

# 4<sup>th</sup> NA Foundation Group Literature Conference at Knoxville, Tennessee

**11:00 pm Saturday March 24<sup>th</sup>, 2006**

**Attendance:** Chris W, Jason B, Bo S, Yellow Eyes, Jon A, Jamice O, Kermit O, Thomas, Richard L,

**need supplies:** inkjet paper, legal pads, pens

**Called Jim Miller** to tell him he was missed.

**Who** are you and **what** do you hope to accomplish this weekend?

**Chris W.** - Just here to get the job done. I like to acknowledge Bo's idea on a new work. I think there is a need to get oldtimers involved and knowledgeable about the Traditions. bo suggested "Our Heritage" for title. What is going on with Knoxville Foundation Group. Area motion to remove group from schedule as group was reading un-approved literature. Motion failed. When motion came up, vote was five for removal. This turned out to be inaccurate due to 2 GSR's not understanding motion and later changed their vote and 2 GSR's voted their own conscience and are being removed by their groups from their position. There is a motion to remove RCM which will be coming up next month. Still hurt attendance at NAFG. Bo there is a difference between true spirituality and witch hunts. A witch hunt is a natural indicator that they are not in a spiritual mode. There are driven by fear, not love or faith.

**Kermit O.** - I was thrilled at the work we did last time I was here. We took chapters with good ideas and turned them into clear concise, readable literature. That is why I am here and if time permits, we can look into new literature.

**Jason B.** - At the last meeting, I was 1<sup>st</sup> week out of jail and the lit conference was taking place. I got very spoiled. Other meetings just don't make it for me anymore. I really enjoyed working with you all and become your friends. I have stayed clean because of what y'all have put in this. I really want to see this book in printed form. I want to help as best I can and have fun doing it.

**Jon A.** - from New York. Not sure what my function is, but I think I am going to find out. I just want whatever that comes from this to be a God thing and not a me thing.

**Jamice O.** - This is only the 2<sup>nd</sup> one I have attended. I have looked at some of the literature and helped Kermit edit some. I don't have a goal, just here to serve where I can.

**Bo S.** - As a lot of you know, when I got into service it was all literature. I didn't know how to type, nobody had computers. It was after the Lit Movement and the Board of Trustees, I got into computers in the late 80's. In the last 3 months have been working on my autobiography. Hope to be a Johnny Appleseed, traveling around the Fellowship and letting them know what is what. When members are connected that breeds good NA, when they are not, it puts them in the position of feeling left out.

**Yellow Eyes** - when we were there, I thought we went through the 1<sup>st</sup> 4 chapters, apparently we went through the first 3 and then one other chapter at last conference. Bo did some stuff afterwards. I think we

need to go in order, so we can see where we are at present, and where we need to be. We had an editor, and he will be here later. An NA member with editing skills. I am a part of a world-wide Fellowship, and there is a need to let other know about the miracle that goes on here, so they can be brought in.

**Thomas** - I feel grateful for being a part of something much bigger than me. I just want to learn how to serve the group, area, region and world. I am realizing I am a part of something bigger than me. Want to give back what was freely given to me.

**Moderator, Chris W.** - I am hearing folks wanting to work on an outline for a new book. Others want to get to work on what Kermit and I started on Friday in Chapter 4.

**Richard L.** - came in later.

**Bo S.** - Brian YE has a good point. We had good input so that is why we jumped to chapter 16. We got some good input on Chapter One, so I added it in - we need to look at that. We have dropped the Quest Forum from the nawol.org site due to a lot of negativity. We are getting another Forum going on Yahoo, with Chris moderating. There is drug dealing going on outside this door, we need to learn how to close the door so our candles don't burn out. We keep our eye on the ball and our objective of saving dying addicts. The web site is set up so you can read the chapter and input directly to [nawol@nawol.org](mailto:nawol@nawol.org) and have the input put into a display area adjacent to the chapter title format on the web page. This is a new way of doing the book so the new info goes right into the form, then we review it at the next conference.

A member from Tallahassee - Suzanne Z. - went through the whole book and has given us a ton of input. We also have some excellent input from Gail in California on foster parenting. Andy Addict sent input on first four Traditions.

**Chris W.** - We can do a nine day workshop here in Knoxville and do all the things you are saying. How much lead time do we need to do a nine day conference?

