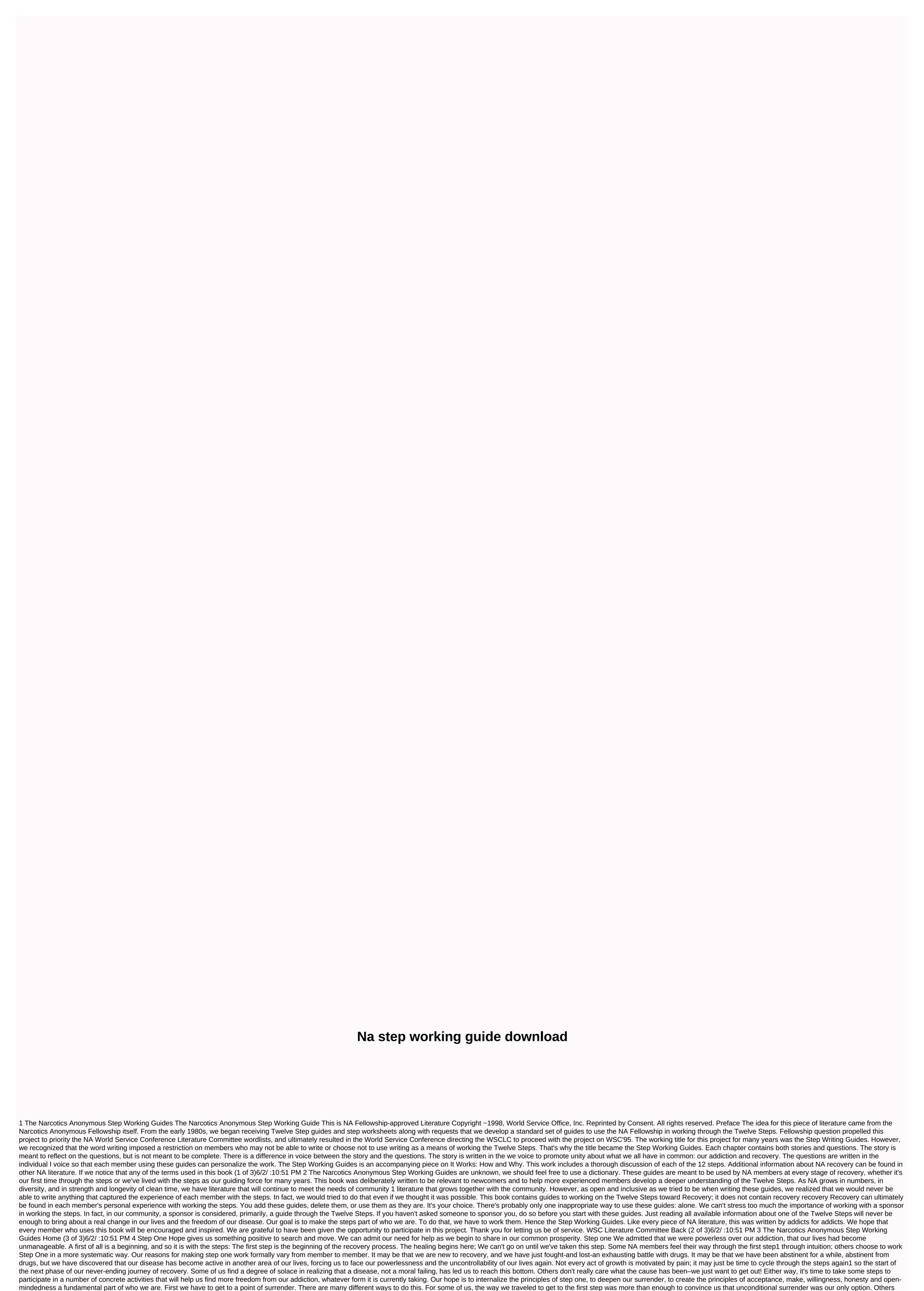
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start this process, even though we are not entirely convinced that we are addicted or that we have really hit the bottom. It is only when we work on the first step that we really come to the realization that we are addicted, that we have hit the bottom and that we have to surrender. Before we
start to work the first step, we need abstinent-whatever it is necessary. If we are new to Narcotics Anonymous and our first step is mainly about looking at the effects of drug addiction in our lives, we need to get clean. If we've been clean for a while and our first step is about our
powerlessness over another behavior that has made our lives unmanageable, we need to find a way to stop the (1 of 8)6/2/:09:23 PM 5 Step A behavior so that our surrender is not clouded by continuing to act. The disease of addiction What makes us addicted is the disease of addiction-
not the drugs, not our behavior, but our disease. There is something in us that does not allow us to control our use of drugs. This same thing also makes us susceptible to obsession and coercion in other areas of our lives. How do we know when our disease is active? When we become
trapped in obsessive, compulsive, self-centered routines, endless loops that lead nowhere but to physical, mental, spiritual and emotional decay. What does the disease of addiction mean to me? Has my illness been active recently? How? ==> What is it like when I'm obsessed with
something? Does my thinking follow a pattern? Describe. ==> If a thought comes to mind, do I act on it immediately without considering the consequences? In what other ways do I behave compulsively? ==> How does the self-centered part of my illness affect my life and the lives of
those around me? ==> How has my illness affected me physically? Mentally? Spiritual? Emotional? Our addiction can manifest itself in different ways. If we first come to Narcotics Anonymous, our problem will, of course, be drugs. Later we can discover that addiction is wreaking havoc in
our lives in a number of ways. ==> What is the specific way my addiction manifests itself most recently? ==> am I obsessed with a person, place or thing? If so, how did that get in the way of my relationships with others? How different am I mentally, physically, mentally and emotionally
affected by this obsession? Denial Denial is the part of our that tells us we don't have a disease. When we are in denial, we are unable to see the reality of our addiction. We minimize its effect. We blame others, citing the over-expectations of friends and employers. We compare ourselves
