

## God Has a Plan

I know this may sound simplistic, but I really believe God has all the stuff that's happened in the last twenty years, especially our devolution in the last ten, in a plan. I remember well when things started going off track thinking, "Gee, I better say something quick before this goes too far." And I DID say something, verbally and in writing. I was even on the WS Board of Trustees and it all fell on deaf ears. It was almost like my experience was only opinion and those who had tried nothing, and had nothing work for them, were listened to with knitted brows and like they knew what they were talking about. I got nervous, then I realized we had come so far - so far - that there had to be a backlash. And so, now we have some evidence about what we do and don't do in NA. Now, we have to wake up spiritually and resume our growth and continuance.

I think a lot of the policies forged in the 'dark ages' between 1990 and 2002 are going to be recinded when members understand just how 'exclusive' they are and some new 'inclusive' policies will be instituted. Just remember this: "Policies are only as good as the people applying them." If the people applying a good policy don't understand why a certain thing is being done a certain way, then the value of the policy is up to luck and happenstance. Usually, it will go badly. Like an uncaring functionary saying, "Look, man, I'm just doing my job." as the guilotine blade drops to chop of someone's head.

It takes a lot of study and learning to become competent at serving NA in a Tradition based manner. Group conscience is a sensitive matter and can easily be undone as well as done. Ask the question so as to get a predetermined answer, don't let the people voting understand all side of an issue, press for the vote while everyone is tired or in need of a break. Our entire Fellowship has been placed on hold by the processes and shenanigans of the 1990's. To say this was all done in the name of 'group conscience' is a sad commentary on just how out of touch with reality some members have become. No 'members' even have a clue of what has happened; only a select few and they don't dare publicize the changes because of the roars of outrage that will come just after understanding that members - according to the new structure - have no real say in NA anymore. Of course, this is not really so is it? But people on the inside think it is so because they created a paper tiger that empowers them to control all the money and all the copyrights on all the literature that they can retail to the general public, military, government, jails and hospitals at an enourmous upcharge forever. The positions are held mainly by people who have served over many years in staff and elected positions. So, you have employees making the rules for themselves as well as for the NA Fellowship through its so-called representative body, the World Service Conference. We are all waiting for the Judge Judy moment, "What were you thinking?" to occur about the radical changes in our sevice structure. Oh, you didn't know?

Thank God, God has a plan!

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# **NARCOTICS ANONYMOUS TRADITIONS HISTORY**

**NARCOTICS ANONYMOUS  
Memphis, Tennessee February 8, 1981**

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CHAPTER SIX - - The Twelve Traditions

## **The Twelve Traditions of NA**

The 12 Traditions contain the brief 'cheat sheets' from the Colorado Region of Narcotic Anonymous to give the service committee a better understanding.

## **Lone Star Region Tradition Workbook**

The NA Guide to the Twelve Traditions  
LSRSC literature Committee  
\* NON CONFERENCE APPROVED \*  
Draft of Introduction minus the questions

## **Narcotics Anonymous Way of Life Why It Works: 12 Traditions**

When our Traditions are violated, the special love that powers this Fellowship cannot flow. When we feel hatred or tension, a quick look to the Traditions can sometimes identify the cause. Imposing one's will on another in the grip of a powerful emotion is likely to be faulty in some important regards. Best to pray. Spiritual strength is usually accompanied by a sense of calm.

**For a further understanding of the Traditions of Narcotics Anonymous  
Read your Basic Text & It Works How and Why  
Don't use, no matter what and try to live clean**

## **Remember**

**The 12 Steps help us work through our shit  
The 12 Traditions helps us live with others in unity and keep the Fellowship alive  
The 12 Concepts teach us how to be of service & give back what's freely given to us**

**The moral of the story is... recovery is an inside job. Spirituality is all inclusive, even to those dastardly 13th steppers. No member I've met as of yet is themselves exempt from moral inadequacies. Judge not lest ye be judged. Teach by example rather than by direction. Quit playing the victim role, victims don't recover.**

Therefore,

"With gratitude in our cleanliness, we dedicate our N.A. book to the loving service of our Higher Power that through the development of conscious contact with God, no addict seeking recovery need die without having had a chance to find a better way of life."

