

CLEAN TIMES

Southwest Area of Narcotics Anonymous Newsletter **April 2020**
www.cirna.org - swananarcoticsanonymous.com - www.na.org

VIRTUAL NA MEETINGS How addicts are continuing to carry the message during the pandemic (page 5)

Working Step Four in Narcotics Anonymous

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Searching and fearless

Step Four calls on us to be searching and fearless. We are asked to look carefully at ourselves and to get beneath the self-deceptions we have used up to now to hide the truth from ourselves. We search within, as if entering a dark house with a single candle to guide us. We move ahead, despite our fear or resistance to the unknown. We need to be willing to illuminate every corner of every room of our minds as if our lives depend on it, because they do. What we are searching for here is a complete and total picture of ourselves. We have found that this requires honesty—honesty to examine our behaviors, feelings, thoughts, and motives, regardless of how unimportant they may appear. Our self-honesty is most important since it will lead us to discover how our disease has affected our lives.

We have operated with a distorted self-image, never fully looking at the whole picture all at once. Now, possibly for the first time in our lives, we will begin to see ourselves as we really are, rather than as we imagined or fantasized. The more accurate and complete this picture is, the more freedom we will gain.

At this point we need to emphasize that being thorough is not the same as being perfect. There aren't any perfect Fourth Steps. We do the best we can to be as thorough as possible. With diligence and perseverance, we write as honestly as we can. Expecting perfection from ourselves can sometimes be a way of putting off writing our Fourth Step. We may also have heard people say "If you don't do a thorough inventory, you'll use again." But here we have to go back to our Third Step and trust God without any reservations. If we focus on our fear that our inventory won't be good enough, or worry about what our sponsor will say when we share it, we may never get going.

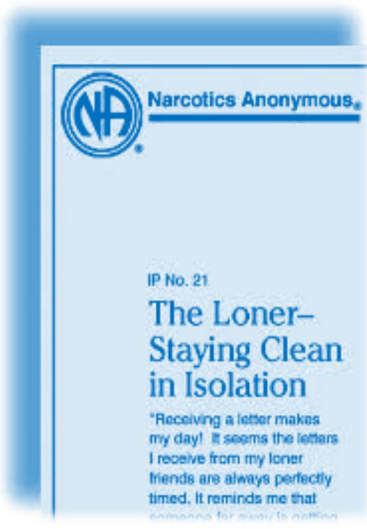
(cont. page 2)

WORD-OKU & MAZE (PAGE 6)

Fourth Concept (page 3)

Tradition Four (page 4)

"When we feel trapped or pressured, it takes great spiritual and emotional strength to be honest. Sharing with others keeps us from feeling isolated and alone. This process is a creative action of the spirit."
- Recovery and Relapse, Sixth Edition Basic Text
printable coloring page (page 7)



The Loner- Staying Clean in Isolation

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"Receiving a letter makes my day! It seems the letters I receive from my loner friends are always perfectly timed. It reminds me that someone far away is getting to know me and cares enough to write. I matter in someone else's recovery and they matter in mine."

Introduction

For the purpose of this pamphlet, we identify "the loner" as a geographically isolated addict who wants to recover from addiction. If you are unable to come to NA meetings, we hope that this pamphlet will reach you and offer workable solutions for living a happy, joyous, and free life.

(cont. page 3)

submit your artwork, homemade recovery puzzles, poetry, or clean date to swanacleanetimes@gmail.com

SPONSOR- SPONSEE BRUNCH 4/26
CIRNA UNITY DAY PICNIC 5/16
CIRCNA XXII 6/26-6/28

all events are pending end date of California's "Safer At Home" order check area and region websites for status updates (more details page 6)

LOCAL EVENTS

This won't be the last inventory we write. It's not necessary to write a best-selling novel; it's only necessary to make an honest beginning and be as thorough as we can be. One of the things we learned in the Third Step was to trust God. Now we can be fearless and write the truth. This Fourth Step is a freeing process as well as a healing one. We put our faith in a loving God and trust that whatever we write will be exactly what we're supposed to write if we are truly searching and fearless.

