



# 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.



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# APRIL **2023** ISSUE



*Photo by: Sergeant Hiropon*

**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.

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**Bookmarks/Merchandise/Art Request:** 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](http://www.HeroinAnonymous.org/Order) to snag some! We have a request from artists or artsy heroin addicts: please send any merchandise ideas or designs to [Merchandise@HeroinAnonymous.org](mailto:Merchandise@HeroinAnonymous.org)

**2023 HAWS 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](http://www.HeroinAnonymous.org/Conference). Come represent your area! E mail [HawsOutreach@HeroinAnonymous.org](mailto: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](mailto: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](mailto: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.

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- **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.
  - **Public Information Chair:** This position is for a member of H.A. who will work with public information at the world level. The efforts of Public Information can be best summarized as taking actions to increase the general population's awareness and accessibility of Heroin Anonymous.

In loving service,

Anna A., HAWS Outreach Chair

[HawsOutreach@HeroinAnonymous.org](mailto:HawsOutreach@HeroinAnonymous.org)

## GOD IS FOR GOOD PEOPLE

### **Came To Believe: Sahar L. Mount Laurel, NJ.**

I could not get behind the God idea. I spent years dissecting religion and making fun of God-fearing people. "What morons! These people are brainwashed! I'm better than them." All while I couldn't keep a needle out of my arm for more than four hours. If God is all powerful and loving, they sure have a twisted way of showing it. If God was real,

why did they make me this way? Why all the suffering and sadness? I looked for reasons why God didn't exist and I found them.

Faced with the terrible dilemma that I was going to either die from heroin addiction or accept a spiritual program of action, I chose to die from heroin addiction. What I

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didn't know at the time was that despite my closed mind and heart, something was working on me.

Something good. It started with me talking to God for the first time since I was a child. Actually, I cursed God out because I got arrested. Then the strangest things started to happen. I had a loving conversation with a man who was looking for sex on the streets. He urged me to call my family and get help. Following his direction, I wound up in a recovery house/homeless shelter where junkies were finding God and getting sober while living in the heart of the largest open air drug market on the East Coast. They were talking about how they were sober, didn't want to get high, and were okay. I had never been those three things all at once in my entire life!

Was it possible that I had been wrong all these years about the God idea? I thought that if there was a God, it was surely for good people, and I'm not a good person. But here in front of me were a bunch of bad people getting free and saying God and the 12 Steps did that. Still skeptical, I decided I could at least just go through the motions and see what happened.

It turns out that being an atheist posed no obstacle whatsoever to

having a spiritual awakening through the 12 Steps. I made the decision that instead of looking for reasons God doesn't exist, I would try to find proof that God does exist. And guess what? I found God. I found God in you guys. And later, I found God working in me.

That little prayer where I cursed God out, all those little foxhole prayers I said in the loss prevention office at Home Depot, I'd like to petition you that those prayers still counted! My Higher Power met me in the darkest hour of my life, there in the trenches with me just waiting for me to call, and when I did, God answered.

This is how I meet my Higher Power today, in honesty and in all of my ugliness. If I don't feel grateful, I don't pretend to be. God knows anyway right? Luckily for this atheist, the promise came true that God didn't make too hard of terms with me when I sought Him. I didn't have to be good or worthy or perfect. I just had to want it.

-Sahar L.

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## THE NECESSARY ENCOUNTER

### One Step At A Time: Teri N. Klamath Falls, OR.

I started drinking and using in my early teens. They say that marijuana is a gateway drug but that wasn't the case for me. It was pills. At 14, I was diagnosed with severe anxiety, depression, and borderline personality disorder. It always baffled me at how someone so young could be diagnosed with such heavy or serious conditions when it probably could have just been a common case of puberty. In any case, I was prescribed Paxil and Xanax.

Taking an excessive amount of benzos at once led me to my first overdose and a trip to a mental institution. I discovered in high school that drinking hard liquor while taking Percocet and Norco only intensifies the feeling, so that's what I did which inevitably led to another overdose. I can't really tell you at what point I fell in love, but I can say that I sought that feeling every single time.