**Report on Titusville Wolf Group of NA** (Way of Life Foundation) - finished two month reading of Step One, needs proofing, grammatical corrections. - contact Lester Overstreet H 321.631.5907 after 5:30 pm, C 321.794.6279  
Note from Brian YE: in native American tradition, WOLF stand for Love, Family, Protectiveness, Playful, Territorial.

**Bo S.** - As a Fellowship, we went without literature for 30 years. If we do nothing more than come up with a few good ideas, it would make me happy. This will invigorate the process. There is a fear about having too many projects going at once. Let's work on the 2006 form and then read it quickly. If we do this, we will be able to see which chapters read unclear. If we can do this, we can get a new 2006 Form. I am concerned that we get lost in the details and forget the whole picture.

I would suggest for those who are new, bring paper and note cards so your ideas don't get lost. Bring up in group conscience sessions so they will get into minutes. Later read the minutes and make sure they are expressed clearly. If it ain't in the minutes, it's hard to say that it happened at the Conference. Little ideas, or just questions, it's all important. I work hard doing minutes after these meetings so every one is in on what is going on and so I am connected to you all.

The other NA Way of Life Foundation Groups report: There is another group going in Titusville Florida called the Titusville WOLF Group of NA. Lester Overstreet is our contact person. There is one in Smyrna, Georgia; Toronto, Ontario; in Ottawa it is called the Book Club; Phoenix, Arizona Scotty has group going. If you have been around for years, you notice we are not taking as much heat. One member asked about what will happen if we are putting copyrighted material from WS into our writing, won't there be a problem? Bo pointed out that we have the 12 Steps and 12 Traditions of NA in book. We strive not to be hostile or argumentative, just loving and loyal.

**Discussion on new books or booklets:**

**Application of 12 Traditions**

in Fellowship, interpersonal relations, business relations

**Heritage:**

- sometimes NA is warm, open, attractive, inclusive
- other times NA can be cold, abrasive, controlling, exclusive
- long time members don't attend

**Sponsorship:**

- guide to working Steps
- principled sponsorship - don't tell what to do, share actual experience, give examples to sponsee, live by example, people want to see the 'sermon,' not hear the sermon, some members need to be told but sponsor doesn't have to be unprincipled when telling them what to do

**12 Stepping:**

- 12 Step call
- sitting with newcomer
- orientation
- simplifying
- what is \_\_\_?
- Terminology
- Traditions

**Adventures with Step 11:**

meditation -styles and suggestions, self-hypnotism  
praying - don't make 'no' prayers, pray for positive

**How to Do NA:**

- be friendly
- plan ahead
- emphasize real caring
- share experience, what works for you
- don't let business concerns take precedence over spiritual recovery
- look for similarities, not differences

**Read and edit** Chapter Four - Spiritually Clean

**General support** for Yellow Eyes idea to edit chapters in order, all the way through. Exceptions could be allowed in any case where group wanted to move to later chapter out of order. But we all thought it would be an easy way to know what would be work shopped at each coming conference/workshop.

**Ate sandwiches** and chips at 3:00 pm, snacks always out with soft drinks and coffee.

*Broke off at 6:30pm for Saturday Night Live NA meeting and Dinner*

**9:30 pm Saturday Evening**

Reported on Suzanne's input

Called Suzanne on cell phone set to speaker and said "HOWDY"

Presented Andy Addict input to Traditions - Thanks Andy!

Resumed reading and editing Chapter Four - Spiritually Clean

**Attendance:**

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Yellow Eyes 4312 Little Wytheville Road, Draper, VA 24324 540.980.7115

Jon Arrigo 4128 Mesa Lane Liverpool, NY [wizzardsmd@aol.com](mailto:wizzardsmd@aol.com) 315.420.1896 C

Jamice and Kermit Osseman 5880 Burnett Lane, Ruckersville, VA 22968 [nvralne@aol.com](mailto:nvralne@aol.com)

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Thomas

*- do not copy or share personal addresses -*

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***INPUT SINCE LAST CONFERENCE***

## Gayle - Diane's sponsor - March 2006

### *Foster Parenting*

*Parenting as an addict is an exercise in compromise, growth and fear. Foster parenting the children of addicts is often like being on a trampoline that has barbed wire covered with electric fence wiring, and you feel like everyone is watching and laughing.*

