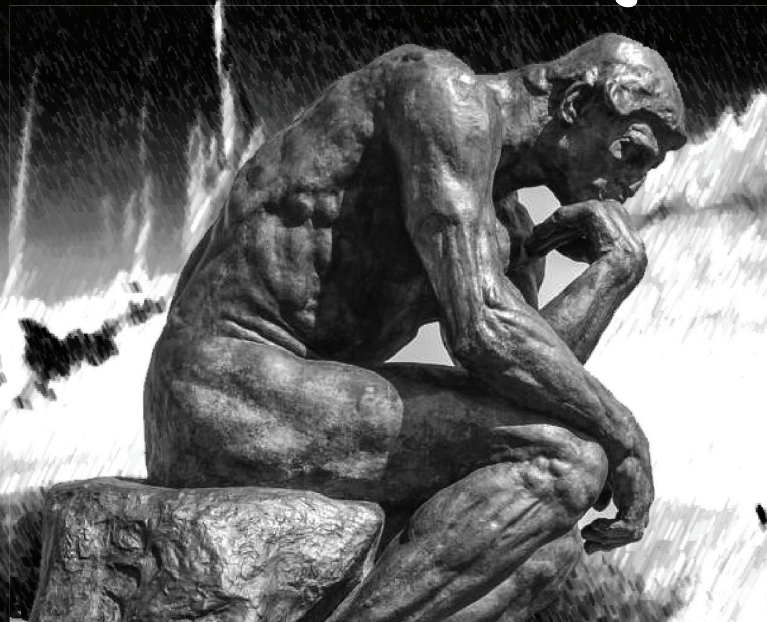


SCFNA PRESENTS

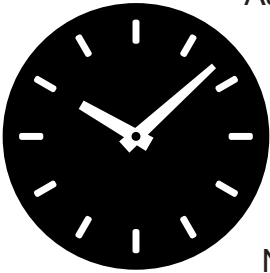
VOR



Fall
2021

Today Is Time

As I sit in a meeting
Recovery is a numbing feeling.
One month clean got me higher than
The ceiling
I'm dealing
Hugs and love, more and more
I run, and
Ignore the illegal drugs.
Positive people, and for once my urine is
Fully legal.
Today is time to live a life.
Even though days can be bitter
Like the taste of dime,
I am not committing a crime.
The new things I find aren't because of 11 years on the grind



As my days unwind
I forgive myself and
God, light and present, is
All the time.
Even in the white walls
NA calls

Surrender, willingness, and no lies
Everything is going to be okay.
Even if the tears never seem to dry,
Crisis hits you blind,
The way you pay
Today is the time.
No judgement
The NA development
Is based on your settlement
There, no government

*"As my days unwind, I
forgive myself and God,
light and present, is all the
time."*

Grateful not to conform to the societal rite of passage for a 21 year old.

I have grown up in the fellowship of Narcotics Anonymous. I was 14 years old when I came to my first NA meeting. I was high and thought to myself, what do these old washed-up failed drug addicts have to tell me about living life. They don't know how to use successfully – and I of course did. I came to the meeting with a friend who needed a piece of paper signed. I was not ready to seek recovery. I was still under the delusion that somehow I could control my drug use – that it was a matter of just being smart enough to outwit this so-called “disease”. I continued to use. Within a year I had dropped out of high school, overdosed a couple of times, lost my job, became agoraphobic, heard voices and saw things that were not real, and could not formulate a sentence. I also could not stop using drugs. I thought that the drugs were my solution, that if I could just find the right combination or use enough that it would somehow reset my brain and my life would work again. I was 15 years old.

I finally got clean at age 15. I say finally because the way that I was using I doubt that I would have made it to my 16th birthday. I did not get clean on my own volition. I did not want to be clean. I did not want to be a boring person or adult, like a square or conformist. I wanted the drugs to work – but they didn't. Once I got clean and fully detoxed it almost felt like being high – because I felt different. I was so used to being high that not being high actually felt good. However, addiction is more than just drug use – it is my thinking and actions – obsession and compulsion. Just because I was not using drugs did not mean that the self-sabotage, shame, and distorted thinking disappeared. In fact, it eventually got louder and I knew that I had to either work the steps or go back to the misery, paranoia, and icky life that I previously had

As we say
One day,
One step,
The unnecessary dent
This place
The people I met
The message that was
sent.
Today is time
Keep coming back
It works
It will hurt
But the goal is to love
every new shirt.
Today is time
There is light and
The only fight
Recovery is alright
Your future is bright
Our higher power
Will wash you
Like a shower
You can be standing with
your voice even louder
And helping others every
hour.
Today is time
Recovery is all mine.

Submitted by Jeremiah P.

