

**HANDBOOK
FOR
NARCOTICS
ANONYMOUS
LITERATURE
COMMITTEES**



**World Service Conference
Literature Committee 1980**

Two Dollars

THE TWELVE TRADITIONS OF NARCOTICS ANONYMOUS

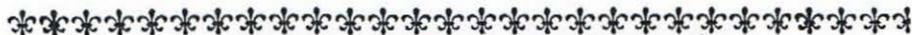
1. Our common welfare should come first; personal recovery depends on N.A. unity.
2. For our Group purpose there is but one ultimate authority—a loving God as He may express Himself in our group conscience, our leaders are but trusted servants, they do not govern.
3. The only requirement for membership is a desire to stop using.
4. Each Group should be autonomous, 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.

HANDBOOK FOR NARCOTICS ANONYMOUS LITERATURE COMMITTEES

Published by WSC Literature Committee for 1980

890 Atlanta Road; Marietta, Georgia 30060

For use within the Fellowship of Narcotics Anonymous.



DEDICATION

Dedicated to the continuation of the effort for new literature for the program of Narcotics Anonymous; that others may experience the freedom of recovery we have found.



INTRODUCTION

A serious effort is underway to develop new literature for the program of Narcotics Anonymous. Every member is welcome to contribute material to this effort. This handbook is meant to be helpful to members wishing to contribute material to this effort on an individual or group basis. The information contained is based on the successful experience of members and committees fellowship wide. This handbook is derived from the minutes of the First World Literature Conference of Narcotics Anonymous held at Wichita, Kansas in October of 1979. We wish to thank the concerned members of Narcotics Anonymous for their support and participation at Wichita and their involvement during the past year.

We realize that this manual will be seen as incomplete in retrospect. We expect ongoing developments and innovations to improve the quality and depth of this effort. We encourage concerned members to come forth with their suggestions and observations. Our sincere desire is that this handbook will be useful to members who want to become involved with getting new literature on NA recovery to the addict who still suffers. This endeavor has been drawn from the experience of everyone who has been involved to date.

This handbook contains a system for review and preparatory work to help insure that material presented to the WSC for approval is complete and acceptable to different areas within our fellowship. We feel that this staging is indispensable and will minimize the need for substantial changes after it is published.

It is our intent to gather letters of support from different areas within the Fellowship for pieces of material before it is presented for approval. We feel we can best serve by doing as much of the homework for the Conference as possible before presenting material. Of course members of the Conference are encouraged to become involved at any point between the origination of new material and its finalization.

**World Service Conference
Literature Committee 1980**

TABLE OF CONTENTS

- I. Ways for the individual member to contribute material. page 2
- II. How to form a local literature committee. page 3
- III. Finances. page 5
- IV. Paper Work. page 6
- V. Newsletters. page 7
- VI. Pamphlets. page 8
- VII. Personal Stories. page 11
- VIII. Basic text. page 12



Ways for the individual member to contribute material.

The average member of Narcotics Anonymous who wants to contribute material to the literature effort writes and sends in his or her story of recovery from addiction. Many of these stories come in a very printable form. Others need spelling and punctuation corrections. If you have a local literature committee in your area, attend the meeting and ask for help. Generally, a member just writes it down. We have a deep feeling among our literature committee members that a person's story should not be changed much from the original. We have to keep out profanity so that no institution or review committee outside the fellowship can keep our material from being made available to addicts in treatment facilities. There is no reason to change a member's personal story. It would probably hurt the identity that a suffering addict might otherwise find in that person's story. Please remember to include material on what it's like now. If a suffering addict reads your story and identifies, it is all the more likely that some of the things which helped you achieve recovery will be of use to them. If surrender was very difficult, then bring it out in your story. If learning gratitude was hard for you, then bring it out. Specific material related to how you worked your steps can help us all by giving us insight into the recovery of others who may have a different type of story and approach recovery from a slightly different point of view. It may also help us carry the message. Remember that addiction is no respecter of age or background. We need all types of stories and yours might be just the one to help *your* type of addict.

