

WSC-LITERATURE SUBCOMMITTEE  
Ginni Swanson, Chairperson  
1805 Pentuckett Avenue  
San Diego, California 92104

July 29, 1983

TO: WSC Subcommittees  
Board of Trustees  
World Service Office  
All Regional Service Committees

Dear fellow members:

In the recent Fellowship Report, I did not report on our basic text because I assumed the WSO report would cover that. The latest WSO Newsline does a good job of that, however I felt there were a couple of points I should try to clarify.

Bob's discussion of copyright releases states:

"A more immediate problem are the authors and subjects of some of the stories that are being circulated by the WSC Literature Sub-Committee. Upon advise of legal counsel, it is important that we find these past contributors to literature and obtain the required release from them so their stories can become approved literature." (WSO Newsline, July 15, 1983, Page 2).

I agree wholeheartedly with Bob, that we need to get release forms from these members. However, I was confused when I read that paragraph, because the Literature Subcommittee is not circulating any stories, at this time, that I know of. Also, the stories that are referred to are already approved literature. "Hell-N-Back, I Felt Hopeless, It Won't Get Any Worse, My Gratitude Speaks, Up From Down Under, It Won't Always be Like This, Long Distance Recovery, Early Services, Institutional Story-Buford Prison, I Kept Coming Back, No Excuse for Loneliness, Relapse and Return and The War Is Over" were all approved for inclusion in our basic text at the World Service Conference in 1982. The reason they weren't included in the first edition and won't appear in the second edition of our basic text, is because approval and final release was never received from the authors. This stipulation was part of the motion, as it was stated at WSC-82. If you know the people who wrote the above-mentioned stories, please ask them to sign a release form immediately and return it to the WSO or the WSC-Literature Subcommittee. That way, their stories can be included in the subsequent editions of the book. It is already too late to get them in the 2nd edition. However, these stories have already been approved by the fellowship, and it is a shame not to be able to use them. If we can obtain releases from the contributors, the above listed stories can be included in subsequent printings of our basic text, as approved by WSC-82.

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In addition to the above referenced stories, a motion was passed at WSC-82 to include the stories from the little white booklet in our basic text. The authors of The Vicious Circle and I Was Different have signed release forms, so those stories will be added to the 2nd edition. Also, I have been informed that a release was obtained from the author of Fat Addict. I do not know if it was received in time to meet the printing deadline, however. If not, it will be included in the 3rd edition. We are still attempting to contact the authors of I Can't Do Any More Time and One Third of My Life. The remaining little white booklet stories (Fearful Mother and Something Meaningful also known as I Found the Only N.A. Meeting in the World) were released and printed in the first edition of our book. Therefore, to summarize, the only stories which will be added to the second edition of our basic text, are: The Vicious Circle, I Was Different and Pothead! because those are the only ones for which we've received release forms. We need the help of the fellowship in contacting the authors of the remaining stories so that they can be included in the third edition of our book.

With further reference to our basic text, I noticed a couple of things while assisting in the proofreading, that I wanted to bring up to the fellowship. I'd like to have a group conscience on the following items:

1. Regarding the portions quoted from the little white booklet which are included in the first nine chapters of the book. In the Memphis Approval Form and first edition of our basic text, these sections were set apart from the rest of the text (single spaced and indented). In the second edition, they will also be set apart (double spaced and italicized). Setting those portions apart from the regular text, indicates that they were quoted from another source. My question to you is: do you feel those portions need to be set apart from the rest of the text, or do you want them printed the same as everything else, in future editions of the book?

2. Regarding Chapter Seven; Recovery and Relapse: The first three paragraphs, as they appeared in the Memphis Approval Form, were not quoted directly from the little white booklet. In Paragraph One, the sentence, "Complete and continuous abstinence, however, is still the best ground for growth," the words "Complete and" were omitted.

In the same chapter, the Second Paragraph also contains an omission. The sentence reading "To step out alone and run our own lives again draws us, yet we seem to know that what we have has come from dependence on a Power greater than ourselves..." The Memphis Approval Form did not contain the words "dependence on." Also, in the last paragraph, the sentence in the white booklet, page nine, reads "Our resistance to change seems built in and only a nuclear blast of some kind will bring about any alteration or initiate another course of action." The Memphis Approval Form reads "...nuclear blast of some type..." I know

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all of this probably sounds very technical and confusing and I have included copies of the appropriate pages from the little white booklet and Memphis Approval Form so that you can compare the two.