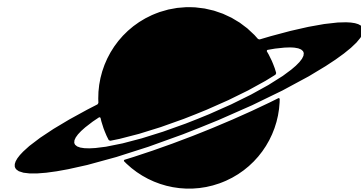
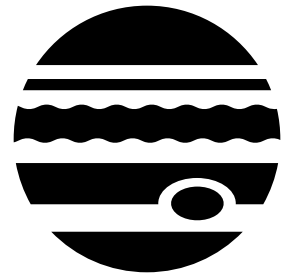


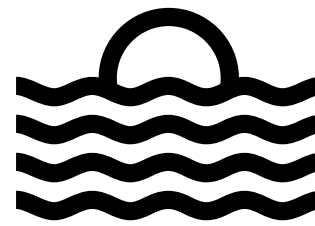
experienced in my use. I got a sponsor and started working the steps. I got a service commitment at a meeting. I was the youngest person in the meeting. I had people tell me "I've spilled more drugs than you used" which the apt comeback has always been "I didn't spill them and I probably used the ones you spilled, which is why I'm here now".

Through working the steps with a sponsor, I was able to learn about "spiritual principles" and how to apply those principles in my life. Every time I took a healthy risk to be honest or vulnerable, the ultimate result was better than my dark imagination could envision. As a young adult I remember calling my sponsor with devastating issues like rejection from a boy I like, or not feeling as cool or as accepted as others. I used to always compare my insides with my distorted perspective of others outsides. I remember thinking that I was cursed – and her reminding me that not only am I an addict but I'm also a young woman and some of the life experiences that I thought were driven by defects were actually just part of the normal growing process of young adulthood. My disease tells me that I cannot make mistakes, that I have to know the answers before I learn them, and has instilled a fear of missing out.

My 21st birthday was one of those triggers for fear of missing out. I thought that as a young woman it was my rite of passage to get hammered, puke all over myself in a sloppy drunken mess, and maybe wake up with a stranger or two, a sexually transmitted disease, and a headache – that somehow every American on the day after their 21st birthday has to wake up hung over to properly adult. I thought that I would be missing out on some super important life experience, or rather my disease was using the fact that I would not be drinking on my 21st birthday to try to convince me that again – I am different and alone and I will never feel connected to others and nobody loves me. Yes – my disease really does take it to that level. The irony is that acting on my disease is a self-fulfilling prophecy that will actually bring about that feeling of disconnection, isolation, and shame – but somehow my brain distorts the fantasy of using to make it attractive. I am so grateful for the fellowship and connections that I made to help keep me clean despite my fear of missing out. My 21st birthday was pretty uneventful, which was probably a good thing because my life clean has been very eventful. Not eventful in the overly dramatic chaos filled events – but it has been exciting and filled with happiness, achievement, laughter, love, travel, and some tragedies that I have not had to bear alone because of the fellowship and 12 steps of NA - staying clean a day at a time including my 21st birthday.

I have been clean now for 26 years. Over the past couple decades, I have been able to watch others also approach, and stay clean through, turning 21 in recovery. When I talk to younger people about reservations a common one is: What about when I turn 21? I can relate with that fear. So I asked a few people that I know who also stayed clean through their 21st birthday if they would be willing to share their answers to the following questions for the Sonoma County Newsletter.





1) Did you have any concerns (reservations) about your 21st birthday?

2) What did you do on your 21st birthday? How did you stay clean?

3) What would you want other young people to know about passing through age 21 (including your birthday day) clean?

Here are their responses...

I got clean at age 19. I just turned 40.

I remember being stoked to turn 21 clean. I was young and wild so my girlfriends and I went to strip clubs in the city. We chose a full nude place because there was no alcohol there. It was a Monday night. Hilarious times! I loved that I remembered every detail. Being clean has its perks and I liked that one at the time for sure. My life is a dream I've loved being able to share this stuff with young people coming in who are torn about their new way of life and this stupid f\$*&ing societal tradition we have. I love being clean and crazy and fun so much more.

- Natalia

I am 39 and I got clean at 17.

I had 4 years clean when I turned 21 and I had a strong foundation in step 1. I didn't have any reservations at the time of my 21st birthday. I knew I wanted to do something fun, so my boyfriend and I went to Vegas for the weekend. It was so much fun, especially clean! Staying clean was a huge part of my life and I was committed to my recovery at the time that I turned 21. It was important to remember that my recovery is always my first priority, whether it's my birthday, Tuesday or the day my best friend passed away. I would never be able to be present in my life and enjoy the gifts I've received without Narcotics Anonymous.

-Portia

I got clean at 17. I am now 47.

I was not worried about turning 21 because I was firm in my understanding of the first step and knew, and still know, that using would screw up everything I had going. We (clean young people) were starting to get some traction. Good attendance at meetings, NAYC was starting and I met my wife.

My 21st birthday was uneventful. I threw out my fake ID that I was using so that I could go to all of the concerts. Today I have an incredible life. I'm still clean, married, and we have 2 sons: one is a college graduate with 2 degrees, and our youngest is a junior in high school. I love NA and I do service work outside of NA with my sons. They have seen me in service for NA their whole lives and get to share in the spiritual nourishment of service through volunteering in our community.

