

REVIEW & INPUT DRAFT

BEHIND THE WALLS

NOT TO BE USED IN N.A. MEETINGS

For Service Committee Use Only

INPUT DUE ON OR BEFORE SEPTEMBER 30, 1989

DEDICATION

*THIS SIMPLE BOOKLET,
WRITTEN BY ADDICTS RECOVERING
IN NARCOTICS ANONYMOUS,
IS DEDICATED TO ADDICTS
IN CORRECTIONAL FACILITIES.*

C - Copyright 1989 by
World Service Office, Inc.
P.O. Box 9999
Van Nuys, CA 91409 U.S.A.

All Rights Reserved

I.S.B.N. No. 1-55776-061-6 7/89

BEHIND THE WALLS

Those of us recovering in Narcotics Anonymous know that our life of using drugs was a maximum security prison in its own right. We share our thoughts, our feelings, and our experiences, because through recovery in N.A. we have found freedom behind the walls. Your experiences may differ, but if we look hard enough, we may find that our feelings are similar, or we can begin to understand each other's experience with using drugs.

I am 41 years old and have a long record of jails and institutions. I started at age 10 in reform school and graduated through the system, missing nothing. I started using drugs at age 15 on release from reform school, and dedicated my life to drugs and crime. My biggest claim to fame was that I could handle it, and it kept me using for 25 years.

Pride in our drug use gave us the illusion of self-respect and the respect of others. We depended on the feelings of courage, self-acceptance, and self-worth that drugs gave us, only to find later that we felt as empty as we felt before using. In the same way it has affected every aspect of our lives, we in N.A. know that the disease of addiction affects people from all walks of life. Admitting that using is causing problems is the beginning of recovery.

As a direct result of active addiction, I found myself in prison with no way out. I say "found" because despite numerous arrests and convictions, I felt immune from the law. It applied to others and not me. I was different, special, as I am an educated woman, white, and from an upper middle class family.

Between solitary confinement and the criminally insane ward in shackles and chains, I was in pain from an active addiction I did not want to live through. I came to believe that addiction does not discriminate. I am no different.

Many of us were running from the beginning. Some of us had experienced extreme physical or mental abuse. Some of us had existed through cruel or violent situations that never seemed to end. We couldn't cope with the feelings of despair and misery, and we needed to escape the reality that we saw no hope in our lives. We ran to find relief and thought we had found it in drugs and the life-style that went with it.

When I first came to prison I was at the point all addicts come to, that is, living for drugs. I had lost my children to welfare and I am in prison for the shooting death of my husband. Although I was in a state of shock, my first and only thought was how to get drugs in prison.

For some of us, life in prison was no different. Most of us suffered in one way or another from the disease of addiction throughout our lives. We used drugs to cope with life because we thought it was the only way we could survive. For those of us now recovering in N.A. our drug use had stopped being a solution and had become a major problem in itself. Drugs stopped working. We put drugs ahead of everything else. This was part of the insanity of our using.

INSANITY

Most of us could not see the insanity in our lives for a long time. Part of the progression of the disease is that as we go on, the things we do for drugs become more and more insane. We hurt and destroy the things we love, and that makes us want to use more to hide from our feelings.

You see, if I am strung out I don't care about you or your things. I am going to take them and I am going to hurt you and I am not going to care if you suffer because I need my drugs. I don't care if I get caught. I am insane and there is nothing anyone can say or do to stop me, because after all what I am doing to myself is far worse than what you can do to me.

The levels of insanity are different for each of us, from the insanity that lost us our families and freedom, to the even deeper insanity of not caring whether we lived or died.

I have overdosed and been pronounced dead only to wake up and call the man who saved my life names. I have hurt countless people in many ways. I have endangered the lives of my family, I have hated and planned to kill cops for trying to protect me from society. I have been in various institutions and I am still in one.

I know how it feels to wake up sick and be controlled by the next urge to use. I saw how it feels to wish you were dead. I have been there. I have seen it, looking dead and wishing I was, hurting and sick and so powerless.

