

I.

WHERE DO WE STAND.

The personal problem of addiction has existed, and has been mentioned in history and literature, since ancient times.

Medicine and society, past and present, with all the organizations and methods, at their disposal, have tried to solve this puzzle. Just recently, a dedicated man of great stature in the medical world, stated that only in rare and individual cases, did addiction yield to therapy in his field.

We know that many of the solutions offered us were worthwhile, but such cunning enemies of life are narcotics and sedation, that we had lost the power to accept and use them.

There was no way out left for us, all our own efforts failed, in extreme desperation, we sought help from ^{LA} each other in the fellowship of Narcotics Anonymous, and since 1953 a new and encouraging page, in recovery, is being unfolded.

We realize that the elimination of drugs from our lives, is but the first step away from a highly abnormal condition of mind and body. To take away drugs and give nothing to take their place, is no answer, something else must dominate and influence our lives. We believe this takes place when we give ourselves as completely as possible, to the simple program of Narcotics Anonymous.

Our using is only the immediate and apparent problem, the true addiction lies deeper in our emotional nature.

We could be called addictive personalities, since we take advantage of every possible means, to escape facing life and our responsibilities. We have to grow up and stop running away; facing reality is a painful process, but it is the way of recovery.

Practically all of us want to quit. We do not use because we want to, but because we have to ^{just to stay will, but when this wears out and we} ~~driven by a compulsion~~ ^{find that we cannot} ~~beyond our control.~~ ^{function either with} Willfulness is no explanation of addiction, for no ^{medial} ~~one~~ person, in control of his faculties, would use as we do, knowing the ultimate pain and agony that it brings. We use because of forces within, that we can neither understand nor change by ourselves. ^{or without drugs.} ^{yet when in this dilemma} ^{we are driven to use} ^{by a craving beyond} ^{our control.}

Our addictions are the outward symptoms of a deep emotional imbalance. We suffer from a physical sensitivity to drugs, so that once having begun to use, or substitute one drug for another, we start the phenomenon of craving, which shows itself in a compulsion that we are powerless to control ---no matter how much we want to stop. This allergy, for lack of a better word, we will always have; we can do nothing to change it, but having stopped and gone through withdrawal it becomes dormant and inactive.

The second part of our two-fold disease, is the mental obsession that leads us back again and again to narcotics and medication, for that elusive feeling of well-being that we *once* experienced...even though we know that the results are nearly always disastrous for us. These fixed ideas that we have are the things that we can and do change in Narcotics Anonymous.

By practicing the principles of the program, in all our affairs, we begin to grow spiritually. Our fears and anxieties, which show themselves in attitudes of discontent and frustration, lessen as the program is utilized in removing our resentments and hostilities. Driven by a hundred forms of fear and self-seeking, we step on peoples toes and they retaliate. Sometimes they seem to hurt us without reason, but we generally find that we had placed ourselves in a position to be hurt. Most of our troubles are of our own making, we are extreme examples of self-will run riot. If we would live we must be free of all forms of selfishness. Self-love, self-condemnation, false pride, self-pity and self-centeredness are gradually removed, as we become aware of new values in our lives. From this evolves a deep personality change.

This is not just a matter of changing our conduct but of altering our character.

By every form of self-deception and justification, we have tried to protect our feelings and bring ease to our emotional life. Our feelings govern us, instead of our reason and our will. We have been looking at life, only from our own selfish viewpoint and we wonder why things do not turn out well for us. We try to run the show our way, and wonder why we fail.

Realizing our position of helplessness in changing all these things alone, we feel aid must come from dependence on a power greater than ourselves, many call this God. Lack of a particular concept, does not exclude any of us. If we are honest in our purpose and willing to try with an open mind, we can recover.

This program is a means to an end and not an end in ~~itself~~. ~~Using~~ the principles each day in all departments of our lives, we find that we have the courage, not only to face our responsibilities, but to find satisfaction and peace of mind in so doing.

