

THE CONNECTION

\$1.00

SHARING WORLDWIDE RECOVERY

A FUNNY THING HAPPENED ON THE WAY TO AA

*One of the original nineteen members
recollects the beginning of Cocaine Anonymous,
what happened, and what it's like today.*

I have been a member of Cocaine Anonymous from its beginning and I owe my life to the people who pushed to give CA its own identity and took commitments to keep CA going. I might not have made it these three-and-a-half years without a place to go and talk about my Cocaine problem.

I was nearly ninety days sober in November of 1982 when someone handed me a yellow notecard at an AA meeting. The card read: AA FOR COCAINE—TUESDAY NIGHT, and it gave an address. This was for me. Up until then I had whispered "Cocaine" under my breath at AA meetings when they said alcohol. Nineteen sober men and women showed up at this meeting.

The Alcoholism Director of the Motion Picture Industry Health Fund had called the meeting in the hopes of finding a program he could refer all the calls he was getting from people with Cocaine problems who didn't feel they had a drinking problem. Some, he said, didn't drink at all.

At one time the Whatever Meeting was listed in both the CA meeting directory and the AA meeting directory at the same time.

Most of the nineteen of us all had found our way into AA from Cocaine; yet we didn't feel comfortable starting up an entirely new program. . . at least not that Tuesday night. There was discussion about how simple a process it could be—just change alcohol to cocaine in the steps and Bingo! instant program. Still, that first Tuesday everyone's allegiance was to AA. The group conscience was that this Tuesday night meeting would be an AA meeting called the "Whatever" Meeting and anyone could share and take chips. We would risk not being a true AA meeting and not getting listed in the AA meeting directory for letting non-alcoholics participate and take chips.

At one time the Whatever Meeting was listed in both the CA meeting directory and the AA meeting

directory at the same time. Over 150 people regularly attended.

One of the local hospitals had a meeting on a Wednesday night that they called Cocaine Anonymous. They just changed Alcohol to Cocaine in the Twelve Steps. There is the strong likelihood that there

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**"COCAINE
ANONYMOUS.
MAY I HELP YOU?"**

Working the phones—being there to share our experience, strength and hope with the addict who is reaching out for the first time—remains the very essence of our daily activities at Central Office. After all, as it's clearly stated in our Fifth Tradition, we have but one primary purpose—to carry the message to the addict who still suffers.

And, if we can't get the message to the addict, we do our best to get the addict to the message, to whatever meetings there are in his or her area. That's really all we can do. We are not professional drug counsellors; nor are we qualified to advise the caller on the other end of the line to take any action, except to stop using and start attending meetings on a regular basis.

We cannot recommend hospitals, doctors or treatment centers of any kind. Nor can we send volunteers on "12-Step Calls" to anyone at their residence or place of business, due to the very illegality of the drug and the kind of situations that could so easily arise from a mission of this sort.

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World Service conference Seeks unity nationwide

Delegates from as far away as New York, Florida, Alaska and Hawaii are expected to attend the 1st World Services Conference in San Diego, California, February 7-9. Their objective? To establish nationwide unity and open up meaningful communication between the close to 20 states across the U.S. actively participating in the growing Fellowship of Cocaine Anonymous.

"This is not a convention," stressed Conference Committee Chairman Gil M. "It is a business conference where we'll be dealing with the immediate needs of the Fellowship and forming committees in an effort to set up guidelines for the future."

The 2nd Annual World Services CA Convention is tentatively scheduled to be held in San Diego, California, July 11-13. Watch for further information in our next edition.

Committees to be formed include: a Conference Committee to prepare an agenda for the next conference, a By-Laws Committee to write amendments to By-Laws currently in effect, a Literature Committee to gather drafts of new literature for publication, a Public Information Committee to interface with the general public and a committee to compile and distribute a National Directory.

In addition, elections will be held to elect officers to attend the next World Services conference. Details of this first conference, what took place, what was resolved and who got elected to what will be reported in the next issue of **The Connection**.