It appears that these words were inadvertently left out when the book was typeset in Memphis. However, since the WSC-83 mandated "that our book be completely returned to its approved form in subsequent printings," the second edition will reflect the incomplete quotes as they appeared in the Memphis Approval Form. Do you, as a fellowship, want the subsequent printings of our basic text (3rd edition, etc.) to quote the little white booklet exactly, or do you want the portions to remain the way they are?

3. In Chapter Eight; We Do Recover: the fourth paragraph begins, "When my addictions brought me to the point of complete powerlessness, uselessness and surrender some twenty-six years ago, there was no N.A." As you all know, this portion was written at least six years ago, so the figure of 26 is no longer accurate. How do you want this treated in future editions of our book? Do you feel the number should be changed every time another edition of the book comes out? Or, do you want an asterisk at the bottom of the page giving the most updated figure? Or, do you want it left as it is with no change?

I would appreciate receiving a response from each of the RSR's, the WSB, WSO and WSC Subcommittees on these three questions. I want you to know that the WSC-Literature Subcommittee as well as the WSO Board of Directors have been working very diligently on the second edition of our basic text to ensure that it meets the requirements set down by the fellowship. In a further attempt to remain accountable to those we serve, I humbly ask for your group conscience on the above referenced items. Please send written input by October 1, 1983, to:

Ginni Swanson, Chairperson  
WSC-Literature Subcommittee  
1805 Pentucket Avenue  
San Diego, CA 92104

If you need further clarification, or wish to discuss this matter, please feel free to contact me at 619/235-6346.

In loving service

  
Ginni Swanson, Chairperson  
Literature Subcommittee

Enclosures

# Approval Form

Memphis

## Chapter Seven RECOVERY AND RELAPSE

Many consider continuous abstinence and recovery as noteworthy and therefore synonymous, while relapsers are sort of pushed aside, or worse yet, used as statistics that in no way give a true picture of the entire addiction pattern. We in the recovery program of Narcotics Anonymous have noted with some satisfaction that many of the relapsers when again active in the prime or substitute addiction have dropped many of the parallel behaviors that characterized them in the past. This change alone is significant to us. Honesty of a kind has penetrated their character. Yet there are others, completely abstinent, whose dishonesties and self-deceits will prevent them from enjoying complete recovery and acceptance within society. Continuous abstinence, however, is still the best ground for growth. In close association and identification with others in N.A. groups, our chances for recovery and complete freedom in a changing and creative form are enhanced a hundred fold.

Although all addicts are basically the same in kind, we do, as individuals, differ in degree of sickness and rate of recovery. There may be times when a relapse lays the groundwork for complete freedom. At other times only by a grim and obstinate willfulness to hang on to abstinence come hell or high water until a crisis passes, can that freedom be achieved. An addict, who by any means, can lose even for a time the need or desire to use, and has free choice over impulsive thinking and compulsive action, has reached a turning point that may be the decisive factor in his recovery. The feeling of true independence and freedom hangs here at times in the balance. To step out alone and run our own lives again draws us, yet we seem to know that what we have had come from a power greater than ourselves and the giving and receiving of help from others in acts of empathy. Many times in our recovery the old bogaboos will haunt us. Life may again become meaningless, monotonous and boring. We may tire mentally in repeating our new ideas and tire physically in our new activities, yet we know that if we fail to repeat them we will surely take up our old practices. We suspect that if we do not use what we have, we will lose what we have. These times are often the periods of our greatest growth. Our minds and bodies seem tired of it all, yet the dynamic forces of change or true conversion, deep within, may be working to give us the answers that alter our inner motivations and change our lives.

Quality and not quantity is the most important aspect of abstinence. Emotional sobriety in reality is our goal, not mere physical abstinence. To improve ourselves takes effort and since there is no way in the world to graft a new idea on a closed mind, an opening must be made somehow. Since we can do this only for ourselves, we need to recognize two of our seemingly inherent enemies, apathy and procrastination. Our resistance to change seems built in and only a nuclear blast of some type will bring about any alteration or initiate another course of action. A relapse may provide the charge for the demolition process. A relapse and sometimes subsequent death of someone close to us can do the job of awakening us to the necessity for personal action.

