

# ③ Why We Are Here <sup>①</sup> What's Here

With love and concern, I want to try to address a difficulty I see a few members of Narcotics Anonymous going through. They are members by right of their desire for recovery but they prolong their suffering in a remarkable manner. Coming into the program, they find relief from their addiction and experience a little recovery. As time goes by they go to a lot of meetings and build personal ties with a lot of members. When it comes to their steps, however, they have in common an incredible dodge. They bounce back and forth not from the program to the streets and back again. They seek their recovery from other programs and the process of recovery is interrupted. I don't think they would have any great trouble if they make complete surrender.

## POSITIVELY NEGATIVE

- We drank <sup>used</sup> for happiness and became unhappy.
- We drank for joy and became miserable.
- We drank for sociability and became argumentative.
- We drank for sophistication and became obnoxious.
- We drank for friendship and made enemies.
- We drank for sleep and awakened without rest.
- We drank for strength and felt weak.
- We drank "Medicinally" and acquired health problems.
- We drank for relaxation and got the shakes.
- We drank for bravery and became afraid.
- We drank for confidence and became doubtful.
- We drank to make conversation easier and slurred our speech.
- We drank to feel heavenly and ended up feeling like hell.
- We drank to forget and were forever haunted.
- We drank for freedom and became slaves.
- We drank to erase problems and saw them multiply.
- We drank to cope with life and invited death.

When did you first realize you were powerless over drugs?

over drugs.

Why We came // here  
what got us here

When I got to Alcoholics Anonymous in 1974 I knew instinctively that staying sober meant staying off all mood changing drugs as well.

In N.A. , we were told, the members concentrated on how they felt, not what they did, and recovery was talked about much more than in A.A. They said they would support the meeting.

From the start the theme of the meetings was recovery. We all knew how to use drugs, we all knew the effect they had on us. The primary thing we were all interested in was how to stay clean, how to cope with life without the use of drugs, how to handle unpleasant feelings and emotions, in other words, how to get better.

## WHAT GOT US HERE

My drug addiction began, or came about I should say, as a result of total disillusion with the people and events surrounding me. I was raised in a hellish situation, seeing fight after fight between my parents. Never understanding why this came down like it did, it totally confused, hurt, and frustrated me. This went on for fifteen years.

I'm sick and tired of having nothing but pain and trouble. Of crying and screaming. Of spinning my wheels. Of the lies and the hurt.

Why were here -  
What got us here

(3)

#0051

Pain / Spiritual Emotional & Physical

addict pain.

ave.  
deat  
as  
run

Pain (Spiritual, Emotional, and Physical)

We have all felt pain. Us addicts, we have a common bond; we have all felt the numbness, the aching loneliness--the separateness from our fellows--knowing inadequacy and feelings of uselessness and self-pity--

knowing inadequacy and feelings  
of uselessness and self pity - even

(A DAY AT A TIME)

Self confidence--over confidence "I'll never get high again. I HAVE CONQUERED

But having the self-confidence to say "OH, I've defeated my addiction--I'm over it " is only fooling yourself.

That's self-confidence that I don't think anyone ever needs--to get a rocky attitude like that.

I don't have the confidence to say "I'll never get high or drink again". because I know that I'm not that I'm not that strong, I never was, and I don't know if I ever will be.

Too much self confidence could lead to feeling like you can stay sober on your own. That you don't need the fellowship of the NA program. It's amazing. How easy it is to remember the good times from our addictions and forget where we came from once things start to get a little better.

~~Barry Hoge~~

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What got us here —

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... + ... + ...

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Addicts when they start out are looking for a way out. possibly a way to be accepted something new in life. We for the most part aren't facing life on life's terms. We try a drug then another and it seems real slow at first and we tell ourselves we won't get "that bad". We find a drug that we like and we start using it more and more often. We learn how to face life through drugs. The pain, hurt, misery we feel can be postponed. We found the answer to happiness. Coming down our problems come back and then another problem. We use more often. What we did yesterday won't cover today. We need to use more and more often. Our progression is growing more.

What Got us Here Why We Are Here (5)

All this led to my becoming a "rebel without a cause". I raised hell just to show that I was nobody's fool, "nobody's gonna tell ME what to do!" They kicked me out of school at the beginning of the 11th grade.

I left home, got an apartment with money I had saved, got a job. And did drugs, drugs, drugs.

Then all the ones I tried began getting old. Same old high, nothing new.

Here come the monkey! MDA is on the way. I ate MDA the first time. But they said "Shoot it up, you'll love it".

