



Narcotics Anonymous®

215 NA WORKS

Foreword

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 drugs. There is no cure for addiction, but recovery is possible by a program of simple spiritual principles. This booklet is not meant to be comprehensive, but it contains the essentials that in our personal and group experience we know to be necessary for recovery.

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.

Who is an addict?

Most of us do not have to think twice about this question. *We know!* Our whole life and thinking was centered in drugs in one form or another—the getting and using and finding ways and means to get more. We lived to use and used to live. 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?

NA is a nonprofit fellowship or society of men and women for whom drugs had become a major problem. We are recovering addicts who meet regularly to help each other stay clean. This is a program of complete abstinence from all drugs. There is only one requirement for membership, the desire to stop using. We suggest that you keep an open mind and give yourself a break. Our program is a set of principles written so simply that

I was born in Arizona in 1935 and I moved to California in the early 1940's. My family moved around from state to state and my father was married several times. He was a binge drinker; either he was in a state of self-righteousness or a state of complete degradation. This is one of the many reasons we moved so often.

As I moved from school to school, I would relate various experiences that I had and I would talk about my various stepmothers. For some reason, I was thought to be a liar. It seemed the only company that accepted me, no matter where I went, was the so-called lower-level people, and I never felt I was a lower-level person. It made me feel like I had some self-worth by being able to look down on them.

My family life was confused and painful, but a lot of sound moral values were passed on to me in my upbringing. I always made the attempt to stay employed. As a matter of fact, on most occasions I managed to be self-employed in some type of business. I was even able to maintain some civic status by belonging to fraternal organizations.

I was five feet, five inches tall, and weighed 282 pounds. I ate compulsively to try and handle my feelings and emotions and to make me feel better. As a matter of fact, this is how I originally got into using heavy drugs. I wanted to lose weight so desperately that I became willing to use heroin. I thought I would be smart enough

not to get hooked, that I could use and lose my appetite, feel good and outsmart the game. I bounced around the country and ended up in penitentiaries and jails. This was the beginning of the end; not only was I a compulsive overeater and remained fat, but I was also addicted to the drugs I was using.

Somebody told me about the Fellowship of Narcotics Anonymous when I was in the complete stage of degradation and desperation. Having no place to go, I walked into this fellowship feeling as low as a person can feel, like there was no way out. I was completely and totally morally bankrupt. I knew nothing about spiritual values. I knew nothing about living. Life ultimately was nothing but pain on a daily basis. All I knew was to put something in me—food or drugs—or to abuse sex to feel good, which just didn't do it for me anymore. I just couldn't get enough of anything.

When I came to this program, I found something that I had never experienced before—total acceptance for who and what I was. I was invited to keep coming back to a fellowship that told me there were no fees or dues—that I had already paid my dues via my past life—and that if I kept coming back, I would find total freedom and a new way of life.

Today, many years later, I find that I am free from addiction and compulsive overeating, and I have status in the community. I have a nice home and family, an

executive position, and most of all I have a personal relationship with my God, which has made all these things possible. I am able to feel good, to feel joyful and blissful, to feel serenity, even when things are not as good as they might be.

There is no question about it, I owe my life to the Narcotics Anonymous Fellowship and God. I can only extend my hope that if you too are suffering as I once was, you will practice the principles of Narcotics Anonymous, and find freedom from pain and a meaningful, prosperous life.

Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions
reprinted for adaptation by permission of
AA World Services, Inc.

Copyright © 1976, 1983, 1986, by
Narcotics Anonymous World Services, Inc.
All rights reserved

World Service Office
PO Box 9999
Van Nuys, CA 91409 USA
Tel. (818) 773-9999 Fax (818) 700-0700
Website: www.na.org

World Service Office—EUROPE
48 Rue de l'Été
B-1050 Brussels, Belgium
Tel. +32/2/646-6012 Fax +32/2/649-9239

World Service Office—CANADA
150 Britannia Rd. E. Unit 21
Mississauga, Ontario, L4Z 2A4, Canada
Tel. (905) 507-0100 Fax (905) 507-0101



This is NA Fellowship-approved literature.

Narcotics Anonymous,    and The NA Way
are registered trademarks of
Narcotics Anonymous World Services, Incorporated.

ISBN 978-0-912075-39-6 English 2/07

WSO Catalog Item No. EN-1500