Published by Cocaine Anonymous
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You're holding the very first edition of CA's new Newsletter, **The Connection**, in your hands. And, if you're any kind of an addict or alcoholic like me, you're probably thinking to yourself right about now that it could've been better. . .

Yup. It could've. But we did the best we could with what we had. Which wasn't a helluva lot, I assure you.

We need your contributions desperately. After all, this is **your** newsletter and without you and the letters and the stories and the poems and the news items and the cartoons and the jokes **you** submit, this newsletter cannot continue to be published.

Oh, we could put a few more together just using material we get right here in Los Angeles, but that's not what the publication is all about. Or, at least, that's not what it's **supposed** to be about. There are literally **thousands** of us across the country who are active, participating members of Cocaine Anonymous, with over 200 meetings in over 20 states, maybe more.

We want to hear from **all** of you wherever you are, whatever you've been through. It's **your** newsletter.

Submit all contributions to Editor, The Connection, Cocaine Anonymous, 6125 Washington Blvd., Suite 202, Los Angeles, CA 90230. Your anonymity will be respected. Only first names and the initial of your last name will be used in conjunction with your contribution.

One more thing. Make my life easier. Help me stay clean and sober by submitting manuscripts that are typed and double-spaced, okay? I'd really appreciate it.

Thanks for allowing me to serve.

The Editor

SHORT TAKES

A newcomer who was feeling a little sorry for himself asked his sponsor how long he would have to go to meetings.

"How long do you have to go to meetings?" the sponsor snorted back. "I'll tell you how long you have to go to meetings, kid. You have to go to meetings until you **want** to go to meetings. And then when you want to go to meetings, you don't **have** to go to meetings!"

MY FIRST MEETING

I made up my mind to get off drugs Monday night, September 19th, 1983. . . following over four years of daily cocaine abuse.

The first couple of days were fairly easy. Anything was better than those last few months of depression, married to my bed, locked up in my room, glued to the television set in the kitchen, clutching the modified Uzi submachine gun beside me, a prisoner in my own house. There were still some people who cared about me, oddly enough, who kept urging me to seek help. One girl I'd been seeing since 1970 asked me why I was waiting to hit bottom. Hell, I'd already hit bottom and I didn't know it. Talk about pathetic, incomprehensible demoralization! It was staring me in the face.

I'd lost the job I'd had for more than 14 years back in May of 1982 and I'd been out of work ever since. My prospects were grim. No one wanted to take a chance on me. That was pretty tough to take. At one time I'd been the best in the business. I'd made hundreds of thousands of dollars over the years, made **millions** for the company I worked for, and now no one wanted to take a chance on me. Not that I blamed them. I'd become completely irresponsible, totally dedicated to my own self-destruction. All I wanted to do was get high, feel good, get away from everything. I did it **my** way. And I was absolutely miserable.

I'd become completely irresponsible, totally dedicated to my own self-destruction.

It wasn't always like that. When I first starting doing cocaine, things were a lot different. I rode high on the hog. I traveled in the fast lane. And I grew to love that fast lane like I'd never loved anything before. I loved the limousines and the flashy cars and the beautiful women. I loved throwing my money around. I loved staying up all night long. I loved the endless orgies.

But most of all, I loved the power.

Obviously, I couldn't handle it. The drugs I'd been taking started taking me. And pretty soon all the money was gone. And the houses and the cars. And the women. When the drugs ran out, they ran out. I was alone.

I needed help. I was desperate. I just couldn't go on like this any longer. Several people had suggested I call Alcoholics Anonymous but I wouldn't because I didn't think I had a drinking problem. Not me. I mean, forget the 502's and the blackouts, the ten-day binge in Vietnam I don't remember, the car I'd wiped out on Mulholland Drive. . . no, I didn't have a drinking problem. I just couldn't stop doing coke, that's all.

Most of all, I loved the power.

