



Greater New York Region of Narcotics Anonymous

About Narcotics Anonymous

Narcotics Anonymous is a global, community-based organization with a multi-lingual and multicultural membership. NA was founded in 1953, and membership growth was minimal during its first twenty years. Since the publication of our Basic Text in 1983, the number of members and meetings has increased dramatically.

As of 2024, NA members hold more than 72,215 meetings weekly—virtually and in person—in 143 countries. Members are welcomed with key tags in 64 languages. IP#1, "Who, What, How and Why?" provides essential information in 57 languages, and the Basic Text is available in 39 languages.

NA offers recovery through a twelve-step program, including regular attendance at group meetings. These meetings create a peer-based support network for addicts who seek to live drug-free. The name Narcotics Anonymous does not imply a focus on any particular drug; NA makes no distinction between substances, including alcohol. Membership is free, and NA is not affiliated with any outside organizations, including governments, religions, or medical groups.

Our goal is to ensure every addict has an opportunity to hear our message of recovery in their own language and culture.

Visual Assets



Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

The following are frequently asked questions about Narcotics Anonymous and detailed answers based on NA literature and principles.

1. What drugs have members used in NA?

Members come from diverse backgrounds and have used many different substances. In meetings, the focus is not on comparing drugs used but on recovery from addiction.



2. Are all addicts alike?

No. NA includes people from all walks of life—homeless, employed professionals, court-referred individuals, and voluntary participants. The common bond is the shared experience of addiction.

3. What is an NA meeting like?

Meetings may involve sharing experiences, readings from NA literature, and peer support. Keytags are given to mark clean time, and contributions support the meeting space and literature distribution.

4. Are most members heroin addicts?

No. While heroin was common in NA's early years, members now report use of various substances. The Membership Survey indicates 89% used alcohol regularly.

5. What is the 'amend step'?

Step 9 encourages members to make amends for harm caused during active addiction, promoting behavioral change and healing.

6. How does sponsorship work?

A sponsor is a more experienced member who guides a newcomer through the Twelve Steps and helps them stay clean.

7. What do you mean by 'clean and not sober'?

NA uses the term 'clean' to distinguish recovery from all mood- and mind-altering substances, not just alcohol.

8. How many members have been incarcerated or convicted of sex crimes?

NA does not collect this type of personal data.

9. What is NA's stance on government drug policy?

NA has no opinion on outside issues, including political or drug policy.

10. What about methadone or Suboxone?

NA welcomes all addicts. Members on medically assisted treatment are asked to listen during meetings to maintain a recovery atmosphere. Total abstinence is NA's goal.

11. Can we take photographs at your convention?

No photos of members are allowed to preserve anonymity. Special arrangements can be made through the Convention's Public Information booth.



12. Have celebrities attended NA?

NA protects members' anonymity and does not confirm attendance by any individuals, including celebrities.

13. Are there meetings around the world?

Yes. NA exists in 143 countries and hosts over 72,000 meetings each week.

14. Do you operate treatment centers?

No. NA is not affiliated with treatment centers or other recovery enterprises, though we cooperate to share information.

15. Where does your funding come from?

NA is fully self-supporting through member contributions.

16. Is there a spokesperson for NA?

NA does not have an official spokesperson. For press, contact the Convention HIPIC or NA World Services.

17. Can we film a meeting or make a documentary?

No. Filming is not permitted. Observers may attend open meetings, but recording is prohibited.

18. Can I take your picture for an article?

No. In the spirit of anonymity, full-face photographs are not taken.



Media Coverage & Professional Papers

The History of Narcotics Anonymous – *JSciMed Central (2017)* – A peer-reviewed perspective by Collins E. Lewis that recounts NA’s origins and evolution. It describes early AA-inspired groups (e.g. an “Addicts Anonymous” in Lexington and a 1949 NY fellowship led by “Danny C.”) and the formal founding of NA in 1953 by “Jimmy K.” in California. The article highlights NA’s subsequent milestones – from overcoming initial struggles to the publication of its *Basic Text* (1983) – and its expansion into a global fellowship present in over 130 countries atahca.ptatahca.pt.

Narcotics Anonymous – an overview – *ScienceDirect Topics* – A concise reference entry (in medical/counseling literature) noting that NA (like AA) is present in virtually all communities, and that active participation in such 12-step programs can be a major factor in an individual’s recovery. It emphasizes including 12-step groups in care plans, even for dually diagnosed individuals, given the support these fellowships provide in sustained abstinence and recovery sciencedirect.com.

Narcotics Anonymous: Its History and Culture – *William White, Chris Budnick & Boyd Pickard, Counselor Magazine (2011)* – An overview of NA’s historical development and culture, comparing it with AA. This article (abridged from *Slaying the Dragon*, 2nd ed.) traces multiple early attempts at drug addicts’ groups (e.g. Dr. Tom M. at Lexington, a short-lived “NA” led by Danny C. in the 1940s, and efforts by Betty T., Jack P. linking AA with Lexington) before the emergence of today’s NA founded by Jimmy K. in 1953 archive.org. It discusses NA’s near-collapse and rebirth, the creation of its own literature (the *Basic Text*), “explosive” worldwide growth, and how NA’s approach diverged from AA as it came of age archive.org. (Notably, the authors respect personal anonymity by identifying members with first name and last initial.)

