If You Want To Use Drugs,

That's Your Business.

If You Want To Stop,

That's Our's.

Narcotics Anonymous

CALL

276-2703

ANYTIME

If You Want To Use Drugs,

That's Your Business.

If You Want To Stop,

That's Our's.

Narcotics Anonymous

CALL

276-2703

ANYTIME

WHO IS AN ADDICT?

Most of us do not have to think twice about this question. WE KNOW. Our whole life and thinking is centered in drugs in one form or another, the getting and using and finding ways and means to get more. We use to live and live to use. Very simply an addict is a man or woman whose life is controlled by drugs. We are people in the grip of a continuing and progressive illness whose ends are always the same, jails, institutions and death.

WHAT IS THE NARCOTICS ANONYMOUS PROGRAM?

N.A. is a non-profit fellowship or society of men and women for whom drugs had become a major problem. We are recovered addicts who meet regularly to help each other to stay clean. This is a program of complete abstinence from all drugs. There is only "One" requirement for membership, the desire to stop using. There are no musts in N.A. but we suggest that you keep an open mind and give yourself a break. Our program 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."

There are no strings attached to N.A. We are not affiliated with any other organizations, we have no leaders, no initiation fees or dues, no pledges to sign, no promises to make to anyone. 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, color, creed, religion or lack of religion.

We are not interested in what or how much you used or who your connections were, what you have done in the past, how much or how little you have, but only in what you want to do about your problem and how we can help. The newcomer is the most important person at any meeting, because we can only keep what we have by giving it away. We have learned from our group experience that those who keep coming to our meetings regularly stay clean.

WHY ARE WE HERE?

Before coming to the fellowship of N.A. we could not manage our own lives, we could not live and enjoy life as other people do. We had to have something different and we thought we had found it in drugs. We placed their use ahead of the welfare of our families, our wives,

husbands, and our children. We had to have drugs at all costs. We did many people great harm but most of all we harmed ourselves. Through our inability to accept personal responsibilities we were actually creating our own problems. We seemed to be incapable of facing life on its own terms.

Most of us realized, that in our addictions, we were slowly committing suicide, but such cunning enemies of life are narcotics, stimulants and sedation that we had lost the power to do anything about it. Jail did not help us at all. Medicine, Religion and Psychiatry seemed to have no answers for us that we could use. All these methods having failed for us, in desperation, we sought help from each other in Narcotics Anonymous.

After coming to N.A. we realized we were sick people who suffered from a disease like Alcoholism, Diabetes or Tuberculosis. There is no known "Cure" for these—all however, can be arrested at some point and "Recovery" is then possible.

In N.A. we follow a program borrowed from Alcoholics Anonymous. In the last twenty-five years more than one-quarter of a million people have recovered in A.A. most of them just as hopelessly addicted to alcohol as we were to drugs. We are deeply grateful to the A.A. Fellowship for pointing the way for us to a new way of life.

HOW IT WORKS

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 that made our recovery possible.

1. We admitted that we were powerless over our 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 those steps, we tried to carry this message to addicts and to practice these principles in all our affairs.

This sounds like a big order, and we can't do it all at once, we didn't become addicted in one day, so remember—EASY DOES IT.

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. Although these are no musts in N.A., there are three things that seem indispensable. These are, Honesty Openmindedness, and

Willingness to try. With these we are well on our way.

We feel that our approach to the problem of addiction is completely realistic, for the therapeutic value of one addict helping another is without parallel. We feel that our way is practical, for one addict can best understand and help another addict. We believe that the sooner we face our problems within our society, in everyday living, just that much faster do we become acceptable, responsible, and productive members of that society.

The only way to keep from getting or continuing a habit is not to take that first fix, pill or drink. If you are like us, you know that one is too many and a thousand never enough. We put great emphasis on this for we know that when we use drugs in any form, or substitute one for another, we release our addiction all over again or create a new one.

