

#4 C Easy does it one day

How it works
(133)

When your head is
out to get you when
its making up shit.
Don't listen to it.
Or if you listen to
it don't act on it.
Its usually out to
get you when you
haven't been sleeping,
huh.

Usually I don't fight
it or give it energy
I just sit back and
watch the movie.

I just don't react
to the Hog wash and
I'm all right. It
happens all the time.
Just don't react to
the suspicion in

your head. Call
a disinterested party
who loves you.

On a daily basis, my spiritual condition must be reliance in God.
I have a lifelong process of spiritual recovery ahead of me.

In no way, can I use drugs. I have to be very careful about any
situation where the subject of using drugs comes up. When I take drugs
there is no God active in my consciousness. Without God, I'm dead.

With God, I'm able to live life on God's terms. I'm at peace with
my emotions, and my nerves and mind aren't creating the havoc on my
system that would have caused me to use drugs in the past.

~~A~~

Easy does it (one day)

and we worry a little. We are after all human and sick ones at that. Some one once said that the greatest freedom one can achieve is wanting God, s will ot be done in his or her life. This this stirred many drug addicts soul when it was said from the podium at the first east coast

its not fun to chase something for very long after a while you chase something else.

~~Just~~ We are here for balance we learn it gradually. By learning the limits of society & accumulating common sense. Easy does it its not that much of a big deal.

...it is easy for us to move from aspirin to tylenol to something stronger. Fortunately it is not quite inevitable for those of us i the program of Narcotics Anonymous. So much of the progress of the modern world is concerned with body chemistry. It is difficult for moderns to conceive of a way of life that bases i self on complete abstinence fro all drugs. Wv

BUT REMEMBER WE DIDN'T
BECOME ADDICTED IN ONE DAY AND WE DONT
SOLVE OUR PROBLEMS IN ONE DAY. AND THE
ONLY WAY WE GET BETTER IS TO APPLY WHAT
WE HAVE LEARNED AND THE ONLY WAY WE LEARN
ABOUT THIS NEW WAY OF LIFE IS TO KEEP COMING
BACK.

#4-0

Spiral notebook reference

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Gratitude ~~is~~ is us peace it makes us worthy. We who have never known contentment may rest assured that if we learn to be grateful for the things we have dear, if want will leave us. If we are not grateful for the things we have we will not be grateful for the things we would like to receive. Gratitude expressed has opened many a tightly closed door and gotten us out of many a tight corner.

We have to have faith in our higher power and develop that faith through our living. Only when we secure a strong faith in some power greater than ourselves, will that power be able to give us its strength and guidance that we need. Belief is the key.

When I use drugs, the chemical of the drug is separating my consciousness from God-consciousness. This separation leads automatically to a feeling of inadequacy which leads in my case to more drugs which leads to drug abuse which leads to drug addiction which leads to drug allergy which leads progressively to the gates: jails, institutions, insanity and death.

Somewhere in my emotional and mental disorder is the lack of a reliance in God. Once the reliance in God is established, my emotional and mental disorders clear up. Relying in God makes this possible.

So, this is my case history, separation from God has caused me to rely on self which has led me to selfwill run riot which has led me to use drugs for relief from having to face it, or more to the point, I refuse to admit there could possibly be anything the matter with selfwill run riot or selfreliance. My mind tries to play this game:

"The nervous or emotional or mental disorders which are symptoms of my separation from God, really are physical conditions and not related to separation from God at all. Some drug may fix it and I won't have the condition at all." Not so, turning to drugs only complicated my condition and worsened my spiritual disease.

The program of Narcotics in various cities in the
lands of thousands of people who have gained the
strength and hope of those who have gone before us on
the road of recovery. It is the twelve steps, principles, tools and
stories of recovery from points of despair to reasonable happiness.
It must be shared to stay vital. We have learned that the disease
is physical, mental and spiritual. The person with a spiritual program
has learned enough of their own spirit to develop and
maintain a conscious contact with their higher power and share
it, ~~xxxxxxxxxx~~ when asked, with others. The Spirit is beyond all
description but can be described in relief. A person can be full
of or poor in spirit. A person can be clean and pure in spirit
or cloudy and preoccupied with worldly concerns. A person can be
attentive and spirited or dull and uncaring. A spiritual experience
changes the course of a person's life in recognizable, obvious terms.
When a person addicted to drugs and unable to help themselves
becomes able to live without drugs and starts growing and solving
difficulties rather than creating them, it is obvious that a real
change has taken place. If the change were only physical or mental,
the person would simply keep doing the same things without drugs.
When joy replaces misery and hope, despair, the change is likely
spiritual.

I can no longer rely on myself or on my choices.

I must rely in God. I need God on a daily basis.

God alone has me clean and serene, I'm incapable of it.

I did not quit, I surrendered by accepting, hey, I can't do it,
God can, let God keep me clean. God gives me the necessary energy to put
in the footwork of applying the 12-Steps to living life on God's terms.

I did not stop using drugs on my own, God simply has me not taking
drugs one day by relying in God.

My spiritual disease is very complicating when it tries to present
emotional, mental and physical complaints instead of the simple remedy
of God-reliance.

God helps me to keep it simple.

I rely in God, by God's grace and love.

Now, my life is simple: "God, meetings and don't use."

Thank God.

D.

Spiritual indifference

How it works

(137)

to develop the feeling that this power will restore us to sanity. In other words restore us to a state where we can experience life without using drugs. To some one just coming in this may seem inadequate but drug usage is at the root of so many of our failures that until we have been clean a while we can't imagine how many problems will clear up when we quit. This is not to say that abstinence alone will do. ~~The program goes much further than~~ The warmth from the fellowship and the guidance of the Steps are the source of personality change for us. With the help suffering addict shows immediate improvement.

At first we may be afraid that someone is fixing to lay a heavy religious trip on us. Except for a few members who have ignored the message in Step Three, no one will try to force their point on any one else. We are entirely free to work out our relationship to God on our own terms. Many of our people are atheists and do not believe in God. This may seem strange to outsiders but arrogance is such an old game to us that we would not want to let it have too much of a place in our new lives. ~~If~~ We don't want to be busybodies. The inner feelings a person has with their higher power are sacred and to ridicule or criticize another would be to show a great lack of spiritual progress. Simple belief is not enough. We need

There is a mystery involved here which does not lend itself to words. We must content ourselves and only share honestly with those who have asked our feelings and experiences. Atheists and agnostics are encouraged to apply spiritual principles in relating to their group or the basic idea of recovery. Their fine minds and carelessness will counterbalance those not content with the merely spiritual.

X4

How it works

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-D.

I ~~can't~~ have to put
my ass on the
line the I want line
& do it.

tool
Easy does it, but
do it,

It was said over
and over again that
I can't stay sober
~~myself~~, I need help.

The three keys to
spirit growth
Love: without it we have
nothing to give
faith - it brings life
and growth
patience: it will never
be

On Truth: We know truth by the way that it feels inside.
If you can't feel it, then it's not a truth for you yet. Just
because it isn't a truth yet doesn't mean it won't be tomorrow.

There is not "the truth" unless one is so evolved one may
see the whole. If you still walk the earth you are not yet that
evolved--no exceptions.

