

The Messenger

Hobbies And Activities In Recovery

The TVANA newsletter would like to dedicate this entire issue to the importance of moving our bodies, focusing our mind and stretching our creative muscles. We will share the experience of our fellowship with finding things that help us get outside ourselves and connect to others while having fun!

Many of us came to NA and didn't have any hobbies. Having lived to use and used to live for so long we had forgotten that there is whole world available to us. We did not know what activities we would like. Recovery has given us the chance to reinvent ourselves, discover and participate in our hobbies. Our literature can help us navigate the process of understanding how addiction affected our social life, hobbies and interests, and how we can have full lives while still keeping recovery in the forefront. We did not choose to become addicts. We suffer from a disease that expresses itself in ways that are anti-social and that makes detection, diagnosis and treatment difficult. Our disease isolated us from people except when we were getting, using and finding ways and means to get more. Hostile, resentful, self-centered and self-seeking, we cut ourselves off from the outside world. Anything not completely familiar became alien and dangerous. Our world shrank and isolation became our life we used to survive. It was the only life that we knew. – *Basic Text Ch*

1, *Who Is an Addict*

Long after the obsession to use is lifted, many of us still seek a “rush” in other ways. The drive for excitement leads us to live full and exciting lives, rich with adventure. We are unafraid to take risks and pursue the opportunity to do the things we always wished we could. Sometimes, though, it seems like we just get strung out on our own adrenaline....we can ramp up so fast that it's hard to scale back down...It is up to each of us to find a balance between chasing a destructive rush and really living our lives to the fullest. – *Living Clean Ch*

4, *Our Physical Selves*

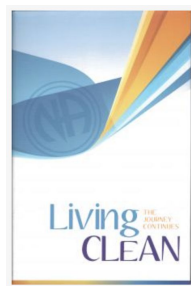
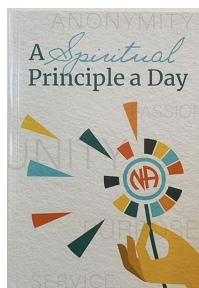
We gain the ability to pursue our interests. Rock climbing, songwriting, restoring old cars – our lives become our own to live. Where addiction limits us and makes our world smaller, recovery opens us up to the world. What opportunities are on my horizon today? - *A Spiritual Principle A Day, January 16.*

While finding a new hobbies or activities may feel challenging, there are resources available in the Treasure Valley for NA members to explore new interests and find people that have similar interests. We learned how to stay clean from the others that came before us and we can apply that same process to filling out the time we are given back now that we are in recovery and not out there finding ways and means to get more.

A BIG THANK YOU to the members who shared their experience, strength and hope on this topic. You make our newsletter what it is.

Love,

The Newsletter Committee



What does staying active and participating in hobbies/activities do for your recovery?

When I was using I wanted to do activities, and for a while I was able to continue my hobbies even though I was using. But then as my use progressed I gave up things I liked doing. I didn't take care of my body or mind. Being clean and expanding my activities helps me maintain physical and mental wellbeing. I also strengthen my recovery by giving back. I volunteer with an organization that specializes in hosting events and activities for people who are substance free —people in recovery, living a clean lifestyle, allies, and supporters. I host weekly pickleball events and frequently participants have never played on a team and doubt their physical capabilities. I see people try new things and gain confidence, and I can share my experience of being in recovery.

2. How do you find activities to participate in? What has been your experience with seeking out activities in recovery?

Some of my activities I found by learning from someone experienced. My husband taught me mtn biking, rock climbing and white water kayaking. I'll be learning hunting from an NA member later this year. Other times I found activities using community resources that were low cost or free - Boise City, the Boise school district and other meetup type groups. I've taken cooking classes, crochet classes, a Death Scene Investigation class taught by the Coroner's office, Book clubs, writing clubs, pickleball leagues. People were always friendly and welcoming at the events. I had to be prepared for the culture of the people that participate in the activity if going with a group of people not specifically in recovery (especially adventure sports). My kayak group doesn't know I'm in recovery, but they do know I don't drink and use and they knew that upfront. I was able to set a boundary with the group on what I was comfortable with.

What is your suggestion for other addicts who are struggling to get out there to try new things or find something they enjoy doing?

If you like the activity but don't like the group, try going to a different group that does the same activity. The first meeting is the worst one, you don't know where to go or who to meet with, but after the first one there is more familiarity with the location and the group, so get through the first meeting and try a second one before giving up.

