



N.A.

# SCANA

## Unity and Fellowship

When I think of “unity” in Narcotics Anonymous, I think of “One”. One fellowship, one primary purpose, one body of believers... that a new way of life is possible. Within that body of believers, might be the rock steady old-timer whose faith seems unshakable. Yet, it is the newcomer who is just beginning the journey of “coming to believe” that the group focuses its attention on, for two reasons. To carry the message, and to ensure that the group remains stable.

How does Fellowship relate to Unity? The two go hand in hand, because we can not recover alone. We prove time and time again in our active addiction and in our recovery, that self-sufficiency is a lie. There are many examples of fellowship: The circle of brothers and sisters that close the meeting together and the get together after meetings when we share our lives and our innermost thoughts with each other.



Unity happens when we seek ways to be of service, to each other and to N.A. Putting away chairs, clearing off tables, cleaning up after an event, are just examples of unity through service. The longer that I have been around, the more I realize how important fellowship is to recovering addicts. From the isolated, empty existence that so many of us experienced to a world that is focused on others. What a change!

Within our fellowship there are so many opportunities to grow and learn about life together. It seems that God places people in our paths who make it easier for us to open ourselves up. Though revealing our true character to others can be risky, it is the very principle of honesty with ourselves and others that will set us free to be who we really are.

“Our common welfare should come first, personal recovery depends on N.A. unity.” This is why through our fellowship, how we treat each other and how we speak of each other, should be tempered with tolerance and love. Not only because our God asks that of us, but because the survival of our groups and our

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**Unity** What is Unity? Is it that we all get along? No fights, no disagreements, and no yelling? Do we all march along nodding our heads and never muttering a word to disagree with what some one else may think or say? Unity doesn't mean we always agree. It means we can agree to disagree. It means even though we may not like each and every person we meet in this fellowship, but we can still listen to them and share with an open mind. We can be there for each other any time or any place. We can work side by side with that person we “just can't stand” for the common good and to carry the message that “**No Addict** need ever die from this disease.” This lie is dead! **We Do Recover!**

Unity means we are united as one to carry the message that anyone can be freed from the prison of addiction. **WE!!! = UNITY!!!**

**No Unity?** In keeping with our Tenth Tradition, I should point out that anything I say is strictly my opinion, and is not necessarily the opinion of Narcotics Anonymous. I am by no means an *expert* on any area of recovery, including Unity. I will try to share my experience with Unity; what I have seen help to build and strengthen it, and what I have seen that has been damaging to it.

It seems as though a day never goes by without my hearing, “There’s no Unity in our Area.” I fail to see what that notion is based upon. Each month, I sit at the Area Service Committee meeting, and witness the personality (ego) clashes, the arguments, heated discussions, and occasional empty (I would hope) threats of physical violence. I suppose our sick and childish behavior might lead people to think that we have no Unity. The fact of the matter is that Unity does not require that everyone be in full agreement on every issue. Unity requires that we find a way to work together, allowing for our differences. We have all heard the phrase, “Let’s just agree to disagree.” The Basic Text tells us that we can disagree without being disagreeable. Often times that idea is easier said than done, as most of us have found. It is however, possible, if we are willing to try. The point is, what we need to do gets done; we manage to overlook our differences in order to carry the message of recovery to the still suffering addict.

We have all seen individuals who appear to thrive on controversy; who stir some up, just to get in a conflict. Some of us seem to lust for attention so much, that they will settle for negative attention. That’s why we have the Twelve Steps; the Steps give us a way to repair our battered self-images. That’s why we have the Twelve Steps; the Steps give us a way to repair our battered self-images. When we have a healthy opinion of ourselves, we find much less need to seek attention. I believe that we have a tendency to try to replace the Steps with the Twelve Traditions. We need to practice the Twelve Steps of Narcotics Anonymous and the principals held within message to Twelve Traditions. We need to carry them in order to have a message to sick, we can twist the Traditions in an effort to justify our behavior. At some time or another we have all heard someone ex-claim, “Principals before Personalities”, hoping to hide behind the Twelfth Tradition in order to avoid the consequences of their actions. The Concepts are abused in the same kinds of ways. Does that help to maintain Unity in our Fellowship? I doubt it.

There are those too, who seem to have Unity and uniformity confused. I would urge every member of NA to get our a dictionary and look both words up.\* See what the difference is. Which are we, as individuals, looking for in the Fellowship? We addicts are a defiant bunch. Watch what happens when someone tries to tell us how to walk, talk, or dress. If you are looking for uniformity, any branch of the military can provide that for you. Narcotics Anonymous is not interested in uniformity; in fact that would, most likely, be considered an “outside issue.”