to other addicts whose addiction seems worse than ours. We can blame a certain drug. If we've been getting rid of drugs for some time, we can compare the current manifestation of our addiction to our drug use, and rationalizing that nothing we do today might be as bad as that was! One
of the easiest ways to tell us that we are in denial is when we give ourselves plausible but untrue reasons for our behavior. ==> have I given plausible but untrue reasons for my behavior? What have they been? ==> did I compulsively act on an obsession, and then acted as if I was
actually intending to act that (2 of 8)6/2/:09:23 PM 6 Step One Way? When were those times? How did I blame other people for my behavior? ==&at; How did I compare my addiction to other people's addiction? Is my addiction bad enough if I don't compare it to someone else's? ==&at; Do
I compare a current manifestation of my addiction to what my life was like before I got clean? Am I plagued by the idea that I should know better? ==> Have I thought I have enough information about addiction and recovery to control my behavior before things get out of hand? ==> Do I
avoid action because I'm afraid I'll be ashamed when I face the results of my addiction? Do I avoid action because I'm worried about what others will think? Hitting rock bottom: despair and isolation Our addiction finally takes us to a place where we can no longer deny the nature of our
problem. All lies, all rationalizations, all illusions fall away when we come face to face with what our lives have become. We find that we are friendless or so completely disconnected that our relationships are a sham, a parody of love and intimacy. While
it seems like all is lost when we are in this state, the truth is that we must go through this place before we can begin our journey of recovery? ==> What crisis brought me to recovery? ==> What situation led me to formally work on Step One? ==> When did I first recognize my
addiction as a problem? Have I tried to correct it? If so, how? If not, why not? Powerlessness As addicts, we respond to the word 'powerless' in different ways. Some of us recognize that a more accurate description of our situation simply could not exist, and admit our powerlessness with a
sense of relief. Others recoil at the word, connecting with weakness or believing it to indicate some sort of character deficit. Understanding powerlessness is essential to our recovery – will help us get over all the negative feelings we have about the
concept. We are powerless when the driving force in our lives is beyond our control. Our addiction certainly qualifies as such an uncontrollable, driving force. We cannot moderate or our drug use or other compulsive behavior, even when they lead us to lose the things that matter most to us.
