

# THE CONNECTION

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vol. two

SHARING WORLDWIDE RECOVERY

number 1

## FROM BEVERLY HILLS TO SATAN'S SLAVE

*Pronounced DOA three times, this biker gal's life was a "glorious adventure" of murder and mayhem.*

From the time I was 15 until I turned 27 my life was a turbulent succession of motorcycles, rampant mayhem and kilos of cocaine. Some might call it a nightmare; to me it was a glorious adventure. I've driven fancy cars, worn diamonds and furs and gone to lots of great places. I've also been raped at gunpoint, arrested for murder and pronounced DOA on three occasions. As long as I had enough coke, it really didn't matter where I went or what I did.

Today, my primary purpose is to stay clean and sober and help others achieve the same. I believe God has brought me back to life and allowed me to live for a reason . . . not to suffer and be unhappy but to have happiness and joy and share it with everyone.

I was born in Beverly Hills on the wrong side of the boulevard. Blonde, blue-eyed and tan. Your typical California Girl. At three I had my first out of body experience and still continue that practice to this day. I have always been extremely psychic, which made most people afraid of me. At 13 I experienced my first encounter with drugs. My cousin Johnny knew Leary and Ozley, and decided to go into business making LSD. Acid was my first drug and I loved it. It got me right where I wanted to be; I took it on a daily basis for years. It was the purest acid you could get and it was

great. I wasn't into drinking, particularly, since the first time I had tried Southern Comfort (that's all Janice Joplin drank and she told me it was the best) I got so drunk I thought I was going to die. Better yet, I wished I *were* dead; at least then I would have stopped puking.

That did it for me and booze for a while. I stuck to drugs from then on. Drugs and Coca Cola.

Turn it over to page 6

## SCOTTSDALE, AZ CA CONVENTION

"Sun, Sand & Serenity" is the theme for Scottsdale, Arizona's 1st Annual CA Convention scheduled to take place at the sensational Scottsdale Safari Resort, March 20, 21 and 22. Deadline for Pre-Registration (\$10) is February 20. In addition to the usual speaker and marathon meetings, there will be two dances, a sumptuous beef banquet dinner Saturday night for only \$20, and breakfast Sunday morning for \$10. T-shirts imprinted with "Sun, Sand & Serenity '87" may be purchased for \$7. Make checks payable to "Arizona CA Convention" and mail to Arizona CA Convention, P.O. Box 30476, Phoenix, AZ 85046 or call (602) 934-0009.

## CUNNING, BAFFLING POWERFUL

Fantastic!!! That was the only way to describe the way I felt when I woke up that Sunday morning. Life was beautiful and I had never felt better. Here I was, only three weeks on the program, and already I was a new man. Three weeks clean and sober — no way would I ever touch that stuff again. My wife and children had also noticed the change in me and they were elated.

I had driven into the office to finish up some paperwork before the Bear's game started when the phone rang. It was a friend I used to do coke with. Would I like to watch the game at his house? "I'd love to," I said. "But remember, I don't do coke anymore."

Boy, did I feel great. Not only did I say no, but I really didn't have any compulsion to do any. Yeah, I know, my new friends in CA told me to stay away from my old playmates, my using buddies. But this friend was different. I knew him from school. He was a true friend.

As I was preparing to leave, he called back. "If no one is home when you get here," he said, "Just let yourself in. I'm going to make a run."

I reminded him I was on the program. "Don't get any for me," I told him. Now I was really feeling great. I had said no for the second time today! As I drove home to change, I felt like I was floating on Cloud Nine.

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## The Connection-Issue Number 5

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## The One Percent

During the last Southern California convention, I was asked to participate in a workshop on Service. Only thirteen members of the Fellowship showed up, including four panelists and one moderator. Down the hall, however, at least 200 other "grateful, recovering addicts" practically fell all over themselves to cram into a workshop on sex.