A good number of members have sent in their experience, strength and hope in the form of one liners, paragraphs, perspectives and topic related material on the steps, principles and all aspects of NA recovery. A lot of this material is published in the NA VOICE from World Service Office, the MAIN LINE from San Francisco and in local newsletters. This gets the material out, where it can help others immediately. This material is also filed and will be used during the composition conference for resource

material for the basic text of our program. Many of us carry notebooks and write down some of the thoughts we have on the program and our recoveries. Lots of times we hear something and it finally makes sense to us. If we turn in our notes, it can help us bring out the message of our program in a form which will be more useful than something that just looks good in print.

We ask all members to please send in their material without worrying too much if it is any good or not. Some of the best is probably in trash cans right now. We ask that all material be sent in. Please send in copies if you have to have your original. We are self-supporting and returning copies can get expensive.



How to form a local literature committee.

Before or after regular meetings ask members for help, ideas and support. If members are supportive of the new literature and are ready to form a literature committee then select a date and schedule the first meeting. Put out announcements to all local meetings, make up flyers and stress the importance of literature committees.

Election of officers should be drawn from a core nucleus, whose interest is directed by the group consciousness. Discretion should be exercised in the choice of officers so that the trusted servants will feel that the literature work helps their program instead of burdens them with duties and commitments that they may have trouble with later on. We want the literature work to help the members involved, not hinder them.

The chairman is responsible for coordinating with other officers of the group to insure continuity of effort. The chairman can be the one who draws the group consciousness back to writing it down and keeps the meeting from getting bogged down in business trivia.

The co-chairman frees up the chairman and assists in all duties relating to literature work. He or she is a key figure in the structure of any literature committee.

The secretary keeps minutes and communicates with other groups working on material. The secretary may co-ordinate and recruit others to help in the performance of secretarial duties. For instance, a committee usually needs help typing up material submitted in hand written form.

The treasurer opens the bank account, keeps records and is responsible for making a report to the group concerning expenditures. The treasurer can also alert the committee when they need to raise more money.

The importance of these officers and a clear understanding of the duties of each is fundamental to a working committee. Literature committee members and especially officers should be drawn from members who actively attend regular N/A meetings. Set up and schedule regular meetings with times, dates and locations announced.

The Meeting Itself

Generally a literature committee opens with a moment of silent meditation followed by the Serenity Prayer. Some members have discussed special prayers for literature. To set the tone of the meeting new literature material is read and sometimes carried over from week to week. New material is available at 10¢ per page through the WSC Literature Committee plus postage. Three dollars would bring you enough new material to introduce meetings for a month. New material is also to be found in the NA VOICE, the MAIN LINE and local newsletters. Material worked on by your group should also be read and worked on as long as the group keeps adding to it. When interest fails, we generally put it on the files and send in copies. We can always go back to it later. Send in all new material to the WSC Literature Committee so it can be available to other groups and so it cannot get lost. Literature committee is based on interest and inspiration. Give your members positive feedback and let them know that they did the right thing by contributing their material. Create incentive to work on literature, not pressure. In the beginning you will have to spend some time informing members as to intent and purposes of your literature committee. Hopefully this handbook will eliminate the need for extensive preoccupation with the business aspects of your literature committee work. This discussion of procedure can get really boring and the point of your committee should be the writing of material that has the power to give new life and hope to the suffering addict. In literature it is true that nothing happens until something is written. Celebrating excellence and encouraging any effort will help your members respond with material and develop excitement about the work in general. The basic format is a blank sheet of paper. We fill it in.

In addition to writing and collecting new material, your committee can serve local needs for existing material by creating a stockpile and placing large orders with World Service Office. This helps WSO get out their orders. It is easier for them to ship one \$200 order than twenty \$10 orders. Starting with a basic small order, literature can be distributed to local groups above cost and the margin used to increase the amount of literature on hand until no group ever goes without.

