

My Higher Power Goes Before Me!

I am a recovering addict named Maurice G. I recently traveled to Ghana West Africa on business. I am working with a non profit organization I founded called AID for AIDS Africa (AFAA). My purpose for this trip was to get a container tied up in the port due to neglect released to 8 organizations relating to recovery from addiction and HIV in Ghana. Recovery from addiction is a new concept. There are no treatment programs in Ghana. Upon my arrival March 27th 2007, I began the process of getting a new sponsor for the release of the container. They agreed to pay the cost and distribute to the original organizations and others. When we arrived at the port, we learned that the container had been seized by Ghana Customs, auctioned and sold. I was so angry. How could this have happened? It was a 5 year project of gathering support and goods from the recovery, HIV, the faith-based communities to fill a 40 foot container. The Port of Oakland in collaboration with AFAA and the Mother Wright Foundation collected medical equipment, food, clothing, books and medicines to get needed relief items to people living well below poverty level even in Ghana (the average annual income is \$600).

I wanted to use after 10 years of practicing the program. Anger is one of my triggers especially righteous indignation. My saving Grace was the fact that in 2004 along with my sponsor and two other addicts, we were able to start the 1st meeting of Narcotics Anonymous in Ghana at the only detox in the country. There were no twelve step programs at the time. AA had been there and died out. My sponsor at that time was Luther B. Clarence H., Logosu A. and myself began the 1st NA meeting fall of 04'. The meeting struggled for the next 3 years. The stigma and fear of being labeled an addict kept many people from coming to get help. Since the detox was for alcohol only, many addicts were unaware of the meeting. Those who attended could not risk being seen and having their identities made known. People watched who attended the meetings and made public the names of some members. Some members not understanding the principle of anonymity discussed the wrong doings of others outside the meeting. However, after 3 years of struggle an average of 20 men were present at the meetings I attended after learning the fate of the container. They saved my life! They understood the pain and frustration I was feeling and walked with me through my process of acceptance and surrender to what is.

God went before me through me and others to establish that meeting in 2004. I had no idea it would be the solution for me in my present situation, reminding me that even if I

thought I wanted to use, it was only a thought. By the grace of God my clean date is still October 25, 1996. Along with the original meeting are 2 additional meetings, one at the psyche ward at the same hospital and another at a church in the center of town. I thank God for Narcotics Anonymous and the fellowship that keeps growing through its members. I have learned to stay focused on the solution which for me is working the steps, facing my problems, admitting my part, understanding and correcting my mistakes, forgiving the rest and moving on. I want to thank the fellowships in Berkeley, Oakland, Sacramento and San Francisco for all the support we have been able to get to that 1st meeting in Ghana. We received over \$3000 in donations from those fellowships to purchase books, CD's and other NA literature. The seeds have been planted. God does the rest!