

NARCOTICS ANONYMOUS  
Informational Package

UNAPPROVED LITERATURE



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# SPIRITUALITY IN NARCOTICS ANONYMOUS N.A. HISTORY AND STATISTICS

## SPIRITUALITY

The Fellowship of Narcotics Anonymous encourages addicts to search out and discover for themselves a God of their own understanding. We do not adhere, as a group, to any specific religious concept. Our understanding of a Higher Power is up to us. The only suggested guidelines are that this Power be loving, caring, and greater than ourselves. We do not have to be religious to accept this idea. The right of members of N.A. to a God of their own understanding is total and without any catches.

We believe there is one thing more than anything else that will defeat us in our recovery; this is an attitude of indifference or intolerance toward spiritual principles. We feel that our Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions are spiritual in nature, and that these are the principles which make our recoveries possible.

## HISTORY AND STATISTICS

Narcotics Anonymous, as we know it today, originated in Southern California in 1953. Gradually, the Fellowship spread to other areas of the United States and into other countries. In the 1970's the World Service Office was established by the World Service Conference of N.A. as a non-profit corporation. The World Service Office is supported through literature sales and, as of early 1987, employed about 35 workers, to carry out necessary services for the Fellowship. N.A. continues to grow rapidly, both in the United States and abroad, developing new literature, revising its old, and translating the literature into more languages.

In the last two decades, Narcotics Anonymous has grown considerably. Group registrations received by the World Service Office through early 1987 numbered approximately 8000 in 40 or more countries. By estimating membership based on literature sales and group registrations, we believe at least 300,000 people regularly attended N.A. at that time. In addition, approximately 1000 special hospitals and institutions meetings of N.A. are held in various facilities for residents who are not able to attend regular N.A. meetings in the community.

# N.A. IN THE COMMUNITY HOW N.A. GROUPS ARE STARTED

## SPIRITUALITY IN NARCOTICS ANONYMOUS N.A. HISTORY AND STATISTICS

### ANONYMITY

*"Our public relations policy is based on attraction rather than promotion; we need always maintain personal anonymity at the level of press, radio, and films."*

*"Anonymity is the spiritual foundation of all our Traditions, ever reminding us to place principles before personalities."*

The principle of personal anonymity at the level of press, radio and films is very important to Narcotics Anonymous for several reasons.

The principle of anonymity protects our groups and members, and allows us to carry the message of recovery to addicts while ensuring that no member's identity will be publicly exposed. Our experience shows that when N.A.'s Traditions are not followed, serious damage can be done to a member's recovery and also to the unity of the Fellowship.

Many individuals who have used drugs could feel uncomfortable seeking help from N.A. if they had reason to believe that their participation might become publicly known. More importantly, N.A.'s Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions discourage the glorification, elevation or promotion of any individual member. The success of our program is based in a large part on this spiritual principle of personal anonymity.

We ask your help in maintaining our tradition of personal anonymity by not identifying our members by name or in full face photos as "members of Narcotics Anonymous," or by describing details of their personal circumstances which could reveal their identities.

We welcome reporting about our Fellowship, but not in terms of personalities. Coverage of Narcotics Anonymous by the press has been very good, and we hope that continued exposure given to the Narcotics Anonymous program will play a major role in attracting the many thousands of addicts who need help. We thank you for your understanding.

## N.A. IN THE COMMUNITY HOW N.A. GROUPS ARE STARTED

### N.A. STRUCTURE

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Narcotics Anonymous has developed several pamphlets and a book, entitled *Narcotics Anonymous*, which we call our Basic Text. We also publish a monthly journal, the *N.A. Way*.

**INFORMATION PAMPHLETS** (1-99; \$.15 each, any combination of 100 or more, \$.13 each)

- #1 Who, What, How and Why
- #2 The Group
- #5 Another Look
- #6 Recovery and Relapse
- #7 Am I an Addict?
- #8 Just for Today
- #9 Living the Program
- #11 Sponsorship
- #12 Triangle of Self-Obsession
- #13 Youth and Recovery
- #14 One Addict's Experience with Acceptance
- #16 For the Newcomer
- #19 Self Acceptance
- #20 Hospitals, Institutions and the N.A. Member

**BASIC TEXT, POSTERS AND WHITE BOOKLETS**

- N.A. Basic Text (\$8.00)
- I.P. #18 Group Starter Kit (\$.40)
- N.A. White Book Newly Revised (1 to 99 copies \$.50;  
100 or more \$.40)
- N.A. Way Magazine (one-year subscription) (\$12.00)

Several of our literature items are available in large type, braille, and in several languages. N.A. also has audio tapes, posters and other items. For further information or for a full catalogue of literature and merchandise, please contact the World Service Office of Narcotics Anonymous at P.O. Box 9999, Van Nuys, CA 91409, (818)780-3951.

**N.A. IN THE COMMUNITY  
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**N.A. STRUCTURE**

**IS N.A. FOR ANY SPECIFIC TYPE OF DRUG USE**

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### WHAT IS NARCOTICS ANONYMOUS?

Narcotics Anonymous, also known as N.A., is a non-profit self-help organization made up of men and women for whom drugs had become a major problem. We are recovering addicts who meet regularly to help each other remain drug-free. This is a program of complete abstinence from all mood-changing drugs. The only requirement for membership is the desire to stop using drugs.

We are not connected with any other organizations, we have no initiation fees or dues, no pledges to sign, no promises to make. We are not connected with any political, religious or law enforcement groups, and are under no surveillance at any time. Anyone may join us, regardless of age, race, sexual identity, creed, religion or lack of religion.