Moral inventory

In Step Four we are asked to take a moral inventory. When we first heard the word moral, some of us had misconceptions of what that meant, while others had no understanding at all. Morals are simply values, the principles that we choose to live by today in our recovery. It is not the purpose of this guide to define morality nor to define a set of morals that others should live by. We recognize that each of us possesses our own internal values. We may choose to define good as that which has the power to bring out the best in us and affirm our recovery and bad as that which has the power to bring out the worst in us and works against our recovery. Looking at our feelings can be very helpful here too. In writing our Fourth Step, we will need to take a look not only at what we did, but also at how we felt. Our morals may have been vague or undefined, but even in our active addiction we had them. In situations where we felt bad, or felt that something was wrong, it was most likely because we compromised our

morals or were unable to uphold them.

When we came to that understanding, we saw how the steps fit together. We began to see the exact nature of our wrongs. That meant more than just the wrong things we did. It meant looking beneath the wrong thing we did, to the nature of that wrong. For example, if we stole money from our parents to buy drugs, that was a wrong. What was the nature of that wrong? The nature of that wrong was our self-centeredness, our fear, our dishonesty, and unkindness. We were self-centered in that we wanted what we wanted at another person's expense. We were fearful that we wouldn't get what we wanted. We were dishonest in that we took money without the other person's knowledge or permission. We were unkind in that we did something that hurt another human being.

Of ourselves

It is important to remember that this is our inventory. It is not a place to list the faults or wrongdoings of others. When we look at our lives in this way, we see that the nature of our wrongs, our character defects, are the characteristics in our lives that are in opposition to spiritual principles. Our inventory, then, is a process of discovering how our character defects bring not only us, but also others, pain and discomfort and how our new life, founded on the Twelve Steps, is one that can bring us serenity, comfort, and joy. Out of the Fourth Step we discover those things that get in our way and those things that work for us.

- Certain paragraphs of this literature were used for this newsletter. For the full pamphlet, visit www.na.org for the full length PDF of this literature.

SEARCHING
& FEARLESS



Fourth Concept

“Effective leadership is highly valued in Narcotics Anonymous. Leadership qualities should be carefully considered when selecting trusted servants.”

Capable NA leadership exhibits the full range of personal characteristics associated with a spiritual awakening. We depend on those who serve us to report on their activities completely and truthfully. Our leaders must have the integrity needed to hear others well, yet still be able to stand fast on sound principle; to compromise, and to disagree without being disagreeable; to demonstrate the courage of their convictions, and to surrender. We seek trusted servants who are willing to expend their time and energy in the diligent service of others, studying available resource materials, consulting those with greater experience in their field

of responsibility, and carefully fulfilling the tasks we've given them as completely as possible. Honesty, open-mindedness, and willingness, indispensable in recovery, are also essential to leadership.

Any NA member can be a leader, and every NA member has the right to serve the fellowship. Effective NA leadership knows not only how to serve, but when it will serve best to step aside and allow others to take over. An entrenched bureaucracy inhibits our fellowship's growth, while a regular influx of new leadership, balanced by continuity, inspires NA growth.

The effective leader also knows that, in order to maintain the distinction in service between principles and personalities, it is important to observe the practice of rotation.

Twelve Concepts for NA Service - Copyright © 1989, 1990, 1991 by Narcotics Anonymous World Services, Inc. All rights reserved. Published 1991. Approved Edition 1992. -- Certain paragraphs of this literature were used for this newsletter. For the full pamphlet, visit www.na.org for the full length PDF of this literature.

The Loner— Staying Clean in Isolation - Copyright © 1986, 1998 by Narcotics Anonymous World Services, Inc. All rights reserved. (cont. from page 1)

Although this pamphlet is directed specifically to addicts recovering in remote areas, unable to attend regular NA meetings, any addict who reads this pamphlet will gain some valuable insights on how to recover from the disease of addiction. Most of us, at some point in our recovery, have experienced feelings of loneliness or isolation. There are also addicts who feel isolated from others because of hearing or visual impairment or some other physical disability. So, whether we are isolated emotionally, physically, or geographically, we believe the suggestions offered in this pamphlet will help any addict stay clean and find a new way of life.