We told ourselves drugs made life better, made the time pass faster and gave us the extra edge to handle situations. However, we have learned that addiction is not just a bad drug habit; it goes a lot deeper than that. Addiction is a physical, spiritual, and emotional disease that touches every area of our lives. When we weren't using drugs we were thinking about using drugs, where to get drugs, and what the price would be.

Once in prison, we found that drugs weren't as easy to obtain as on the outside. Some of us were able, or forced by circumstances, to stay away from drugs, sometimes for long periods of time. The end result was always the same: when we started using again, sooner or later we were back in the vicious cycle of addiction all over again. We in N.A. know that it did not matter what drugs we used, or how much. What matters is what happened when we used. The insanity caused by the disease of addiction brought us to Narcotics Anonymous.

RELIEF

Narcotics Anonymous is a program which relieves the pain caused by the disease of addiction. Although we sought to do this with drugs, it never worked. When the drugs wore off, the pain was still there and the problems were not solved. Addiction is a progressive disease. Narcotics Anonymous offers us a solution. While addiction cannot be cured, it is halted through recovery and we learn how to live.

Sometimes while lying on my bunk in my cell, once again for what I now know as addiction, I swore using just once would not take me back down again, but it did. I have been in treatment before and I have been in prison before. For excitement, I committed crimes I would never do if I was straight. I can no longer ignore the fact that I have a problem. There is a life without drugs and I want it.

Once we have admitted we have a drug problem, we open the door to recovery. If meetings are available, we can see and hear other addicts who are living clean and recovering in N.A. Freedom from active addiction is available to all addicts if they are willing to take suggestions. When we have had enough, we become willing.

Some days my head tells me that it's okay to use, especially if I am hurting emotionally. Feelings like shame, guilt, inadequacy, or fear were always enough to start the whole mad cycle all over again. But today, my heart and my friends in the program tell me that all pain will pass, and to use again would be my destruction. The miracle is that if I don't use drugs, the problem I am facing gets easier. The sad thing in my life is that I never learned that, because I got high rather than face life on life's terms.

Today I have my own keys to my life, and one of the keys is the program and fellowship of N.A. This is the main key in my life, because I am learning how to live, to feel, and to accept me for being me. Today, I have the freedom to make my own mistakes and profit from them. I am gaining a freedom that is better than what any drug could do for me.

Each of us fell to our own depth of insanity, but whatever our lowest point, it was always painful and crushing. We found that no matter what feelings we had experienced, no matter what we had lived through, we had to take a closer look at ourselves. These were some of the common questions we found helpful when seeking answers:

1. Does the thought of running out of drugs leave me with the feeling of impending doom--fear?
2. How long has it been since drugs worked the way I wanted them to?
3. Have I gotten sick when I couldn't get drugs?
4. Was I using drugs or needing to get drugs, on the day I did what got me here?
5. If I don't have a drug problem, why can't I stop using drugs or stop thinking about using drugs?
6. Have I ever questioned my own sanity?

As we answered yes to some of these questions, and many of us answered yes to still more questions, the evidence of our addiction was hard to deny and we began to change our attitude. We knew where active addiction would lead us. Maybe we could find a new way of life through N.A.

We can't tell anyone whether or not he or she is an addict. This is a decision each of us has had to reach on our own. We can tell you however, that we are addicts. We have found recovery and relief through Narcotics Anonymous.

WHAT IS NARCOTICS ANONYMOUS

Narcotics Anonymous is a program of recovery for anyone who has the desire to stop using drugs. We have found that the value of one addict helping another is without parallel. We meet regularly to help each other stay clean and to share our message of recovery. Our message is that any addict can stop using drugs, lose the desire to use, and find a new way of life. Our message is one of hope and the promise of freedom from active addiction.

