



# 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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# MARCH **2023** ISSUE



*Photo by: [Dieter444](#)*

## **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 attend to H.A. business throughout the year.

**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 for

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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! Email [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.
- **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](mailto:HawsOutreach@HeroinAnonymous.org)

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## FOREVER GRATEFUL

### Personal Story: Nicci O. Department of Corrections, FL.

When I walked into my first HA meeting in Chicago, I was barely managing to remain 30 days clean off alcohol and crack. Even though I had yet to touch heroin, I felt at home and our mutual need for recovery matched. That was my very first homegroup. The men there dropped so much recovery wisdom into my life but, unfortunately, I wasn't done yet.

I didn't truly want recovery just yet. I just wanted to want it. My story is no fairytale. It is full of relapse, destruction, and total demoralization. Not even two months after my first H.A. meeting, I was addicted to heroin and doing anything and everything to sustain my habit: robbing friends, selling my daughter's outgrown clothes, draining my daughter's savings account, having sex for money, being homeless, living in a stolen car, and so much more.

I thought a "geographical cure" from Chicago to south Florida was the answer that would save me from all my problems. It's sad that I was completely clueless that my problem was myself. So, bringing myself with me down to Florida only led to more destruction, just in warmer weather! I became so selfish in my heroin addiction that I was involved in the

murder of my best friend for dope and money. Facing the death penalty at 22 years old rocketed me into a spiritual experience I never expected, especially since I refused to believe in a Higher Power at the time.

After trying to kill myself daily for so long, I never cared about living. That is, until the state wanted to take my life. I was sick of merely existing. I prayed to a God I didn't yet believe in to allow me to live so I could truly experience the life of my dreams and help others. I ended up with an 18 year prison sentence. I'm so proud to say that I'm coming up on 11 years clean!

The drive and compassion the men from my original H.A. home group had to see me thriving and living clean has now rubbed off onto me years later. I am currently in prison in Florida and working as a recovery liaison for a re-entry program offered at my facility. Because of my personal experience with H.A., I reached out for help to start a meeting for the ladies in the re-entry program and have gained so much more. I have an amazing sponsor and new, solid friendships that help keep my personal recovery strong! We now have an H.A. meeting here that

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meets with outside members via Zoom once or twice a month. More and more women are being drawn to the program and wanting to get clean. I owe my

life and so much more to H.A. and I'm forever grateful!

Nicci O.

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## DECISIONS, DECISIONS

### Step of the Month: Sam P. Long Island, NY.

What does it mean to make a decision? I make a million decisions every day, but something changed on August 28, 2013. That was the last day I used, the day I finally threw my hands up. I had no idea what I was doing at the time, or how important it would be to set the ball in motion for the next (almost) ten years, but I knew I was done. I know I was defeated and, for the first time, willing to take direction from anything other than myself. I heard someone say their Step Three experience was the first time they realized they could no longer trust themselves with themselves, and I could not relate to anything more.

See, my whole life I have been making many bad decisions. I constantly thought I was going for what I wanted or needed out of my life. Still, every time I got what I wanted, it set me up for a more significant letdown, a more considerable resentment, or a worse situation. The funniest part about it all is that I constantly blamed

God for why things never worked out; why I was so unhappy; why I ended up in that abusive relationship; why heroin became the great escape to cover up all the restlessness, irritability, and discontentedness that just built up over and over again. I could never look at my part. I was incapable of taking accountability for my poor decisions and understanding the root of my problem. I got to a point where life had beaten me, so I hopelessly had no other choice.

The first time I admitted powerlessness, I told myself the rehab would teach me something I didn't know. That was my first actual Third Step experience. I knew they knew more than me. I had been going to meetings the two weeks before I went in, and it was suggested to me. My inner world was so unmanageable that it seemed the only possibility, so I went. Maybe they would help me with my anxiety, calm the racing thoughts, and help me understand what was wrong with me. That was a start, at least.

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While I was there, something changed. It was the first time I had realized people were talking about a sponsor taking you through the steps. I had never heard that before, and I knew I had to do something different, so I knew that was the first thing I needed to do when I left. I spent the first month out of rehab struggling to find a sponsor, but I knew to continue listening to people at the meetings and in outpatient, while trying to practice what they said. A considerable part of my 3rd step experience was the ability to listen. Finally, for once, I didn't think I knew it all nor could I figure it out on my own. I knew I couldn't. I met my first sponsor, someone I am so blessed to have had then, and we went through the work quickly.

