

# clear crystal

CARRY  
THE MESSAGE

**SPECIAL ISSUE**  
SHARE-A-DAY PREVIEW

Volume 5 • Number 3  
**NYCMA**  
NEW YORK CRYSTAL METH  
ANONYMOUS INTERGROUP

## Share with us

RECOVERING CRYSTAL meth addicts looking to grow in their program, gain insight into addiction and to meet fellow CMA-ers from around the region will gather on Saturday, October 13, for Share-a-Day.

In its third year, Share-a-Day is a day-long series of speakers and workshops that has become an important

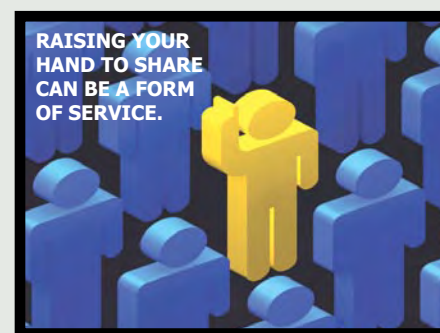
event for CMA fellows in New York. Funded by NYCMA and donations from attendees, Share-a-Day has the following mission:

"Share-A-Day 2007 is a one-day workshop for recovering crystal meth addicts uniting together to share our experience, strength and hope. Our desire is to bring

discussion, fellowship, information and love to all people in the region who are seeking solutions for recovery from crystal meth and all mind- and mood-altering substances. In the spirit of the Twelfth Step, we gather under a unifying theme—CARRY THE MESSAGE."

Jeff G., 2007 Share-a-Day

See **SHARE** on Page 3



## Fellow showed me faith, action

by Rich M.

ONE THING I HAVE LEARNED IN my brief time in recovery is that service can take many forms. Sometimes it means making phone calls or visiting the hospital. Sometimes it just means setting up chairs or making announcements. The most amazing service I have ever seen happened one night when I least expected it, from someone I would never have thought was in a position to be doing service for anyone.

I was attending my CMA home group after work. The meeting started out pretty much like any other; people were trickling in, saying hello to each other and finding their way to their seats. Then Charlie appeared at the door. He looked frail and was wearing a patch over one eye. I hadn't seen him in weeks but knew where he had been—in the hospital in I.C.U. He had undergone major surgery and was receiving chemotherapy for newly diagnosed cancer.

During the meeting, we read from the Big Book, and the speaker talked about his experience with the Eleventh Step. After he finished, we went to a show of hands. Charlie's hand went up quickly, and the speaker called on him almost right away. "Hi, my name's Charlie, and I'm an addict," he announced.

See **FAITH** on Page 7

## SAVING MY LIFE IN PRISON

I'M RIGHT  
WHERE I'M  
SUPPOSED  
TO BE

by Dennis K.

AS I SIT HERE AMONG 125 bunk beds, I am not really sure where to begin. Most of the other inmates are at work. Today is one of my days off, so it's relatively quiet around me right now. Still, the loudspeaker keeps going off.

Let's start here: I am serving a six-year sentence for the intent to distribute crystal meth. Well into my prison term, I sometimes still ask, *How did I end up here? I wasn't really a drug dealer—I never made any money at it.* But then I get honest with myself: If I had not been arrested, I probably would still be using.



I started doing drugs at a pretty young age. My first was cocaine. I was probably about 16, and all of my so-called friends were much older than I. As life began to spiral out of control, I traded the coke for Ecstasy. I fell in love with it and started going to the clubs every weekend. This lasted a couple of years,

See **FRIEND** on Page 6

## Once upon a time, there was a little girl...

by Allison

ONCE UPON A TIME, A 9-year-old girl snuck into her neighbor's kitchen 10 times to steal and snack on miniature powdered donuts.

This same girl snuck a stash of crystal meth into a

psychiatric hospital 19 years later to have a little bump every few hours or so without anyone knowing.

She felt that the little-girl character called "Crystal Meth" on a television series was adorable, so therefore,

her crystal meth habit was also adorable.

Four hideous tattoos later, she decided to keep her diamond earrings in her crystal meth bullet. Her crystal meth was now being kept in her

See **LITTLE GIRL** on Page 8

## ABOUT THIS ISSUE

When all else seems like it is failing, carry the message. We know from experience that this suggestion has helped keep us sober, especially when times were difficult.

As fall begins, opportunities to spread the message of hope in recovery are all around us. Whether we choose to seize upon these chances to help one another depends on how much we want to stay sober ourselves. Especially when we were new, this time of year could be difficult, and it was easy for us to forget about others. (Many of us had a lot of questions as we were preparing to show up *sober* for our families during the holidays. Some of us had never done this; it had been many years for others.)

