NewsGram

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FEATURE STORY

A Tribute to Kevin M.

By Lauri B. & Rachael M.

Shortly before his passing, Kevin dictated reflections about his life, his sobriety, and the people who shaped his journey in Cocaine Anonymous. What follows is a tribute drawn from his words. Kevin often joked that what he really wanted was more time. As his health declined he was undergoing chemotherapy and recovering from hospital stays while facing serious complications.

Some days were harder than others. Yet even in those moments Kevin's thoughts kept returning to one place: Cocaine Anonymous and the legacy he hoped to leave behind.

He once said that if there was only one thing he could still accomplish it would be this: "If it's all I can do, I want to leave behind the best possible Third Step legacy." Kevin had been sober since April 1, 1988 and he hoped, perhaps defiantly, to live long enough to take a 38-year sobriety cake in April of 2026. He had a way of acknowledging reality while still fighting it. As he put it, "I say I'm dying, but I also say not today."

The Early Days of Sobriety

When Kevin first came into C.A., he didn't speak much. For nearly two years he stayed in the background, making coffee, cleaning up, and avoiding attention. Then one day an early member Joey D. pulled him aside and told him something that would stay with him for the rest of his life: he couldn't stay hidden forever. "You need to let people know who you are," Joey said. "Make contact, Greet people," It was a turning point. Soon afterward, Joey became seriously ill during the height of the AIDS epidemic. At a time when fear kept many people at a distance, Kevin reached out and held him, telling him it would be okay. A month later, Joey was gone. At Joey's memorial his sponsor Johnny S. shared a conversation he once had with Joey about facing death. Joey's answer became something Kevin carried with him for decades: "It's a bitch of a Third Step." Toward the end of his life Kevin quietly reflected that he finally understood exactly what Joey meant.

Sponsors, Friends, and Teachers

Throughout his sobriety Kevin was shaped by many people. His first Big Book sponsor had exactly twenty years more sobriety than Kevin.

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NEWSGRAM

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SUBMIT A STORY

Send to newsgram@ca.org with subject line "Personal Story"

The NewsGram publishes articles that reflect the full diversity of experience and opinion found within the Fellowship of Cocaine Anonymous. No one viewpoint or philosophy domi nates its pages, and in determining the editorial content, the editor relys on the principles of the Twelve Steps, Twelve Traditions, and the Twelve Concepts. The heart of The NewsGram is in the shared experience of individual C.A. members working the C.A. program and applying the spiritual principles of the Twelve Steps. Yet what works for one individual of C.A. group may not always work for another. For this reason, from month to month, articles may be pub lished that appear to contradict one another. Seeking neither to gloss over different issues, nor to prevent such issues in a harmful or contentious manner. The NewsGram tries to embody the widest possible view of the C.A. Fellowship.

The Charter of the World Service Conference guarantees The NewsGram editor the right to accept or reject material for publication. The NewsGram staff members evaluate articles and, while some editing is done for purposes of clarity, styling, length and content, the editor encourage all writers to express their own experience in their own unique way. Articles are not intended to be statements of C.A. policy, nor does publication of any article constitute endorsement by either Cocaine Anonymous or The NewsGram. Articles are invited, although no payment can be made nor can material be returned.



PERSONAL STORY

A Tribute to Kevin M.

By Lauri B. & Rachael M.

(Continued...)

His second sponsor, Stan, once gave him advice Kevin never forgot: "Stop chasing women!" Stan actually suggested the dating service where Kevin eventually met Rachael, his wife, beginning a partnership that would last decades. Another sponsor pushed him hard through the Big Book,

Leadership and Service

Kevin served in many roles within C.A. World Service over the years, including Delegate, Public Information Chair, Conference Vice Chair, Conference Chair, Trustee, and advisor during times of transition. Even when stepping away from formal roles he continued to help the Fellowship whenever it needed continuity or historical perspective.

He understood the history of C.A. and cared deeply about preserving its spirit while helping it grow. When the COVID pandemic disrupted conferences and meetings, technology once again became essential to recovery around the world, something Kevin had envisioned decades earlier.

Kevin Beyond the Fellowship

Although C.A. was the center of Kevin's life it was not the only part. He loved computers and technology, and he spent much of his professional life working in software. He was also a passionate science fiction fan and collected comic books for many years. He loved movies, especially Blade Runner, often quoting one of its most famous lines about fleeting moments and the human desire for more time.

Kevin was deeply engaged in politics and current events and even ran as an independent candidate for the California State Assembly in 1994.

He enjoyed puzzles and games, often relaxing with New York Times crossword puzzles, Sudoku, poker, bridge, and Angry Birds.

Like many people in recovery, he possessed a sharp wit and a slightly irreverent sense of humor that could catch people off guard but always carried warmth underneath.

His Legacy

Toward the end of his reflections, Kevin spoke quietly about the meaning of his life. He said, "People touched my life, and I touched theirs. Things I have done, you may never know all of them." Then he added, "My life has meaning, mostly because of these 37 years of sobriety." Kevin believed that God did not give him decades of sobriety only to abandon him at the end. He believed he would be okay.