“Being a loner at times can be frustrating, but I have to make an effort in every area of my new life. Being a part of NA is special to me. I know I have friends whom I haven't met yet, but to know they are there gives me hope to go on.”

Reaching out for help

Narcotics Anonymous is a program of Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions designed to help addicts find recovery, regardless of where they may be. By practicing these spiritual principles, we achieve freedom from active addiction. We suggest you read all the NA literature you can get, and if at all possible, attend an NA meeting or function. If there are no NA meetings in your area, go ahead

and start one. Even though you may start it by yourself, you never know when another suffering addict will walk through the door. Fill out the form in the back of this pamphlet for a free starter kit and send it to the World Service Office.

There are many NA services available which were designed to reach out to isolated addicts. Some of these are coordinated through special committees. In many areas, there are local NA phonelines, meeting directories, and newsletters. You can also get NA literature and other information about NA from the nearest area or regional office.

“The message is that an addict, any addict, can stop using drugs, lose the desire to use, and find a new way to live. Our message is hope and the promise of freedom.”

The most important service NA offers is the recovering addict. Remember, the therapeutic value of one addict helping another is without parallel*. So if it is possible, contact some other recovering addicts either by phone or by mail. If you contact the NA World Service Office, they will assist you in reaching the nearest recovering addicts. Remember that you don't have to be lonely, even though you might be alone.

“It is so easy for me to forget about the importance of sharing, especially when my pride and arrogance prevent me from sharing feelings and thoughts I don't like or don't want to have. When I write things about myself, it helps.”

The value of sharing

There is no easy solution for recovering addicts who have no local NA community for fellowship and support, but recovery is possible if we truly want to stay clean. Although we may be the only recovering addict for miles around, we need not be afraid to reach out for help. There are many ways of contacting other recovering addicts, and any initial contact can be used as a link to new ones. Many isolated addicts have regular pen pals with whom they communicate to share their recovery. It is also important to have a sponsor or someone to help you learn and practice the Twelve Steps. If there is no one near you to ask to be your sponsor, don't be afraid to ask someone in another area. You can write letters to each other, send tapes back and forth, and make long-distance phone calls whenever necessary. The action of sharing with another addict, whether it is in person, by phone, or on paper, can alleviate problems even without immediate feedback.

(cont. page 4)

Tradition Four

“Each group should be autonomous except in matters affecting other groups or NA as a whole.”

Twelve Traditions, Sixth Edition Basic Text - Copyright © 1982, 1983, 1984, 1986, 1987, 1988, 2008 by Narcotics Anonymous World Services, Inc. All rights reserved.

A Narcotics Anonymous group is any group that meets regularly, at a specified place and time, for the purpose of recovery, provided that it follows the Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions of Narcotics Anonymous. There are two basic types of meetings: those open to the general public and those closed to the public (for addicts only). Meeting formats vary widely from group to group; some are participation meetings, some speakers, some are question and answer, and some focus on special problems discussion.

Participation

The leader opens the meeting up for members to share on any subject related to recovery.

Topic Discussion

The leader selects a particular recovery-related topic for discussion or asks someone else to provide a topic.

Literature Study

There are a number of different types of study meetings. Some read a portion of an NA approved book or pamphlet each week and discuss it—for example, a Basic Text study. Others have discussions focusing on the Twelve Steps or the Twelve Traditions.

Speaker

Some meetings ask a single speaker to share his or her recovery story or experience in a particular aspect of recovery in Narcotics Anonymous. Others ask two or three speakers to talk for shorter periods of time. Still others use a combination format with a speaker sharing first and a topic discussion afterward.

Whatever the type or format a group uses for its meetings, the function of a group is always the same; to provide a suitable and reliable environment for personal recovery and to promote such recovery. These Traditions are part of a set of spiritual principles of Narcotics Anonymous, and without them NA does not exist.

