

SERENITY TIMES



NORTH COASTAL NEWSLETTER DECEMBER 2008

"We cannot change the nature of the addict or addiction. We can help to change the old lie "Once an addict, always an addict," by striving to make recovery more available. God, help us to remember this difference.

Basic Text

"If I ever have an epitaph on my headstone...it should read something like this: All we did was sow some seeds and worked and wrought to make this work, so that we and others could live in Peace, in Freedom and in Love."—James P. Kinnon, 1982

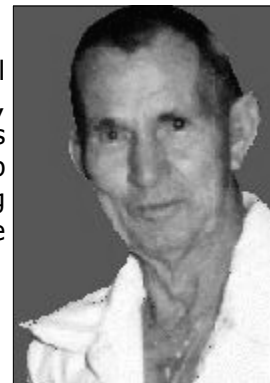
James P. Kinnon (April 5, 1911-July 9, 1985), also known as "Jimmy K" was the co-founder of Narcotics Anonymous. He never referred to himself as the founder or co-founder of NA, although the record clearly shows that he played a founding role. From the very start, Narcotics Anonymous was based on both the Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions of Alcoholics Anonymous and adapted to the specific needs of NA.

Kinnon was born in Paisley, Scotland and immigrated to the US, arriving with his family on Ellis Island, NY in 1923. He worked as a roofer, struggling with his drug addiction until he achieved permanent and complete abstinence from all drugs in AA on February 2, 1950.

As Jimmy stated in the Basic Test he found AA "insufficient" for addicts who needed identification at a deeper level of emotions or feelings, rather than at the level of apparent symptoms, as commonly accepted in the AA fellowship and philosophy. He and a few other addicts who had met in AA started holding a series of meetings for drug addicts, beginning August 17, 1953 in southern California. Today, Narcotics Anonymous has more than 33,500 weekly meetings in over 115 countries worldwide. Our Basic Text is currently being distributed in 16 different languages and with over 4.5 million books sold.

Jimmy K is a key figure in the history of Narcotics anonymous. He wrote several portions of the *Little White Booklet*, which formed the basis for NA's basic text, published in 1983 under the title *Narcotics Anonymous*. Our book also contains his anonymous biography, titled *We Do Recover*. Jimmy was there to pick up the pieces and restart NA when it closed down in 1959 due to traditions being broken. Jimmy also designed the NA logo and served as the volunteer office manager of NA's World Service Office from the time it began to 1983.

Jimmy K died on July 9, 1985 in Los Angeles, having spent the last 35 years of his life as a "clean" recovering member of Narcotics Anonymous.



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— **The Editor**

Who is sitting next to you...

I know who you are. You are "X" who attends the ABC Meeting at the XYZ Club where N.A.'s meet in Anywhere, U.S.A. I saw you there the other night at the eight o'clock meeting. I don't know how long you've been clean, but I know you've been coming around for a while because you spoke to a lot of people who knew you. I wasn't one of them.

You don't know who I am. I wandered into your meeting place alone the other night, a stranger in a strange town. I got a cup of coffee, and sat down by myself. You didn't speak to me. Oh, you saw me. You glanced my way, but you didn't recognize me, so you quickly averted your eyes and sought out a familiar face. I sat there through the meeting.

It was okay, a slightly different format but basically the same kind of meeting as the one I go to at home.

The topic was gratitude. You and your friends spoke about how much N.A. means to you. You talked about the camaraderie in your meeting place. You said how much the people there had helped you when you first came through the door how they extended the hand of friendship to make you feel welcome, and asked you to come back. And I wondered where they had gone, those nice people who made your entrance so welcoming and so comfortable.

You talked about how the newcomer is the life blood of N.A. I agree, but I didn't say so. In fact, I didn't share in your meeting. I signed my name in the book that was passed around, but the chairperson didn't refer to it. He only called on those people in the room whom he knew. So who am I? You don't know, because you didn't bother to find out. Although yours was a closed meeting, you didn't even ask if I belonged there.

It might have been my first meeting. I could have been full of fear and distrust, knowing N.A. wouldn't work any better than anything else I'd tried, and I would have left convinced that I was right. I might have been suicidal, grasping at one last straw, hoping someone would reach out and pull me from the pit of loathing and self-pity from which, by myself, I could find no escape.

