



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.



FEBRUARY **2023** ISSUE



Photo by: Victoria Watercolor

Greetings from the HA World Services Board!

And Happy Valentine's Day, if you're into that.

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.

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Bookmarks/Merchandise/Art Request: BIG NEWS! H.A. World Services has produced its first ever H.A. World merchandise... bookmarks! These limited edition designs are available now at \$3 per bookmark. Head to www.HeroinAnonymous.org/Order to snag some! **We have a request for artists or artsy heroin addicts:** please send any merchandise ideas or designs to Merchandise@HeroinAnonymous.org

2023 HAWSC Conference: The official 2023 Heroin Anonymous World Service Conference dates are July 12-14th in Phoenix Arizona. More information is at www.HeroinAnonymous.org/Conference. Come represent your area! E-mail HawsOutreach@HeroinAnonymous.org with any questions.

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 29 active zoom meetings in 10 different states! Go to our world website, 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

- **Non-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.
- **Heroin Addict Advisor:** This is someone who is a member of H.A. This person will utilize their experience with H.A. and 12-step service to advise the board.

In loving service,
Anna A., HAWS Outreach Chair
HawsOutreach@HeroinAnonymous.org

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HALF-WAY THROUGH AND AMAZED

Personal Story: Jennie S. Sturgeon Bay, WI

Amaze is defined as greatly surprised or astonished. As I write this, I find myself more than halfway through my 9th step. The question then, am I amazed? For a complex and overly analytical woman like myself that has a splendidly simple answer: Yes! What, might you ask, has been so amazing about this experience then? Let me elaborate for you.

I have now done more than 20 amends ranging the whole gamut. From an ex-boyfriend who had a full-blown panic attack mid-amends, to corrections officers at the jail I frequented more than the Hilton, to an adult Son who had not spoken to me in more than a year and back again.

I went into this step with a preconceived idea of what the amends process would be like. I had visions of teary unions complete with heart emojis flying everywhere like confetti. Truth be told there were no emojis flying around and the gray skies did not part in dramatic fashion. A few tears were shed, mostly by me, but I digress.

To answer the question, I want to refer back to the definition of amaze and break it down.

Greatly surprised: the great surprise of it all was the newfound confidence that facing the wreckage of my past in this very up close and personal way would bestow upon me. Basically, I crawled into this step timid and unsure. I am walking out head high and unchained.

Astonished: the astonishment snuck in the backdoor real quiet and planted its roots in none-other than forgiveness. And no, I'm not referring to forgiveness from others (although that has happened too) but rather forgiveness of self-myself! That part is not just astonishing but a modern-day miracle, the likes of which I never thought possible.

I remember the "ah-ha" moment when I finally understood that infamous line in our 9th step promises that reads, "We will not regret the past nor wish to shut the door on it." I hated that line being read at meetings. I would tense up and go numb every time, because I never thought the day would come. I tormented and toiled over my past like a sadistic cat with a ball of yarn, relentless and unyielding. I thought if I finally let go of the anger, bitterness, and self-loathing that I had held onto for decades I would surely crumble into a million little pieces. I hate to spoil the ending, but I am still in one piece and in every way possible more whole

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than I could have ever dreamed, even with my wild imagination.

To sum things up: I was surprised to find my confidence back and even more surprised to find the sense of freedom that I now relish in. I was astonished with the transformative

powers imbibed in self-love and self-respect. This process is truly amazing!

Jennis S.

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AN ATHEIST WHO CAME TO BELIEVE

Step of the Month: Tim W. Brooklyn, NY

I came into the H.A. rooms as an atheist with a lot of prejudice against religion. Without recounting my entire backstory, I'll just say this: I saw the worst of my church, and I came by my prejudice honestly.

So, when I walked into meetings, all I could see or hear were people reciting the "Our Father," passing the collection basket, reading from a holy book, and talking about confessing their sins. I was extremely skeptical.

As a formerly religious person determined to remain religious at all costs, everything in the rooms seemed like a huge red flag. It mattered to me not at all that I could choose a God of my own understanding, which sounded like wishy-washy nonsense. After all, how often, when referring to God, do the Steps and our literature refer to

God as "He" or "Him"? So even though people told me I could surrender to the God of my own understanding, it seemed pretty clear they had a specific Judeo-Christian God in mind (I simply couldn't accept God's He/Him pronouns).