And in the Fellowship he loved Kevin's work continues, every meeting held online, every addict who finds C.A. through a website. Every person who discovers recovery because someone shared a link, an email, or a meeting. Those moments carry Kevin's fingerprints.

A Final Reflection

Kevin leaves behind not just memories, but a profound impact on the Fellowship he helped build. As one friend recently said, Kevin doesn't leave behind a hole in your life, he leaves a crater. But because of the life he lived and the recovery he shared, countless people across the world are sober today.

PERSONAL STORY

Guilt & Regrets

By Tom P. from San Juan Capistrano, California, USA

I first got loaded when I was twelve years old and I found the rooms of Cocaine Anonymous when I was almost forty-four. For almost thirty-two years my life in addiction was a roller coaster of spree and remorse. Guilt, regret, remorse, horror and hopelessness were my constant companions and taskmasters. Until I could admit my powerless over cocaine and all other mind-altering substances, I had no chance of being free from their tyranny over my life.

> *"The remorse, horror and hopelessness of the next morning are unforgettable. The courage to do battle was not there. My brain raced uncontrollably and there was a terrible sense of impending calamity." (From A.A. B.B. page 6 Bills Story)*

My addiction can best be described as a condition of grasping for satisfaction in a never-ending stream of "mores." More alcohol, more drugs, more gambling, more of anything, and in the drive for "more," my addiction engulfed all whose lives came into contact with it.

The big book says I ". . .frequently become disgustingly and dangerously anti-social." When trapped in my addiction, anyone or anything that comes in front of the next hit or drink must go. The people I care for most deeply in life are the ones who are directly affected by my harms and neglects. My wife, children and other loved ones are the ones who directly experience this behavior. They are the ones too, who endure, day after day, my broken promises. Guilt and regret from unacceptable behaviors and those broken promises eat away at my soul like some kind of spiritual cancer. And since my addiction traps me in an inescapable downward spiral, I am unable to cease the behaviors that harm others and I get sicker and sicker.

Dealing with guilt and regret has been one of the unexpected gifts of recovery in Cocaine Anonymous. Generally, guilt for normal people serves as an indicator that one's behavior has caused another harm and the harm needs to be redressed in order to facilitate a healthy relationship. Further, one who is emotionally healthy will typically learn from the experience and not repeat the behavior(s) that cause(d) the harm. When in the grips of addiction to cocaine and all other mind-altering substances, I can predict that any time I am using I have little or no control over how things will turn out and my experience has shown that I will have interactions with mental health or law enforcement professionals and many will be affected/harmed by my behaviors or neglects. I get drunk or loaded and drunk or loaded things happen. And I am incapable of not repeating the harmful actions.

How did I get free of the cycle of spree and remorse? Freedom from cocaine and all other mind-altering substances is not a matter of simply putting down the drink or the substance. While putting down the substance and continued abstinence is necessary to begin and maintain the process, confronting the problem at the source of addiction is necessary to achieve real freedom. I have found the source problem to be a flawed/distorted spiritual perspective, a spiritual malady. The C.A. recovery program stresses the problem is rooted in selfishness and self-centeredness, that to be free of addiction I must be free of selfishness and to be free of selfishness, I must have God's help.

After finding the rooms of C.A. in September of 2001, because of the example of sober people and by God's grace I embraced the spiritual program of action necessary to connect with a power greater than me. The Great Mystery put in me in touch with a man who became my spiritual guide and sponsor. David B., took me through the Steps and I had a vital spiritual experience. My sponsor introduced me to the Fellowship in meetings, conventions and other gatherings. He also encouraged me to join him and so many others in Fellowship service. I know today that his example and direction helped ground my ideals in God's will and has given me a new design for living. This design for living has as its center, a life of continual and thorough participation in all aspects of C.A., Unity, Recovery and Service. By way of this grounding, my life has been re-created, my heart has been transformed and I grow a little each day on the path of spiritual progress.

There is a paradox found in spiritual recovery from addiction and alcoholism and that is, in order to recover, one must at some point, accept every horror, failure and moment of despair as having been absolutely necessary to bring the recovering person to the point of surrender and potential spiritual rebirth. The Big Book recommends: "Cling to the thought that, in God's hands, the dark past is the greatest possession you have—the key to life and happiness for others. With it you can avert death and misery for them." (From A.A. B.B. page 124, The Family Afterwards) This sentiment does not mean we are condoning or approving past harmful actions, instead with remorse, we acknowledge they have happened and we trust that God will guide us and take us to better things. Standing ready to accept the consequences of our actions while taking responsibility for the well-being of others allows us to live in the spirit of healing and growth.

In order to heal and grow we must first engage in a "strenuous effort to face and to be rid of the things in ourselves which had been blocking us (From A.A. B.B. page 64, How It Works)". Steps Four through Nine comprise this effort and include accurate self-appraisal, honest connection with God and another person, an awareness of our personal faults and the harms they cause others. Further, Step Nine provides a detailed process by which we can repair relationships we have destroyed. Working with a sponsor is imperative in this very important stage of our growth as our self-will can easily slip in to derail our progress. Having done so facilitates our living the one day at a time spiritual program highlighted by the key words of Steps Ten, Eleven and Twelve: "continued, sought and tried." With a commitment to grow along spiritual lines certain statements have a new gravity. For me probably the most pertinent and powerful one is this: "Our real purpose is to fit ourselves to be of maximum service to God and the people about us (From A.A. B.B. page 72-78, Into Action)." Reminding myself on a daily basis of this purpose and taking actions to do live it is how I deal with guilt and regret because doing so always brings me back to the Steps, God and others.

