

The Messenger

JAK K NAILS THE BIG 40!

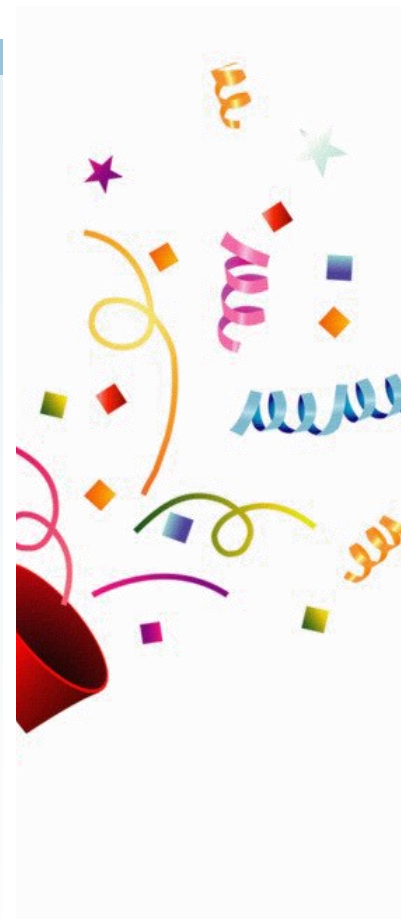
On November 25th Jak K celebrated 40 years of being clean in Narcotics Anonymous. There was a clean time celebration at the Hub in Boise. In attendance were many of the people that have been affected by Jak’s recovery. People that were not able to make it in person attended and participated in the event virtually. Members of NA logged in from as far away as Singapore to speak on how Jak’s recovery has benefited their own.

The room was full of love and respect for a man who has kept coming back one day at a time for forty years. Jak was given a dark blue special edition 40-year key tag by his wife Judy and a coin from a member who celebrated 40 years last year. The member spoke via Zoom to say how passing on his own coin every year to Jak was a privilege. Though many people and members of NA had messages of love and gratitude toward Jak, a true testament of how recovery has worked in his life was to see people who may not have always gotten along with Jak stand up and say that despite their conflicts in the past; they had respect and admiration for him.

It was a fun and a wonderful evening where many members of the NA community were able to pay tribute to a fellow member through dishes of food, words spoke out loud and even music performed live. The amount of unity that results from one addict staying clean is truly inspirational.

The next day Jak and his wife Judy sat down and answered some questions about their experience of recovery in Narcotics Anonymous here in Idaho. Jak and Judy have been married for 32 years. Jak and Judy share the home-group New Attitudes which meets virtually on Zoom Monday through Saturday at noon. Judy will be celebrating 25 years clean on January 13th, 2023. Both are active in NA service and have more than one service commitment.

Jak is a part of PR and takes meetings into institutions. Judy is the Treasure Valley’s RCM and on the committee for PNW. Both are active participants in their homegroups, have sponsors who have sponsors and are sponsors themselves. Both have spent the entirety of their clean time in Idaho



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- Please take a minuet or two after you read this issue and let us know how we did and how or what we can do better.
- Thank you

Passing Time with Judy and Jak K.

What would you say to the newcomer?

Jak: Welcome.

Judy: Welcome. Keep coming back

What did you hear when you got here that helped you to keep coming back?

Jak: It was different when I got here. It was more along the lines of take the cotton out of your ears and put in in your mouth. It wasn't very friendly because it was life and death. It was serious. There wasn't a lot of us then, so it seemed more serious.

Judy: I came to my first NA meeting in Nampa in 1982 and there was not a lot of women. I didn't think I had a problem but was told to keep coming back. There was no one else in my life who wanted to be around me, and they were very friendly. Another thing I heard was 'one is too many and a thousand is never enough'...and I wondered how they knew that about me.

What are the biggest changes you have seen in NA? In the room, in service, in the fellowship?