We can't stop even if we continue it will certainly cause irreparable physical damage. We do things we would never do without our addiction; things that make us shudder with shame when we think about it. We may even decide that we don't want to use it, that we're not going to use it, and
realize that we just aren't able to stop when the opportunity arises. (3 of 8)6/2/:09:23 PM 7 Step One We may have tried to refrain from drug use or other compulsive behavior - perhaps with some success - for a period without a program, only to discover that our untreated addiction
eventually takes us back to where we were before. In order to work the first step, we need to prove ourselves on a deep level. ==> Uhat am I powerless about? ==> Uhat am 
things have I done to maintain my addiction that went completely against all my beliefs and values? ==> How does my personality change when I behave on my addiction? (For example: Am I becoming arrogant? Self-centered? Mean tempered? Passive to the point where I can't protect
myself? Manipulative? Whining?) ==> do I manipulate other people to sustain my addiction? How? ==> Did I try to stop using and find out I couldn't? Have I stopped using it on my own and found that my life was so painful without drugs that my abstinence didn't last very long? How
were these times? ==&at: How has my addiction caused me to hurt myself or others? Unmanageability The first step requires us to admit two things; first, that we are powerless over our addiction; and two, that our lives have become unmanageable. Actually, we would be hard pressed to
admit one and not the other. Our unruliness is the outward proof of our powerlessness. There are two general forms of unrulyness; and inner, or personal, unruly. Outward uncontrollability is often identified by things like arrests, job
losses and family problems. Some of our members are locked up. Some have never been able to support any kind of relationship for more than a few months. Some of us have been cut off from our families, asked never to contact them again. Inner or personal uncontrollability is often
identified by unhealthy or untrue belief Systems about ourselves, the in which we live, and the people in our lives. We can believe that the world revolves around us -not only that it should, but that it does. We can believe that it is not really our job to take care
of ourselves; Someone else should do that. We can believe that the responsibilities average person takes as a self are just too big a burden for us to bear. We can over or under respond to events in our lives. Emotional volatility is often one of the most obvious ways we can identify personal
uncontrollability. ==> What does uncontrollability mean to me? (4 of 8)6/2/:09:23 PM 8 Step 1 ==> Have I ever been arrested or have I had legal problems due to my addiction? Did I ever do anything that could have been arrested if I'd just been caught? What have those things been
like? ==> What problems have I had at work or at school because of my addiction? What problems have I had with my family as a result of my addiction? ==> What kind of problems have I had with my friends as a result of my addiction? ==> Do I insist on going my own way? What
effect does my insistence have on my relationships? ==> Do I think about the needs of others? What effect has my lack of attention had on my relationships? ==> do I take responsibility for my life and my actions? Am I able to carry out my daily responsibilities without being
overwhelmed? How did this affect my life? ==> Do I fall apart when things don't go according to plan? How did this affect my life? ==> Do I maintain a crisis mentality and react to every situation in a
panic? How did this affect my life? ==> Do I ignore signs that something could be seriously wrong with my health or with my children, thinking that somehow it will work out? Describe. ==> Have I ever been indifferent to that danger or have I not been able to protect myself as a result of
my addiction? Describe. ==> Have I ever hired anyone as a result of my addiction? Describe. ==> Do I have tantrums or do I respond in other ways to my feelings that diminish my self-esteem or sense of dignity? Describe. ==> Have I taken drugs or my addiction to changing or
suppressing my feelings? What was I trying to change or suppress? Reservations Reservations are places in our program that we have reserved for relapse. They may be built around the idea that we can maintain a small amount of control, like. Okay, I accept that I can't control my use, but
I can still sell drugs, right? Or maybe we think we can stay friends with the people we used or bought drugs with. We may think there's something we couldn't have done with a disease, for example, or the death of a loved
one - and plan to use it if it ever happens. We may think that after we have reached a goal, a (5 of 8)6/2/:09:23 PM 9 Step Have made a certain number of years, then we can check our usage. Reservations are usually tucked away in the back
of our minds; we are not fully aware of it. It is is That we're exposing and canceling all the reservations we have, right now. Have I accepted the full measure of my illness? ==> Do I think I can still associate with the people connected to my addiction? Can I still go to the places
I used? Do I think it's wise to keep drugs or paraphernalia around, just to remind myself or test my recovery? If so, why? ==> Is there anything I don't think I can get through, an event that can happen that will be so painful that I have to use it to survive the pain? ==> Do I think that with
