



## SHARKCOAST AREA NEWSLETTER

Name our Newsletter

Send all suggestions to [sharkbitesna@gmail.com](mailto:sharkbitesna@gmail.com)  
or give to Justin, Dave or Big Mike

*"Carrying the message of recovery, not the disease."*

Volume 1 Issue 1



March 2019

**It has been our experience when asked to write article for the newsletter members get this blank look like what should they write about. With that in mind we created an interview with 5 simple questions.**

- 1. How long have you been clean?** As of this morning 37 days, with a more peaceful mind.
  - 2. How has your life changed since you've been in recovery?** I have found hope, I have made new friends who I need to do nothing more than be honest with myself and them. I now believe and know that my addiction will no longer rule my life. My wife of 25 years tells me that I am once again the man she married. Every morning I wake up excited for the new day, and my first thought is another day clean and what meeting am I attending today. The wrong voice in my head is much quieter most of the time. I know exactly what to do if the wrong voice talks too much or insists on being too loud I know now that my addiction is a disease not a flaw in my character. Honesty means something once again (That feels really good!) I am grateful, I never really understood or knew what that meant until now. I AM TRULY GRATEFUL FOR NA, MY NEW FOUND FRIENDS AND MY LIFE NOT CONTROLLED BY MY DRUG OF CHOICE. The list goes on Thanks to everyone in NA I have a tremendous amount of respect for everyone that is committed to the best quality of life that being drug free.
  - 3. How important is it to have a sponsor in your life?** I just recently found my Sponsor, it was one of the first things I heard that I needed to do when I walked into my first NA meeting. At first I was uncomfortable walking up to a stranger or someone I talked to or listened to in a meeting and to ask someone to take on the task of helping me. I didn't know who would be the right sponsor for me, I had so many questions and in the beginning I thought that a sponsor was someone you called if you were going to jump off the cliff and use again. As I attended meetings I began to ask my new friends how I choose my sponsor, I really had no clue. Then a friend gave me a suggestion that worked for me. He said find someone that had something I wanted, he gave me examples like the car they drive etc. For me it is the length of clean time. I felt that someone clean for a substantial amount of time would most likely have experienced the many trials and challenges that I knew would be coming my way. So I found my sponsor approximately ten days ago, and I am now understanding that a sponsor is so much more than the person you call before you jump off of the cliff. I talk with my sponsor every day, he gives me alternative ways to look at things. He does this with common sense and a dash of humor. Both of which I respect and appreciate.
  - 4. How long have you been involve in narcotics anonymous service?** I have only had one opportunity to attend a Detox Center and I really enjoyed the experience. It felt so good to give something back. I am at the very beginning of my recovery and I feel like the majority of the time I am taking so much more than I am giving and that feels selfish to me. I want to get involved in H&I so I can give back that what I have received so kindly.
  - 5. Tell us about your home group?** Mine is The No matter what club that meets every Monday, Tuesday and Friday. It was the first meeting I walked into on a Friday morning after being up all night in a state of confusion and not knowing what to do. I only was sure that I have a problem and all of my efforts on my own were not working. That first meeting everyone was so kind and supportive, many offered suggestions like people places and thing, and if I could get clean anyone can. A friend at that meeting gave me the basic text as a Christmas present, (best Christmas present I ever received) My home group celebrates my success with me, they encourage me, they don't judge me, and they are truly some of the finest people I have ever met. The name of my home group inspires me. The No Matter What Club. To me it means that no matter what I am not using again, No matter what this disease will not control my life anymore, as I have a home in the No Matter What Club my friends there do not judge me they support me and all of us together can stay clean and live a good honest life drug free. I am truly grateful for The No Matter What Club, my home group. They also say the program works if you let it. My 37 days of clean is a good start and it is in no small part due to my home group who took me in.
- Thanks for the opportunity to share an Addict named Tony P.** PS:. Today Tony has 80 days clean.



## How important is it to have a sponsor in my life?

Finding a great sponsor has been one of the best investments I've made for my recovery. The help it has given me is equally described to the photosynthesis that occurs when plants receive water and sunlight.

The greatest joy in having a sponsor is in sharing a very personal journey with another recovering addict who can empathize with our journey and encourage us with experience, strength and hope...to stay vigilant towards better tomorrows. Instead of receiving the guilt or judgment I'd experienced from others outside the program, I have received the love and acceptance that caught me off guard at first.