We remain trusted servants.

In gratitude and loving service,

WORLD LITERATURE CONFERENCE-III

WORLD SERVICE CONFERENCE-LITERATURE COMMITTEE,

NARCOTICS ANONYMOUS At Memphis, Tennessee February 8, 1981

## INTRODUCTION

This book is the shared common and personal experience of the Fellowship of Narcotics Anonymous. We welcome you to read this text, trusting that you will choose to share with us the new life we have found. We have by no means found a "cure" for addiction. We offer only a proven plan for daily recovery.

In N.A., we follow a program adapted from Alcoholics Anonymous. In the last forty-five years, more than one million people have recovered in A.A., most of them just as hopelessly addicted to alcohol as we were to drugs. We are grateful to the A.A. fellowship for showing us the way to a new life.

The Twelve Steps of Narcotics Anonymous, as adapted from A.A., are the basis of our recovery program. We have only broadened the perspective of addiction. We follow the same path with a single exception; our identification as addicts is all-inclusive in respect to any mood-changing, mind-altering substance.

"Alcoholism" did not cover the total spectrum as comprehensively as does addiction. We believe that we have been guided by a Greater Consciousness as a Fellowship, and are grateful for the Direction that has enabled us to build upon an already-proven program of recovery.

We have come to Narcotics Anonymous by various means and believe that as our common denominator is that we failed to come to terms with our addictions, however varied. Because of the degree and variety of addictions found within our Fellowship, we have approached the solution contained within this book in general terms. We pray that we have been searching and thorough, so that every addict who reads this volume will find the hope we have found.

Based on our collective experience, we believe that every addict, including the "potential" addict, suffers from an incurable disease of body, mind and spirit. We were in the grip of a hopeless dilemma. The solution of which is spiritual in nature. Therefore, this book will deal in great part with spiritual matters.

We are not a religious organization. our program is a set of spiritual principles through which we are recovering from a seemingly hopeless state of mind and body. Throughout the compiling of this work, the prevailing theme has been the conscious prayer and meditation:

***"GOD, grant us knowledge that we may write according to Your Divine precepts; instill in us a sense of Your purpose, make us servants of Your will and grant us a bond of selflessness that this may truly be Your work, not ours, in order that no addict, anywhere, need die from the horrors of addiction."***

Everything that occurs in the course of N.A. service must be motivated by the desire to more successfully carry the message of recovery to the addict who still suffers. It was for this reason that we began this work. We must always remember that as individual members, groups, and service committees, we are not, and should never be, in competition with each other. We work separately and together to help the newcomer and for our common good. We have learned, painfully, that internal strife cripples our Fellowship; it prevents us from providing the services necessary for growth.

It is our hope that this book will help the suffering addict find the solution we have found. our purpose is to remain clean, just for today, and to carry the message of recovery..

Thank you,

WORLD LITERATURE CONFERENCE III

WORLD SERVICE CONFERENCE - LITERATURE COMMITTEE, NARCOTICS ANONYMOUS

**NARCOTICS ANONYMOUS**  
**Memphis, Tennessee February 8, 1981**  
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**FORWARD**

"The full fruit of a labor of love lives in the harvest, and that always comes in its right season..."

The material for this book was drawn from the personal experiences of recovering addicts within the Fellowship of Narcotics Anonymous. The text is based on an outline derived from the pamphlet (our "white book"), "Narcotics Anonymous." The first eight chapters are based on the topic headings in the white book" and carry the same title. We have included a ninth chapter, 'Just for Today,' and a tenth chapter, 'More Will Be Revealed.' The remainder of the text was comprised of personal stories and appendices.

**Following is a brief history of the book:**

Narcotics Anonymous was formed in July 1953 with the first meeting held in Southern California. The Fellowship grew erratically, but quickly spread to various parts of the United States. From the beginning while membership was still very small and the need was seen for a "book on recovery" to help strengthen the Fellowship. The pamphlet, "Narcotics Anonymous," was published in 1962.

