

YEAR XL - NO. 2 - JUNE 2025

40 ANOS
NÃO
TENS?
SERENIDADE

SERENIDADE

SERVICE EDITORS



THE DIFFICULT (OR NOT) NUMBER TWO

PAULO O. - GRATEFUL ADDICT

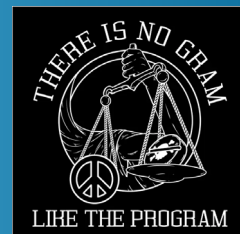
I remember, as a teenager, when I was starting to discover my taste in music and following the little news that came from abroad, the obsession of the foreign music press (mainly from the UK) with discovering the next big band. Almost every week, a new name would pop up, sometimes without an album out yet, touted as the new discovery.

Some of these bands didn't even record an album, others did and, failing to live up to expectations, fell into oblivion, and there were still those who, having released an acclaimed first album, had to pass the test of a second album in order to confirm their talent. This is the second issue of the digital life of this magazine, and it's the issue of confirmations and cutting corners. We've discovered that the greatest pressure has to come from us, that criticism will always exist and that, really, we can only count on ourselves.

The initial illusion has faded somewhat: there are no funny messages to share, no competition results to announce, no spontaneous contributions to declare. In fact, since the first issue, we haven't received anything that wasn't specifically requested.

We're still here, with the same goal, only more realistic: to launch a magazine by addicts for addicts, and we're going to continue. Just for today, of course.





XVCNALX

LINEUP

14 June

AUDITORIUM

11:30 Relationship with a higher power

14:30 1st, 2nd and 3rd Step

16:30 Loss and grief in recovery

18:30 12th Tradition: Anonymity

ROOM 1

12:30 Living clean

14:00 A message of hope

15:30 Sponsor and sponsee

17:00 New path of recovery

18:30 Recovery beyond borders

ROOM 2

16:00 Surprise activity

20:30 Dinner

22:00 Party

15 June

09:00 Morning Nature Walk

AUDITORIUM

11:00 Service: foundation of recovery

14:00 10th, 11th and 12th Steps

16:00 Countdown

ROOM 1

12:30 Dreams in recovery

ROOM 2

13:30 Workshop: The importance of service and attraction of the message



The first meeting I held was an LGBTQIA+ online meeting

Hi, I'm João and I'm an addict. I'd like to thank all the people who make this publication possible. This magazine has kept me warm and company many times, because in the center where I went for treatment there was a bookshelf with various books and magazines, including Serenity.

And although many of them were from the 1990s and early 2000s, they had shares that spoke directly to me in 2024. After all, times change, but our illness doesn't.

And the times we live in are fertile ground for this treacherous enemy, as we seem to be increasingly disconnected from each other. Technological advances bring a lot of good, but also a lot of bad, such as isolation and overdependence on digital devices, which can negatively affect interpersonal relationships and mental health. In contrast to this increasingly disconnected world, Narcotics Anonymous offered me what I needed most: connection, belonging, community.

That's why I feel privileged to have found NA meetings. It's rare to find this spirit of mutual help in our society today, even though it's essential if we want to live in peace and harmony with our surroundings.

The meetings were, and still are, very important to me. Having a place where I can talk about what's going on in my life and also listen to other addicts who are going through the same things is priceless. The first meeting I went to was an LGBTQIA+ online meeting, when I was still in treatment, and it couldn't have started better, because, as an addict and a gay man, it was so important to find so much identification and to be in contact with other people like me. After all, we've all been through very similar experiences.

And it's obvious that, as an addict, I can identify with almost all the sharing I hear at the meetings, but having a specific meeting increases that identification even more, which is something very powerful. I often ask myself questions like: "Did I become an addict because I'm gay?" or "Am I only gay because I'm an addict?". And although I think the two things can be interconnected, I believe that neither is the cause of the other - but I can't ignore the fact that I started

using substances because I was afraid of being the person I am.

Drugs (I thought) gave me the confidence to be the person I wanted to be, I lost the fear and shame of being my true self, and I quickly thought that this was the solution to my problems, to the point of thinking that drugs were good for me, because only through them could I live my truth. But I was wrong. Today I know that it was just another excuse, a way of sustaining my addiction, a rationalization that led me to believe that drugs were part of me and that this was the only way I could be my true identity.

Not to mention that I was already used to keeping a part of my life to myself, because I couldn't accept myself, because I felt I needed to hide. And so my addiction and my sexual orientation went hand in hand. That double life, of which I was unhealthily proud.

The power of identification really is something magical. I'm very grateful for the existence of specific meetings (such as LGBTQIA+) and it makes me sad when I hear people criticizing them and the online meetings, because without them my early recovery would have been very different and probably more difficult, since I only have one face-to-face meeting a week where I live. I think the important thing is that the meetings serve their primary purpose.

The ease of joining an online meeting at any time of the day is priceless because, as I was told when I arrived in NA: "You'll never be alone again."

And isn't that so true?
Thank you and +24.



She came to rest her head, and discovered peace of mind

The sincere sharing of an Adita who thought she was only coming to Portugal to “rest her head”... and saw her life change.

The usual introduction: “Hello, I'm Marília and I'm an Adita in Recovery.”

Aware of how far she's come, Marília won't allow herself to go any further without making it clear and clear what she now holds dear and won't negotiate: “I'd like to start by saying that I'm extremely grateful to Narcotics Anonymous. It was this program that saved my life.”

She started early.

Very early.

Even with a good family background, she felt the need to escape from reality.

To run away from herself.

“At the age of 14 I was already trying to escape from reality and I was already finding it difficult to deal with my feelings.” There was no history of violence.

There was no neglect.

There was no bad background or family chaos.

“I come from a functional family.”

But addiction is insidious.

It has no criteria.

It doesn't look at status, appearance, or special or visible degrees of harmony or suffering.

Lured by the ease of anesthesia, Marília gradually lost herself in the fascination of parties, alcohol and euphoria. In the fascination of a marginal life, lived and experienced with older people in “cool” environments that made her feel more grown up and adult.

From there to another kind of substance, the step was very small.

Completely unthinking.

Just felt.

Absolutely unreflected.

That kind of sensation and thoughtlessness is only possible at the peak of adolescent inconsequence.

From then on... a constant slope.

A slope that is also unprecedented.

Always going down.

“I was an excellent student, but with the hangovers, my school career became increasingly difficult.”

At 17 I got pregnant - the infamous story of the child with a child in its womb!

“I wasn't able to look after myself and now I had the responsibility of looking after the life of that little human being!”

Despite everything, during her pregnancy Marília managed to stop using.

She stopped using, but nothing else changed...

The environment, the company, the routines... everything remained the same.

When he was born, it all started again.

“Motherhood was a “double burden”.

It wasn't enough to bring her back to life, but deep down - and especially today when she looks back - it was the thing that hurt her most to give up.

“I didn't know how to deal with anything around me and using it was the only solution I could see.”

All of Marília's words overflow with Gratitude, but Guilt continues to accompany the Awareness that Responsibility brings her. Her Parents have always been there for her. They fought. They fought for her.

And, ultimately, they took care of her son when she couldn't. When she wasn't there.

“I would disappear for days at a time. I was very lucky that my parents took care of my son, otherwise I don't know what would have become of him. That's something that still brings me a lot of guilt today.”

Days in a row when no one knew about her.

Days, months and years in a row in which she herself didn't know about herself.

Imprisoned for the first time for 6 months!

She came to rest her head, and discovered peace of mind

A real scare for anyone, you'd think...

"I thought: 'This is it! This is when I'm going to change my life. I don't ever want to use again!'

Even though the latch on the gate wasn't fully open for her to leave, her mind had already made the journey from jail to the neighborhood; she had danced to the scheme of the moment and felt the longed-for high.

