



I.P. No. 22

NARCOTICS ANONYMOUS

WELCOME TO NARCOTICS ANONYMOUS

WORLD SERVICE CONFERENCE
LITERATURE COMMITTEE
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Van Nuys, California 91406-3423

WELCOME TO NARCOTICS ANONYMOUS

This pamphlet was written to answer some of your questions concerning the Program of Narcotics Anonymous. Like N.A. itself, our message is very simple: We have found a way to live without using drugs and we are happy to share it with anyone for whom drugs are a problem.

If you are like many of us when we attended our first N.A. meeting, you may be feeling pretty hopeless and afraid. Your biggest fear may be that you cannot go on using drugs the way you were, but you don't know how to stop. You may fear that this program, like other things you have tried, will not work either, or that it may work for someone else, but not for you because you are different than us. We were all afraid to let go of something which had become so important to us. It is a relief to discover that the only requirement for membership is a desire – not the ability – to stop using.

Welcome to your first N.A. meeting. It is your presence that allows us to fulfill our group's primary purpose: "To carry the message to the addict who still suffers." What can N.A. offer you? Most importantly, N.A. offers a way to live drug-free. If you are not sure you're an addict or don't know if you belong, don't worry about it; just keep coming to our meetings. You will have all the time you need to make up your own mind.

You may feel pretty nervous and think that everyone at the meeting is focusing on you. If so, you are definitely not the only one. An old-timer once said during a meeting, "If your stomach's all tied up in knots, you're probably in the right place." We often say that no one comes through the doors of N.A. by mistake. Non-addicted people don't waste their time wondering if they're addicts. They don't even think about it. If you're wondering whether or not you're an addict, you might be one. Just allow yourself the time to listen to us share about what it has been like for us. Perhaps you will hear something that sounds familiar to you. It does not even matter whether or not you have used the same drugs others mention. It is not important which drugs you used; you're welcome

here if you want to stop using. Most addicts experience very similar feelings, and it is in focusing on our similarities, rather than our differences, that we are helpful to one another.

At first, most of us were mistrustful and fearful of trying a new way of doing things. About the only thing we were sure of was that our old ways were not working at all. Even after getting clean, things didn't change right away. Often, even our usual activities such as driving a car or using the telephone seemed frightening and strange, as if we had become someone we didn't recognize. This is where the company and support of other clean addicts really helps, and we begin to rely on others for the reassurance we so desperately need.

You may already be thinking "Yes, but..." or, "What if...?" However, even if you have doubts, you can try these simple suggestions for starters: Attend as many N.A. meetings as you can and collect a list of N.A. phone numbers to use when the urge for drugs is strong. The temptation is not restricted to the days and hours that meetings occur, so don't be afraid to call another recovering addict.

The most natural thing for an addict to do is to use drugs. In order for most of us to abstain from using mood-altering, mind-changing chemicals, we have had to undergo a drastic change physically, emotionally, and spiritually. The Twelve Steps of N.A. offer us a way to change. As someone said, "You can probably get clean by just coming to meetings, however, if you want to stay clean, you may want to try the Twelve Steps." This is more than we can do alone. In the N.A. Fellowship, we support one another in our efforts to learn and practice a new way of living that keeps us healthy and drug-free.

At your first meeting, you will meet people with various lengths of clean time. You may wonder how they could remain clean for that period of time. If you keep coming to N.A. meetings and stay clean, you will come to understand how it works. There is a mutual respect and caring among clean addicts because we've all had to

overcome the misery of addiction. We love and support each other in our recovery. The Program of N.A. is comprised of suggestions which we have found help us to remain clean. Nothing will be demanded of you, but you will receive many suggestions. This Fellowship provides the opportunity for us to give you what we have found: A clean way of living. We have been told, "You have to give it away in order to keep it."

So, welcome! We are glad that you have made it here, and hope that you decide to stay. At N.A. meetings, you may hear us mention God. What we are referring to is a Power greater than ourselves that makes possible what seems impossible. We found that Power here, in N.A., in the program, in the meetings, and in the people. We are not a religion, but we believe in what has worked for us. It has become possible for us to live drug-free one day at a time; and whenever a day is too long, then five minutes at a time. We can do together what we could not seem to do alone. We invite you to use our strength and our hope until you have found some of your own. There will come a time when you too may want to share with someone else what has been freely given to you. **KEEP COMING BACK — IT WORKS!**