In N. A. principles become tools to use in living and not answers on which to rest. In the past we solved most of our problems intellectually, having decided that this or that should be done, we let it rest there; here more than anywhere else ACTION is the magic ingredient that changes our lives. Our best ideas must be translated into doing, before they have any value.

We feel that our approach to our problem is completely realistic— for the therapeutic value of one addict helping another to recover, is without parallel. We feel too, that it is practical, for it takes one addict to thoroughly understand another,

and it is in helping each other that we find it possible, to maintain a happy way of life. This is why, our main purpose, is to carry the message of hope and recovery, to those addicted who sincerely want to stop. We know this booklet is limited in scope, N.A. does not claim to have all the answers. We realize we know but little, but this ^{can be} ~~is always~~ sufficient to carry us through twenty four hours. More will be revealed to us as we grow in faith and wisdom.

NARCOTICS ANONYMOUS.

The only requirement for membership is a sincere and honest desire to recover from our addiction.

N.A. is not a reform, temperance, prohibition or religious movement. As a group, we adhere to no particular creed or dogma. There are no dues or fees and no pledges to sign. You are a member when you make your own decision. There are no restrictions, of any kind, as to age, race, color or creed. We are under no surveillance, by any agency at any time.

Narcotics Anonymous is a fellowship of men and women for whom narcotics and sedation had become a major problem. Here we have learned that we are not deficient in will power, but suffer from a disease such as alcoholism, tuberculosis, cancer or diabetes, unless checked, these grow progressively worse, never better. There is no known cure for these diseases, nor is there one for ours, but we can become arrested cases.

G.

In our experience, it has been proved, that ^{any} attempt ^{to} at controlled ~~use~~ of drugs by an addict, ^{is} ~~is~~ doomed to failure.

We had reached the point of no return, total abstinence from all narcotics and sedation was imperative.

We stood at the cross-road. We had only two alternatives.

One To make the best of our addiction and go on to the bitter end.....Jail, Insanity, Death.

Two. To accept spiritual help, since no human power seemed able to relieve our addiction.

HOW IT WORKS .

Honest Open-minded Willingness Is The Way Of Recovery,
Knowledge, Success.

We who have recovered in N.A. have found a new way of life free from the need for narcotics and sedation. With self-honesty and self-respect, we can now face life and its responsibilities, unafraid.

If you want what we have to offer, and are willing to make the effort to get it, then you are ready to take certain steps. These are suggested only, but they are the principles which made our recovery possible.

1. We admitted we were powerless over addiction, that our lives had become unmanageable.
2. We came to believe that a power greater than ourselves could restore us to sanity.
3. We made a decision to turn our will and our lives over to the care of God, as we understood Him.

4. We made a searching and fearless moral inventory of ourselves.
5. We admitted to God, to ourselves, and to another human being the exact nature of our wrongs.
6. We were entirely ready to have God remove all these defects of character.
7. We humbly asked Him to remove our shortcomings.
8. We made a list of all persons we had harmed and became willing to make amends to them all.
9. We made direct amends to such people wherever possible except when to do so would injure them or others.
10. We continued to take personal inventory, and when we were wrong promptly admitted it.
11. We sought through prayer and meditation to improve our conscious contact with God, As we understood Him, praying ~~only~~ for knowledge of His 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 addicts and to practice these principles in all our affairs.

This may sound like a big order, for we of all people, are certainly not saints, we did not become addicted in one day and we do not expect to change everything overnight, but we can grow in spirit one day at a time. We are not crusaders trying to save the world, we do these things for ourselves, so that we may regain our individual freedom. ~~Here we must~~

~~and never are separated from the ways of the physical age~~

This is a simple but not an easy program, it takes courage to face our own reality, and many of us are afraid, but if we had never known fear, what value would there be in courage?

We do not claim perfection in our lives, only spiritual progress. We ask those who are new to the program, to give themselves a break. Keep an open mind. Make your own decisions. We are complex people so keep the program simple and let it work for you.

HOW CAN I DO IT?