"The same day I got out, I forgot everything and went straight to score. I forgot my son again. I forgot my parents. Above all, I forgot myself!"

This time it was worse.

"I no longer went home with the shame of having used again."

Shame.

Homeless.

On the street.

"I lived for and with the drug.

Without any dignity. I was a slave to drugs."

The repetition of stories and mental processes never ceases to intrigue me... How the mind of an Active Addict always prefers to hear what is most convenient for its use and its deprivation. And with Marília it would obviously be no different - because it never is!

"I saw people going to treatment, who, when they came back, went straight back to using... So, for me, there was no point in asking for help!"

Accommodated to this defense, Marília remained in that increasingly dark and dangerous world.

It wasn't long before she was back behind bars.

New Prison.

New Scare.

New Promise.

New Failure.

This time, with extra elements adorning the Scenario of Terror:

"The bitterness of the Life I was leading wasn't enough,

I still got into a Toxic Relationship. Violence, sexual abuse... and I felt like I was at the bottom of a well."

It was at that moment that I learned that the bottom of the well can have springs.

And it does if you want it to, it does if you try!"

Marília wanted to and she tried.

Fear overcame Shame.

Pain overcame Pride.

"I couldn't get out of that relationship."

It wasn't Courage that moved her, it was Dread.

It was Fear.

It was the constant Terror of not knowing when and where the next blow would come from.

"I thought there was no way out of it. He always found me and if I didn't go with him, I'd get beaten up more."

Marília flips it all over.

"The truth is that it was all this that made me ask for help. Until the day I got up the courage and went to my parents and an association for help!"

In the end, Marília was tired... she didn't know exactly what, but she was exhausted!

"I needed to put on a few pounds and rest my head.

My intention wasn't to come here to stop using.

My intention was to leave Luxembourg for a few months and, when I came back, to continue using."

Marília could well be grateful.

She asked for help and got it in the blink of an eye.

Her parents had been waiting for that phone call for years.

Everything was ready.

But she...

She needed "That" Farewell...Marília went to use one last time with the person who beat her.

She came to rest her head, and discovered peace of mind

"The insanity was so great that the day before I left I still went to use with that person who made my life so painful!"

I'm glad Marília is here today to tell this story because many like her will certainly never tell it.

Goodbye, Luxembourg. Hello, Portugal!

"I thought I'd never be able to stay clean for long like the people I saw in the Online Meetings, like those people who went there to do HI&RP!!!"

In fact, Marília's initial plan didn't go as planned.

Yes, she ran away from that Relationship.

Yes, she left Luxembourg.

Yes, she put on a few pounds.

Yes, she rested her head.

But suddenly, or little by little, actually? something else was happening...

"I pretended to believe it, and the truth is that my life changed the day I came to Portugal!"

Goodbye, Despair. Hello, Recovery!

What was supposed to be another temporary escape... became Rebirth.

It stayed. It remained. It grew.

"I ended up making the best decision of my life!"

It's easy to see why Marília made a point of saying that she is "Extremely Grateful to Narcotics Anonymous".

After all, in Recovery, she has done just that - she has recovered valuable things that she thought were lost or irretrievably damaged.

She has completed Treatment.

She takes Meetings.

She has stuck with the Service.

She creates Friendships and cultivates Bonds.

"At first it was very scary. I thought I'd never make friends because I didn't know anyone here...

But I did. And for real.

I've got a sponsor who has been a great help for my recovery."

Rebuild.

With Time.

With Patience.

With Hope.

"Today I'm rebuilding the relationship with my son who is now 12 and I only started to be present in his life when he was 9."

It's not always easy, but today she has tools.

"It's with the help of this program that I now know how to deal with the situation."

She does service at the Helpline.

She lives in a healthy relationship.

And above all...

"I've learned to respect myself as a woman."

Marília came to rest. To gain some weight, to escape. And she stayed to live.

It shows us that Miracles continue to happen.

It shows us that no matter why it is done, asking for help can change the course of not just one, but several Lives!!!

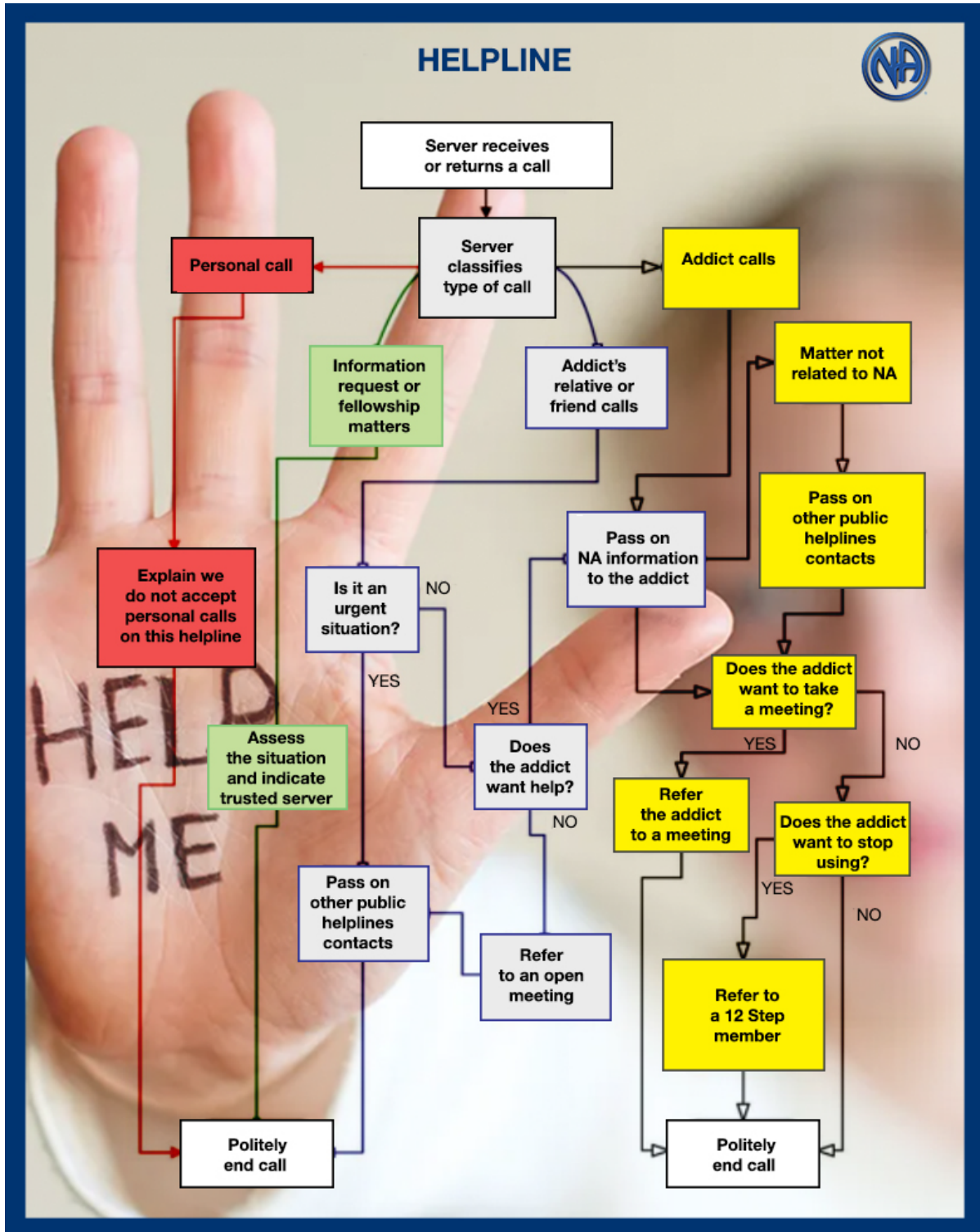
Thank you, Marília.