PERSONAL STORY

Small Acts, Big Change

By Richard E. from Stockholm, Sweden

I always thought it would take something big, a sacred promise, Dr. Phil, or some new medical breakthrough, that it required big moments and big decisions for me to get sober, and I never thought I could be happy. But that's not how it happened for me.

It started with a flyer on a wall that said, "We're Here and We're Free." Cocaine Anonymous meeting, Thursday at 7 PM. That small flyer changed my life.

A few weeks later I went to my first meeting, two people in the room and me, I was asked to read "Who is a cocaine addict"? I had to stop several times, it felt like a joke, did they know who I was? Was this some kind of trick? Or were there really others like me?

Nothing big happened there, just people sitting together, listening, sharing but that's where the magic was and it was huge for me.

I started coming back, someone took the time to greet me, someone talked to me, someone showed me that I was allowed to be there, that I belonged.

Eventually I got a sponsor, someone who had worked the Steps before me, someone who could show me how, one addict helping another. Nothing big, at least not from the outside, but everything to me.

When I came to C.A., there was one meeting in Sweden, we were three people at my first meeting, today there are more than 120 meetings, and all of them have more than three people.

C.A. didn't grow through big stages or big words, it grew through the small things. Someone putting up a flyer, someone opening a meeting, someone welcoming the newcomer, someone listening, someone taking another person through the Steps, that's where it happens.

A moment of clarity, someone daring to ask for help, and someone being there in that exact moment to show the way. That's how the message is carried forward, big stages and big personalities can be inspiring. But the most beautiful thing we can do is to stand at the door, because that's how we show that there is a solution, we can recover from addiction.

One day at a time, it is possible to live a life filled with Hope, Faith, and Courage.

PERSONAL STORY

From The Shadow To The Light

By Jamie C. from Troon, Scotland, UK

It tells me where to go, any day, time, or place,
A phantom navigator in a cold and hollow space.
For so many years, Jamie tried to fill the void within,
Seeking earthly solutions for an internal sin.
He signed the contract on that first white line,
Bound by a debt that felt like a life design.

But the Word says, "The people walking in darkness have seen a great light,"
A hope that shines steady through the deepest of nights.
"Show me who you walked with, and I'll tell you who you are,"
His father's words echoed like a distant, guiding star.

From town to town, on deployment, he tried to flee the past,
But Jamie found that shadows are the only things that last.
Until the Truth broke through, as the scripture has told,
"The old has gone, the new is here," behold!

He's no longer a prisoner to the path that he trod,
For he is being called out of darkness into the marvellous light of God.
The baby's born, you sniff. Your loved ones die, you sniff,
Walking through the valley, standing on the cliff.

He hears the word "triggers," but he knows the enemy's lies,
The trigger isn't the world, it's when he opens up his eyes.

The addict brain's a deceiver, whispering in his own breath,
"For the wages of sin," it whispers, "is only death."

But Jamie reaches out for the Gift that is free,
The grace that declares, "By My stripes, you are healed and set free."
His father says, "Look in the mirror—tell me what you see,"
He sees the broken image of the man he's meant to be.
He sees the "business" of the drug, the logic of the cost,
The stranger in his own skin, feeling permanently lost.

But God looks at the heart and sees a son, not a slave,
The one whom the Savior came specifically to save.
"I am the Light of the world," the Lord softly speaks,
The strength for the weary, the hope that Jamie seeks.

It isn't personal, they say—it's just the nature of the war,
But Jamie isn't fighting for the bottle anymore.
He's learning to see the lie before the "business" can begin,
To let the Spirit breathe beneath this tired, weary skin.

The contract is broken; the shadow has to flee,
For "if the Son sets you free, you are free indeed."
This is Jamie's story, a life no longer dim,
Stepping out of the darkness and walking home to Him.

POEM

Opening Reading From The Ireland European Convention

Submitted by Edwina S. from Templederry, Tipperary, Ireland

God gave great gifts to doctors, and doctors could not cure alcoholism.

God gave great gifts to psychiatrists, and psychiatrists could not cure alcoholism.

God gave great gifts to nurses, to counsellors, to clergy, and with all their learning and compassion,

they could not cure alcoholism.

They helped. They cared. They did all that they could.

But God did not choose them to carry this message.

Instead, God chose alcoholics.

Not because they were wise, not because they were trained, not because they were qualified.

But because they were wounded.

Because they had walked through the darkness, because they knew the despair,

because they had felt the loneliness and the shame.

God did not call the qualified.

God qualified the called.

And the recovering addict / alcoholic, having been broken and restored, became uniquely able to reach another.

One addicted / alcoholic speaking to another became the channel through which hope could flow.

