

the fear of not being a part off, and feeling better or worse than others. We compare ourselves and look for ways to disqualify ourselves for this way of life. By spending time with other recovering addicts in NA we learn about our disease and learn how to become part of a group of people who understand where we come from and how we think and feel.

Prayer and meditation is also about communication with God of our understanding. our basic text says "For some, prayer is asking for God's help, and meditation is listening for God's answers." That communication is the most important one we have. Self-centeredness stops growth and our communication, it's the spiritual part of the disease of addiction, and what helps is God-centeredness, spirituality, to keep that communication going. For many of us, God works through people, places & things. We need to open our mind and communicate with others in order to receive God's answers. If we just listen to ourselves, it's probably self-will.

A rule of thumb might be: to whom, why and what are we communicating. Learning to communicate takes time, and we all understand when members struggle with this. We have all been there, so we love each other and help each other in this area. Lots of addicts have described this process as Coming Home and feel like they found purpose and meaning they have always been looking for. We are no longer alone

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# NARCOTICS ANONYMOUS



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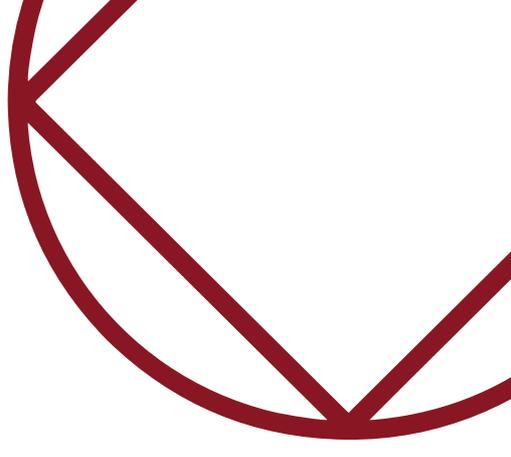
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## COMMUNICATION



Our program is about relationships and communication is vital for any relationship to survive. In active addiction we wanted something we took it. Usually without asking. When we spoke let's be real we growled and yelled in anger. This is what we knew. Some were taught this due to how we were raised, others learned it because of active addiction. So why do we get so upset when we come into the rooms and others don't understand us? In active addiction we used to manipulate, scheme and when we ran out of words some of us used violence. Our self centered nature has halted many of us from being able to build lasting relationships. When others communicate issues many times we take things personal that have nothing to do with us. We must get past this barrier if we are going to communicate with each other and face the issues we need to deal with. Feelings get in the way also as many addicts choose to f\*\*k everything and run. When we refuse to face our problems there is no room for growth. Relationships can't grow if we don't face the things that bother us. For real growth the elephants in the room can't be ignored.

Coming into the rooms was our first form of communication in NA. This was huge for us. For we are asking for help. This was good for our first awareness to having a problem for whatever it was until we admitted we are an addict.

We may ask is this really communication, yes, yes it was in the beginning remember where you came from. Did someone welcome you? Did someone help explain anything to you? Did someone say you never have to use against your will again? If yes for the sake of your recovery do the same! We can't keep what we have unless we give it away, we need to remember where we came from or we may go back.

In active addiction our world started to shrink

more and more until it was only us and our disease. When we stop communicating we're alone with our disease. We need to communicate what our disease tells us when we're alone, or else it will start to give us orders. Many of us lived that way for many months or years and so it is obvious that when we stopped being in contact with others at one point we lost the skill to communicate.

We have to admit our powerlessness and learn that we need to communicate with fellow addicts to recover. To put it more simple, Communication is the first ingredient of recovery.

Our Basic Text talks about honesty being the antidote for our diseased thinking. Our old way of thinking drives us into isolation. Being alone as addicts is a dangerous place to be because alone we are powerless over our disease. Becoming honest is a process and by surrendering our actions we open up towards others around us. Most of us start with opening up to our sponsors or home group members, eventually we learn to become honest with ourselves and our God as we understand it.

The message of recovery is how we communicate with each other in our meetings. We share our experience, strength and hope and listen to what others have to say, in that way we learn and grow, together. We ask other members and groups How they Did so that we can learn to live and better carry the message. No exception, communication is essential for our recovery and it's saving lives, we can't do this alone. Our literature is experience, strength and hope communicated in writing. Our self inventories is communicating with our spirits, and to share those inventories with our sponsors let's other recovering addicts into our lives.

In service we communicate our good will and empathy for the still suffering addict. We listen

for honest sharing, one heart communicating with another.

In recovery we learn that to be able to live a life without drugs we have to ask for help. Asking for help is for us addicts one of the hardest parts of communication for we have to admit that we can't do it alone. We learn to face everything and recover instead. This attitude helps us to choose to listen to others. We learn to not only listen but to hear what others are saying. We learn to take the time necessary, and not let our own selfishness get in the way of communication.

At our meetings it might be the first time there is someone listening to us. We can share freely without any interruption and criticism. This helps us to open up, it relieves us of our fear of being judged. We learn these things by listening ourselves when attending meetings. When practicing anonymity our personalities are set aside. We are all here to communicate our recovery. We focus on communicating our feelings, our experience, strength and hope. Manipulations and rationalizations doesn't fly in a room of recovering addicts. When we communicate tough love it's only because we care. Narcotics Anonymous is place for any positive change. If we can't communicate honestly, this is where we need to grow.

Our actions communicate more than words. When our words are put into action things start to happen. We change. We grow. We need to surrender our old ways to communicate and stay clear from isolation. We communicate our empathy with hugs and service for the still suffering addict. We communicate our gratitude in our actions. Spending time together before and after the meeting, becoming part of each other's lives, and helping out with what needs to be done at the meeting, are all great ways to learn how to communicate. Most addicts struggle with