Autonomy gives our groups the freedom to act on their own to establish an atmosphere of recovery, serve their members and fulfill their primary purpose. It is for these reasons that we guard our autonomy so carefully.

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Newcomer

These meetings are often conducted by two or three of the group's more experienced members. These members share their experience with addiction and with recovery in Narcotics Anonymous. If time allows, the meeting is then opened for questions from the newer members.

Question-&-Answer (Q&A)

At Q&A meetings, people are asked to think of questions related to recovery and the fellowship, write those questions down, and place them in “the ask-it basket.” The leader of the meeting pulls a slip of paper from the basket, reads the question, and asks for someone to share their experience related to it. After one or two members have shared, the leader selects another question from the basket, and so forth, until the meeting is over.

The Group Booklet, Revised - Copyright © 1990, 1997 by Narcotics Anonymous World Services, Inc. All rights reserved.

The Loner— Staying Clean in Isolation - cont. from page 1,3

One member shared about getting clean in a country where she didn't speak the language. Her sponsor was in a different country, many miles away. She had to use the phone and call other women in the NA Fellowship in another country to get direction on working the Twelve Steps. But she wanted to recover from her addiction, and so she was willing to take that action. She found that by making the phone calls, she was creating a bond with those other recovering women. Pretty soon, she didn't call just her sponsor, she also called other members whose telephone numbers her sponsor had shared with her. And she shared those numbers with other women who wanted to recover from addiction. That way they could all rely on and help each other. All of a sudden, they had some unity, a feeling of belonging to a worldwide fellowship, and not being alone anymore. For someone who was alone in a strange country, our member felt that she was no longer alone. She was a member of NA, she stayed clean, and she practiced the Twelve Steps. She found another way, a way to recover and live a new life.

We have all found that after sharing with another recovering addict, we feel better. There is someone who understands our disease and can help us take the steps which are necessary for our recovery. So, whether it is by telephone, on paper, or through cassette tapes, the value of sharing is paramount to our recovery.

“I'm an addict. I started the first meeting of NA in this town four weeks ago. The first meeting only had two people and I was on my own the last two. But I have a few more people coming next week. Even sitting by myself in that room for an hour and a half, I don't feel lonely. I just pray that one day I might help someone. I'm really very grateful and I know by giving it away, I keep it. I need NA so much.”

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APRIL ANNIVERSARIES

Dave C. 4/01/94 Lara R. 4/15/14

Paul L. 4/01/13 Christina L. 4/07/13

Roy M. Jr. 4/02/15 Shawna M. 4/21/14

Sherri W. 4/04/05 Steve S. 4/19/95

Dylan D. 4/07/03 Anthony P. 4/20/10

Happy Birthday addicts!

VIRTUAL NA MEETINGS

What a virtual meeting is and how it's maintaining the therapeutic value. -The Editor

Addicts came to Narcotics Anonymous in search of a new life; one that was free from the handcuffs of active addiction and one where liars, cheaters, and thieves could blossom into productive members of society. With years of despair and degradation, NA finally reinforced that the addict does not have to live in the prison between their ears any longer.

Sadly, current events have prevented that freedom that NA has provided. The COVID-19 pandemic has led local governments to close businesses, schools, and even country borders to prevent the spread of the disease. Further, meeting places have also had to close their doors in response to the new "Shelter in place" or "Safer at Home" laws. Though NA has no opinion on outside issues, that does not mean we can break the law, putting our name and reputation in jeopardy. There are options and alternatives to physical meetings ... we are auton-

mous but not exempt from the law.

While being forced to remain in our residences, addicts today really are more fortunate. From the comfort of our own homes, the fellowship reiterated the phrase to both the disease of addiction and the coronavirus: "Just for Today, I will be UNAFRAID".

In the NA World Services Statement Regarding Coronavirus on March 12th, 2020, the WSO stated, "We are hopeful that NA members and groups can continue to provide support for one another as we move through this current situation". Living in the age of technology, the message will continue to be carried in a creative way via phone and computer. Though video conference, and phone meetings have been around for some time now, the pandemic has caused the fellowship to rely solely on these methods of communication. Multiple different programs and online platforms, unaffiliated with Narcotics Anonymous, such as Skype, Zoom, and Facetime, have made "the therapeutic value of one addict helping another" live on.