And so it was, and so it is.

PERSONAL STORY

History & Future of C.A. Online

By Cameron F. from Toronto, Ontario, Canada

Online Beginnings

It all began with two members of the 1994 Conference, Craig H. (Midwest Regional Trustee) and Jim S., a delegate from Northern California Area brought a motion to the Conference floor through the Public Information Committee. This motion was to obtain an internet domain (ca.org) and to put up a very limited web site on a server that Craig H. managed. The site was to be limited to the Preamble, the Self-Test and local telephone contact numbers. The "Escape Cocaine" billboard art was also used. This motion passed after considerable debate.

The domain, ca.org, was registered on October 20,1994. The site was online shortly thereafter generating a small number of telephone contacts to CAWSO. There was no e-mail address. C.A. was the first 12-Step Fellowship to have such a web site—AA.org (1996-04-24) and Al-Anon.org (1996-07-23), NA.org (1997-06-12) all put up sites in the following years. Kevin M. was our first Web Master.

In 1995, the Public Information Committee brought a motion to the Conference floor to add certain specified information to the website, such as "What is C.A.?", "...And All Other Mind-Altering Substances" and "To the Newcomer." The motion passed with an amendment to allow the PI Committee to add Conference-approved information at its discretion.

Kevin M. undertook a redesign of the website. More pieces were added: a page on the Storybook, the PI Fact File, the 12 Steps and 12 Traditions, "Crack", and some of the results of the PI Survey of the previous year and an opening page describing the Fellowship and its goals. There was still no e-mail contact listed. This new version of the site went up, but it should have been reviewed and approved first by the WSBT and/or the WSOB, but none of them had Internet access!

In 1996, the new website was formally announced at the Conference and made available for viewing by the fellowship. E-mail addresses for Public Information inquiries (pubinfo@ca.org) and for technical comments (webmaster@ca.org) were also created, and all of these addresses were listed on the web site.

A motion was passed at the 1996 World Conference that any future substantive changes to the site would require Trustee or Conference approval and a motion was passed to translate the web site into French. The Montreal Fellowship translated the web site into French, and provided text and detailed information on how that text correlated to the English version, so that posting the French web site was merely a technical issue. The French version of ca.org went online on August 1, 1997, with WSO approval.

On February 1, 1997, Kevin M., started the "Hope, Faith & Courage" (aka HFC) – the first Email-based meeting of Cocaine Anonymous. Initially a speaker/discussion meeting patterned after AA's "Lamplighters" online meeting, but soon changed to mostly a discussion format.

In time, the "speaker" portion of the meeting was replaced by inviting people celebrating a birthday to post their stories online. After a slow start, the meeting began to thrive. Due to the very low initial cost of operating the meeting, no 7th Tradition was taken initially. After some discussion, and a long talk with former Trustee Bob L, it was decided that the HFC meeting needed to take a 7th Tradition, as this was the only one of the 6 points regarding group status that HFC was not currently meeting.

In August of 1998, the second subscriber meeting, an Email-based meeting, KISCA—The Keep It Simple C.A. E-mail Group. Each week we discuss a topic dealing with life in sobriety. In order to accommodate off-topic discussion, there is also an optional "Parking Lot" list. The Parking Lot is NOT a meeting, but, well...The Parking Lot.

By 1999, two more email meetings were formed: Sisters In Sobriety is an e-mail-based meeting of Cocaine Anonymous. SIS is a women's discussion meeting, where female addicts can talk more freely about issues pertaining to being a woman in sobriety. The Study of CA Online was for the purpose of an email-based Book Study meeting.

At the 1999 C.A. World Service Conference a motion is passed to create an Online Service Committee, ca-online.org is registered on1999-09-16.

The First Online Area of Cocaine Anonymous

At the 2000 C.A. World Conference Cocaine Anonymous ratifies the Online Service Area. OSA Delegates representing the OSA are: Michael C. (2 votes) and Alt. Del. Sherri H. (1 vote). By 2010, voice meetings were introduced.

Then in 2020, the Global pandemic starts and C.A. moves to the virtual meeting platform and the OSA experiences exponential growth due to government lock-downs in an attempt to curtain the spread of the COVID-19 virus. The ensuing result was hundreds of online meeting forming, many which are still running today and currently the OSA has 29 Member Groups and 68 meetings per week!

A Second Online Area Takes Shape

The Online Recovery Area of C.A. was started on September 3, 2025 with three founding Online Groups: 12 Steps in 4 Hours, T.G.I.F. & the Midnight Rounders, and the C.A. Service Sponsorship Group. With one service objective in mind: to attract suffering addicts searching the web looking for recovery solutions, and once finding the Area's website, be directed to C.A. online meetings find a solution to their problem. It's current size is 25 Member Groups, 38 meetings per week and 14 H&I meetings. The Online Recovery Area is seeking ratification at the 2026 C.A. World Service Conference.

Continued from p. 5

The Formation of a Third Online Area

The C.A. Online GB Area began as the Online District within the Area of CAUK in 2020 during the Covid-19 pandemic. Helping those who could not get to any face to face meetings, giving them the chance to begin or continue their recovery online. It began with just 6 aligned meetings.