Now, I'm the last person in the world to suggest that what we discussed in our little workshop was anywhere near as interesting, as provocative or as much just plain fun as sex. By the same token, I've never heard of anybody in the program having to change his sobriety date because he got obsessed with *service!*

After more than three-and-a-half years of research, I'm pretty much convinced that 99% of the service work in Cocaine Anonymous is done by about *one percent* of the membership. For the thousands upon thousands of us who have been given the Gift of Sobriety, thanks to a loving God and the Miracle of the Twelve Steps of Recovery, that's unfortunate. If nothing else, I think, it shows an alarming lack of gratitude on the part of an awful lot of us.

You've got to give it away to keep it. How many times have we heard that statement in meetings? Yet, so many of us seem so determined to keep it we forget to give *anything* away.

When I first arrived in these rooms, I found some very special people who were tirelessly giving of themselves to the Fellowship. And I'm not just talking about the people who make the coffee or greet newcomers at the door, either. I'm talking about the people behind the scenes, the people who got this program going and kept it going through the kind of trials and tribulations that would make lesser men and women walk away in total frustration. People like Gil M. and Jonny S. and Ray G., who literally drove to any length to serve, as the 300-400 miles his odometer registered week after week attested to. These are the people who developed our first public information and our starter kits and the formats for the meetings we hold today. These are the people who organized our Fellowship and set up our By-Laws and established World Services and made certain Cocaine Anonymous was legally protected from outside entities.

And with these three came others like Jennifer R. and Greg D. and H. Lee S. and Bob L. and Fenn P. and later, Reggie L., along with all the members of all the committees, both national and local, and all the others who were there for us in the beginning, who've unselfishly given of themselves to serve.

These are the one percent who do 99% of the service.

One *one percent* who deserves special recognition is Willie O., of Studio City, CA, whose term as first chairman of the World Services Board recently expired. For the past two years, Willie has served the Fellowship with distinction. At one time he served as chairman of *three* World Services committees, all at the same time. He was instrumental in putting together both the 1st World Services Conference and the 1st World Services Business Meeting, and the 1st World Services CA Convention in Santa Barbara in '85 might never have come off had it not been for Willie and his American Express card.

We thank Willie for his tireless service, for showing up day after day, week after week, and taking the action. The Fellowship owes him a debt of gratitude. He is truly one of the one percent.

*The Editor*

## Santa Barbara CA Convention

The Santa Barbara Chapter of Cocaine Anonymous will be holding its 1st Annual "Sun & Serenity" CA Convention at the Miramar Hotel, April 10, 11 and 12. In addition to workshops of special interest, meetings 'round the clock and some really dynamite speakers, there will be a banquet dinner Saturday night and a breakfast Sunday morning.

Register by March 31 and save some bucks. Pre-Registration is \$10, as is the breakfast, and the banquet is \$25. Make your check payable to "CA Santa Barbara Convention" and mail to Cocaine Anonymous Santa Barbara Convention, P.O. Box 1002, Studio City, CA 91608. For hotel reservations, contact the Miramar at 805-969-2203.

## An Attitude Of Gratitude

When I woke up this morning  
I had a feeling of Gratitude  
I am so overwhelmed to have  
this brand new attitude.

I jump out of bed,  
look out of my window and say,  
Oh!! What a beautiful day !!...  
Like none I remember.

I look in the mirror,  
I like what I see.  
Oh!! What a beautiful face.  
Is this really me?!

I smile at myself,  
and say "Hello, Friend.  
This is how I'll see you  
to the very end."

I love the Lord.  
He heard my cry.  
He lifted me up  
instead of letting me die.

*Diane, Chicago*

## ME? AN ADDICT? *His Secret is Out!*

The nights were the worst. I would close my eyes and say to myself, "This isn't me. Please, God, this isn't me." Then after lying still for what seemed like hours (though it was probably only minutes), I'd head for the drawer to scrape another line of "feel good" (or, at least, that's what I thought) onto the table and savor it, like it was going to work some magic on me. Then turning to look in the mirror, there I was, staring at someone I didn't know.