Efficacy of Group Therapy Based on 12-Step Approach of NA on Self-Control and Quality of Life – *Abdollahi & Haghayegh, J. of Practice in Clinical Psychology (2020)* – A clinical study in Iran assessing NA-based group therapy for people with substance use disorder. Sixty patients in recovery were split into a 12-step **NA group therapy** vs. control (no intervention). After 12 sessions, the NA group showed significantly greater improvement in self-control and in multiple quality-of-life domains (physical, psychological, social) compared to controls pdfs.semanticscholar.org. The authors conclude that NA 12-step-oriented group therapy can effectively reduce relapse risk and enhance quality of life in individuals overcoming addiction pdfs.semanticscholar.org.

“Surrender to Win”: Constructions of 12-Step Recovery from Addiction – *Cosmo Duff Gordon & Carla Willig, Health (London) (2020)* – A qualitative study of how AA/NA members construct their identity in recovery. Using interviews with 19 participants and Foucauldian discourse analysis, it finds that contrary to the notion that 12-step discourse “totalizes” people, participants actually use it in an empowering way. They *surrender* to the program but simultaneously exercise personal agency and “care of the self” in pursuit of their recovery goals pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov. The authors note that 12-step recovery is less antithetical to humanistic, autonomous self-care than often assumed, and suggest clinicians reconsider the misconception that AA/NA



undermine clients' autonomy pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov. (All participant quotes were kept anonymous in line with 12-step traditions.)

Narcotics Anonymous: Its History, Structure, and Approach – Michael Peyrot, *Int. Journal of the Addictions* (1985) – An early scholarly examination of NA, providing an overview of the fellowship's history, organizational structure, philosophy, and practices. Drawing on member interviews, NA literature, and observations in a therapeutic community, the article describes NA's evolution and internal dynamics pure.johnshopkins.edu. Peyrot characterizes NA as both an “underground” social movement and a major treatment modality for drug addiction, and he calls for further research into this then-understudied recovery group pure.johnshopkins.edu.

Recovery Groups' Refuge vs. Medication – Lev Facher, *STAT News* (2024) – An investigative journalism piece revealing tensions between traditional 12-step groups and medication-assisted treatment. It recounts how some Narcotics Anonymous meetings remain hostile to **buprenorphine or methadone**: members on these doctor-prescribed medications are sometimes stigmatized as not truly “clean,” asked to sit out, or even told to leave the group statnews.com. The article profiles one NA attendee who was expelled after advocating for buprenorphine as a valid recovery tool statnews.com. This perspective highlights a cultural rift, as NA's long-standing abstinence-only ethic clashes with modern medical consensus on opioid addiction treatment. (In the piece, the individual chose to break his anonymity publicly to underscore the issue.)

Additional Information & Resources

Membership Survey – Our 2018 survey of 28,495 NA members.

Information about NA – Includes facts about the history of NA, organizational philosophy, and membership demographics. (Attached)

NA: A Resource in Your Community – This pamphlet provides information about local NA services that may be available such as public service announcements, phonelines, literature sales, and NA presentations for health fairs, schools and professional conferences. (attached)

In Times of Illness – This relied-upon booklet was revised in 2010 to reflect members' experiences with challenges such as mental health issues, chronic illness and pain, and supporting members with illnesses. It includes section summaries in the table of contents. (attached)

NA Groups and Medication – Our Twelve Traditions remind us that medication use is a member's personal decision and is an outside issue for NA groups. This piece is intended for groups as they consider this issue. It does not address members' personal decisions, nor does it try to change members' opinions about medication. Groups are often better able to carry the message and welcome everyone when members come together to discuss this issue. (attached)



For Those in Treatment – This pamphlet offers some suggestions and a basic plan of action to help recovering addicts in the transition from treatment to continuing recovery in Narcotics Anonymous. (attached)

By Young Addicts, For Young Addicts – This pamphlet was developed by young members of Narcotics Anonymous to illustrate the fact that young addicts around the world, speaking many different languages, are getting and staying clean in NA. (attached)

An Introduction to NA Meetings – Offers a welcoming introduction and explains practices unfamiliar to those at their first meetings, and provides tips for groups to preserve an atmosphere of recovery. (attached)

Narcotics Anonymous and Persons Receiving Medication-Assisted Treatment – This pamphlet is intended for professionals who prescribe medication to treat drug addiction. The service pamphlet *NA Groups and Medication* contains a broader discussion of NA Members and other medications. (attached)

CONTACT INFORMATION

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Narcotics Anonymous

Development

Narcotics Anonymous sprang from the Alcoholics Anonymous Program of the late 1940s, with NA meetings first emerging in the Los Angeles area of California, USA, in the early 1950s. The NA program started as a small US organization that has grown into one of the world's oldest and largest international organizations of its type. For many years, NA grew very slowly, spreading from Los Angeles to other major North American cities and Australia in the early 1970s. Within a few years, groups had formed in Brazil, Colombia, Germany, India, Ireland, Japan, New Zealand, and Great Britain. In 1983, Narcotics Anonymous published its self-titled Basic Text book, which contributed to NA's tremendous growth; by year's end, NA had grown to have a presence in more than a dozen countries and had 2,966 meetings worldwide.

