

## Early References To 12 Step Fellowships For Addicts

The following quotes are excerpted from articles and books published prior to 1970 that make reference to Addicts Anonymous, Narcotics Anonymous, and other Fellowships for Addicts. The source documents for these excerpts can sometimes be found in libraries in original form or on microfilm. It is important to note that none of these references appear to be related to the Narcotics Anonymous which began in California in 1953 and grew into the Worldwide Fellowship that exists today. The references themselves show that the fellowships they describe were quite different than the present N.A. and that they did not apply the Twelve Traditions in the same way.

Alcohol, Science and Society (page 472) reported to contain a statement made by or question asked of Bill Wilson in 1944 at Yale University

"..... an organization similar to A.A which operates among addicts....."

New York Times - June 18, 1950  
Group Here Helps Narcotics Addicts

"Anonymous" Unit Applies the Group Therapy Principle to Aid Newly Cured

Group therapy to help addicts to abstain from the use of narcotics has been applied successfully on a small but increasing scale here by Narcotics Anonymous. The organization has been assisted by members of Alcoholics Anonymous, from which it derived its name and program, although there is no official connection between the two groups.

The New York City chapter was started five months ago by a discharged patient from the United States Public Health Service Hospital in Lexington, Ky., where Federal prisoners and voluntary patients receive treatment. Like other members he is known only by his first name, Danny.

An addict for twenty-five years, Danny had undergone a number of previous "cures" and once considered his case hopeless. Now he views the future with confidence and intends to devote the remainder of his life to the organization, which describes itself as "an informal society of former addicts" who maintain their own freedom from the habit "by helping other addicts to recover."

Not a Cure in Itself

The Narcotics Anonymous program, recently outlined in a booklet prepared by the local chapter, does not pretend to be a cure itself. Like Alcoholics Anonymous, it is interested primarily in helping newly treated sufferers to continue their hard-won abstinence by introducing them to a dedicated "way of life" in which they pass on the benefits of their experience to other sufferers.

The program assumes that the cure is not enough. Continual "spiritual assistance" is needed to avoid the "joy pop" or first shot of "junk" that leads to renewed addiction. Members feel they are "living on borrowed time--twenty-four hours a day, one day at a time; but that, by means of this program, they may continue happily to do so."

This group approach to the problem originated in 1947 among patients at the Kentucky hospital. The New York chapter is the first outside branch. A monthly newspaper, THE KEY, published at the Federal institution, provides contact between the parent group and ex-patients.

There are sixteen members of Narcotics Anonymous here and membership has begun to

expand rapidly. Hampered by a lack of permanent headquarters, the unit holds two meetings a week, on Tuesday and Friday nights, in the Salvation Army building at 535 West Forty-eighth Street.....

Field work in the city's prisons and hospitals is an integral part of the organization's activities.....

Maj. Dorothy Berry of the Salvation Army became interested in Narcotics Anonymous through its work in the city's institutions. Miss Ann Husted, a social worker at the Women's House of Detention, Greenwich Avenue and West Tenth Street, serves as an adviser, as do several physicians here.

Chicago Sun Times - August 17, 1950

Where Can "Junkie" Get Medical Help? Not in This Town! - By Herman Kogan

..... As a matter of fact, there are only two hospitals for drug addicts in the country. Both are run by the United States Public Health Service - one at Fort Worth, Tex., and the other at Lexington, Ky., an overnight trip from Chicago.....

A new group seeking to cut down the ranks of addicts is called "Addicts Anonymous". In intent and method, it resembles the older and well-established Alcoholics Anonymous organization. It was founded in 1947 in Frankfort, Ky., and works, in some cities, with Alcoholics Anonymous.....

American Journal of Public Health - February, 1951 (page 254)

(section with the heading - Narcotics Anonymous)

Frankly admitting Alcoholics Anonymous as its "guiding star," the New York City chapter of Narcotics Anonymous has put together a leaflet, *Our Way of Life: An Introduction to N.A.* This outlines its purposes and the way it works--"an informal society of former addicts who aim to help fellow sufferers recover their health ... banded together in groups ... they have no constitution, no by-laws, no officers, no dues or assessments...." The only requirement is an honest desire to stay off "opiates, sedatives, and alcohol." The recognition of the same mental and emotional sickness that is represented by alcoholism is evident in this new allied group. P.O. Box 68, Village Station, New York 14.

Time - May 7, 1951 (page 82)

The White Stuff

Young Danny had an abscessed ear, and to ease the pain a doctor in St. Joseph, Missouri gave him morphine. Danny had been an insecure, troubled child longer than he could remember - both his mother & father died before he was five. At 16, Danny knew nothing about psychology, but he knew that the 'shot' gave him a lift. From a peddler he got morphine regularly for six months; then he lost his contact and could get no more. He became weak, nauseated, sweaty, shaky and depressed. Danny was sent to a state hospital.

No Such Thing as a Cure. Danny learned a lot in the hospital. Veteran gowsters taught him how to get a ration of white stuff. When he got out, Danny did not go home. He bummed around thje country, doing odd jobs, lying, stealing, forging prescriptions - anything for a bang. Time & again he was picked up and convicted, usually to serve his sentence in the U.S.