However, the Fellowship still had little structure and the 1960's were a period of struggle. Membership grew rapidly for a time, and then began to decline. The need for more specific direction was readily apparent. N.A. demonstrated its maturity in 1972 when a World Service Office was opened in Los Angeles. The W.S.O. has brought the needed unity and sense of purpose to the Fellowship. The opening of W.S.O. brought stability to the growth of the Fellowship.

Today, there are many thousand recovering addicts in hundreds of meetings all across the United States and in many foreign countries. Today, the World Service office truly serves a worldwide Fellowship. Narcotics Anonymous has long recognized the need for a complete text on addiction - a book about addicts, by addicts and for addicts, which would serve us much like the A.A. "Big Book" has served that Fellowship.

This effort was strengthened shortly after the formation of W.S.O. with the publication of The N.A. Tree, a pamphlet on service work. This pamphlet the original "service manual" of the Fellowship. It has been followed by subsequent and more comprehensive volumes, and now the N.A. Service manual. The manual outlined a service structure which included a World Service Conference. The W.S.C., in turn, included a Literature committee .

With the encouragement of W.S.O., several members of the Board of Trustees and the Conference, work began. As the cry for literature, particularly a comprehensive text, became more widespread, the W.S.C. Literature committee developed. In October, 1979, the first, World Literature Conference was held at Wichita, Kansas, followed by conferences at Lincoln, Nebraska and Memphis, Tennessee.

The W.S.C. Literature Committee, working in conference and as individuals, have collected hundreds of pages of material from members and groups throughout the Fellowship. This material has been laboriously catalogued, edited, rewritten, assembled, dismembered and reassembled. Dozens of area and regional representatives working with the Committee have dedicated weeks and thousands of man-hours to produce the work here presented. But more importantly, those members have conscientiously sought to insure a "group-conscious" text.

In keeping with the spirit of anonymity, we, the Literature Committee feel it appropriate to express our special gratitude and appreciation to the Fellowship as a whole, especially the many of you who contributed material for inclusion in the book. We feel that this book is a synthesis of the collective Group Conscience of the entire Fellowship and that every single idea submitted is included in the work, in some form or another.

This volume is intended as a textbook for every addict seeking recovery. As addicts, we know the pain of addiction, but we also know the joy of recovery we have found in the Fellowship and on the program of Narcotics Anonymous. We believe the time has come to share our recovery in written form with all who desire what we have found.

Appropriately, this book is devoted to informing every addict: JUST FOR TODAY, YOU NEVER HAVE TO USE AGAIN.

**We come to this program from homes and apartments, offices and schools, treatment centers and jails, parks and gutters. We come from many different places, but they all share loneliness, pain, and fear. Somehow addiction draws us together in Narcotics Anonymous.**

**We came to this program for many different reasons. Those of us who stay, do so for the same reasons--to stop using and stay clean. After we've actually stopped, and the fog has cleared a bit, most of us take a look around to see what this program is all about. We start trying to do the things we see those around us doing. Eventually we come to the Twelve Steps and try to work them the best we can. The result is a degree of freedom that we never have known before. We find freedom from drugs and the obsession to use them; and in time a bit of freedom from that part of ourselves that has been destroyed.**

**We're taught that we can only keep what we have by giving it away. So we seek out and give our hand to other addicts who have problems like ours and want help. Usually one of the first things we try to do when we're working with a newcomer is to get them to a meeting. After all, that's what worked for us.**

**Why is this so? What is it about our meetings that's so special? Usually, about all we can say is that there is a feeling there, a feeling of strength and hope and love; an atmosphere of recovery. Our meetings are very special to most of us. They're a place where we feel safe; a place where we fit in. But what keeps it that way? One would think that any time people like us get together the results would be chaos. Groups of self-centered, self-willed, isolated individuals just can't meet together peacefully and safely; but we do. The reason that we can is that we have Twelve Traditions that help to keep our groups "safe" and free.**

**For most of us, understanding of these Traditions comes slowly over a period of time. We pick up a little information here and there as we talk to members and visit various groups. It usually isn't until we get involved with service that someone points out that "personal recovery depends on N.A. unity", and that unity depends on how well we follow our traditions.**