There is a difference between something fitting in with my
other delusions and something that is true--and they feel differ-
ent.

We like to collect "evidence." If it helps us to believe
what we wish to believe then it is accepted as true--even (or
specially) when it is only heresay. That which contradicts that
which I believe is cross-examined, tested and usually rejected.

Next we need to get close to the fact that we're not
really the center of the universe. First the higher power is
the in the people we meet and the program we follow. In the
old days we turned our lives over to the drugs. Many times
we did drugs without any idea of how much we were taking or
what exact effect it would have on us.

How it Works

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P. spiritual indifference

Spirituality blocks effective action. The more we indulge in it the more we feel that the answer to problems is a change in others or the world, not a change in us. Thus we become a homeless case.

Surrender to the spirit that we find at the meetings was the catalyst that began the deflation of ego and let us relax to the point where we could begin taking up the normal everyday concerns that used to be impossible for us. We can reach out in many ways. Most of the N.A.'s I know like to hug a lot. Touching

self-righteousness
is caused by a feeling
of inadequacy
in self.

This is a giant step. But anyone can take it. You don't have to be religious. You don't have to believe in God. You have only to believe what you see with your own eyes in the transformed lives of N.A. members and have a desire to get well. That's all it takes--an open mind. If the word "God" bothers you--substitute recovery or Good or love or N.A. or peace--anything positive, just so you mean it.

analytical?
No 2IS. I always
goes back to the
steps, which by
working & advancing
spiritually we get
self esteem and
ego deflation.

When I think of
myself as an agent
of God, perhaps, on
an assignment, that
he gives me all these
great tools for safety,
ease, well being, and
accomplishment, & protects
me

Most addicts who have managed to learn to live without alcohol and/or drugs have found the spiritual aspects of the N.A. program particularly important. In N.A. this does not involve religion.

Man has always had a super ego. Many great men of the past and even today have tried to explain their existence in the world as we live in without giving thought to the presence of a supreme being or power. They have attempted and continue to try to explain their difference of views and opinions regarding the reasons for man's life on this planet and what they consider facts of his existence. One of the favorite explanations is known as the theory of evolution or how we evolved over countless centuries from the lower forms of life to our present state.

#4

How it works

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My Senses were limited when I was using my Perception was limited in such a way that other people knew how I was feeling better than I did, I And thought that god's existence was based on whether I believed in him or not but that made no difference at all, He was there watching every move I made, the hurting of people, the conning, taking his blood out of my body and putting it in a syringe, at times I cursed god for putting me in situations and did alot of blaming of god. But through all this, He still loved me, 13 years of Drugging, Drinking And Insanity was the basis of life for me, I knew no other way but this, In coming to the program I was physically 23 But emotionally still 12 years old I had to learn to live in society all over again, through 2 1/2 years of Reform School and a stretch in the Penitentiary I learned only using and usage, not to love and loving, I thought that I was always one of a kind but found out different when I came to god and came to the program, to my amazement there were thousands like myself. My acceptance has come only a day at a time and at times when growing was harder it was a minute at a time, I still get those sick feelings to this day, but now I have an inner peace which keeps me from going back to using, the problems are still there but there's no more I can't

#4 - E.

H. O. W.

How it Works
(141)

I find that it has become necessary
for me to live one day at a time, without
fear of what tomorrow might offer, and
no worry about what yesterday ~~offered~~ ^{has brought}.
Remaining constantly aware of the will of my
God, and attempting to carry that will
out, & I find today to be beautiful.

#4-E

H. O. W

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OPENMINDEDNESS

A big word for a big subject. All it really means is that if we don't open our minds, new ideas can't get in and old ideas can't get out. Bare our brain that it might be washed. It is the strength to tolerate opposing points of view even when we want violently to shout our opposition can lead us to those very insights that have so long eluded us and been like closed doors. Even the most intolerant and bigoted person will usually admit to the possibility of lapses in their otherwise ~~perfect~~ complete understanding of it all. Well it's good to admit that we might not quite be perfect but if we can succeed in gaining new understandings, our lives can begin to change. We are addictive people and anything that makes us feel good will stick in our minds. The good feeling of having a situation we used to fail in and suddenly succeed will provide all the encouragement we need to continue to practice openmindedness.

At the beginning though, let's give ourselves and the newcomer a break. First we need to know we are in a safe place where we can get the love and understanding we need ~~before~~ ^{before} studying and study the program. The steps are written so as to guide a person's recovery from one achievable goal to the next. We are not talking about the kind of openmindedness that can be used by a sick person to justify not trying or assuming that just because it's rough today, it can't get better.

Not only does the group show concern for me, but it also directs my attention to a Power greater than myself that can guide my life through the hills and valleys of changes I encounter from day to day.

#4

How it works

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E.

Over the last ^{thirty six} ~~twenty four~~ hours I have been clean. I feel as if I have made it through a strange storm in the process of recovery. I have added a new gratitude to the list; open-mindedness. I now know that when it is read in the literature it isn't something to be taken for granted. My mind is capable of blowing out like a tire on a rough road. Neither will I take the N.A. literature for granted, because of it, something was jarred which began a chain reaction which resulted in me being at a meeting tonight instead of being out on the street.

the human condition being that we are not perfect. We are human and not designed to be perfect but to grow towards a perfect life with God. Spiritual condition means accepting the human condition, surrendering our lives and powerlessness to God for him to mold and sustain. On a constant on going basis. It comes out when we are sick and tired of being sick and tired. The keys are Honesty open mindedness and willingness to do whatever is necessary to grow along spiritual lines.

We try to be as completely honest about every single thing in all our affairs that we can. We generally find that shortcuts in honesty tend to be the long way round. Honesty clarifies our living and gets us out of doing things against our nature. Honesty tells us who we are and helps us find our places and keep them. It tells us how to act to secure what we truly desire and makes us willing to pay the price required to obtain it. It guides us in managing our affairs and keeps us out of debt. It allows the spirit within us to awaken, come out and live freely

in the world. I am aware that our disease is one that reaches our innermost souls with its sickness and that almost all of us come in here as liars, cheats and thieves with emotional problems and little, if any, morals. And I am also aware that it takes a lot of time for us to get better with our honesty and our con games and our using people, and our stealing, but when you come to an N.A. meeting or function you should leave your street ways on the street, and be honest, openminded and willing to try.

How It Works.

D. E. H.O.W.

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I means being loyal
to others and honest
with them for in
reality. I'm being
loyal with myself.

Being honest is not having to fear what you said will come back to you in feelings of hurt, anger, and guilt. Being openminded to me is looking at what other people do and say. To try not to limit myself to one or two ways of doing anything, but trying many ideas and ways. Being willing, to me, is putting into action new ideas and facing our fears.

H.O.W.

Twelve steps to guide us, three principles to keep it.

my life. (It works
both ways) but
you've got to change
or you've got to
die.

The day we stop
trying is the day
we start dying.

Stop listening to
the voices that
say you can't get
a new life.

For all of us these 12-Steps seemed to be a big order, and few of us were able to stumble past them. But our N.A. sponsor pointed out to us that there is nothing more to it. It is an attitude of independence toward ourselves and the world. And that the three principles are: HONESTY, OPENMINDEDNESS, and WILLINGNESS. If we accepted these three principles, we would be well on our way.