The substitution of alcohol has caused a great many addicts to form a new addiction pattern, which in its progression brings as many problems as before. We seem to forget that alcohol is one of the oldest known drugs. It would appear that we are people with addictive personalities who are strongly susceptible to alcoholic addiction.

WHAT CAN I DO?

Begin your own program by taking Step One from the previous chapter "How It Works." When we fully concede to our innermost selves that we are powerless over our addiction, we have taken a big step in our recovery. Many of us have had some reservations at this point, so give yourself a break and be as thorough as possible at the start. Go to Step Two, and so forth and as you go on you will come to an understanding of the program for yourself. If you are in an institution of any kind, you have gone through complete withdrawal and have stopped using for the present. Now, with a clear mind, try this way of life.

Upon release, continue your daily program and contact a member of N.A. Do this by mail, by phone, or in person. Better yet come to our meetings. Here you will find the answers to some of the things that may be disturbing you now.

If you are not in an institution, the same holds true. Stop using for today. Most of us can do for eight or twelve hours what seems impossible for a longer period of time. If the obsession or compulsion becomes too great, put yourself on a five minute basis of not using. Minutes will grow to hours and hours to days and so you will break the habit and gain some peace of mind. The real miracle happens

when you realize that the need for drugs has in some way been lifted from you. You have stopped using and have started to live.

THE TWELVE TRADITIONS OF N.A.

We keep what we have only with vigilance and just as freedom for the individual comes from the Twelve Steps so freedom for the groups springs from our traditions.

As long as the ties that bind us together are stronger than those that would tear us apart, all will be well.

1. Our common welfare should come first; personal recovery depends on N.A. unity.
2. For our Group purpose there is but one ultimate authority—a 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 membership is a desire to stop using.
4. Each Group should be autonomus, except in matters affecting other Groups, or N.A., as a whole.

5. Each Group has but one primary purpose—to carry the message to the addict who still suffers.
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 or 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. N.A. 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, and films.
12. Anonymity is the spiritual foundation of all our Traditions, ever reminding us to place principles before personalities.

RECOVERY AND RELAPSE

Many consider continuous abstinence and recovery as noteworthy and therefore synonymous, while relapsers are sort of pushed aside or worse yet, used as statistics that in no way give a true picture of the entire addiction pattern. We in the recovery program of Narcotics Anonymous have noted with some satisfaction that many of the relapsers, when again active in their prime or substitute addiction, have dropped many of the parallel behaviors that characterized them in the past. This change alone is significant to us. Honesty of a kind has penetrated their character. Yet there are others completely abstinent, whose dishonesties and self deceits still prevent them from enjoying complete recovery and acceptance within society. Complete and continuous abstinence however, is still the best ground for growth. In close association and identification with others in N.A. groups, our chances for recovery and complete freedom in a changing and creative form are enhanced a hundred fold.

Although all addicts are basically the same in kind, we do, as individuals, differ in degree of sickness and rate of recovery. There may be times when a relapse lays the groundwork for complete freedom. At othertimes only by a grim and obstinate willfulness to hang on to abstinence come hell or high water until a crisis passes, can

that freedom be achieved. An addict, who by any means, can lose even for a time the need or desire to use, and has free choice over impulsive thinking and compulsive action, has reached a turning point that may be the decisive factor in his recovery. The feeling of true independence and freedom hangs here at times in the balance. To step out alone and run our own lives again draws us, yet we seem to know that what we have has come from dependence on a Power greater than ourselves and the giving and receiving of help from others in acts of empathy. Many times in our recovery the old bugaboos will haunt us. Life may again become meaningless, monotonous and boring. We may tire mentally in repeating our new ideas and tire physically in our new activities, yet we know that if we fail to repeat them we will surely take up our old practices. We suspect that if we do not use what we have, we will lose what we have. These times are often the periods of our greatest growth. Our minds and bodies seem tired of it all, yet the dynamic forces of change or true conversion, deep within, may be working to give us the answers that alter our inner motivations and change our lives.