*As an addict in recovery, foster parenting, every day, is an act of blind faith. You must believe that if you try to control the system you work with, the child in your home who is acting out on what was learned while living with an active addict, if you try to control the recovery of the parent who lost the child you are caring for, your life will become unmanageable. Since I am unable to control it, I must believe that my Higher Power, who I choose to call Creator, will watch over for those children until they can find a Higher Power of their own. I must make a decision, daily, to turn my will and my life, and their will and life, over to the power greater than us all, and trust that blind faith will prevail.*

I am an addict, my name is Gail G. and at this writing I have been over 20 years clean and have been a foster parent to 57 children over the past five years. I can not think of a single child who I have lived with me that did not come from, directly or indirectly, a family like we came from. From the youngest to the oldest, they showed their addictive behaviors, their people pleasing skills, their ability to manipulate every situation, their need for creative venues in order to survive, and their elasticity in showing that they could take a beating, often not just figuratively, and bounce back. Once again proving that addicts are strong, versatile and hard to kill or keep down.

As a foster parent, I am dealing with the system (Child Protection Service and the Courts), the children, their doctors and therapists, their psychiatrists and support councilors, their teachers and mentors, their biological parents, previous and future foster parents, and their past, present and future. And all this, without directions.

If I could convey any message I wanted to the biological addict parent who lost their child along the way, it would be this. While you may never be able to atone for what was done, or not done, in some cases, while you can never have a magic 'do over,' while it may be the hardest items you put down on your fourth and eighth Steps, you will eventually forgive yourself. I tell my kids that their parents are addicts; they suffer from the disease of addiction for which there is no known cure. It can however, be arrested at some point and there is always hope that the parent will find love, surrender and guidance in the rooms of Narcotics Anonymous.

I have never been a biological parent; a situation I blamed God for quite often. When I found a loving power greater than myself, Creator, I came to believe that just as I lived through my addiction to help another addict, I had not had children of my own so I could be there to help the kids caught in the cross fire – yours. From teaching these kids daily grooming and hygiene habits, to homework,

dating, nightmares and bathroom accidents, I have loved each and every one, each and every step. And with each, I plant a seed – a seed of love, hope, nourishment, cherishment, delight, wonder, self-esteem, hope, a future and the possibility of life without drugs.

I plant these seeds, and I water them with hugs and kisses. I nourish them with action, with direction, with purpose. And I never see them bloom. On the rare occasions, I see them take root, start to grow and then the child moves on. I am often blessed with having that adult child contact me again, once the system is not controlling Life, and that child contacts me, and I see that my seed did sprout, into a beautiful and wonderful adult.

But I must express, while I have the voice and the audience, that this is truly the hardest job I have ever undertaken in my life, either when using or clean. To love someone so unconditionally, to open my heart so completely, to welcome and crave the unconditional love from that child, is truly a gift from Creator. AS is the pain that comes when it feels my heart is being ripped from my chest with each and every child that leaves. I act brave, and say all the right things for the system. I use the Steps, and I am direct and honest, except when to do so will injure them or others, and so I say what must be said and what I hope, in blind faith, will come to be true, and I let that spirit and little body go, back to the system. Then I wonder, once again, why I open myself up for this heart wrenching, gut twisting, soul crushing pain.

And then I see the smile in my mind's eye, I feel the little hand holding mine, I remember the warmth of a good night embrace and that sweet little kiss on my cheek and I remember. I did this for the child. For the wonderful person they will someday be. I did this for their parents, who are trying to find recovery and who may or may not make it, I do it for my fellow addict. Mostly, I do this for me. Balance, that is what I have been taught on my spiritual path following Creator – balance. To know the love, I must walk through the pain. To know the truth, I must wade through the lies. To be warmed by the sunlight of recovery, I must remember the darkness of my disease.

I really don't like feeling the bad parts, but I would not trade them for anything if it meant losing those hugs, that love and the wondrous gift that Creator has bestowed upon me, the ability to Let Go and Let God do his job.

*Mitakuye Oyasin* - All my relations – I ask that Creator watch over you, that your children find someone who understand recovery and will love your child, then let them go as their path decrees. I have survived another day, I have lived today without using, even though my heart hurts deeply right now, for I have just experienced again that true and trusting love, and another child has left my home, but never my heart.

Grateful to be in recovery today, a loving addict ...Gail