Also local literature committees can produce and distribute a local newsletter to promote unity and keep members informed. You can also put in some of the new material produced by your literature committee. This has helped NA grow in many areas and is proving really useful in our literature committee work. For this and other purposes your committee might throw a fund raiser to purchase a mimeograph machine. It can produce your newsletter and flyers for your groups. Also records and forms for your local area service committee.

All local members should be encouraged to send in ideas, paragraphs and perspectives as well as their stories. All ideas are important. Encourage members along the lines of, "Say what you feel." Collecting this material and getting it into Your local newsletter, the VOICE or the MAIN LINE is our first concern. Copies of all material should be sent in to the WSC Literature Committee. Committees should emphasize the importance of the book. The theme is: "You are the Book!" This expresses the fact that so much of our program is in the minds, hearts and spirits of our members with time on the program. Those not fortunate enough to live in an area strong in the fellowship have to do without. In a real sense ours is a movement of the message from those who have it to those who are dying for it.

Attend and keep informed of your needs and progress the area service committee in your area. Your literature committee should be a part of your ASC and the support of the ASC can make all the difference between success and failure for your committee. Remember when we used to go it alone? Try to figure out ways to serve

the needs of your ASC and get with it. The stockpile, a newsletter, making flyers for group announcements are all ways to serve your groups needs.

Write letters from your group to other literature committees. This will help them as well as let members in attendance know that your committee is a part of the whole effort. Members come to write. If your committee emphasises writing, they will come back. Many of our committees have had the problem of discussing business too much and it will hurt your committee. Members want to feel that they will be helping others and we recommend that you encourage them from the very start. As recovering addicts they have something to offer the addict who still suffers. Most of them will need support and encouragement to get going. The quality will often improve dramatically if they are given a chance. We recommend that they write from the heart what they would say or expect to hear on a subject at an NA meeting. This is our message.



FINANCE

To do its work, your committee will have to raise money. You will need notebooks and postage to collect material and communicate with other groups. If your committee starts a stockpile of existing literature for your area, you will need an initial sum to get it going. If you start a newsletter to announce events, publish material and promote unity you will need supplies and equipment. When you send copies of material collected in to the WSC Literature Committee Archives or to other literature committees you will need money for the copies, unless you have your own mimeograph machine.

Contributions are tax free and should be kept within the Fellowship. Without the guidance of our Twelve Traditions we can easily raise major sums for a book on recovery from addiction. We want the book to be ours and we decline outside contributions.

To raise money you might hold a fun day, supper, softball game, hold a raffle or set out a jar for contributions to literature work. The following ways to raise money for your committee and the overall effort were suggested by the Finance workshop at Wichita:

1. Write all groups in your area and ask for a percentage of the groups collections.
2. Hold fund raisers around holidays: dances with a meeting afterwards.
3. Pass special basket at the end of meetings.
4. Pot luck suppers or bake sales.
5. Sleigh rides or hay rides in the winter.
6. Collecting and selling scrap metal or flea market items.
7. Holding a campout.
8. Having a jar for change at meeting places with slogan on it such as, "How much is a Human Life Worth?"
9. Individual contributions should be limited to keep members who are well off from feeling like they have to buy group acceptance. This is also in keeping with the Spirit of our Fellowship.

Your committee treasurer should maintain a prudent reserve and forward the balance to the WSC Literature Committee. Keep your members informed as to the activities of the Committee so that they will feel a part of the effort. Money received by the WSC Literature Committee will be held by a treasurer and regular accountings will be made to contributing committees to insure their ongoing support.

Keep finance simple. Don't get too many things going at once. Put the Spirit of our Fellowship first and remember that it is by our combined efforts that our message will assume book form, God willing.