Today, Narcotics Anonymous is well established throughout much of North and South America, Europe, Australia, the Middle East, New Zealand, and Russia. Groups and NA communities continue to grow and evolve throughout the Indian subcontinent, Africa, and Asia. Today the organization is truly a worldwide multilingual multicultural fellowship with over 72,200 weekly meetings in 143 countries.¹ Narcotics Anonymous books and information pamphlets are currently available in 61 languages, with translations in process for 16 languages.²

Program

NA's earliest self-titled pamphlet, known among members as "The White Booklet," describes Narcotics Anonymous this way:

"NA is a nonprofit fellowship or society of men and women for whom drugs had become a major problem. We...meet regularly to help each other stay clean. ...We are not interested in what or how much you used...but only in what you want to do about your problem and how we can help."

Membership is open to all drug addicts, regardless of the particular drug or combination of drugs used. When adapting AA's First Step, the word "addiction" was substituted for "alcohol," thus removing drug-specific language and reflecting the "disease concept" of addiction. Narcotics Anonymous provides a recovery process and peer support network that are linked together. One of the keys to NA's success is the therapeutic value of addicts working with other addicts. Members share their successes and challenges in overcoming active addiction and living drug-free, productive lives through the application of the principles contained within the Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions of NA. These principles are the core of the Narcotics Anonymous recovery program. Narcotics Anonymous itself is a non-religious program of recovery; each member is encouraged to cultivate an individual understanding—religious or not—of the spiritual principles and apply these principles to everyday life.

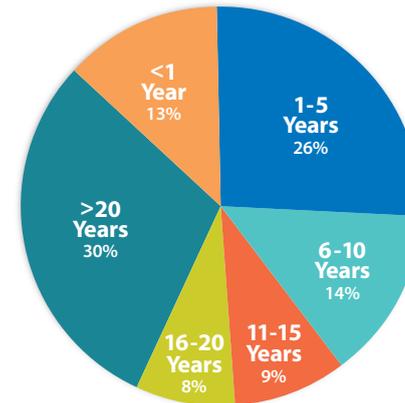
There are no social, religious, economic, racial, ethnic, national, gender, or class-status membership restrictions. There are no dues or fees for membership; most members regularly contribute in meetings to help cover the expenses incurred for the rent of facility space.

Narcotics Anonymous is not affiliated with other organizations, including other twelve step programs, treatment centers, or correctional facilities. As an organization, NA does not employ professional counselors or therapists nor does it provide residential facilities or clinics. Additionally, the fellowship does not offer vocational, legal, financial, psychiatric, or medical services. NA has only one mission: to provide an environment in which addicts can help one another stop using drugs and find a new way to live.

In Narcotics Anonymous, membership is based on a desire to stop using drugs including alcohol and has as a foundation, the principle of complete abstinence. It has been the experience of NA members that complete and continuous abstinence provides the best foundation for recovery and personal growth. NA as a whole has no opinion on outside issues, including prescribed medications. Use of psychiatric medication and other medically indicated drugs prescribed by a physician and taken under medical supervision is not seen as compromising a person's recovery in NA.

Years Drug-Free

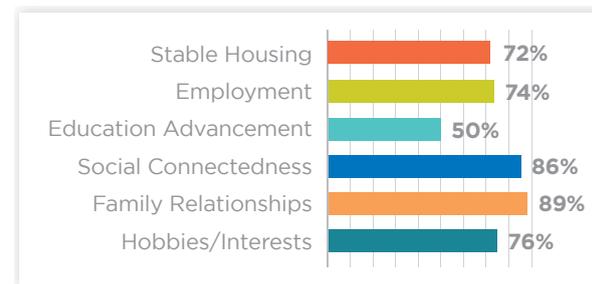
Based on survey responses, the average length of cleantime in NA is 13.79 years.



Quality-of-Life Improvement Areas

Multiple answers were allowed.

Overall improvement in quality of life is powerfully evident in these responses. In 2024, two areas in which we could see overwhelming improvement with NA meeting attendance were family relationships, where 89% of respondents reported improvement; and social connection, which was realized by 86% of respondents. NA's literature states that active addiction is marked by increased isolation and destruction of relationships. Recovery in NA has helped survey respondents to repair the damage in their lives from drug addiction.



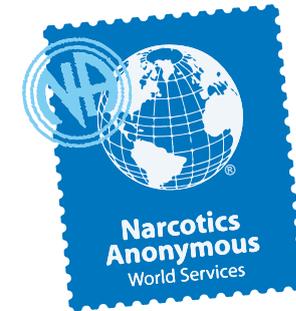
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Information about NA

Narcotics Anonymous is an international, community-based association of recovering drug addicts with over 72,200 weekly meetings in 143 countries worldwide.



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¹ As of May 2023

² As of July 2025



Service Organization

The primary service provided by Narcotics Anonymous is the NA group meeting. Each group runs itself based on principles common to the entire organization, which is expressed in NA's literature.

Most groups rent space for their meetings in buildings run by public, religious, or civic organizations. Individual members lead the NA meetings while other members participate by sharing about their experiences in recovering from drug addiction. Group members also work together to perform the activities associated with running a meeting.

In a country where Narcotics Anonymous is a relatively new and emerging fellowship, the NA group is the only level of organization. In places where a number of Narcotics Anonymous groups have had the chance to develop and stabilize, groups elect representatives to form a local service committee. These local committees usually offer a number of services. Included among them are:

- distribution of NA literature;
- helpline information services;
- presentations for treatment and healthcare staff, civic organizations, government agencies, and schools;
- presentations to acquaint treatment or correctional facility clients with the NA program; and
- maintaining NA meeting directories for individual information and for any interested person.