We are not related to any other organizations, including other twelve step fellowships, programs, treatment or correctional facilities. We employ no professionals, counselors, or therapists. Our membership is free and we share what has worked for us in day-to-day living. The Twelve Steps of Narcotics Anonymous are the foundation of our program of recovery from the disease of addiction.

Addicts turn to Narcotics Anonymous in desperation, when all else has failed. Our individual ways did not work. We may not even have had a clear desire to stop using, but we knew something had to change. We gave ourselves and recovery a chance. Hearing what other recovering addicts had to say often helped us think more clearly.

I was sure I would die using. I had tried to quit for a long time, but I couldn't make it. My only advice to fellow addicts is to try recovery. It is sure a lot more productive and successful than anything I have ever tried on my own.

When I was new in the program, I used to hear phrases from people who had been in N.A. for a while, like jails, institutions and death. When I thought about the addicts I knew they had all ended up either dead, in prison, or in institutions. This term has sure given me a chance to think back on how out of control my life had become and how powerless I was over my addiction.

The spiritual principles of N.A. relieve us of the physical compulsion to use and the mental obsession with using. Obsession is playing thoughts over and over again in our minds. Compulsion is being driven to using drugs by some urge we cannot explain. The spiritual aspect of addiction is our self-centeredness which caused us to put our using first. The process of working the Twelve Steps changes us. We become able to make the choice to stay clean, one day at a time. The obsession to use is removed. We gain the ability to consider other people rather than thinking only of ourselves.

I am not stupid and I am not tough. I suffer like many from the disease of addiction. I don't want to be an addict and I don't want to be a convict. I want to live and love and share the things I earn and learn with people who care. I want what this program has to offer me. I can't go back and live my life over and that hurts. As I sit here in my cell I know there are people out there following in my footsteps and it brings tears to my eyes because I know the pain they are feeling.

Through practicing the principles of the N.A. program, we learned about ourselves. Some of us had difficulty coming to grips with the disease of addiction. We felt like we didn't belong anywhere. One thought we heard over and over again in meetings was that addicts feel unique and different. We feel alone, even in a crowded room. At times, due to the disease of addiction, we feel apart from everyone. We learned that no matter how we feel, we are not alone. We found strength and support in Narcotics Anonymous.

MEETINGS

There are a variety of reasons that brought us to Narcotics Anonymous. Whatever the reasons were, many of us heard the N.A. message in meetings. We share our experience, strength and hope for a better way of life, drug free. Gaining support from recovering addicts, our attitudes began to change.

Due to circumstances beyond our control, the support and strength gained through attendance at meetings may not always be available to us. Regardless of meeting availability, we practice the principles contained in the Twelve Steps of N.A. to the best of our ability. Some of us try recovery and find relief from the disease of addiction. Others try and fail many times, but we have one thing in common, we keep coming back.

I joined the ranks of recovery in quite a bit of pain. I would like to say I wanted recovery at first, but I did not. It was just another scam I tried to run.

I felt welcome at the N.A. meetings, and I also knew I belonged. I had always fit in with others, but always felt apart from them. I could fit in like a chameleon, changing my colors with my surroundings. But at N.A. I found no need to do this. Another thing that attracted me to the meetings was that people invited me back. This did not occur very often in my active addiction. The people in N.A. loved me until I could love myself.

Our acceptance in N.A. does not depend on good behavior or working a perfect program. For the first time we are accepted because we are addicts, not in spite of the fact that we are addicts. We can feel the acceptance in the meetings. Members around the world agree that when we leave a meeting we feel better. We gain hope from other members and practical information to help us live clean. However, many of us find that the insanity of addictive thinking may return when we start to recover.

For 3 months of my incarceration I went to all the meetings. They had what I wanted, peace. I wanted to enjoy my life, not waste away in some jail cell. When I was released I figured I was cured, but all that changed before I ever knew it. I was caught up in the web of addiction once again, not caring about myself or others. In one month, I violated my probation and was back in jail. Upon sentencing, I received a 3 year bid. That was 8 months ago.