PAPER WORK

Paper work is an important part of our literature work because as we accumulate material it gets harder and harder to keep track of it all. The paper work is the substance of our work and if we organize it, we will be able to locate related material and save on revision and avoid duplication of effort within our committee. Passing on copies of material to the WSC Literature Committee will insure that our material is available to other groups. In the beginning we thought in terms of being able to copy all of our material and sending it out to literature committees for the cost of copying it. At this point it would be overwhelming and most groups will want topic related material. At composition our first task will be to go over the material collected and make sense of it. By encouraging you to begin the process of separating the material into basic categories along common sense lines, our work will proceed more quickly. Saving carbon copies of correspondence will keep you from wondering what you wrote last time if your letter is not answered right away.

Part of the paper work involves flyers and requests for material for members in your area. It's fine to be creative but keep the tone serious. Acknowledgement of material received in the mail can help the contributing member know that their effort is appreciated. A sample response might be as follows:

"Thank you for your literature contribution. You have our prayers for your ongoing recovery and our gratitude for your effort in writing. You know, you can really do no wrong in this effort. None of us involved are professionals. We are all just recovering addicts with a common desire for new literature for our brothers and sisters still suffering from our disease. What most of use have done is just write down things that we hear in our meetings. The things we share with our newcomers make for good book material. This is our message we are talking about. The message that no addict seeking help has to go it alone. Without a book many of those who might be enjoying new lives will surely die of our disease, never knowing help was possible. We are all guided in our effort by our Higher Power and praying will help you write your perspectives on NA recovery. Please keep in touch by phone or mail and keep writing!"

Editing is a form of group consciousness. Individuals or committees as a whole should review new material as soon as possible at home or in committee meetings. As much as possible, they should try to make it "printable". They should correct errors in spelling, punctuation, organization and word choice following the rule, "If it's passable, let it pass." The contributor should be asked how they feel about any changes and if possible work with someone they can feel at home with. Stories can include slang but not profanity since this would limit the availability of our book in some areas and institutions.

Reviewing new material should begin with the contributing member so they don't feel left out and to preserve it's intent and meaning. Review at the national level should make material suitable for presentation to the WSC for distribution. Trial distribution for interest and finalization precedes WSC approval of literature for NA as a whole. Copies of the material should be sent out to any areas working on literature and comments and letters of support requested. Copies of material and finalized work should be sent to the WSC Literature Committee so that no material sits on the shelf too long. The emphasis at all levels of review is to get material to the printable stage as quickly as possible. Material sent to the MAIN LINE or the NA VOICE will be published if possible but will not get feedback as surely as a direct request from other literature committee members.

Keep accurate records on material collected and all correspondence. If a member is calling long distance concerning literature, they may want to keep a telephone log of

their calls and conversations. It is easy to lose track of commitments and conversations if there are no notes.

Storage of material collected should be in a centralized place where it will be safe and yet available to concerned members within the fellowship. Avoid loaning out material. Make copies instead. A lot of material can be lost if we aren't careful.



NEWSLETTERS

Newsletters can help promote unity and growth within an area containing several NA meetings and hopefully at least one area service committee. The purpose of a newsletter is to carry our message in various ways to members within an area. These ways may include stories of NA recovery, articles and perspectives on the steps or applying the principles to our own recovery, a calendar of local regional and national events within the fellowship. A good newsletter can keep down confusion as NA begins to grow in your area. Also it gives the benefit of group effort and keeps individual members from being set up as leaders. This protects their recovery and protects NA as a whole if some one gets loaded. The newsletter can appeal for financial support to individual members by subscription and the ASC by sending out copies of each issue to each group in the ASC. Members interested in starting a newsletter should go to their ASC and ask for their support. If they don't have an ASC or if they fail to get its support, they should work toward implementing the service structure in their area until it reaches the level where it can provide the support. Once support has been gained you should hold a formative meeting and start working on getting out the first issue. Decide on a date for the first issue and the frequency of issues. A very simple one or two page newsletter on 8½"x11" sheets could be very easily produced and distributed. It would be easy to come out with this type newsletter every month. A larger type would take a greater financial reserve and commitment and might better come out at periodic intervals, say before spring or Christmas. Since the primary reason for the newsletter is to carry our message and build unity, it might be better to have as simple a format as could be produced more frequently. Founding your newsletter in your ASC will keep it an integral part of the whole serving the needs of your area.