In some countries, especially the larger countries or those where Narcotics Anonymous is well established, a number of local/area committees have come together to create regional committees. These regional committees handle services within their larger geographical boundaries while the local/area committees operate local services.

An international delegate assembly known as the World Service Conference provides guidance on issues affecting the entire organization. Primary among the priorities of NA's world services are activities that support emerging and developing NA communities and the translation of Narcotics Anonymous literature. For additional information, contact the World Service Office headquarters in Los Angeles, California. The mailing address, telephone number, fax number, and website address appear at the end of this pamphlet.

Organizational Philosophy

In order to maintain its focus, Narcotics Anonymous has established a tradition of non-endorsement and does not take positions on anything outside its own specific sphere of activity. Narcotics Anonymous does not express opinions—either pro or con—on civil, social, medical, legal, or religious issues. Additionally, it does not take stands on addiction-related issues such as criminality, law enforcement, drug legalization or penalties, prostitution, HIV/HCV infection, or syringe programs.

Narcotics Anonymous strives to be entirely self-supporting through member contributions and does not accept financial contributions from non-members. Based on the same principle, groups and service committees are administered by NA members, for members.

Narcotics Anonymous neither endorses nor opposes any other organization's philosophy or methodology. NA's primary focus is in providing a recovery environment whereby drug addicts can share their recovery experiences with one another. By remaining free from the distraction of controversy, NA is able to focus all of its energy on its particular area of purpose.

Cooperating with Narcotics Anonymous

Although certain traditions guide its relations with other organizations, Narcotics Anonymous welcomes the cooperation of those in government, the clergy, treatment and healthcare professions, criminal justice organizations and private voluntary organizations. NA's nonaddict friends have been instrumental in getting Narcotics Anonymous started in many countries and helping NA grow worldwide.

NA strives to cooperate with others interested in Narcotics Anonymous. Our more common cooperation approaches are: providing contact information, disseminating recovery literature, and sharing information about recovery. Additionally, NA members are often available to provide presentations for treatment centers and correctional facilities, offering information about the NA program to the professional staff and sharing with addicts otherwise unable to attend community-based meetings.

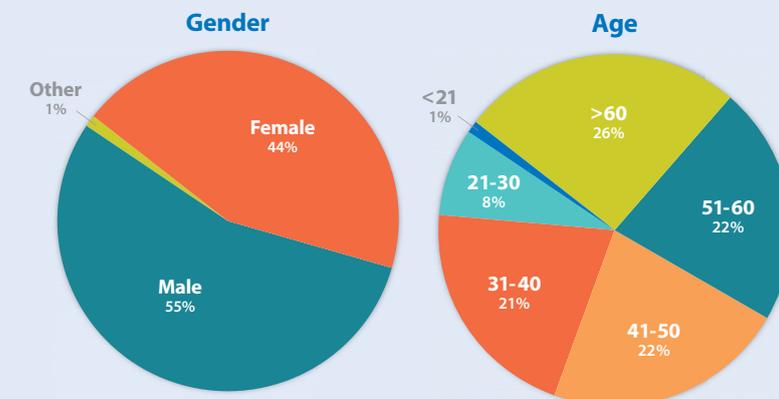
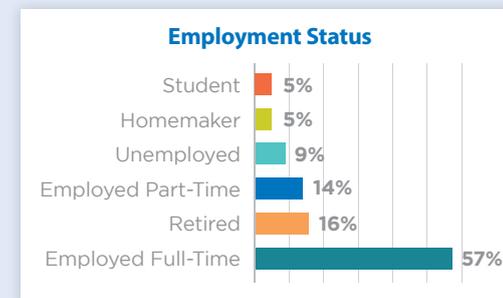
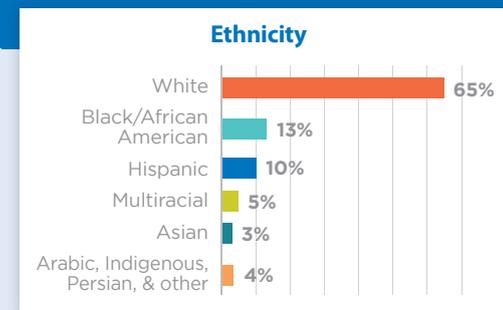
Membership Demographics

To offer some general informal observations about the nature of the membership, and the effectiveness of the program, the following observations are believed to be reasonably accurate.

The socioeconomic strata represented by the NA membership vary from country to country. Usually, members of one particular social or economic class start and sustain most developing NA communities worldwide, but as their fellowship development activities become more effective, the membership becomes more broadly representative of all socioeconomic backgrounds.

All ethnic and religious backgrounds are represented among NA members. Once a developing NA community reaches a certain level of maturity, its membership generally reflects the diversity or homogeneity of the background culture.

Membership in Narcotics Anonymous is voluntary; no attendance records are kept either for NA's own purposes or for others. Because of this, it is sometimes difficult to provide interested parties with comprehensive information about NA membership. There are, however, some objective measures that can be shared based on data obtained from members attending one of our world conventions; the diversity of our membership, especially ethnic background, seems to be representative of the geographic location of the survey. The following demographic information was gathered from a survey completed by 32,398 NA members. The survey was made available at the 2024 World Convention of NA in Washington, DC (USA) and on our website.