We found that carrying the message of recovery to another addict made our own fear more manageable. It helped get us out of our own heads. The unexpected reward: it became easier for us to do the right things in life. With an open heart, we could let those who were closest to us love us in the best ways they knew how. Many of us realized our families and others loved us more than we ever knew, that the rejection we had felt, sometimes for years, was often just self-imposed emotional exile. We learned all of this from following a simple suggestion.

That is why we have dedicated this issue of *Crystal Clear* to the principle of carrying the message. Among the articles: On Page 1, Rich M. tells us how the message carried by a now-deceased fellow continues to help him even today. Another New York fellow, Dennis K., does his part to carry the message from federal prison. On this page, Mark L. recalls those who have shared the message with him over the years. In October, we will join together for a day-long series of recovery workshops and guest speakers that we call Share-a-Day. This year's theme is CARRY THE MESSAGE. The 2007 Share-a-Day Committee previews the event for us. We hope you can make it.

How will *you* carry the message?

# Thanks for your message

by Mark L.

WHEN BILL W. TOURED THE COUNTRY IN the 1940s and 1950s, people at AA meetings naturally mobbed him with thanks and praise. He was reportedly very gracious, telling them simply, "Pass it on." And so we do. In CMA today, we carry the message every time we show up at a meeting, or answer the phone or crowd into a diner.

I wondered recently, *Who specifically passed the message to me? What was it, exactly? Do I carry it with me still?*

Eight years ago, I was dropping weight rapidly. I started my workdays at noon with scowls at my boss and sharp words for my assistant. I'd been AWOL from dinners, brunches and movie nights for months. My new "boy-friend" was a hustler/dealer. ("He's just misunderstood," I told people.) Finally my friend Eric—all too aware of my hyperthin skin—ever so gently suggested I try out a harm-reduction counselor. Eric's not a Twelve-Stepper, but he knew that people with drug problems could get better. And he offered that promise to me. Thanks, Eric.

My counselor, Michael, was a world-wise fifty-something who had me figured out (he later said) in the first few minutes of my intake meeting. He was the first person to broach the idea of a Twelve Step group to me. (Recently I came across a flyer he gave me in 1999: "Twelve Step Meetings at the Center," with the Tuesday CMA meeting highlighted in yellow. It would be another year before I'd get there.) Through 1999, I went to see him week after wretched week, making plans to "not use this weekend"—and promptly botching them; week after wretched week he walked me through each calamity and calmly asked if I might be ready to consider a meeting or rehab. Thanks, Michael.

A meeting I would not do. I still wanted a medical miracle, some kind of cure or system with which I could control my partying. But life did become so painful that, with the encouragement of Eric, Michael and my psychiatrist, I finally checked myself into the emergency room. As soon as I got my little gown on, my sobbing stopped. My tremors stopped. I lay down and nodded off. They woke me when the paperwork was done and moved me upstairs to the dual-diagnosis ward, a facility for people with psychiatric disorders and drug problems. Jack Murphy, a tireless and kind counselor there, gave me a copy of the Big Book. "Just read the stories," he told me. Thanks, Jack.

A few weeks later, in a rehab out in Pennsylva-

nia (they transferred me from the hospital after five days), my roommate Willy gave me a taste of the Step work ahead. I had done whatever I was told, from the E.R. through the psych ward through rehab, and I guess my ego revolted. I was mad as hell. "I'm gay! I'm an artist! You all despise me! No one understands me!" The group was silent for a minute until Willy, on a furlough from prison so he could try to kick marijuana, said, "Mark, you must be the most judgmental person I've ever met." Thanks, Willy.

I had only one friend in New York who was sober, in the Twelve Step sense. I'd hung out with Patrick R. at the beach every summer. He seemed to be sane, seemed to have just as much fun as I did; he wasn't afraid of anyone or anything. I called him as soon as I got out of rehab and hung out with him the next weekend on Fire Island. We went to some meetings together, and he shared about

If you want to try a real trippy drug, try higher power.

Anonymity is more than just an issue of privacy; it means 'having no name'; it's about humility.

All you have to do is quit behaving like an asshole.

how important it was to keep the program in his life: the meetings, a sponsor, the Steps. He said he could remember his crazy drinking years of a decade earlier like they were yesterday, and that he still "played the tape through" all the time. Thanks, Patrick.