I'm glad you came.

I'm glad you stayed.

Lots of +24. ❤️

HELPLINE SERVICE





The Relapse

restoring oneself

Hello, I'm Eduardo a recovering addict, I'd like to start this sharing by thanking my Higher Power for helping me to be clean and sober during this sharing.

In 2001 I started a new way of life, I finished a 12-step treatment and came out to the reality of life after learning that I had a disease called addiction, I had accepted and forgiven most of my past behaviors and learned tools to live one day at a time with this 12-step program and with my disease that had no cure or control, but I could keep my life in balance and in a healthy way.

I looked like a robot, afraid to fail, keeping almost all the suggestions that were given to me religiously, working the program in all areas of my life.

I held meetings every day, made plans for the day and at night an outlook on the day, created medium- and long-term life goals taking care not to project feelings outside of the day, got involved in NA, creating new friends, people who weren't using drugs or alcohol and who found a new way to live free and happy, did service for 20 years in my base meeting, did service in the area that gave me a lot of help in dealing with the chaos of society and with diverse opinions and I learned how to deal with controversy and inflamed egos.

I had the privilege of having a supportive family, who, despite having a lot of difficulties, were able to pay for 11 months of my treatment, which had been abroad due to suggestions they had received at Families Anonymous, which my parents, through my sister, had started to live with the 12-step program, and they gave me the option of being able to finish my university degree, which until then had been a study slog due to my use.

With the balance that NA had given me and the life of recovery, I managed to do 2 years in one year with good results and the following year finish the course with the preparation of a beekeeping project together with my grandfather who was my beekeeping master.

However, my first big test of my recovery came with the announcement that my grandfather, whom I was very

close to and loved, had cancer, because of his acceptance of my illness without any judgment, just unconditional and true love.

His death was difficult, as I was finishing the last courses of my degree, while managing my life between Ponte de Lima and the Hospital of Santa Maria da Feira, with the support of the meetings in the area, which listened to me so much that I shared my sadness, my doubts, my desire to use that I often felt like saying, to hell with all this, I'm going to escape this pain in the way I know best!

However, recovery had already given me the pleasure of living without drugs and the constant calls to addicts and sponsors, trusting that my Higher Power would give me what I needed, made me accept his death! I went through my first clean and sober mourning, feeling the pain and sometimes the despair of not feeling the physical presence of my grandfather who had gone, but I continued to hear his voice inside me, to smell his beret which still kept his presence with me and I faced his soul as my watcher as my Higher Power and I felt his presence immediately.

It was in the last exam to finish the course, due to those difficult moments, I thought I wasn't prepared enough and the fear of failing, the anxiety of not being able to finish my goal, which for a perfectionist like me, would be the frustration of a failure!

And in the first 15 minutes of the exam, when I read the syllabus backwards and forwards, everything had been swept away, I knew nothing and I didn't know how to start!

I stopped and decided to pray, breathe and ask for help from my Higher Power, in this case I spoke to my grandfather, I asked him to calm me down, to help me remember the subjects and after a teacher interrupted me to ask if I was all right, I started that exam putting in my months of effort and everything came out!

I got the best mark I'd ever had, 16 in an exam in the most difficult subject of the course and I felt that I was on the right path, that I had felt my grandfather's presence of my Higher Power and I never questioned it

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again! I shared this magic at the meetings because I believe that we should also transmit positive messages and not just dump the bag of negative things at the meetings as I had done for almost 6 months!

And I managed to pass my first big test of recovery, feeling the pain clean and sober!

From that moment on I believed that it's in the difficult moments, in the pain, that we can grow spiritually by accepting and surrendering what we can't control and only doing what we can!

The magic of this moment was the sharing of my grandfather's small inheritance, it was a draw between 2 daughters in which the farm that would go ahead with the project with him, fell to my mother who immediately volunteered to let me explore it!

I went ahead with the project, applied for European aid and got funding support as well as a bank loan and so I started a difficult project with an inner strength, overcoming all the physical and mental obstacles that come with carrying out a project of this size and unique in Portugal.

In 2 years I completed the project, having built the first Industrial Melaria (honey extraction unit) in the country, always in contact with NA, in my base meeting, in contacts with my friends in NA and in the service in NA, without this support this project would not have been possible!

I had become an acceptable and productive member of this society, as the preambles of Narcotics Anonymous say!

At this stage I also met the great love of my life and a great passion, the mother of my children!

As an architect, she worked at the Faculty of Architecture in Porto and was my great help in building this project, having been the author of this 1st Melaria in Portugal, we were accomplices, friends and lovers, we rebuilt a small house in Quinta, literally we rebuilt it ourselves, a house that was our nest for almost 5 years, we were very happy, I felt fulfilled professionally, emotionally and spiritually, without a doubt the best

moments of my life, all thanks to my recovery and this Narcotics Anonymous program!

The mother of my children knew about my addiction, but she never lived with it during my time of use.

I think one of the attractions she had for me was precisely that in the past she had heard about the arrogant, overbearing and crazy person that characterized me the most during my time of use, and then she met a balanced, hard-working, dreamy and spiritual person!

She was always present in our NA lives, the meetings he often held between the Minho Area, base meetings and the Porto area, Santa Maria da Feira, São João da Madeira, Oliveira de Azeméis, Vale de Cambra, Espinho and Ovar, all these were meetings that I had the privilege of knowing, some of them already closed!

My decline in NA and the growing internal emptiness began with the demonstration of my insecurities in my personal relationship with the mother of my children.

I began to feel unconsciously the fear of abandonment, the fear of rejection and when I had these bouts of jealousy, I would identify the mistake promptly, working the 10th step and apologizing, This brought up feelings of guilt and shame that I mistakenly shared less and less at meetings and with my addicted friends.

A few years into my recovery, I also unconsciously took an unhealthy pride in my time in recovery and thought I shouldn't share these childish emotions, not showing my vulnerability and never looking at why I was afraid of abandonment and rejection.

My professional life was going very well, I was exhibiting abroad and establishing contacts for the sale of all my bee products. I began to feel that I was a good professional, very good, and that's when the ego began to take hold of me again, without me being aware of it.

I stopped sharing with my Godfather on a regular basis and talking about these little details that were marking my personality, I started to stop being earnest and

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restoring oneself

became honest in my private life, but my individual recovery no longer came into play in business.

The financial pressure of having to meet the financial responsibilities resulting from the bank loan began to mess with my emotional and spiritual stability.

I began a slow and progressive process of self-reliance, in which all the decisions in my life were my decision and self-will in a camouflaged form was exercised regularly. The lack of acceptance of lower levels of productivity, related to the climate, to nature were difficult to accept and I felt angry at not being able to control these aspects.

The Serenity Prayer, which I often chanted in my head, ceased to exist and I began a process of controlling the things that were out of my hands and that I couldn't control. I continued to share in the meetings, which were no longer as frequent due to the change in my life's priorities: the professional and financial aspects were the priority!

I would pray and talk to my Higher Power, but always asking for things to make those priorities come true. Gratitude for what I had was only shared in meetings, I would only verbally say that I was grateful to be in recovery, but I rarely gave thanks for food, my car, my time management, my partner, my family and I gradually lost my spiritual peace, my spirituality only started to work at Christmas time, when I had a higher income and I always tried to help without shelters. My partner had to leave her job in Porto and return to our base city, Viana do Castelo, where I continued to have my hobbies such as being a surf teacher and being part of a club that held many international activities and events.

I resented the fact that she'd left the farmhouse, with the attitude of a baby king, starting to think that the world revolved around me, and I never dealt with the resentment I felt that the mother of my children had moved on with her professional life and didn't give a damn about my life, and I also jointly agreed to get a house in Viana, where I only spent weekends, as I was only with her at weekends because I had to be at the farm during the week.