Production: The simplest newsletter could be photocopies of type written sheets stapled together. Thirty copies of a two page newsletter would cost \$6.00 at the rate of 10¢ per copy.

The next option is mimeograph. An inexpensive or used piece of equipment can be purchased by money raised by a dance and be useful for flyers and other group needs. With a little practice you can produce a good stencil which will make good copies. This method will cost \$5.00 to \$7.00 for a ream (500 sheets). Stencils cost about \$5.00 for 24. Sheets can be run bothsides, folded and stapled for better readability. A standard or simple cover can make this type look better.

After mimeograph, your typewritten copy can be printed by offset press. This can be done in various sizes and to be folded in various ways. This will cost more per issue but it will come out better too.

The best results will come from type setting and offsetting your newsletter. This will cost the most but will allow you to take maximum advantage of the technology. It takes a large population to support this type of newsletter. Like the simpler styles, a cover can be used but requires some form of packaging to be mailed.

Areas planning a newsletter can obtain copies of existing newsletters to see examples of the different styles of production. Don't make it hard on yourself. It is better to make a simple honest newsletter that serves the needs of your group than to wait until you can do it fancy.

Distribution: Send a certain number of copies to each group in your area. They can be

mailed or hand delivered. If you elect to have a subscription rate, you might want to start mailing out from the very beginning. Base your decision to have subscription rate on your ASC's group consciousness because it will be up to the group to make good if individuals lose interest. Subscription records can be kept on file cards or sheets. Whatever system you use, make sure you have one so that no subscriber misses an issue. Set up some books to keep track of expenses and income. Decide on an address like a post office box number or a local clubhouse. Bulk mail should be considered when the number of mailouts approaches 200 pieces. Be careful to protect the anonymity of your subscribers by omitting any reference to Narcotics Anonymous on the outside of your final mailing piece. The NA logo can be used because it might stand for anything or omitted if you think it might be controversial. A return address will help insure that your newsletters are getting through to the current addresses and will avoid sending out repeatedly to nonexistent addresses.

One of the major ways to insure the growth and success of your newsletter is to thank contributors. Appreciation will insure future contributors of material and general feelings of support. We are directly responsible to those we serve.



PAMPHLETS

Pamphlets can be related to specifics of recovery in such a way as to be helpful to someone needing help in some area. Good pamphlets can be handed to a newcomer after their first meeting and available as their recovery progresses. Pamphlet material can be used as material for our book but will always serve particular needs. Our Fellowship can benefit greatly from a number of new pamphlets. If our efforts to establish a group of literature committees they can work and rework pamphlet material so that it serves the needs of our Fellowship world wide and is presentable to the World Service Conference for approval and general distribution. Originating pamphlets can be done by groups or individuals and circulated for feedback from local members or members in other areas. They also lend themselves to publication in newsletters. Original material has to be checked out and possibly improved by group consciousness. This is why we recommend that contributing members not become too attached to the specific form of their material. We are all subject to the whole. Any of us are free to become writers by profession if we want to. In our literature, however, it is not our needs we should consider. We want material representing NA as a whole to be a genuine reflection of the NA experience unless it is stated at the beginning that it is only one members viewpoint. We will probably have material emerge of both sorts. Honestly and sincerity will probably be the best way to insure a pamphlets usefulness to others. Sharing from the heart of our own experience best carries our message.

We include a breakdown of topics developed at the Wichita Conference for what they might be worth. The four priorities set were: 1) Carrying the message to the addict still suffering, 2) Helping the newcomer, 3) Important aspects for the fellowship, 4) Community Awareness and Family.