Jak: NA used to seem so secret when I first got here. Not just the meetings, but Area. I remember people whispering about service and business. They didn't make big announcements like they do now

Judy: It's way more organized now. Though... it used to be a big event to go to Area. It would rotate from home group to home group who would put on breakfast for Area. We would have breakfast, a speaker meeting and then the Area Service meeting. It was awesome and very well attended.

Jak: Everything wasn't about money back then.

Judy: My first Area position was Treasurer and we hardly had any bills. I don't remember making donations to Region or Area. It seems more professional now.

Can you speak about NA service in Idaho throughout your recovery?

Jak: The best way to describe it is...we were on a sinking ship, and we all needed each other. Now, it seems like not as many people are involved in service.

Judy: The fellow ship was really, really small. Therefore, a higher percentage of the people were involved. Because we had all these service positions to fill and a small population to pull from. So, people did multiple positions. I remember my first service position was opening the building, making the coffee, and setting the meeting up. I was so flattered that they thought I could do that. They thought I could be trusted to do that.

Jak: She had the key to the community center.

Judy: There was several times I wouldn't have gone to the meeting, but I had the key. So, I had to show up. I had the sense of responsibility to show up... thank God.

Jak: When we were small, we had to do everything. I've had about every position. Here's the thing when you are new you think 'oh, you're the area chair you're really something'. But you're just an addict, that's the highest you will ever get. Even if you work for world service. You're just an addict.

Can you speak on sponsorship? What is the most rewarding? What is the most difficult?

(Continued on page 3)

Passing Time with Judy and Jak K.

Jak: Judy was telling me this morning; she was telling me why you have a sponsor...because... what did you say?

Judy: I said it's very difficult to spot self-deception. That is so absolutely true; even today with nearly 25 years clean my sponsor can point out things I don't see. It probably happens with Jak to... we don't sponsor each other, thank God.

Jak and Judy laugh

Jak: A lot of people won't read the basic text.

Judy: A lot of people don't hang around.

Jak: The difficult part is people will call you their sponsor, but you don't see them, you don't have anything to do with them. It's just a flat out lie... and of course you can't say anything. Or you make plans, and you show up and they call and say they can't make it.

Judy: Getting a sponsee through a difficult life event is probably one of the most rewarding things I have experienced.

Jak: Its having that close relationship. If you don't call your sponsor...if you don't talk to that person, they don't know you, you're not honest...you're not gonna call them when you want to pick up. You can say 'Yeah I have a sponsor' and that's great... but if you read in Chapter 5 (Basic Text) it tells you what to do to stay clean. Most people aren't willing to do that and how do you get them to be motivated to do that?

Judy: When I first got here, I thought 'I don't have time to do all of that, I'm just trying to stay alive' but over time I learned that those were correct things to do.

Jak: Successful addicts have successful sponsors.

What are some of the ways the spiritual principles from this program influenced your life?

(Jak received a phone call during the questions and left the room per Judy's request)

Judy: Well, kindness. I can't think with a big booming voice in my ear, but I can be kind about it...Marriage is one of the hardest things I've ever done. It is also one of the most rewarding things I've ever done! But...No matter how much you love each other you become increasingly aware of each other's character defects. Tolerance. There's another one... (Judy laughs warmly) ...and learning to be honest with each other. Yeah, um... I learned to be a parent in this program. I had no modeling for how to be a decent parent. My kids were 6, 8 and 10 when I first got clean. So, they survived through my active addiction, but what I learned was watching other people in Narcotics Anonymous and how they parented their children. Because the parenting I got was you got screamed at...it was a life-threatening experience. All I knew was what not to do. Parents in NA showed me *what to do*.

Judy speaking on the 12 Steps and 12 Traditions.

Judy: I used to go this meeting here in Boise called 'It Works How and Why'. We would read a chapter each meeting from the How It Works and Why book and discuss it. So, we would get through the 12 Steps and 12 Traditions twice each year. I learned so much about the traditions from that meeting. Things I had never thought about before. I really believe without the 12 Traditions we would fall apart. Recovery programs prior to NA that didn't have traditions didn't last, it's what holds us together. The traditions have taught me to be self-supporting. I have heard that the steps teach us how to get along with ourselves and the traditions teach us to get along with other people. I think that is true.

