

Narcotics Anonymous.

# **It Works:** How and Why

Part Two

## **The Traditions**

Approval-Form Material  
Traditions One — Six

UNAPPROVED LITERATURE  
NOT FOR USE IN NA MEETINGS

For approval or disapproval  
at WSC 1993



## The Twelve Traditions of Narcotics Anonymous.

1. Our common welfare should come first; personal recovery depends on NA 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 autonomous except in matters affecting other groups or NA as a whole.
5. Each group has but one primary purpose—to carry the message to the addict who still suffers.
6. An NA group ought never endorse, finance, or lend the NA name to any related facility or outside enterprise, lest problems of money, property, or prestige divert us from our primary purpose.
7. Every NA group ought to be fully self-supporting, declining outside contributions.
8. Narcotics Anonymous should remain forever nonprofessional, but our service centers may employ special workers.
9. NA, 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 NA 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.



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OF NARCOTICS ANONYMOUS



P.O. Box 9999  
Van Nuys, CA 91409  
(818) 780-3951

TO: The fellowship

FROM: Becky Meyer, Chairperson  
World Service Board of Trustees

DATE: July 17, 1992

RE: *It Works: How and Why, The Traditions*

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We are nearing the end of our project on *It Works: How and Why, The Traditions*. We, the WSB, have thoroughly enjoyed our part in developing part of this very important work for the fellowship. At the same time, we are overjoyed that we can see "the light at the end of the tunnel" by being able to present you with the approval form of the first six traditions. Attached is the content of those traditions for your perusal. Additional copies of this material are available through the World Service Office. The item number is #1161 and the cost is \$2.50 + shipping and handling.

At this point, I need to reiterate a statement made a number of times by the WSB Traditions Ad Hoc Committee about the nature and purpose of this material: "The Traditions portion of *It Works: How and Why*, shall serve as a resource for NA groups and the individual member. The book seeks to: explore the spiritual principles within the traditions; engage members with the spirit--not the law--of the traditions; and, provide a basis for thought and discussion about the traditions. This book is not meant to fulfill every need for every group or every member, rather it is to be a book that will generate discussion and allow for local interpretation of the practical application of the principles contained in the traditions." We hope that you will find as much encouragement and inspiration from reading it as we have in developing it.

As we have sought to inform you during the past year and a half, the approval form of the traditions will come out in two parts; the first part is in your hands. The second part will be mailed out to you by the middle of October. Both parts will have the content only; the final approval form (containing the steps and the traditions) will be mailed out to you by the WSC Literature Committee in the beginning of December. This material, in fact the entire book, *It Works: How and Why*, will be up for conference-approval at WSC '93, next April. This is in keeping with the information we've provided during the past eighteen months and the panel discussions regarding the shorter approval period at this year's conference in Dallas. Part of that information was the fact that, based upon the

input we've received on the review-and-input drafts, only minor, cosmetic changes were going to be made to the drafts to arrive at the approval form.

On behalf of the entire WSB, I would like to take this opportunity to thank all the members of the WSB Traditions Ad Hoc Committee whose tireless efforts resulted in this material. I would also like to extend our thanks to all of you who have provided input on the review drafts of the traditions. Your participation has allowed us to put together what we believe to be a quality piece of literature about our traditions. We are all anxiously awaiting the day, that will hopefully arrive next April, when we, as a fellowship, will have a book on our steps and traditions.


Volume Two

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It Works: How and Why  
The traditions

*Approval Form, 1992*

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**TRADITIONS ONE - SIX  
APPROVAL FORM**

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FOR APPROVAL OR DISAPPROVAL AT WSC '93**

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TRUSTEES ONE - SIX  
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## TRADITION ONE

*Our common welfare should come first;  
personal recovery depends on NA unity.*

Narcotics Anonymous is more than just the first meeting we attend or the other NA meetings in our neighborhood. We are part of a much greater whole. Addicts apply the principles of Narcotics Anonymous in their personal recovery across town and around the world. Just as we learned in early recovery that we need each other to stay clean, we come to believe that all of us, every NA meeting and group, are interdependent. We share an equal membership in NA, and we all have an interest in maintaining the unity that underlies its common welfare. Unity is the spirit that joins thousands of members around the world in a spiritual fellowship that has the power to change lives.

