

FROM
ONE
"Junkie"



To
ANOTHER...

TRUE...

OR

FALSE...



"... ONCE A JUNKIE ALWAYS A JUNKIE"

"... THERE'S NO HOPE WITHOUT DOPE"

"... I CAN STOP ON MY OWN..."

"... NOTHING WORKS FOR ME..."



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JUST A JUNKIE

Some drug addicts just never get used to being called "junkies". Others don't seem to mind. But, whether you do or you don't, you really are more than a "junkie". In God's eyes you are a human being with a dignity beyond the value of gold and silver. Maybe you've lost sight of that dignity doing the things you had to do to get your drugs. But somehow you never quite forget that dignity no matter how low you go. You think of it waiting for a fix.... You think of it boosting or hustling.... You think of it desperately sick in the streets.... You think of it busted in jail.... You think of it kicking in a hospital.... You think of it now as you read this....

"My God! Will I ever stop this rat race? Can I stop?
When, God?"

At this point you become almost overcome with the discouraging temptation, "what's the use of trying. I'm hopeless.... I'm just a junkie...."

HELPLESS OR HOPELESS

But no human being is hopeless-not unless he completely despairs and gives up. Isn't there a difference between "hopeless" and "helpless"? Unless you have a very strong constitution and an even stronger will power, you are helpless to help yourself once your physical system craves drugs. But even then you're not hopeless. Far from it. For as long as there is human life there is hope.

But taking this further, you know you're not helpless once your detoxified. In all probability you're off the junk now as you read this. Actually, it doesn't really matter how or where you kicked. And don't make up the excuses that it does, because it really doesn't. The point is that your body doesn't need it now. Now your not helpless. Now you can help yourself. And unless you help yourself, no one can help you - not even God.

"No one can help the addict, but the addict!" No matter where you are now as you read this, be firmly convinced that you are neither Hopeless nor Helpless. Be convinced, however that no one or nothing can help unless you want to be helped and are willing to want to help yourself.

CAN'T OR WON'T

No matter what hospital or prison your in at the moment no matter what theraputic community, rember no amount of job counseling, guidance, psycho-therapy or even medical detoxication will give you lasting help for the future unless you want that help, cooperate with it and get out of it the help intended. Look at the stones on the bottom of the river! The water flows over and around them but leaves them unmoved. Most addicts are this way. Help is all around them but they are unmoved by the help that's offered them. Sometimes they even think they are using the help - but not really.

And here is the real heart of the problem of drug addict-ion. It takes a very sincere addict to be so sincere with himself as to admit that maybe he doesn't really want to stay off drugs. For once an addict is detoxified, it is no longer a question of saying "I can't". "Can't really means "won't". Since your physical system doesn't need it now, it is untrue and insincere to weep that "I can't stay off drugs". What you're really saying is that "I do not want to stay off drugs".

Please think it over before you deny this. Really think! Isn't it true that you only think you want to stay clean when you leave, but not really? Isn't it a fact that you only "wish" you could? "Wishing" is certainly weaker than wanting. Do you wish it or want it?

Again, if you think you want it - a clean, normal, "square" life, do you also dream of the day when you can "chippie" and never again be "hooked"? This is the dream and obsession of most addicts.

THAT DAMNABLE FIRST FIX

But isn't such a dream stupid? Isn't it the rare exception that an addict can "chippie" without being hooked? And you're not one of the exceptions! Actually, as every sincere, honest addict will admit, it isn't the seventh or the eighth fix that "hooks" you, but that damnable first one! Right? Certainly you're not hooked at once. But you might just as well be! Because even though you won't take your second for a day or two, you will eventually take the second. Isn't it true that when an addict leaves the hospital or prison he or she is really "free" to take the first fix? Free in the sense that the body doesn't need it. But isn't it also true that once he takes his first fix he is no longer "free" not to take the second? It doesn't really matter when he takes the second one, but sooner than later he will take it. Why? Because he is not "free" to avoid the second once he takes the first... Deny this if you dare!