Virtual NA (virtual-na.org) recog-

nized and endorsed on the NA.org official site, is a globally based collaborative service resource whose primary purpose is to provide a formal meeting search for both online and phone line NA meetings. Hosted from different countries around the world, virtual-na.org provides a list of phone numbers and website platform logins listed by day, time, location, and the language that will be spoken.

To attend via internet just click on the link in the Meeting list and follow the instructions; when prompted, choose "Computer Audio" and then "Join meeting". On mobile devices, for the first time, it is necessary to download the Zoom app so click on the meeting link and follow the instructions to download the app. To attend via phone call, dial the number indicated for the country you are in (see link below) and when prompted enter the meeting ID followed by #. The meeting ID are the numbers in the link provided for each Zoom meeting - (ex. <https://zoom.us/j/123456789>)

In order to better maintain anonymity on the Zoom platform, there are ways to do just that. Under the Zoom Settings section in the user's account, adjustments can be made to the following defaults:

- Require Encryption for Third Party Endpoints
- Disable Auto saving chats
- Disable File transfer
- Disable Feedback to Zoom
- Disable Screen sharing
- Disable desktop/screen share for users
- Disable Remote control
- Allow Virtual background (this is the Zoom default and allows the user to use a virtual background instead of the inside of their apartment, for example)

The Zoom Settings page gives detailed descriptions on what each adjusted setting means. For further information, visit the Virtual Meetings subpage on the NA.org website.



LOCAL EVENTS

Unfortunately, all events are **PENDING** an end date to California's "Safer At Home" order and/or the potential national shut-down due to the coronavirus pandemic. Check for status updates:

California Inland Region of NA - www.cirna.org SWANA - www.swanarcoticsanonymous.com



Sponsor/Sponsee Luncheon

April 26th, 2020
 2:00PM-6:00PM
 32665 Haddock St.
 Winchester, CA 92596

Lunch at 2:30PM
 Two Speakers
 \$15 per person

For ticket info, visit
swanarcoticsanonymous@gmail.com

UNITY DAY PICNIC

Celebrating CIRNA's 25th Anniversary
 May 16th 9AM - 5PM
 33900 Oak Glen Rd, Yucaipa, CA 92399
 Burgers, Hot Dogs, Water 11AM-12PM
 GAMES 12:30PM-2:30PM
 2 Speakers 3:00PM