Possible Topics:

I. Still suffering

A. Different types of addicts

1. Street addict.
2. Retirement addict.
3. Prescription addict.
4. Psychological addict.

B. Am I an Addict?

1. Questions and Answers.
2. Disease Concept.

- 3. Short Stories.
 - C. N.A. Works — Hope.
 - 1. Helping Yourself.
 - 2. Promises.
- II. Helping the Newcomer
- A. To the Newcomer
 - 1. Importance of Meetings
 - 2. Growing Pains
 - 3. Program Promises
 - 4. Fellowship
 - B. Surrender to Win.
 - 1. Acceptance.
 - 2. Openmindedness
 - 3. Willingness.
 - 4. Honesty.
 - C. Coming to Believe.
 - 1. Attitude of Gratitude.
 - 2. Letting Go.
 - 3. Purpose in Life.
 - D. For those in treatment.
 - E. What about pot?
 - F. First things first: HALT
 - G. Addiction is a disease.
 - 1. Physical and psychological disorders.
 - 2. Need of medication.
 - 3. Emotions.
 - 4. Spiritual.
 - 5. Substitution of alcohol.
 - H. I can't — We can!
 - I. Professionals in N.A.
- III. Important aspects for the Fellowship
- A. Spiritual.
 - 1. Surrender.
 - 2. Prayer.
 - 3. Humility.
 - 4. Gratitude.
 - 5. God's will, not mine.
 - B. Mental and Emotional
 - 1. Stinking Thinking.
 - 2. Substituting Addictions
 - 3. Dry high.
 - 4. 12 Steps and 12 Traditions — Utilize
 - 5. Character defects.
 - C. How it works.
 - 1. Honesty, openmindedness and the willingness to try: H.O.W.
 - 2. Don't get too Hungry, Angry, Lonely or Tired: H.A.L.T.
 - 3. ~~Slogans~~.
 - 4. Steps and Traditions.
 - 5. Sponsorship.
 - a. 12 step call.
 - b. Phone therapy.

- c. Setting an example.
 - d. Sharing and caring.
 - 6. Keeping Priorities Straight.
 - a. Family members.
 - b. Employment.
 - c. Relationships.
 - d. Recovery.
 - 7. Lifetime Job.
 - a. One day at a time.
 - b. action, acTION, ACTION.
 - c. Maintenance steps: 10, 11 and 12.
 - d. Personal Responsibility.
 - 8. Taking Medication.
- IV. Community Awareness.
 - A. Employers.
 - 1. Disease concept.
 - 2. Recovery possible.
 - 3. Symptoms of Addiction.
 - B. Questions and Answers.
 - 1. Types of addicts.
 - 2. What is N.A.
 - C. Information on Treatment.
 - D. Family Illness
 - 1. Tough love.
 - 2. 12 steps for family members.

This listing is not intended to be more than a guide. We realize that any list would be incomplete but trust you to add to it. Like all N.A. literature, profanity will be edited to insure that our message is widely available. Also we should have an eye to our traditions. Much might be said that would only lead us into controversy and limit our primary purpose. All material should be related to some aspect of NA recovery and rooted in the actual experience of our members.



STORIES OF NA RECOVERY

As elsewhere stated, when a member wants to contribute material to the effort for our book, he or she will most often write their personal story of recovery and get it to us. After taking this first step, they usually feel easier about the whole thing and send in other material they think might help. We want to encourage all members to feel this way. We feel we must reach a certain level of freedom to express ourselves to have a useful and reasonably compete basic text.