By 2021, The Online District had increased to nine meetings. Momentum continued in 2022 with 13 groups now part of the district and in 2023 it had expanded to 21.The pace of growth accelerated and 36 groups had now joined by 2024, and in 2025 the number had peaked at 54.

In 2026, reflecting its maturity and international reach, the CAUK Online District voted with a 98% majority, to pursue global recognition and ratification at the 2026 World Services Conference.

It is apparent that the growth of modem-to-modem online recovery will continue to expand from hundreds of online groups to thousands of online groups in the coming years. With the help of area service committees staffed by C.A. elected trusted servants who are technologically adept and savvy to the online, virtual world of recovery, and who are equipped to deliver an online platform and forum to maximize GSR participation at the Group, Area, and World Services level, not only enhances our C.A. Fellowship as a global whole, but ensures C.A. viability and long-term fulfilment of our primary purpose, "to carry our message to the addict who still suffers".

PERSONAL STORY

Courage Looks Like A One-Way Ticket

By Albina K. from San Antonio, Texas, USA

When people talk about courage they often imagine something dramatic, running into a burning building or making a heroic speech. But sometimes courage is much quieter, sometimes courage looks like packing your life into boxes, getting on a plane, and starting over somewhere you've never lived before. For me courage looked like leaving New York and moving to Texas.

New York had been my home for my whole life. It held my memories, my routines, my familiar streets, and the people who had known me through many versions of myself. In recovery we talk a lot about honesty, willingness, and change, but knowing you need change and actually stepping into it are two very different things.

When the idea of moving first came up it felt overwhelming, I wasn't just changing apartments or neighborhoods I was leaving an entire life behind. My meetings, my community, the people who knew my story without me having to explain it, in recovery those connections are everything.

But somewhere along the way I realized something important, recovery had already been teaching me courage all along. Every time I walked into a meeting when I didn't want to, every time I told the truth instead of hiding, every time I asked for help instead of pretending I had it all together. Those moments had been building something inside me so eventually I did the thing that once felt impossible, I moved from New York to Texas and let me tell you starting over is no small thing.

Suddenly everything was different, the weather, the culture, the pace of life, even simple things felt unfamiliar. I had to find new meetings, introduce myself to new people and rebuild the kind of support system that had taken years to grow back home. There were days when I questioned whether I had made the right decision, days when I missed the comfort of the familiar, days when courage didn't feel like bravery at all it felt like uncertainty. But recovery reminds us that growth often lives on the other side of discomfort.

What I've learned through this move is that courage doesn't mean you're not scared, it means you move forward anyway. It means trusting that the tools we learn in recovery travel with us wherever we go. The program doesn't exist in one city or one meeting room, it lives inside the people who practice it.

And the truth is the same principles that helped me get clean are the ones helping me build a life here now, willingness, faith, connection, and showing up even when it feels uncomfortable. Today, Texas is starting to feel like home, not because everything is perfect or easy but because I've learned that home isn't just a place. It's the community we build, the honesty we practice, and the courage we choose each day.

If recovery has taught me anything, it's this, we are capable of far more than we think. Sometimes courage is getting clean, sometimes courage is telling your story and sometimes courage is simply beginning again somewhere new. For me courage looked like leaving New York, and as it turns out, it also looked like arriving in Texas.

PERSONAL STORY

Dealing with Guilt & Regrets

By Barry H. from Blairville, Georgia, USA

Guilt and regret were among the most common and most difficult emotions I faced when I came to Cocaine Anonymous. These feelings began to surface after the fog of addiction began to lift, bringing clarity about past actions, relationships, and consequences. While uncomfortable, these experiences were not a setback, but rather the beginning signs of progress. It reflected my growing awareness, emotional honesty, and a reawakening of personal values that had been buried during my active addiction.

In recovery I learned the difference between guilt and shame. Guilt was rooted in my behavior and told me, "I did something wrong." Shame, on the other hand, was rooted in my identity. It told me, "I am something wrong." The 12 Steps helped me to address guilt constructively, helping me taking responsibility for my actions and make amends. It did not support shame, which led me to isolation, hopelessness, and relapses. Learning to separate these two was essential to my recovery. I learned that when viewed through the right lens, guilt served a meaningful purpose. It signaled that my moral awareness was returning and that change was underway. Guilt motivated me to action and prompted me to repair harm, rebuild trust, and make different choices. I learned that once it had served its purpose, continuing to carry guilt could become harmful. I leaned on my relationship with a Higher Power and as I took action, I asked God to remove the guilt.

It was important for me to recognize traps that kept me stuck in the problem. This included believing that ongoing suffering was necessary to prove change, repeatedly replaying past mistakes without taking action, avoiding amends while holding onto guilt, and

allowing past behavior to define my current identity. Step work, combined with the shared experience of other C.A. members helped me recognize the patterns of my thinking and behavior that reinforced negativity. I was encouraged to move forward, grounded in accountability, and not anchored in self- condemnation.