John T.—who celebrated 10 years this summer—was my first official sponsor. I met him at CMA in New York. John held my hand through my first sober job; my first sober sex; my first short-lived sober relationship; my first auditions after I decided to return to theater. John right-sized me in the gentlest way. He told me my Step One novella was lovely, but that the *Keep It Simple Workbook* would serve an "intellectual" like me better. He looked at my Step Four spreadsheets—10 pages in seven-point Arial narrow type—and said, "Oh dear...you're one of *those*." John was hilarious. Thank you, John.

See THANK YOU on Page 7

**What if I want to write an article for the newsletter?** Contact a member of the NYCMA Literature Committee. You may also send an e-mail to [newsletter@nycma.org](mailto:newsletter@nycma.org).



## SHARE-A-DAY from Page 1

chair, says he is excited about the fresh program created by this year's steering committee. "Since May, we have been meeting once a month as a group to create an event that we hope will be memorable and help keep crystal meth addicts sober. From our first meeting, the consensus was that we should focus on workshops that would resonate with all of our fellows."

"We saw CMA in New York literally growing up before our eyes," Jeff continues. "Many of us have three, five or even more years of sobriety and are facing different issues than when we were counting days. We also value the newcomer and believe that he or she is the most important person in our fellowship. Our workshops will focus on Twelve Step recovery solutions and have been designed to appeal to all of our fellows."

Workshop topics are intended to go beyond the general themes of CMA meetings and to explore areas of recovery that are not often addressed at the meeting level. The inspiration for this notion was the Big Book of Alcoholics Anonymous.

## WORKSHOP TOPICS ARE INTENDED TO GO BEYOND THE GENERAL THEMES OF... MEETINGS

"The Big Book is a design for living that offers a rich history of AA's beginnings; an explanation of the disease of addiction; solutions to live a happy, joyous and free life; and numerous personal anecdotes that illustrate the hope we have found in recovery," Jeff explains. "We sought to create workshops that illuminated the bridge back to life. An abundance of men and women have agreed to do service to our fellowship and facilitate these workshops based on their own experiences in getting sober. All of our facilitators have crystal meth in their story and got sober at CMA."

The event also will include guest speakers.

The morning-meeting portion of Share-a-Day will feature a qualification from a new friend, Carole T. of Phoenix. Carole is a housewife and grandmother of three, drives a minivan and lives in a nice middle-class neighborhood. She is also a recovering crystal meth addict with more than four years clean, says Jeff.

Share-a-Day promises to be a wonderful opportunity for members to gather as friends and fellows and to share solutions in recovery.



THE MAIN ENTRANCE TO THE MEETING HOUSE

**Take Note: Saturday, October 13, 9 A.M. to 3:30 P.M.**  
**"CARRY THE MESSAGE" • NYCMA'S THIRD SHARE-A-DAY**  
**Religious Society of Friends Meeting House • 15 Rutherford Place**  
 Take the 4,5,6,N,R,W, Q or L to Union Square. Walk east on 15th Street to Rutherford Place, just east of Third Avenue.

A suggested donation of \$15 will include a light breakfast, boxed lunch and beverages throughout the day. Tickets will go on sale starting September 15 at CMA meetings. Nobody will be turned away for lack of funds.

Share-a-Day will run from 9 A.M. to 3:30 P.M. at the Religious Society of Friends Meeting House, 15 Rutherford Place (between 15<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup> streets).

The Share-A-Day Committee is interested in reaching out to CMA fellowships throughout the region. Also, if you know a recovering crystal meth addict whom you think might be interested in attending, please extend an invitation. ■

*from the 2007 Share-a-Day Committee*

### PLANNED WORKSHOPS

**Crystal and Your Health**  
 Mind, Body, Spirit  
*Dr. Bob F. and Dr. Gordon S.*

**Amends to Society**  
 Do I Need a Lawyer or an Accountant?  
*Andy W. and Matthew B.*

**Crystal and Your Community**  
 A Bridge Back to Life  
*Chris C.*

**First Things First**  
 Back to the Basics  
*Carole T. and John W.*

**WHAT IS CRYSTAL METH ANONYMOUS?** Crystal Meth Anonymous is a fellowship of men and women who share their experience, strength and hope with each other, so they may solve their common problem and help others to recover from addiction to crystal meth. The only requirement for membership is a desire to stop using. There are no dues or fees for CMA membership; we are self-supporting through our own contributions. CMA is not allied with any sect, denomination, politics, organization or institution; does not wish to engage in any controversy; and neither endorses nor opposes any causes. Our primary purpose is to lead a sober life and to carry the message of recovery to the crystal meth addict who still suffers.