Before moving to Florida, almost three years ago, I developed a wonderful bond to an honorable and loving sponsor, in Rapid City, South Dakota. During the years I'd been able to stay clean there, I began to realize the magnitude of how important having a sponsor truly is. My sponsor was very caring and did the best he could with me and I owe him a tremendous debt of gratitude. He had guided me through the steps for the first time. It was through this process that I began to understand why it wasn't just me who had started healing from my pain- but him as well. The therapeutic value of one addict helping another began to really have an impact in my life. I believe this is why the literature states its importance in so many ways.

My sponsor and I shared our experiences through our active addiction and he had helped me to face some things that I had hidden through years of drug use. It also showed me that I was not unique in my suffering and it began to show a pattern and a plan for recovery.

I remember I had one year clean in 2014 and I was contemplating filing for Bankruptcy. Of course, this was due to all the anxiety the past bills had caused me as a result of my poor choices in active addiction. At that time, my parents were encouraging me to pursue the next steps of the filing procedures and finalize the Bankruptcy. They were ready to see me move onward and upward as quickly as possible likely since I had already taken so much from them during my active using. However; my sponsor was a big influence in why I didn't make that choice (even against the encouragement of my folks). He reminded me that making amends in recovery wasn't just about the spiritual and moral crimes we had committed in active addiction but it was also about making things right to the faceless institutions like lenders and banks I had neglected as well. It was very hard to hear his advice at that time. I recall thinking it would have been much nicer to take the easy way out and to "wash my hands clean" of all the wrongdoings I had done in the past. However, upon much prayer, I agreed to his guidance and fought to catch up financially. That year I had a record year in Sales for my employer at the time and I remember just how amazing it felt to restore my finances and keep my credit from taking a nose dive.

It wasn't just about helping other banks and nameless institutions write my name on their positive balances ledgers or even was how it made me feel to keep my credit from being damaged for the next 7 years. It was how I felt trusting that his guidance despite going through temporary discomfort, heartache, discipline and overtime. I believed in myself, his advice and the spiritual principles of the program. He helped me understand that I would not only prevail but ultimately grow spiritually. This was just one example of invaluable guidance we can only attain through a rich and seasoned relationship with another sponsoring addict who truly knows us and what we are capable of.

My current sponsor, has been one of the greatest things to occur to me in my life and my recovery. He has guided me with brilliance, care, passion, enthusiasm, honor, discernment, wisdom and overwhelming love! It really is the hand of my Higher Power (whom I choose to call GOD) that put us in each others' lives. I am encouraged and inspired by his unbridled passion for Narcotics Anonymous and what he knows we stand for. I'm continually reminded by him that I am also a blessing in his life as well. He lives the program not just in the rooms but applies the spiritual principles to every aspect of his life! This is exactly what I choose and want for my own life. I know we have learned a lot from one another already in the few years that we have known each other. We don't always agree but we love each other and respect each other. I was told to choose a sponsor that you would want to be in the future or has something you admire about them.

Language just can't articulate how much this relationship means to me. It can't be put into words. I respect him and honor his advice because he is the best example of whom I would like to be. We have already worked steps together. I am currently going through step 8. I'm looking back at how much we have gone through together already and the warmth and pride we have for each other now and it fills me with gratitude. He has asked for me to really share my decisions with him before making them because I haven't always done this in the past. I appreciate that he doesn't let me live in that guilt and shame of making those choices alone, however, he simply asks me to move forward with more awareness in involving him on all of the choices I will need feedback on. I need this guidance in my life today. Thank you to my sponsor, NA and to those who keep giving back to keep what they have! **"Big" Mike B**

### Sponsorship

When we come into the program we learn that we are powerless and that we are not in control of anything. We also learn that we can get a Higher Power to help us stay clean, but a sponsor helps you to stay here and work the steps in your life. Your sponsor is there to listen and will share their own life experiences with you so don't feel like you are in this alone. My sponsor loves me unconditionally and it's a two-way street. Thank God for sponsorship, I'm so glad for the program of NA.

### HAVE A STORY TO SHARE?

Your local area newsletter is looking for recovery stories to help carry a message of recovery. Take the few moments of time to write and submit them to us! We are always welcome for new and exciting articles to help carry a message of recovery.

Shark Coast Area  
Att: Newsletter  
PO Box 1668  
Venice, FL 34284  
sharkbitesna@gmail.com





**1. How long have you been clean?**

30 yrs. 7 mos. & 14 days

**2. How has your life changed since you've been in recovery?**

My life made a shifted 360 degrees I can write a book about how much my life as changed. I am not the same broken woman I was 30 yrs ago

**3. How important is it to have a sponsor?**

Having a sponsor is extremely important as she is the person guiding me in the spiritual principles.

