

**Living Clean
The Journey Continues**

Approval Draft

for Decision @ WSC 2012



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WSO Catalog Item No. 9146

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<i>NA offers us a path, a process, and a way of life. The work and rewards of recovery are never-ending. We continue to grow and learn no matter where we are on the journey, and more is revealed to us as we go forward. Finding the spark that makes our recovery an ongoing, rewarding, and exciting journey requires active change in our ideas and attitudes. For many of us, this is a shift from desperation to passion.</i>	
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<i>The spirituality we experience in NA is simple and practical: It allows us to live in harmony with our world and to experience empathy and compassion for others. The steps are a path to spiritual growth; we awaken to our own spirituality. As we develop a relationship with a Higher Power in whatever way we understand that, we come to understand that our spirituality is not a part of our lives; it is a way of life that brings us to an understanding of our purpose and the freedom we had been seeking all along.</i>	
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Learning to live in our bodies isn't easy. We haven't been kind to them, and often they bear the painful scars of our addiction. Making peace with our physical selves is necessary for our physical survival—but it is also a part of our amends process, an act of self-acceptance, and a way we experience freedom, healing, and joy. This chapter addresses the way we treat ourselves in recovery, learning to find pleasure in being physically alive and aware—and facing our aging, our vulnerability, and our mortality.

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Our recovery is based in relationships, and most of us struggle with them in one way or another. Our relationships with one another in the rooms, with the families we come from and the families we create, are all places where we learn to practice principles, including honesty, empathy, and intimacy. Love is a healing presence in our lives, and we experience its power when we allow ourselves to reach out.

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As we get some time in recovery, we get some time in the world as well. Social acceptability does not equal recovery, to be sure, but that doesn't mean they're mutually exclusive, either. For many of us it is something we must learn along the way. Our work habits and our beliefs about work, education, money, and stability change and grow as we stick around—sometimes in surprising ways. Learning to deal with success and

failure, with risk and responsibility, with stability and change are all part of the process some of us call "growing up in recovery."

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From the first time we find hope, we are in an ongoing process of spiritual awakening that can last our whole lives, if we are willing. Continuing to feel that our recovery is alive requires us to keep growing. Isolation and complacency hold us back from freedom in ways we may not even feel until we are stuck. Generosity of spirit is the antidote for loneliness and alienation. Being of service frees us into our own lives and opens us to the spirit of love that surrounds us. We experience unconditional hope and understand that there is no limit to how much better we can get. No matter how far we have come, the journey continues.

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