I couldn't believe it. This person had my eyes, my face . . . but I had no idea who the pair of eyes belonged to. It was too much for me to comprehend, so I would grab three or four sleeping pills and a couple of shots of Nyquil . . . anything to escape the agony, anything to put me out of my personal hell.

My life was a walking nightmare as I lied and cheated and manipulated the closest people in my life. I knew something was wrong, but whatever it was, I couldn't let anyone know. I had to hide the fact (at least, I thought I did) that David wasn't the all-together great guy that his family and his friends and even *himself* thought he was.

I knew that some people became drug addicts. I even thought a few of my friends had a problem. But me? David? No chance! I was different. After all, I'd had this great girlfriend for the past ten years and, well . . . not much else, except a head full of dreams and fears, dreams and fears of being able to be a good person, an honest person, a loving person.

It was as though I were two people. One with a smiling face with all the right moves. The other the *real* me, a man of 24, filled with nothing but fears. To cover them up I had coated my brain with drugs for the past 14 years, thinking things would be different soon, if only. . . .

I was living my life running from place to place, hiding from one person or another, hiding from myself. I

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Cartoon drawn by John, Chicago, Ill.

## NEWSFRONT

# COCAINE USE LINKED TO PARKINSON'S

Texas A&M University — Habitual cocaine use can greatly accelerate the onset of Parkinson's disease, a chronic, progressive disorder of the central nervous system, a Texas researcher reports.

In laboratory studies on rats, Texas A&M University researcher Michael Trulson demonstrated that routine cocaine use can upset the balance of essential chemicals in the brain and destroy brain cells related to the control of motor skills. Trulson believes that destruction of these cells allows symptoms of Parkinson's to appear much earlier than in its normal course of development. In fact, he speculates that routine cocaine use can speed up the onset of the disease by as much as 20 years.

Most commonly Parkinson's, characterized by slow movements, muscle rigidity and tremors, strikes the elderly.

In experiments on rats given cocaine, Trulson reports a significant dip in the levels of four enzymes in the brain, a depletion he speculates might be permanent. In earlier studies, he had suggested that a decline in the enzyme levels could expose steady cocaine users to high risk for sudden heart attack.

*Reprinted from Insight Magazine*

### HELP WANTED

The Connection needs your help! We need your letters and your news items and your cartoons and, most important, your stories of recovery for our newsletter. Send all written material, typed and double-spaced, to the Editor, c/o The Connection, Cocaine Anonymous, P.O. Box 1367, Culver City, CA 90232. Your anonymity will be respected. Only your first name and the initial of your last name, along with your city and state, will be used in conjunction with your contribution. And don't forget to subscribe. We need the money.

# STEPPING OUT FROM THE KITCHEN

# I'M NOT ALONE, SHE DISCOVERS

7:30. Friday night. Coffee maker bubbles, sodas chill, candles flicker and the D.J.'s massive speakers flex as the sound system is tested. It's the biweekly dance sponsored by Connecticut CA State Service.

I know my job well. Make sure the area is properly stocked, that coffee and soda is available, provide paper and pencil for phone number exchanges, deal with unexpected trauma and manage kitchen operations. It's a tough job but somebody's got to do it and it's certainly not without its rewards.

Music booms through the hall as dance committee members set up. The crowd should start filing in at nine. Pre-dance anxiety can be seen in our faces. *What if nobody shows? What if the dance is a failure?* No words are spoken, but the thoughts are there. I do a fast Third Step and hope the others remember to do likewise. I'm O.K.

9:30 *Where the hell is everybody?* They're at meetings; things don't start jumping until ten-thirty. We go through this at every dance. Insanity lingers in the air.

10:30. People start packing in. They come in all shapes and sizes, some very young, some not so young, leotards to formal wear. All are welcomed. Then the hardcore dancers arrive, sweatbands everywhere, towels draped around their necks. They will dance and dance and dance. Their freedom astounds me. I wish I could be that well. Some of my closer friends arrive, we exchange hugs and kisses. They're beautiful people. One wall down, many to go.

Things are cookin' now, sober bodies gyrate around the dance floor. There're smiles everywhere. No conflicts. No arguments. No pain. I hope I never get used to the sight. . . .