We may find many of our old ways returning. Loneliness, isolation, resentment and discontentment once again begin to rule our lives. We tell ourselves we can handle it. All thoughts of powerlessness are forgotten. Our addictive thinking once again opens the door to compulsion and obsession. These thoughts led many of us to relapse into active addiction. Some have died proving they can handle using drugs.

RELAPSE

Relapse is a return to using drugs after a period of abstinence. This is a serious issue for all addicts. Some die and others never make it back to recovery, continuing to use for years in pain and hopelessness. The longer it goes on, the worse it gets. When we choose to return to using, we do not start over or even continue from where we left off, although our addictive thinking may tell us that we will. Not only does the disease get worse, we have lost the ability to use in ignorance because N.A. has shown us another way.

The insanity started all over again. I was telling lies, stealing from anybody and everybody, including my family, because they were the easiest ones to lie to. I had no respect for anyone, including myself. I had no feelings, thoughts or cares for anyone. I hated myself and others, unless I could use them for parties or drugs.

N.A. is a program of action. It is what we do that counts, not what we say, or think, or mean to do. With the Twelve Steps of Narcotics Anonymous, meeting attendance, contact with other recovering addicts and not using, we can stay clean and recover.

Because of my relapse, I found out what kind of person I am, one with an addictive personality. I am truly powerless over my addiction, but with this fellowship I feel a chance at life again.

Addicts who relapse are as welcome at N.A. meetings as any other newcomer. Addiction is a disease, not a moral problem. Some members who have relapsed do feel that they learned lessons about their powerlessness and insanity that they were unwilling or unable to learn any other way. With a return to abstinence from drugs, the disease of addiction is arrested, and recovery is possible through working the Twelve Steps of Narcotics Anonymous.

RECOVERY

We needed a guide to help us change our lives. We realized that nothing could change the fact that we were in prison, but we could begin to change ourselves by beginning to break down the walls inside us.

The Twelve Steps of Narcotics Anonymous are the guides we use to change. We believe that change requires a willingness to work the Steps, being open to new ideas, and being as honest as we are capable of being at the time. It is our experience that when we begin to work the Steps, more often than not we develop new attitudes. Without drugs in our lives, our minds become clearer and we realize we are beginning to build a new way of life.

I have done anything and everything to get the drugs I needed. But today it's different for me. Today I am not using. In the fellowship of Narcotics Anonymous, I was able to find some purpose for existing without the use of drugs, and most importantly, a new way to exist without drugs--the Twelve Steps. I find in this program that if I try to the best of my ability to apply the Twelve Steps in my daily life, things will happen for the best, maybe not exactly when I want it, but in God's time. A lot of times I don't even know why they happen, they just do. I don't try to figure it out, I just know it works for me and I'm grateful.

Many of us believe that we rely on a power greater than ourselves to help us to live clean. When we realize we have found a power which can free us from using and from the obsession to use, we become more willing to trust in this Higher Power. We may choose to call this power God, but it is our choice.

I have to believe in a Power greater than myself and trust that Power to restore me to sanity. I can't run my life, I am powerless, so I have to turn my will over to this Higher Power. I have to apply all Twelve Steps of Narcotics Anonymous in my life and God has to help me. I can't do it on my own. I can walk the yard of this institution, but it takes more heart to ask God to help me take these Steps.

Our reactions and feelings change as we work the Steps. We begin to attract others into our lives. We start to allow people to get close to us, rather than drive them away. We learn to trust and to be trusted. No longer must we hide who we are for fear of being rejected. The sense of emptiness all addicts know now begins to leave us.

By getting to know myself and who I really am, I began to work on those areas of myself I didn't like, such as my jealousy, envy, pride, hatred, and revenge. It's not as though I was a bad person wanting to get good; I realized those emotions made me feel bad, and that I was wasting a great deal of energy I could not afford.