(Judy's phone rings announcing a member of NA calling).....

NA World Services releases newest Literature!

A Spiritual Principal a Day – now available at local meetings and online

Like many other addicts, I am excited with the release and availability of the newest NA book, *A Spiritual Principal a Day*. Most are familiar with the daily meditation book, *Just For Today*, copywrite 1992, so familiar that we may know the meditations by heart. Using a similar format as *Just For Today*: a quotation from NA literature, a brief reading and a daily contemplation, *A Spiritual Principal a Day*, expands the ability for reading NA literature daily, with 366 fresh new thoughts and mediations for addicts to incorporate into their recovery.

Taken from the Preface of *A Spiritual Principal a Day*:

“Each day we wake up clean affords us the opportunity to seek a life of connection – to ourselves, to our fellow NA members and other loved ones, to service, and to a power greater than ourselves.... *A Spiritual Principal a Day*, are expressions of these connections that we seek...We talk a lot about living by spiritual principals, sharing our experience – both directly and indirectly – of what that means and how we do it...*A Spiritual Principal a Day* is intended to provide us with practical applications regarding how we strive to live spiritually in recovery, facing life on life’s terms, and how we support each other in doing so. “

Below is an excerpt from *A Spiritual Principal a Day*:

December 11

*Creative Action Can Be an Inside Job
Creative action is not a mysterious procedure, although it is an inside job in rebuilding or reintegrating our disordered and fractured personalities.*

IP #5, Another Look, “Addiction is a way of life”

Active addiction is a mess-

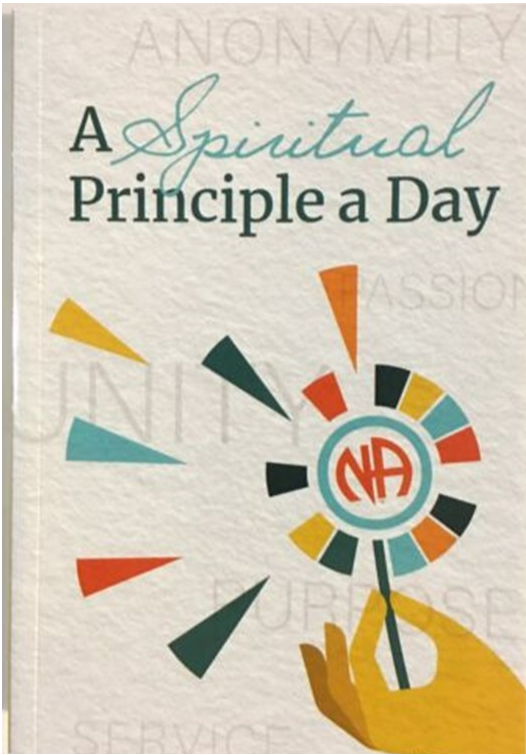
physical, mental, emotional, spiritual disorder in the flesh. There isn’t enough room on this page to list what we lose or risk losing while we’re using; our health and well-being, our loved ones, our freedom, our minds, and...our keys! We’ve all been there.

We also lose ourselves. Which selves? Exactly. Which, indeed. In the rooms of Narcotics Anonymous, we often hear members say, “Out there, I was a chameleon.” While we were using, we changed our behavior, even our personalities – from situation to situation – to meet our self-centered ends, to survive. That’s some masterful creativity for sure.

As with all of our defects, if we flip the coin over, there’s an asset on the other side. We can be as curious and adaptable as we are manipulative and self-seeking. By the same token, just as we used our creativity to survive, we can rely on it now to rebuild our lives from the inside.

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Today I will look at what’s messy or broken inside me and use my imagination to identify what I could do to create some order and serenity in this brain of mine!



Do your step work.....