#4

How it works

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F.

I can't we can

UNITY

0124

(4)

If it were not for this program I would be dead. This program is a vital part of my everyday living, and I will go to any lengths to help this fellowship grow and prosper. I love this fellowship and it loves me; I help this fellowship and it helps me. I get extremely angry when someone takes this fellowship lightly or comes into the fellowship trying to use me or one of my loved ones in the program. We do not offer sympathy, we offer recovery. If you have a drug problem and are seeking help, N.A. is the place to go. If you have a drug problem, but you know what to do about your problem yourself, well then you are welcome to leave and not come back until you are openminded and willing to try it our way.

United we stand, divided we fall; I can't, we can. These slogans tell me that if we do not stick together, and help each other, then I will die. I do not know if you will die or not because I do not know if you are an addict or not, but if you are, and we do not stick together, then you, like me, will also die.

We rented an old house with growing room. The clubhouse has been a blessing for the unity of Narcotics Anonymous in Wichita. Our group was founded on the ideals of tight fellowship and small group meetings. On these ideals we have thrived. We are making ourselves known through our involvement in our area, state, region and the world. We have a lot of love for the fellowship in our area, and as a whole. I personally have compulsions to attend Narcotics Anonymous functions in all regions. What a compulsion to have! When I was afraid of the unknown and Narcotics Anonymous was unknown, I didn't know what I was needing. After I opened myself to Narcotics Anonymous, I found that you druggies fill my needs. A few months ago, when some members were afraid of disunity and financial insecurity, I started saying, "Do all you can and give the rest to God," over and over to them and me. All I can say is our clubhouse has survived a year and we have grown. I have faith now, which at first, I too, lacked. Today I am grateful. My cup runneth over, thanks to finding myself in the program of Narcotics Anonymous.

—Annie W.

"I CAN'T, WE CAN!"

All this, as we struggled with such major issues as whether we should wake-up members on methadone during the meetings; how to keep a 4-person meeting from lasting two hours; and what to do about the guy who kept coming to tell us how he loved helping us conquer our drug problems although he'd never used drugs himself! We weren't too wise and were often angry and fragmented. But the spirit of closeness that developed among our struggling few is one we work to keep alive today, having earned the good way, the lesson of "I can't, we can."

Today, this wheat-fed chapter of Narcotics Anonymous meets in a house of our own, where we have 9 meetings a week and are learning to share our gratitude "The N.A. Way." Parolees are still coming around, but now we are able to reach out in love rather than in fearful hostility; and some come back after their parole is through! The sponsor in the story has a brand new car today, and this pigeon is learning the beauty of being "really me" in the atmosphere of acceptance that can only happen to frightened junkies in Narcotics Anonymous.

4-F

I can't, we can (therapeutic value)

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Thank God, there is a part of me that desperately wants to stay clean and needs meetings.

Thank God, I'm being given the energy to attend meetings because those of us who attend meetings regularly stay clean.

Meetings are a very important factor in my recovery because there is a part of me that seeks the approval of those around me. At meetings, surrounded by clean and serene people, that part seeking their approval will help keep me clean and serene during the day just so I can get to the meeting and have their approval.

More importantly, meetings help remind me of what my addiction is like and encourage me to stay clean.

I get reminded by newcomers at each meeting just how progressive is this disease of drug addiction.

I get encouraged by members of Narcotics Anonymous at each meeting just how progressive this recovery is spiritually.

A meeting is like a fence around my sobriety and cleanliness. It protects me during each phase of my recovery.

At first, the people in the meetings helped me through my remorse and selfpity by accepting me like I am and showing me the necessary care and love to begin to live clean. A loving God as may be expressed in our group conscious saves me daily.

Then, I began to be able to practice an hour or hour and a half a day during the meeting just being comfortable simply being me. Like practicing any musical instrument, an hour a day during the meeting of being comfortable being me developed into the ability to be comfortable being me no matter where or what is happening.

I kept going to meetings, because
I realised that only through the Group Conscious was I able to
survive, that reality was being offered to me through what happened
at meetings- sharing, loving and growing.

A meeting is the place where the N.A. group can carry its message to the addict who still suffers by letting them also benefit by the company of clean and serene people. In the meeting, the vision of hope recovering addicts represent helps light the way to recovery, providing sponsorship and friendship to ourselves and those of us to come.

We can do what I can't.

The meetings provide me with a place where I can participate in my own recovery.

Meetings are like medicine to me.

I have a minimum dose of five/week I have to go to in order arrest my drug addiction. Usually can average up to 14/week, though can get through on 5/week; though a meeting a day helps keep the drug addiction relapse away, each addict has a dose of meetings in attendance suitable to the individual case.

When I don't get my minimum dose of five meetings per week, I go through physical withdrawals. Give me my dose of meetings and it's okay, don't and nothing seems okay. It's as simple as "Don't use and go to meetings."

Thank God, I have meetings.

Now I can detach from parties and attach to meetings.

Now I can detach from dirty and attach to clean.

Now I can let go and let God.

Thank God, the 12-Steps and 12-Traditions work.

In the meeting, I heard about a loving God, today the loving God keeps me clean and serene.

Thank God.

to need the discipline of group experience; and when it is useful to other persons, as an encouragement to them in their own efforts to become honest, then one should be willing to "share his story," again and again. Practically speaking, however, one rarely feels that anything about himself is much of a "secret" if upwards of half a dozen other persons know it.

(b). "Isn't there danger of over-doing confession, of getting to the point of 'boasting' about one's sins?"

If confession is not directly and explicitly associated with a program of restitution, there is indeed a danger of "over-doing" it, because confession, alone and of itself, never does enough. But I have yet to see anyone, who has acted as well as talked about his sins, talk too much or inappropriately. If, in our groups, someone seems to be dwelling unduly upon that managed to shake my insides. It made me instantly aware of the seriousness of the game my mind had been running on me. It was like a breath of fresh air after a deep dive into cold merky water. It worked as simply as that. The real, sincere, communication of that other addicted who was sharing the life or death proposition of recovery. I began coming out of the closed-mindedness, not all at once, but I had peaked out on it. My anger left before I had put down the paper.

Where is this help? How do I get it? What is it? You go into a meeting of Narcotics Anonymous. There you will find people like yourself with the same or worse patterns of using, yet they are clean and sober. They can smile. Their eyes are clear. They seem to care for each other. They will probably introduce themselves to you and try to make you feel welcome. As the meeting progresses you will hear a little bit about them from their own lips. You will hear things that remind you of you if you listen with an open mind and give yourself the opportunity to begin getting well. The main point is this: These people are addicts, people like yourself, but they are clean and sober for months or years. If you can watch them and listen

uns unfortunately is taking recovery and our freedom for granted. after all brothers and sisters, what did we have when we got here a deadly disease many of us didnt know about. we were then in the depths of despair, degradation and lost in a destructive chaos. Now lets take a look at what happened to us did we come in and puke, sweat, and shake. thank God we dont find it essential to puke, and sweat and shake anymore. Some of us stayed awhile: was it through our own merit/? our way got us here. For sure, it was done with the help of others, answers and tools they gave us, and a higher Power and steps of relief, rest, restoration. We are as we see it free. Freedom comes from within and is free for the achieving of absolutely all of us.