The first time I did Oxycontin was in a public bathroom and I had to be carried out and put in the backseat of a car. We ended up at a party and I'm very grateful that nobody left me in the bathroom because I had a hard time walking. I can honestly say that there were a select few whom I was able to consider my actual friends, friends who genuinely cared and looked out for

me the best they could. But, who really can care the way someone does on this side of recovery when you're in addiction? We do the best we can. OCs started getting hard to find, OPs sucked, and Roxys were too expensive and not strong enough, so I started using heroin intravenously and couldn't stop.

The first time I tried to get sober was in Southern California. I was in my early twenties and part of another 12-Step fellowship. I had an amazing sponsor who did her best at taking me through the steps, but I kept relapsing around Step 4 or 5, so we'd start over every time. This went on for a while until I eventually ghosted her and moved to Guam. Guam doesn't have access to heroin the same way California does, and drugs were brought in at a much smaller scale. Geographics seemed to solve the problem I had until I found the right person to sell me a script. I soon got pregnant which also seemed to be a motivation for sobriety, but because I am a real addict with a physical allergy and mental obsession, I shot up Morphine before she was born. So, I decided to move to Oregon. I thought that by removing myself from the situation it would solve things. After all, the problem was the world, never me.

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I am now 35 with a beautiful daughter whom God trusts me with. I have 18 months of sobriety and I do my best to live my life dedicated to God based on spiritual principles that I've come to embrace through working the 12 Steps. I have the opportunity to take other women through the same work, and I am honored to do so. Thoroughly working the steps, Step 4 in particular, helped me see myself from a different angle and through the eyes of a spiritual guide. It is only by God's grace and mercy that I am here.

Without a spiritual foundation and without first deciding to turn my will over to the care of God, I am unable to take a fearless and moral inventory. By doing this, I am devoted to carry out His will for me and become a living sacrifice as a testimony to Him and the Spirit within me. This is God's work, and I strive to fulfill it fearlessly knowing He is my advocate. Most importantly, an encounter with God was necessary for someone like me, a person beyond human aid, in order to proceed with the rest of the program.

Step 4 required me to take an inward approach and see the underlying factors of the reasons I used; addiction is a symptom of a much bigger problem. This step is intimidating at first but it is actually straightforward and to the

point. It revealed my past and put perspective on the misunderstanding I developed about myself. It helped me identify where I fall short, revealed my character defects, and resulted in absolute freedom so long as my approach is consistently without reservation.

The first inventory deals with resentments. Have I become an unforgiving person towards people who are maybe sicker than I am? I believe I have already been forgiven by God, so why shouldn't I do the same for those who deserve the same grace and forgiveness that was freely given to me? I believe my Higher Power died for them too. Because having a resentment is offensive to my spirit, I began and continue to repent. This is what step 4 revealed to me: daily repentance to maintain a healthy relationship with God who was kind and loved me first and continues to love me without conditions.

The second inventory was fear. Fear took on many forms: pride, codependency, introversion, anger, false humility and the like. And being able to define it let alone see each one face to face, only then was I able to declare that it no longer controls me. My fears can now be reprimanded and taken captive only for them to be cast away by God. Generational curses and inherited emotional misfortunes are now broken and soul ties have been severed.

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Then there's the sex and harms done inventory. For so long, my identity had been definitive of my traumas but by taking a moral inventory I was able to re-evaluate my motives and reconsider perceiving myself in a positive way. I am a new creation, the old has passed and the new has come. I am responsible for myself and my actions. I am held accountable for the way I choose to regard things in every situation. Having grace and allowing myself to receive it by faithfully trusting that only God can heal me on every level of my being-especially in matters of my heart. I have

self-respect, self-worth, confidence in love, and the ability to love and be loved. The solution to the problem I had is not within the world but in me and now I can share it with a purpose.

-Teri N.

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## A TRADITIONAL LIFE

### Tradition Twist: Anonymous

I'll admit, hard-won experience has a much greater effect on me than reading words on a wall or being told about something. Take Step One, for instance. You can tell me I'm powerless over heroin all day long, but it means nothing until I experience the bitter morass of self-pity, the quicksand stretching out all around me with no hope of escape, which the Big Book so eloquently describes. The same has been

true with my journey into our Traditions.

I once believed that Tradition Four gave me and my homegroup the right to do as I pleased. It wasn't until later that I learned that Tradition One should be my end goal, and I've been given 11 tools, the rest of the Traditions, to aim toward Unity. In my experience, making group autonomy my focal point can result in disunifying my homegroup with the groups in

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my area. For example, when toying with the idea of opening up our singleness of purpose to include people struggling with problems other than heroin addiction, I failed to consult other groups in my area. Rather, I told them what we were intending to do.