Most members we have received stories from have a tendency to feel like they're turning their story over to some kind of professional crew. This is not true. Even those of us who have been working along these lines for some time remember the fears we had in the beginning that someone would criticize our first efforts or not make us feel welcome. This remembrance makes us quick to assure a contributing member that their story will remain their story whatever changes might occur to make it printable. Personal stories should be completely in the control of the contributor and they have the final say as to style and content. We don't want all stories to read the same. All stories will be held in our archives and selection of those published will depend on too many factors to say which ones will be used in the book. Stories which are not used in the first edition will contribute to the basic text portion by giving us some basis for any generalizations that may have to be made. Also they might be used in future editions. We want everybody who gets involved in this to know that we are doing this work to insure our ongoing recovery, for those yet to come and for the many who could use such a book today. Our guidelines and suggestions are not rules.

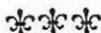
It is not necessary to keep to any particular formula or style to contribute a useful and meaningful story. To provide a sense of common identity and reality you should at some point share what it was like. Your own words and the things which lead to your reaching out for help will help others identify and make your words meaningful to them. A useful tool in any writing is to say what you mean — abbreviated SWYM. The first time you heard of Narcotics Anonymous and your first meeting or contact with NA members might help show how the program came to work for you. Many of us had to come back a while before we saw that recovery was possible for us. Sharing along these lines might well help some addict still suffering avoid some of the agony you went through. Many of the stories we have received to date sort of peter out at the point where the person reaches the program. From our own experience we can realize that in a program which promotes personality change, it is hard to bring our stories right up to date. We are still learning. Try to include some of the points of growth and major breakthroughs in understanding which have occurred in your recovery. These insights combined might well make the pattern for our basic text section.

If you are trying to help someone else write their story, be sensitive and helpful. Try not to let them feel pressured. Help them follow up their ideas and get out what they really want to say. Work on structure last. Content is far more important. If they are uncomfortable writing it down, put it on tape and have someone transcribe it.

The people we need to reach out to include all types of addictions. To show our recovery program works for all types of addictions, we need all types of stories. Stories drawn from different age groups and backgrounds will also be useful. We need to know how you feel about the program: sponsors, steps, traditions, spirituality, anonymity, fellowship, drugs prescribed for physical pain, etc. Include how or why you started using, what your attitudes and feelings were and how you got to the program. Did you come in through a treatment program. Include material on family or other living problems. If you had relapses, what helped you stay clean today. Tell how things are today. How do you handle good and bad times? Be yourself — use your own slang. Avoid profanity because it lowers spiritual content. We want our message to get to the suffering addict and profanity would allow profanity groups to exclude our book from institutions where it might do some good. Share your spirituality. What

is the Higher Power you used in working your steps. How did you come to find your Higher Power and did It change for you after coming to the Program. How does your Higher Power fit into your life today. What changes did you go through in your recovery. How about geographical cures, jobs, spouses, schools, different crowds and switching friends.

The main pointers we have to offer are keep it simple, don't exaggerate or over estimate. Keep it simple and honest: stories should be based on recovery and hope.



BASIC TEXT

A keystone of our book should be that it has an understanding that we are writing to the sick individuals in and out of pain, jails and institutions and therefore should have a wave of compassion sweeping through the entire book. We want to share what has come to us of recovery through the program of Narcotics Anonymous. We are not telling anyone how to write the book but only what we feel and what we have experienced in the effort so far. Furthermore, we don't want what is written in this handbook to hamper those who attend the composition conference. It just seems helpful to include what has been talked about and shared so far. As much of the work as possible should be done in advance of the composition conference. At the composition conference a manuscript of our basic text will be drawn and brought as near completion as possible before fellowship wide review for input and changes. A second conference will probably be necessary to finalize the book and select stories for inclusion in the first edition. These conferences will be set well in advance to best suit the convenience of members wishing to attend. They will probably be of no certain length since we will have to stick with it until each stage is completed.