#4 F. How IT WORKS

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First--our condition is incurable. Literally billions of dollars have been spent searching out a cure for drug addiction. So far, none has been found. N.A. has a way to arrest the disease--to stop it in its tracks--but nobody has come up with a cure.

Second--it's progressive. Over the long run, if we continue to use, we always get worse--never better.

Third--it's terminal. That means that if we continue to use, we die from it--one way or another. The autopsies will list accidental or intentional overdoses as drug related deaths. But think about it for a moment. If a wealthy lady gets one too many martinis on top of her doctor-prescribed tranquilizer and falls asleep at the wheel and kills herself or someone else, the statistics will call that death and automobile accident. But the truth is that drug abuse caused that death. If a junkie becomes depressed because of the tremendous burden of futility a junkie carries and hangs himself, the statistics will blame his death on a piece of rope. But heroin took him to the rope and kicked the chair away. And again, if a person really gets involved with one drug or another, to the point where he or she forgets to eat or is unable to eat for any length of time, that person becomes malnourished. That means,

Dad and mom adults
users and non users
took care of us when
though we had nothing
to give be cause we
(I) can't take care
of myself.

Today I come here
to get my medicine
it aint in the
form of a drug but
in the form of love
I give by the grace

Testimony Prayer

My gratitude speaks...

When I came

And when I share

With others

The N.A. way

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of ourselves. Addicts usually don't want anyone telling them what to do, but the process of our sharing is an entirely different thing. We share what it was like, what happened and what it's like today. If some one asked ~~about~~ what to do for a specific problem and we have had a similar experience, we go to them and tell them that it ~~was~~ ~~like~~ for us and that we did that worked. If it worked

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for us it might work for them. ~~this way we don't experience the~~
~~condescension~~ Most addicts are able to accept this type of sharing even in the beginning. In time we have a new source of strength that will that will help give us the guidance we need to effect our own recoveries. The group we choose to be our home group will be like a spiritual savings account. The more we can invest in it through our caring and sharing, the greater the dividends it will pay.

to reach when we need
Being able ~~reaching~~ out to others / ~~seeking~~ help and responding to others in need is a major part of the recovery we seek in N.A.
~~This is how~~ The flow that is life takes place in this manner.
We come here in powerlessness and needing manageability and the power we seek comes to us through other people in the program if can only reach out for it. New to the program or years clean we will want to keep ourselves surrounded by fellow members that we have let know us well and who we feel we can count on in a pinch. N.A. is a fellowship of survival and one of the advantages of the program is that it places us in intimate regular contact with the very people who can most understand and help us in our quest for sobriety. All the good ideas and intentions will help us not at all if we fail to put them into action. Reaching out is the beginning of the struggle that will

#4 How it works (F)

(150)

In the course of carrying this message each of us comes to our own understanding and if we have difficulty, we trust our groups to guide us by right of their spiritual nature. These things should. These things shared to help others are those things which should be written: 2

I want what they have, ~~also~~ H.P. who worked.

The force in the meetings wasn't just the people but also something within the people. Call it what you want.

I believe in every one of you people

a past misdemeanor, he is likely to be asked: "What have you done about it?"

Or, "What else do you need to talk about?"

(c). "Should you start confession with an individual or before a group?"

In general, it is easier to begin with one person, who will then gradually "sponsor" you into the open fellowship of a group. But when there are painful problems to be worked through with a marital partner, it is sometimes desirable to have at least one other person present, sometimes a full-fledged group. This provides a kind of "center of gravity" which keeps issues in clearer focus, and helps each of the partners to behave with restraint and fairness.

My ~~twelve~~ step work today is not just limited to verbal messages. Today the idea of practicing the principles of the program are a foundation for me to build on ~~the~~ like the Golden Rule in the Holy Bible is a foundation. In order to clean my self up I have to be willing to clean up my meeting place and support it by any other means within my capability. This letter I think is a good example of that. I realize today that if there hadn't been people like myself to carry the message to me I might not of ever ever had the desire to stop killing myself.

This program has been a great blessing for me and it doesn't have to wear a disguise

I have got the ability to read the literature today and receive a whole new outlook on matters I might have thought hopeless before because I know that the literature is written by a Group Conscience with the group in mind as well as the individual. I must always remember "together we stand besides we fall"

= = = = =

My mind is not
always the great indicator
of what I am / or am I / or I /

q-f

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#0018

JOHN H.

THE PROGRAM OFFERS US A WAY OUT OF OUR HURT. AT THE BEGINNING OF EACH MEETING THE QUESTION IS ASKED, "DOES ANYONE HAVE A PROBLEM OR SOMETHING THEY WOULD LIKE TO HEAR FEEDBACK ON?" THIS IS WHEN WHAT THE PROGRAM IS ALL ABOUT COMES TOGETHER.

WE ARE ~~THE~~ PEOPLE IN THE GRIP OF A CONTINUING AND PROGRESSIVE ILLNESS. IT IS THE PROBLEMS, HURTS, INSECURITIES, AND LACK OF LOVE THAT CAUSED OUR ~~DEEPEST~~ DISEASE AND ~~IF WE CONTINUE TO HOLD IT~~ HOLDING THESE THINGS INSIDE US LEFT US NO OUT BUT TO DIE. AND IF WE CONTINUE TO HOLD THEM INSIDE, WE WILL GO BACK OUT AND DIE!

FROM MY OWN EXPERIENCE AND WATCHING OTHERS THIS ONE THING ~~THAT~~ HAS CAUSED A GREAT MANY RELAPSES, ~~FEELING~~ GOING BACK AND MANY TIMES WE DON'T LIVE LONG ENOUGH TO MAKE IT BACK.

I WAS ONE OF THE LUCKY FEW. I MADE IT BACK, THANK THE GRACE OF GOD. AND ONLY BY THE GRACE OF GOD TODAY I'M CLEAN AND SOBER.

MY INABILITY, OR HOLDING BACK CAUSED A LARGE PART OF MY PAIN AND IN EFFECT MADE THE PAIN WORSE. I HAVE FOUND NO MATTER HOW BAD I FEEL ABOUT "IMPOSING" ON SOMEONE THAT ITS THE ONLY WAY I'M GOING TO GET BETTER. AND NO MATTER WHAT I THINK THE PEOPLE I CALL ON AND THE PEOPLE AT THE MEETINGS ARE MORE THAN GLAD TO HELP ME. BECAUSE THEY CAN ONLY KEEP WHAT THEY HAVE BY GIVING IT AWAY. AND IN THE SAME LIGHT I KEEP WHAT I HAVE BY GIVING IT

How it works

(153)

F. I can't; we can, therapeutic value

calling every day
my sponsor.

It means receiving
rejection to save
my ass.