**4. How have you been involved in Narcotics Anonymous Service?**

I have been involved in service since the beginning of my recovery from greeter, coffee maker, Secretary, alt. GSR, GSR, and treasurer at the group level, to Alt. secretary, secretary, alt chairperson and Chairperson at the area level H & I committee, Phone line, Convention committee. I've sponsored women for 29 yrs.

**5. Tell us about your home group.**

I'm relatively new to the area and my home group welcomed me and made me feel a part of the area immediately. This is the norm for my home group, they have greeters that welcome everyone coming in and ensure they seek out newcomers to the group. In loving service Esther T.



**Building Strength through Peace**

When we come to the inevitable stage of tiring ourselves out from fighting everything and everyone we can choose to open our minds by getting humble and honest. When we come to this point of maturity we are ready to consider the suggestions offered to us by others who have been down this road before us. When we pick up a white and give up the fight we begin to build ourselves up by admitting defeat. This is a time when we can start focusing our energy towards handling the inevitable curves life takes. When ripping and running all our resources were stretched thin and often far past their breaking points before we needed to use them. When we practice spiritual principals we are slowly building our abilities to handle lives ever changing situations by growing inner peace. **anonymous member of Shark Coast Area**

 **New Meeting in Shark Coast Shamrocking In Recovery** meets on   
**Sunday 10:00-11:00 am**  
 Shamrock Park 3900 Shamrock Dr. **Venice**

**Do The Right Thing**

Help me, Higher Power, to get out of myself, to stop always thinking what I need. Show me the way I can be helpful to others and supply me with the strength to do the right thing

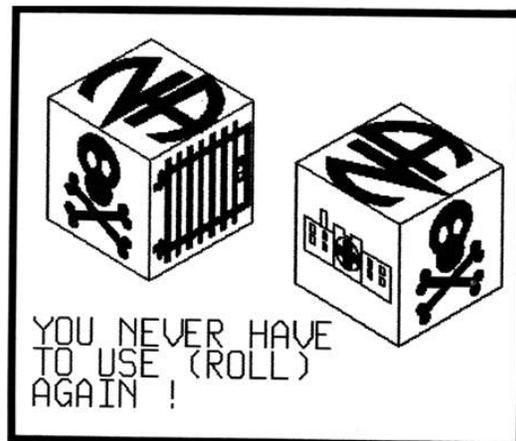
**GRATEFUL ADDICT**

My recent experience:

I just recently visited Wales in United Kingdom due to the sudden death of my brother. As I have been taught, shown, and guided on this journey of recovery, I sought out my support of brothers and sisters in Narcotics Anonymous meetings, wherever I may be traveling to, and for whatever reason. I was able to get such a great dose of gratitude for what we have here in Sharkcoast Area, as small as some people may feel it to be.

I had the opportunity to attend three meetings while I was there for over a 15 day period. One in Abergavenny, one in Newport, and one in Cardiff. Abergavenny and Newport has only one meeting a week. Cardiff has only four meetings a week. To put this into perspective, Cardiff has over twenty times the population of Venice and the streets were lined with tents and homeless addicts. The drug epidemic there was quite astonishing. There were no meeting lists available, no Basic Texts and very few I.P.'s or other literature available. Those meetings are really struggling to pay rent in order to keep the doors open. It's very sad to see and it really touched me and helped me to stay grateful for what we have. The addicts in Sarasota County Jail get more of an opportunity to go to meetings than the local people in those areas. As a 'World Wide Fellowship' of Narcotics Anonymous, we can all contribute, whether it's the dollar in the basket that gets forwarded to 'World Services' of Narcotics Anonymous, or a service commitment that helps us carry the message of recovery to the addict that still suffers. **WE CAN DO THIS!!**

Thanks for allowing me to share...**anonymous member of Shark Coast Area**



**Congratulations To Our Members That Recently CELEBRATED CLEAN TIME!**

|           |            |          |
|-----------|------------|----------|
| Ian W     | 12-18-2013 | 5 years  |
| Ashley F  | 12-25-2017 | 1 year   |
| Kim C     | 1-8-2005   | 14 years |
| Sean M    | 1-10-2016  | 3 years  |
| Mike      | 1-12-2007  | 12 years |
| Roarke B  | 1-13-18    | 1 year   |
| Patrick B | 1-13-2010  | 9 years  |
| Hass      | 1-21 -2018 | 1 year   |
| Steve D.  | 1-24-2011  | 8 years  |
| Nolan B.  | 3-3-2017   | 2 years  |
| Ed J.     | 3-4-1990   | 29 years |



Please send any information about Anniversaries, speakers or events with your GSR to area meeting for inclusion in the next Newsletter.