NA GROUPS & MEDICATION



SERVICE-RELATED MATERIAL
NOT INTENDED TO BE READ DURING RECOVERY MEETINGS

NA GROUPS AND MEDICATION

As outlined in *In Times of Illness*, the choice to take prescribed medication is a personal decision between a member, his or her sponsor, physician, and a higher power. It is a decision many members struggle through. It is not an issue for groups to enforce. This pamphlet is not intended to speak to members about the personal decision of whether or not to take medication, nor is it trying to convince members to have different opinions about the use of medication. What this pamphlet does address is that groups are often better able to carry the NA message and welcome anyone to a meeting when members come together to discuss this issue. Each group is autonomous, and this pamphlet is simply meant to provide groups with a tool for how to have their own discussions. In these discussions, we must remember that regardless of our personal opinions, decisions, and experiences, our Twelve Traditions remind us that the use of medication is an outside issue for NA groups and that all addicts are welcome in NA.

The information here is intended for NA groups as they consider how to address this issue. As a part of this discussion, drug replacement is addressed in a separate section because NA's philosophy of complete abstinence differentiates a drug used as a replacement from prescribed medication for other mental or physical conditions. We hope the following approaches will help groups in their efforts to preserve unity, welcome members, and create an atmosphere of recovery.

***Our common welfare should come first;
personal recovery depends on NA unity.***

Tradition One

When NA groups consider the topic of medication, including the use of prescribed medication for surgery, injury, illness, and medication for mental health, we can begin by acknowledging the complexity of the situation. Those

who take medication tend to feel judged and treated as if they don't belong in NA, while others believe a member's decision to share while taking medication compromises a meeting's atmosphere of recovery. Some members have seen friends who've taken medication relapse, and some have seen friends who've taken medication stabilize and stay clean. In spite of the strong feelings and opinions we may have about the issue of medication, groups must stay focused on how they can welcome members and carry the NA message of recovery.

Following are examples of some of the challenges groups face around the topic of medication in NA meetings:

***S**ome of us are being told that if we take meds we are not clean and should not share at meetings. Does this mean that those of us who suffer from depression should just disregard what our doctors are advising, even if we only take our meds as prescribed? Do I even belong in this fellowship?*

***A** member in our group is taking medication and sharing during the meeting. We're upset because we're afraid this will disrupt the atmosphere of the meeting. Should the group ask this person to refrain from sharing until they stop taking medication?*

***W**e have a member who is an addict and who is obviously mentally ill. When he is on his medication he is quite functional, but occasionally he stops taking his meds and all hell breaks loose. He thinks being totally abstinent will make him a full-fledged member. What should we tell him when he asks us if he's clean?*

No matter what our personal opinions, observations, or experiences may be about the use of medication, the focus of the NA group must be on how we can work together to carry the NA message in our meetings. The Tradition

One essay in *It Works: How and Why* reminds us that, “just as anonymity is the spiritual foundation of our traditions, the unity spoken of in the First Tradition is the practical foundation on which we may build strong and successful groups.” With unity as our practical foundation, we find that our relationships with one another are more important than any issue that may arise to divide us. No problem or disagreement is more significant than our need for each other’s support.

CULTIVATING UNITY

The question for NA groups to consider is how to welcome people and carry the NA message in a variety of situations. Our unity and our primary purpose can guide our efforts in welcoming members and creating an atmosphere of recovery. In this way, we can help members use the NA program to apply recovery principles to their lives, regardless of their situation. Following are some examples of the ways groups can strive to be unified and welcoming in the face of a variety of challenges:

- ◆ When group members freely share their own recovery and trusted servants welcome other members, groups are usually able to carry the NA message in a variety of potentially challenging situations.
- ◆ If someone shares a message that seems to compromise the atmosphere of recovery, group members can attempt to gently re-establish the meeting’s focus after that person has shared. This doesn’t mean group members should correct or clean up what has been said, but they can freely share their own experience, strength, and hope, offering an additional perspective.
- ◆ Carefully choosing a chairperson or secretary who is able to help maintain an atmosphere of recovery during a meeting can also help. If necessary, this group leader can help refocus the meeting by announcing a five-minute break or by asking the group to join in a prayer. A loving and inclusive

attitude on the part of the leader and group member is usually the most effective way to move through these situations.

- ◆ The group can reflect on how it can practice principles such as tolerance, love, and compassion in situations that might cause concern. Considering ways to respond to these potentially frightening situations with compassion and tolerance, rather than reacting, can better allow the group to maintain an atmosphere of recovery and carry the NA message.

GROUP DISCUSSIONS

One of the most effective ways a group can work to resolve these challenges is by discussing its primary purpose. A discussion focused on how group members welcome people to NA can help clarify what the group is responsible for and what it is not. A group discussion can also help members become aware of how they treat those who come to meetings. For example, if a group has an unwelcoming attitude toward new members who take medication for a medical condition, that group will likely alienate the very people it's trying to introduce to the NA message. Discussing questions like the ones below can help group members consider ways to maintain an atmosphere of recovery in potentially challenging situations:

- ◆ What does our group do to help new members feel welcome? How can our group better welcome newcomers?
- ◆ What can our group do to create and maintain a strong atmosphere of recovery?
- ◆ What can our group do to foster unity?
- ◆ What can our group do to help ensure that all members (especially some of our more challenged members) feel accepted and valued?