It means knowing
this program is
the one for me the
one that will work
for me if I work
it today, finding
out all I can about
what the program
suggests I do.

total meetings
about forming
total sharing
stay silent & stay
back their
total cotton out
of your ears &
put it in your
mouth.

the people w/ time
and listening to
them & asking questions

are the
people to go through
that it's not me.

we work the twelve steps and r
respect the twelve traditions, attend meetings regularly
and practice total abstinence for the current 24 hours
there is nothing to fear. We can and do recovery in NA. Our main
enemy is ourselves. An addict alone is in bad company
Working Together we do recover.

What is impossible for one alone is often light work for many.

I called a friend of mine
in the program. Boy, did I get it.
They let me know right quick that
they wouldn't give me any wily.
~~rough~~ tough love.

4 - ~~154~~ F

-35-

(X)

0057

(154)

assured them that these were just parts of the way we were and adopted the attitude that if they couldn't accept us the way we were they probably didn't really care about us. Reaching out will restore some of the give and take of normal living and we will slowly begin to change for the better at a rate we can accept a day at a time. Helping others gives us the benefit of our own best advice. We will literally talk ourselves into improving. Many of us have had the experience that we become the people we really wanted to be ~~but~~ when we were sick but our disease kept us from becoming.

Reaching out must be practiced and it counts more if it's hard. A lot of the rules that apply out there will not apply to your new life in the program. Expressing our need for help in time of crisis seems like a logical thing to do but we are so illogical sometimes. To us it feels like rank insanity to give another person knowledge of our pain. We want to run off like an animal and lick our wounds when we experience pain. As we become more closely involved with others we will learn to share our pain and it will be lessened. Really most people miss the obvious conclusion that learning to share our existence with others can't help but enlarge our lives and give them meaning. One of the wonderful things about being human is the capacity to see into the problems of another and the sources of concern and difficulty. Part of the horror of addiction is being cut off from this type of understanding and comfort. Our fear and sense of guilt keep us from receiving the benefits afforded to everyday people. When we sincerely seek the answers to the questions of a fellow member we often find our answers that we can apply to our own lives and problems. Caring enough to really try to help another in need seem to give us what amounts to almost permission to enjoy the

II. 4-G

How it works (Facing Life)

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I found my recovery began to really draw strength from the meetings when I talk about where I'm at today in relationship to the 12-Steps and relying in God's grace and loving guidance. I stopped talking problem and began talking solution.

Wherever I'm at in recovery, I just talk me in relationship to the 12-Steps and relying in God. And so far, all the big deals I've been caught up in have passed, leaving these constants in my recovery. Consistent in all my changes is going to meetings. Still with me is relying in God to give me sustenance on a daily basis. Applying the 12-Steps in all my affairs remains constant in all these changes I'm going through clean and serene. The love and care of addictions is a constant enjoyment in my recovery along with God's love and care of me. God keeps me clean.

When I plug into the loving God as expressed in our group conscious by talking solution and reliance in God, it's like recharging a battery with solution and reliance in a loving God. All I have to do is think about the solution and the loving God expressed during the meeting and it's like getting a free meeting to tap into here and now during the day and anything I may be going through in this phase of recovery.

Since my mind rarely knows what's best, reality is simply a phase of recovery I'm going through here and now and as usual this too shall pass the way of spiritual progress.

Even if I don't say anything and simply make myself available by going to the meeting, placing the body and letting the mind follow, the loving God during the meeting somehow says through the people at the meeting exactly what I needed to hear in that meeting.

4-6

How it Works

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It's called a day at a time. Patience is the ability to reckon slowly. We must learn to take our time and take it easy. A reasonable day's work for a reasonable day's pay. Anyone can have more as soon as they learn to do and accept more. A person who lives beyond his means exhausts those means. A person who learns to live within their means has some left over and learns to live without want. We only want to commit ourselves to things we are sure to be able to respond to. The easiest way to insure our success is to limit our commitments. When we lower our goals we increase our ability to reach them. Our abilities will increase more if we permit ourselves a few successes. A man or woman who commits themselves to too much fails to reach their goals and wears themselves out. A person who sets reasonable goals and meets them feels good about themselves and as their abilities increase they may reasonably raise their goals. We want to eliminate confusion and wasted effort. Our bad image of ourselves even if earned makes us apologetic in our living and we want to make up for the things that have caused us to feel bad about ourselves all at once. This is impossible and no reasonable person would take it upon themselves. We can best make amends by letting go of the past and giving our attention to the work at hand. Our higher power will be with us to help us along. Fear and desperation will give way to peace and understanding.

0059
The Steps guide us into our place in society. We begin by straightening out our internal disorder and obtaining release from the defects that prevent us from being all we should be. We list people we have harmed and make amends directly or through willingness. We emerge as individuals reconceived with a new awareness and the ability to take our place in the world. Our viewpoint changes from that of a ~~man~~ fleeing solitary to that of a participating member. Just as we are obliged to do certain things for the whole, society is obliged to help us meet our needs. We emphasize setting our own house in order and trying to do more than our part because under the influence of drugs and alcohol our views have been distorted and we are not likely to know when we have ~~x~~ truly done our part. We trust in our higher power to give us the strength and meet our needs. If we feel that we have more than our share of difficulty, we should share more with others and ~~we~~ remember to be grateful for the good things we already have. If we're not grateful for the things we've got, we won't be grateful for the things we yet want and even if we get them they will also be unacceptable to us.

Responsibility is a key word here. There are certain ~~x~~ situations that simply demand more than we have to give. We should avoid all of these and back out or seek help if we find ourselves already in such a situation. We are no longer asked to do the ~~ix~~ impossible. Most of us are accustomed to getting bored and disinterested when we find ourselves without major problems. We want to change this. Serenity not prayed for is likely to appear as a burden. In the past we have relied on desperation to give us the strength to periodical y re-order our lives. There is another way.

#4-6

How it works

When we accept that we are re-

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responsible for our problems we will realize that we can be equally responsible for our solutions. In honesty, I feel that even proper encouragement most people know what their solutions are. It simply takes time clean and sober for us to realize who we are and what we want to do. I believe that this spirit is capable of helping us overcome our addiction and also setting our lives in order. What we can do is remember that we are addicts and that cleanliness is abnormal to us and we must learn how to live in an ongoing manner. A great magic is to be found in helping others. If you find yourself clean and sober in the program of Narcotics Anonymous you can help yourself by helping others. If

As our attention focuses on these solutions, old ideas break up and dissolve like icebergs in the tropics. When the compulsion to do drugs is lifted from us and we begin to think of others before ourselves, a true miracle begins. Working the steps, practicing the principles and using the tools, we begin to see ourselves in a new light. Finding ourselves helping others and securing help for our own problems, we redefine ourselves. We become people capable of feeling and responding appropriately to our environment. We can put the right things first and exercise patience, tolerance and humility in our daily lives. The further we get from the last pill, fix, or drink, the more we will see our drug related past as normal to the disease of drug addiction and the more we will see the miracle of releasing the disease.