any amount of clean time, or with other living conditions, I could control my use? ==> Which reservations am I still holding on to? Surrender There is a big difference between dismissal and surrender. Dismissal is what we feel when we realize that we are addicted, but have not yet
accepted recovery as the solution to our problem. Many of us found ourselves at this point long before we went to Narcotics Anonymous. We may have thought it was our destiny to be addicted, to live and to die in our addiction. Surrender, on the other hand, is what happens after we have
accepted the first step as something that applies to us and have accepted that recovery is the solution. We don't want to keep feeling the way we feel. ==> What am I afraid of in the concept of surrender, if anything? What convinces me
that I can no longer use successfully? ==> Do I accept that I will never regain control, even after a long period of abstinence? ==> What would my life be like if I completely surrendered? ==> Can I continue my recovery
without a complete surrender? Spiritual principles In the first step, we will focus on honesty, open-mindedness, willingness, humility and acceptance. The practice of the principle of honesty from the first step begins with admitting the truth about our addiction, and continues with the practice
of honesty on a daily basis. When we say I'm an addict in a meeting, it may be the first really honest thing we've said in a long time. We're starting to be honest with ourselves and therefore with other people. (6 of 8)6/2/:09:23 PM 10 Step One If I've thought about using or acting on my
addiction in any other way, have I shared it with my sponsor or told anyone else? ==> Have I remained in touch with the reality of my illness, no matter how long I am free from active addiction? ==> Have I noticed that now that I don't have to cover up my addiction, I don't have to lie
like I did anymore? I appreciate the freedom that's part of it? In what ways have I started to be honest in my recovery? Practicing the principle of open-mindedness found in Step One usually goes into being ready to believe that there might be another way to live and be to try that. It doesn't
matter that we can't see every detail of what that way might be, or that it could be totally different from anything we've heard before; what matters is that we do not limit ourselves or our thinking. Sometimes we hear NA members say things that sound totally crazy to us, things like surrender
to win or suggestions to pray for someone we hate. We show open-mindedness if we don't reject these things without trying them. ==> What have I heard in recovery that I have difficulty believing? Did I ask my sponsor or the person I heard to say it to explain it to me? ==> How do I
practice open-mindedness? The principle of readiness contained in the first step can be applied in different ways. When we first start thinking about recovery, many of us either don't really believe it's possible for us or just don't understand how it will work, but we still go through with the first
step—and that's our first experience with readiness. Taking any action that will help our recovery shows willingness: going to meetings, getting phone numbers from other NA members and calling them. ==> Am I willing to follow my
sponsor's course? ==> Am I willing to go to meetings regularly? ==> Am I willing to do my utmost? In what ways? The principle of humility, so central to the first step, is most evident in our surrender. Humility is easiest to recognize as an acceptance of who we really are - no worse or
better than we believed we were when we used it, only human. ==&qt; Do I believe I am a monster who has poisoned the whole world with my addiction? Do I believe that my addiction is completely unimportant to the larger society around me? Or something in between? ==&qt; Do I have a
sense of relative significance within my circle of family and friends? In society as a whole? What's that feeling? (7 of 8)6/2/:09:23 PM 11 Step 1 ==&at: How do I practice the principle of humility associated with this work on the first step? To practice the principle of acceptance, we need to do
more than just admit that we are addicted. When we accept our addiction, we feel a profound inner change that is underscored by an increasing sense of peace. We come to terms with our addiction, with our recovery, and with the meaning that
these two realities will come to have in our lives. We are not afraid of a future of meeting presence, sponsor contact and stepwork; instead, we begin to see recovery as a precious gift, and the work that is connected as no more problems than other routines of life. ==> have I made peace
with the fact that I am addicted? ==> Have I made peace with the things I have to do to stay clean? ==> How is the acceptance of my illness necessary for my further recovery? Move on as we get ready to move on to Step Step we'll probably notice if we've worked Step One well
enough. Are we sure it's time to move on? Have we spent as much time as others have spent on this step? Have we really gained insight into this step? Many of us have found it helpful to write about our understanding of every step as we prepare to move forward. ==> How do I know it's
time to move on? ==> What is my understanding of Step One? ==> How has my prior knowledge and experience affected my work on this step? We have come to a place where we see the results of our old way of life and accept that a new way is needed, but we probably don't see
how rich the life of recovery is yet. It may be enough to be free of active addiction now, but we'll soon find that the void we've filled with drugs or other obsessive and compulsive behavior begs to be filled. Working the rest of the steps will fill that void. Next on our journey to recovery is Step