One way to look at placing our common welfare first is to say that each of us is equally responsible for NA's well-being. In our recovery, we have found that living clean is very difficult without the support of other members. Our individual recovery depends on meetings that take place regularly, other recovering addicts who participate, and sponsors who share with us how to stay clean. Even members who can't get to meetings depend on the support of fellow addicts, maintaining contact with phone calls, letters, and NA loner groups. As each individual member relies on the support of the fellowship for survival, so NA's survival depends on its members.

Our First Tradition encourages not only our members but our groups to place our common welfare first. Most groups conduct most of their affairs on their own. In attending to the details of their week in, week out routines, autonomous NA groups may lose sight of the bigger picture. In the larger frame, each group is a strand in the supporting fabric of Narcotics Anonymous as a whole; without that fabric, there would be no NA. The importance of our unity encourages our groups to look beyond their own little worlds to the common needs of the worldwide NA Fellowship, placing the welfare of the whole before their own.

The relationship described in the First Tradition is reciprocal. Groups work together in a spirit of cooperation to ensure the survival of Narcotics Anonymous; in turn, those groups receive strength and support from every other group and all our services. The strength of our mutual commitment to NA creates the unity that binds us together in spite of all that might divide us. The common welfare of NA depends on the continued growth and well-being of the fellowship in every corner of the world.

Our shared commitment to recovery and our common welfare gives us a personal stake in the unity of NA. In meetings, we find a new place to belong,

serve only to divert us from our primary purpose. Carrying our message to the still-suffering addict is sufficient for us.

Carrying a clear message of recovery in NA reflects *integrity*. Our message is outlined in our Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions and further articulated in NA literature. Because our message is also our identity, we take care not to confuse it with the beliefs or literature of other organizations.

We demonstrate *faith* when we don't trade our endorsement, funds, or name for the cooperation of others. It's true that our friends in society can help us carry our message to addicts who need us. But our faith lies in the effectiveness of our message and the Higher Power that guides our recovery, not in the related facilities and outside enterprises we deal with. If a relationship with another organization compromises our devotion to carrying the recovery message, we need not be afraid to let go of that relationship. Our strength is in the power of the NA program--after all, it works!

The principle of *harmony* is both assumed and supported by Tradition Six. Our groups seek to cooperate with others in society whenever possible and as much as possible. Our contacts with others are made simple and straightforward when we let them know, right from the start, how far we can go in cooperating with them. By respecting the Sixth Tradition's boundaries in our group's relations with other organizations, we generate harmony in those relations.

Our identity as a fellowship is founded in *anonymity* and selfless service, carrying the message one addict to another. The relationships we have with outside organizations are not based on the personalities of our leaders; our groups themselves are responsible for their cooperation with other organizations, making those contacts stronger and more effective.

Additionally, anonymity helps us avoid blurring our purpose in our contacts with other organizations. Our relationships with outside agencies exist to help us fulfill our primary purpose, not merely to build our reputation or prestige. When we observe the spirit of anonymity, we seek nothing other than to carry the recovery message to the addict who still suffers.

**W**ithin the limits established by Tradition Six, we have tremendous freedom to carry the message of recovery and help other addicts. We have clear boundaries set by our identity as Narcotics Anonymous. When we take care to observe those boundaries, our outside relationships enhance our ability to carry the message to the addict who still suffers rather than diverting us from our primary purpose.



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## The Twelve Steps of Narcotics Anonymous.

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 these steps, we tried to carry this message to addicts, and to practice these principles in all our affairs.



