



SANITY

THE FOLLOWING INFORMATION WAS COPIED FROM
NARCOTICS ANONYMOUS WORLD SERVICE INC.
MEMBERSHIP SURVEY DONE IN 2007

NARCOTICS ANONYMOUS MEMBERSHIP SURVEY

At every NA world convention since 1996, NA World Services has distributed demographic surveys. In 2007, the survey was disseminated at the world convention which was held in San Antonio, Texas. Additionally, this survey was available for members who choose to participate online and via mail and fax. This marks the first time in NA's history that a fellowshipwide demographic survey was offered. There were approximately 13,500 responses, which represents the largest sample to date. We collect this data to provide information about our fellowship, strengthen our public relations efforts, and learn more about how and where we carry our message of recovery.

NA Membership

NA is comprised of people who come from many races, cultures, age groups, professions, and backgrounds. The only requirement to become an NA member is the desire to stop using drugs. The choice of joining the NA Fellowship rests with the individual. There are no dues or fees for membership; we are self-supporting through our own contributions. NA is a community-based organization that holds more than 50,000 weekly meetings in 130 countries.

Age

Based on survey responses, the average age of NA members is 42.8.

Influence to Attend First NA Meeting

Multiple answers were permitted. The top twelve choices are listed.

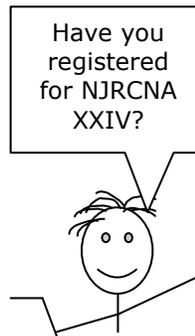
- NA Member 58%
- Treatment/Counseling Agency 55%
- Family 39%
- Other 37%
- NA Literature 18%
- AA Member/Group 15%
- Court Order 10%
- Probation/Parole Officer 9%
- Non-NA Friend/Neighbor 8%
- Healthcare Provider 8%
- Correctional Facility 8%
- Employer/Fellow Worker 6%

Meeting Attendance

Regular attendance at NA meetings provides the opportunity to experience the NA message of recovery. Members surveyed attend an average of 4.2 meetings a week.

Occupation

- Health Professional 14%
- Professional/Technical 14%
- Other/Self-Employed 14%
- Manager/Administrator 13%
- Laborer 9%
- Service Worker 5%
- Sales 5%
- Clerical Worker 4%
- Educator 3%
- Crafts/Arts 2%
- Transportation 2%
- Did Not Answer 15%



The 2007 Membership Survey marks the first time that members were asked to assess areas of their lives that have improved with NA attendance. The two areas that received overwhelming improvement were Family Relationships where 90% of our members stated enrichment, and Social Connectedness was realized by 83% of the respondents.

NA literature states that active addiction is marked by increased isolation and destruction with relationships. Recovery in NA has helped survey respondents to repair the damage in their lives from drug addiction.

Quality of Life Improvement Areas

- Family Relationships 90%
- Social Connection 83%
- Stable Housing 76%
- Employment 75%
- Education 53%

Drugs Used on a Regular Basis

- Multiple answers were allowed.
- Alcohol 89%
 - Cannabis 81%
 - Cocaine 73%
 - Stimulants 57%
 - Hallucinogens 48%
 - Opiates 45%
 - Crack 44%
 - Prescription 44% (based on printed survey only)
 - Tranquilizers 41%
 - Barbiturates 39%
 - Inhalants 20%
 - Methadone 17%

CAN YOU FREEBASE A BURRITO? A TRUE STORY

By Joe Fernandes

Whenever my friends and I sit and talk about addiction, the conversation is almost never about drugs. It may start with drugs, but usually finds its way into how messed up we all are without them. After being clean for over a decade, sometimes, drugs seem so far away. However, addiction continues to wreak havoc in all our lives. I was told when I first got clean that drugs were just a symptom of my problem. That addiction will manifest itself in my life in so many ways. I figured that it would be in relationships, friendships, and such. But I never thought addiction would get me again...in the form of "The Grilled Stuffed Burrito" from Taco Bell.

It was a typical day at work. The clock was moving slow, boss was in a bad mood, and I was hung over from two nights of staying up late feeling sorry for myself. That's usually my addiction's first attack — get me feeling sorry for myself, and I will surely begin thoughts that will sabotage my life. It keeps me tired and very obedient to negative desires. I decide that a little lunch will do me good, so I head out to the local Taco Bell. I see a sign for the "All New Grilled Stuffed Burrito — A large, warm, soft, flour tortilla wrapped around seasoned ground beef, hearty beans, seasoned rice, a blend of three cheeses (cheddar, pepper jack and mozzarella), creamy Pepper Jack sauce, and Fiesta Salsa, then grilled to perfection. (You can also upgrade this item with marinated and grilled all-white-meat chicken or authentic carne asada steak.)" I put the actual description to illustrate what sold me. Even writing this makes me salivate.

