



the NORVANA

SCOOP

July 2018



“ There is nothing noble in being superior to your fellow man; true nobility is being superior to your former self ”

- Anonymous

for the NEWCOMER

Read this when you want to use...

Dear Self,

If you're reading this, I assume you are struggling to quiet the voice in your head that says you can, or should, use. That you're not really an addict, or even if you are, it's not that bad. That it's just for tonight, you're a grown adult and can make your own decisions, and are perfectly capable of enjoying a drink or a hit, or five or seven, and be still perfectly fine overall.

Or, maybe you're upset. Maybe something bad has happened, or you are afraid might happen soon. Maybe something stressful is going on. Maybe you're overwhelmed and anxious, and the voice is telling you that you are being ridiculous to "deny yourself" any longer.

Maybe you're happy and relaxed, and something in your brain is piping up louder and louder. If you're this happy and relaxed now, getting high would make that feeling even better. Right? Isn't that how it works?

Whatever the situation going on, there is always an excuse that we can come up with to use, if we try hard enough to create it.



Just do this for me (for you), just this once, please. Just wait until tomorrow. It's just for today. You chose to quit using, and you have the complete freedom to choose to use again at any point.

The reason that you haven't is because you accepted the truth that once you take that first drink or drug, all bets are off. You came to the conclusion that for you, it is no longer worth the risk.

You may not feel that way now, or today. I get that. I'm not asking you to do this forever, but please just hang on for another day. That's all I ask.

Love,
You



tips

FOR YOUR RECOVERY

How to build a recovery toolbox

GET INSPIRED

Words work! Make a list of your favorite quotes/mantras, or download a daily affirmation app on your phone. Not only can this halt destructive thinking, but it can also lift your spirits and remind you how awesome you are!



FIND COMFORT

Try breathing exercises. Deep breathing can bring a sense of calm. Using this tool can relieve anxiety and promote balance.

Smells ring bells! Scent is one of the most powerful triggers for emotions and memories. A comforting scent can bring you back to a place of peace.



FIND RELIEF (from cravings)

Exercise is one of the most useful healthy coping mechanisms. It helps your body recover from the damage of drugs and alcohol and can also help you sleep better, reduce stress and symptoms of anxiety and depression.



GROUND YOURSELF

Guided meditation or even just taking a few minutes to find a quiet place can have major physical and mental benefits including reduced stress, increased mindfulness and relaxation.

Writing down your thoughts and feelings – whether positive or negative can be a release. Instead of bottling things up, you'll be able to express yourself on paper.





carrying THE MESSAGE

A STORY OF RECOVERY AND SERVICE TO OTHERS

- ANONYMOUS

Prior to recovery, I spent 18 years as a daily drug and alcohol user; I was in and out of jails/prisons regularly, I had severe mental disorders, I felt lonely, broken, hollow, and desperate for change. My history is not unlike many who struggle with addiction; however, **this story is not one of addiction, it is a story of recovery.**

My journey into recovery started October 6, 2009. I fell asleep drunk and woke up the next morning to an FBI raid. As I sat in jail (once again), I realized that I had been trying to control my addictive behavior for years, and I had failed. I needed help, and I was finally ready to seek it out.

Over the next couple of years in prison, I started attending 12-step meetings and completed a 12-week nonresidential drug abuse treatment program. That gave me some coping skills, helped me change some criminal thinking errors, and introduced me to 12-step programs. When I was released, I immediately started attending 12-step fellowships in the rural community I returned to. I got a sponsor, I worked the steps, I started doing service work for my home group, I attended meetings every day, and I did not associate with anyone still using.

This early recovery foundation was vital for me. I was able to completely change my social niche and had a safe place to pursue the inner transformation necessary to recover. In these early years, my recovery was centered around practice, practice, practice.

Change occurred slowly, my recovery community was patient with me and loved me through the process. Around 4 years of recovery, I could really see the difference within me, and in all the relationships in my new life.

At this time, I started attending college, pursuing degrees in social work and chemical dependency counseling. The school experience was also very important to my recovery. I had no work history, I was a convicted felon, and my self-esteem was very low. School helped me build confidence in myself, taught me how to move through different social settings and be professional. Eventually, I replaced those old prison numbers behind my name, with new educational letters behind my name. I had become employable.

I had learned in recovery, **that service to humanity can be an important principle for recovering people to practice.** So, I carried that with me into my work. I opened a peer support drop-in center in my rural area. It has become a huge success in an area that was hurting for treatment options. I also became an addiction counselor for a newly developed drug treatment court. Today, I can see the difference I am making in the lives of many people. This recovery adventure has taken me to places I could never have imagined myself going. Today, the song in my heart, is one of gratitude and beauty.



upcoming EVENTS

- 20-22 JUL** 37th Annual BRANA Campout "Giving it Away"
🕒 Friday, 12:00 am – Sunday 11:59 pm
📍 Natural Chimneys Campground, Mount Solon, VA
- 22 JUL** NORVANA Special Events Subcommittee Picnic
🕒 Sunday, 12:00 pm – 6:00 pm
📍 Lacey Woods Park, Arlington, VA
- 11 AUG** Chesapeake & Potomac Regional Service Committee Mtg
🕒 Saturday, 10:00 am – 6:00 pm
📍 Fairlington Presbyterian Church, Alexandria, VA

INSPIRATION

from our literature

"We learn that our spirit is not apart from us; it is a part of us. We gain awareness of the exact nature of what is right about us. Our fractured personalities come back together into an integrated whole. Integrity is the state of being fully integrated: Our actions, our thinking, our feelings, our ideals, and our values all match up. It takes a long time for a lot of us to get here, and longer still for us to feel like it's real. More and more, we are able to bring our behavior into alignment with our values and beliefs rather than our feelings and reactions."

— [Narcotics Anonymous](#), [Living Clean: The Journey Continues](#)

call the HELPLINE

Ready to quit? We can help
1-800-543-4670



"that no addict seeking recovery need ever die..."

do you have IDEAS?

Submit your comments, concerns, opinions, experiences, art work, etc. to:
norvananewsletter
@cprna.org