SERVICE AND THE USE OF MEDICATION

Another issue groups often grapple with is whether a member who is taking medication is eligible for service to the group or within the service structure. Groups should exercise judgment in deciding if a member is able to perform the task associated with the service position, not whether a member is taking medication. If a member seems acutely unstable, he or she would be unsuitable for a service position, regardless of whether that member is taking medication.

DRUG REPLACEMENT

By definition, drug replacement is used for a different reason than prescribed medications for mental or physical health. This distinction makes drug replacement a separate issue for us in NA. When it comes to those who participate in drug replacement, it is helpful to remember that our Third Tradition clearly states that membership in NA is established when someone has a desire to stop using or when they choose to become a member, not when they are clean. No matter what the issue, groups are still charged with the goal of welcoming each person who walks into a meeting.

The courts have mandated NA meetings for those on drug replacement. Some of these addicts are sharing at our meeting. Is this an outside issue? What about our message of complete abstinence? We want to do the right thing, but we are concerned that the newcomer will get the wrong message. It's life and death we're talking about!

Some NA members are confused or even intolerant of those on drug replacement due to what they see as a contradiction between drug replacement and the NA principle of complete abstinence. Some of us are

fearful when those on drug replacement want to share or speak on behalf of NA. It may be helpful for all of us to remember that many addicts on drug replacement eventually do get clean, stay clean, and find a way of life they thought was unobtainable before coming to NA. This process doesn't always occur when an addict attends his or her first meeting—getting and staying clean is often a decision that's made after attending many meetings over a period of time.

Because NA is a program of complete abstinence, groups do sometimes limit the participation of members on drug replacement to ensure the clarity of the NA message. Yet, we must balance this limited participation with the idea that membership in NA comes with a desire to stop using, not abstinence. As the Tradition Three essay in *It Works: How and Why* reminds us, "Desire is not a measurable commodity. It lives in the heart of each member. Because we can't judge the sole requirement for membership, we are encouraged to open wide the doors of our meetings to any addict who wishes to join."

Opening our doors to these members means that groups take the time to discuss this issue and find ways to make everyone feel welcome. Each group is autonomous, and a group's conscience will ultimately determine the level of participation of those on drug replacement. Some groups may decide to encourage those on drug replacement to serve as coffee or tea makers, or as a clean-up person, instead of holding leadership positions. These commitments may encourage a desire for complete abstinence through allowing these members to feel a part of NA.

The reality is that some groups already permit those on drug replacement to share and lead meetings, while others do not. Although we may not endorse this level of participation, we can simply acknowledge what exists and consider ways to encourage every member to get clean and find the hope and recovery that are possible in NA. The real question groups are left with is how to honor the NA philosophy of complete abstinence and

still welcome addicts in our groups and meetings. What is most important is that we don't let our fears get in the way of our group's ability to carry the NA message of hope and freedom.

***The only requirement for membership
is a desire to stop using.***

Tradition Three

One of the most challenging aspects of this issue is that while an NA group is free to ask those who have used that day to refrain from sharing in the meeting, groups don't decide what "using" means for an individual member. The use of medication is an issue that many members have strong personal feelings about, but a group is not there to enforce, endorse, or oppose members' personal opinions. Any member—those who take medication and those who feel taking medication is inappropriate—has a responsibility to not represent their personal feelings and opinions as the opinions of Narcotics Anonymous as a whole.

In NA, we purposely attract people who are ill, unstable, and in need of help. Our challenge is to continue to practice tolerance, patience, and love, so that we create an atmosphere in which those who want to recover can do so. Many of us have watched as NA meetings become weighed down by disruptions, controversy, and negativity around this issue. Yet, when these challenges are addressed through incorporating the spiritual principles of our program, groups often become stronger and more focused as a result. Recovery is often a demanding process with many ups and downs, and NA groups tend to experience similar challenges. Yet, it is these struggles that allow us to grow as individuals and as groups. Narcotics Anonymous is here to help addicts find a new way of life, and joining NA means becoming a part of a lively and diverse fellowship. As our First Tradition reminds us, "Our relationships with one another are more important than any issue that may arise to divide us." Keeping this in mind allows our groups to best serve all addicts seeking recovery in NA.



This is Board-approved service material.

Service pamphlets should be used by members, groups, and service committees as a resource rather than being read in an NA meeting.

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2024 Narcotics Anonymous Membership Survey

Narcotics Anonymous World Services initiated a Membership Survey at WCNA in 1996 and have repeated it every 3-4 years since. The 2024 survey received the highest member participation to date. There were 32,398 responses from 125 countries. Members were able to complete a survey at the 2024 World Convention of NA (WCNA) in Washington, DC, USA, or online between Sept 2024 and Jan 2025. We collect this data to provide information about the NA Fellowship, to strengthen our public relations efforts, and to learn more about how and where we carry our message of recovery.