Two. Back Home (8 of 8)6/2/:09:23 12 Step two Surrender to the things we cannot change by our own strength is a way to get on with our lives. We seek a Higher Power of our own understanding and that becomes our ultimate guide and source of strength. Step two We came to believe
that a power greater than ourselves could restore us to common sense. Step One rids us of our illusions about addiction; Step two gives us hope of recovery. The second step tells us that what we discovered about our addiction in the first step is not the end of the story. The pain and
insanity we have lived with is unnecessary, says step two. They can be enlightened and, over time, we will learn to live without them by working the Twelve Steps of Narcotics Anonymous. The second step fills the void we feel when we're done with Step One. As we approach step two, we
begin to think that there may be, just maybe, a Force greater than ourselves—a Force that is able to heal our pain, soothe our confusion, and restore our sanity. When we were new to the program, many of us were amazed by the implication of this step that we had been crazy. From
acknowledging our powerlessness to admitting our insanity seemed like a terrible leap. However, after being around the program for a while, we began to understand what this step was really about. We read the basic text and found that our insanity there was defined as repeating the same
mistakes and expecting different results. We can certainly agree with that! After all, how many times had we tried to get away with before, every time telling ourselves, it will this time. Now, that's insane! While we have lived the principles of this step for
many years, we discover how deep our insanity actually runs; we often find that the definition of basic text simply scratches the surface. Some of us oppose this move because I thought it needed us to be religious. Nothing could be further from the truth. There is nothing, absolutely nothing,
in the NA program that requires a member to be religious. The idea that anyone can join us, regardless of ... religion or lack of religion is fiercely defended by our community. Our members strive to be inclusive in this regard and do not tolerate anything that jeopardizes the unconditional right
of all addicts to develop their own individual (1 of 8)6/2/:11:17 PM 13 Step Two understanding of a Power greater than itself. This is a spiritual, not religious, program. The beauty of the Second Step is revealed as we begin to think about what our Higher Power can be. We are encouraged
to choose a Force that is loving, caring and-more important – able to make us healthy. The second step does not say: We have come to believe in a Power greater than ourselves. It says, We came to believe that a Power greater than ourselves could restore ourselves to common sense.
The emphasis is not on who or what this Force is, but on what this Force can do for us. The group itself certainly qualifies as a Power greater than ourselves. The same applies to the spiritual principles of the Twelve Steps. And, of course, so has the understanding that one of our individual
members has of a Higher Power. As we stay clean and continue to work on this step, we discover that no matter how long our addiction has gone and how far our insanity has progressed, there is no limit to the ability of a power greater than ourselves to restore our sanity. Hope The hope
we get from working Step Two replaces the desperation with which we came into the program. Every time we had followed what we had followed whether wh
us. When we ran out of options and our resources were exhausted, we wondered if we would ever find a solution to our dilemma, if there was anything in the world that worked. In fact, we may have been somewhat suspicious when we first came to Narcotics Anonymous, wondering if this
was just another method that wouldn't work, or whether that wouldn't work well enough for us to make a difference. However, something remarkable occurred to us as we sat in our first few meetings. There were other addicts out there who had taken drugs just like we had, addicts who were
now clean. We believed in them. We knew we could trust them. They knew the places we'd been in our addiction-not just the geographical locations, but the meeting places of horror and despair our minds had visited every time we had used it. The recovering
addicts we met in NA knew those places as well as we did because they had been there themselves. It was when we realized that these other members - addicts like us - stayed clean and felt freedom that most of them us for the first time experienced the feeling of hope. We might have
been standing with a group of members after a meeting. We may have listened to someone share a story, just like ours. Most of us can remember that moment, even years later—and that moment comes to all of us. Our hopes will be renewed during our recovery. Every time something new
is revealed to us about our disease, the pain of that realization is accompanied by a wave of hope. No matter how painful the process of scrapping our denial can be, something else is restored in its place in us. Even if we don't feel like we believe in something, we believe in the program.
We believe we are healthy again, even in the most hopeless times, even in our sickest areas. ==> What do I have today? Insanity (2 of 8)6/2/:11:17 14 Step two If we have doubts about the need for a renewal of common sense in our lives, we are going to have trouble with this step.