**Because we hear about "suggested steps" and of no must" so often, some of us make a mistake and assume that this applies to our groups the way it applies to the individual. The Twelve Traditions of N.A. are not suggested, and they are not negotiable. These are the rules that keep our fellowship alive and free.**

**By following these principles in our dealings with others in N.A. and society at large, we avoid many problems. That isn't to say that our Traditions eliminate all problems. We still have to face difficulties as they arise: communication problems, differences of opinion, internal controversies, problems with individuals, groups outside the fellowship.**

**However, when we apply these principles we avoid some of the pitfalls.**

**Many of our problems are much like those our predecessors had to face. Their hard won experience gave birth to the Traditions; and our own experiences have shown that these principles are just as valid today as they were yesterday. Our Traditions are what protect us from the internal and external forces which could destroy us. They are truly the ties that bind us together, but they don't work automatically. It is only through understanding and application that they have power.**

**Grey Copy**  
**CHAPTER SIX**  
**THE TWELVE TRADITIONS OF NARCOTICS ANONYMOUS**

We keep what we have only with vigilance and just as freedom for the individual comes from the Twelve Steps so freedom for the groups springs from our Traditions. As long as the ties that bind us at bind us together are stronger than those that would tear us apart, all will be well.

- 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 nonprofessional, 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.**

**The Twelve Traditions of NA  
Colorado Region of Narcotic Anonymous  
to give the service committee a better understanding.**

***First Tradition*** Our common welfare should come first; personal recovery depends on NA unity.

Our First Tradition concerns unity and our common welfare. One of the most important things about our new way of life is being a part of a group of addicts seeking recovery. Our survival is directly related to the survival of the group and the Fellowship. To maintain unity within NA, it is imperative that the group remain stable, or the entire Fellowship perishes and the individual dies.

**Lone Star Region Tradition Workbook**

The relationship described in the First Tradition is reciprocal. Groups work together in a spirit of cooperation to ensure the survival of Narcotics Anonymous; in turn, those groups receive strength and support from every other group and all our services. The strength of our mutual commitment to NA creates the unity that binds us together in spite of all that might divide us. The common welfare of NA depends on the continued growth and well being of the Fellowship in every corner of the world. Our shared commitment to recovery and to our common welfare gives us a personal stake in the unity of NA. In meetings, we find a new place to belong, new friends, and a hope for a better life. A feeling of care and concern grows between us and the group. We learn to treat others with kindness and respect and do what we can to support each other and our group.

Sometimes we comfort each other merely by being present; at other times, a phone call or letter to say hello can make a world of difference. Our relationships with other addicts are a source of strength in our personal recovery. We come to rely on meetings and on each other for that support. The unity we see in our meetings is an expression not only of our reliance on each other but our mutual reliance on spiritual principles and a Higher Power.

NA unity begins with our recognition of the therapeutic value of one addict helping another. We help each other in different ways. Sometimes we help each other one-on-one, as in sponsorship, or we may help each other by participating in the formation of new meetings to make NA accessible to more addicts. Many groups are formed when members of a more established group help to start another group. Sharing the responsibility enhances our common welfare and creates unity among NA members who work together. Groups flourish with the loving support of addicts helping addicts. We strengthen our unity by participating in each other's recovery.

Communication goes a long way toward building and enhancing our common welfare. With an attitude of open-mindedness, we seek to understand other perspectives. Reports may tell us a lot about what's happening in other groups or areas, but our common welfare depends on more than just information. True communication involves an effort on our part to "listen" as we read or hear reports, seeking a better understanding of the needs and problems of both our own group and other groups, wherever they may be. Encouraging each member to speak openly from the heart enhances our ability to work together. Regular reports, thorough discussion, and active listening lead us to the kind of understanding that helps us find creative solutions that benefit us all. Today's decisions may affect tomorrow's members. When we think of solutions to our current problems, it's not hard to consider the needs of our group, our area, our region, or even the worldwide Fellowship. But it's also important to remember the "unseen member" in our discussion—the member yet to come. When we work to ensure the vitality of NA, we're not working just for ourselves but for those yet to join us.