The fear of abandonment and rejection quickly grew and whenever there were disconnections between us, the subject of my resentment always came up as a weapon, accusing her of not valuing my professional project and opting for her own!

The business of selling honey, propolis, royal jelly, pollen, swarms and beekeeping material was going well. In 2007 I had the best year ever, with a lot of work during the spring and summer, I slowly stopped holding meetings, just my base meeting in Viana. In that year of great productivity and good honey sales, I was able to repay a large part of my debt to the bank and quickly entered the projection that if I continued like this I would become rich in 8 years!

However, my Higher Power had other plans in store for me and not my own will, which was already related to money and financial power, making small dishonesties in the business I carried out, which were common practices in the society I lived in and in that business niche. In 2009, two violent fires destroyed my 14 apiaries, I was expecting another good year of beekeeping production and for four hours, all my work and commitment would be burned to ashes! It was devastating.

Even today, I haven't been able to make good the amount of the loss, without insurance because no insurance company covered this high-risk activity, essentially in forests, I was completely stripped bare with a rage, generated by impotence, in which I couldn't even have a responsible person to release my anger, to this day this mourning was difficult to do and it all stayed inside!

I used to share a lot in meetings, but a large part of the feelings were blocked and the lack of permanent surveillance of my illness made me become complacent and self-sufficient, in which I didn't even realize my condition! With my main productive apparatus destroyed, still in debt to the banks, I had to get by and, as I was a good professional in my field, I was invited to carry out organic farming inspections by the company that certified my project.

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restoring oneself

I started auditing all over Portugal, including the islands, staying permanently during the week and sometimes 2 to 3 weeks away from home. This work was very enriching and basically I was still managing my time and my work based on European procedures and rules. I had the privilege of holding NA meetings all over the country, spending 4 years feeling the security of being able to be anywhere and have an open room.

I held international meetings and exhibitions twice a year, in Brussels and Nuremberg, Germany, getting to know a lot about the Bio World and all the people in Europe responsible for this sector, bringing a lot of knowledge and great qualifications to the National producers and as I was a cool inspector, I created a lot of friendships and admiration for almost everyone I worked with, that's when my ego grew by leaps and bounds, abandoning the humility that characterized me and even starting a characteristic that I detest, Prepotency! It was difficult for anyone to confront me, whether professionally, because I rarely made mistakes, due to the personal discipline I gained in NA, because I was a perfectionist who always kept up to date and because of the power and control I thought I had over my life!

In 2010 we had our first child, I was always identified as a boy who loved children and there was a lot of pressure on me to be an exceptional father, however the exact opposite came to be reflected, which consciously brought me to a great frustration that I also kept inside me, with the shame of sharing because I thought I should only share positivity because I felt like an example of NA!

With the arrival of Afonso I went into an immature existential crisis, with a great need to go out with friends, while my partner spent the weekends I was in Viana alone looking after a child. I ran away from home as if I were running away from myself, I felt all the fears of being responsible for that beautiful living being to die for the rest of my life and the baby king attitude took over me!

My partner was very resentful and from that moment I never forgave myself, there were frequent arguments,

which when I felt confronted I reacted with verbal aggression in order to cause fear, so that no one would hit me with anything. And the first break-ups began at this stage.

It was like this with the mother of my children, with friends from the Surf Club, with family and even my NA colleagues took it out on me if I had a less correct attitude, like thinking I was the master of the meeting without realizing it, trying to get all the servers and addicts to do the job like me, because I thought I was perfect, or if I saw or felt that I was a more vulnerable or relapsed addict, I would start a series of terrible judgments, with very negative inventories, starting to scare people away from me, in short, the progress of my relapse was already announced 12 years before the physical relapse, because of these behaviors!

I became a functioning member of society, with a position of power in my professional life, a permanent conflict if things didn't go my way, always trying to control everything and everyone, becoming an overbearing arrogant person who, although I was sometimes aware of it, showed it by being extremely pleasant to those who were furthest away from me in order to obtain external internal validation of being a nice guy, I also had this attitude towards anyone I had an interest in, related to social and professional life!

Today I can see the person I was becoming in recovery, but I had been clean for many years and every year I received the multiple years key ring as a trophy of sick pride, thinking I was the biggest in my neighborhood and surroundings. The mother of my children tried to warn me about the person I was becoming, but I always thought she was judging me and criticizing me for never having dealt with the resentment of the almost permanent absence of that summer of my son's birth.

Until we had our 2nd child in 2012, without any planning, I just unconsciously thought that these were guarantees so that abandonment and rejection would be more camouflaged, due to the illusion of security that children gave!

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restoring oneself

The birth of my daughter was a little different from that of my son, because the few meetings I attended brought me some moments of awareness and I managed to change some of my mistakes!

However, I maintained most of my unhealthy behaviors and a spiritual blindness that was growing over time! Over the course of several years, I separated from my partner several times, with bouts of jealousy, with attitudes of anger provoked by the lack of fulfillment of my own will, sometimes in such ridiculous and unimportant situations, just for the need for conflict, where the shame of sharing the feeling of rejection, abandonment and humiliation was rarely identified or even shared in an honest way!

Pride and ego wouldn't allow it! I began a process of spiritual ignorance, with the growth of the ego! Only the appearances of being who I thought I was became important and my partner, who was also a beautiful woman with professional success, fitted into the life of a society in which that was all that mattered.

My natural distancing from NA and Service meant that many addicts distanced themselves from me, but I always thought that since I was an example of recovery, everyone should come to me!

I did several 12 steps to addicts in the wrong way, just to show that I was an example, without ever putting myself in the place of the pain and despair I had once felt! When these 12s didn't work, which was a big part of it, I went into anger, frustration and judgment!

Which brought me a lot of disappointment with the program that worked in a wrong and manipulated way.

I only began to look at the differences between other addicts and quickly began a process of deconstruction and disillusionment with many of those who had once been an example to me and who I had considered to be Winners!

My lack of physical, financial and - most of all - emotional and spiritual stability, led me to feed my alcohol reserve! I stopped saying I didn't drink at wine tastings and started trying certain alcoholic beverages

during my professional activity, non-alcoholic beers were already an increasingly frequent reality in my recovery, yet I always minimized these small attitudes of mine, never considering relapses!

Until one day of great suffering, when the worst wounds inside me manifested themselves with the arguments and separations from the mother of my children, that day when the perfect storm of my negative feelings made me say to my emptiness: screw it!

And I went and drank alcohol openly, with a lot of fear, with shame camouflaged by the reality-altering effect that alcohol brought me and with the illusion that it was a small amount, 2 or 3 glasses and that I was even at a point in my life, almost 50 years old, with a stable job, with 22 clean years so it would be the moment to be able to do it in a controlled way!

An alcoholic assumed within himself that he would drink socially!

I never did, only in front of strangers I assumed that it was enough time to abstain, mainly I said this to people who use, drink and think I should do it, in front of my family, true friends of NA I never admitted it and even hid it! Dishonesty took over my insides!

Through manipulation, crazy insistence and persistence, I managed to trick my former partner into staying together, sometimes with threats that you had young children and we couldn't give them the instability of a separation, or with promises of changes in behavior and unhealthy attitudes that never happened.

In fact, they worsened with my use of them, no matter how little! I was under this illusion for two years, without ever losing control of the abuse, but the progression of the disease was doing so in a silent and very cunning way!

I began to be confronted by my family and my Alito's friends about the alcohol I had stopped hiding, arrogantly assuming that I was almost 50 and that no one should interfere in my life and that I had made that choice!

The Relapse

restoring oneself

I pushed almost everyone away from me, with a permanent arrogance and verbal violence in my speech.