The dance will be a success. I don't know why we always worry. It's out of our hands, anyway.

Soda sales are frantic, orders exceed our ability to fill them. Fortunately, there are lulls which allow a breather to

restock. The soda sales support staff usually includes a newcomer or two asked by their sponsor to "learn something about service." The dance almost always "ties the ribbon" around the program for the newcomers, who get a look of amazement on their faces as they begin to realize they can have fun *sober!*

I watch for that look. It is one of the real joys of my job. Shortly, they'll find their way to the dance floor and I'll be looking for someone new for the staff. My friends gladly fill the gaps whenever I need them.

And me? The astute reader has already figured out that I'm hiding. I've been doing this for the past six months. Why am I still on the kitchen side of the window? Well, I'm happy to report that I'm getting better, too. I have friends that won't let me live in this sanctuary. Thank God!

"ARE YOU GOING TO DANCE AT ALL TONIGHT, JOHN?"

The look says it all. Excuses aren't accepted. Ever try to *con* a sober addict? Forget it!! I slowly meander out to the dance floor. After a couple of dances, I return to my duties, secure in the knowledge that I am growing. My nights behind the kitchen window are numbered. Soon I will be well enough to turn my responsibilities over to someone else who needs to live in the sanctuary for awhile. And I will know their pain and their fears and do my best to help them. That's the way the Fellowship works.

Who knows, I may even buy a sweatband!

John O., Fairfield, CT

I'm Kay D. and I'm a very grateful recovering addict/alcoholic from Chicago. I've been in the program for almost a year now and a few weeks ago I had the most enlightening experience happen to me, which made me feel a love and a gratitude the likes of which I've never felt before. Time and time again I'd heard you have to do the footwork, that love must be unconditional, that you have to give it away in order to keep it, but it wasn't until the other day that I really, truly believed what you've been telling me.

I live with another recovering addict who has almost three years of sobriety. And something she and another real important person in my life did allowed me to see for myself what this program is really all about.

Briefly, a friend of theirs had gone out and used. They tried calling him on the phone a number of times but they couldn't reach him so they decided to drive over to his house and let him know that it was okay, that they understood and, most important, that they still loved him.

I really don't know too much about what happened after that. But I had tears in my eyes... I knew I had some real winners in my life. I had a feeling come over me that no matter what I did, little or big, these people, *you people*, would love me, anyway, for trying as best I can today. For the first time in life I'm not alone anymore. *I'm not alone!*

Thank you, CA, for caring and sharing. I love each and everyone of you.

Kay D., Chicago

## Portland Holds Holiday Classic

The Portland, Oregon Chapter of Cocaine Anonymous held its 1st "Holiday Classic" Convention at the Portland Alcoholic Social Sobriety Club, December 26-28. There were speakers and meetings 'round the clock. What conventioners lacked in attendance they more than made up for in enthusiasm.

Highlight of the convention was a sober father and two sober sons speaking on the topic, "How It Works In The Family." Bruce M. of Hollywood, CA was the speaker at the banquet, Saturday night, followed by a dance with a live band.

# ADDICT DISCOVERS HER ADDICTION TO ALCOHOL IS FAR MORE SUBTLE

*The story of a girl who sees a married man and what she learned from the experience.*

I'm an addict *and an alcoholic*. I have a disease that tells me I don't have a disease. It's obvious that cocaine made a mess of my life, but my addiction to alcohol is more subtle. Therefore, I need to remember that I cannot drug *or drink*.

Recently, I went out of town for three days. I'd made plans to see this man . . . this married man. You get the idea. I told myself everything would be okay, I'd gone to lots of meetings before I left to insure that I wouldn't relapse while I was away, and everything *was* okay . . . for the first day. Then morning came and I got on my knees to pray.

"God," I said, "please keep me clean and sober today. Please protect me and care for me." Then I started to say "Please lead me and guide me through this day." And I thought, *who am I kidding?* I know it's not His Will for me to be here with this man. I'm not going to do His Will today; I'm going to do *mine!* So I left my prayers at, "Please keep me clean and sober today."