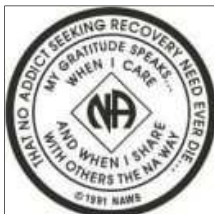
I might have been a student with a tape recorder in my pocket, assigned to write a paper on how N.A. works - someone who shouldn't have been permitted to sit there at all but could have been directed to an open meeting to learn what I needed to know. Or I could have been sent by the courts, wanting to know more, but afraid to ask. It happens that I was none of the above. I was just an ordinary addict with a few years of clean living in N.A. who was traveling and was in need of a meeting.

My only problem that night was that I'd been alone with my own mind too long. I just needed to touch base with my N.A. family. I know from past experience that I could have walked into your meeting place smiling, stuck out my hand to the first person I saw and said, "Hi. My name is - . I'm an addict from - ." If I'd felt like doing that, I probably would have been warmly welcomed. You would have asked me if I knew Old So-and-so from my state, or you might have shared a part of your drug-a-log that occurred in my part of the country. Why didn't I? I was hungry, lonely, and tired.

The only thing missing was angry, but three out of four isn't a good place for me to be. So I sat silently through your meeting, and when it was over I watched enviously as all of you gathered in small groups, talking to one another the same way we do in my home town.

You and some of your friends were planning a meeting after the meeting at a nearby coffee shop. By this time I had been silent too long to reach out to you. I stopped by the bulletin board to read the notices there, kind of hanging around without being too obvious, hoping you might ask if I wanted to join you, but you didn't.

As I walked slowly across the parking lot to my car with the out-of-state license plates you looked my way again. Our eyes met briefly and I mustered a smile. Again, you looked away. I buckled my seat belt, started the car, and drove to the motel where I was staying.



As I lay in my bed waiting for sleep to come, I made a gratitude list. You were on it, along with your friends at the meeting place. I knew that you were there for me, and that I needed you far more than you needed me. I knew that if I had needed help, and had asked for it, you would have gladly given it.

But I wondered . . . what if I hadn't been able to ask?

Sunil

The Greatest Gift

One bit of wisdom I heard from my sponsor when I first got clean is that the greatest gift of *getting* clean and *staying* clean is *being* clean. Just like most sayings in the program of Narcotics Anonymous, this is a simple saying that packs a ton of information and meaning. The getting clean and staying clean are the hard work and efforts that we put into our recovery, while being clean is a gift from the program of Narcotics Anonymous and from our understanding of a Power Greater than Ourselves.

Getting clean is difficult. There is no way to learn to accept life on life’s terms without living life. Getting clean allows us to handle what life has in store for us. That means that we have to hang on and refrain from using in spite of the pull that the disease has on us until the obsession to use has been lifted. Once we gain the state of abstinence, we have to wait for the overwhelming desire to use drugs is taken from us by a Higher Power and we are able to let a newfound peace enter our lives. The comforting thing is that the program of Narcotics Anonymous promises this freedom to every addict that gets clean.

Staying clean is easier than getting clean. I have been clean for nearly 16 years and I have never seen anything different. Although I have never relapsed, I can say that from the experience of my own recovery that getting clean is much more difficult than staying clean. Perhaps more impactful, every person that I have spoken with who returns to the program after a relapse has told me they wish they had stayed clean. The good news with staying clean is that as we go through life in the state of being clean, we develop Faith, from our experience and the experience of others, that we can stay clean through any experience with which we are faced. We know that that as long as we do not get loaded, we will stay clean. We also know that everything changes so any difficult experience will become a learning lesson, an opportunity for us to help someone else, or an opportunity for someone to help us. As we gain more experience living life clean, the larger our tool bag of recovery becomes.

At first glance, to me, being clean hardly seems like a gift. It wasn’t until I had been through some important experiences in my life that I realized what a gift we have. I have been married, developed incredible friendships, I have gone to school and earned a PhD. in science. I have also become a great son, husband, daddy, employee, and more. On the other side of the coin, I have gone through the hardships of helping my ailing mother through hard times, I have lost friends to the diseases of addiction and cancer, gotten divorced, I have been through illness, and been through several other challenges. The beauty of it all is that I have been able to do all of these things clean. The ability to go through life’s joys, sorrows, and difficulties while being clean are all gifts.