In the end, Unity starts from within. We have the choice; we can choose to work together for our common goal, or we can engage in “pissing matches” on the Area Service floor, or not participate in the next area function because we would rather not drive to another community for our recovery. Either way, next time we feel like there’s no Unity in SCANA, instead of jumping into the fracas, we can ask ourselves, “What can I do to **improve** the situation?”


\**Unity* [fr. *unus* one—more at ONE] - **1.** the quality or state of not being multiple: oneness. **2.** A definite amount taken as one or for which 1 is made to stand in calculation.

\**Uniformity*—**1.** the quality or state of being uniform. **2.** Consistent in conduct or opinion. **3.** Having always the same form, manner, or degree; not varying or variable. **4.** Of the same form with others; conforming to one rule or mode.

**Unity.** Unity in the Narcotics Anonymous Fellowship can be demonstrated in a great number of ways... Being able to disagree, agreeably. We don't all have to think alike, or have the same opinions to be unified. If we were all exactly alike, had no differences of opinions, didn't think differently from time to time, then we would be just like a body of robots.

I don't see how that could be a very good demonstration of unity. What is a good example of unity within the fellowship is when we all work together for the common good of the program of Narcotics Anonymous, carrying the message of recovery to the still suffering addict. The still suffering addict doesn't necessarily mean the person who just came in off the streets either. Any one of us, from time to time, even with years of recovery can and are the still suffering addict.

We need to be available in those cases, whoever they might be. Unity does not mean that we have to like everyone in the fellowship, but it does mean we have to be acceptable of those people and we all need to understand that we all have the common bond, "The disease of addiction." Personalities may clash sometimes, feelings may even get hurt, does that mean we have no unity? I think not. We are human beings as well as addicts, we all come from different walks of life, different backgrounds, different situations, etc. but that does not mean that we can not be unified. I truly believe if Narcotics Anonymous suffered a lack of unity, this fellowship would have collapsed many years ago. Like the old song goes... United we stand, divided we fall, even though we may stumble sometimes. Narcotics Anonymous is alive and well and keeps going strong. I am very, very proud to be a member with passion and a passion for the program and the fellowship of N.A. com-



A very grateful, sometimes still suffering addict, in unity with Narcotics Anonymous.

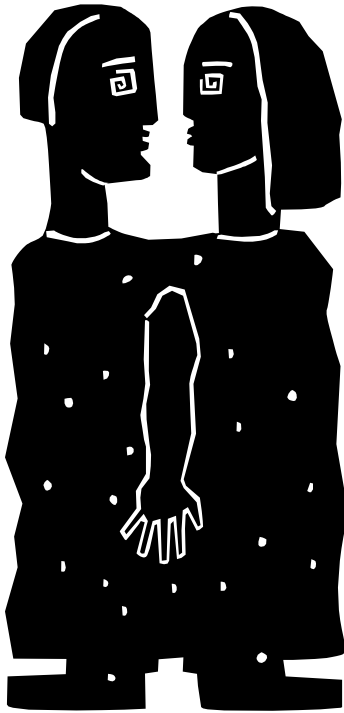
**Unity.** Unity is a must in Narcotics Anonymous if we are to survive. First, let's start with the letters that make up the word. The letter U is where the definition begins. N is the second letter that ties the U n' I together. Then the last syllable to the word is ty. So my definition of Unity is, you and I tie. This would mean that you and I would exist together, one not being better than the other. We could and would co-exist together without one person feeling as if his or her opinion would not matter. In Narcotics Anonymous everybody does matter for Unity is a must if we are all to be here together.

If we were to look up Unity in the dictionary we would find that the word is one of many definitions. So I ask you, is Unity a condition, a harmony, or accord? Is it a totality of all related parts? Or is it a continuity of all related parts without deviation or change? The answers are all of the above. Unity is continuing to strive for what is best for Narcotics Anonymous despite what others might say and do. As well as doing our best despite how we feel about one another personally.

Unity is a major part of our 1st Tradition. It states that our personal recovery depends on it. You will find that any organization or family depends upon it. Although, we spend a lot of time with our family and at our jobs, we find that Unity is a must there just as it is in Narcotics Anonymous. Unity creates an atmosphere of recovery in every facet of our lives. Without Unity the basic institution of our family ceases to exist. Therefore Unity is not only a must here in Narcotics Anonymous, but it is a must in our everyday lives. When Unity does not become a primary focus, we falter and our lives become separated. I ask you—how many times have we seen this in our personal lives as well as in the lives of others?