I was uneasy most of the day. I felt like I was alone, without a support system. That evening the man had some champagne at our chalet. I kept looking at his glass. I could picture it in my hand . . . see my lipstick on the lip . . . taste the bubbles going down my throat. And, for a second or two, I actually picked it up and held it in my hand!

I quickly jumped up off the couch, went outside and started to pray. "Please, God, let me stop thinking like this! Restore me to sanity! Help me!" I stood outside for about ten minutes. I knew that drinking would only make the situation worse. I knew that I didn't *have* to drink over this.

When I went back inside, I asked him to get rid of the rest of the champagne. We went out to dinner and I tried to put this near disaster behind me.

The next day, I took an early plane home, called my sponsors and got to a meeting. One of my sponsors told me

that each of us in the program tests our wings from time to time and then we come back to the nest. I'm so grateful to my Higher Power for bringing me back safely to the nest, and I'm so thankful that I didn't relapse, that I'm back where I belong.

I learned something about me from all of this. I'm growing. I didn't want to face the fact that I was doing something I shouldn't have been . . . that's why I wanted to drink. I have a Conscience today. And I'm beginning to find out what God's will for me is. And, just as important, what it *isn't*.

*RR, Chicago*

## Daily Meditation

Hi, God. Thank you for a new day. Please help me to stay clean and sober. Help me to accept my powerlessness over my addiction and people, places and things. Please give me the strength and courage I need to face life today. I believe you will help me, and I will not be alone. Thy Will be done; not mine, God. If I choose to do my own will, I'll just screw things up. Show me the way of Your Will. As I start off the new day, help me to remember that I am a good person and I can do good things. Please take away my selfishness and let me help others. Please help me to keep amends with my family and friends. And also help me to keep amends with myself, because I am doing the right thing today. Please God, when I am wrong today, help me to admit it. Please grant me the knowledge of Your Will for me, and the power to carry it out. Also grant me the willingness to try to carry the message of the Twelve Steps to the addict who still suffers, so that he or she, too, may have what I have. And last, God, please grant me Your Peace, Love and Strength to honestly make these Twelve Steps a way of life for myself.

*A Grateful Addict in Chicago*

## FLYING SOBER

This is the first time in 20 years that I haven't had a joint or a drink or a pill or some coke before a flight. I used to check in 15 minutes or so early in order to take a walk around the terminal building to light up. As I pass by the metal detector, I think about all the drugs I might be carrying. I don't have any with me today, but the habits of many years need new sober reference.

It feels really good being straight on board. I don't need the double Bloody Marys or the Valium to take the edge off. I don't have to worry about the marijuana smell when I leave the bathroom. I don't feel paranoid when the captain comes back to the passenger compartment. In the past, more times than not, I was *sure* he was coming back to finger me. I knew they couldn't find any trace of coke, and I always kept the sink drain button pushed down when I smoked grass in the lavatory, but I could never be certain the vacuum it created took away all the smoke!

Today, I don't have to worry about that. I just celebrated my 100th day of sobriety, and things really are getting better one day at a time. I'm flying by myself, but I don't feel alone. I can easily converse with the stewardess and the other passengers. I have enough concentration to read a magazine or some literature from the program, and I can even laugh at some of the "addict" behavior of the other passengers on board.

The plane lands smoothly and federal agents are not (as I had always feared they would be) waiting to bust me for the drugs I no longer carry in my suitcase.

**TODAY, I HAVE A NEW FREEDOM AND IT FEELS GREAT!!**

*Burt R., New York*

## MAKING JUDGMENTS

The reason we're so judgmental is that a lot of us don't really believe we have a disease, that we *really* aren't all that powerless, that we *do* have some measure of control over our imperfections.

*Annette, Los Angeles*

**SATAN'S SLAVE**

Continued from page 1

At 15, I started going with the boy down the block. I was in Catholic girls' school at the time and he was Jewish. Needless to say, my mom wasn't too happy with the situation so, naturally, I saw him all the more. I was very adventurous and I still am. But then it was all negative energy. Today, for the most part, it's all positive.