The 12 Steps provided a clear and practical pathway for working through guilt and regret. Steps Four and Five encouraged me to take a thorough and fearless moral inventory. Sharing that inventory with another person broke through the isolation where regret once grew. It reduced the emotional weight of past actions and harms done to others. Steps Eight and Nine focused me on taking action and as I made amends my recovery shifted from reflection to restoration. A practical program of action helped me move from focusing on just "feeling better" to a lifestyle of "doing better", taking concrete steps to repair relationships and address past harms. Step Ten introduced me to a daily practice of self-examination, allowing me to stay current and preventing the buildup of unresolved guilt over time.

One of the most challenging realities I faced in recovery was accepting that not everything can be fixed. Some damage cannot be undone, and some opportunities for amends may no longer exist. My recovery calls for both responsibility and surrender. My sponsor encouraged me to do what I could, where I could, and then to turn the rest over. This is where my faith and reliance on a Higher Power grew. As I let go of what was beyond my control I found peace, despite unresolved outcomes.

I discovered that some of my greatest regrets became sources of purpose. Experiences that once carried deep guilt were transformed into tools for helping others. By sharing my "Hope, Faith, and Courage" with others with similar struggles, I turned my past pain into present usefulness. Through service in Cocaine Anonymous, the transformation I experienced became a pathway to continued healing and growth.

Over time, I developed a simple daily framework that helps me maintain emotional balance and supports continued growth. Beginning the day with a focus on doing the next right thing sets a positive direction. Throughout the day, I pause when guilt arises and ask whether action is needed or whether it is something to give to my Higher Power. Ending my day with a brief personal inventory allows for reflection, correction, and closure. This consistent practice helps me prevent the accumulation of regret and reinforces a healthier way of living.

I have found freedom in recovery and no longer punish myself for past mistakes. I try to live each day practicing spiritual principles. I now can see clearly that guilt and regret, when approached through the lens of the 12 Steps, are not obstacles, but steppingstones toward healing, restoration, and a more purposeful life.

PERSONAL STORY

Concept One

By Susan C. from St. Louis, Missouri, USA

The final responsibility and the ultimate authority for A.A. (C.A.) world services should always reside in the collective conscience of our whole Fellowship.

At the height of the pandemic while on a virtual meeting, I heard a delegate from the east coast say, "When I go to conference I lead with my heart and my Higher Power." That statement touched me as a truth in which I believed, but I decided right then and there that I wanted it to be more a part of my every day and service life.

Our delegates as trusted servants know that they carry the wishes of their Area to the conference. Once they arrive at conference they are not only representing their Area but they are a voice for all of C.A. While conference is in session they must follow the group's conscience of the conference as a whole. Just like when Groups, Districts and Areas have a group conscience, the whole makes the decision not just a few. Once the decision is made as a Group, District, or Area, that is what stands. At times as individuals we may not get our way, but we need to trust our Higher Power and the Fellowship. A good reminder, "When I go to conference I lead with my heart and my Higher Power."

> **"An even greater force for A.A.'s (C.A.'s) unity is the compelling love that we have for our fellow members and for the principles upon which our lives today are founded." (A.A. Service Manual page C-5)**

If I go into a group conscience with contempt prior to investigation, I have already made up my mind without listening to others. I close myself off from my Higher Power and other members Higher Power too. In the A.A. Service Manual on page C-3 in Concept One it states, ". . . some of us began to apply this tested principle of "stop, look, and listen" to A.A.'s (C.A.'s) world affairs, it was widely thought that we must be foolish worriers who lacked faith."

This is how I see "Stop, Look, and Listen."

STOP

Stop my prejudgment, I do not know everything, I came into the program with major issues disrupting my life. I wanted to change and become a productive member of C.A. and society as a whole. Could I pause my internal narrator and just notice the thoughts passing through? How about asking my Higher Power to help me keep an open mind to new possibilities and ideas? I needed to avoid the trap of doing the same thing over and over again, still expecting a different outcome which we all know is the definition of insanity. That isn't reality, my life before sobriety was led by my way or the highway, if you didn't agree with me then you paid for it.

I have learned to do and be better by letting go of the need for immediate answers.

LOOK

Looking around I'm not the only person in this world or situation, people are entitled to their opinions. In C.A. we learn that we may not always get our way but we have to trust our HP and the people (delegates & trusted servants) who carry out the wishes of the majority to do the right thing. In most non-C.A. situations we do not get a voice nor an opportunity to express that opinion, I am grateful for the process of having a group conscience.

LISTEN

I practice listening by asking my Higher Power to stop my mind from anticipating what I'm going to say to rebut what is being said. I endeavor to stay in the moment and focused on what another person is saying. I need to stop looking around worrying about what other people are or are not doing. Time to stop judging and really listen to people with a kind open

heart. Like the delegate said, "When I go to conference, I lead with my heart and my Higher Power." I try to apply that wise advice wherever I go be it in meetings, driving, or daily interactions. I find the 9th Step promise coming true--"intuitively know how to handle situations which used to baffle us." It makes me a gentler more compassionate person which is what sobriety means to me. Living life on life's terms can I acknowledge that control isn't always mine but acceptance is? Doing what my Higher Power wants me to do giving away what was freely given to me is the heart of my recovery, it radiates the gift of sobriety and service to all of us. Stop, Look and Listen is a mindful approach to life and service.