**Area Service Committee Meeting**

2nd Sunday 1 - 3pm  
New Hope Missionary Baptist Church  
2100 Englewood Rd., Englewood

**Subcommittee Meetings**

**Activities** after Friday Night Lights Group **Venice** (call Helpline for exact week)

**Hospitals & Institutions (H&I)** 2nd Sunday @ Noon before Area meeting **Englewood**

**Newsletter** every Tuesday @ 7:00 pm before the Frontier Group **Venice**

**Public Relations ( PR )** 2nd Friday 7:00 pm before Friday Night Lights Group **Venice**

**Policy** meets as needed



**Recovery in Paradise Spiritual Retreat 26**

Has Been Postponed for another year. The Conch Republic Area is delighted to announce that we are welcomed with open arms back to the amazing Sugarloaf KOA campgrounds once again; however, they will not be able to accommodate us until April of 2020.

Write an article for the Newsletter. Send to [sharkbitesna@gmail.com](mailto:sharkbitesna@gmail.com)



**Newsletter Staff**

**Chair:** Justin H  
**Co-Chair:** Open  
**Reporters:** Dave C  
**Secretary:** Open

Newsletter meets every Tuesday @ 7:00 pm before the "Frontier Group" in **Venice**

**Please join us with your ideas and stories. All addicts welcome regardless of clean time.**

**Up Coming Events**

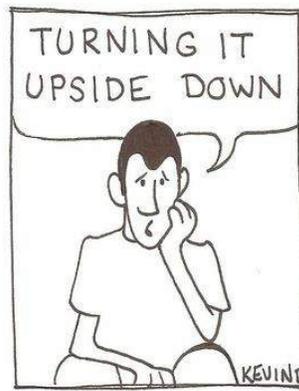
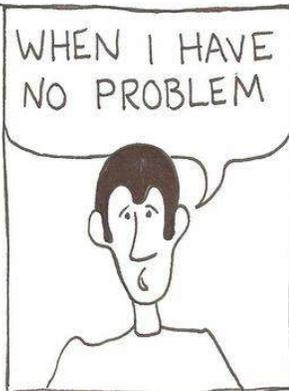
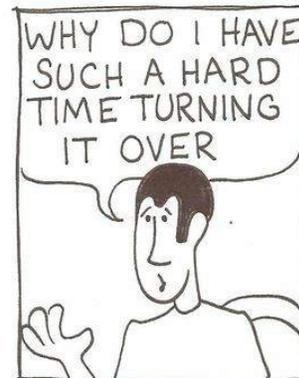
**March 22-23, 2019**  
**8th Biennial Florida Regional Service Symposium**  
**Sheraton Tampa Brandon**  
**10221 Princess Palm Ave., Tampa**

Service is the backbone of the NA Fellowship!  
All members are eligible to attend.

Register for the Saturday Night Banquet, the Women's Banquet, and the Zonal Breakfast here: <https://servicesymposium.org>

**Monday Night Miracles**  
Invites you to join us for  
**FOOD FUN & FELLOWSHIP**  
**April 6, 2019**  
12:00 pm - 6:00 pm  
For our  
**Second Annual SPEAKER JAM**  
Donations at the door greatly appreciated  
New Hope Missionary Baptist Church  
2100 Englewood Road, Englewood

**LIFE IN RECOVERY**



**Saturday March 16th Lakes Park Pavilion C**  
**7330 Gladiolus Drive Fort Myers, FL**  
**11 am to 3pm Suggested Donation \$10.00**  
**(No Addict Turned Away)**  
**Food, Games, Speakers.**  
**T-shirts for sale \$10.00**



**Right to Disclaimer**

**This form must be filled out and submitted with any and all articles sent in for publication. Failure to do so may result in your article not being considered for publication.**

I hereby give permission to the Shark Coast Area newsletter subcommittee to edit (if necessary) and publish my written article without recourse. The opinion expressed in this newsletter are written by individuals and are in no way a reflection of any member of the newsletter staff or NA as a whole. Articles are edited for clarity, punctuation, grammar, and in accordance with The Handbook for Narcotics Anonymous Newsletter.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**Emailed articles will be considered giving consent to newsletter committee for editing purposes.**