Perhaps you have received this booklet by mail, or from some other source, or live in a city or town, far removed from the groups now formed. Maybe you are newly released from an institution where you were a member of an inner group.

Do these conditions mean that being by yourself, you cannot recover, we know better.....even though you are but one man or woman with this booklet in your hand, you are not alone anymore. Your recovery is not primarily dependent on people, but on a Higher Power as you understand It. Many of us with no clear concept of God first, have used the groups of recovered addicts, as a power greater than ourselves to start with; and our own idea of the greatest good we could conceive, as a guide in living. As one of our members states:

" I took one O from GOOD, and found GOD as I understand Him."

To give freely of ourselves and be helpful to others, is the way that helps us most, but until you grow in strength and spirit and are able to start your own group of N. A. write to us, we will be happy to share with you what we have found.

In the meantime, search out other recovered addicts. Where? we find many in local groups of Alcoholics Anonymous, ask group secretaries for help. Many addicts feel they have nothing in common with alcoholics and hesitate at this point, we have felt the same way, but our desire to get well should guide us in our course. We all have to face facts sooner or later...we might as well start now. Our movement was started by addicts, some with double addictions, who having no other place to turn, at last found recovery possible through the A. A. program. Many times at first, when we were at the vanishing point as a movement, recovered alcoholics renewed our faith in ourselves, and here we are. We owe them many thanks. Now we have the opportunity to form our own groups of Narcotics Anonymous so that those yet to come will find the way a little easier.

Whatever you do to help yourself, helps us all, every addict who recovers, no matter how or where, is another light shining in the darkness of addiction to guide others who are on the way. So join us in the fellowship of the spirit, and you will surely meet some of us, as you walk the way of Grateful Recovery.

THE TWELVE TRADITIONS.

When we apply the twelve steps to our personal life, disintegration stops and unification begins.

The same principle applies to the traditions and the group. N. A. unity cannot automatically maintain itself; like personal recovery, ~~we~~^{we} shall keep it only with vigilance.

So long as the ties that bind us together, are stronger than the forces that would divide us, all will be well,

"Our experience has taught us....."

1. Our common welfare should come first; personal recovery depends upon N. A. unity.
2. For our group purpose there is but one ultimate authorityA loving God as he may express Himself in our group conscience. Our leaders are but trusted servants.... they do not govern.
3. The only requirement for N. A. membership is a desire to stop using.
4. Each group should be self-governing, except in matters affecting other groups or N. A. as a whole.
5. Each group has but one primary purpose..... to carry its message to the addict who still suffers.

II.

6. An N. A. group ought never endorse, finance or lend the N. A. name to any related facility or outside enterprise, lest problems of money, property and prestige, divert us from our primary purpose.
7. Every N. A. group ought to be fully self-supporting, declining outside contributions.
8. Narcotics Anonymous should remain forever non-professional but our service centers may employ special workers.
9. N. A. as such ought never be organized; but we may create service boards or committees directly responsible to those they serve.
10. Narcotics Anonymous has no opinion on outside issues; hence the N. A. name ought never be drawn into public controversy.
11. Our public relations policy is based on attraction rather than promotion; we need always maintain personal anonymity at the level of press, radio, film and T.V.
12. Anonymity is the spiritual foundation of all our traditions, ever reminding us to place principles before personalities.

T O D A Y

JUST FOR TODAY my thoughts will be on my recovery,
living and enjoying life without the use of drugs.

JUST FOR TODAY I will have faith in someone in
Narcotics Anonymous who believes in me, and wants to
help me in my recovery.

JUST FOR TODAY I will have a program. I will try
to follow it to the best of my ability.

JUST FOR TODAY through Narcotics Anonymous, I will
try to get a better perspective on my life.

JUST FOR TODAY I will be unafraid. My thoughts will
be on my new associations, people who are not using and
who have found a new way of life. As long as I follow
in that way, ~~as long as I follow~~, I have nothing to fear.

SERENITY PRAYER.

GOD, Grant me the serenity to accept the things I
cannot change,

The courage to change the things I can,

And the wisdom to know the difference.