For more info, visit
www.cirna.org

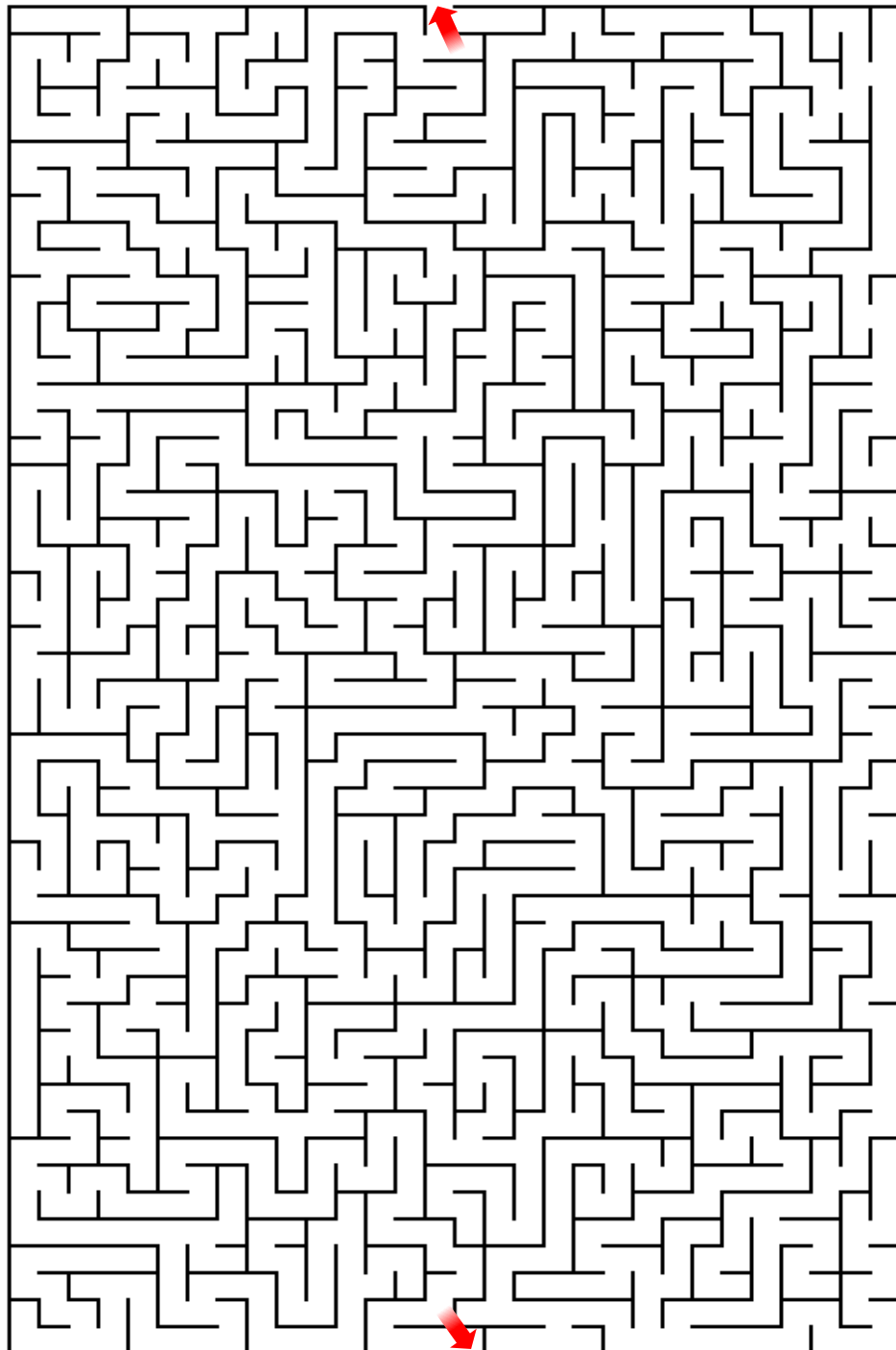


**ONE
MESSAGE**
**MANY
VOICES**
CIRCNA XXII
 JUNE 26-28, 2020
 PALM DESERT, CA

CIRNA Regional Convention
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 Comedy! Golf Tournament!

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 CODE: **CIRNA / NA**
 group rates + taxes & fees: start at
 \$153 per night; hotel may require
 2 nights minimum stay.
 Register online at
www.circna.com