When it came to the Third Step, we did the Third Step Prayer, and directly after I was asked when I would stop taking things before they were given to me. That blew my mind because that's what I had been doing my whole life. Promoting myself into positions, getting the relationship I wanted, the job I wanted, anything I ever wanted. Never once did I let God into the situation to let me know if it was what I deserved. I was never patient or present enough to understand whether or not things were meant for me because I was constantly overthinking what I

thought I needed and making bad decisions. It was later explained to me that your will and your life are your thoughts and actions, and when I turn my thoughts and actions over, I wait. The only decision I make is to let God show me the decision. This is not always an easy feat.

Sometimes I need to pray extra hard for that patience, that faith, for the clarity before I can let it go. Sometimes I need to continue to create tremendous pain before I turn it over, but with God and this program by my side, I have always (so far) decided just in time to learn the lesson to let God in, and remain sober a day at a time. My sponsor once told me something that I love: belief is in the decision, and faith is in the outcome, and when I let God help me decide, my faith continues to grow because it works out better than I have ever imagined. Every. Single. Time.

I had no idea what this program would give me, but it brought me back to a space with God. I can trust myself again to make decisions, no longer based on self but on the benefit of all involved. And when I slip up and make a wrong decision, I can make amends for it and move forward. I am no longer stuck in the cycle that brought me here. Step Three causes me to grow. What was once something God threw me into, and then something I struggled to maintain, is now second nature.

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When I slip up and make a human choice, if I continue with the rest of the steps and let God show me where I was wrong, I'm able to strengthen my relationship with God and myself as I go along. Little by little, moment by moment, I will stay sober one day at a time, free from the craving for heroin as long as I continue to let God in and let Him guide my thoughts and actions. This life can be easy, calm,

peaceful, and full of contentment in a way I had never imagined. If I just LET.

-Sam P.

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## I'VE ALWAYS BEEN WELCOME

### **Tradition Twist: Blake P. Birmingham, AL.**

I remember when I first started coming to H.A. I engaged the crowd and it seemed a bit intimidating. People my age, a younger crowd, all seeming to be happy and recovered.

At first, I thought it was bullshit because the only people who are sober are in other fellowships and are also a lot older. Or so I thought. I did try other fellowships, but I didn't like what I was experiencing. I ended up sticking around in H.A. and came to find there were members who knew the facts about themselves and had a solution, and to me that was very attractive. In Heroin Anonymous I found people who were part of a younger fellowship, more understanding, and tolerable to

people with flaring character defects such as mine. Even more important, I was never asked to prove my membership even when I was not a true heroin addict (at the time). That did eventually change, and when I relapsed, I just stayed in the rooms I was already in because that's where my unity was. Before I was a true heroin addict, I would think that everyone else did not want me there. Maybe they did, maybe they didn't (not my business).

Then it was mentioned to me by other members that the meetings I was going to were open meetings, so I could come anytime. They told me that if I had any solution to offer, then just introduce myself as a heroin addict. So, I did, out of

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respect for the singleness of purpose. With me coming to H.A. and sticking around for a while I began to grow my network in the fellowship. I also joined in on service work with the Public Information Committee and found lots of friends over the year of 2020.

When everyone was locked down, we would meet up on Zoom or at someone's house to come up with ideas on how to reach the still sick and suffering. These members never asked me to prove my membership, either, and always made me feel welcome to be around and help out. Like I said before, when I did become a true heroin addict, they were still there.

I've seen H.A. in my area evolve much like A.A. back in the day. Some members in H.A. wouldn't necessarily stand for someone who has a story like mine, but in my experience people have evolved to be more open to the idea, and to help others who want the help we are offering them.

I've seen both sides of the spectrum, and I do respect where people are coming from. However, I believe if my fellow H.A. members didn't treat me like family from the start, then I may not have had a place to go when I relapsed this last time.

I heard one time in a meeting that the Third Tradition means I can be here no matter what you think or say about me, and you can't tell me otherwise. I'm allowed to be here.

With that being said, I started to judge people less. Everyone has their own reason for being in H.A. and, essentially, it's to get the help they need. It's none of my business what that entails. I also have had a sponsor tell me that the Third Tradition is speaking of a "sincere desire" to stop. What that means to me is to be honest with myself. Do I have a sincere desire to recover from this disease? The only person's eligibility that I should be worried about is mine. My name is Blake, and I am a heroin addict. Thanks for letting me share.

-Blake P.

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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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