This is not conducive to healthy discussion or making everyone in my area feel part of something larger. My group was potentially alienating ourselves from the rest of the area, as if we didn't care how this might affect others, nor care to hear their input. However, I'm going to focus this article on how I do practice Tradition Four, rather than on how I do not practice it. I'd like to start with how I apply this Tradition of Autonomy at the group level. My homegroup gives out key tags to recognize lengths of sobriety; however, we do not give the key tag takers the floor to discuss how they got to where they are now. We also (autonomously) decided on our format: a Big Book study. We read one paragraph at a time and then open the floor to comments and questions before we continue to

the next paragraph. We also voted to spend our Seventh Tradition money on business cards with our meeting information and hotline number.

These, to me, all seem like wonderful ways to practice our autonomy. We maintain that our primary purpose is to carry the message to heroin addicts and practice these principles in all our affairs. That is the stated purpose of H.A. and we, in unity with the fellowship, adhere to this.

In my personal life, this Tradition is also visible. Before God sobered me up, I had no desire to follow any type of laws. I often stepped on the toes of my fellows. I in no way attempted to work towards any unity in my family, and could care less if I hurt them or anyone. Nowadays, I am concerned for the wellbeing of my family. This may sound silly, but my daughter really likes going to a certain restaurant. It's a ramen place, and it is not my favorite. Although I desperately want to tell her "absolutely not" every time she asks to go there, I can suck it up once in a while

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and do something to make my family happy. But while I'm there, I order (autonomously) whatever I want to eat, not her favorite food. I also do my best to follow laws and be courteous to those around me. I can choose what car I drive, but I should be following traffic laws. I can choose what clothes to wear, but I don't wear things that are offensive to others. I have a lot of personal autonomy, but I try not to use it to disregard the rights of my fellows.

At work, I'm allowed a lot of freedom. My boss doesn't ask too much from me. I (try) to come in to work on time. I follow the dress code. I follow our Health Department guidelines. My autonomy shows up when I get to decide what lesson to teach the children. I get to decide how to wear my hair that day. I can spend my lunch hour reading, watching a show, or writing for the Mainline. I use Tradition Four at work respectfully by doing these things in a way that doesn't hurt my fellow employees or the organization I work for. For example, I don't

eat stinky food in the classroom, although I could. I could continue writing about how this Tradition shows up in my life, but I want to end it here after one last crucial thought. I remember when I first got here, to these rooms. I did what was suggested to me out of desperation and a feeling that I had to. Today, I do my best to adhere to all of our Spiritual Principles because I believe in what God and this program have given me, and because I find myself genuinely wanting to. I truly want to do my part to let go of what I think is best and conform to what God has shown through the voice of the Group Conscience what He thinks is best. I want to use my autonomy to help others and this fellowship thrive, not to get what I can get no matter the cost to you. I don't use this Tradition to shape our great fellowship into what I want it to be; I use this and all our Traditions as tools to help this fellowship thrive as it has already been laid out.

-Anonymous

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# H.A. World Convention 2024

## A Score of HA

Buffalo, NY

UPSTATE NY AREA OF HEROIN ANONYMOUS IS HONORED TO BE SELECTED TO HOST THE HAWS CONVENTION! IT WILL NOT ONLY BE HA'S BI-ANNUAL WORLD CONVENTION, BUT ALSO 20 YEARS (A SCORE) OF HA (2004-2024)!

DATE AND LOCATION TBD.

## Stay Tuned!

### 2024 H.A.W.S. Convention: ANNOUNCEMENT

The Program committee of the convention is looking for speaker tapes from the fellowship to find people to speak at the H.A. World Convention in 2024. If you, or someone you know, has a speaker tape, and want to submit it please email the following to

[ConventionSpeakers@HeroinAnonymous.org](mailto:ConventionSpeakers@HeroinAnonymous.org):

- Audio file
- Name
- Area
- Contact method

*We are looking forward to hearing from you!*

Upstate New York Area of Heroin Anonymous Presents

A SCORE OF HA

H.A.W.S. Convention  
Buffalo, NY  
2024

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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](mailto:haworldbulletin@gmail.com).

Thank you!  
The Folks at The HAWS Mainline

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