Last month's WORDSCRAMBLE

Clue: *Third Step, Concept, Tradition*

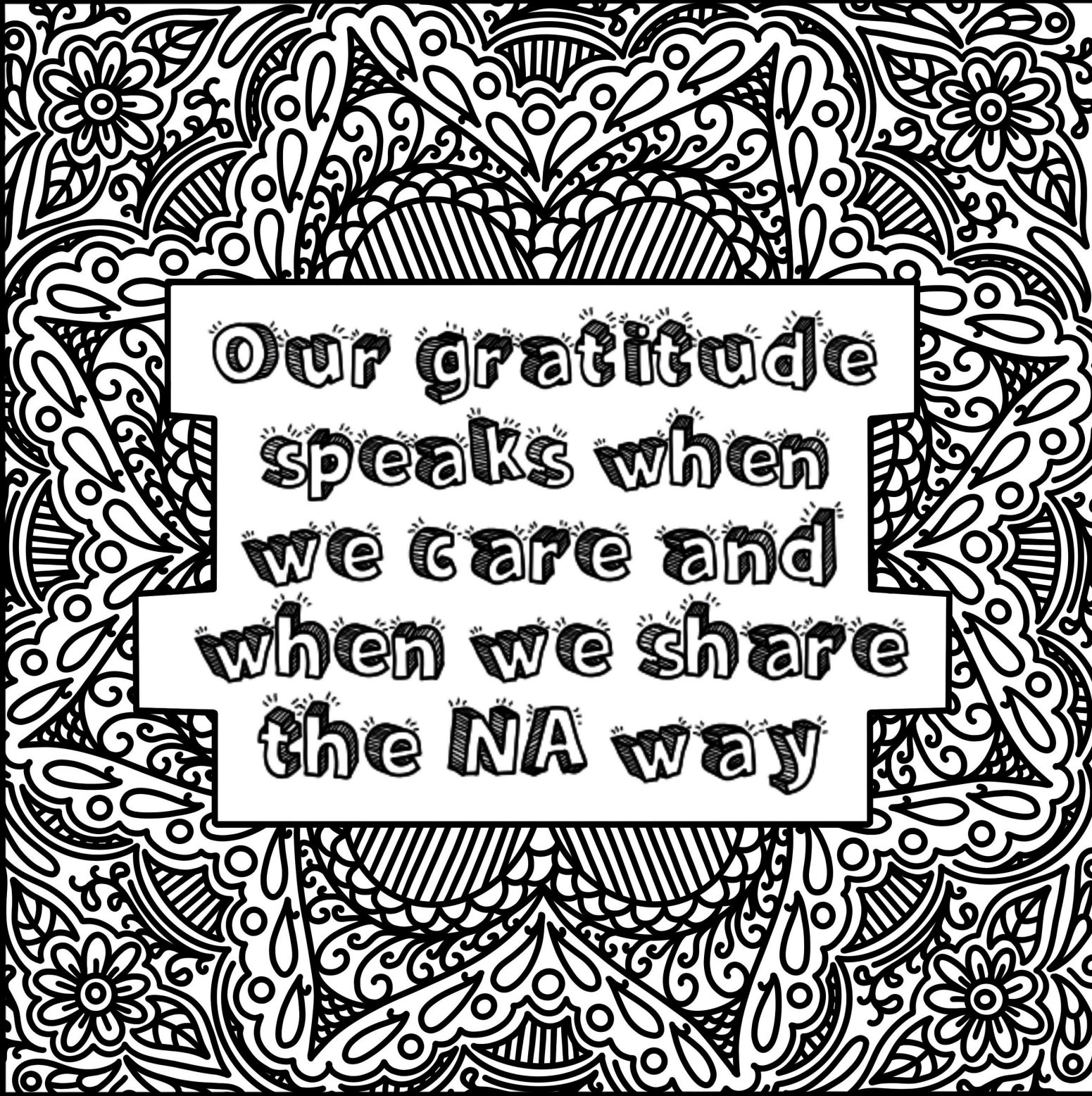
POREW	POWER
RREGTEA	GREATER
UDRNET	TURNED
DESEIR	DESIRE
REQRTUEMENI	REQUIREMENT
BEMREMIHSP	MEMBERSHIP
EDAEGLTE	DELEGATE
URRTCTUSE	STRUCTURE
SEEVIRC	SERVICE

“We made a **SEARCHING and fear-
less moral inventory of ourselves.”**

				G	A	S
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	C	E		I		A
N	I		A			
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		G	R	C		
	E		N	H	S	
	N	C	I	A		

submit your artwork, homemade recovery puzzles, poetry, or clean date to swanacleantimes@gmail.com

“Our meetings are a process of identification, hope and sharing. The heart of NA beats when two addicts share their recovery. What we do becomes real for us when we share it. This happens on a larger scale in our regular meetings. A meeting happens when two or more addicts gather to help each other stay clean.” - *What is the NA Program?*, Sixth Edition Basic Text



**Our gratitude
speaks when
we care and
when we share
the NA way**

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submit your artwork, homemade recovery puzzles, poetry, or clean date to swanacleantimes@gmail.com