" I'm sick and tired of having nothing but pain and trouble

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Over the years I endured many surgeries, that I believe now were actively sought by me to obtain drugs. I became a sick individual. I spent a good many months, over a span of ten or more years, in mental institutions, being treated with the drugs that I was becoming a slave to. My days were spent in obtaining drugs and using them. I felt that I was free, but I was a slave to myself and my drugs of choice.

causes, and accident. Women are dying everyday, overdosing on housewife's little helpers.



# SEEKING HELP IN NA I CAN'T WE CAN

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When a person afflicted with drug addiction first comes to the program of Narcotics Anonymous, they are faced with a disturbing realization. Addiction makes you think that your pain is unique and the future has become predicated on on conivance and futility. Suddenly at a meeting surrounded by fellow addicts, a new member will realize that they are no longer alone. Th-

do. I didn't

have any dope and figured I'd go and try to find the NA meeting. I was driving up and down Atlanta Road in between the trailer where I lived and where it crosses the railroad tracks just after you get inside the Marietta city limits trying to find the club. I couldn't find anything that looked likee a club but I kept driving by this place where there was a party going on. I could hear music blasting and people ~~comingxxxx~~ running in and out. The circle I was making looking for the NA club kept getting shorter and shorter. Right dead center of that circle was that party.

Finally I pulled in and I stopped there and I got out and I walked up and says: Having a party and they said yea, a dance you're welcome to go on in. By way of explanation I started to say well I was originally going out to hunting this meeting. The person I was talking to asked if I was looking for a Narcotics Anonymous meeting and I said yes, He said that it was here. earlier

We had one here and there will be another one later. ~~xx~~ I'd come to the idea ~~xxxx~~ once I'd saw that party (I'd left the house looking for that Narcotics Anonymous butonce I saw ~~xxxx~~ big party going on, I said to hell with that NA, I didn't know what that was and I figured I'd get in that party).

Well, screwed up again, went looking for something, changed my mind about looking for it and found what I'd gone looking for in the first place

I broke through many emotional barriers in N.A., and learnt a lot about myself by identifying with other addicts who were also willing to talk at depth. Today I am free of my addictions.

# Seeking Help

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We all have our personal story of recovery in N.A. This is the way the program works. It is available to each addict seeking recovery to be used as needed. Our addiction so damaged us in different ways and our personal torture varies so also our experience of recovery varies. The purpose of literature is to make our message available to all addicts regardless of drug of choice, age, or background. For this reason we try to present a recovery in general. We single out areas of difficulty and share our progress. We are

God! I hate to go to A.A.  
and listen to them winoes, what can they tell me? But I got to go, it's all part of the game.

If someone suggests to me that I might get better results by doing something a little differently than the way I'm doing it, and I resent it, chances are that they are 100% correct. When I first came into the program of Narcotics Anonymous and I felt resentful at the suggestions some members made to me I expressed my resentments through argument or by cold-shouldering the person who had tried to help me. Now my program-self simply acknowledges the fact that my drug-addict-self is having a temper tantrum over some idea it doesn't want to accept, and I go right on with the conversation. I even ask the other person to tell me more, because now I know I need to hear it!

Pray for me and love me, so I can  
learn to love you and others. Love,  
Rowland C

# REALIZATION - WHY WE STAYED

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- ultimate weapon for recovery is the recovered addict himself.

At these meetings I learnt that I was an addict, and that my addictions started as a child, long before I ever picked up a drink or a drug. As a child I became addicted to fantasy, because fantasy was much more preferable than reality. When I got older I didn't basically change, I just used alcohol and drugs to shield me from reality.

A way to secure safe and certain passage into a new life, where the old rules no longer apply and where we can live in peace with one another until the day we die.

I don't have any of the things I thought I had to have when I came to this program, but I've found myself very happy clean and sober without these things Catherine F.

When I was using I thought I was having a ball and straight people were deprived of fun. Clean and sober I've learned I have more fun and not have the loss of control that I had with drugs. The point of health is living to the fullest. God helps me live to the fullest without forgetting who I am and what I'm about. I can love others better now that I'm not so afraid. Bo S

God sometimes grants me the ability to be aware of the obvious.

Narcotics Anonymous. Anyone can play, the only requirements for membership to this team is the honest desire to do something about your drinking and using problem.

They would work the Steps and experience the new freedom. But they don't. About the time they have reached a certain phase of closeness with their new people they again switch over and come back to NA again, for the "love and identity". We welcome them back but as soon as we start getting close to them, they switch again. It has gotten to be a regular thing for some of these addicts seeking help. In our writing, we get a genuine thrill for writing about the unspeakable. After all we believe in the Power of a Loving God to handle all that we cannot. We hope that by dragging this phenomenon out of the shadows some members can find ways to address this and other areas of concern so that we can better carry our message to the addict who still suffers. I for one of many find NA well equipped to provide the ongoing recovery I need for a new life which I learn to enjoy a day at a time. There are no needs or opportunities for growth that the Program does not provide me with.