Quality and not quantity is the most important aspect of abstinence. Emotional sobriety in reality is our goal, not mere physical abstinence. To improve ourselves takes effort and since there is no way in the

world to graft a new idea on a closed mind, an opening must be made somehow. Since we can do this only for ourselves, we need to recognize two of our seemingly inherent enemies, apathy and procrastination. Our resistance to change seems built in and only a nuclear blast of some kind will bring about any alteration or initiate another course of action. A relapse may provide the charge for the demolition process. A relapse and sometimes subsequent death of someone close to us can do the job of awakening us to the necessity for vigorous personal action.

"WE DO RECOVER"

Although "Politics makes strange bedfellow," as the old saying goes, addiction makes us one of a kind .Our personal stories may vary in individual pattern but in the end we all have the same thing in common. This common illness or disorder is addiction. We know well the two things that make up true addiction. Obsession and compulsion. Obsession — that fixed idea that takes us back time and time again to our particular drug or some substitute, to recapture the ease and comfort we once knew.

Compulsion — that once having started

the process with one "fix", one pill, or one drink, we cannot stop through our own power of will. Because of our physical sensitivity to drugs we are completely in the grip of a destructive power greater than ourselves.

When at the end of the road we find that we can no longer function as a human being, either with or without drugs, we all face the same dilemma. What is there left to do? There seems to be these alternatives: either go on as best we can to the bitter ends, jails, institutions or death, or find a new way to live. In years gone by, very few addicts, ever had this last choice. Those who are addicted today, are more fortunate. For the first time in man's entire history, a simple way has been proving itself in the lives of many addicts. It is available to us all. This is a simple spiritual — not religious — program, known as Narcotics Anonymous.

When my addictions brought me to the point of complete powerlessness, uselessness and surrender some fourteen years ago, there was no N.A. I found A.A. and in that Fellowship met addicts who had also found that program to be the answer to their problem. However, we knew that many were still going down the road of disillusion, degradation and death, because they were unable to identify with the alcoholic in A.A. Their identification was at the level of apparent symptoms and not at the deeper level of emotions or feelings, where

empathy becomes a healing therapy for all addicted people. With several other addicts and some members of A.A. who had great faith in us and the program, we formed, in July of 1953, what we now know as Narcotics Anonymous. We felt that now the addict would find from the start as much identification as each needed to convince himself that he could stay clean, by the example of others who had recovered for many years.

That this was what was principally needed, has proved itself in these passing years. That wordless language of recognition, belief and faith, which we call empathy, created the atmosphere in which we could feel time, touch reality and recognize spiritual values long lost to many of us. In our program of recovery we are growing in numbers and in strength. Never before have so many clean addicts, of their own choice and in free society, been able to meet where they please, to maintain their recovery in complete creative freedom.

Even addicts said it could not be done the way we had it planned. We believed in openly scheduled meetings, no more hiding as other groups had tried. We believe this differed from all other methods tried before by those who advocated long withdrawal from society. We feel that the sooner the addict could face his problem of everyday living just that much faster would he become a real productive citizen. We eventually have to

stand on our own feet and face life on its own terms, so why not from the start. Because of this, of course, many relapsed and many were lost completely. However, many stayed and some came back after their setback. The brighter part, is the fact that of those who are now our members, many have long terms of complete abstinence and are better able to help the newcomer. Their attitude, based in the spiritual values of our Steps, and Traditions, is the dynamic force that is bringing increase and unity to our program. Now we know that the time has come when that tired old lie, "Once an addict always an addict," will no longer be tolerated by either society or the addict himself. We do recover.

