



Clean Times News

Temecula - Hemet - Lake Elsinore - Murrieta - Morongo - Banning - San Jacinto - Canyon Lake - Idyllwild - Anza

August 2023

Southwest Area of Narcotics
Anonymous

Solid Recovery: Stories and articles to enhance our well-being.

The newcomer is the most important person at any meeting, because we can only keep what we have by giving it away.

Clean Time Celebrations

Please Send in your information and let's **Celebrate all Milestones.**
Congratulations to All. swanacleantimes@gmail.com

Stephen S, 25 years

Jeni S, 7 years

Matt and Jenna B, 4 years



The activities subcommittee meets on the first Saturday of every month

Come join us in a new era of SWANA Activities. We will have a variety of topics on the agenda, and the floor is always open for new ideas and suggestions for activities in our area.



Come join us and be of service to our fellowship!

Remain Teachable...

Like it was yesterday, I remember the day my brother invited me to do something different. Instead of using, he suggested I attend a Narcotics Anonymous meeting. We walked into the room and slowly but surely it filled to capacity. One by one the miniature nursery school chairs which filled this church basement were occupied by grown men and women. When asked if there were any newcomers in the room I reluctantly and sheepishly raised my hand. The applause seemed deafening to me - all I could do was cry. Who were these people? Why were they clapping for a low - life street urchin who couldn't stay clean for 24 hours?

The meeting went on and someone shared their story. I remember comparing myself to them, thinking that I hadn't done the thing they had, so maybe I wasn't as messed up as I thought. As the meeting progressed and more and more people shared, I began to identify with them and realized I was in the right place. Finally, after so many years of searching, I found a place where I truly belonged. Wait - I did not find it - my brother knew of this place and shared it with me. A precious gift to share and what would turn out to be the most vital and important gift my brother ever gave me. Shortly thereafter, my brother's life ended. He picked up and died.

Some time has passed since that first meeting but I recall well the willingness in which I attended meetings as a newcomer. I remember how closely I paid attention to hear the message in what others shared. How important it was to take my sponsor's suggestions, and how vital it became for me to learn and incorporate the Steps and Traditions in my life.

There are many addicts who somewhere in their process made a decision to take their will back and use - some like my brother, who are no longer with us, some who are trying to get back and some who by the grace of God are back working on recovery again. There are also many who came to N.A. long before me and are still here - active members of the fellowship. Theirs is a strong message and the common denominator of their message is this : " I must remain teachable, I must remember that even with some clean time my attitude must be that of a newcomer - after all, all I have is today and the things that kept me clean in early recovery continue to keep me clean today." Once a newcomer always a newcomer, at least in spirit !!!

THE TRUTH ABOUT MY COMPLACENCY *By Ruch M.*

We hear a lot of warnings about *complacency in recovery*. When most of us share our experience with complacency, we usually talk about reaching a point where life became so good we no longer felt the need to go to meetings, work a program, call our sponsors, etc... As a result, some of us got loaded, and others found ourselves in a state of insanity usually accompanied by serious consequences of our recent actions. Whatever the result, our perception is that our complacency started because our life was good. However, as I have grown in recovery.

I have come to realize that my periods of complacency had very little to do with life being good. While I have experienced several small periods of complacency my longest experience happened around nine years clean. After having spent several years in less-than-satisfying jobs with very minimal pay I managed to get a supervisory position with a growing firm that paid me by far more money than any of my previous jobs. Both the money and the esteem of the position boosted my self-image. I felt like I was finally becoming successful in my life. One of the drawbacks of the job was that it was second shift as a result *I could no longer make as many meetings as I was used to.* However, I still could make meetings on the weekends and occasionally a noon or midnight meeting.

As time passed, I found that with my disposable income, I could spend it in a lot of ways to fix myself. Also, I eventually started getting offers for credit cards, which I quickly accepted. The more I started to fix myself externally the less I felt the need to go to meetings, work steps, or try to live a spiritual life. As a result, I eventually lost my job and ran my credit up so high I ended up declaring bankruptcy. I also had removed myself so far from meetings and the fellowship I felt alone and isolated. It took several years of hard work and humility to repair the damage of my complacency. From this description, my experience sounds like a classic case of complacency. Some good things started happening in my life, **I got comfortable, and I stopped working a program.** Actually, it was a classic case of complacency by the dictionary definition, which is not the same that is often given at meetings.

The dictionary defines complacency as “self-satisfaction accompanied by unawareness of actual dangers or deficiencies.” To me the key part of this definition is the “unawareness of actual dangers or deficiencies.” This tells me that though I may feel a sense of self-satisfaction, I am actually in a state of spiritual danger and deficiency. Or perhaps a more accurate definition would be; as a result of denying my state of spiritual danger and deficiency, I lied myself into a state of self-satisfaction. The distinction is that instead of being in a good place and then becoming complacent, I deceived myself into to a state of comfort to avoid my spiritual deficiency.

While I may have experienced some success in my job and financial state, a lot of inside work needed to be done. I was at a standstill with my steps, stuck on step eight and unwilling to look at the things that were blocking me, like some of my behavior since being in the program. I also had recently brought to light some very painful experiences of my past that had a lot of old feelings of shame tied to them. In reality, I was anything but in a state of well-being. I was scared and overwhelmed about what lay ahead in my path of recovery. **Rather than looking to God for the strength, courage, and faith to face these things, I chose to run and hide.** When eventually I ran out of things to fix myself with, I hit my spiritual bottom and found that I was still faced with the demons I had ran from. In retrospect, I realize the wreckage and insanity was a result of my unwillingness to work the program as opposed to resting on my laurels. **Today through consistently working the program I like where I am at in my life today.** The difference is that I have no desire to rest, instead, I find myself excited and hopeful about the future. I realize that recovery is a path and not a destination. I know that my Higher Power will guide me through whatever difficulty may arise and lead me to the truth and joy of life..

From - NeverAlone San Fernando Valley Newsletter

I hope you all enjoyed this issue of the Clean Times Newsletter.

Eric B. Editor