Let's then admit right here that it's rather stupid to beg miracles from God. God doesn't multiply miracles. You can pray all day long for God's help, but you put that needle in your arm, man, and God is not going to pull it out! God only helps those who help themselves. You must do what only you can do, what no one else can do for you. You and only you must decide that "when I walk out of here God, I'll avoid that first fix... So help me!"

NEVER AGAIN

This is easier than saying "I'll never again take drugs". Never again seems so long. And for most addicts who feel inadequate enough as it is, this is a very frightening finality.

"Never again" would scare anyone! Even the thought of the first three days or the first week "bugs" most addicts leaving prison or the hospital. Never again? How can a girl look ahead that far, plan that far or even make promises that far ahead? The answer is "don't".

What can you do, what should you do, what must you do? You can do a very simple thing that has kept hundreds of addicts off drugs - for years at a time. You can only do the only thing you can do: You can live only one day at a time.

THE REAL PROBLEM

Earlier I said that if your physical system no longer craves drugs then it should be so much easier to stay clean. That may not be totally true because drug addiction is a disease of the whole person - physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual. In a drug program, a hospital, a jail or prison, your body may now be free of all drugs. But isn't this the easiest part of the disease treatment? How to deal with the real problem - the mental, emotional, and spiritual dimensions of the disease? Here's where Narcotics Anonymous comes in.....

THIRTEEN YEARS CLEAN

I once worked closely with a woman who had been an addict for almost twenty years. Her name was Rae. We were in Narcotics Anonymous together when it first started in New York City. She had so many busts she stopped counting them. I enjoyed the way she answered when I asked "how are things?" She would first look at her watch like she always did - and then reply, "Thank God I'm fine now. I don't know about tomorrow, but I'm not worried about it. It hasn't come yet. I might go back on drugs tomorrow, but I'm not worried about what I might do. I'm happy about what I know I will not do. It is now ten minutes to ten. "Thank God I know I'll not take a fix tonight....." Man she was saying that for over thirteen years, and it kept her clean for thirteen years in Narcotics Anonymous. Just imagine that! And it's that simple. When she left the prison thirteen years earlier - in those days when junk was real good and kicking was real kicking, she decided to live just one day at a time. She didn't say "for thirteen years" or "for life." It was "Lord! Just for today!" And she was still doing it for "a day at a time" until she died happily a few year's ago, and her pure soul went to God in Heaven.

HILLS NOT MOUNTAINS

"Easy does it" is one of the slogans of Narcotics Anonymous, It means don't make a mountain out of a hill. Certainly there will be hills to climb when you leave, but a hill isn't a mountain. Some of these hills you won't even have to climb. You can avoid them. "Easy does it." That means do one thing at a time. Sometimes it isn't all important what you do first, so long as you do something positive. If a thousand - leg bug stopped in it's tracks and said "which leg will I move first?", there would be confusion in bug-land. Don't think of all the things you have to do when you leave. That would frighten anyone. Even if you can't decide which thing to do first, do something constructive the first day. The next day do some one other thing. And if you can't decide what to do then get advice - not a "fix".

DAY BY DAY

The other night, I had coffee in Bickfords with nine addicts. No one was nodding. All were clean and working. Each one had found in the simple philosophy of "day by day living" answers and help they had never found in prison, mere hospital withdrawal or a wrong kind of psychotherapy. None of them were sure they wouldn't take a fix tomorrow. But they were sure they wouldn't take a fix today. Remember again, "Each new today is the tomorrow you worried about yesterday."