PERSONAL STORY

Dealing with Guilt & Regret, Learning to Lay Down The Weight

By Trish P. from Paulshof, Johannesburg, South Africa

For much of my using life and long into early recovery I lived under the constant weight of guilt and regret, it was heavy, relentless, and familiar. I told myself that if I felt bad enough about the past maybe that meant I was taking responsibility. What I didn't realise was that guilt and regret when left unchecked became just another form of self-obsession.

In recovery, I've learned that guilt is not the same as accountability, and regret is not the same as growth.

When I first stopped using the memories came flooding back, the people I had hurt, the moments I wasn't present, the lies, the manipulation and the emotional wreckage left behind. My instinct was to punish myself with those memories to replay them endlessly as proof that I was a bad person who deserved to suffer.

But recovery gently challenged that narrative. Through the Steps I began to see that guilt has a purpose but only when it leads somewhere. Step Four asked me to look honestly at myself not to destroy myself. Step Five taught me that I am only as sick as my secrets. And Steps Six and Seven showed me that my defects are not life sentences they are patterns that can be changed with willingness and humility.

One of the biggest shifts for me was understanding that regret often comes from judging the past with the clarity I only have today. When I look back now I see things differently not because I was always capable of better choices but because recovery has given me new tools, new awareness, and new values. Expecting my past self to have what I only gained later is unfair and unrealistic. Guilt told me "You are broken", recovery taught me to ask "What can I learn from this?"

As I worked through amends I learned another difficult truth, not every regret can be undone and not every harm can be repaired in the way I would like, some doors remain closed and some people choose distance. Recovery doesn't guarantee reconciliation but it does offer integrity, my responsibility is to clean my side of the street and live differently today.

What has helped me most is learning to replace guilt with vresponsibility and regret with intention. Responsibility looks like honesty, boundaries, and changed behaviour, intention looks like showing up, staying teachable and living in alignment with the principles of the program.

I've also learned that guilt can quietly turn into pride keeping me stuck in the idea that I am uniquely bad or beyond redemption.

Recovery reminds me that I am not special in my brokenness and I don't need to be perfect to be useful.

Today when guilt or regret surfaces I try to pause and ask is this pointing me toward growth or pulling me back into shame? Is there an amends to be made or is this something I need to surrender? What would living differently today look like?

Recovery hasn't erased my past but it has changed my relationship with it, I no longer need to live there, my past informs me it does not define me. The greatest gift of recovery is learning that I am allowed to move forward without forgetting where I came from and without dragging it all behind me. I am learning, one day at a time, to lay the weight down.

SUBMIT A STORY Send to newsgram@ca.org with subject line "Personal Story"

UPDATES FROM OUR WORLD SERVICE COMMITTEES

WORKING TOGETHER.
SHARING PROGRESS.
SERVING COCAINE ANONYMOUS.



SHOP CAWSO

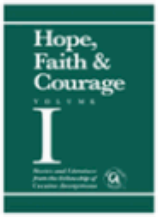
READ A DAMN BOOK!

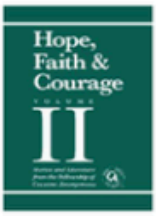
(quote by a semi famous person, don't remember her name. . .)

History and Stories of those who came before us . . .

All C.A. books are written -and stories are gathered – with one thing in mind, to continue to carry C.A.'s Message of Recovery.
You don't want to miss these!







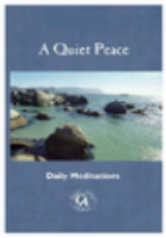
It works if you work it!!



This is the BEST workbook for the 12 Steps, if we do say so ourselves.
Buy it, work it with another addict, and if it does not set your soul on fire . . . well, do it again!



. .and a little serenity goes a long way



If you can't stroll the beach,
walk through the woods, or
wake up before the sun . . .
then you need this daily meditation book to feed your soul.

We can't wait to see you at the World Convention in Orlando this May!
*That means you will be blessed with our presence, **BUT** the office will be closed Wednesday, May 20th –get your orders in by Sunday the 17th to guarantee shipping before we shut the doors on Tuesday . . . and we will be back to business on Tuesday the 26th(but we will be tired- we don't bounce back like we used too!)*

IN THE SPIRIT OF TRADITION SIX, C.A. IS NOT ALLIED WITH ANY SECT, DENOMINATION, POLITICS, ORGANISATION OR INSTITUTION

WSC 2026 UNITY BREAKFAST

- 7.30-9AM ON THURSDAY 3RD SEPT 2026
- @ 'CROSSWINDS' (IMMEDIATELY ON THE RIGHT AFTER COMING THROUGH MAIN HOTEL ENTRANCE)

COME AND MEET YOUR FELLOWS BEFORE CONFERENCE REALLY GETS STARTED!!



