get everything I was always looking for. A sense of peace and freedom from the bondage of self.

-Matt C.

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IMPOSTER SYNDROME

Personal Story: Justin I. Norwich, CT

My name is Justin I., and I am a heroin addict. A Power greater than myself removed me from all substances on July 1st, 2021. My home group, "A Way Out," meets at the 12-Step Club every Friday at 8pm at 337 Main Street in West Haven, CT. This is the story of my experience with a recurring theme I suffer from called "imposter syndrome". In short, I define it as being abstinent from substances while living dishonestly.

This repeating cycle began in 2016 when I had met one of my many bottoms. I found myself in a homeless shelter and I had just missed the birth of my daughter as a direct result of my heroin use. During my stay at the shelter, I was introduced to an individual that was bringing Big Book meetings into the facility. I could identify with nothing about his walk of life, and everything regarding the state of hopelessness he suffered from prior to working the steps. I thought I was finally beaten into a state of surrender.

He became my sponsor and brought me to a lot of meetings with people that were very familiar with the verbiage of our literature. Everyone

that shared in these meetings had a personal experience with the Big Book and spoke of a personal relationship with a God of their own understanding. It appeared they were speaking a foreign language. As time went on, I began to pick up on the lingo from these meetings. I could quote the Big Book by the paragraph during a share. In hindsight, all that proved was I had book smarts and a decent memory. From the outside looking in, it appeared as though I was a recovering heroin addict that was applying the 12 steps to my life. Little did everyone know, my public flawless facade masked private despair.

It's amazing how quickly my ego comes back in such a subtle manner. I started as a man that was crawling on all fours, begging for mercy, willing to take direction and listen. After a short period of time, I gained my health back; I regained employment; I got myself an apartment and a vehicle; I acquired a good social status within the community; I did a few sets of pushups; and suddenly I stuck my chest out thinking I know what's best for me. When I walked into a meeting everyone saw me taking service positions and heard me

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sharing about a relationship with my Creator and how the steps changed me. Meanwhile, outside the meetings I was living in self-will, hurting others, and not trusting God. I was a fraud.

Eventually my double life caught up to me and I had a needle in my arm again. Staying clean while living dirty does not work. On June 30th, 2021, I experienced the physical, emotional, and spiritual bottom that was required for me to push all my chips forward and go all in. During my 9th step amends I returned to individuals that I resented for having found their truth in The Big Book and had a relationship with God. I exposed my character defects of jealousy and told them I was wrong for separating myself from them as opposed to asking for help.

One person's request was for me to share my experience with this difficulty I faced in hopes I can reach someone who may be suffering from the same problem.

Today I am fully committed to living the spiritual way of life and I look for symptoms of imposter syndrome and expose them to the people in my support network immediately before things spiral out of control. I unapologetically speak my truth, I trust God, and I trust the 12 steps of recovery this time around.

-Justin I.

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TOOLS, NOT WEAPONS

Tradition Twist: Jake R. Birmingham, AL

"Heroin Anonymous has no opinion on outside issues; hence the H.A. name ought never be drawn into public controversy."

Tradition 10 is a beautiful and direct message that the only opinions that belong are those relating to our heroin addiction and recovery. It reminds us, as members of Heroin Anonymous, that our

primary purpose is always to carry the message to the still suffering heroin addicts. It allows our members to place their controversial beliefs at the door and pick them up when they leave. This idea of complete neutrality on issues not pertaining to H.A. is paramount to our unity, first and foremost, our group conscience, our primary

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purpose, and our 12th tradition of anonymity and humility.

The spirit of this Tradition, as with all of our Traditions, has been adopted from the long form of AA's Traditions. Specifically, the long form of Tradition 10 more explicitly states that opinions on outside controversial issues should ever be expressed, and it emphasizes opinions on politics, alcohol reform, and religion. It also states that we can express no views whatsoever. It is not common to see such definitive language used in how members should or should not behave, which speaks to the importance of this suggestion.

Half a century later, these words ring true enough to be adapted into our H.A Traditions. The notion that politics, religion, and reform are still largely controversial, as we see staunchly opposing ideas on medication assisted recovery, police conduct, and gender. We all have opinions on these issues in our personal life, but as members of Heroin Anonymous, the unity and endurance of the fellowship relies on keeping those personal opinions and the stated purpose of H.A. wholeheartedly separate. Upholding this Tradition is one of the most effective and important ways for us to solidify a unified Heroin Anonymous for those of us who have yet to find our rooms.

Early in my sobriety I struggled with keeping opinions I had to myself, especially those I felt strongly about. It wasn't that I felt that I should share in a meeting about a particular political issue, but I surely had no problem standing outside that same meeting and speaking openly about controversial issues, or going back to my recovery house and sharing those same opinions in an even bolder manner. I had no intention of causing disunity, and I surely would've dismissed any objection to sharing my personal opinions in my own house. While I understood the literal definition of the Tradition, I had yet to grasp the spirit and usefulness of it. I failed to see that being as outspoken as I was about H.A. didn't allow for a compartmentalized lifestyle of acting one way inside a meeting and another way on the outside. The same people who heard what I said in the meeting were hearing what I said in my everyday life.

It wasn't until I sat in a Traditions in Relationships panel at the 2017 H.A. AZ State Convention that I began to understand why the traditions as a whole are important. The discussion was framed around using our Traditions to foster unity in my relations, from family to romantic to professional. I then saw how expressing harsh or controversial opinions lessened my ability to be of service to anyone,

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let alone my fellow heroin addicts. It took time and experience before I settled into living my life in alignment with the Traditions, especially the 10th Tradition. The paradigm shift of viewing Traditions as tools instead of weapons and fully grasping their profound utility has transformed my

relationships, inside and outside the rooms, and I couldn't be more grateful to that panel, those who patiently guided me, and Heroin Anonymous as a whole.

-Jake R.

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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

Link for filling out survey-

https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpOLsDKH-WOpwiHlkGD2y9_BWlZCianPibQ2SlorfGcdKtg00kFzg/viewform?fbclid=IwAR30GOxyk_nsCr5rS-3gWUiby7T_oHu2BEeRxJraR3ah2PWKCZYUUQcNlq

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Calling all H.A. members!



FILL OUT THE

HEROIN ANONYMOUS 'BOOK INTEREST' SURVEY

<https://forms.gle/nDAXFCemqGLrE4ag6>



Created by the HAWS
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