About three nights after I'd decided to clean up my act, I was watching this television show on drug abuse and they talked about a new recovery program called Cocaine Anonymous that was helping addicts get off coke. I called the number they flashed on the screen to see what it was all about and spoke to a counsellor who informed me there was a CA meeting scheduled for 7:30 the following Monday night in Hollywood. So, I went.

When I arrived, however, the doors were locked

and there was no one around. Frantic, I called the counsellor at the drug abuse center and got his answering service. He called me back a few minutes later at the phone booth I was standing in and said his secretary must have gotten the dates screwed up.

"It's **Tuesday** night," he said.

"That's terrific," I replied. "Here I am, trying to get some help, and there's no one here to help me!"

He was very sympathetic.

"Gee," he said. "What a bummer. Can you make it through one more night?"

I told him I could. And somehow I did.

I went to the meeting the following night and spent almost the entire hour-and-a-half by myself, standing in the back of the hall. I felt out of place. My heart was beating a mile a minute. The palms of my hands were sweating profusely. I was the only person in the room dressed in a three-piece suit. The place was packed. There must have been over 200 people there. Everybody seemed to know everybody else, and I didn't know **anybody**.

I heard a lot of talk about God and "steps" and "sponsors" and "the Big Book", whatever that was. . .

I did not want to be there. I wanted nothing to do with this place or these strange people.

But I stayed.

I heard a lot of talk about God and "steps" and "sponsors" and "the Big Book", whatever that was, but I don't remember much of what the speaker said except he went on and on about being a chronic "people pleaser". Hey! I could sure relate to that. I'd been pleasing people ever since I was a small child. I was always looking for approval. I was so busy proving myself I never really had time to be myself.

"What's this 'Big Book' everybody's talking about?" I asked the fellow standing next to me at the end of the meeting. "Is that the Bible?"

He laughed.

"Let me get one for you," he said. "My name is Larry. Is this your first meeting?"

I told him it was.

We talked for a while and then he gave me his phone number and asked me if I'd care to join him and another friend at the restaurant down the street for some coffee.

"No," I said. "Thanks, anyway. I've got a lot of **thinking** to do."

I didn't feel like talking. It was almost too much all at once. I needed time. I needed to think about some of the things I'd heard. I didn't really understand what was going on, and I wasn't sure I wanted what any of these people had, but I **was** certain of one thing: I didn't want what I had. Not any more.

That was my first meeting. There've been many more meetings since. What happened, why the program took hold, why I've been clean and sober ever since, I really don't know. For the most part, I just did what I was told. I went to ninety meetings in ninety days. I got a sponsor. I worked the steps. I prayed a lot. I did my best to be of service whenever, wherever I was needed.

And I wanted this thing called Sobriety **real** bad.

MY RELATIONSHIP WITH CHEMICALS: A CONVERSATION

The chemically dependent person speaking to alcohol and drugs:

I want you to be available whenever I need or want you.
I want you to make me feel good when I've done nothing to deserve it.
I want to use you as an excuse whenever there are negative consequences to my relationship with you.
I want all my needs and desires provided for without my having to exert any effort.
I want the right to hate you when you fail me.
And I won't admit to anyone including myself how much I need you; in fact, I'll probably boast about being able to take or leave you and not needing you at all.

Alcohol and drugs' response:

What I have to give you is an illusion of your own making and there will be no positive meaningful or lasting results.
You will require more and more of me as time goes on and I will respond by giving you less and less.
Your relationship with me will create increasing problems for you; you may blame me or someone or something else, but it is you who will pay the consequences.
You will be less and less able to cope and take care of yourself and your responsibilities as a result of your progressive relationship with me.
I will rob you of your self-respect and personal worth.
I will weaken and impair your relationships with others.
In the end, you will still need me though I will have nothing to give and I will be taking all.

Mary C.