—from the CMA General Service pamphlet titled "What Is Crystal Meth Anonymous?"

# Sleeping Single in a Double Bed


Alfredo M. looks  
back on a year of sobriety and celibacy

**I** had no sex for one year. It didn't kill me. My penis didn't fall off. I didn't go crazy. I didn't slash my wrists. I didn't lock myself in my room. No nasty diseases came my way. No stern nurse shook her finger in my face, asking me if I had used a condom *every time*. None of that happened. I just stopped. Then a year went by. ➤

As I celebrate a year of sobriety this week, I also mark one full year without sex. A year ago, I had been up for six days in a row without food or water. I thought I looked hot. During that interminable time, my primary activity had not been cleaning my apartment or writing poetry or listening to music or watering plants. Six days of doing just one thing: *that*. Right before I collapsed on my bathroom floor on Day 6, it occurred to me that what I was doing was pretty strange. And probably not such a good thing. My last conscious thought was: *I'm not really having fun*.

**SOS** I walked away from sex like one walks away from a plane crash. I didn't make a conscious decision to abstain. What had just happened to me terrified me so much that I couldn't face the prospect of anything remotely sexual. I had nearly died in some insane pursuit of a good time. A year without sex taught me a few things. I learned that sex is meant to be a part of life and not a game of





“Having a lot of sex  
can be amusing,  
but it’s not exactly something  
you can put on your resume.”

Russian roulette. I learned that bringing harm to myself, jeopardizing my health, could not be a sane person’s idea of fun. I learned that I was not a sane person. I learned that life is full of beautiful things and beautiful people and that you can feel voluptuous pleasure from people and things without any sex involved. I learned that sexual desire can be a kind of enslavement, especially for an addict. When I was high and having sex, I was condemned to repeat the same gestures and the same everything. Nothing was new. I wasn’t free. I was always left with blurred memories of the same frenzied insanities. There was no grace. I don’t know why people talk about sex parties. Parties are for children. With balloons and cake. And they only last a couple hours.

When I was high and having sex, I never really looked at anybody; people just whizzed by. We were like walking zombies, our eyes were dead. I took people for granted. In sobriety I learned

that you never take anyone for granted. Today I look at people and know that in every body there is a soul that is unique and irreplaceable. I look at people and learn to have great compassion for them because I can see their suffering and their fear. I learned that often sex is something people do when they don’t have anything more interesting to do. So many people I would meet had no jobs or friends or money, and they would turn to drug-fueled sex just to make something happen in their lives. I didn’t see lust. I saw desperation.

People sometimes ask me if I fantasize about crystal and sex. I tell them that I make myself snap out of it if the fantasy lasts more than three minutes. I just walk away. A great fashion editor once said that elegance was refusal. Nothing is sexier than saying no. Fantasies can be a trap: They can make what doesn’t exist seem exciting and alluring, inviting you to a Nowhere Land that will never deliver on its promise of

beauty and fulfillment. In fantasy there is no puking or passing out. Fantasies lie, and sobriety is all about the truth.

**LETTING GO** Having a lot of sex can be amusing, but it’s not exactly something you can put on your resume. Intense pleasure can pierce and overwhelm you but it leaves nothing in its wake. You can’t archive the experience. It’s not a work of art. Sex is sensation, and sensation is impermanent. There is a beauty to sex, but it’s not the kind of beauty you can hold on to and keep; you kind of have to let it go and move on. I didn’t know how to let go. In sobriety we learn to let go. I think the most important thing I learned in a year without sex is that our bodies are not some kind of toy that we can throw around carelessly and disrespectfully. Our bodies are given to us to keep and watch over in the short period that we’re on this Earth. Our bodies are our house, and when we set our house on fire, we’re dead. ■

## THE TWELVE STEPS OF CMA

1. We admitted that we were powerless over crystal meth and that our lives had become unmanageable.
2. Came to believe that a power greater than ourselves could restore us to sanity.
3. Made a decision to turn our will and our lives over to the care of a God of our understanding.
4. Made a searching and fearless moral inventory of ourselves.
5. Admitted to God, to ourselves and to another human being the exact nature of our wrongs.
6. Were entirely ready to have God remove all these defects of character.
7. Humbly asked God to remove our shortcomings.
8. Made a list of all persons we had harmed and became willing to make amends to them all.
9. Made direct amends to such people wherever possible, except when to do so would injure them or others.
10. Continued to take personal inventory and when we were wrong promptly admitted it.
11. Sought through prayer and meditation to improve our conscious contact with a God of our understanding praying only for the knowledge of God's will for us, and the power to carry that out.
12. Having had a spiritual awakening as a result of these steps, we tried to carry this message to crystal meth addicts, and to practice these principles in all of our affairs.