The unity that supports our common welfare is created not only by working together but also by playing together. The friendships we develop outside meetings strengthen NA unity. Fellowship activities provide opportunities for us to relax, socialize with each other, and have fun. Conventions, dinners, and holiday celebrations give us a chance to celebrate our recovery while practicing social skills. Picnics, dances, and sports days, for example, often allow our families to participate, too. We strengthen our sense of community when we share more than just meeting time. Stronger relationships develop, as we become more involved in each other's lives. The care and understanding born of these relationships are strong threads in the fabric of NA unity.

### **Applying spirituals principles**

In the Twelve Steps of NA we learn to apply principles to better our lives. Moved by the miracle of personal recovery, we reach out to share that miracle with others. This is the essence of being of service in NA. In supporting our unity, we first apply principles to guide our own behavior. As groups, we use the same principles for guidance. That guidance creates a sense of unity that strengthens our ability to reach out to others, enhancing our common welfare. Some of the principles that seem particularly important to unity include surrender and acceptance, commitment, selflessness, love, and anonymity. As we practice these principles, we will find others who strengthen unity as well. Surrender and acceptance open the door to unity. As our trust in a Higher Power grows, it gets easier to let go of our personal desires and stop fighting for what we want. With an attitude of surrender, working together in a group becomes easier. Tradition One presents a picture of addicts working together worldwide to support each other's recovery. We try to remember this goal in all our actions, as individuals or as groups. If we find that our personal desires or the aims of our group conflict with that ideal, unity asks us to surrender our own desires and accept guidance that enhances the greater good of Narcotics Anonymous. Only by deciding to be part of that whole can we support the unity so essential to our personal survival.

Commitment is another essential ingredient in unity. Personal commitment to our shared sense of purpose is one of the ties that bind us together. When we know that we belong in NA, and when we make a commitment to stay, we become a part of the greater whole. Our sense of belonging is closely related to our degree of commitment to recovery in NA. As groups, the combined strength of that commitment is a powerful force in serving others. With that strong commitment, we are able to carry the message of hope that will support us all in our recovery. Commitment is a decision supported by our belief in NA as a way of life. Regular meeting attendance is one way in which we live out that belief. Greeting newcomers as they arrive or giving our telephone number to someone who needs help also reflects our decision. Sponsorship, sharing in meetings, setting up chairs before meetings—all these are ways in which we express our commitment. Each member finds a level of service that fits comfortably into a balanced program of recovery.

Selflessness is another indispensable element in unity. The principles we learn in the Steps help us let go of our selfishness and lovingly serve the needs of others. To keep our groups healthy, we place the needs of our group ahead of our own personal desires. The same principle applies to our affairs as a group. Setting aside what we may want as a group, we think about the needs of the Fellowship and seek ways to support our common good. Our ability to survive as a Fellowship and to reach others depends on our unity.

Love is a principle that is expressed in the practice of goodwill toward one another. We contribute to unity in our meetings by exercising loving care in the way we speak to and the way we treat one another. We try to share our experience, strength, and hope in a way, which demonstrates that recovery, is available in Narcotics Anonymous. An atmosphere of love and care in our meetings helps members feel comfortable and safe. The love we show each other attracts newcomers and strengthens us all, fueling our sense of unity and common welfare.

Anonymity, the spiritual foundation of our Traditions, supports NA unity as well. When we apply anonymity to the First Tradition, we overlook the differences that would separate us. In the context of unity, anonymity means that the message of recovery is for every addict who wants it. We learn to set aside our prejudices and focus on our common identity as addicts. Each of us has an equal right to and responsibility for the well-being of Narcotics Anonymous. Just as anonymity is the spiritual foundation of our Traditions, the unity spoken of in the First Tradition is the practical foundation on which we may build strong and successful groups. With unity as our practical foundation, we find that our relationship with one another is more important than any issue that may arise to divide us. No problem or disagreement is more significant than our need for each other's support. The fundamental importance of our common welfare strengthens our understanding of all the other Traditions. Many questions can be answered simply by determining how the action we contemplate will affect the unity of the Fellowship. Will it serve to divide us, or will it bring us closer together?

**Are we practicing anonymity in our group?**