"ONE THIRD OF MY LIFE"

Today has been one of those days. It was Friday and Monday all together. Trying to get something done was like trying to make a connection when the heat was on. It was a panic all day, but when I got home and lay down for an hour, it felt good. I can go on a natural nod, because I have nothing up here now but a clear conscience. The old hassle is gone, I can lie down, take it easy and be comfortable. The longer I stay clean, the better it gets for me. It's real groovey to get up in the morn-

ing and not care whether it's foggy or the sun's shining, just so long as I'm clean. No cramps and no sweats now. I remember the times when I'd be afraid to go to sleep, because I had a "git up" there on the dresser; but if I took my "git up" I'd have nothing when I got up and then I'd be sick again.

I never thought I'd feel good being out here with the squares, but now I think sometimes I feel the same things they do. I don't have all those petty little things going thru my mind now, like I did when I thought I was hip — so slick. The only one I was being hip and slick with was me. Everybody else could see right thru me. I don't have a running nose anymore and no itches unless it's an allergy or something. I can go home now at night to clean sheets and blankets, say my little prayers and go to sleep. It's real good for me. Yesterday was pay-day. I went out and bought myself a few presents — not Xmas shoplifting you know. Now I can go thru these stores and not even a temptation to steal. I was thinking of this when I said Xmas shopping. This is my third Xmas on the bricks and I can't think of anything I've stolen since I've been out of the joint. I feel that I was basically honest from childhood, I stole to keep up my habit, to get my stuff, to keep my head on my chest to keep my stomach from grinding and to keep my nose from running — that nose, it was always running whether I was sick or not.

My story is similar to many others, I hit one nuthouse when I was 13, I really don't remember much about it. That was on an O.D. of amphetamines, they thought I was a manic-depressive till I cleaned up off the pills and then they figured I was just a neurotic.

It progressed though. I started to make the joints. I'm thirty now and there's twelve and a half years gone out of my life like this, and twice at Ft. Worth. Man, I sure don't want anymore of it. Since I've been out of the joint about three years I can't say I haven't had the temptation, I can't say I haven't had some obsession, I can't say I haven't had the passing thought of wanting to use because I have had at times. Now however, its like the passing thought of "There is a real nice car there. I'd like one like that," and then it's gone and so is the thought. I notice that the times and the periods are getting farther apart when they happen. I haven't had a driving obsession to get my head on my chest for over two years now, and this is really something. I now try to turn my will and my life over to the care of God as I understand Him. Sometimes I like to try to play God and run everything but it doesn't work that way. The longer I stay around and stay clean, the groovier it gets. The last time I came out, I was a scared, sniveling little snot, double hip, double slick, still walking that walk and talking that talk. Now I go back to the institutions every week I can

make it. I went back to my home group a while back and it was greater than my birthday. This was at T.I. Federal and you know those guys accepted me back and were glad to see me.

I gave a lot of them a hard time, with the attitudes I used to have. At that time nothing was any good, everything was rotten, except dope. Sure I had a craving for narcotics, but anything that would get my feet off the ground at that time I was ready for it. Now however, I know that anything that would get my feet off the ground that isn't an airplane, will head me for real trouble. I sincerely believe this, I don't know if I work the Twelve Steps to the best of my ability or not, but I do know I've been clean about three years by practicing them the best I can.

When things start buggin' me now, I know where most of the trouble lies: me. Now I find I have a greater tolerance for people and a lot more patience all around; this is a big change for me. Practicing the principles of this program, the way I understand them and staying clean a day at a time and sharing experiences with other addicts who are new to the program, has changed my whole outlook on life. It's a good way to live.

I CAN'T DO ANY MORE TIME

I came to the fellowship of Narcotics Anonymous as an addict, out of the California Institution for Women at Corona. I came the first night I got out and it's been here that I've learned how to live, so that it hasn't been necessary for me to drink, or to use pills — barbiturates, amphetamines, or tranquilizers — or to use any narcotics, in my daily life. It has been here that I've learned a lot about myself, because we are so very much alike. I've always seen another side of myself, whenever problems and suggested solutions have been discussed at our meetings. I have learned, from those who are following the program of recovery to the best of their ability, how I can do the same if I am willing to make the effort. Also I have learned from those who have made mistakes. I feel bad when I see that some leave this Fellowship to try the old way again, but I know that I don't have to do that if I don't want to. Also it has not been necessary for me to steal or to write any bad checks.