#4-6

How it works

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What we have to live with today is the wonderful fact of our cleanliness and all it means to us. We will have many successes where we have known only failure. Many of our dreams, forgotten and obscured by our addiction will return and help us regain the sense of wonder and excitement at the miracle of living and the choice we make each day. The old compulsions will fade and give way to expectancy. The habits of mind associated with addiction will weaken and be broken. A great many things will be possible for us now. We can take a job of our choice and work with people of our choosing. Many of the more successful counterculture groups have proven that a person who enjoys that they are doing are supplied by the people around them with the requirements they need to carry out their work and live in comfort. Out there ~~we~~ we forget we live in a revolutionary form of government and economics. We have failed to take advantage of the opportunities presented to us. We could not or would not let ourselves succeed. As we live and grow many of the doors we have closed will swing open. Each day we get to be clean and sober will awaken us to the freedom we had all along, but feared to realize. Our employers will become friends and associates of our own choosing. We will be enabled to take our place in the world.

Just because a need or a fear is back behind the wall so that I am unaware of it's existence doesn't mean that they are not developing (growing or fading) driving me forward or back each according to it's nature.

My "choices" are mostly a result of what is left to me after my friends and enemies in my head are through pushing and pulling and leave me with (what they consider to be) the least of all evils--one narrow pathway with the least votes against it.

~~X~~ 4. G. How it works

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When we forgive the shortcomings of another person ,
we receive many benefits. First we don't have to spend time
feeling bad about them. We are spared this often times self
destructive effects of setting another person straight. It
is so easy to get caught up in criticism of another person.
Somehow the exact nature of their wrongs appears perfectly
clear to us. If only we could see our own defects so clearly!
If we suffer at the hands of another after a few months of life
without drugs, it is no surprise that we are often over-
whelmed. Gone is the magic mood changer. We have to learn to
take our reality clean and (if the maxim "if it works, don't
fix it" applies.) Remember, we are powerless to change that
other person, but we have nearly unlimited power to change
ourselves. This includes the power to change our reactions.
A story is told of a man who had been buying a newspaper at
the same ~~change~~ stand for years. ~~XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX~~
~~XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX~~ The man in charge of the stand
was very surly and rude but our friend bought the paper and
wished the fellow a good day. Amazed his companion asked him
how he could be so friendly with such a sour person.
"Because", he said, " I just couldn't let someone like him
have the power to determine my reaction."

Narcotics Anonymous has assisted
me in coming to grips with my addiction,
other aspects that defect my character,
and my ability to accept reality and
deal with people.

X4

G.

How it works

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Any place where I grow angry when my beliefs are tested as false, weak or unfinished or not really believed even by me.

These are the things I believe in my head. Those ideas my head least wishes to question are those places that need most to be looked at.

Truths are usually more general--like that you get what you pay for, and pay for what you get.

Truths are incapable of making an outright case against anything or anybody. Since there is always the other side which is equally true like "the best things in life are free."

Until I can understand inside--how both can be true at the same time, I understand less than nothing.

Truths seem to be something that are impossible to understand until suddenly it's obvious. That's how I know a truth--it feels like something long forgotten and finally remembered.

It makes the pieces fit together like scattered jigsaw pieces lacking the center piece. Nothing fits together till the whole group does.

And as I go on the smaller truths fit together to make larger pieces of truth.

Truth is something you never suspected until you knew it.

"The truth" is absolute, but "a truth" never is.

Each time I take two "opposing" half truths and am given the truth underneath them both--to this new truth is also another half.

The most enteraining arguments are between two people who each hold a half of the same truth, especially when neither believes another half exists. There are no execeptions--just incomplete truths. Everything I know is subject to revision, specially what I know about truth.

4

G.

How it works

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I will love the ambitious for they can inspire me! I will love the failures for they can teach me. I will love the kings for they are but human; I will love the meek for they are divine. I will love the poor for they are so many. I will love the rich for they are yet lonely. I will love the young for the faith they hold; I will love the old for the wisdom they share. I will love the beautiful for their eyes of sadness; I will love the ugly for their souls of peace.

I will greet this day with love in my heart.

But how will I react to the actions of others? With Love. For just as love is my weapon to open the hearts of men, love is also my shield to repulse the arrows of hate and the spears of anger. Adversity and discouragement will beat against my new shield and become as the softest of rains. My shield will protect me in the market place and sustain me when I am alone. It will uplift me in moments of despair yet it will calm me in time of exultation. It will become stronger and more protective with use until one day I will cast it aside and walk unencumbered among all manners of men and, when I do, my name will be raised high on the pyramid of life.

I will greet this day with love in my heart.

And how will I confront each whom I meet? In only one way. In silence and to myself I will address him and say I Love You. Though spoken in silence these words will shine in my eyes, un wrinkle my brow, bring a smile to my lips, and echo in my voice; and his heart will be opened. And who is there who will say nay to my goods when his heart feels my love?

I will greet this day with love in my heart.

And most of all I will love myself. For when I do I will zealously inspect all things which enter my body, my mind, my soul, and my heart. Never will I over-indulge the requests of my flesh, rather I will cherish my body with cleanliness and moderation. Never will I allow my mind to be attracted to evil and despair, rather I will uplift it with the knowledge and wisdom of the ages. Never will I allow my soul to become complacent and satisfied, rather I will feed it with meditation and prayer. Never will I allow my heart to become small and bitter, rather I will share it and it will grow and warm the earth.

I will greet this day with love in my heart.

Henceforth will I love all mankind. From this moment all hate is let from my veins for I have not time to hate, only time to love. From this moment I take the first step required to become a man among men. With love I will increase my sales a hundredfold and become a great salesman. If I have ~~no~~ other qualities I can succeed with love alone. without it I will fail though I possess all the knowledge and skills of the world. I will greet this day with love, and I will succeed.

*4 G. Facing life (acceptance) (163)

Too often we drug addicts find our selfs, comparing our selfs. We compare ~~xxxx~~ our selfs, how ~~how~~ we are doing with others and the way they present themselves. Wait, stop. This is thin ice we are treading. Isn't this the sick ego again trying to run the show. Chronically, we drug addicts compare our selfs with those "greater and less" brothers and sisters. Why do we do it? We in N.A. believe that comparing is a basic insecurity. Why should we compare our sick egos, after all didn't they get us here? We see the futility of comparing our sick character traits. Also we see that humility should be our goal if we are to recover. Comparing my insides to your outsides is an obstacle to both our recoveries.

The answer? Well, we believe that the twelve steps of N.A. recovery are a journey from a sick ego problem to a spiritual awakening, a personality change, or a sort of vital rebirth. Now, this "change takes place slowly many times and at other paces, the main thing thing is that we do it at our own pace. Live and let live is our motto. The only requirement for membership is a desire to stop doing drugs, with that we are all in the same boat. There are no big shots one slip and were all shot. If we are to survive the unreasonable disease of addiction, we have to do it with others. I can only compare me to me. I may get a sponsor and work with him but but ought never to make a practice of comparing myself to others in any way shape or form this is very often to a destructive end, for some reason it always puts me in a class by myself. Alone.

Better to stay in a fellowship of love and help than to face the pain of addiction alone. NARCOTICS IS NOT OUR HOME HAS BEEN FOR MANY THOUSANDS OF ADDICTS A SPIRITUAL HOME OF IDENTIFICATION, LOVE, AND HOPE. We meet our problems a day at a time. Today an addict in recovery or this person with whom we are acquainted may help us. Sooner or later we may find our in a position to help him/her; then we do not need our sick egos getting in the way of helping others. We stay clean by helping others, not by comparing. None of us by any stretch of the imagination "have it together. We merely go about our day at a time doing the next thing required of us

The same universe that was a source of terror and pain when I put something inside of me--became a wholly different place.