The problems started to become more and more frequent, car fines, fines for late payment of responsibilities were tormenting my soul, keeping me in an almost permanent state of irritation.

My children and partner in those two years never witnessed my altered alcoholic state, because I never did, but they took my addictive personality with frequent mood swings, with shouting to intimidate when things didn't go my way, always with the illusion that everything was under control, maintaining the responsibilities of my job, but without the ability to evolve, update myself or even rethink the difficulties I was having.

I assumed my relapse by a confrontation from an NA friend, the person who took me to treatment in 2001.

I couldn't deny it and went for the last time to hand in all the key rings at my base meeting! I felt nothing!

Just the self-feedback that I'd had enough of NA, that I'd spent a lot of time listening and sharing and had enough to control my illness if I didn't abuse or use hard drugs!

What a lie I told myself!

The traumas quickly grew inside me, the worst quality defects became like a defense mechanism if someone questioned my life! The healthy sport I did, surfing and endurance cycling, quickly became my drug, like a source of dopamine injection trying to fill the growing emptiness inside me!

The feeling that the mother of my children didn't love me channeled me into the greatest abyss I would ever fall into, giving a freedom and a growing premise to the pain and suffering that existed inside me and I quickly became a person with destructive thoughts and a terrible low self-esteem that I tried to hide with all the masks that society fed me!

I was maintaining the illusion of control over my life through the responsibility of my job, which I thought would never fail me.

I was feeding my ego even more when the company I worked for was sold to the largest European certification group, with promises of large salaries and the coordination of a team of auditors who would replace me during my long absences from work, thinking that this would be the only reason for my instability!

Increasingly, the frequent alterations to my "normal" state with mixed amounts of alcohol that gave me the illusion of escaping from the emptiness inside, the pain, fear and frustration, became a regular and daily practice, without ever having lost apparent control, but already doing everything in a state of unconsciousness that made me see and feel that I was heading towards the abyss and think that when I wanted to, I would be able to get off that path!

And it was at the end of 2024, after two years of this growing path to the abyss, being a workaholic because it was the only thing I knew how to do unconsciously and it gave me that illusion of control, I had another crisis of unhealthy jealousy with a work colleague of my former partner!

So much so that her exhaustion at my behavior made her take a decision when I was 800 km away from home, the definitive separation!

Finally, the rejection had reached its peak, the fear of abandonment was almost a certainty and I began an obsession without limits, seeking constant humiliation in messages of attempts at reconciliation, with requests for forgiveness, with promises of change, alternated with messages of anger, aggression and victimization for a betrayal that I searched so hard for inside myself, which I found in messages from that same work colleague, expressing affection and friendship and loving emojis in an exaggerated way, but which were certainly allowed by my former partner due to her state of vulnerability and emotional and emotional need!

The Relapse

restoring oneself

I didn't explode straight away, because I was already in therapy and trying to stop using, and despite my partner's request for me to leave the house, I resisted and began a process of destroying my dignity, with behaviours of victimization, self-destruction when she tried to manipulate or convince me that I was going to be 50, it was Christmas time, and that you had two children in their pre-teens and we couldn't do that.

But her decision had already been made and throughout the month of December, when I had decided to work from home to win her back, I never succeeded, because I was exhausted by my emotional destruction, psychological fatigue and without any spirituality that could make me believe in another path!

I knew that if I looked again for the path of Narcotics Anonymous I could save myself, but the obsession of having lost the mother of my children, the greatest source of emotional dependence of all my inner traumas, didn't make me look for the only possible path, even though I honestly wanted to get out of that space, I couldn't!

And it was on December 28, 2024 that, after seeing more phone messages from my partner to her colleague, arranging work lunches when she had refused to go with me for two weeks, I spent my 50th birthday with my children and my former partner, In deep sadness and knowing perfectly well inside me that it would be the last time we would travel together, on that terrible day before the end of the year I made the decision to end my own life, feeling the greatest emptiness and despair I would ever feel, forgetting my children, my parents, sister and the rest of the family, friends and people who loved me unconditionally! However, as is typical of a cowardly addict who deceives his own spirit by feeding the disease, I didn't have the courage to do it consciously and decided to go and drink and smoke everything I could to throw myself off an already programmed cliff!

I was in such a state of unconsciousness, with the help of my Higher Power, that a blackout appeared after 24 years, where I woke up naked in my daughter's bed, with a hangover that I no longer remembered existed,

with a deep sadness that led me to a depression that took a long time to pass! The next day I had a theater program with my children and it was during that theater that I looked at them and my former companion and made the decision to recover!

However, that was only the decision, because the next day I went into the worst state I had ever felt clean, the disease in my head started to break free, not letting me get out of the negative and destructive thinking and without my cognitive functioning I went to a family commitment with my children and my wife, at the end of a family party for the 50th wedding anniversary of some uncles, anger took over, frustration and an attempt to take responsibility for my decision to end my life and I put it into my head to justify everything I had done by betraying my partner, tormenting and causing such psychological violence to the mother of my children that she had to explode and tell everything to my family, asking me to disappear from her life, in a fit of despair and anger in front of my children, and I couldn't bear the shame and guilt and I left home for good!

The next day, I planned my recovery, asked for help to find out the best places to check in, informed my company that I would be taking sick leave, and set out on the road, holding 4 intake meetings at treatment centers, calling all my good friends in NA for help and admitting what they had known for a long time, ending the week with a meeting in Ponte da Barca, a meeting that would have been my first meeting when I first entered recovery.

That Friday meeting was my 29th birthday! With around 70 people, addicts and their families, some of whom I hadn't seen for several years, and with a great sense of guilt and shame, I admitted my relapse, where in that sharing I felt the longing to say: I am Eduardo, an addict! And a path to recovery began again, just for today, but with people who showed me simple love, in their welcome and hugs, without judgment and with the message, come back, this works. That day became my spiritual awakening!

And I began this path of NA by reviving the dormant program within me, identifying the errors of recovery,

The Relapse

restoring oneself

working on the reconstruction and transformation of the real Eduardo, with the help of daily meetings, 3 in person and the rest online, where I created a group of fantastic friends who are already part of my life.

I found a sponsor who proposed to me at the Portimão Convention at the end of the Serenity Prayer and I'm writing down the steps again.

I'm sharing my relapse with you so that I can help anyone who finds themselves on this path.

I believe that we all have our own path, however stormy it may be, there is always a way out and it can be found in NA, with an individual decision to want to recover, with the acceptance that almost everything is out of our control, but with permanent action in applying these 12 magical steps that can transform our lives!

Just for today I feel more internal peace, with many consequences to resolve, but with the certainty that my Higher Power gives me everything I need and that I can handle it!

Just for today I thank NA, the addicts who have come to believe in me again and this 12-step program that has helped me to reconnect with my Higher Power and to be able to live one day at a time through the pain and difficulties of rebuilding a life, clean and sober!

Thank you for another 24 hours clean and sober!

Eduardo M.



AROUND **HERE** & ABOUT **THERE**



XV CNALX
PÉS NA AREIA
TORRES VEDRAS
14-15.06.2025

<https://xvcnalx.na-pt.org>



ECCNA40
CELEBRATE LIFE
ROTTERDAM, NETHER-
LANDS
18-20.06.2025

<https://eccna.nl/>
<https://edmna.org/eccna/>

The 40th European Convention (ECCNA) is coming to Rotterdam on July 18-20, 2025! It will be an unforgettable event, full of sharing, connection, celebration of life and recovery.

And there's more: it will be streamed and translated into Portuguese, with the support of our Translations Subcommittee.