My addiction goes away back. I was drinking alcoholically, when I first started at sixteen, and I realize today, that the reason for that was, I was sick to begin with. I had this emotional illness and it was very deep. I don't think that if I hadn't been emotionally ill to begin with, that I would have been carried away with alcohol and drugs. When it became noticeable that I was using alcohol more and more, being in the nursing profession, I tried experimenting with drugs. It grew and grew and became a horrible problem. Altho' this is

certainly a suicidal path in itself I did, when I was aware and in a lucid moment, realize I was hopelessly addicted. I did not know that there was any answer. There really wasn't at that time. It was in San Francisco, not knowing which way to turn, that I tried suicide and was unsuccessful. I was twenty six year old at that time. I now think that if it had been possible for me, I would have come to this program like a lot who are here today, at that same age. My pattern, however, continued and when I finally reached Camarillo I had lost not only my self respect but the respect and love of my family, my children, and my husband. I had lost my home and my profession. Somehow or other, I hadn't reached the point where I wanted to try this way of life or to try it all the way. I just had to go on and try in my own way. I tried drugs again and alcohol again and was finally committed to the Institution at Corona three times. The last time I went there I just felt that I couldn't do any more time. I didn't immediately connect it with my addiction. I just couldn't do any more time. It wasn't the thought I can't use drugs, just I can't do any more time. I just felt completely hopeless and helpless and I didn't have any answers. All of my emotional and spiritual pride had gone. I'm sure that at Corona they doubted my sincerity in ever wanting to do anything about my problem. However, I did want to do something about it, and I know that this

program doesn't work until we really do want it for ourselves. It's not for people who need it but for people who want it. I finally wanted it so bad I knocked on the doors of psychiatrists, psychologists, chaplains and anywhere I could. I think one of the counsellors at Corona, who just naturally loves all people, gave me a lot of encouragement, for I thoroughly took my first three steps. I admitted I was powerless over alcohol and my addictions, that my life was unmanageable. I had tried so many things so I decided a Power greater than myself could restore my sanity and to the best of my ability I turned my life and my will over to the care of God as I understood Him and tried in my daily life to understand God. I had read all kinds of metaphysical books, I agreed with them and thought they were great, but I never took any action on them. I never tried any faith in my daily living. It's amazing getting just this far, how I began to get a little honesty and could see myself as I was. I doubted that I could get honest but I became aware of myself by looking outside myself, at the addicts around me and getting to know them and understand them, and be friendly with them. I would like to give credit where credit is due and I do believe that my daily attendance at psychotherapy groups in Corona with very understanding psychologists helped me become aware of myself so that I might do something about my problem; but when I came

out. I thought, Oh! can I make it outside? So many times, institutions took so many years out of my life, that I wondered if I could stay clean and sober and do ordinary things. I doubted whether I could go ahead with just normal living but God has seen fit to see that I have been provided for in this last year and a half. I've been able to work regularly, I didn't have steady jobs at first but there was never any long period in between them. Although for a time I threw out the idea of going back to my profession, which is nursing, I have since reconsidered this and am now in the process of perhaps returning to full time nursing. With the help of some very understanding people I have met, the future here looks very bright. In the meantime, I give myself, the best I can to my job every day and have been doing it successfully, despite the fact that when I left Corona everyone thought I was unemployable. To me this is a spiritual program and the maintainence and growth of a spiritual experience. Without the kind of help and the therapy of one addict talking to and helping another, I know that it wouldn't have been possible for me. The obsession to use drugs or to drink has been completely removed from me during this period, and I know that it's only by the grace of God, I now give my attention to my daily problems. It's amazing, having had a pattern of fear, anxiety and resentments and self pity, how much of this too has been re-