When such emotions came up inside me, I realized something was wrong. My Higher Power that I had begun to talk to in my early days of recovery was the one I turned to. When these emotions came up I recognized what was happening and admitted it. Usually the feelings inside went away. Sometimes they didn't, but as time went on I learned about discipline and using my assets. I have come to believe that discipline, responsibility, and creativity are also a means to freedom for me.

The Twelve Steps are a program for living. Our experience has shown that the Steps can help us to work through any situation. Practicing the Twelve Steps in our daily lives enables us to handle day-to-day life more easily. Our ability to do this comes slowly. We found that as we were developing the strength necessary to live life on life's-terms, the principles we used in our daily lives allowed us to face times of fear or pain.

I did 5 years, and stayed clean. Living in the general population was hard. I had a lot of faith that God would carry me. I read what N.A. literature I could get. I went to N.A. meetings when they were held. Letting other people know what I was feeling and letting them know how I was working the Steps was real difficult for me. I was in jail for a long time and there were meetings that were closed down for lack of support. I worked the steps the best way I could.

I admitted I was powerless over my addiction, that my life had become unmanageable. That was real evident to me, all I had to do was look around me and see the locked gates. At that point I came to believe that there was a power greater than myself that could restore me to sanity. I knew I didn't want to use. I knew there was a better life for me, and that was enough a lot of the days.

Recovery was often new, strange and frightening. Sometimes the pull of old friends and old ways was strong. It seemed as if it would be easier to go back to using, but using is not the answer for addicts. We found a new way to live which is better than anything we had ever known. Even though there were outside pressures on us to use, we were not willing to go back to the life we had before we got clean.

I was alone with my two-year-old daughter, who was born during my using. We had not much more than the clothes on our backs. I was expecting twins, one of whom died. My surviving son had almost died at birth but was still alive. I used gratitude to get me through the days. My first sponsor¹ died, yet in many ways she still lives in my memory. She lives in my love for others in the same way she loved me.

Looking at my possible death from a terminal disease was hard. There were times when nothing anyone said to me helped. In the end I realized that I only have today anyway. Today I am healthy. Regardless of life's disillusionments, I prefer to believe in life. All human beings are given only one day or one moment at a time to live. I am no different from other people.

¹ For further discussion of this important topic, please refer to I.P. #11, Sponsorship

As long as we don't use, we have a chance at a new life, in or out of jail. The program does not promise us that life will become easy and everything will go our way. We learn that there is a difference between needs and wants. Our Higher Power always meets our needs. Through working the Twelve Steps, we gain serenity in spite of any living situation.

One by one I brought back the people in my life I had loved so much. Later when it came that time in my recovery, I started making amends and felt more relief. I have happiness and peace like I never felt before. I have a purpose, I know God has a plan for me. I know as long as I have faith in a loving God, and I apply the Steps in my N.A. life, I am on the road to recovery. My dreams are different today, they are reality.

This is a program of change. We learn to accept life on its own terms. We learn to overcome self-destructiveness. We stop setting ourselves up to fail. When we see that we caused our own problems, we may react with anger, depression, resentment or fear. Taking an honest look at ourselves often gives us information we don't like. Our Higher Power will remove everything we are willing to turn over. Whatever we have done in the past, we don't have to do again. Most importantly, we never have to use again.

RELEASE

Those of us who have found recovery in prison know that upon release we are vulnerable. Uncomfortable and faced with the feelings of insecurity our release from prison often brings, the temptation to return to using can be overwhelming.

The first time I went for parole, I turned release down. I felt I was not ready to face the outside and stay clean. Later the parole board decided they were going to give me a chance and I was petrified. Now that I didn't have those walls around me and people staring at me, I had built walls inside of me. I was faced with going out there and being on my own. Those were real scary feelings for me.

Our experience has shown that no matter whether we are in prison or on the outside, wherever we go, the disease of addiction goes with us. The actions taken to begin recovery while incarcerated are the same actions recovering addicts practice on the outside. Our first priority is staying clean.

