

"I just don't know any other way to do it. But I am not going back, I am only going forward and I am getting better," he concluded as he dropped his head and twisted his hands. One of the group's member patted Vincent on the back comfortingly.

Another man raised his hand.

"Hi I am David and I am an addict," he said, looking at Vincent. "I am trying to do things that I can (to) help someone else. I don't have much friends and I have hurt a lot of people with my drug addiction so I have been collecting lots of information that may help you find a place to live."

"There are lots of programs out there to help us," David said. "I signed up for an AIDs walk, a walk for leukemia and some

other groups. It just makes me feel good that while I am fighting my drug addiction, if I can be busy to help someone else, it helps me become stronger to fight my addiction."

As the Wednesday session wound down for the evening, everyone stood up and held hands and said the serenity prayer. I was also asked to read one of the closeout session sheets about strength for a recovering addict.

The public meeting was closed and a small business meeting was held. Donations were accepted so the group could order brochures and supplies.

Finally, Linda, a group leader, said that if anyone wanted to stay around after the meeting to speak with the Cal State student writing the story, that would be

great

Six members remained behind to answer questions and share their stories.

"I am Linda and I am a recovering addict," Linda said, starting things off.

"I began using drugs since I was four years old," she said. "I had problems with my bladder and my urethra did not grow properly. My doctor would put me on this drug and (he would) put me on that drug. The type of drugs that were addictive for me were all of them – I went from drug to drug and they caused all types of chemical imbalance."

Linda explained how her mother never accepted what had happened to her or expressed any sympathy for Linda. Linda's 16-year-old daughter, on the other hand, has helped her a lot.