We feel that our approach to the disease of addiction is completely realistic, for the therapeutic value of one addict helping another is without parallel.

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### WHO IS AN ADDICT?

An addict is a man or woman whose life is controlled by drugs. Addicts are people whose use of any mind-altering, mood-changing substance causes a problem in their life. Addiction eventually takes away pride, self-esteem, family relationships and even the desire to live. The following are excerpts from a list of questions written to a cross-section of addicts in Narcotics Anonymous.

Do you avoid people or places that do not condone your usage?

Do you get more drugs when your supply is running low or soon as you run out?

Have you ever been in trouble with friends, family, school, jobs, or the law because of drug related incidents?

Do you do things while under the influence that you normally would not do?

Do you lie about what or how much you use?

Are you preoccupied with getting high?

Do you like to use alone?

Have you tried substituting one drug for another, thinking that "one" particular drug was your problem?

Have you ever tried to quit and failed?

These questions, when honestly approached, may help show how drugs could be making an addict's life unmanageable. Before any progress can be made toward recovery, addicts must first admit and accept the fact that they have a problem with drugs.

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**IS N.A. FOR ANY SPECIFIC TYPE OF DRUG USER?**

Our steps and traditions are worded to keep the focus of our program on addiction and recovery, not on specific drugs. N.A. is for *all* drug addicts, regardless of which drug or combination of drugs they used.

**IS NARCOTICS ANONYMOUS FOR ABUSERS OF  
COCAINE, MARIJUANA, HEROIN, PRESCRIPTION  
DRUGS, INHALANTS, OR "STREET DRUGS"?**

The word "Narcotics" in our name -- "Narcotics Anonymous" -- does not only apply to drugs of the opiate family. Rather, it is used as a general term, which applies to any drug or chemical substance which is used to change moods or feelings or to "get high." Our program, which is based on the personal experience of addicts, is a set of principles written so simply that we can follow them in our daily lives. The most important thing about them is that *they work*. Our experience has taught us that when addicts use drugs in any form, or substitute one for another, their addiction is released all over again.

We believe that all drug addicts, regardless of the specific chemical substances they used, suffer from the same disease -- addiction. We feel that in order for addicts to recover, they must completely abstain from all mood-altering drugs. In Narcotics Anonymous meetings, people who may not have used the same specific drugs experience recovery together.

**DOES N.A. INCLUDE PEOPLE WHO ABUSED  
ALCOHOL?**

Thinking of alcohol as different from other drugs has caused a great many addicts to relapse. We cannot afford to be confused about this. Alcohol is a drug. People with the disease of addiction must abstain from the use of all mood-altering, mind-changing drugs in order to recover.

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Although there is no formal organization within Narcotics Anonymous, service boards and committees formed by and for the groups comprise the N.A. service structure. Narcotics Anonymous is fully self-supporting, declining outside contributions.

An N.A. *group* is any meeting which meets regularly at a specified place and time, provided that it follows the Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions (having no outside affiliation and receiving no outside financial support) and is duly registered with the World Service Office of Narcotics Anonymous. The primary purpose of a group is to carry the message of recovery to the addict who still suffers.

N.A. groups elect General Service Representatives who represent the groups at Area Service Committees, committees which meet for the purpose of supporting and serving the needs of their member groups. The work of an Area Service Committee may include producing meeting lists, administrating a telephone line, holding social events, and carrying out public information activities.

Area Service Committees send representatives to Regional Service Committees, which work to be supportive to their member areas, helping areas deal with their basic situations and needs, and to facilitate communication between groups and areas in N.A.

Each year, Narcotics Anonymous holds a World Service Conference in Van Nuys California at which Regional Service Representatives meet to define and take action according to the group conscience of Narcotics Anonymous as a whole.

The World Service Office (W.S.O.) of Narcotics Anonymous was created to print and distribute Narcotics Anonymous literature and to serve as communications headquarters for the growing international Fellowship of N.A. The W.S.O. is overseen by an elected Board of Directors who are directed and guided by the World Service Conference.

The World Service Conference elects members of the Narcotics Anonymous Board of Trustees, who serve to help facilitate the continuation and growth of N.A. by seeking to ensure the maintenance of the Twelve Traditions.

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Narcotics Anonymous can be a valuable resource to those who work with addicts. Many people refer to Narcotics Anonymous whenever they are in contact with someone who needs help due to a drug problem. At Narcotics Anonymous meetings, addicts meet others who understand addiction, and recovery from addiction, through personal experience. It is not unusual to find addicts of many different ages and occupations in Narcotics Anonymous meetings.

Narcotics Anonymous members perform several volunteer services which include: conducting special institutional meetings for individuals who can not attend regular N.A. meetings in communities, operating local N.A. information phonelines, publishing local meeting lists, and giving informational presentations to community groups and the media.

N.A. groups are not formed, conducted or funded by professionals, government officials, or any non-addicts. N.A. meetings are voluntary self-help groups, held by and for addicts, who obtain a regular meeting place, and register their group with N.A.. Caring community members can help facilitate the growth of Narcotics Anonymous by providing information about the existence and nature of N.A. to addicts and to those who have direct contact with addicts, such as staffs of treatment hospitals. Narcotics Anonymous meetings are usually held in public facilities such as churches, community centers, union halls, hospitals, civic organization buildings, etc. Group starter kits are provided free by the World Service Office upon request.

N.A. can be reached in most cities by calling a local N.A. telephone line. These are usually listed in the telephone book. The World Service Office of Narcotics Anonymous is also available to respond to inquiries.