CA's FIRST ANNUAL CONVENTION: A REPLAY

Well, the best party in town went on for around 48 hours last weekend. . . non-stop. Oh, a few of the party-goers crashed for short periods when their energy ran out—but the electricity at the Miramar Convention Center was such that few of the 600-odd people in attendance seemed to need much respite. And you're wondering why no one told you about the bash? Well, it was pretty exclusive, even though people came from as far away as the Bahamas and Hawaii to attend. It was the First Annual Convention of Cocaine Anonymous, a two-and-a-half year old organization dedicated—as is its spiritual parent, Alcoholics Anonymous—to helping the recovering coke addict stay clean, and sober, and adjust happily to a full, drug-free life.

If you happened to wander into the Miramar parking lot during the weekend, you might have been forgiven for thinking that a high-powered meeting of investors, or a corporate gathering of bonus-winning marketing people was in progress. The cars in the lot alone indicated an unusual group was in session. But the convention itself was an eye-opener. It would be hard to imagine a more attractive, alive, alert bunch of people assembled under one roof for any reason. Both men and women tended to be in the late-twenties to early-forties age group. They radiated good cheer and a sense of positive purpose. In the several hours I spent among the recovering coke addicts, I didn't get any of the feeling of the despair, anger, frustration or self-pity one might have expected from a sizable group of people who had gone to the brink of life, stared hard at the bottomless chasm—then rescued themselves from disaster—and death.

To the contrary, Cocaine Anonymous is so upbeat, so full of joy, it's breathtaking. And it looks at life full in the eyes—like one of the most popular workshops on sex and sobriety, or another, on relationships. While upstairs in the main convention auditorium, a disc jockey amplified the beat of everything from hard rock to Lionel Richie, downstairs, around one in the morning, some 40 recovering coke addicts were quietly listening to an open discussion about how they could share their experience, strength and hope with others still suffering. It was the people of Cocaine Anonymous who made the weekend. Their enthusiasm and their sparkle made it hard to believe that only a short time ago, they had been suffering the tortures of the **damned**, the isolated, the paranoid, the fearful.

If you happened to wander into the parking lot, you might have been forgiven for thinking a high-powered meeting of investors, or a corporate gathering of bonus-winning marketing people, was in progress...

Now, last weekend, they threw all the verve and the splash of the yuppie into their conviction that helping others who still cringe under the addiction is, really, helping themselves to practice a fruitful life.

Here at KMGQ, we'll be broadcasting a two-part special edition of "Good Companions" on cocaine on May 19 and June 2nd. A look at this decade's most popular drug. Has its use reached epidemic proportions in Santa Barbara and Goleta? Is cocaine-use affecting the community's well being? And what's the hope for recovery? We hope you'll listen to our exploration of a problem that just won't stay under the carpet.

Radio Station KMGQ
Public Service Announcement
Santa Barbara, CA
May 4, 1985

RECOVERING ADDICTS RESPOND TO NEWSPAPER COLUMN

It is difficult to describe in words what we felt reading your Friday, August 30th column, "Cocaine holds no glamor for companion of addict." We were surprised, to say the least, to see this topic discussed in your column. We were overwhelmed by what some of us considered to be our own stories in print. And we were dismayed by the seemingly hopelessness of your subject's plight.

You see, we know what she is going through. Some of us have been there ourselves. The rest have put our loved ones through the kind of living hell which she describes. But we also know that there is help. We know because WE ARE RECOVERING COCAINE ADDICTS OURSELVES.

We, too, have tried to remove imaginary insects from our bodies. We have lied, stolen, cheated to support our habits. We have prostituted ourselves: some

It is only when the addict has lost nearly everything he or she values, that the addict can begin to be helped.

literally, some in other ways. Some of us preferred the straw or rolled-up dollar bill. Some the free-base pipe. Some the needles. How we got high is not what matters. What we did to ourselves and our families, and how we got clean is important enough to us that we feel we must share our stories, with the hope and prayer that it will help others.

Turn it over to page 4

A NEW BEGINNING

February 26, 1985 was the last time I smoked a Cocaine-laced joint. I quit drinking the following day. I had hit my bottom. I had lost what I had always wanted—my body shop to work on cars and almost my life. I really didn't want to check into the hospital but I was really sick, always getting into trouble with the law and always, always being broke.