Every journey, no matter how long it is, begins with a first step. That first step is necessary whether you cross a street, walk a block or hike a mile. When you leave prison or the hospital your first step must be that first day. Don't panic! Just take it! Don't worry about the second or third step until you've taken the first one. And you don't need a fix to take that step, just courage, will power and the help of God. Someone else may help you with it, but no one can take it for

you. The only ones clean in the streets today are those who took that first step. Don't discourage yourself thinking of all the problems and pressures you must face tomorrow. Tomorrow hasn't come yet. All that is yours is today, "Today is the first day of the rest of your life." It is the only thing before God you can call your own: -Today. If you added up all the yesterdays in your life and and put them all together it would equal only "today" And if you subtracted all the tomorrow from your life it would only leave you "today". So this is all I have, God - just today. Yesterday is over, tomorrow is yet to come. So, today God, I'll do what I can do and not worry about what I can't do. I won't insult or disgrace the dignity and power of my human will by saying I can't stay off drugs this first day out. With your help I can if I really want to. Maybe I can't get a job the first day, but I can stay clean today. Maybe I can't get my clothes today, but I can stay off drugs today. Maybe I can't straighten out all my family problems this one day, but God I can avoid a fix this one day." Remember, this brief "today" is a high, big "tomorrow" I was so worried about yesterday

TODAY NOT FOREVER

Actually, today is such a short time compared with "forever" or "never". Before you know it, you're crossing off on your calendar a big X for that first big day. Soon it will be three X's, then six, then 16, then a whole month... Before you know it your first clean Christmas in years. Happy, healthy, normal days, unafraid of the law. Some people won't believe you but you will know. Deep down in your heart you will know them to be the happiest six months of your life. And all because you did it a day at a time.

A REASON FOR STAYING OFF

Don't say you can't do this. Man, there's nothing you can't do if you really want it badly enough! But you must have a motive for wanting it. And here is the reason why so many addicts continually

go back to drugs. Why? Because they never had a strong enough motive for not going back. Oh yes, you wanted to stay off - but why? Only that "why" can solve the problem.

It's one thing to want to stay clean, it's quite another thing to find a strong enough motive for wanting it. it's like expecting a space ship to reach the moon without a powerful enough thrust to drive it off the ground. "Wanting" to stay off drugs is only wishful thinking unless there's a powerful motive or incentive to make you stay off. Somehow that motive must be related to yourself or it will be feeble and ineffectual. You must want to stay clean a day at a time for your own sake not just to please someone else. This is the most basic, God-given form of "selfishness". It is self-preservation. True, we must "love our neighbors as ourselves", but never more than myself. If staying off drugs would mean never again living with your husband or wife or children, then you should want your own health and happiness so much that you would be willing to sacrifice everything to attain it. So convince yourself that this is the real heart of the problem: finding a strong enough motive for wanting to stay clean the first day you leave prison, the hospital, or any drug program.

GOD'S HELP

Next you must really believe that it is not enough to have an ideal to live for and a motive for wanting it. You need the means or help to reach it. In other words, sooner or later you must honestly and humbly admit that it is not within your own power alone to stay off drugs. You've tried before. But by your own power you just couldn't keep telling yourself that you're powerless over drugs. Here's where you're forced to admit that there must be a Divine Power above and beyond you that can help you. And sometimes, you know, it's only when an addict goes so low - so low she can't go any lower - that she is forced to look up to her Father in Heaven and say and keep saying over and over again, "my God! Help me. Help me to do what I can't do by myself. I know staying off drugs is best for me, and I want this with all my will. But God, my will is weak. I give it over to you, to will

only what you want, what I know is best for me. Help me, dear God, just for today!.." Even if you claim to have no set form of religion you can say this simple prayer. You can say it in your heart right now and mean it! You can say it the moment you awake each new day. You can repeat it often during the day, especially when you leave and you're discouraged, bugged or tempted to chippie "just once". God and you are a majority. With His help and your own determination you can and will stay clean a day at a time. Never tire of saying this to yourself. Keep repeating it to yourself while in prison or the hospital until it becomes an habitual attitude of mind... "With God's help and my own firm determination I can and will stay off drugs the first day I leave..." When that day is over say the same thing at the beginning of the next day. Then the next, and the next...soon it's Christmas.

DON'T BE A PHONIE

Oh yes, there are phonies all around you, too insincere to face the question. Secretly they envy your guts. You've reached a decision they're too immature and too dishonest with themselves to make. And so they ridicule you with words and expressions intended to weaken you. That's the way it is with most addicts. They sit around talking and thinking and planning and scheming about only one thing: Junk! It's all they got on their mind: Junk! They leave with it on their mind. So they hardly hit the streets when they're high as a kite. Again they're busted and the rat race continues. These "confirmed junkies", who never really want to change now want to change you.