moved. No longer do these sway my life, I ask for help every morning and I count my blessings every night and I'm real grateful that I don't have to go through the sickness that accompanies the taking of drugs of any kind, including alcohol. I think one of the biggest things that helped me here, was that this is a program of complete abstinence. I got over the idea that I had a dual problem. I don't have a problem with drugs or alcohol, I have a living problem, and this is all I need to think about today. I have a lot of help from my sponsor, it seemed that everyone had let me down, both family and friends. I don't know what I would have done had it not been for the doors that she opened in her letters. She shared her experience, her strength and her hope with me, and it was very beneficial. She continues to be my very good friend. Here in N.A. I have found a family, friends and a way of life, my own family has also been restored to me through working these steps, and not through directly working on the problem. A lot of wonderful things have happened to me, I can't conceive of anything ever happening that would make me want to forget this way of life. I haven't had any big crises, in the last year, I've always been able to face big crises, the real things, but those things from inside, that were bugging me all the time, they didn't seem worthwhile bothering with, yet they caused me the most trouble. It's not that way anymore. I

become more aware of myself and more aware of God all the time and it's a great way to live.

ONE WOMANS STORY

I am an addict and alcoholic. It never was very hard for me to say I was an addict but it really was hard for me to say I was an alcoholic. In reading our booklet I found out it doesn't matter what you are, that's only the symptom anyway, but it does show the cause of those things that are wrong with us. Most of my trouble was with the narcotics. I went to prison in 1955, I was there 17 months that time and when I came out it hadn't done a thing for me, all I did was my time. I did try the program, but not very hard, however I stayed clean four years that time. I did some drinking but was able to stay off the narcotics. Then I went back to them again. You know, I remember the day the policeman came, it was the 22nd of Dec. He said to me, "I'm really sorry to pick you up so close to Christmas", you can believe me, when I answered him, I meant it; I said, "I really wouldn't care if it was Christmas day, I'm just tired" and believe me I was tired, I was tired of knowing that I had to make it to a Doctor, knowing I was sick, I was tired of stealing and knowing I had to have that "Fix." I was just too tired

of it all. It didn't bother me a bit, knowing I was going back to the joint, I didn't feel a thing. The eighteen months down there this time, was nothing, because I had God with me, and I knew that. If you don't have God or some Higher Power going for you, even the program doesn't mean a thing. I didn't know this until I came on the program all the way. I really could feel this something, when I was picked up and went back this time. God was really with me and I tried to do something about it this time. I was still a little nervous when I came out, I didn't know for sure what I'd do. I wasn't sure if the program was going to work for me. We had a lot of rehabilitation brought to us in the institution, if we'd have paid attention to it. I paid maybe a little, but not as much as I should have. This program has really taught me away to live, I'm very, very happy and this is the very first time in my life that I've ever had peace of mind. I can now go to sleep and I don't have to worry about the police. I do have to work, I know that because I now have a knife and fork habit. I have a wonderful boss, the supervisor at the institution where I was, got me this job, my boss knows this program, so she does understand. She's very fond of me and I know this to. Sometimes I feel like a teacher's pet, but she really helps me. I don't know what more I could ask for, this program has done everything for me and I'm so happy. I've lived a long time, but I was in prison a long

time before I was ever locked up; within myself, and I knew it. I went to Church the other day, and heard the Minister say "You know, there are people out on the street that are in prisons of their own making, yet are not behind steel bars". Believe me that's the way I used to feel, but I didn't know what to do about it. This program has taught me and made a new person out of me. I always knew there was some good in me but I didn't know how to get it out .I'm sure happy to be in this program and I hope to stay with it. If I have tomorrow what I have today I won't be using and I won't be drinking thanks to Narcotics Anonymous.