Reviewing our first step should help us if we have any doubts. Now it's time to take a good look at our insanity. ==> did I think I could check my usage? What were some of my experiences with this, and how were my efforts unsuccessful? ==> What things have I done that I can hardly
believe when I look back at them? Did I put myself in dangerous situations to get drugs? Did I behave in a way I'm ashamed of now? How were those situations? ==> Have I made insane decisions as a result of my addiction? Have I resigned jobs, let friendships and other relationships, or
give up on achieving other goals for no other reason than that those things interfered with my use? ==> Have I ever physically injured myself or anyone else in my addiction? Insanity is a loss of our perspective and our sense of proportion. For example, we may think that our personal
problems are more important than someone else's; In fact, we may not even be able to consider other people's needs. Small problems become big catastrophes. Our lives are getting out of balance. Some obvious examples of insane thinking are the belief that we can stay clean on our own,
or the belief that drug use was our only problem and that everything is fine now just because we are clean. In Narcotics Anonymous, insanity is often described as the belief that we can take something outside of ourselves-drugs1 power, sex, food—to establish what is wrong in ourselves:
our feelings. ==> How did I overreact or underreact to things? How has my life been out of balance? ==> In what ways does my insanity tell me can make or solve all my problems? Do drugs? Compulsive gambling, eating or sex seeking? Anything
else? ==> Is part of my insanity the belief that the symptom of my addiction (the use of drugs or any other manifestation) is my only problem? If we've been clean for a while, we may notice a whole new level of denial it's hard to see the insanity in our lives. Just as we did early in our
recovery, we need to become familiar with the ways we are insane. Many of us have found that our understanding of insanity in the Basic Text. We always make the same mistakes, even if we are fully aware of what the results will be. Maybe we're
hurting so much that we don't care about the consequences, or do we think that acting will somehow be worth the price. ==> When we had an obsession, even though we knew what the results would be, what did we feel and thought in advance? Why did we keep going? (3 of 8)6/2/
:11:17 Step two come to believe The discussion above has given several reasons why we may have problems with this step. There could be more. It is important for us to identify and overcome barriers that can prevent us from believing. ==> Am I afraid to believe? What are they? ==&gt
Do I have any other barriers that make it difficult for me to believe? What are they? ==> What does the phrase We came to believe..., for me? As addicts, we want everything to happen immediately. But it's important to remember that Step Two is a process, not an event. Most of us do not
only wake up one day and know that a Force greater than us can restore ourselves to common sense. We are gradually growing in this faith. Yet we do not have to sit back and wait for our faith to grow on its own; We can help. ==> Have I ever believed in something for which I had no
tangible evidence? How was that experience? ==> What experiences have I heard other recovering addicts tell about the process of believing? Have I tried any of them in my life? What do I believe in? ==> How has my faith grown since I've recovered? A Force greater than ourselves
Each us comes to recovery with a whole history of life experiences. That history will largely determine what kind of understanding we develop of a Force greater than ourselves. In this step, we don't need to have many specific ideas about the nature or identity of that Higher Power. That kind
of understanding will come later. The kind of understanding of a Higher Power that is most important to find in the Second Step is a concept that can help us. We're not concerned with theological elegance or doctrinal adherence here - we just want something that works. How powerful is a
Power greater than we must be? The answer to that question is simple. Our addiction as a negative power was without a doubt greater than we were. Our addiction led us down a path of insanity and made us act differently than we wanted to behave. We have something to combat that,
something at least as powerful as our addiction. ==> I have accept that there is a power or powers greater than myself? ==> What are some things that are more powerful than I am? ==> Can a force be greater than myself to stay clean? How? (4 of 8)6/2/:11:17 PM 16 Step two
==> Can a force be greater than I'm helping me recover? How? Some of us may have a very clear idea about the nature of a Power greater than ourselves, and there is absolutely nothing wrong with it. In fact, Step Two is the point at which many of us begin to form our first practical ideas
about a power greater than ourselves, if we have not yet. Many addicts have found it useful to identify what a Force greater than ourselves is not before they determine what it is. Moreover, looking at what a Force greater than we can do for us can help us to discover more about that Power.
There are many, many insights of a Power greater than ourselves that we can develop. We can see it as the power of the NA Fellowship, Good Orderly Direction, or anything else we can imagine, as long as it is loving and caring and more powerful than we
are. In fact, we don't need to understand a Force greater than ourselves to use that Power to stay clean and seek recovery. ==> What are the characteristics that my Higher Power does not have? ==> What are the
characteristics that my Higher Power has? Recovery to mental health It works: How and why defines the term recovery as changing to a point where addiction and associated insanity do not control our lives. We find that just as our insanity was evident in our loss of perspective and sense of
proportion, so that we can see common sense in our lives when we start developing a perspective that allows us to make better decisions. We feel we have choices about how to act. We begin to have the maturity and wisdom to slow down and consider all aspects of a situation before we
act. Of course our lives will change. Most of us have no difficulty in identifying the mental health in our lives as we compare our use to our early recovery with some clean time, and some time clean with long-term recovery. All this is a process, and our need for a recovery
to common sense will change over time. If we are new to the program, being restored to common sense probably means no more use; when that happens, perhaps some of the insanity that is directly and clearly bound to our use will stop. We stop committing to get drugs. We will stop
ourselves in certain humiliating situations that serve no purpose, but our use. If we have been in recovery for some time, we may find that we have no trouble believing in a power greater than ourselves that can help us stay clean, but we may not have considered what a recovery recovery
means to us to stay clean. As we grow in our recovery, it is very important that our idea of the meaning of common sense also grows. ==> What are some things I consider examples of common sense? (5 of 8)6/2/:11:17 PM 17 Step two ==> What changes in my thinking and behavior
are needed to keep my recovery healthy? In what areas of my life do I need common sense now? ==> How will working the rest of the steps help me in my recovery to common sense? ==> How has my mental health recovered in my recovery?