- TICKETS ONLY AVAILABLE FOR PURCHASE WHEN COMPLETING YOUR CONFERENCE REGISTRATION ONLINE AT CA.ORG
- TICKETS ORIGINALLY COST $35 PP...
- THE UNITY COMMITTEE WILL SUBSIDISE THE TICKETS BY $10, THEREBY REDUCING THE TICKET PRICE TO $25PP.
- FIRST 100 TICKETS ONLY,
- USE COUPON CODE 'UNITY10'

ANY QUESTIONS... EMAIL UNITY@CA.ORG



2026

Orlando, Florida, USA

2027

Seattle, Washington, USA

2028

Glasglow, Scotland

2029

Toronto, Canada



Scan to pay

May 21-25, 2026

Caribe Royale Resort - 8101 World Center Dr., Orlando, FL 32821

Registration Packages

Sabal Package - Marathon meetings, speaker meetings, workshops and basic entertainment, as well as $5.00 in C.A. bucks to be used for memorabilia or auctions.

Bismarck Package - Includes everything in the **Sabal** Package plus Breakaway Breakfast, premium entertainment, as well as $15.00 in C.A. bucks to be used for memorabilia or auctions.

Royal Package - Includes everything in the **Bismarck** Package, plus the Banquet and $25.00 in C.A. bucks to be used for memorabilia or auctions.

LATE REGISTRATION REMAINS OPEN ONLY UNTIL MAY 4, 2026

Registration Pricing In U.S. Dollars

Sabal -	**$140**
Bismark -	**$245**
Royal -	**$390**

(Registration For Offsite Special Events Is Now Closed)

Important Registration Deadlines To Be Aware Of

Late Registration ends – **May 4th, 2026**, all online registration closes.

On-site Registration – **May 21st, 2026**, on-site registration opens and is limited to Day Passes and Daily Entertainment tickets only.

- Registration & hotel booking links, contact, and all other info check out the website www.caws2026.org
- Paper registrations and registration related questions, please email: registration@caws2026.org
- Hotel related questions, please email: hotelliaison@caws2026.org

"In the spririt of Tradition Six, C.A. is not allied with any sect, denomination, politics, organization or institution." As such, Cocaine Anonymous World Services Convention 2026 and Cocaine Anonymous as a whole, does not endorse and is not affiliated with RegFox or the Caribe Royale.

THANK YOU TO OUR GENEROSITY



RECOGNIZING DONATIONS FROM THE PREVIOUS QUARTER

Your support helps carry the message of recovery and hope to the world.

WE ARE STRONGER TOGETHER.

YOUR DONATION MAKES A DIFFERENCE.

SUPPORTING OUR FELLOWSHIP WORLDWIDE.

CARRYING THE MESSAGE OF RECOVERY.

THANK YOU FOR YOUR CONTINUED SUPPORT!

Donations Received

Thank you to the following groups and areas for their generous contributions to the World Service Office!

Arizona Area

Birds of a Feather	$83.18
AZ Tucson	$1,000
SNL Group	$407.71

Another Area

Group Here	$83.18
Another Group	$1,000
Group Name	$452.85
Another Group	$123.00
Location Place	$862.12
The Group	$407.71

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The Group	$407.71

Member Donation

John Doe	$83.18
Jane Doe	$1,000
The DoDo's	$452.85
Do or Do Not	$123.00
DOnation Group	$862.12
John Doe	$83.18
Jane Doe	$1,000
The DoDo's	$452.85
Do or Do Not	$123.00
DOnation Group	$862.12
Do Donate Donairs	$407.71

CALA

South Central District	$262.00
Long Beach Compton	$410.00
Central Cali.	$145.00
South Central District	$262.00
Long Beach Compton	$410.00
Central Cali.	$145.00

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The Group	$407.71

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Group Name	$452.85
Another Group	$123.00
Location Place	$862.12
The Group	$407.71

First Quarter 2026 Total Donations:

$51,427.96

UPCOMING EVENTS

CONNECT. SHARE. GROW. TOGETHER.

FELLOWSHIP IN ACTION

BUILDING CONNECTIONS

SHARING EXPERIENCE, STRENGTH & HOPE

UNITED IN OUR COMMON PURPOSE



MARK YOUR CALENDARS!

Stay connected with events happening in our fellowship around the world.

DETAILS & UPDATES

Visit the CA website or your local region's page for more information.

TOGETHER WE STAY STRONG.
TOGETHER WE CARRY THE MESSAGE.

Upcoming Events

MAY
21-25
2026

C.A. 2026 World Service Convention

Caribe Royal Resort, 8101 World Center Dr. Orlando, Florida, 32821 USA

For more information see www.caws2026.org

JUNE
13-14
2026

The Osla Pivot C.A. Convention 2026

Breivoll Farm, Breivollveien 100, 1407 Vinterbro, Norway

JULY
31
2026

Campvention

Ford Street Farm, Braughing SG11 2PN England, UK

AUGUST
20-23
2026

CALA Annual Convention in Palm Springs

La Quinta Resort & Club, 49 - 499 Eisenhower Drive, La Quinta, CA 92253 USA

SEPTEMBER
11-13
2026

CA Scotland 25th Annual Convention

The Glynhill Hotel & Spa, 1169 Paisley Road, Renfrew, PA4 8XB Scotland, UK

SUBMIT AN EVENT Send to newsgram@ca.org with subject line "Event Listing"