*Everything was still the same except me—
I didn't use or drink.*

At the time I was approximately \$30,000 in the hole. People were looking for me because I'd cash their insurance drafts to fix their cars and the money would go up my nose and into the cash register at all the local bars. After 28 days, I was released from the hospital. I took a week's vacation at home. Everything was still the same except me—I didn't use or drink. At first, it was hard. After that week at home I had to go to a halfway house where there were other guys staying there who also wanted to change their lifestyle.

Everything from ex-cons to straight-out winos. I must admit I felt a little bit superior to a lot of them because I still had quite a few material things left. I was supposed to stay there for 90 days but the way I am, with my attitude and all, I was late several times to meetings, so I got kicked out after 55 days. They told me they suspected me of using. I never used or drank any of the time, but they told me I had to leave, anyway. I was humiliated. My ego was smashed. I wasn't Mr. Bitchin' anymore. I surrendered, and suddenly things started getting better. I'm so glad I made the decision to stay clean and sober; it's worth it. I have never ever done anything for myself as good as getting straight. My life has changed incredibly. I'm not in courtrooms anymore. I don't lose time from work, and I'm no longer paranoid about a black and white being behind me all the time.

David S.

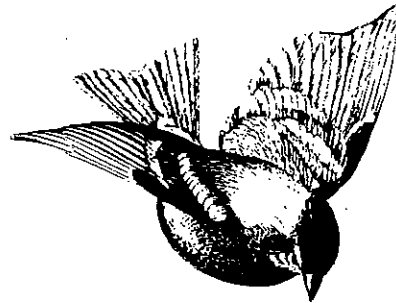


SURRENDER

*Losing it. That horror which once kept me
Has left me and now there is a hole.
I'm walking, talking, playing my role
But now a shell without my blasphemy.
Can living replace that hell I cherished?
Can love true and pure clean this unclean mind?
Forsaken ways and beliefs long maligned?
I wonder if somehow I live though perished.*

*I know I must find something new to hold.
Where to look, to start I do not know.
Must I reap only what I used to sow?
Or is there some good left in this worn mold?
I know that all I have is this one day,
I'll try, I'll try, I'll try,
I'll hope,
I'll pray.*

Sue



IT'S OKAY

*It's okay to be afraid
of the things we don't understand.
It's okay to feel anxious
when things aren't working our way.
It's okay to feel lonely . . .
even when you're with other people.
It's okay to feel unfulfilled
because you know something is missing
(even if you're not sure what it is).
It's okay to think and worry and cry.*

*It's okay to do
whatever you have to do, but
just remember, too . . .
that eventually you're going to
adjust to the changes life brings your way,
and you'll realize that
it's okay to love again and laugh again,
and it's okay to get to the point where
the life you live
is full and satisfying and good to you . . .
and it will be that way
because you made it that way.*

Perry G.

HELP WANTED

The Connection needs your help!

We need your letters and your stories and your poems and your news items and your cartoons and your jokes and whatever else you want to contribute to the newsletter. Send all written material, typed and double-spaced, to The Editor, The Connection, Cocaine Anonymous, 6125 Washington Blvd., Suite 202, Los Angeles, CA 90203. Your anonymity will be respected. Only your first name and the initial of your last name will be used in conjunction with your contribution.

And don't forget to subscribe. We need the money.

RECOVERING ADDICTS RESPOND TO NEWSPAPER COLUMN

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Some of us lost our homes. Some our spouses and children. Many of us lost our jobs, our possessions, our savings. All of us lost our self-respect. Some nearly lost our lives. And believe it or not, we are all GRATEFUL for what we have lost. It is not that we didn't value what we have lost. That is precisely the point. Until an addict is confronted with the wreckage of his abuse, he has little chance of getting well.