# Realization - why we stayed 9

## Normal Living

Normal living is possible as human beings when we rely in a power on a daily basis to provide us spiritual progress. The 12-steps of narcotics anonymous are a progressive recovery process establishing in us normal living; the normal life of reliance in our higher power.

This is why the N A third step is so important to us. It is the decision to turn our will and lives over to the care of our higher power, as we use this step, the insanity of daily living evaporates.

The reliance in a higher power is possible because we no longer have a chemical separating our consciousness from higher power consciousness.

Chemicals act as a roadblock to higher power consciousness, thus causing the hopeless and helpless feeling of inadequacy most using drug addicts experience as a result of this separation.

We are going to feel inadequate as long as there is a mood changing or mind altering chemical in our body; it is the result of long term drug usage though the eventual remorse can occur at any stage in the disease.

The cloudy inadequacy leaves when we stop using drugs because we no longer have a chemical shutting us off from the sunlight of the higher power.

With the reliance in a higher power, we become a part of the whole design for living free from chemical addiction. The feelings of hopelessness and helplessness begin to disappear.

Now we have natural highs, and the occasional lows are not as heavy as before our conscious contact with higher power.

In the NA recovery program, these highs and lows of living clean eventually even up and balance themselves into a casual, easy does it, live and let live, daily enjoyment of life straight.

And for this clean living, we may be eternally grateful to our higher power.

*My needle monkey kept on. not*

My needle monkey kept on, not as intense as before, but still there, still enough to spend all my money and waste all my time.. *el*

*my time.*

*Of crying and  
Of spinning wheels. Of the lies*

Of crying and screaming. Of spinning wheels. Of the lies and the hurt. Please help me so I can help myself.

*help myself.*

# 1 Recovery - IT Works (10)

working is that it must. We have nowhere else to go. Most of us have explored the alternatives. Personality change it seems is a rare commodity and that's ~~what we~~ we want really. Change from self-destructiveness to <sup>a</sup> self affirming pattern of living. We are all miracles and we accomplish our miracle a day at a time.

we can draw on constantly. ~~and~~ to help ourselves and others.

The last thing that we wanted to do operating is the first thing that we need to do clean and sober and that is to take personal responsibility for the things that we make happen and the things ~~s~~ that we let happen. In this way we become the architects of our own lives and this is a gift that no one will be able to take from us. We will come to know our true nature and it will guide us on our ~~new~~ path. The negative sense of self will be replaced by a positive concern for others and our own problems will seem to resolve themselves.

We start realizing how powerless we really are. Nothing seems to relieve the paranoia, the fear. We then hit bottom. We are searching for an answer. Looking for a way out. Things don't seem to be able to get any worse. We reach out and there's an answer, Narcotics Anonymous.

# Why We Are Here Recovery It Works.

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Until we recognize just who is an addict and how we can help him, many will die needlessly..I will do all I can help in this work. I am grateful to my God and to the NA for being there when I sought help.

After I admitted and accepted that I was, indeed, a drug addict, I became painfully aware that there were few women my age in treatment or in Na.

What we go through before we accept our illness are denial, anger, bargaining, depression, and finally we accept our addiction .

When did you come to believe in a higher power?

When did you come to believe in a higher power? Is the HP you believe in today the same one you believed in your 1st 6 months? How do you feel about the addict who still suffers? What are you most grateful for in your recovery.

What are you most grateful for in your recovery?

3c) We know that for the most part we place expectations on the program. We expect to feel only peace, joy and ecstasy--at the very least comfortability---

(Comfortability) ---

Oblivion is the answer. If we can just keep high all the time we can't feel the pain. In our stupor we start doing things and saying things to people we don't usually mean. After a party someone might say, "Man, You were really messed up last night". You can't even remember anything but you don't tell him that. The fear of what you said or did. The humiliation of having to ask others what happened. Did I have a good time last night? We use to cover up our humiliation. We are becoming irresponsible with our lives. We wake up sick, don't make it to work, or go to work stoned. We steal to support our habit. Hurt the ones we love. Whatever it takes to get that fix, pill or drink. We deny all these things, we tell ourselves we can handle it, man.



5 - Why are we here?

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What got us here - people.

Don't blame others for your problems. If you bore people by complaining about how you feel and want to get a more lively reaction, one way to do this is to try holding them responsible for your problems. If you really want to "lose friends and alienate people," start complaining about them.