A basic text should include all the things which apply to its subject. In our case, we deal with thoughts, feelings and experiences of a spiritual nature which do not lend themselves to written expression but which can be communicated between the lines if we are honest enough in expressing our thoughts and feelings. Those who have been where we have been and also seek recovery will know what we mean. If you are committed to helping produce our book or just want to contribute some material to the effort, we would ask that you search your heart and write down that which you feel should be included in a complete and accurate book on the program of Narcotics Anonymous. We are going to these lengths to secure your input because our experience shows us that we are all constantly going through growing experiences which keep us spiritually fit and relieves us of the compulsion to use. Just the same way groups and areas go through growing experiences. This means that what may be common place in your groups consciousness might be a revelation to other groups and members. If we didn't make our appeal plain and exert ourselves over a sufficient period of time, we would necessarily compose a book which would be incomplete. We each know a pie slice of the whole and we feel we must include the thought, feelings and experiences of a great many of our members to have a reasonably complete first edition. Revision of the first edition is inevitable but that won't come without a first.

Our book should be about recovery. The library shelves are already lined with books about what a serious disease we have. Various remedies have been proposed and some of them have met with some success until graduation. We feel as recovering addicts that a living program is the only way to achieve daily recovery on an ongoing basis. Recovery such as we offer is very difficult to define. We are not trying to search out the elusive magic key to our recovery. Most of us feel: that if we figured out the program, we would get loaded. We only want our message to be more available in

written form. If we can each share our experience, strength and hope and combine the sum in a single text, we will in effect tell our group story, the story of Narcotics Anonymous.

We want every nook and cranny of the disease to be in the book so addicts can know the seriousness of addiction regardless of the progression at the point of their last usage. The seriousness of what happens when we pick up that first fix, pill, drink or toke. We want to use phrases and words that clearly express what we mean to say. Complication would lead to misinterpretation. To involve others we need to create incentive not pressure. It is a privilege to serve the Fellowship. We want a book we can call our own. There is nothing, no structure or rules that stand in the way of a good piece of literature to serve the growing needs of our program.

To serve the needs of those who will use this handbook to get involved with the writing of our book, we include a listing of possible topics drawn from the Wichita Conference. This list will probably be incomplete without your input. Feel free to write on any topic which you feel will help someone seeking recovery from addiction. We would appreciate any additional topics which you as members might suggest and include them in future editions of this handbook.

Disease concept

Guilt

Positive addictions

Recovery

There is hope

Living in the here and now

Finding a Higher Power when you don't believe in one

Powerlessness

Sponsorship

Beer and grass was no excuse

90 meetings in 90 days

I didn't know I was sick

Positive thinking

Negative thinking

Complete abstinence from all drugs?

The benefits of a clean life

Learning how to live clean

Chipping

Old playmates, playgrounds and playthings

Problems in recovery

Little old ladies can get sick too

Hope and the 12 Steps

Self honesty is the key

Self will run riot

Foreward

It's not what or how much

I can't, We can

Longform of the 12 Traditions of N.A.

What is normal . . .

I thought I had an emotional disturbance but I didn't think the dope caused it.

(psychological maintenance)

13th Stepping

Medicine, religion and psychiatry seemed to have no answers

Turn away no chances

Inventories

One minute at a time

Live and let live
Tools of the program
Serenity and peace of mind
Prayer and meditation
A spiritual way of life
Personality change
A new life
Loneliness
Fellowship
Caring and sharing
Lonely or alone
Paranoia
Fear of being found out
Being straight can be fun
Clean and Serene
Easy does but do it
H.O.W. — Honesty, Openmindedness and the Willingness to try
Spiritual principles
Sense of humor
Carrying the message
Helping the newcomer
Community awareness
Self acceptance

Our experience has taught us that all we need do is to write on a topic, after praying to be used as instruments by our Higher Power. in terms of what we would say or expect to hear at an NA meeting or in Fellowship. Carrying a notebook can help us catch the fleeting thought as it occurs. Writing down what is being said during the meeting can be a help but should never disturb the meeting or the primary purpose.



***** Literature Notes: *****

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 understand 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.

edicated to the continuation of
the effort for new literature
for the program of

arcotics nonymous ;
that others may find the
freedom of recovery
we have found.