### FRIEND from Page 1

until my using got me in trouble—seven days in a county jail, 90 days house arrest, then two years probation.

I stopped doing Ecstasy, but by this time, I had already tried meth. I was consumed quickly. At first, it was a weekend thing. To that weekend, Thursday was added; then came Wednesday, Tuesday. Monday was a given because I couldn't stop on Sunday.

Once while I was messed up on meth, I took GHB to help me come down, leading me to fall asleep while driving; my car slammed into a tree.

I come from a good family and have two younger brothers. My parents are happily married. They started to notice what was going on with me. I mean how could they not have? I would be out for four days, then show up at work, where my dad was the boss.

After one New Year's Eve, I said I needed to go to rehab but quickly realized it wasn't for me. I had only gone there because I liked someone and thought that checking in would help our relationship. (I did a lot of things for attention.) My second run at rehab only lasted three days. I *had* to get out. My first weekend after leaving there, I got high. Shortly thereafter, I moved out of my parents' house and ended up with someone who was selling crystal—and who always had plenty to share. That's how I did what I had to do to keep up my habit.

The dealer reintroduced me to someone from my past who had since moved to New York. I packed my VW and moved there, too. My life was already crazy—now it got even worse. I had an endless amount of crystal and never had to come down. I did everything high, or should I say, tried to do things while I was high.

I loved crystal meth. Nonetheless, there were times when I wanted to stop but did not know how. It was not until my second arrest that I kind of woke up. I continued using, though. Even the FBI agents

did not scare me enough to put down meth. I just wasn't ready to stop; I did not care. It wasn't until about January 2005, when my pretrial officer (I was on bail at the time) recommended that I go to Crystal Meth Anonymous. I remember my first meeting, the Saturday-night meditation group. I was so nervous, and I felt like I had to share because of the meeting's round-robin format. While there, I ran into a friend I knew from Boston and couldn't believe how much he had changed.

I kind of felt right at home. Now I am not saying

I never relapsed after I began attending meetings—because I did, plenty of times. Even so, I got a chance to experience life in sobriety. Before I got remanded, I had a really long relapse, but with that relapse came a great sponsor who helped me get into detox and who has supported me now for almost 22 months. Because of CMA, I have a lot of sober friends who write to me and who also came to my sentencing. It feels really good to know I have a support group and great friends who are waiting for me out there. I got really lucky, because my Higher Power saw

something in me and rescued me.

Listen, prison sucks. I mean the food is terrible; you are with hundreds of other guys all the time, sleep in a bunk bed, and live out of a locker. Out of 400 guys, two of us identify ourselves as addicts. There are plenty of people in here for meth-related crimes, but they don't believe they have a problem. Their problem was selling, they say, not using.

I would be lying if I told you I always feel fine, but even in a place like this, I still get strong cravings, experience nasty dreams and have thoughts that pollute my mind. I wake up every morning and read from my meditation book; I go to bed after reading a meditation. I try to do everything I can to stay focused. I work out, read books I never got around to and eat well. I have started to have a good relationship with my family. All in all, my life is definitely better than it was when I was out there using.

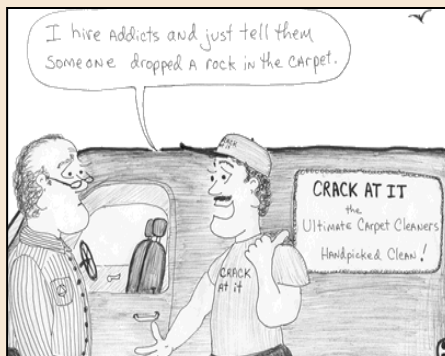
I have many things to be grateful for, and most of them are the result of finding CMA. I am also not sure what would have happened if I had not been sent to prison. In my sick mind, I might have thought I had gotten away with it again and probably would have started using just like before.

People might think I'm crazy for thinking like this, but I believe that the judge who sentenced me and the pretrial officer who told me to go to CMA saved my life. Now prison is saving my life by allowing me to be with myself and learn things about myself. There are times when I think, *Why do I have to be here for so long?* Then I look back at everything and realize I am right where I am supposed to be. ■

### ABOUT THIS ARTICLE

The slogan JAILS, INSTITUTIONS AND DEATH IS, of course, no joke. We have lost members to all three, but even though they are not with us, we remember them. *Crystal Clear* asked New York CMA member Dennis K. to check in with us from a federal prison in New Jersey. We asked him to share about his recovery there. He was only too happy to oblige. Thank you, Dennis, for helping us stay sober.