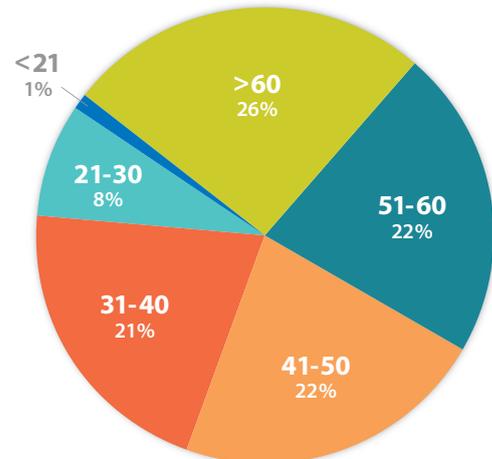
NA Membership

NA is a community-based organization that holds more than 72,200 weekly meetings in 143 countries.* NA is comprised of people who come from many backgrounds. Our membership is diverse across indicators including age, race, gender, culture, and profession. The only requirement to become an NA member is the desire to stop using drugs. The decision to become a member of the NA Fellowship rests with the individual.

There are no annual dues or fees for membership: We are self-supporting through member contributions and the sale of recovery literature.

Age

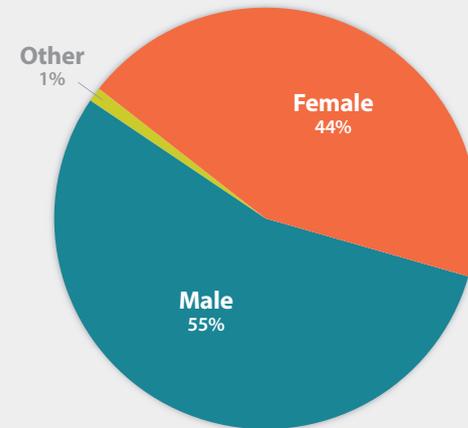
Based on survey responses, the average age of NA members is almost 50 years.



* As of May 2023

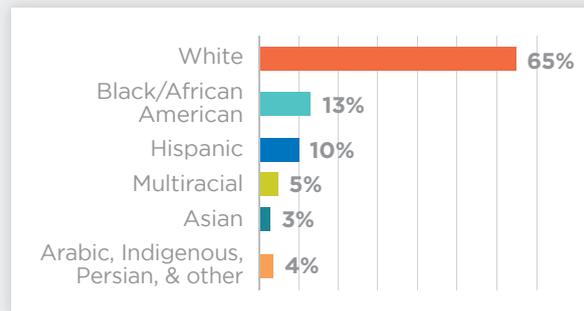
Gender

Since our last survey in 2018, membership by women has increased 2%. When we factor in survey responses from Iran, where our membership is substantial and in some ways different from other NA communities, the gender composite in 2024 changes to 39% female, 60% male, and 1% other.



Ethnicity

The ethnic diversity of our membership, at times, seems to be correlated with geographic location; the 2024 survey was made available at WCNA in Washington, DC and on our website. When we conducted this survey in 2024:



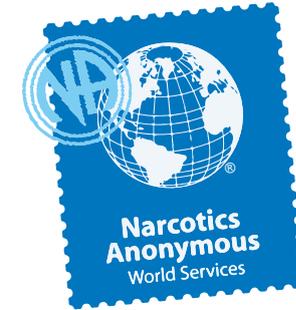
From the last time we surveyed our members in 2018, there has been an increase in Hispanic and multiracial members, and a slight decrease among white members.

ABOUT NA

Narcotics Anonymous is a worldwide twelve-step fellowship of recovering addicts whose primary purpose is to help addicts stop using drugs. NA is not a religious organization and does not require any particular belief system. It teaches basic spiritual principles including honesty, open-mindedness, and willingness. The practical application of these principles is determined by the individual member.

NA members learn from one another how to live drug-free and recover from the effects of addiction. Although not associated with any religion, political group, organization, or institution, NA cooperates with professionals and the public by providing information about the fellowship.

In many communities, Narcotics Anonymous has a local website. Another way to obtain local meeting information is by accessing the "NA Meeting Finder" link at www.na.org. Please feel free to contact NA World Services through our website or by phone.



Membership Survey



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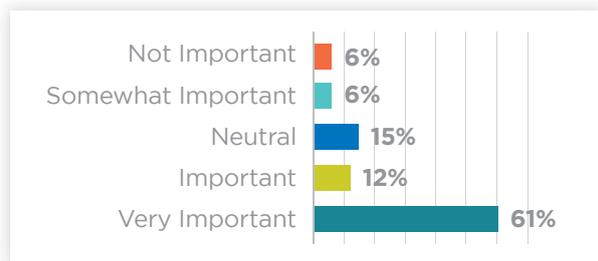
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World Service Office–IRAN
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Importance of First NA Meeting

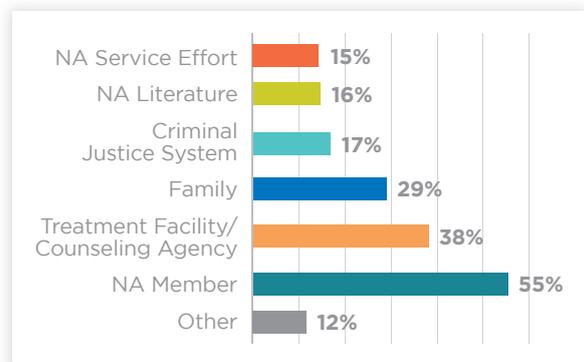


Influence to Attend First NA Meeting

The 2024 survey indicates that members perceive their first NA meeting as very important; we also asked respondents what influenced them to stay in NA, and 83% reported identification as a key component. Since NA meetings vary both in members attending and meeting formats, we encourage people to try different meetings to find that vital identification.