Alicia D.

Did you start baking before you got clean?

I feel like I've always had an interest in cooking and baking, but it wasn't until a few years ago that I started baking like I do now. We were at my grandma's house and she just whipped up a rhubarb pie one evening for everyone and I wanted to be able to do the same. My dad had recently given me a textbook-like recipe book that included all the science behind great cooking so a few weeks later when I went to make my first pie and couldn't get ahold of my grandma for the recipe, I turned to that book and have been geeking out on it ever since. (Except now I have a subscription to an app that lets me go ham on whatever I want to know!)

How is baking an outlet for my emotions, thoughts, intentions?

Hmm, so I don't know if this answers the question asked but for me baking checks some boxes that I sometimes have a hard time getting checked elsewhere. 1) I like a challenge. I like to be good at things and I like to do things I'm good at. In my life before recovery I used to be good at different things that aren't accessible to me anymore, baking nourishes that part of myself that needs evidence that there are still some things that I can be good at. 2) The structure of a recipe is calming to me. Having a recipe source that I trust is calming to me. Knowing that if I follow each clearly outlined step I can reasonably trust the outcome to be what it was presented to be is CALMING to me. Knowing WHY (the science) behind why I'm doing something the way I'm doing it is uber calming to me. 3) Baking is one of the ways I can express my care for people. It takes time and effort and energy for me, all things I value, so when I can pour that into something tangible to offer someone, it means something.

What's my favorite thing about baking?

I feel like maybe I answered this some on the previous question but in addition to all that, I've recently discovered another amazing thing about my baking hobby that probably is my favorite thing, and that is watching my kid pick it up. It's really amazing to witness my theories about life bear out in the material, in reality. We says 'do as I say, not as I do' but that never works, that isn't real. Kids do as we do, and for an addict who is consumed with the thought that she is damaging it's a miracle to see that I have developed a skill that's valuable and can pass along to my kid. He made bread the other day, bread! I'm so happy to him finding an outlet in baking and that is my favorite thing.

-Adrie T.



What are some Activities or hobbies that you engage in?

Hi I'm Tiff and I'm an addict. I play softball in the spring and in the fall. I love to bowl, snowboard, axe throw, longboard, rollerblade, go to concerts and hang out at the lake. I love doing things with friends in recovery.

Are you able to verbalize how these activities add to your recovery? Spiritually? Physically? Mentally? Socially?

I have played sports when I was in school and loved it, but then let it go when I was using. I recently got back into the things I like to do since I have been in recovery and now enjoying doing these things with fellow recovering addicts and play on a recovery softball team. A lot of us use to go bowl after meetings or just go out to dinner afterwards. I feel fellowship before and after meetings is a huge part of my recovery story and I try to pass that on to the newcomers as well. I feel fellowshiping before and after meetings teaches us to open up to each other and learn trust and keep us busy from going out to use again and that it shows we can have fun without using. Doing activities and things with fellow addicts has boosted my self-esteem, my worth and shown me how true friends are. Watching them grow in NA has shown me the program works. I have gotten healthier emotionally, spiritually and physically since being clean.

What of your experience do you want to share with the newcomer that wants what you have found?

I kept coming back, no matter what. I had to Fellowship before and after meetings and to learn to trust and have fun without using.

-Tiff C.

(Tiff is working on getting a hiking group together every Thursday afternoon to hike up Table Rock. More to come..Talk to Tiff for more details if you are interested in going!.)

How did you get into hockey? Was it something you did prior to your recovery or something you found in recovery?

I got into hockey while in recovery. It was actually through another member of NA. He had to convince me go and I didn't want to at first. Now, I'm really glad I did. It's become a big part of my life.

How does hockey add to your recovery? Spiritually? Physically? Mentally? Socially?

Hockey adds to my recovery physically as a workout that is fun. Mentally...it's an activity that lets you hit people, so I get out aggression... in a healthy way. Socially...I have experienced how to bond and work as a team. Spiritually.. I get to push myself and set goals with myself. It has also allowed me to see my disease come out in other ways. I can set unrealistic expectations on my performance or get down on myself to do better, when I just need to be looking at the positives of my performance or that I'm having fun. It's something I apply to my recovery outside of hockey.

Are there other activities that you engage in?