I eventually married him six years later but the years in between were really fun, and fun is what I did best. My boyfriend (or "old man" as I called him back then) was adventurous, too, and soon we were heavily into motorcycles. Riding was the greatest. Right up there with skydiving on acid. Soon we were partying with other bikers we met at the "love-ins" in Griffith Park and everything was great. I had decided to wait to have sex until I was married but, like a lot of things in my life, it didn't turn out that way. At 17, a girlfriend and I were thrown into a car on Hollywood Blvd. and taken to Watts at gunpoint where we were raped by three black men. As they were negotiating our sale into white slavery, I committed my first violent act by beating the one that was left behind to watch us over the head with a bedstand lamp. To this day I don't know if he was dead or alive when we escaped.

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*I was taken to Watts and raped  
by three men at gunpoint.*

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When I got back to my house, I stayed in the bathtub for the rest of the day. Then I called my boyfriend and told him what had happened. But this time, he was riding with the roughest motorcycle gang in the Valley, the Satan Slaves, and I believe they went and took care of the men who abducted me. The Satan Slaves later became the Valley Hell's Angels.

For the next four years, until our marriage, my old man and I rode with the Satan Slaves. I loved those people very dearly. They were like my brothers and sisters. Today, I have found that same bond in Cocaine Anonymous and the girls I sponsor. That "all for one, one for all" attitude I call "Love."

When we got married, we "retired" from the Satan Slaves. I was 21 and he was 23. My husband decided that we needed money, property and prestige, so he cut his hair and beard and put on a silk suit. His father owned an established import company and he had a lot of friends in the drug field.

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*We made a lot of money fast  
—mostly from cocaine.*

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We made a lot of money fast — mostly from cocaine. We brought in 15 kilos a week in the days when coke was not all that well known. When people ask me what it was like, I tell them I was married to Scarface, which is closer to the truth than I like to believe at times. I remember being arrested one day for murder and sales of machine guns and cocaine. The charges were eventually dropped, but to this day I wonder if my husband had our best man killed. I'll never know for sure. Life was hard and fast back then and I didn't worry about it. I saw many of our friends die from overdose. I saw others get murdered. It was a rough crowd we ran with; you learned fast or you died.

I remember one time my husband's business partner gave me an ounce of pure coke from Peru for my birthday. The next day we all went to Disneyland with a bunch of friends. I was in charge of the drugs, as usual, so I had cut an ounce up the night before. But that morning I grabbed the wrong one — the uncut one! It was really way too strong to be doing without being cut, but I didn't find out my mistake until we were on the road. What choice did I have but to do it, anyway?

By the time we got to Disneyland, everyone else was refusing to do any more coke, so I was doing their share as well as mine. I did about half a gram before we got on the Monorail. The ride took off and so did I. I started to convulse. The next thing I knew I was in an ambulance and someone was saying, "Oh, no. We lost her." All the while I was looking down at all this happening. My husband was crying and the paramedics were working on me. I didn't think I was going to come back but I didn't want to leave my husband that way. Then one of the paramedics said, "She's stable now,"

and I went to sleep. When I came to, all I wanted to do was get out of there. After that, my husband decided it was time we stopped using.

A few months later our marriage broke up and I moved to the high desert to be near my father. *And for almost seven years I stayed clean and sober.*

I did it mostly on my own. I had tried AA meetings, but I just couldn't relate to anyone there. My Dad and I would go, but these people were so uncool I couldn't run with them. So, my Dad became my support group. I loved him more than anything. Even the man I was living with next was jealous of my father because he knew my Dad was the most important person in my life. We spent almost every Sunday together fishing and talking. He became my Higher Power.

And then one day he went into the hospital for open heart surgery. The surgery went fine. As he was being wheeled into the recovery room, however, the doctors realized they had done something wrong. They pulled the monitor out and Dad drowned in his own fluid. They raced him back into surgery but he remained in a coma. They said he was no longer there. No brain waves.