REAL SQUARE

"Man", they say, "You're starting to talk like a real square". Your answer? "That's right, man, when I was a 17 year old punk there was nothing I wanted

less than being square. Now it's the one thing I want more than anything else in life. To become a member of the human race again. To think human. To do the simple, normal, happy things that "squares" do. Man, I've had it. I'm tired. I want to be square. So square that I'll have a job, my wife and kids, a little bit of money in the bank, a car - and to walk down the street and look any cop in the face... Man, that's living..."

NOT EASY

"But it won't be easy." Your answer? "Nothing worthwhile in life is easy, man! What's easy ain't worth suffering for. But to live normal, secure and happy off drugs man! I'll do anything for that. Sure it won't be easy. It wasn't easy to become a junkie, so it won't be easy to stop being one. I didn't reach the state I'm in today sort of overnight, man. It took a long time. So I Don't expect to undo it overnight either. But, like it says in this little booklet, man, I'm not even going to look ahead. I'm just promising myself and God that no one or nothing can make me take a fix the first day I get out of here. When the next day comes, I'll say the same thing... Man, is that too difficult?

I LIKE DRUGS

"But, man, you like drugs! Your answer? "Sure, I like it. I'd be a liar if I said I didn't. This is one of the most honest admissions I've ever made. Like for a long ,long time I used to cry when kicking, "I hate the stuff". Me hate it? I loved it! Even now I can't deny I like it. But it's bad for me. It's slowly killing me. So now, as much as I like it, I know it's not good for me. Like lot's of people with ulcers love pork but it kills them so they got sense

enough not to eat it." Like other people with bad hearts may like dancing or swimming, but because it kills them, they just avoid it. Like from now on, man, I know as much as I like drugs that it's bad for me. So i'll avoid it... Especially my first day out.

THE GUILTY PAST

"But what about the past? Look at all the broken promises, the wasted years, the jobs lost, the people hurt! How can you forget all this?" Your answer? You look at it, man! That's why i'm finished. But if there's one thing I ain't doing it's worrying about the past. Like this little N.A. book says, the past is over. From now on I'm not going to worry about it. Worrying about it won't change it, undo it, or bring it back. Like this abscess on my arm won't heal if I keep picking at it. Time and God's mercy will heal all past sores so long as I don't keep thinking about them. I've told God I'm sorry in the only way I know how. If He forgives me, man, why shouldn't I forgive myself? It's been this guilt about the past that kept me on drugs for so long... I felt guilty because of my addiction, and I took drugs to forget the guilt, and when I took more drugs to forget the guilt I felt more guilty and so it went - a real rat race. Like this book says, from now on the past is over, forgotten and forgiven by God. For me it's a new life, no longer than a day at a time."

JUST ONCE

"But won't you even joy pop once?" Your answer? "Hell! No! Do that and I'll end up in this can again. Even if I don't get busted for a while, I know it's bound to happen. Like this booksays, it ain't the fifth or sixth that hooks me, it's that damnable first fix. And, man, it ain't worth it. Like it's garbage - real garbage! My body can't stand it much longer.

Man, I'm getting old. Life is passing me by. I want to live, really live! Man, you ought to read this little N.A. book. It's real good. It gives you hope. Like it says, man, you're not just a junkie. You're a human being, and this is even more true of a woman. You've got a spiritual soul, filled with dignity and value. You've got a free will that can do anything you really put your mind to doing with God's help. Man, like this Narcotics Anonymous book says, if you got a strong enough reason, you sure can stay off drugs that first day - with God's help and your own will power...

*If you'd like some hopeful Literature about Narcotics Anonymous...

*If you'd like someone from N.A. to visit you and tell you about a new way of life....

*If you'd like someone from N.A. to meet you when you're leaving and take you to a meeting

*Please write...



Please share this with another poor human trapped by drugs. There is hope without dope! Hope is always