When I held this warm burrito that was grilled to perfection, I knew it was going to be great. When I took the first bite, I had the same thought that I had when I did my first line of cocaine, "Where have you been all my life?" There are no words to describe how delicious this was. How comforting it made me feel. I no longer felt sorry for myself, the day no longer dragged. I was full and I felt good...real good...too good.

For the next two weeks I ate the burrito everyday at lunch. I changed it up a little, sometimes with hot sauce, sometimes with chicken or steak. Every combination, better than the next. Can I find a way to make this even better, more pure? Can I freebase a burrito? I was hooked, and I had no idea. One day my boss asked me what I was doing for lunch and I told him that I was going to get a burrito. He said, "Joe, I've noticed you have been eating that burrito a lot lately." I could only respond the way an addict in true denial does, "I'm alright, I got it under control."

Another week of daily burrito consumption went by. The only outward sign of this affecting my life was the massive accumulation of hours I was wasting in the bathroom. There was only two explanations for this... either the daily doses of burritos, or the onslaught of Dysentery. Thankfully, I was living alone at the time, and had to explain myself to no one. My downward spiral was on, addiction had me in its clutches, and I chose to ignore all negative signs.

A few days later I found myself on the road for a TV shoot and hours away from any hook ups for my current "food of choice." I wasn't panicked because I knew this was a national chain. I asked the guy I was working for if he knew where I could find any. He said that he didn't think there was any in the area. From that moment on obsession

grabbed me and wouldn't let go. Knowing that there weren't any in the area, made my cravings for one all the more strong. I would have compromised myself at that moment, just to smell one...or know that one was near. I frantically found a computer and Googled it. I found one 30 minutes away. Can I drive 30 minutes and make it back in time for our shoot? I had to try. I printed out the directions and left without telling anyone. I was in full addict mode on the way to a fix.

Any addict will tell you that the act of going to get your stuff is always the best part. The anticipation is exhilarating. You run through all the scenarios of how great it will be once you get it. Will I get chicken, beef or steak? Hot or mild sauce? Should I not get a drink so I could savor the flavor for hours? I was insane. I was speeding and looking out for police so I didn't get pulled over. I had not one second to give if I wanted to get back in time. Then, on my left, in the distance, I saw the purple sign with the big yellow bell. I even turned down my radio for full concentration. My stomach started moving and growling in anticipation of the greasy goodness that was about to be had. As I approached I saw a no left turn sign and that the u-turn was a quarter mile up the road. I couldn't risk it so I pulled a screeching left, cutting off a car and found myself in the drive thru window. I ordered my burrito and pulled into the back corner of the parking lot. As I unwrapped, I noticed that it was not grilled. Not Grilled! But that's what makes it so great! That was the difference between that and lesser burritos on the menu. I was furious! But, I couldn't go argue with them to get another. It was lunch time and busy. I would have been late for the shoot. I looked at myself in the rearview mirror. As I was about to say to myself, "Do you believe this?" I paused. I looked at myself, and for the first time had a moment of clarity. I saw it all clear — and I was ashamed. I figured I would take a few breaths and calm down. I would eat this burrito and then stop — for good. As I placed this big, fat, greasy, devil in my mouth I started to cry. I couldn't even bite it. I looked to my left and saw a family staring at me. There I was, a young man with years of recovery from drugs, shamefully weeping in his car, with a burrito in his mouth. The woman asked me, "Is everything ok?" Without even taking the burrito out of my mouth I said, "I don't know." She quickly got her family away from me. I shamefully ate the burrito, and got back to my shoot in time.

When I got home that night I started to get honest with my sponsor about what I've been up to. We talked about the power of addiction and in all the ways it can affect us. I am proud to say that I went a whole year without the grilled stuffed burrito. My sponsor said it was unnecessary for me to give it up totally. It wasn't the burrito that was the problem. I just came to it in a vulnerable time in my life and that went out of control. He knew I was in a better frame of mind now. I decided to go get one and see what happened. Though I wanted one, when I got there, I felt like it was an old relationship that hurt me. Even though it wasn't the burritos fault, I thought it was best I stay away. I decided to look forward with my life, try something new. I went for the "Spicy Chicken Burrito — A warm, soft, flour tortilla wrapped around shredded chicken that has been slow simmered in authentic Mexican spices, seasoned rice, creamy Jalapeño sauce, and Fiesta Salsa." It sounded good...real good...too good. So, I did what any addict with clarity does when confronted with that strong an urge and doesn't know what to do... I got the hell out of there.