We have seen addicts come to our Fellowship, try our Program and stay clean for a period of time. They lost contact with other recovering addicts and eventually returned to active addiction. They forgot that it is really the first fix, pill, drink, snort or toke that starts the deadly cycle all over again. They tried to control it, to use in moderation, or to use just certain drugs. None of these worked for them.

Relapse is a reality. It can and does happen. Experience shows that those who do not work our Program of recovery on a daily basis may relapse. We see them come back seeking recovery. Maybe they were clean for years before their relapse. If they were lucky enough to make it back, they were shaken badly. They tell us that the relapse was more horrible than before they first found N.A. We have never seen a person relapse who lives the Narcotics Anonymous program.

Relapses are often fatal. We have attended funerals of loved ones that died from a relapse. They died in various ways. Other times we see relapsers lost for years, living in misery. Those who make it to jail or institutions may survive longer and perhaps have a reintroduction to N.A.

In our daily lives we are subject to emotional and spiritual lapses, causing us to become defenseless against the physical relapse of drug use. As an incurable disease, drug addiction is subject to relapse.

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# Memphis Approval Form

## Chapter Eight WE DO RECOVER

Although "Politics makes strange bedfellows," as the old saying goes, addiction makes us one of a kind. Our personal stories may vary in individual pattern but in the end we all have the same thing in common. This common illness or disorder is addiction. We know well the two things that make up true addiction: Obsession and compulsion. Obsession—that fixed idea that takes us back time and time again to our particular drug or some substitute, to recapture the ease and comfort we once knew.

Compulsion—that once having started the process with one "fix", one pill, or one drink we cannot stop through our own power of will. Because of our physical sensitivity to drugs, we are completely in the grip of a destructive power greater than ourselves.

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 seem to be these alternatives: 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 man's entire 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.

When my addictions brought me to the point of complete powerlessness, uselessness and surrender some ~~tweniv-six years~~ ago, there was no N.A. I found A.A. and in that Fellowship met addicts who had also found that program to be the answer to their problem. However, we knew that many were still going down the road of disillusion, degradation and death, because they were unable to identify with the alcoholic in A.A. Their identification was at the level of apparent symptoms and not at the deeper level of emotions or feelings, where empathy becomes a healing therapy for all addicted people. With several other addicts and some members of A.A. who had great faith in us and the program, we formed, in July of 1953, what we now know as Narcotics Anonymous. We felt that now the addict would find from the start as much identification as each needed to convince himself that he could stay clean, by the example of others who had recovered for many years.

That this was what was principally needed, has proved itself in these passing years. A wordless language of recognition, belief and faith, which we call empathy, created the atmosphere in which we could feel time, touch reality and recognize spiritual values long lost to many of us. In our program of recovery we are growing in numbers and in strength. Never before have so many clean addicts, of their own choice and in free society, been able to meet where they please, to maintain their recovery in complete creative freedom.

Even addicts said it could not be done the way we had it planned. We believed in openly scheduled meetings, no more hiding as other groups had tried. We believed this differed from all other methods tried before by those who advocated long withdrawal from society. We felt that the sooner the addict could face his problem of everyday living just that much faster would he become a real productive citizen. We eventually have to stand on our own feet and face life on its own terms, so why not from the start. Because of this, of course, many relapsed and many were lost completely. However, many stayed and some came back after their setback. The brighter part is the fact that of those who are now our members, many have long terms of complete abstinence and are better able to help the newcomer. Their attitude, based on the spiritual values of our Steps and Traditions, is the dynamic force that is bringing increase and unity to our program. Now we know that the time has come when that tired old lie, "Once an addict, always an addict," will no longer be tolerated by either society or the addict himself. We do recover.

Recovery begins with surrender. From that point forward, each of us is reminded that a day clean is a day won. In Narcotics Anonymous our attitudes, thoughts and reactions change. We come to realize that we are not alien and begin to understand and accept who we are.

As long as there have been people, addiction has existed. For us, addiction is an obsession to use the drugs that are destroying us followed by a compulsion which forces us to continue. Complete abstinence is the foundation for our new way of life.

In the past, there was no hope for an addict. In Narcotics Anonymous, we learn to share the loneliness, anger and fear that addicts have in common and cannot control. Our old ideas are what got us into trouble. We weren't oriented toward fulfillment, we focused on the emptiness and worthlessness of it all. We could not deal with success, so failure became a way of life. In recovery,

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*Little White Book, 10 (chap. 7)*

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