Participe conosco de um webinar aberto sobre como lidar com

12 de julho
15:00-16:30 h (Brasília)
19:00-20:30 h (Lisboa)

Comportamentos perturbadores e predatórios

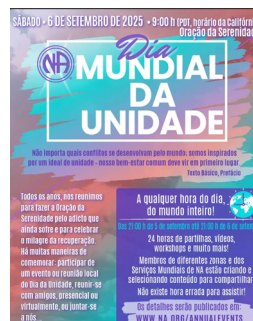
ID da reunião: 892 4425 9430 Senha: 1953

Haverá tradução para espanhol e português. Consulte wb@na.org se precisar de tradução para outros idiomas.

WEBINAR
DISRUPTIVE AND
PREDATORY BEHAVIOR

12.07.2025
19H00 - 20H00

Meeting ID: 892 4425 9430
PASSWORD: 1953



WORLD UNITY DAY

06.09.2025
09H00 (PDT)

<https://na.org/annualevents>



From a "Box Full of Nothing" to a Grateful and Whole Woman

"Hi, I'm Ana Cristina, a recovering addict."

This is almost invariably the beginning of every testimonial that comes our way. It's raw. It's the testimony of a woman who faced three decades of consumption, destruction and pain and who today is an Example of Resistance and Faith.

A.Cristina shares her story as if she were picking at a fresh wound. She does so without fear, without disguise and with the courage of someone who has lost everything except hope.

"I started using when I was 13. And I can't be dishonest: for many years I liked using drugs. Because I didn't know how to live without them. I didn't know how to do anything at all if I didn't use them."

She used for over thirty years. And for a long time, with pride. The use wasn't hidden, it was identity: "Junkies were fashionable. I was part of it."

Social inappropriateness, the absence of consequences and a certain twisted pride prolonged this morbid pleasure even further. You assume that Shame was something that once defined you. But not today.

"Today I'm proud of the person I've become. But not of the person I was." And before moving on, she adds: So far, a familiar story. I woke up wearing. I lived to use. I worked to use. I breathed use. "For a long time... I didn't see any reason to stop."

For a long time, she led a double life. He was impeccable at work, both in a hospital and in an institution for homeless people.

Hardworking. Zealous. Methodical. But the working A.Cristina and the A.Cristina of use worked separate shifts, almost as if they were two different women and two different beings.

"For a long time, I really believed I was bipolar. Because, throughout my use, I always worked.

I came in very early, I was always the first to arrive, and one of the last to leave. I was petty, really - things had to be done and done well. I believed I was bipolar and I believed I was responsible!!!

"All you had to do was walk through those doors... and there she was: the other A.Cristina. The Cristina who needed to use. The one who couldn't stop.

The A.Cristina. who couldn't wait to get her dose.

After all, who can maintain two such different worlds?

Truth and Addiction don't sleep or rest and the varnish cracked!!!

"I started using inside the hospital itself. I became... deranged. But in order to understand the fall, you have to look back. Before moving on, A. Cristina remembers going back in time to introduce decisive pieces into her story. Although outside the bars, A.Cristina follows, as trapped as she is, and followed to Lisbon. She moves there to live there. Alone. She finds NA.

"My ex-husband had been arrested and I had to go to Lisbon. I didn't know anyone except my family. At that time I met Narcotics Anonymous and I found it all very different from the life I had and was leading down here in the Algarve."

The impression that remains in the already foggy mind of young A. Cristina is a strange haze of "a lot of euphoria, late nights every night... I remember doing direct line work. Cristina's mind is a strange haze of "a lot of euphoria, nights out every day... I remember I used to do direct mail and then go to work";

"Red Bull" and "very cool people."
Let's keep this information to ourselves.

Cristina spends about a year and a half in Lisbon. She attends meetings on autopilot while visiting her husband in prison and handling the income from the drug trade that he keeps inside. She's still exposed.

From a "Box Full of Nothing" to a Grateful and Whole Woman

Still longing for the day her "love" is released.
Longing to return to her familiar day-to-day life in the South.

Nothing has changed." I'd like to point out that while I wasn't using, for about a year or a year and a half - I think that was the only and longest period of time I didn't use - it was practically the same: I remember going to jail to visit my ex-husband and bringing back the money from the shit he sold inside....

So my life hadn't changed at all, my behavior hadn't changed at all. I was still the same person. I was still the same A.Cristina.

NA, for me they were different people, people I actually liked, a lot of euphoria ...I remember drinking a lot of Red Bull ...But otherwise, I was the same person. I got back together with the same person - my husband at the time - and went on with my life."

When her husband at the time was released, they headed for the Algarve again.

But the longed-for honeymoon was short-lived...When they arrived in the south, the person - as A.Cristina calls her ex - was arrested again.

This time for a long time.

A.Cristina found herself alone again.

No money. No home.

With only luck as her luggage, she begins to fall.

Falling hard.

"Life took a turn! Then my world fell apart!

I didn't have and couldn't get the money to support myself with. I was left with nothing. I was very lucky that, at the time, I didn't go to prison either. And I say lucky because luck was the only thing I had at the time: I had nothing but luck. I only had a few clothes and not much besides luck!"

She was back to "bipolar" A. Cristina.

She resorted to the same old mechanisms: "As I was working, I managed to get by by working, taking sick leave, and making mistake after mistake...

This situation dragged on for quite a few years, until it got to the point where I could no longer reconcile work and nights of robbery.

Then some new drugs appeared (they were new at the time); and that was my rock bottom."Even in the face of all the evidence, Ana Cristina continued to believe that she didn't have a problem.

She believed she didn't need help."I started to go completely mad. I had several outbreaks. I had no idea how I was; I had no idea that I was badly dressed, thin... At the time, at the hospital where I worked, they suggested I go to a treatment center... but I denied it so much that I said no, that I didn't have a problem.

"Overwhelmed by the illness, she once again opted for the solution that best suited her so that she could continue using it: "I ended up reaching an agreement with them and being fired.

Today I even look at photos from that time and see that it really was a gut-wrenching experience."Cristina knows well that she ignored the value of Life itself. She ignored her problems and her health. She drove straight ahead like a tractor, adding to all sorts of problems that she insisted on creating for herself:

"I have HIV." By then I already had HIV. It was a problem because of the medication: I forgot my medication, I didn't take it... I was constantly in hospital. I remember that even when I was hospitalized, I managed to get some money and they would take me to score!"

On one of those Russian roulette on which A.Cristina was playing with her fate, the shot predictably backfired and A.Cristina narrowly missed returning.

This time compulsorily hospitalized. She no longer entered Faro Hospital through the door she was used to. She spent more than two months in the Psychiatric Ward.

Prognosis?

"A.Cristina probably won't come back." "I even had a very complicated outbreak.

From a "Box Full of Nothing" to a Grateful and Whole Woman

I was compulsorily admitted and spent more than two months in a Psychiatric Hospital. The doctors said I probably wouldn't come back."

"But I did! The Higher Power wanted me to come back. Little by little, I got better and returned to my normal state. The truth is that it was never the same again. At least I didn't have the outbursts or the problems I had before I was hospitalized."

Well, she did get better after all. She went against all the predictions and all the expectations.

"Yes, she's back here"

But A. Cristina definitely didn't know how to function without using.

She didn't know how to Be without using.

She didn't know how to be without using.

Nothing seemed to shake her or make her reflect.

"It was just another phase because as soon as I left the psychiatric hospital, I started using again.

All the people who had trusted me again, all the people who believed I was going to change, started to stop believing. I was stealing from everyone and everything. I just wanted drugs and drugs and drugs and drugs."

A process that dragged on for what would be her last four or five years of use!!!

Weak, "no longer strong enough to get out of bed"; fed up with being repeatedly bombarded by "opportunistic diseases that come either from using, or from poor diet, or from living on the street or in abandoned houses"; a new opportunity arose for her to go to a treatment center."

I was so weak that I was a Box Full of Nothing.

I was nothing.

I couldn't feel anymore, I couldn't do anything... I reached out for help.