In the graph below, the number one influence to attend NA meetings was an NA member (55%); a treatment facility or counseling agency was noted as the second important influence (38%). Many members are introduced to NA while participating in treatment and/or counseling. The Informational Pamphlet #29, *An Introduction to NA Meetings*, which explains practices that may be unfamiliar to those at their first meeting or early in recovery, could be helpful to those being referred to NA.

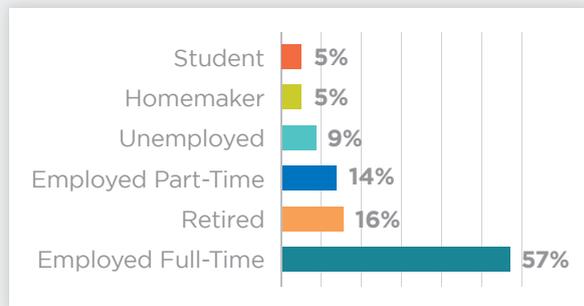
Multiple answers were permitted; only the top seven choices are shown.



Meeting Attendance

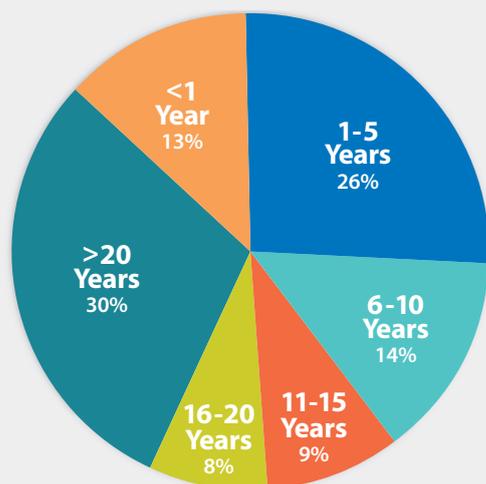
Regular attendance at NA meetings provides the opportunity to experience the NA message of recovery. Members surveyed attend an average of 2.90 in-person meetings and 2.69 online meetings per week.

Employment Status



Years Drug-Free

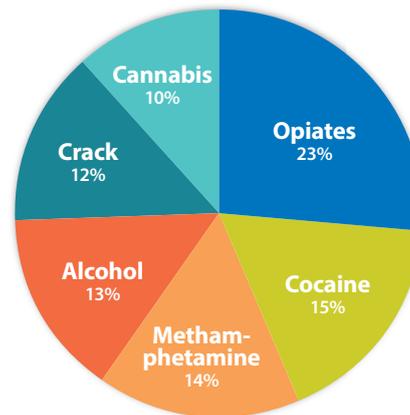
Based on survey responses, the average length of cleantime in NA is 13.79 years.



Our name, Narcotics Anonymous, is not meant to imply a focus on any particular drug; NA's approach makes no distinction between drugs, including alcohol. –PR Statement

Drugs Used on a Regular Basis

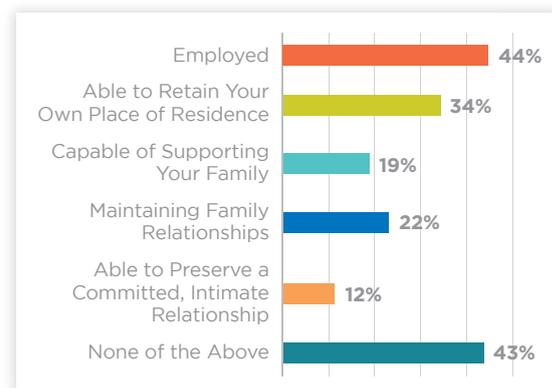
Multiple answers were allowed.



Areas of Life Affected by Drug Use

Multiple answers were allowed.

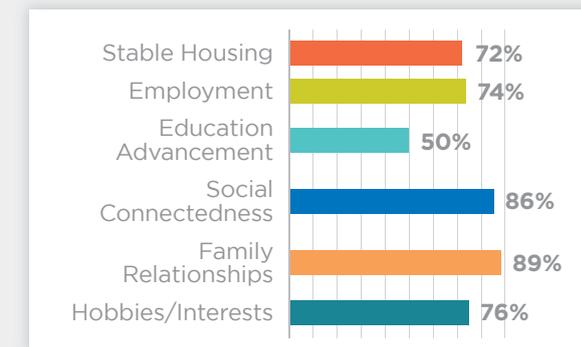
Substance use affects people's ability to maintain stability in housing, employment, and relationships. In the 2024 Membership Survey, 43% of the respondents indicated that all areas of their lives were affected by drug use, and only 44% stated that they were able to maintain employment while using. Areas most notably affected by drug use were committed intimate relationships and providing for family.



Quality-of-Life Improvement Areas

Multiple answers were allowed.

Overall improvement in quality of life is powerfully evident in these responses. In 2024, two areas in which we could see overwhelming improvement with NA meeting attendance were family relationships, where 89% of respondents reported improvement; and social connection, which was realized by 86% of respondents. NA's literature states that active addiction is marked by increased isolation and destruction of relationships. Recovery in NA has helped survey respondents to repair the damage in their lives from drug addiction.



Attending Other Twelve-Step Fellowships