Unity is a promoter! It promotes personal development, it promotes citizenship, it promotes health and prosperity, and most of all it promotes and cultivates leadership. So I ask you, aren't these some of the reasons we came to the fellowship in the first place?

Unity is loving others in spite of their defects. Without the Unity of the group, the individual dies and the group breaks up or goes their own separate ways. Together we stand in Unity, divided we fall with disunity. So, if you and I tie (u-n-i-ty) we all can stand together with each other and our beloved fellowship grows. Without Unity we cease to exist. With Unity we thrive and succeed as a fellowship.



## Unity

Years ago, reading the 12 steps for the first time, I noticed many things. I noticed a lot about God. There was stuff on inventory. Things called character defects and shortcomings were included. Further, amends were mentioned and service was alluded to in the final step. What I missed—FOR YEARS was “We”. You see, I have read those steps many times over the next few years. I tried very hard to dissect and understand them—with limited success. I would recite those steps from memory say them verbatim, but while I said, “we” in each step what I heard in my mind was “I”... “I admitted...”

“I came to believe...”

“I made a decision...”

Wrong.

“I” can’t work this program

### UNITY

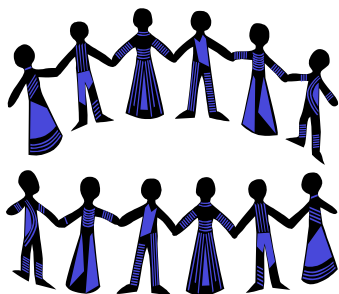
U  
N  
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T  
Y

You and I TRY.

### UNITY

**Chaos with a purpose.**

Example: Forming the circle to close the meeting



## Freedom

I first used methamphetamine in 1985, at the age of twenty-two. I had three children under the age of five, a demanding husband, and three jobs. I found I could sleep less and work more. I had more hours available each day to work and take care of my family. Within a couple of years I had developed an addiction that plagued me for the better part of eighteen years.

I can tell you that I sacrificed everything I cared

by myself.

“I got high.”

“I became spiritually bankrupt.”

“I lost spiritually, emotionally and physically.”

“I do not have a chance against addiction.”

“We do.”

There is no “I” in our steps because we do not work these steps on our own. This is not an individual study course, “Survey in Recovery”. This program demands that we work with others. The most obvious person we do this with is our sponsor. This person, among other things, guides us through the steps together. The identification we feel when we first get here is what makes most of us stick around long enough for this lifestyle to take hold.

about to the service of my addiction more times than I ever want to remember. I have been homeless, jobless, and spiritually bankrupt. I have hurt the ones I loved the most, and questioned my own sanity, but I still was compelled to use meth., because that’s what addiction is all about. It was an all consuming obsession for me. Many times I tried to quit, but could not, no matter how much I wanted to. I believed I was weak, worthless,

We share our lives with one another. We rely on each other. Without the fellowship, the program cannot work.

I can’t have a meeting by myself. Certainly not a recovery meeting, anyway. I cannot work steps by myself—I need guidance from others.

“We admitted...”

“We came to believe...”

“We made a decision...”

We do this together. We are all very different as individuals but we share a common disease and a common solution. When we put aside our myriad differences and focus on our common purpose we can be just what our basic text says, “happy, joyous, and free” - together.

That, for me, is Unity.

and without willpower. I was so consumed with self loathing that I was certain I deserved to die a junkie.

The home I shared with my boyfriend, Scott, was raided by the drug task force in August of 2003. After that, we moved to the country in an effort to change our lifestyle. Our home was situated on a hilltop, at the end of a half-mile lane that led to a gravel road which wound its way lazily to the -

## Freedom Continued...

highway six miles away. Once on the pavement, it was another eight miles to town. Seclusion seemed the best way to avoid the drug scene. Scott quit using and I entered an outpatient treatment program, though I continued to use without his knowledge. I believed I was being discreet. We had few visitors because we were no longer seeing old drug buddies. I always had a valid reason to be going out when I left the house, so I felt safe that he would not discover my betrayal.