Some of us may have unrealistic expectations about restoring common sense. We may think that we will never get angry again or that, once we start working on this step, we will behave perfectly all the time and have no more trouble with obsessions, emotional turmoil, or imbalance in our
lives. This description may seem extreme, but if we let ourselves down with our personal growth in recovery or the amount of time it takes to be restored to common sense, we can recognize some of our beliefs in this description. Most of us have found that we get the most rest by letting go
of all the expectations we can have about how our recovery is progressing. ==> What expectations do I have about restoring common sense? Are they realistic, or unrealistic? ==> Are my realistic expectations about how my recovery is progressing or not? Do I understand that
recovery happens over time, not at night? ==> Finding ourselves able to act soundly, even once, in a situation where we were never able to act successfully before is proof of common sense. ==> Have I had such experiences in my recovery? What were they? Spiritual principles In the
second step we will focus on open-mindedness, willingness, faith, trust and humility. The principle of open-mindedness that we find in the second step stems from the understanding that we cannot recover alone, that we need some kind of help. It continues to open our minds to believe that
help is possible for us. It doesn't matter if we have any idea of how this Power is going to help greater than ourselves, only that we believe it's possible. ==> Why is having a closed mind detrimental to my recovery? ==> How do I show open-mindedness in my life today? ==> How
has my life changed since I was recovering? Do I believe more change is possible? Practicing the principle of readiness in the second step can easily begin. At first, we can just listen to meetings and listen to recovering addicts share about their experiences with this step. Then we (6 of
8)6/2/:11:17 PM 18 Step Two can start applying what we hear to our own recovery. Of course we ask our sponsor to guide us. ==> What am I willing to do to be healthy again? ==> Is there anything I'm willing to do now that I didn't want to do before? What is it? We can't sit back.
Lean. wait to feel a sense of faith when working step two. We have to work on it. One of the suggestions that has worked for many of us is to act as if we had faith. This doesn't mean we should be dishonest with ourselves. We don't have to lie to our sponsor or anyone else about where we
are with this step. We don't do this to sound good or look good. Pretending just means living as if we believe what we hope will happen. In the second step, this would mean that we live as if we expect to be healthy again. There are several ways this can work in our individual lives. Many
members suggest that we may start acting like by regularly going to meetings and taking direction from our sponsor. ==> What action have I taken that demonstrate my faith? How has my faith grown? ==> Have I been able to make plans because I am confident that my addiction will
not get in the way? Practicing the principle of trust may require overcoming a sense of anxiety about the process of restoring common sense. Even if we've only been clean for a short time, we've probably already experienced some emotional pain as we've grown in recovery. We may be
afraid there will be more pain. In a sense we are right about this: There will be more pain. None of this, however, will be more than we can wear, and none of it needs to be worn alone. If we can develop our sense of confidence in the process of recovery and in a Force greater than
ourselves, we can walk through the painful times in our recovery. We will know that what awaits on the other side will be more than just superficial happiness, but a fundamental transformation that will make our lives more satisfying on a deeper level. ==> What fears do I have that stand
in my confidence in the way? ==> What do I need to do to let go of these fears? ==> What action do I take that demonstrates my confidence in the recovery process and a force greater than myself? The principle of humility comes from our recognition that there is a Force greater than
ourselves. It's a huge struggle for most of us to stop relying on our own thinking and start asking for help, but when we do, we've started to practice the principle of humility found in the second step. ==> Have I sought help today from a force greater than myself? How? ==> have I
sought help from my sponsor, went to meetings and contacted other recovering addicts? What were the results? Further (7 of 8)6/2/:11:17 19 Step two If we are ready to move on to step three, we will want to take a look at what we have gained by working Two. Writing about our
understanding of each step as we prepare to move forward helps us internalize the spiritual principles associated with it. ==> What action can I take to help me in the process of believing? ==> What do I do to work on overcoming unrealistic expectations that I can have about about
restored to common sense? ==> What is my understanding of step two? ==> How has my prior knowledge and experience affected my work on this step? If we move on to step three, there's probably a sense of hope in our minds. Even if we are not new to recovery, we have just
strengthened our knowledge that recovery, growth and change are not only possible, but inevitable when we take the trouble to work the steps. We see the possibility of alleviating the specific brand of insanity in which we have most recently been gripped by our addiction. We've probably