Dear Sanity:

Dear Sanity:

I am having a lot of difficulty and pain in working Step Eight. Making a list of people I harmed is eating away at my brain. The list is long and I don't even know if I can think of everyone I hurt. I don't know if I will ever be willing to make amends to everyone. I don't know how I would approach a lot of people.

I am losing sleep over this and I can't think about anything else. It is driving me crazy. I don't know if I can do this step. The thought of making amends to all these people is very overwhelming. I am a mess. I need help. The burden of this step is killing me. I don't know what to do.

Confused Calvin

Dear Calvin:

Step Eight states "We made a list of all persons we had harmed and became willing to make amends to them all". Your struggle with this step is not uncommon. Some amends seem impossible to make. Approaching people to make amends can be overwhelming.

In *It Works How and Why* it states that in this Step "we begin the process of making peace with others. ... We need to do whatever we can to repair the harm we've done ... While our efforts to make amends may make a difference in the lives of those we have harmed, this process has the greatest impact on our own lives. ... By the time we work our way through the process of making amends, we will surely be astounded by the level of freedom we feel."

"... We may be afraid that we've done so much damage that we can never repair it, or we may be afraid of facing the people we've harmed."

In Step Eight we make the list. When it is time to make amends it is best to wait until the time is right. We don't have to seek out people to make amends, but wait until situations present themselves to us when we can openly make amends.

Some amends can never be made, but being aware of them helps us heal. Sometimes we have to make indirect amends because a verbal amend might cause harm. This is part of Step Nine, so in Step Eight, just write the list.

In Step Eight in *It Works How and Why* it states: "Though we have yet to make peace with others, we've come a long way toward making peace with ourselves".

Sally Sanity



JERSEY UNITY UPCOMING CONVENTIONS:

NJRCNA XXIV

July 3, 4, 5, 2009

Doubletree Hotel
& Executive Meeting Center
Somerset, New Jersey

www.njrcna.org

Have you registered for NJRCNA XXIV ?
What are you waiting for?

Where's the coffee?

New Years Eve Convention

Bergen Area,
Dec 31, 2009,
Hanover Hilton, Whippany

33rd World Convention of NA WCNA-33

20, 21, 22, 23 August 2009
Centre Convencions Internacional (CCIB)
Barcelona, Spain

Visit our website at www.nanj.org for all convention information

Send input and articles to:

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Please put 'Sanity' in the subject line.

Editor: MD

Sanity is published every two months as a service of the New Jersey Region for its Groups and Members. Input and articles are welcome on all recovery related topics.

Opinions expressed here are those of individual addicts, not NA as a whole.