Late in January of 2004, after being snowbound for three days, we carefully made our way into town. Our first stop was the local library. We each selected some books to help combat the boredom of winter isolation. Next, we went to the grocery store to stock up on food, as there was another winter storm predicted. It was getting near dark as we made our way home. The roads were icy and traffic on the highway was slow moving and sparse. The gravel road was even less traveled. We were happy to get home where it was safe and warm. I made us some pizza burgers while Scott stoked the wood burning stove. We ate our supper, then got our pajamas on and settled in our favorite places on the couch with our library books.

Suddenly the silence outside was broken by the sound of cars doors slamming. Scott got up to look out the window. Snow crunched under running feet. Scott looked at me and mouthed, "It's the cops." He reached to open the door. At the same time, the door burst open, knocking him down. Our living room was flooded with six men in full riot gear. Gas masks and guns, followed by four or five uniformed officers. They were shouting, "Get your hands up!"

They had guns pointed at us as they barked, "Get on the ground. Keep your hands up!" I was thinking—this can't be happening. I was trying to see if Scott had been hurt. Mostly, I was concentrating on not getting shot for making a wrong move. They quickly spread throughout the house to make certain no one else was there, and then they ordered us to get up slowly and sit on the couch.

It all felt surreal. My heart was pounding and I thought I was going to vomit. I was worried about my three cats, which had been visible just a few minutes before. All three had gone to hide when they heard the car doors slam.

I sat there quietly as the officers searched our home. When they turned up two used syringes, I immediately claimed them as mine. Scott looked at me with such disgust; I wanted to crawl under the couch. It was bad enough that this was happening, even worse that I had been deceiving him. I felt horrible to think that he could be charged for a crime he knew nothing about.

Fortunately, I was the only one charged with possession of drug paraphernalia. Since that was only a misdemeanor, I was given a citation to appear in court at a later date. As it turned out, I had to spend two days in jail when I was fifty-seven days drug free.

In the days that followed the raid, I was full of remorse, yet at the same time I was constantly nagged by my addiction. I wanted to get high so bad, but I was scared that it would happen again if I went to a drug house. I could not face Scott with that betrayal again.



I made a decision to do something about my problem. I entered an inpatient drug treatment program. Nine days later I came out of the hospital drug free and feeling a little better about me. Within forty-eight hours I had a needle in my arm again. I was so disgusted with myself that I just wanted to die. There simply wasn't enough dope for an overdose or I might have. Instead, I prayed to God to help me. The next day I went back to inpatient treatment. This time, I was introduced to the program of Narcotics Anonymous. I began to understand that I could not stay clean for any length of time myself. I figured I had nothing to lose by trying things their way. This time it wasn't about trying to stay clean for someone else. This time it was because I realized that I did not want to die with a needle sticking out of my arm.

I wanted to be a good mother to my children again. I wanted to love and be loved by my grandkids. I wanted my mom to know she had a daughter who loved her. In general, I wanted to have a family and to be able to look at myself in the mirror.

Today, I am a member of Narcotics Anonymous with nearly twenty months clean. My hope is to carry the message to the still suffering addict that one doesn't have to die in active addiction.

I am a full time student seeking a degree in Human Services in hope of becoming a Chemical Dependency Counselor. I am rebuilding relationships with my family and happy with myself for the first time in many years. No matter what happens, as long as I stay clean, today will be a good day.

- A Grateful Recovering Addict



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- ACCEPTANCE
- ACTION
- ATTITUDE
- BALANCE
- BASICS
- CALM
- CARE
- CHANCES
- CHOICE
- CLOSENESS
- COMPLACENCY
- CREATE
- DEATH
- DRIVE
- EMPATHY
- EVER GOD
- FAITH
- FRIENDSHIP
- GIVING
- GOD CENTERED
- GRACE
- HEALTH
- HELPING PEOPLE
- HOME GROUP
- HELPING PEOPLE
- HOPE
- HUG
- LAUGH
- MANAGEABILITY
- MIRACLES
- MORAL
- OUR WAY
- PARTNERS
- SELF
- SERENITY
- SPIRITUAL
- SPONSOR
- TRUST
- UNCONDITIONAL
- UNITY
- VICES
- WORKING -
- THE STEPS
- WORTH

## *Top Ten Unity List*

### *Unity*

- Spiritual Principal*
- Respect*
- Vigilance*
- Higher Powerfied*
- Diversity*
- Anonymity*
- Together—We*
- Common Purpose*
- Acceptance*
- Sharing*



### *Ununified*

- Immoral*
- Disrespect*
- Disinterest—Apathy*
- Self-Centerfied*
- Segregated*
- Gossip*
- Torn—Me*
- Die Alone*
- Intolerance*
- Chaos & Anger*