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*I didn't feel high unless I  
was convulsing or close to it.*

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We fought to pull the plug that kept him alive. A week later he died and I took a hundred 25 mg valiums to end my own life. One more time I arrived DOA at the hospital and that started a year-and-a-half binge with no holds barred. I hated everything about life. I missed by Dad so much I tried to drown all my sorrows in coke and champagne. Only this time it was not so much fun. I always seemed to have drugs and friends from the past that I could wheel and deal with so I never had to become a bimbo, but life was beginning to run out for me. It was getting to the point where unless I was convulsing or close to it I didn't feel high.

I tried to get hold of my life but I couldn't. My family kept suggesting I see a shrink. Then Duncan was born. I loved that little guy more than anything. And between wanting to stop shaking long

enough to hold him and what my shrink was telling me, I went to my first meeting of Cocaine Anonymous. I was still too cool for AA, mind you, but a bunch of coke addicts I could relate to. It wasn't easy getting sober for me. I spent six days convulsing and was deathly ill before I ever made that first meeting but I felt so much positive energy flowing through the room I knew I was going to make it. And when I got home, Duncan had come to visit and I was able to hold him for the very first time.

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*And for almost seven years  
I stayed clean and sober.*

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Looking back, that all seems so long ago. As if it were only a dream. Today, my life is completely different, I'm an active member of CA and AA. I sponsor six girls. I work full-time, take Karate four nights a week and I just love life. I have also become a hypnotherapist and I donate time to treating cancer patients. And I recently quit smoking.

If you work the Steps and practice the Principles of the program in all your affairs, it works. I've tried it and I guarantee it! "To thine own self be true." Check your motives and you'll never be in trouble. I love CA, AA, NA and all the other programs and I think God that He has allowed me to be of service to you and to Him. Today I am capable of loving on a very deep level. And I allow others to love me back because today I love myself. I have finally stopped judging myself, so I no longer have to judge you or make you live up to any of my expectations.

For someone who died three times and didn't want to live three years ago, I'm truly grateful for my life today.

*Liz M., Los Angeles*

#### HELP WANTED

The Connection needs your help! We need your news items and your cartoons and, most important, your stories of recovery for our newsletter. Send all written material, typed, and double-spaced to the Editor, c/o The Connection, Cocaine Anonymous, P.O. Box 1367, Culver City, CA 90232.

## DON'T BE INTIMIDATED BY ME

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*Take a risk, guys. I'm approachable. I want  
to be loved just like every other woman.*

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I've been sober for almost three years now and I'm still amazed that people, sober people, continue to be intimidated by me. Sometimes I think to myself *if only they knew!*

I grew up wealthy and privileged, always "good" in public, always on display. For most of my teens and early twenties, I was paraded around and showed off. I felt like a trophy, an article to be looked at and revered, but not loved or taken seriously. I used to hate having all that responsibility; then I learned to hide behind it. I learned that people like to believe in what they see, what they hear. So, I gave them my best. I looked "good" all the time. You could "dress me up and take me out." I learned how to talk to people, how to manipulate them. I was determined not to be just another "Dumb Blonde."

At the point when the pain of feeling lost, alone, unloved and unlovable became too much, I found cocaine. Cocaine did for me what no person, man or woman, could do. Coke *loved* me. It didn't care what I wore, who I dated, what I said or how I looked. Coke only cared that I got numb; it helped me forget how much I really *needed* you. And it made you believe I didn't need *anything* because I looked good.

By the time I'd gotten to the program I'd learned a lot about men and how they saw me. As a result, I've worked very hard these three years correcting some of my defects. Today, I go out of my way *not* to use men anymore. The paradox is that most men still find me unapproachable!

What's a girl to do? Personally, I find it hard to ask a man out, especially one I like, but the alternative is to sit home alone (which I do a lot!) or go to the dance and stand alone because *you* won't ask me to dance. I know your fear because I have that same fear, too. But, hey! You guys out there. Start asking! I may look beautiful and appear self-assured and all-together, but if you don't ask, you'll never know that inside there is

a scared, often lonely woman who's *not* always sure she's as well put together as you'd have her to be.