Now in sobriety, the program must be inside of me to work. Solely being around sober people could no more work the change than being around loaded people could get me stoned.

Drug abuse does teach one humility--we needed the drugs to do what we could not do for ourselves. All that we had, all that we held in reverence, came from outside ourselves, and only when placed inside did we become whole and feeling.

The program works in the same manner.

will be reliable guides in this uncharted area of human experience.

Three signs of progress to be expected are humility, patience and tolerance. Humility is where we recognize our humanity and no longer need to determine outcomes by ourselves. As our self acceptance improves, the shortcomings of others will seem less threatening and we will gain tolerance and even a helpful attitude towards those in difficulty. One small gesture of kindness or understanding ~~can~~ at the right moment can be the most meaningful in our life.

Things should not be more important than people. We work our miracle with patience. The anxiety that if something isn't done in a particular way at a particular time is sick. Patience teaches us that all things come in God's time not our own. We can have anything we want if we are willing and able to pay the price. In our sickness we carried many beautiful dreams into nightmareish excess. We made many commitments that exceeded our ability to pay the price. Now, in our new lives, we will want to start anew. The past won't go away just because it is unpleasant, but it should be seen as a part of our sickness. It should be allowed to die a natural death as we progress in our recovery. We will be granted the strength to deal with unresolved problems from our past a day at a time.

~~XXXXXXXXXXXXXXX~~ Staying clean and sober itself
will begin to establish us in the present. The past will be seen
as a natural part of our addiction that we are freed more and more
free from today.

* Inertia is one of the great forces of nature. It is defined as the ~~inertness~~ property of matter by which it ~~resists~~ tends to remain at rest, or in uniform motion in a straight line or direction.

X 4

How It Works,

(165)

G. Facing life (acceptance)

The people love me unconditionally and accept me if I let them. Having a sense of humor helps me to Live and Let live and see joy and beauty.

When I was out using H. P. liked after me. Now that I'm clean, he's going to take that much more now that I'm available to him. He's not going to say OK you recovered lets go on to somebody else.

And how will I act? I will love all manners of men for each has qualities to be admired even though they be hidden. With love I will tear down the wall of suspicion and hate which they have built round their hearts and in its place will I build bridges so that my love may enter their souls.

In this Third Step, we simply recognize that there is a force for good in the world and we cooperate with that force. We let good things happen to us. Every action we've ever taken in regards to drugs was taken in an effort to get comfortable. And it didn't work. Our way did not work. So we are going to try another way. We are going to try to let God, as we understand Him, care for and direct our lives.

To lie is to lose the respect of others;
To trust someone is to have faith in them.

When I was out using H.P. looked after me. Now that I'm clean he's going to take that much more ~~now~~ now that I'm available to him. He's not going to say OK you recovered lets,

Most of our so called friends will go out the door when we stop using. Many of us will be lucky enough to have a few relationships that are based on real feeling rather than drug use. We may be grateful for these but we should not try to breathe life into a dead friendship. We will find plenty of new friends who will accept us as we are. When we work the amends step we should take care to avoid complications and limit our amends to a sincere effort to say we're sorry or make proper restitutions generally we owe past suppliers nothing. We left their world and burned our bridges.

Better to ask a stupid question than to make a stupid mistake. Many of us display temper because we lack talent.

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any adult who continues to act as if he were still a helpless, irresponsible child who is at the mercy of others is asking for trouble--and usually gets it!

"But if I let others know me as I know myself, won't they reject, criticize, gossip about, or otherwise punish me?" someone will ask. "That is, if I let others know my sins and short-comings, won't they just 'throw them up' to me and make me feel worse, rather than better?"

Perhaps the first thing to note here is that if we have been behaving badly, one of the strongest incentives for change is to have the eyes of others upon us, to bring ourselves, so to say, "under suspicion." With striking regularity, persons who become deeply open with a group find that their "will-power" is mysteriously strengthened.

Through secrecy we shield ourselves from group sanctions, so it should not surprise us that, while practicing secrecy, we are commonly helpless in the face of temptation.

"weak" because we do not allow the strength, concern, and discipline of others to operate to our advantage. By confession we indicate our willingness to live "under the judgment" of our fellows; and it would seriously defeat the purpose of this whole procedure if we asked and received "forgiveness" and "acceptance," in the sense of no questions asked and nothing expected of us, nothing demanded.

Besides, there is always the possibility that our honesty will make others less satisfied with their dishonesty.

Gossip is a calculated risk. But if the members of a group follow the policy of telling only their own story, the risk is minimal. Gossip, in general, represents an attempt to explain and understand otherwise unintelligible situations. If we are making a deliberate attempt to "get by" with something, others have a right to form their own conjectures--and, incidentally, to set up indirect social controls. Thus, the surest way to avoid gossip is to make our lives so open that there is no mystery, nothing for anyone to con-

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0172
IV

①

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Simple Basic Program

You know it's unreal how strong my monkey really is. Not to mention how smart. He is tremendously sneaky. Sometimes he'll lay dormant for a day or even a month! Waiting for an opening, just a chance to jump, where he can have a say in my sobriety.

It's them that I have to get back to some strong basic program.

It's amazing, I mean the power it has in changing my outlook.

Sometimes, in fact most of the time it isn't that simple or should I say, isn't that easy. I need to open up and share with someone in the program.

That's not so easy. You see I was always a loner in my using days. Among other things; like a problem sober. Not mine of course YOURS. "Something wrong?" bring it to me- I'll fix it - The thing is, I couldn't even solve my own.

is, I couldn't even solve my own.

0157

There is steadily mounting evidence that nothing is so radically redemptive--and so "relaxing"--as having no secrets, at least no shameful ones, from anybody.

about him and

In our groups, people quickly come to appreciate all this, and when someone makes a painful but liberating self-disclosure, there is no attempt either to condemn or "forgive" that person. Instead the emphasis is upon what the person is doing, here and now, by way of trying to become more honest and authentic. But sometimes people who are new to this philosophy follow a less helpful practice.

*I don't have to
feel better than
anybody else.*

-Dean

Dean

God is the answer (solution) to all your problems. Just take the best of each program. Don't look for the small flukes in each program, you'll find them. I'm very nervous but I need you people. When I take risks I find out who I am, (identify) I have to take risks I am afraid to. ~~Bkix~~ But in love I have to take risks I grow without love there can be no identity. I don't have to feel better about anybody else. Just accept and feel comfortable with who I am.

H.P.' someone makes the sun rise, birds chirp, me talk, It's not me I can't make the sun rise, roses smell pretty etc. Someone up there, omni powerful, present does. Find an H.P. and turn it over! ~~\$fear\$~~

Tried it on my own at most six weeks. Had to do it their way cause it seemed to work my way didn't I wanted what they had. They were happy, they know how to care and share. We have had similar experiences.

*we have had
similar experiences.*

II. 4-7/ (169)

If we clean our bodies by daily abstainance, we should clean our minds of preconceptions based on past experience.