I used after I went to a few meetings while still in jail, but I learned. The N.A. program began working for me while I was still locked up, and it has continued to work for me on the streets.

The first days after release are critical for our continuing recovery. The disease of addiction is strong; therefore, we cannot afford to visit using friends. We need to surround ourselves with recovering addicts.

Because of addiction I had lost custody of my son, my family had abandoned me and I felt completely alone. Two days out on work release, I used. I used for fifteen days, committed new crimes, and found myself in a park with a knife at my throat. I hadn't lived through all that, including prison, to die. For ninety days in work release I had never been offered so many drugs. There were times when I thought I was losing my mind. On blind faith, I followed the suggestions.

I got on my knees; I had done worse things for drugs so I was willing to do this in order to live. Finally after 60 days I used the phone to call outside N.A. members. I was scared to death. I would be vulnerable. I would have to speak to someone I didn't know. Before, I had only used the phone to find out who had money or where the drugs were.

In many meetings those first ninety days I screamed about wanting to get loaded. At one meeting, I literally held onto the table for dear life so I wouldn't run out and use. "Stay here, it gets better" kept running through my head. N.A. members kept telling me to come back. Inside me, I longed to be able to carry on a conversation, smile and laugh. It had been years, if ever. I shared how I felt and hung onto the members of this fellowship. I had to completely change. I had no idea how to change, and it scared me. Change is in our Twelve Steps, so at sixty days clean, I made a step meeting my home group.

The meetings are a source of hope, support, guidance and fellowship. Any addict is welcome at an N.A. meeting. We can sense the acceptance and concern in a meeting room. Regular attendance needs to begin as soon as possible. We need to let members get to know us and to let them know we need help. No one can help if they don't know that there is a problem.

That first week I went to work and isolated in my apartment. I was talking on the phone with some people in the program back home. I shared with them how desperate and scared I felt. I couldn't understand all these feelings I was having, and I was clean. They told me I needed a meeting. I needed recovering people in my life. I needed to be in the rooms of Narcotics Anonymous again.

Our problems and fears are lessened as we work the Twelve Steps of Narcotics Anonymous.

Sometimes I thought it would take a stick of dynamite to break down the walls I had built up inside. It has taken me some time, but I believe I have knocked down a whole lot of them. I started by not using drugs, going to meetings, and by getting a sponsor to help me take the Steps and apply them to my new life on the outside.

The following are some of the things we have found helpful in making that transition:

1. Don't use, no matter what.
2. Go to an N.A. meeting on the first day out; attending ninety meetings in ninety days is a good idea.
3. Call a sponsor; talk to other recovering addicts.
4. Read N.A. literature.
5. Get phone numbers of other N.A. members.
6. Work the Twelve Steps of Narcotics Anonymous.

When at the end of the road we find that we can no longer function as a human being, either with or without drugs, we all face the same dilemma. What is there left to do? There seems to be this alternative: either go on as best we can to the bitter ends--jails, institutions or death--or find a new way to live. In years gone by, very few addicts ever had this last choice. Those who are addicted today are more fortunate. For the first time in history, a simple way has been proving itself in the lives of many addicts. It is available to us all. This is a simple spiritual--not religious--program, known as Narcotics Anonymous.²

Editor's Note: The excerpts in this booklet were edited in some cases for clarity. We would like to thank the N.A. members that wrote to us from prison, for without their words, this booklet would not have been possible.

OTHER N.A. LITERATURE YOU MAY WISH TO READ:

NARCOTICS ANONYMOUS - Originally published in 1983, this publication is commonly referred to as the Basic Text for recovery from addiction. In its pages, many addicts share their experience, strength and hope about the disease of addiction and their recovery through the N.A. program. It encompasses and expands on the chapters from the N.A. White Booklet and includes an additional chapter, "More Will Be Revealed." The personal stories of many recovering addicts are also included in order to assist new members in finding identification and hope for a better life.