As far as I was concerned, 12-Step programs like H.A. were just another religion, and I let this misconception keep me out of the rooms for many years. My only religion was heroin, and my only sacrament was the needle.

I was the type of atheist who had no trouble admitting there were powers in the universe beyond human understanding. I'd eaten enough mushrooms to be sure of that. It seemed obvious there were great forces at work in our vast universe. But the idea of a God or savior I could have a personal relationship

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with? Give me a break. That seemed as foolish to me as believing in Zeus, Anubis, or the forgotten pagan deities of my ancestors.

However, after many years of shooting up heroin, I could no longer deny that I was powerless over heroin, or that my life had indeed become unmanageable to the extreme. But in those early days, Step 2 seemed to be an impassable barrier.

Yet today, I'm working Steps 10, 11, and 12 with my sponsor and I'm happier than I've ever been. So, how did I come to believe in a power greater than myself?

To be honest, I just had to get desperate enough. I managed to reach this point of desperation without killing myself, but just barely. After my last relapse and overdose, I was so sick, and so tired, and so afraid of my own addiction, that I truly became willing to do anything. Once I stopped resisting, it was easy. Anything was preferable to going on as a heroin addict – even prayer.

If my sponsor had told me to sacrifice a goat to Baphomet, I would have gone looking for a goat

and a knife. Thankfully, my sponsor didn't ask me to participate in any ritual blood sacrifices. He simply asked me to get on my knees and pray with him with an open mind. If I couldn't find a God of my understanding yet, I could at least acknowledge that there were powers in the universe greater than myself, and that was enough to make my beginning.

Indeed, by this time, I knew many people who had recovered through a 12-Step program like Heroin Anonymous. I prided myself on being an atheist and on being rational and examining the evidence objectively. Yet I was ignoring the evidence right in front of my face – Heroin Anonymous and the 12 Steps really did work.

-Tim W.

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THE MEETING LIVES ON

Tradition Twist: Anonymous, USA

Tradition Two is the unsung hero of my personal recovery. It reads "For our group purpose there is but one ultimate authority – a loving God as He may express himself in our group conscience. Our leaders are but trusted servants; they do not govern.". I think something I tend to forget when considering Traditions is whether I am sincerely practicing all of step 12 in my program. "Am I truly practicing ALL of the principles in my affairs?"

The principle behind Tradition Two is trust. Where does trust come up in my personal recovery? My occupation? My service commitments and my home group? What about my spiritual connection with my Higher Power? These are things I often neglect when I revert back to my own self-interest due to fear: fear of outcomes and false perceptions of matters I've grown attached to. The selfish thoughts that present themselves are ideas like: "My homegroup will suffer, or worse, if I'm not there to provide my input at business meetings;" "My co-worker isn't competent enough to cover my end of the work if I'm not there;" "Does my Higher Power really know me all that well? And do I still believe that?"

The longer I have been sober, the easier it is for me to start

trusting myself and reverting back to the old idea that it's difficult to trust anyone (or anything) because I am misunderstood and I know what's best. That's the exact same mentality that kept me shooting heroin for years. If I am to continue to maintain my sobriety, and the serenity that comes with that, it's pertinent that I continue to trust my sponsor, my Higher Power, and the rooms of my fellows.

The reality I seem to forget is I wouldn't have made it this far if I hadn't. And these rooms were alive and active well before I hit my bottom. I had to trust in believing I wasn't going to make my heroin problem worse by stepping into an H.A. meeting.

Today, those "leaders" I looked up to who served the group and I trusted, I am grateful to say, have become some of my closest friends in recovery. They continue to challenge me to be the best version of myself as I grow. All because I made the decision to trust in something greater than myself, at a time in my life where I was left with nothing else to consider. I had to trust this program, its people, and a Higher Power with my life.

My first sponsor used to ask me, "Are you willing to live a life of service and self-sacrifice?" I never

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really understood what that meant when I was trying to get sober then. But when I got sober in H.A. I came to better understand what they meant. And, thankfully, I was taught

how to do that by getting involved with a home group that had trusted servants who valued me as a member, more than I was able to value myself in the beginning.

-Anonymous

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THE MECHANICAL HANDS OF H.A.

Committee Corner

Chairperson - Webmaster Committee

Here at the Mainline, we think it is important to humanize higher-level service positions and help our fellowship understand how accessible they are. They have a mystique about them, and we wanted to pull back the curtain and show what the day-to-day looks like, from a real committee member. As well as what the role means/meant to them. This month we interviewed Sara R., the current H.A.W.S. Webmaster Chair. Please email haworldbulletin@gmail.com with suggestions about who you would like us to interview next!