"Although my motives were still dubious, it was certain that the decision had been made - a decision with other sub-decisions or sub-plans...I needed...to get stronger!!! My idea was "I need to get stronger".

Okay, I agreed to go to a treatment facility, but not without saying "goodbye". Once again, that Farewell ALMOST took her life! And once again, the Higher Power didn't want Ana Cristina to leave this Plane.

And once again A. Cristina survived!

To children, the hottie... and the Insane Addict, the Higher Power puts the "Great" Hand beneath!!!

(And He too has his plans...!)

"When I woke up from this ALMOST DEATH.... I wasn't walking."

Change of plans. The Center where she was due to be admitted was not prepared to receive people in wheelchairs. From the "crazy wheel in the air" to the 2 wheels on the ground, the focus remained the same, just with a "small change":

"To strengthen myself until I could walk again."

It took a year for A. Cristina to take her first steps again.

"I was left with very, very strong and very complicated leg problems, but I got what I really wanted and I went back to using it. "

The candle always burns up from the point where it ceased, and with A. Cristina it was never any different!

She had worked with homeless people and, ironically, she was once again becoming one of them: in just 10 days she felt herself hitting rock bottom with the same force as the last 5 years:

"I had horrible open wounds on my legs.

Those 10 days when I was inside a neighborhood using were almost like those 5 years when I went to rock bottom. This time I didn't need so long to hit rock bottom! Those 10 days were enough for me to look at myself and think 'I have to change my life, but I can't do it alone. But how do I live without using drugs?"

That's when it clicked! She went to the same treatment center, this time with focus, this time with will. From a box full of nothing, she went through several phases.

From a "Box Full of Nothing" to a Grateful and Whole Woman

She left the center with a hand full of fears, another full of mistrust and a backpack full of labels. Still, she found the courage to return to the same city.

"I'm on my own and I had to find my own place, my own job."

She returned, but no longer as an "illustrious stranger

.The insane years of use had earned her a heavy reputation.

"I wasn't a well-known person, but during those five years when I lived on the street, when I was constantly going to the police station, with case after case...I became a well-known person for the worst reasons. Now the difficulties of a life I hadn't known before began: those of Real Life.

Many closed doors!

It was very, very difficult to get my first job.

I got No after No.

There was also a whole series of things we couldn't see: the suffering, the aches and pains, the legs that wouldn't allow me to work, the fear of becoming homeless again.

"The health problems that already came with the use began to multiply and worsen.

In the legs, a venous problem. From time to time, wounds opened up. I am unable and can't exert myself, which has made it very difficult for me to work. The truth is that I used to panic when I thought I might be ill and homeless. I was very, very scared. My first years in recovery were based on fear!"

But there are doors that never close.

The fog of 20 years ago is now beginning to dissipate or take on a new form and, even at great cost, A. Cristina realizes that she is not alone:

"At the time, I distanced myself (from the meetings and the Sisterhood...). But, the truth is, I look back and I know that this was the Seed that was planted in me; a Seed that took a long time to germinate, it's true, but without a doubt that's where it was sown!"

With the Transparency and Sincerity that are her hallmarks, and always emphasizing the Primordial Love and Purpose that she knows and recognizes in NA, and that guide her today in the Sisterhood, she makes a point of sharing all the moments she went through. Even in recovery, as well as the learning and experience she has gained from them:

"I hear people talk about the pink phase of recovery.

I didn't have that phase

Everything was very difficult for me.

I went to meetings with a lot of ill will, I didn't trust anyone. The beginning of Recovery wasn't easy at all, nothing, nothing easy at all, even today knowing that those people were there for me. It wasn't easy."

Without Fear, but with Coyness, she adds:

"I live here in the Algarve and all my use was here in the Algarve.

But most of the friends I could count on were from the South! I always say this because it's the truth and the problem isn't with anyone... or maybe it was with me.

We're all a Brotherhood, there are different areas and it was in the South that I felt welcomed. Even though I didn't have a good temper - which I still don't have today - those people welcomed me very well.

I was always very respected. Even today I'm very grateful that there are online meetings, because after I got my first job, I used to wait for my days off so that I could go up to face-to-face meetings."

With no crutches of any kind, life hurting and an apparent big bill to pay, it's not surprising that A.Cristina was a "cornered, suspicious, frightened and angry little animal" at the start of her journey in Recovery.

"Even though I liked this one, that one and the other one, I spent many years not trusting anyone.

At the time, I had a lot of anger inside me, a lot of hate. I lacked trust in myself and in others.

The only person I learned to trust was my Sponsor.

She was the person I liked to be!

She was an example to me (and still is).

And she was the only person I trusted."

From a "Box Full of Nothing" to a Grateful and Whole Woman

But she stresses:

"It's not really about trust, it's about my faith, because I see things differently today!"

She made use of a faith she wasn't even sure she had inside her. By following suggestions she didn't agree with, by going to meetings she didn't feel like going to, by facing people she didn't feel like facing, by learning the beauty of "gifts wrapped in newspaper", A. Cristina made progress and achieved a maturity and stability she never dreamed possible:

"I kept going. I kept working. I went to meetings. I worked the Steps. The Work of the Steps was very important to me. It really changed the way I saw things. Believing in a Higher Power was, for me, the most beautiful thing that happened to me in Recovery: having Faith!!! Something very difficult, but which I achieved with great difficulty and with many gifts wrapped in newspaper. Because I did have a lot of gifts wrapped in newspaper. Things that, as I unwrapped them, turned out to be beautiful things."

With many difficulties, both physical and financial, her health problems worsened and a concrete issue arose that shook her more seriously.

She doesn't hide the fact that she often thought about giving up "Ok, maybe you can do it, but I can't", she thought several times.

But at this point, "I was already stronger..."

In fact, she corrects herself: "I already was! That's it! Acceptance! Accepting that this is what life is all about, that these were my problems and that it was all because of my use!" "I didn't give up because I went to meetings. I didn't give up because I worked the Steps. I didn't give up because I listened to my Sponsor - even though she was always ranting, I ended up agreeing and did what she suggested!!! "

But Ana Cristina still seemed to have some work to do.

She tells us - and warns us - "I often forget that there is nothing is to be taken as granted:

"Just when I thought I had my life 'organized' and there was nothing more that could happen to me, apart from the losses I had suffered in the meantime - because losing people was also very difficult for me - when I took everything for granted, I was diagnosed with Chronic Leukemia."

A Rollercoaster of Emotions.

A Hurricane of Information.

An Explosion of Questions.

An Ultimate Meltdown.

Ana Cristina is depressed.

Who can judge her?

"I didn't listen very well to what I was told. In my mind it was just Leukemia Leukemia Leukemia Leukemia.

I went into a terrible depression. And I shut myself in. I shut myself in completely.

The inventories began.

I started taking inventory of everything and everyone.

I stopped going to meetings.

It didn't make sense to me any more, I thought.

If you only knew what I had"; "how I feel!"

Isolation.

Terror.

Anguish.

Anger.

Confusion.

It was an atrocious Suffering, a lot of Suffering.

"I've never been one to get into self-pity in front of others - me, alone, in my corner, yes. But not in Meetings or in conversations with other addicts.

I've never been one to think I'm a poor me.

I mean, I do think I'm a poor me, but it's me with myself, because I never verbalize it to other people."

Once again, who could judge her!??

Living with pain and uncertainty is something that only those who go through it can describe.

From a "Box Full of Nothing" to a Grateful and Whole Woman

This was A.Cristina's experience in the first six months after her diagnosis.

She chose to be alone, but she grew.
She learned a lot.

After going through one of the most delicate periods of her life, she became certain of the people she wants to be within Narcotics Anonymous and in Recovery.

She just says that today, in this New Way of Life, there are things that don't make sense to her.