My Experience—Step 10

The tenth step for me is all about accountability. It's the step that, when practiced, allows me to hold myself accountable to make amends when a defect flares up. When reflecting back upon the day or the week, if there is something that still disturbs me then there is a relationship that I have harmed and need to try and mend. For me, without working the steps beforehand I would have no idea the signifi-

cance of this step or what it even meant. The fourth step gives me the evidence to identify defects in step six. Now here at step Ten I have the tools necessary to identify my defects when they happen and promptly make amends so as not to cause a build up of resentments. This allows me to keep my side of the street clean and enjoy peace of mind.



TO CARRY THE MESSAGE TO THE ADDICT THAT STILL SUFFERS

Acceptance Takes Practice

Acceptance is not an all-or-nothing event, and it doesn't necessarily happen all at once. —Living Clean, Chapter 1, "Growing Pains" We talk about "practicing spiritual principles" because they take practice. That's certainly true of acceptance. At times, the only thing we fully accept is the fact that we're addicts. On those days, that's good enough. We practice acceptance by not picking up. And if we don't pick up, we won't use. As we grow in recovery, we start to recognize where our acceptance falls short. Sometimes we might acknowledge a problem, but not fully accept its implications, especially when a solution requires us to take responsibility and make an effort. For example, we might sense relationship trouble, but may or may not adjust how much time we spend with a partner. Some of us can't accept, or even recognize, that we've been dishonest until we do a Tenth Step; the disease calls us to stop writing. Our ability to practice acceptance sometimes wavers depending on who else is involved. We may be able to accept relapse from others, but not when it's a family member. Maybe we

can accept the blunders of newcomers but not those mistakes made by old-timers. We celebrate the progress we make, no matter how small: "Today I told my boss why I was really late; that was a first!" Or big: "The loss of my beloved dog opened the floodgates, allowing me to revisit the grief of other losses and come to new levels of acceptance." As we recover just a little more each day, practicing acceptance pays off. We experience rare and remarkable epiphanies with acceptance and recognize the path it took to get there. We can hear other members' struggles with acceptance and think, Yep, they're right where they're supposed to be.

_____ Today I'll look at the conditions I place on acceptance and try to practice this principle more full



Thank You.....

.....for stopping by our initial issue of The Messenger.

A few things from our guidelines should you want to contribute, and please do, or maybe wonder the how and why of the newsletter.

From our guidelines:

All submissions to The Messenger Newsletter are subject to editing by the newsletter subcommittee and may or may not be included in the newsletter at the discretion of the Editor with input from the subcommittee. The editing process will follow the methodology outlined in the document [Consensus Based Decision Making Basics](#) as offered by World. [CBDM Basics final.pdf](#)

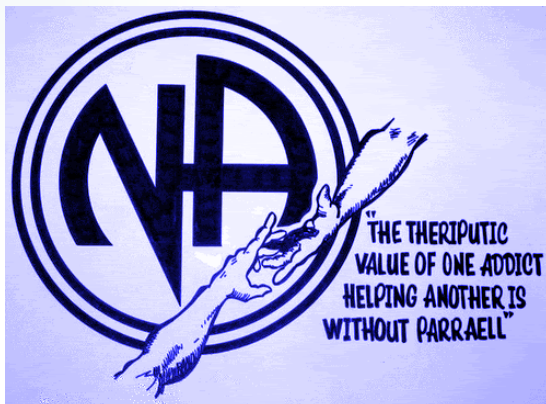
Submitted material will be available to the contributor of said material for review of any editing by the newsletter subcommittee, which will consider suggestions for further editing by the contributor prior to publishing.

By sending an item to the newsletter, the person(s) who has contributed the material confirms that the material is his/hers/their original work, or the individual will supply the link to any such material as may be needed.

Generally, the newsletter subcommittee will only consider original Material, or that which has originated in NA approved literature, or has been published by another NA entity.

The Messenger Newsletter strongly encourages anyone who contributes to the newsletter to have 3 mo. or more clean time and / or belong to and be active in a home group.

Editor



Treasure Valley Area of
Narcotics Anonymous

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