### HUMOR IN RECOVERY





## THANK YOU from Page 2

My next sponsor, Joe S., was more fatherly. He patiently took me from Step Five to Step Eight; even flying out to Las Vegas where I was doing *Mamma Mia!* (that's a promise they don't mention: "We will gamely stomp around in silver platform boots singing 'Waterloo'") to do Step Seven with me. Joe told me, when I got that job, to quit "two-Stepping." I was really into "service" at the point, sponsoring tons of guys, starting up meetings, helping to get the Intergroup going and writing pamphlets. "You need to focus on yourself for a while, Mark," he told me. Thank you, Joe.

Mike L. and Fernan R. were my first sponsees. One thing no one can quite tell you—you have to find it out for yourself—is exactly how much you get from "giving back" in this intimate way. While working Step One with Mike, I worked my own all over again: reaching back into my confused adoles-

cent experiments, replaying my own struggle with denial around alcohol, reliving my final frightening weekends of helpless bingeing. With Fernan, the real discoveries (for me) came on Step Two: I found myself reinvestigating my Catholic upbringing and searching out writings on the Gnostic gospels. Best of all, seeing how sane he was becoming, I finally trusted that I, too, had been restored to sanity. Thanks, guys.

So many men and women have moved me with such honesty in their shares. Years ago, I started putting some of the messages I got in meetings into my Palm. Some of my favorites: "If you want to try a real trippy drug, try higher power. Today I'm a user of higher power." "Anonymity is more than just an issue of privacy; it means 'having no name'; it's about humility." "Expect nothing, blame no one, and do something. All you have to do is quit behaving like an asshole." Thanks to all of you.

I'll do my best to pass it on. ■

## FAITH from Page 1

After that, Charlie stopped and looked at the floor. He began to shift uncomfortably in his seat, and he had a look of pain and confusion on his face. It was as if he was trying to collect his thoughts but didn't know where, or how, to begin. Slowly, he sat up and started to speak.

What he said in the next few minutes was the most powerful share I have ever heard. He started by admitting that at that very moment, he was living in intense fear. That is something I don't hear very often at meetings—it isn't pretty and doesn't sound good.

Charlie talked about being at home and being consumed by the fear that he would have to return to the hospital. He was in danger of having an infection, and his temperature had begun to rise. He told us he had lain in bed and prayed that he would not have to go back to the hospital later that night.

Unfortunately, this had done little to alleviate his anxiety. While lying in bed, he had realized that he needed to *do* something. "This is a program of action; sometimes just praying isn't enough," he said. Then he quoted the Big Book: "Faith without

works is dead," he added.

We had just read that line from the AA basic text a few minutes earlier, but somehow, coming from him at that moment, it took on new meaning for me. Here he was, in the middle of a health crisis. In a moment of such difficulty, he had chosen to get up and come to a meeting, to stay sober. He had chosen to put his faith into action and to share his experience. I was overwhelmed by his display of absolute faith in a higher power and in his program. The hardships I had complained about earlier in the day became trivial. I was reminded that the program that I been given so freely would handle anything I might face myself.

It became clear to me that this was an amazing example of service. I had often heard that we do service just by sharing our experience with others, but I had always thought that meant sharing our accomplishments. This was someone who was just sharing the truth about his life, his fear and his difficulties, and who had given me a magnificent gift in the process.

By demonstrating his faith, he reinforced mine. By taking an action that he had not wanted to take, in circumstances he didn't want to be in, he did an amazing

service for me. He broadened my understanding of why it is important to share and of how sharing about our problems, as well as our joys, can help fellow addicts.

Charlie went on to say that he was trying to make peace with whatever he would need to do that evening. If he needed to return to the hospital, then he would accept that as God's will and take the necessary action. This seemed to give him some comfort as he concluded his share.

Simply by listening to him, I came to realize that I also can do whatever I need to do—if I accept whatever outcomes might occur and if I continue to do the next right thing.

His demonstration of faith in his Higher Power was an example of how this program works. I also came to realize that sometimes the greatest service we can do for our fellows is to simply live our program to the best of our ability, no matter our current circumstances.