Yeah, fishing. Again I have another addict in recovery to thank for getting into this activity as well. This activity is more on the spiritual side as it is peaceful. It can be quiet out in nature and on the water, which helps mentally too. It can be a workout with reeling in sturgeon. *(See pictures: At Swan Falls in the Snake River)*

What of your experience do you want to share with the newcomer that wants what you have found?

I got what I have by connecting to the fellowship. I found what I did by connecting with the men in this program. I pushed myself. I got out of my comfort zone. I didn't let fear stop me.

-Henry G.



NA Roller Skating Party

Sunday March 17, 2024



\$7 Group Admission

\$4 Skate rental



3 - 5pm

Treasure Valley Skate
4712 W State St, Boise

How did you get into Roller Skating? Was it something you did prior to recovery or found in recovery?

I started skating as a young child, around 5yrs old on steel wheels outside on the sidewalk. My mom was the oldest of 10 and they all skated at rinks. My grandfather was the 1st of 5 generations which includes my grandchildren. I skated every week all through my teen yrs. It's what we did in the 70s until the discos started to open. I went back in my early 20s when my life started to become unmanageable and started getting arrested. My brother was 6 yrs younger so I skated with his age skaters and ended up playing roller hockey, and met my ex wife at the rink. I stopped again for the most part until my son's started playing roller hockey and I coached them for awhile. As the disease progressed and I was a weekend dad I went a lot of yrs of not skating very much. When I got clean this time, and moved to Idaho my brother was skating from time to time I made a decision to buy skates and get in shape.

What does skating do for your recovery? Physically? Spiritually? Mentally? Socially?

We have one promise, "freedom from active addiction" and for me the rink gives me that freedom. That song, that session, that feeling I got got as an innocent teen. I started back with my brother and skated with one friend (not in recovery) until three treasure valley area of NARCOTICS ANONYMOUS had a skate event 3yrs ago and have been skating with a clean and serene crew ever since. We average 10 recovering addicts skating every fri night and we're like teens at heart skating, laughing, and loving each other outside of the rooms. Its my spiritual place of freedom. I'm 63 and I skate, Ski, play softball and owe it all to God and NA.

What of your experience do you want to share with the newcomer that wants what you have found?

We always strongly suggest to people that are new to go to a lot of meetings and that's so important but for me I have to have fun in recovery, so whatever that looks like for you please get out there and enjoy the gift of our freedom.

-Mike W.

(Come join Mike and others from the fellowship every Friday 8:30-10:30 for a skate night)

The fellowship has been giving you positive praise for your work on the activities committee. It's been said you did this kind of service in another area. How has your experience been here in TVANA vs the other area?

I have a team that makes me look really good. It is a group effort and I'm a trusted servant for that group at Area, alot is happening behind the scenes. Activities here is smaller than the other Area I was a part of. The biggest differences is how budgeting is done. Here there is a budget for activities and the funds we bring in go to area or other functions. At the other Area all fundraising that was done by activities was for activities and only a percentage went to area, they had a budget for activities but all fundraising was funds on top of that budget—so the biggest difference is the financial side of things. .

When does the activities service committee meet? Can anyone join? Are there clean time requirements?

We meet every second Thursday of the month at 1115 North Garden Street. The committee meeting is directly after the We Share Hope Not Dope meeting of NA so the meeting starts around 7pm-ish. So if you attend you have the opportunity of getting a meeting and a committee meeting in one go. Anyone can join and everyone is welcome. There are only clean time requirements for Treasurer and Chair of three years.

Do you have any needs from the fellowship?

We would love more support and are always in need of multiple people to help with events, organizing and setting up. We are always looking for more people to be of service.

Do you personally have any hobbies/activities that you enjoy? How does it help your recovery?

I enjoy going gold hunting in the mountains with a metal detector. I wear orange so I won't get shot by possible hunters. I go up around the Idaho City area. It adds to my recovery by getting out and being physical—moving in nature is spiritual experience. I get to speak with my Higher Power. It mentally clears my head and helps me work out things that I might be dealing with in life.

Any upcoming events you want to mention for our members?

Yeah, the Spring Fling NA Dance Party on 3-23-24 from 6-8:30pm. Come out and dance, eat chili dogs and hear a good speaker at 245 E Pine Ave in Meridian Idaho. (See Flyer)

-Michael M.



Activities



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