"In Recovery, with a Program, with these Steps, with these Principles, under these Guidelines?

It doesn't make sense to me.

Thank God there are more of the People who are here for me. People who have remained with me since the beginning of my Recovery until today."

A Force of Nature, this Woman shows us the Power of this Program in ALL areas of her life.

She shows us how, by practicing it, she has rebuilt herself in Resilience and Faith and how she has been able to face the most difficult challenges.

She shows us how learning to live with addiction in recovery has proved to be such an important school for all the difficulties she has faced.

"Leukemia was like a death sentence for me... I didn't even care if it was chronic... I didn't know anything about it. I just closed myself off so much that I went completely mad for six months. But things worked out."

As always happens when you have faith and stick around...

"Now I see things differently. I've realized that Leukemia isn't the 7-headed beast I imagined, it's Chronic Leukemia!!! I've had to learn to live with it. I'm learning to live with it every day - by controlling it. Being medicated. Being followed up by the oncology department."

The leukemia, the difficulties, the addiction, all of that is very present, but those 6 months, that A.Cristina locked in a shell, isolated in fear, unable to envision a future of so many good things for herself; all of that is in the past.

Ana Cristina clings tightly to slogans she believes in because she knows they work.

"I'm a great believer in the slogan that says 'A Grateful Addict Doesn't Relapse!'

And she practices it every day of her life.

"In the meantime, after being unemployed for a long time, I got a job where, for about a year now, I've been able to do a job that I love!

A job that doesn't require too much physical effort; and a job where, at the end of my shifts, I come home with the feeling of Mission Accomplished!!!

I work with mentally challenged people and it's a very rewarding job!"

"I also do voluntary work and I feel very privileged! I'm very grateful to Narcotics Anonymous. The service has helped me a lot. The whole service is rewarding, of course, and the Helpline service is one of the best things I've ever had in recovery, and I'm also very grateful to all the people who have been there."

"I still use this program every day.

There isn't a day when I don't read the Meditation. There isn't a day when I don't take inventory of my day. I need to do a daily Inventory to see where I went wrong, what I can do differently - and I go wrong every day.

I know I'm not the person I'd like to be, but I know I'm much better than I used to be.

No doubt about it."

"Today I don't need to steal.

Today I don't have to lie.

Today I don't have to cheat anyone.

I don't need to prostitute myself. "

Ana Cristina

From a "Box Full of Nothing" to a Grateful and Whole Woman

"The only thing I need today is to Feel and Give Love
the way I can.
And Gratitude."

"I wake up and give thanks for another day.

I'm grateful to be able to walk. I'm grateful to have
Narcotics Anonymous.
Because my gratitude to Narcotics Anonymous is the
size of the world!"

"I have a roof over my head.
I have food on the table.
I have friends.
And I have faith."

And We Say to Ana Cristina a Huge Thank You

"If You Follow This Path...You Have Nothing to Fear!"

Just for Today, We'll Follow It With You.

Together!

Lots of +24. ❤️



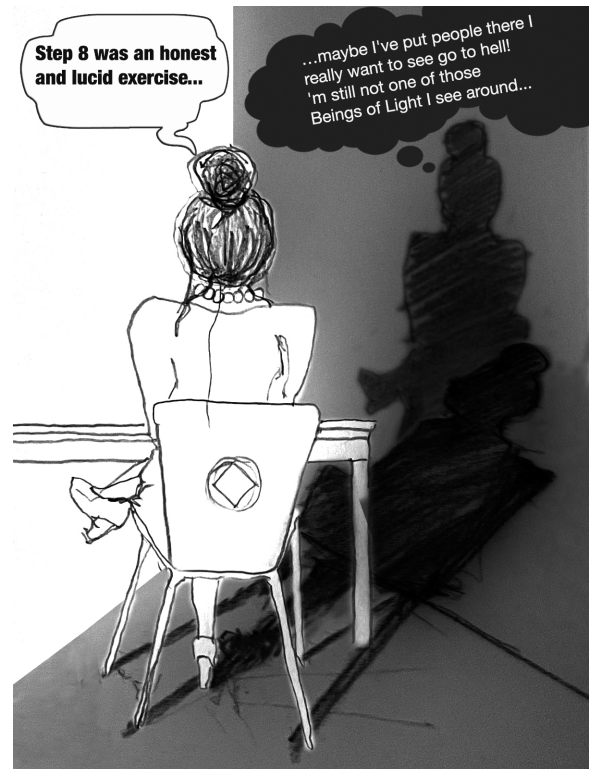


MOCKING THE RECOVERING

JOE FIX



STEPPING MARY



INVENTORIES À LA CARTE

SO I HEAR....

This could be your message.

This could be your message

THIS COULD BE YOUR MESSAGE.

The meeting in Espinho is served with sea air. It's so good....

Best convention ever!
- vox populi



Do you want to be on the cover of the next magazine?

Send in a drawing or photo related to recovery (not including people).

The chosen artwork will be on the cover of the next magazine.



CELEBRATION

| Date | Meeting | Day | Location | Area |
|------------|-------------------------|-----------|-------------------|--------------|
| 01/07/2022 | English Meeting DNA | Wednesday | Cascais | NA LInha |
| 14/07/1999 | Pegadas na areia | Wednesday | Leça da palmeira | Grande Porto |
| 17/07/1997 | NA Onda | Tuesday | Costa da Caparica | Sul |
| 18/07/2005 | Vitória de NA | Monday | Albufeira | Algarve |
| 21/07/1997 | Alternativa | Monday | Matosinhos | Grande Porto |
| 09/08/2004 | Viver Mais À Descoberta | Monday | Belmonte | Oeste |
| 10/08/1993 | Ovos Moles | Friday | Aveiro | Grande Porto |
| 23/08/2017 | Juntos Conseguimos | Wednesday | Alcobaça | Oeste |
| 02/09/1992 | Amizade em recuperação | Monday | Parede | NA Linha |
| 12/09/2024 | Estamos Juntos | Thursday | Paranhos | Grande Porto |
| 15/09/2008 | Viver feliz | Sunday | Portimão | Algarve |
| 15/09/2009 | Começar de novo | Saturday | Covilhã | Oeste |
| 16/09/1994 | Vitamina | Friday | Portimão | Algarve |
| 16/09/2023 | Mártires da liberdade | Saturday | Albergue | Grande Porto |
| 18/09/2009 | Sextas feiras loucas | Friday | Parede | NA LInha |
| 20/09/2007 | Sem vícios | Thursday | Parede | NA LInha |
| 24/09/1993 | Berço Espiritual | Monday | Guimarães | Minho |
| 24/09/1993 | Recuperação é o que es | Tuesday | Braga | Minho |
| 24/09/2014 | Humildade Para recuper | Wednesday | Ordem do Carmo | Lisboa |

If you want to see your group's anniversary, or that of your fellow members, contact us.

LAST SHARE

Serenidade 2.0 magazine is published in Portuguese and English and is available in digital format. Its contents are a way of contributing to the recovery of NA members by publishing information on recovery, activities and services related to recovery. The magazine also seeks to introduce a component of entertainment and debate on issues that are relevant to its recipients. Coordination reserves the right to evaluate the conformity of texts and other contributions with the 12 traditions of NA. All material must be original and once published is the property of the journal, and authorization for publication is implicit in its submission. The articles published represent the experience and opinion of individual NA members and do not necessarily express the principles and philosophy of NA as a whole.

YOUR SERENE TEAM

CHAIR: Paulo O.

CO-CHAIR: Diana C.

Collaborators: José S., Susana R., Teresa

... and all the fellows that would like to participate!

Special thanks to our honorary reporters who attended the Learning Days: Pedro C. and Mário B.



CONTACT

serenidade@na-pt.org