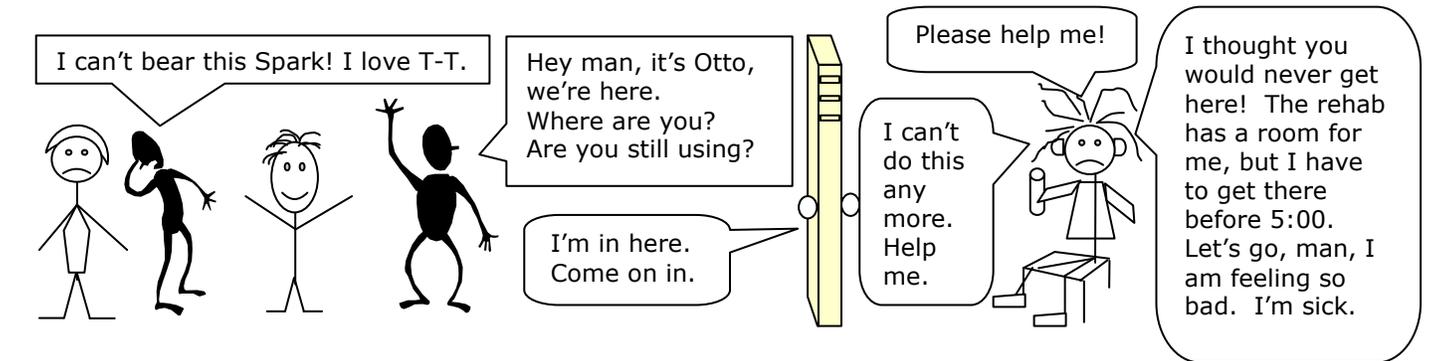
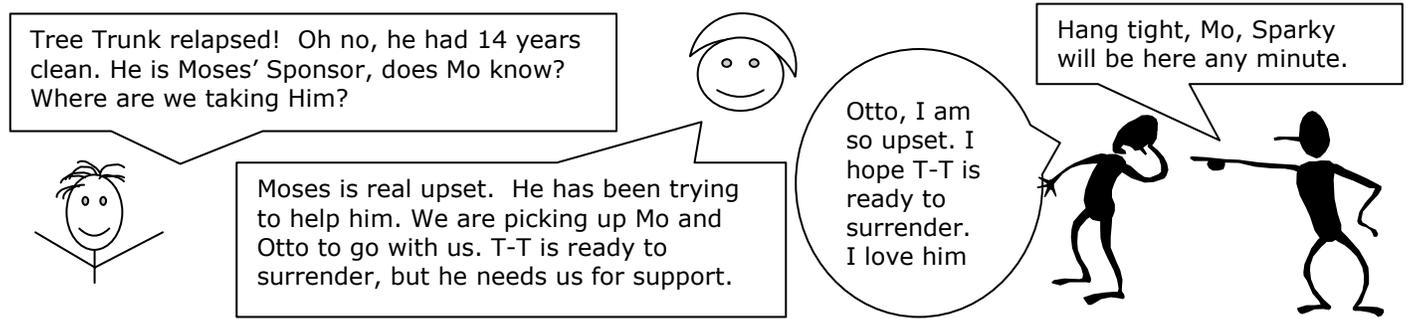
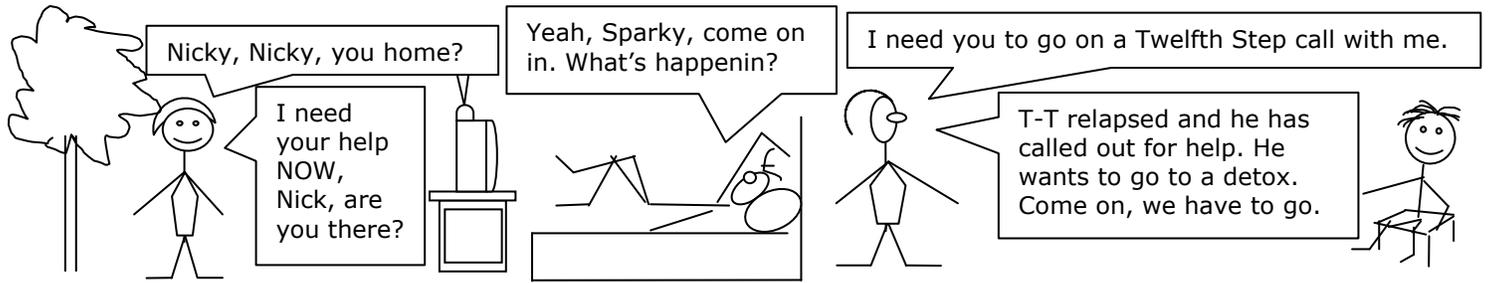
Issues of SANITY can be downloaded from the NJ Statewide Website at www.nanj.org

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**Words of Wisdom:** Don't use and go to meetings.

# The Adventures of Nicky Newcomer

## (Step Twelve)



**FIVE HOURS LATER**

Oh Cookie, what an emotional day! T-T reached out for help and asked to be taken to a detox. He was really a mess and could not stop using. Otto was so great in helping him but Moses was a basket case. Sparky and I were there for moral support. I learned a lot about helping people in need.

The rehab will take T-T for a ninety day program.

Nicky, I am so proud of you. You have come a long way in your recovery. I am glad you could be there for T-T. Way-to-go! Now come eat some dinner.

**THREE MONTHS LATER:**

Welcome to the Recover Now meeting of NA. My name is Moses and I am an addict. May we please have a moment of Silence followed by the Serenity Prayer for those who care to join in.

... Grant me the serenity...

My name is Tree Trunk and I'm an addict. I just got out of a 90 day rehab program and I am ready to continue my recovery in NA.

I could not have done it without the support of my Sponsor, Sparky, and my network of men - Nicky, Otto, and Moses. There is definitely therapeutic value in one addict helping another. They stood by me when everyone in my family gave up on me.

I need coffee!

MD