Hi Sara! Could you tell us what your service position is and what it entails?

Hi, my name is Sara R. and I am the H.A. World Service Webmaster Chair from Columbus, OH. One of my biggest commitments is to facilitate a Webmaster Committee meeting and report as a voting member of the World Service Office Board meeting once a month.

What does the Webmaster Committee do exactly?

The Webmaster Committee has a lot of functions in our fellowship that happen behind the scenes. Guidelines for the Webmaster Committee, written by the webmasters before me, state, "The Webmaster Committee's purpose is to carry the message of Heroin Anonymous by providing a resource on the Internet where information can be obtained about Heroin Anonymous, especially as it relates to Heroin Anonymous World Services and the Heroin Anonymous World Conference at www.heroinanonymous.org. Additionally, to provide a platform for (a) the sale of key-tags and literature and (b) making available meeting startup kits. The webmaster committee should strive to be the conduit of information that connects H.A. members world-wide."

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How long have you been on this committee and how long in this position? What has been your favorite part? What is the most challenging part?

I joined the Webmaster Committee as a secretary at the end of 2019 when the pandemic hit our fellowship, simultaneously catapulting our H.A. fellowship into the online realm. That period of time was exciting, frightening, and by far the most challenging part of being on this committee. The Webmaster Committee, many other committees, and members came together at that time to keep this fellowship going as the world was shutting down from Covid-19. Then, there is my favorite part of this Committee, the integration of the whole fellowship. What I mean by this is that the Webmaster Committee is responsible for the functioning of the website but not the content. The whole fellowship, from every part of the service structure, reports to the webmaster in some way for content to be added, removed, or updated. The members from groups, districts, and regions reach out for meeting updates, meeting information, guidelines, suggestions, and starting meetings. We work with the Conference Committee, Convention Committee, the Literature, Chips and Formats Committee, Public Information Committee, and World Service Outreach Committee, just to name a few. I feel we are the mechanical hands of the fellowship and everyone else is the grease, joints, and electricity that makes the mechanics of this committee function.

How many other members are on the committee and what roles do they serve?

Another part of these "mechanical hands" of the Webmaster Committee is the wonderful members that I have the privilege to do service work beside. Our Webmaster Secretary in California has been a wonderful asset to this committee. She is usually the one that responds to the fellowship when they email in. She takes minutes for the webmaster meeting and maintains the webmaster drive. We have a meeting updater from the Midsouth Area (West TN, North MS, and Eastern AR area) that updates meetings, The Mainline, minutes, manuals, and guidelines. We have a member from Phoenix, AZ that is learning all the cart functions for keytags, literature, and merchandise. Last but not least, the big brains of the tech world, the Webmaster Committee has three tech members that help with the web design, plug-ins, and functionality of the website. Two of these tech members are from New York, one is from Ohio.

Be on the lookout for announcements for a new website redesign soon! We are working on a fresh new look to the website and a new meeting finder.

What advice would you give someone considering joining this committee?

The Webmaster Committee is made up of H.A. members anywhere: not all of them are delegates, not all of us are tech people that know about websites! I sure did not know anything about how to build or maintain a website when I joined.

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For anyone interested in joining the committee that can keep to a once-a-month commitment to show up and help, I'd say we have a place for you. There is always more that is being revealed, integrated, and updated. We would excitedly welcome any member that has any kind of website building and code writing experience.

Anything else you would like to say to the fellowship?

There are many committees in H.A. and many ways to be of service. It is my hope that this article has shed some light on this committee that serves Heroin Anonymous, and maybe inspired others to add service into their own recovery. When I was asked to write this piece for the Mainline, I was honored and surprised that so little of the fellowship even knew that there was a Webmaster Committee. We have had great Webmaster Chairs in the past, including one that has gone on from this world, who have led the way for a whole committee to exist and function for this fellowship. When I saw the Mainline article in 2019 that the Webmaster Committee needed help, I had no clue what God had in store for me at that time. The Webmaster Committee has allowed me to be of service to the fellowship that saved my life in ways that I could never have imagined. I am looking forward to serving as chair for the next two years. After that, only God knows what is next for me.

In love and Service,

Sara R.

H.A.W.S. Webmaster Chair

hawswebmaster@heroinanonymous.org


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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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