It is those who stay clean when it ain't worth it that make it.

It means remembering I'm only one fix, pill or drink away, after that...I don't know. I do know if I don't take that first

I will be clean and sover.

#4 (170)
H

Alienation and despair are the fruits of addiction. Life to the operating addict is a movement between points. Normal concerns are pushed to the side as the disease progresses. Our usage confounds our good friends and relations and we ~~seek~~ necessarily seek the company of the only people we know who understand, fellow addicts. As the drugs consume our physical, mental and spiritual reserves, we pass into the hazy, crazy state where getting and using drugs is our main activity. Well before we get to this point, we have ceased to participate in the human race. Our tenuous grasp of reality is invaded by fears and self-hatred and we exist apart from the rest of humanity as a whole. A man can be an island unto himself --- we know. In desperation, those of us who ~~have~~ have recovered today, found Narcotics Anonymous and suddenly found ourselves surrounded by a feeling of love and ~~understand~~ acceptance ~~for the~~ that awakened the old memories of what it feels like to be a member of the human family. Slowly painfully we acquainted ourselves with the principles and the Steps that have helped so many hopelessly addicted people learn to live a day at a time without resorting to the use of mood altering drugs. Staying clean and sober is the main purpose of the program of N.A. Gaining strength and guidance leads us into a new life that is beyond the imagination of the operating addict or the newcomer. Nothing is forever and wherever we find ourselves coming in rest assured that we are going to experience many miracles as we progress step by step. The original desire to be clean is the flame that we should feed. It will burn away all the old ideas that hold us back and make us ready to begin our new lives. Lives in which we become the opposite of the persons we had become in our operating days. Through our sharing we assassinate and expose our old selves and become useful members of the society which

#4 How It Works.

(171)

H. stay clean from everything.

to Bill many by
coming up remember
look at the gratitude
it. This switches
the mind. To me there
~~is~~ is nothing
good or bad just
stuff to be grateful
for and live clean
clean ^{and} 3 years.

When I am alone
my medicine is
in the form of
gratitude when I'm
in fellowship it is
done.

a quick death. Happily, the answer for those of us who
found out about NA from hospitals or friends, was total
abstinence, NA meeting relieves our loneliness, and most
wonderful of all a new found spiritual program that
we use freedom from the obsession and compulsion that
we

The bottom line of Narcotics Anonymous is cleanliness.

When we realize that we cannot use drugs in any form and live

we are ready to admit our powerlessness. It takes a while to

realize how unmanageable our lives had become for some of us.

Sometimes I wonder how it is that I can function at all.

The minimum performance required just to keep life within
my body is a monumental task. My brain wants to do what it wants
to do when it wants to do it. And resents being forced into the
discipline necessary to live in this world. It gets back at me.

How It Works

H. D.W.

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taken for granted by average citizens.

The program works a r^evolution in our hearts and it is as if we become new people. Personally I believe that all we really do is learn to become our real selves. The Steps and continual daily abstinence give us daily reprieves from self imposed life sentences and we become free to move about without compulsion and guilt. Ordinary life takes on a new charm and simple things excite us. In time we are able to face life on it's own terms again.

Set sick getting well not bad getting good be our guide. Most of us experienced great pain from our failures to be the people we dreamed of being. We would have done anything to get out of it but unless you're one of us , you'll never know what its like...

How I+WORKS

(173)

1-10-68

Ego - the false sense of self

One of the definitions of the word egotism is the frequent use of the word I. In the program of Narcotics Anonymous, we want to change the personality for the better as soon as possible. Some of our ideas just aren't true and these must be changed till they fit the facts. Most addicts have a rap or routine that they go into with the people that they get to know. It usually contains a number of carefully constructed tales in which we characterize ourselves as the victims of one or more aggressors or even of society as a whole. The sympathy and concern aroused in the listener gave us a hold on them and got them to provide for our needs. As we grow in the fellowship we will find new ways to provide for ourselves and others. The false sense of self keeps us from forming a real relationship to the world around us.

The unconditional love we find at the meetings makes it possible to relax and review our assumptions about ourselves and reality. Working the Steps will give us ^{relationships with} a power greater than ourselves, correct old defects, right old wrongs and lead us to help others. As we begin the process of change by honestly listening to the stories of people we meet in the program at an open speakers meeting or in private fellowship, we will want to try out some of the solutions that have worked for others. Maybe ~~part~~ of their solution is part of our solution. Trying to be all things to all people, we have often forgotten what we really think and feel. As we begin to come to from the alcohol and drugs, the layers of phony self will peel off like the skin of an onion. When the layers are gone, our real selves will remain. There is a softer, easier way of ^{self imposed} course but it carries a death sentence.

4 I

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Recently someone loves me

Recently someone very dear to me, Someone I loved very much, had a relapse. They also dissappeared for approx five days. Let me tell you, I went thru hell. See I'm also in love with this ~~program~~ person.

Well I called everywhere and searched a lot. I even called some of my old connections and using buddies, trying to find this person.

Soon I began wearing down. Losing sleep every night and struggling with some nerves that were wearing thin. I was going bananas. Finally I couldn't go on that way.

When drug addiction is complicated by an underlying emotional or mental disorder, even if the disorder is treated successfully, I cannot safely go back to using anyform of drugs once the addiction has been established.

Any amount of drug use will trigger the addiction process, the compulsive addiction would take over and I would use the addictive drug mor and more as a necessity.

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How It Works

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The only way to keep from getting or continuing a habit is not to take that first fix, pill, or drink. People like us know that one is too many and a thousand never enough. We put great emphasis on this for we know that when we use drugs in any form, or substitute one for another, we release our addiction all over again or create a new one.

I know ONE pill, fix or drink more would finish me, because even after 16 months the disease I have is progressing; I am more a drug addict today than when I came in. At any rate we were trapped

Most drugs, Especially the harder ones, require no period of usage to trigger any sort of allergic effect although physical and mental tolerance can play a role. Generally the effects are immediate and devastating. As usage continues it can be

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higher power to remove these defects that have drained our resources and kept us from being the people we truly wanted to be. We have reached out for a higher power and a new self image as God would have it. Now we reach out to the world and take care of any left-over business from our operating days. We want to be free to walk any street and face anyone. The eighth and ninth steps give us that freedom. The final three save us the trouble of defending our selves when we make a mistake. Once we have admitted our fault then other persons or persons don't feel a need to show us our mistake. If they do it is then no fault of our own.

We seek a closer contact with our higher power and the guidance and strength we need to live God's will. We are really ready to reach out in the joy of living step. By practicing the spiritual principles we have learned we qualify ourselves to take a place in society and to carry on the great work of this fellowship by doing our best to carry this message to addicts who still suffer. The message that Narcotics Anonymous is a reality and a dope addict can learn to live free and clean and get a new life. Through the legacy of service we can let people with a need to know about the fellowship, and Counselors of all types as well as addicts need to know that help is available.

The snobbishness or holier than thou attitude had to go regardless of our different backgrounds.

God gives me the resources for unconditional ~~love~~ love.

I learned to recognize recovery and growth understand, care and share openly.