We all had our enablers. Those who cared enough to try to help us that they would lie to a boss, make a payment we couldn't, take care of us when we were sick, even lie to us and tell us everything would be okay. All the while, they allowed us to continue using. Of course, they cannot be faulted. They were only trying to help, and did not know what to do.

You see, it is only when the addict has lost nearly everything he or she values, that the addict can begin to be helped. We call this "hitting our bottom." For each one of us, it is different. For most of us we were physically ill, emotionally empty, spiritually and financially bankrupt.

Yet today, with the help of treatment facilities (like De Paul Rehabilitation Hospital, Saint Anthony Hospital, and Dewey Center), and with the support of recovery self-help groups like Alcoholics Anonymous, Narcotics Anonymous and now Cocaine Anonymous, we are living clean. Many of us are happier that we have ever been in our lives.

With the help of the same treatment facilities, and the aid of groups like Al-Anon, Nar-Anon and Coke-Anon, our families are getting well, too.

No, life is not a bed of roses for us, and probably never will be. Each day is a struggle. But we know that with help, we can stay clean JUST FOR TODAY.

Addicts all feel that they are different, that no one shares our problems, feelings, fears. Those who are co-dependent upon the addict feel the same way. What a surprise and relief it is to learn that we are not alone. There is help. There is hope.

Why do we share our stories? Because it is only by giving away the gift of sobriety that we are able to keep it for ourselves.

The woman in your article says life has given her few roses. She says, "You find the rose, and it's raining." We say we have found the rose which was truly given to us. And we value it as highly as we do because we have weathered the storm.

After all, where would roses be without rain?

Reprinted from the
Milwaukee Journal

A FUNNY THING HAPPENED . . .

Continued from page 1

was another meeting doing the same thing somewhere else in the country at the same time and we didn't know it. But it was not so much which meeting was the first CA meeting but what happened in the next few months which became the foundation for the extra-ordinary phenomenon that CA has become.

As more people got sober, qualified professionals who were recovering addicts volunteered to do service. . .

The next week a Thursday night CA meeting was announced. One of the nineteen from the first Tuesday was elected Secretary. Another Tuesday night attendee started a meeting on Saturday in the Valley. And so it went. . . committed, sober addict-alcoholics starting meetings. Shortly thereafter, a feature article on Cocaine abuse and recovery in Cocaine Anonymous appeared in the Los Angeles Times "Calendar" section. Suddenly, members with 30 days to six months were sharing their stories with people who had never been exposed to any Twelve Step recovery programs.

I was recently reminded by someone who was celebrating their Third Birthday that I was the first person he had heard share; he made it despite that. I had six months of sobriety. . . I shared my experience, strength and hope and what little I understood about the steps. No one had any real amount of continuous sobriety, so when we passed it on we were kinda pumping ourselves up a little, too. There's always been an up and positive slant to CA, at least in the meetings I've attended, and I believe that's great recovery, upbeat and hopeful.

It was frequently said that Cocaine Anonymous meetings were actually only a way to "twelve step" newcomers into AA. . .

Well. . . a funny thing happened on the way to AA!

A hospital gave a room for an office. . . A Monday night step study meeting was started and suddenly there was a CA meeting every night of the week. . . Someone typed a meeting directory on a piece of paper. . . We took the Seventh Tradition and bought an answering machine.

Suddenly, there was CA. Not like we know it now, but God bless us, we were helping ourselves recover by helping others find recovery. The first CA chips blew my mind.

Here was a place for people to go where they could feel free to share what was going on with their battle to stay away from Coke.

At a recent CA meeting I attended, the speaker asked how many people had found CA through the phone line. Almost a third of the meeting raised their hand; that's a lot of lives helped because someone answered the phones.

It wasn't quite that way in the beginning. One person manned the phones for an entire day, calling in remote to the machine and calling the people back and getting them to a meeting or getting someone to call them and just talk to them. We would get calls from around the country asking for information on how to start a meeting. Meetings sprung up all over the country.