His legacy reminds me that anything is possible, if I have faith in a Higher Power, if I remain willing to take action, and if I am honest with my fellows. I don't think I have ever received a greater gift from anyone. ■

## The LIST

## TWELVE STEPS TO RELAPSE

- 1** Start missing meetings for any reason, real or imaginary.
- 2** Become critical of the methods used by other members who might not agree with you.
- 3** Nurse the idea that someday, somehow, you can do crystal meth again as a controlled user.
- 4** Let the other fellow do the Twelfth Step work in your group. You are too busy.
- 5** Become conscious of your CMA "seniority" and view new members skeptically.
- 6** Become so pleased with your own views of the program that you consider yourself an "Elder Statesman."
- 7** Start a small clique within the fellowship and make sure it is composed of only a few members who see eye-to-eye with you.
- 8** Tell the new member in confidence that you, yourself, do not take certain of the Twelve Steps seriously.
- 9** Let your mind dwell more and more on how much you are helping others rather than on how much CMA is helping you.
- 10** If an unfortunate member has a slip, drop him at once.
- 11** Cultivate the habit of borrowing money from other members, then staying away from meetings to avoid embarrassment.
- 12** Look upon the "Twenty-Four Hour Plan" as a vital thing for new members, but not for yourself. You have out-grown it.

EXPERIENCE  
STRENGTH  
AND HOPE

**Q: When you were a newcomer, how did you carry the message?** A: I wanted to share the gift of sobriety with everyone I could, so I gave a big smile and hello to everyone who came in the door for the first time. That way I could do service without losing sight of my own sobriety, which was still pretty fragile. MIKE M.

# MEETINGS

THIS LIST IS UPDATED REGULARLY AT NYCMA.ORG

## SUNDAY

- 9:00 AM **Pier Meeting**++++ End of the Christopher Street Pier  
 9:30 AM **Sunday Solutions**(c) Lesbian & Gay Community Center  
 1:30 PM **Getting It** 46th Street Clubhouse  
 6:00 PM **Step Meeting** (o)† Lesbian & Gay Community Center  
 7:30 PM **Beginner's Basics** (c) Lesbian & Gay Community Center

## MONDAY

- 7:45 AM **Good Morning, Higher Power** (c) Gay Men's Health Crisis  
 6:00 PM **Relapse Prevention**(o) Lesbian & Gay Community Center  
 7:30 PM **Juntos En Sobriedad**+++ Gay Men's Health Crisis  
 8:00 PM **NA Book Study** (o) Realization Center  
 8:30 PM **59th Street Bridge Back to Life** 36-01 31st Ave., #4D - Astoria, Queens

## TUESDAY

- 7:45 AM **Good Morning, Higher Power** (c) Gay Men's Health Crisis  
 6:00 PM **Recovering Together** (o) Gay Men's Health Crisis  
 7:30 PM **New York Group No. 1: Beginners** (o) Lesbian & Gay Community Center  
 8:00 PM **Long-Term Sobriety** Gay Men's Health Crisis  
 9:15 PM **Midtown Miracles** (o) 46th Street Clubhouse

## WEDNESDAY

- 7:45 AM **Good Morning, Higher Power** (c) Gay Men's Health Crisis  
 6:30 PM **Solutions in Recovery** (c) Callen-Lorde Health Center  
 8:00 PM **Conscious Contact/11th Step** (o) Gay Men's Health Crisis

## THURSDAY

- 7:45 AM **Good Morning, Higher Power** (c) Gay Men's Health Crisis  
 6:30 PM **CMA Agnostics** (c) Gay Men's Health Crisis  
 6:30 PM **As Bill Sees It** (o) Gay Men's Health Crisis  
 7:30 PM **Serenity at Sunset on the Pier** (o) Charles Street Pier++++  
 8:00 PM **Big Book Study** (o) Gay Men's Health Crisis

## FRIDAY

- 7:45 AM **Good Morning, Higher Power** (c) Gay Men's Health Crisis  
 6:15 PM **Living With HIV** (c) Callen-Lorde Health Center  
 8:00 PM **Crystal Clear** (o) Gay Men's Health Crisis  
 8:30 PM **The O'Toole Meeting** (c) O'Toole Building/St. Vincent's Medical Center

## SATURDAY

- 8:30 AM **Pier Meeting**++++ End of the Christopher Street Pier  
 9:15 AM **Saturday Solutions** (c) Lesbian & Gay Community Center  
 5:00 PM **Promises** Manhattan Plaza Health Club  
 8:00 PM **Meditation Meeting** (c)++++ Lesbian & Gay Community Center  
 9:30 PM **Intimacy, Relationships & Sex in Sobriety** (c) Lesbian & Gay Community Center