THE VICIOUS CIRCLE

I am Gene and I am an addict. In writing this I hope that I can help other addicts like myself, who are trying to overcome their addiction by substituting one thing for another, that was my pattern. I started drinking, whenever possible, at the age of fourteen. With this I added weed so that I could feel at ease and be comfortable with my surroundings in the social activities in High School. At seventeen I started on heroin and quickly became addicted. After using heroin for one and a half years, I decided to turn myself in to Ft. Worth. When they accepted my application, I got scared and joined the Army after kicking

at home. I thought that being away from my environment I would be able to solve my problem. Even here I found myself going AWOL to get more heroin. I was then shipped to Europe and thought that if I just drank, that would be the answer, but again I found nothing but trouble. Upon my release I came back home to the same environment, again I was using heroin and various other sedatives. This lasted for two years. The rat race really began when I tried to clean up, cough syrup, bennies, fixes etc. By now I didn't know where one addiction left off and the other started. A year before I came to Narcotics Anonymous I found myself hopelessly addicted to cough syrup, drinking five or six 4 oz. bottles a day. I needed help so I went to a Dr. he prescribed dexedrine and would give me a shot that made me feel good; I found myself going to him practically every day. This continued for about eight months and I was very happy with my new found legal addiction. I was also getting codiene from a different Dr. I now became insanely afraid and began drinking too, this went on around the clock for a month and I ended up in a mental institution. After being released from the hospital, I thought I was free from narcotics and now I could drink socially. I soon found out I could not. It was then that I sought help through N.A.

Here I learned that my real problem did not lie in the drugs, including alcohol, that I had been using, but in a distorted per-

sonality that had developed over the years of my using and even before that. In N.A. I was able to help myself with the help of the others in the Fellowship. I find I am making progress in facing reality and I'm growing a day at a time. I find new interests now, that mean something, and realize that that was one of the things that I was looking for in drugs. Sometimes I still find it difficult to face things but I'm no longer alone and can always find someone to help me over the rough and confused spots. I have finally found people like myself who understand how I feel. I'm now able to help others to find what I have, if they really want it. I thank God, as I understand Him for this way of life.

"SOMETHING MEANINGFUL"

I am not the great leader or philosopher that I tried to make people believe I was. The great man that I tried to make believe I was, I know now, I am not. After fifteen years of trying to live this illusion, I now find that I am being accepted for just what I really am. All my life before this, I did things my way. If anyone else ever offered advice or suggestions, I rebuffed them with a closed mind without ever trying what they had to offer, to see whether it would

succeed of fail. It seems, that, though my way always failed, I had to use or drink again, until repeated trips to jail began to convince me that something was wrong. I reached the point of desperately wanting to do something with my life that would be meaningful. I had to try something else that would work. I had found N.A. several years previous to this decision, but then I was not ready to change and although I closed the door on N.A. on many occasions, I have always been welcomed back everytime.

Since I have become willing to do something about my life with the N.A. program, it has been fuller and with more meaning. I could not experience life before on a daily basis, without drugs, sedatives or alcohol. I needed these just to face each day. I know I have to alter this pattern of thinking and living if I am to stay completely clean. This I am doing through the principles of our program. Although I do not now desire or need narcotics, I have to fill the void left, with something worthwhile. I have found this in the fellowship of N.A. I have to stick with the winners and go in the same direction that they go, and as long as I follow the steps of the program, I know I can make it too. Although I don't find the program easy, it is simple enough for a complicated person like me to follow.

JUST FOR TODAY

Tell yourself—

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 N.A. 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 N.A. 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. So long as I follow that way, 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.

This booklet is an introduction to the fellowship of Narcotics Anonymous. It is written for those men and women, who like ourselves, suffer from a seemingly hopeless addiction to narcotics and sedation. There is no "Cure" for addiction, but "Recovery" is possible by a program of simple spiritual principles. This is not meant to be comprehensive, but it contains the essentials; that in our personal and group experiences, we know to be necessary for recovery.

INTERGROUP

APPROVED