- Jeff L.



• I got clean at 15 and I'm 27 now.
• I could not think past my 18th birthday when I got clean. I was fixated
• more so on getting to 18, moving out and getting high if I wanted to. 21
• felt easier, as I had 6 years clean and a very solid support group in NA,
• so we partied clean and had a blast. I really did not want to drink (not my
• preference anyways).

• On my 21st birthday a group of friends in NA and I went to eat, and then
• had a bonfire on the beach. We listened to terrible hyphy music and
• some of our friends went streaking into the ocean. It was amazing, and
• unforgettable.

• I would want other young people to know that if you have drank or used
• before your 21st birthday, it is not special for 21. What makes 21 special
• is remembering it, laughing during it, and being able to experience pride
• in yourself for being able to get through a milestone like 21. We grow up
• thinking 21 is some incredible threshold crossing, yet for most addicts we
• have already crossed those thresholds and never needed a birthday or
• chronological age to give us permission. WE get to give ourselves
• permission to be clean, and that is a miracle and a gift.

• - Nicollette



• I got clean when I was 15 years old. This January I turned 27 years clean
• and this August I will be 43 years old.
• Getting clean young has been sweetly complicated for me and is the best
• gift I have continued to give to myself. When I turned 21, I was 6.5 years
• clean and my oldest son was four years old. I celebrated my birthday with
• friends and went to a show. I love listening to live music.
• At that time in my recovery I had finished my second round of steps and had
• begun my journey into taking responsibility for myself. I didn't struggle at that
• time with my own understanding of why I was in recovery and why I stayed.
• I think it's important for young people getting clean to know that there is a full
• vibrant life available to them on the other side of the self-hate and pity, that
• can often accompany using/addiction. Everyone experiences the gifts of
• recovery differently, don't leave before you experience your miracle-
• whatever that may be. Take time to understand yourself and share that
• openly with people you feel close to. Or want to build closeness with. Your
• voice matters regardless of how long you've been alive or clean.

• - Jessika

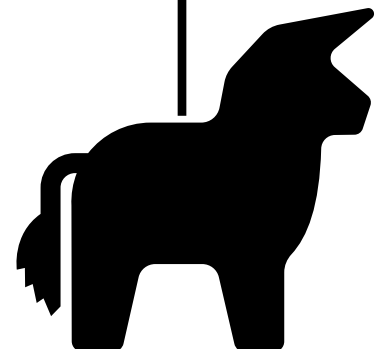


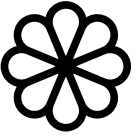
• 1) I started sneaking
• into bars with people
• in recovery to sing
• karaoke at age 19 so
• turning 21 meant very
• little.

• 2) I went to my first
• gay pride parade in
• San Francisco for my
• 21st birthday with
• friends in recovery.

• 3) Can we assume
• that none of us were
• waiting to turn 21 to
• drink? The legality of
• the drink does not
• make you exempt as
• an addict.

• - Chris





YOU ARE BEAUTIFUL

There's beauty in my mind,

There's beauty in my heart,

This world will not determine

My value or my part.

These pimples, this acne, these scars
that I bare.

My beauty is not defined so simple, it
can't be, far from it from those who truly care.

My small arms, my skinny frame,

Taunts from bullies won't haunt me forever.

What you want to represent does not have to define me personally.

Nor how you act represent my character.

You can call me ugly.

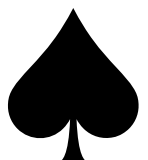
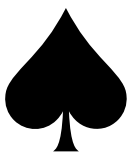
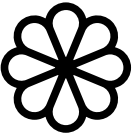
Go ahead and judge me.

You don't have to approve of me, or the person I'm trying to be, for
me to love me.

To myself I choose to stay true.

Sorry, all I can do is wish the same for you.

Submitted by Christopher G.





September, October, November Birthdays

Name Clean Date #Yrs Clean

Dana C. Moses	10/1/2020	1
Zee - The Real Zee	10/19/2020	1
Zach M.	8/22/2019	2
Eric R.	10/21/2019	2
Daniel Bard	10/31/2018	3
Rick W.	9/17/2018	3
Mike C.	9/25/2018	3
Donnie G.	11/14/2017	4
Amanda C.	8/1/2016	5
Miranda S.	11/24/2014	7
Bryan C.	11/12/2012	9
Erik	11/12/2010	11
Frank S.	11/1/2007	14
Mike W.	11/15/2007	14
Mark Spruce	9/1/2004	17
Cher G.	11/25/2004	17
Beth M.	11/11/2003	18
James H.	11/10/2003	18
Victor G.	10/23/2002	19
Sorel P.	10/11/2001	20
Paula H.	9/25/2000	21
Jean S.	9/5/1999	22
Shelly H.	9/18/1991	30
Rick A.	10/1/2001	30