N.A. WHITE BOOKLET, NEWLY REVISED - The N.A. White Booklet was the first piece of literature written by the fellowship of Narcotics Anonymous. It contains a concise description of the N.A. program, including all the information in pamphlets No. 1 and No. 6. The White Booklet is included in its entirety in the Basic Text.

RECOVERY AND RELAPSE (I.P. #6) - An excerpt from the White Booklet, this pamphlet discusses the early warning signs of relapse as well as actions that addicts can take to avoid relapse.

AM I AN ADDICT? (I.P. #7) - Forty-five questions are listed to assist individuals in making this personal decision. The questions range from focusing on obvious behavioral symptoms to more subtle personality changes that accompany the disease of addiction. Reading this pamphlet may help you to face addiction honestly and give you hope, because it offers the solution of the N.A. program.

JUST FOR TODAY (I.P. #8) - There are five positive thoughts presented in this pamphlet to help recovering addicts each day. Ideal for reading on a daily basis, these thoughts provide addicts with the perspective of clean living to face each new day. The remainder of the pamphlet develops the principle of living a day at a time, encouraging addicts to trust in a Higher Power and work the N.A. program on a daily basis.

SPONSORSHIP (I.P. #11) - Sponsorship is a vital tool for recovery. This introductory pamphlet helps provide an understanding of sponsorship, especially for new members. The pamphlet addresses some questions, including what is a sponsor? How do you get a sponsor? Also included is a closing section, "How to Be a Sponsor."

YOUTH AND RECOVERY (I.P. # 13) - The message of this pamphlet is that recovery is possible for all addicts, regardless of their ages or period of drug use. It emphasizes that all addicts eventually end up at the same point of total despair, but this is not necessary - we can begin recovery right away! Sections on hitting bottom, making a decision, peer pressure and family problems, living for today, and a message of hope.

FOR THE NEWCOMER (I.P. #16) - This informational pamphlet describes how Narcotics Anonymous combats the disease of addiction that is shared by all N.A. members. It sets forth the Twelve Steps, the blueprints for recovery. Information about recognizing and experiencing feelings is included, as well as suggestions to utilize a sponsor and new friends in the N.A. fellowship. All of these tools help addicts to begin and maintain their recovery.

STAYING CLEAN ON THE OUTSIDE (I.P. #23) - This pamphlet is directed towards those recovering addicts who are re-entering society from an institutional setting, treatment or correctional. It outlines the basics necessary to continue their recovery while in transition. It addresses such issues as how to get involved in recovery in N.A. while institutionalized, how to make the first contacts with N.A. members, how to find and choose a sponsor, and how to get involved in personal service. A highly valuable tool for those in a hospital or institutional setting interested in developing a personal program of daily action.

SOME SERIAL PUBLICATIONS YOU MAY WISH TO READ:

REACHING OUT - *Reaching Out* is a newsletter that is published by the World Service Conference Hospitals and Institutions Committee of N.A., to meet the needs of institutionalized addicts, as well as H&I committees throughout the fellowship. If you are interested in being placed on the mailing list for this publication or would like to write to us about your experience in recovery through the Narcotics Anonymous program, the address is: *Reaching Out*, c/o World Service Office, P.O. Box 9999, Van Nuys, CA, 91409 U.S.A.

THE N.A. WAY MAGAZINE - *The N.A. Way Magazine* is the fellowship's monthly international journal. Its main section, "Meeting in Print," contains articles about personal recovery written by N.A. members from around the world. In a monthly feature article, a current N.A. event or topic is discussed in detail. "Viewpoint" is an ongoing presentation of various opinions on issues of interest to N.A. members, and the "Home Group" cartoon series keeps us laughing at ourselves. To order a subscription, write the World Service Office.

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 awakening as a result of these steps, we tried to carry this message to addicts, and to practice these principles in all our affairs.*

Reprinted for adaptation
by permission of Alcoholics
Anonymous World Services, Inc.