The gifts of recovery are endless as long as we are willing to look for them. I have been reminded that 30 days is not the period in which my cable bill comes due, it is the miraculous period in which an addict reaches their first public milestone in recovery. It is, indeed, a miracle that any addict can stay clean for even one day. For that I am grateful and mindful of the saying: The greatest gift of getting clean and staying clean is being clean.

John S.
September 2, 1992



NA BIRTHDAYS

Bobby C.—19 years
Roy—4 years
Rhonda—2 years
Aaron—2 years



UPCOMING NORTH COASTAL ACTIVITIES

North Coastal

Thanksgiving Marathon

2821 Oceanside Blvd.

Thanksgiving Eve, 11/26 9:00pm to Midnight

Thanksgiving Day, 11/27 9:00am to 6:00pm

Potluck Dinner 11/27 3:00-5:00pm

READ ALL ABOUT IT

All Hallows Eve in North Coastal Narcotics Anonymous

Ghosts, goblins, and gangsters made an appearance at this year's annual Halloween event, and let's not forget the aristocracy along with fairy book characters prancing around in all their regalia.

The hall began to fill with characters as excitement, laughter and chatter echoed off the walls. Marsha of Temecula took center stage at 7:30 p.m. sharing her experience strength and hope along with twenty years of experience and the message of recovery resonated throughout the hall.

Then as the nine o'clock hour struck the doors reopened and members of Narcotics Anonymous dressed in their Halloween's finest flooded the dance floor. Costumes where judged music played, spirits soared, and a good time was had by all.

OTHER AREA/ REGIONAL ACTIVITIES

Introduction to NA Workshop

1st-3rd Tuesday every month

6:30-7:30pm

9140 Akard Street, Spring Valley

Tony 619.948.3852, John 619.244.5878

Behind the Walls

Be pen-pal or sponsor to incarcerated individuals via mail, Must have worked 12 Steps of NA

1st Monday of each month. 6:00pm

RSO 4689 Felton Street,

San Diego (Normal Heights)

Michael H 619.818.7640

Beach Area

Holiday Dinner/Marathon Meetings

Thursday, Dec 25th, 12pm First Meeting

Dinner Served 1-4pm meetings until 6pm

3450 Clairemont Drive, San Diego, CA

Ali 619.368.4884, Pam 858.733.0825

Ice Skating and Pizza Party

December 13, 11:30-12:30 Pizza and Drinks

12:30-4:00pm Ice Skating

Admission: \$10.00

Ice Town, 4545 LaJolla Village Drive

University Town Center

Ali 619-368-4384 Pam 858-733-0825

Leadership Workshop

On the 8th of November the RD and RDA held a workshop on leadership. Our fourth concept of NA tells us "Effective leadership is highly valued in NA. Leadership qualities should be carefully considered when selecting trusted servants".

The workshop took a look at the different aspects of good leadership keeping with our steps, traditions, and our concepts. If you were unable to attend and are interested in more information, you can visit, www.na.org Or contact RD: Pam 858-733-0825 or RDA Nila 760-806-1213

North Coastal Area Service Committees:

Subcommittee:	Contact:	Date/Time:	Location:
Activities	Jenettee 760-505-2620	2nd/4th Sunday, 6pm	2821 Oceanside Blvd, Oceanside
H&I	Mike M. 760-721-6969	1st Monday, 6:30pm	171 Unity Way, Vista
Newsletter	Nancy M. 760-815-0886	1st/3rd Saturday, 3:30pm	2775 Carlsbad Blvd, Carlsbad
Outreach	Skylar 707-499-2566	1st Sunday, 6pm	251 S. Melrose Dr., Vista
Lit. Sales	Dan J. 760-845-2297	Meets as needed	
Pol. & Admin	Eric H. 760-427-1160	Last Saturday, 5:30pm	4002 Vista Way, Café, Vista
Phonelines	Paula 760-805-8546	1st/3rd Sun., 2pm	contact for directions
P.I.	Bob C. 760-717-3510	2nd/4th Tues., 6pm	2276 Fuerte St., Oceanside
T-Shirts	Henry 760-966-0207	Meets as needed	