already experienced some freedom. We begin to be freed from the blind pursuit of our insanity. We have explored our insanity and begun to trust in a Force greater than ourselves to relieve us of having to continue on the same path. We're starting to be freed from our illusions. We no longer
have to struggle to keep our addiction secret or isolate ourselves to hide our insanity. We've seen how the program has worked for others, and we've found that it's starting to work for us as well. Through our new faith, we achieve a willingness to act and work step three. Back Home (8 of
8)6/2/:11:17 PM 20 Step three Acceptance allows evasion and denial to make way for reality and peace. With the care of God, we have the power to welcome new people and new ideas into our lives. Step three We have decided to transfer our will and our lives to the care of God as we
understood Him. We've been working steps one and two with our sponsor-we've surrendered, and we'l be back where we
started. The action we need to take is working step three. The central action in step three is a decision. The idea of making that decision can scare us, especially when we look at what we decide to do in this step. Making a decision, every decision, is something most of us haven't done in a
long time. We made our decisions for us because of our addiction, by the authorities, or just by default because we didn't want the responsibility to make a decision for ourselves. When we add to this the concept of entrusting the care of our will and our lives to something that most of us
don't understand at this point, we can just think that this whole thing is beyond us and start looking for a shortcut or an easier way to update our programs. These thoughts are dangerous, because if we have shortcuts in our program, shorting our recovery. The third step decision may be too
big to make in one jump. Our fear of the third step, and the dangerous thinking that these fears lead to, can be alleviated by breaking this step into a series of smaller, separate obstacles. The third step is only one one piece of the path of recovery from our addiction. Making the decision of
the third step does not necessarily mean that we suddenly have to change everything about the way we live our lives. Fundamental changes in our lives happen gradually as we work towards our recovery, and all these changes require our participation. We don't have to worry that this step
will do something to us that we are not ready for or will not want. It is important that this step suggests that we transfer our will and our lives to the God's care of our understanding. These words are particularly important. By working on the third step, let's have someone or something to take
care of us, not to control us or live our lives for us. This step does not (1 of 8)6/2/:21:30 21 Step Three suggest that we become mindless robots with no ability to live our own lives, nor do they allow those of us who find such irresponsibility attractive to take such an urge. Instead, we make a
simple decision to change direction, to stop rebelling at the natural and logical flow of events in our lives, to stop carrying ourselves out trying to make everything happen as if we were in charge of the world. We accept that a Power greater than us does a better job of caring for our will and
our lives than we have. We promote the spiritual process of recovery by beginning to explore what we understand the word God means to us as individuals. In this step, each of us will have to come to some conclusions about what we think Cod means. Our understanding does not have to
be complex or complete. It doesn't have to be like someone else's. We can find out that we are sure what God is, and that's okay. The only thing that is essential is that we begin a search that will allow us to advance our understanding as our recovery
continues. Our concept of God will grow as we grow in our recovery. Working on the third step will help us discover what works best for us. Making a decision As we have already discussed, many of us may find ourselves nervous by the thought of making a big decision. We can feel
intimidated or overwhelmed. We may fear the results or the implicit commitment. We may think it's a one-off and fear that we're not doing it right or getting the chance to do it again. However, the decision to transfer our will and life to the God's care of our understanding is one that we can
make over and over again daily if necessary. In fact, we will probably find that we have to make this decision regularly, or risk our recovery because of complacency. It is essential that we involve our hearts and minds in this decision. Although the word decision sounds like something that
usually takes place in the mind, we need to do the work that is necessary to go beyond an intellectual understanding and internalize this choice. ==> Why is is a decision central to this step? ==> Can I make this decision only for today? Do I have any fears or reservations? What are
they? We must realise that taking a decision without following it up with action is pointless. For example, one morning we may decide to go somewhere and then sit down and not leave our homes for the rest of that day. This would render our earlier decision meaningless, no more important
than any thought we might have. ==> What action did I take to follow my decision? ==> What areas of my life are hard for me to turn them around? Self-will Step Three is crucial because we have acted on our own will for so long, abusing our
right to make choices and (2 of 8)6/2/:21:30 PM
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