## ABOUT THIS NEWSLETTER



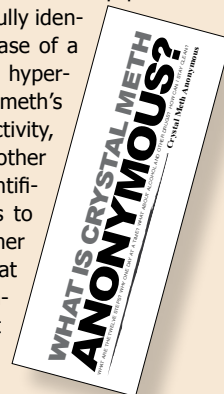
© 2007 NYCMA Inc. Vol. 5 • No. 3

**Submissions and Comments:** CMA members are encouraged to submit essays and other original nonfiction writing for publication in *Crystal Clear*. Interested parties may contact a member of the NYCMA Literature Committee or NYCMA Intergroup for more information. Inquiries and comments may also be sent to [newsletter@nycma.org](mailto:newsletter@nycma.org). By submitting material for publication, members affirm that it is comprised solely of original content or that references to other works are credited properly. The writer also assumes all liability for any damages that may result from the publication of his or her article. Crystal Meth Anonymous is a Twelve Step fellowship for those with a desire to stop using crystal meth. *Crystal Clear* is published periodically by NYCMA Inc., a not-for-profit corporation located in New York City. NYCMA, or its designee(s), reserves the right to refuse submissions and to edit them, including for clarity and space and to avoid triggering the reader. Submissions become property of NYCMA. No compensation is paid. According to our Tenth Tradition, NYCMA has no opinions on outside issues. Opinions expressed in articles are solely those of the writers and do not speak for NYCMA as a whole. This policy was created by the NYCMA Literature Committee at the request of NYCMA Intergroup members. We also suggest that writers keep in mind our Eleventh Tradition: "Our public relations policy is based on attraction rather than promotion; we need always maintain personal anonymity at the level of press, radio and films and all other media." The Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions of CMA have been adapted with permission from AA World Services Inc. NYCMA is not affiliated with Alcoholics Anonymous. Visual materials are printed with permission.

New York Crystal Meth Anonymous  
 P.O. Box 1517, Old Chelsea Station • New York, New York. 10113

**How is CMA different than other Twelve Step programs?** We have found that we relate best to other crystal meth addicts because they understand the darkness, paranoia and compulsions of this particular addiction. The Twelve Steps of CMA were adapted from Alcoholics Anonymous. We do not believe we are better or worse than those in other Twelve Step programs. At the same time, many of us fail to fully identify with "a falling-down drunk" or, in the case of a heroin addict, "a nodding-off junkie." The hyper-extended length and intensity of crystal meth's effects, be it compulsive cleaning or sexual activity, were unique. Many of us have attended other Twelve Step programs, but the feeling of identification in the Rooms of CMA has helped us to keep coming back. After all, who but another meth addict understands the insanity that accompanies the high and, finally, that seemingly bottomless drop into depression that makes us desperate to use still more?

—Excerpted from the new CMA General Service pamphlet titled "What Is Crystal Meth Anonymous?" Copies may be downloaded free of charge at [crystallmeth.org](http://crystallmeth.org).



## MEETING DETAILS

†The last Sunday of every month is a Traditions meeting. +++Meeting is conducted in Spanish +++Please try to arrive on time so as not to interrupt the silent-meditation portion of the meeting. +++Weather permitting through October (o) **Open Meeting:** Welcomes anyone interested in the CMA program. (c) **Closed meeting:** Welcomes anyone who has, or thinks he or she might have, a problem with crystal meth.

## DIRECTIONS

- **46thStreet Clubhouse** 252 West 46th Street, between 7th and 8th avenues
- **Callen-Lorde Community Health Center** 356 West 18th Street, between 8th & 9th avenues. Check at front desk for room number.
- **Gay Men's HealthCrisis** 119 West 24th Street, between 6th and 7th avenues. Check at front desk for room number.
- **lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgendered Community Services Center** 208 West 13th Street, between 7th and 8th avenues. Check listings at front desk for room number.
- **Manhattan Plaza HealthClub** 482 West 43rd Street, Conference Room Minnesota 1.
- **S. Vincent's O'Toole Building** 203 West 12th Street, Sixth Floor, Large Conference Room
- **Realization Center** 19 Union Square West, Seventh Floor
- **William Ryan Health Center** 110 West 97th Street, between Columbus and Amsterdam

## LITTLE GIRL from Page 1

safe-deposit box at the bank, along with her self-made "circuit party" pornography of a lower-power sort.

The end was near—she was starting to wish her childhood See's Candy cardboard house was still available, instead of the backseat of a bottle-green Volvo.

Her little meth baby had a Pick 3 father and was never born.

But something happened to this once-embarrassing soul: Now she only gets high by being gracious. ■

Allison is a crystal meth addict who shared her story with us via [nycma.org](http://nycma.org).