Take a risk, guys. I'm approachable. I'm available. I want to be loved and to give love just like every other woman. Don't just look. Stop and talk to me. Find out what I'm like inside. You may even like it! *I* do.

And for all you women that don't like me or are jealous of me, I feel the same about *you*. We'd all like to believe "the grass is greener," but it's not. I need female friends, too. So, give me a chance. I have wonderful things to offer if you'd let me. I need you people. Don't put me on a pedestal. I'm human. Don't assume I'm okay when I'm not, and most of all, help me to believe that I'm not just an item on display. I need you to love me back to health. You have to help me believe I can look sloppy or un-together and still feel good about me.

*Anonymous, Fairfield, CT*

CUNNING Continued from page 1

I changed my clothes, got back into my car and started to drive over to my friend's house. Suddenly, I began to feel uneasy. I started to sweat. I quickly reached for my car phone and called my sponsor. No answer. I called two other numbers, the only other numbers of anybody in CA I had. Again, no answer. Panic was beginning to set in. I prayed madly to God to help me, but the compulsion was rapidly out of control. When I arrived at his house, I ran like a madman to the door and literally kicked it open. Then I raced through the house until I found my friend. "HOW MUCH DID YOU GET?" I screamed. Fortunately, he had been unable to score.

It has been well over a year since this incident took place, but I have never forgotten it. It is a constant reminder to me of the addict I am and how *cunning, baffling* and *powerful* is this drug cocaine.

*Mike C., Chicago*

# ME? AN ADDICT?

Continued from page 3

couldn't go on like this anymore. I needed help. I was done being a lying, living legend in my own mind. I had to admit my real problem . . . that I, the great David, was a drug addict.

I attended my first meeting on September 8, 1985. A friend of mine named Neil drove me there. I was terrified. But when we walked in, I felt something I'd never felt before. There were at least 50 people sitting around laughing, sharing, comforting each other. I looked at Neil and sighed, "I wish I could be like that." He smiled back at me and said, "It's all right. Don't be scared. These people are just like you, David. You never have to feel alone again. We're all here to help you."

My head was in a fog. I was shaking like a leaf. I took my seat. When it was my turn to say something, I turned to Neil like a little lost boy who had lost his mommy. He put his arms around me and told me it was OK. And then I stood up and said, "Hi. My name is David, and I'm a drug addict!"

The secret I'd held in all those years was out. God, I was free! I didn't have to run anymore.

Everyone there at the meeting made me feel wanted. They told me to keep coming back. They gave me their phone

numbers. What for? I wanted to know. To talk, they said. What about? I asked. Whatever you want to talk about, they answered.

I felt so good about the meetings that I began to go to them every chance I could. I started to trust other people. What a switch! For so long I had trusted no one. Now, I actually became friends with people. I even began to like David for a change.

Sitting here looking back over my first year is a trip. It's a miracle. Today, I have a God in my life and for that I thank the program. I have friends today. I've learned how to love. I've learned how to be honest with myself and others. What were once dreams are now realities.

Today, I listen to my sponsor, and do whatever the people in the program tell me to do. Because unlike before I have a life now, a life that I'm a part of.

I'm proud to be who I am today, and I'm proud to be a part of you. My life is far from perfect but it keeps getting better thanks to God, and the program, and you. The tears I cry today are no longer from pain and fear, but from joy.

I'm going to keep comin' back, and I hope to see you there.

*David, Chicago*

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## FREE

I used to wonder  
Just who I am?  
What do I want?  
Why do I cry?

I thought of the dreams  
I had as a child  
What could have happened?  
What made me so wild?

Now that I'm sober  
I'm feeling so free!  
I'm learning today  
That I hold the key.

I have a disease  
That can be controlled.  
By using new tools  
My answers unfold.

All thanks go to God  
He's my Higher Power!  
With Him at my side  
I'll be strong as a tower.

*BL, Chicago*

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