Someone brought back a pamphlet from Chicago



(or maybe it was San Francisco, I don't know) called "To the Newcomer" and that was CA's first pamphlet. We struggled and wrote the "First Thirty Days." As more people got sober, qualified professionals who were recovering addicts volunteered to do service, and our pamphlets became more professional and there were more of them.

I was the first person he had heard share; he made it despite that.

CA just kept growing. More newcomers came in to remind us that it was still rough out there. Hospital after hospital was starting Drug programs and sending their patients to CA. They were welcomed to the meetings and found a growing fellowship which truly cared both inside and outside the meetings.

When the World Services Board was formed, it took charge of protecting our First Tradition: Our common welfare should come first; personal recovery depends on CA unity. Anyone who had lost the war with Coke could find help in meetings throughout the country and that's a miracle.

Another miracle was the First World Services Convention in May of 1985 in Santa Barbara, California. CA was starting to come of age.

And let us not forget the eternal debt we owe to Alcoholics Anonymous for generously letting us adapt their Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions which we use as the backbone of our recovery. That's still another miracle.

But it is the ability of one person to relate to another which really made it work and that is why I am grateful to CA and to those who helped make it grow. Much of what I have observed in the struggle has been the strain of personalities trying to win out over principles. They haven't, thank God, and I marvel at the resilience of the human spirit and of God's grace to us all.

So, to all of you who have worked thankless hours to keep CA going and have said it was what you needed to do to stay sober. . . thank you. What you did helped give me a life I never had.

"HELLO, COCAINE"

"MAY I HELP YOU?"

Continued from page 1

It really hurts to tell you that I can't keep you company anymore. . .

It's been a while since we last got together. I sure miss you and all the warm friendly feelings you gave me. I miss all the good times we had together, all the places we've been together across these United States. Thanks for sticking with me through the rough times, too, man. You sure did pull me through countless situations. And thanks for waiting for me whenever we were separated for a while. I could always depend on you being there . . . and patiently waiting for me as no one else ever did. Remember the odd places you would show up when I least expected it? You sure made me happy when I would run into you. You always seemed to have exactly what I needed in times of despair, and good fortune. You're the best friend anybody could ever have.

It's been fifteen years since we first met. Now I'm left with open wounds, in a lot of pain. I need to call on someone else from now on. It really hurts to tell you that I can't keep you company anymore, and take in your companionship. This someone else is sure different from you. It seems so hard to be comfortable and unafraid. Sometimes I truly hate the way I'm living now, without you. But I've got to get used to it, because if I don't, we might get together one more time. I know you'd like that, but it would only be for a short time. I wouldn't want that. It would hurt too much. So, I have to say goodbye now, because I can't be your friend anymore.

I'm sure someone else would love to be friends with you.

We experienced enough of those nightmares when we were using!

Many of the 50-60 calls a day we receive at Central Office are from friends or family of practicing addicts, and those are probably the most painful, frustrating calls of all. Because there is absolutely **nothing** we can do for the addict who doesn't want to stop using cocaine or other mind-altering substances. As long as he continues to think he has his addiction under control, he is beyond our help.

That is something we know only too well from our own personal experience. We understand. But we cannot promote our Fellowship; we can only attract those who want we have. We can only share what happened to us, our own experiences, in our own way; how we got clean and sober and the Gratitude we have for the kind of life we now enjoy.

And that is why we serve. We have been given the Gift of Sobriety, and the only way we can keep it, we have come to believe, is to give it away.

SUBSCRIPTION FORM

Subscribe today! Receive your very own copy of **The Connection** at home. Keep up with what's happening in the Fellowship of Cocaine Anonymous. Share in other recovering addicts' recovery. Relate to their stories. Laugh at their humor. Get angry. Get sad. But whatever you do, **do something**. Take the action. Subscribe today and play an active role in your own recovery. Support **your Fellowship!** Check one:

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\$ 10 Clean & Sober

\$ 5 Token Gesture

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THE LAST LINE

"If I had known that was the last line of coke I'd ever do, I probably would have done another one."