



**Narcotics
Anonymous**®



A Presentation to Professionals



Our aims today

- Describe what Narcotics Anonymous is
- Describe what it is not
- Explain how to find our meetings and how to get our literature
- Outline how we can help you, and how you can help us



Narcotics Anonymous is...

- A global fellowship of men and women for whom drugs had become a major problem
- An international, community-based 12-Step programme for daily recovery that has worked for many thousands of addicts worldwide



Narcotics Anonymous is **not**...

- About any particular drug or group of drugs
 - To us, a drug is any mind- or mood-altering substance
- The only solution for drug addiction
- A cult or a religion
- Affiliated with any other organisation
- Funded by any third parties



History of Narcotics Anonymous

- Sprang from the Alcoholics Anonymous movement in the late 1940s
- Meetings started in the Los Angeles area in 1953
- At first NA grew slowly, spreading to major North American cities and Australia by the early 1970s
- In 1983, when there were fewer than 1,500 meetings, Narcotics Anonymous published its Basic Text; since then, membership has grown dramatically



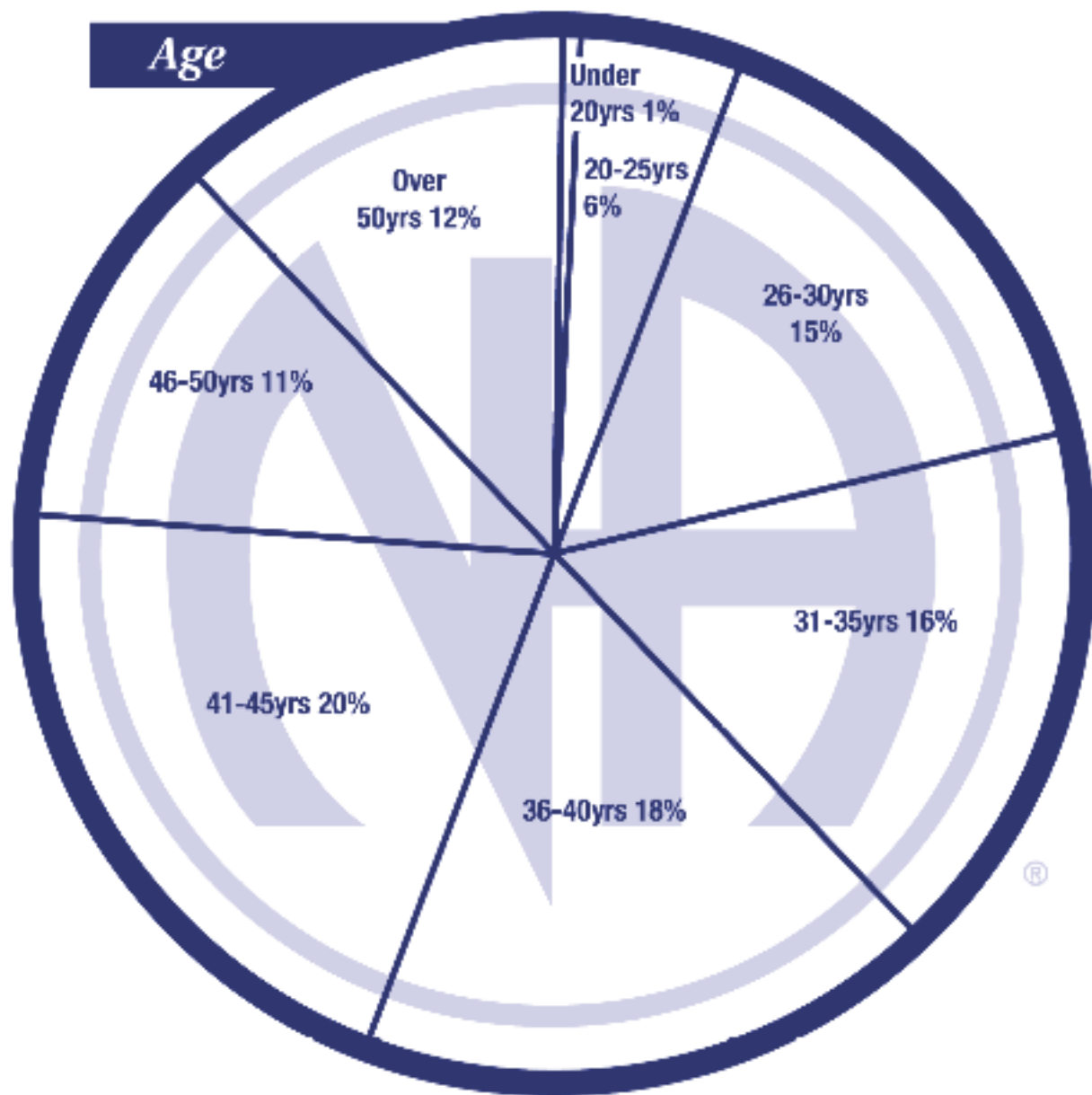
History of Narcotics Anonymous

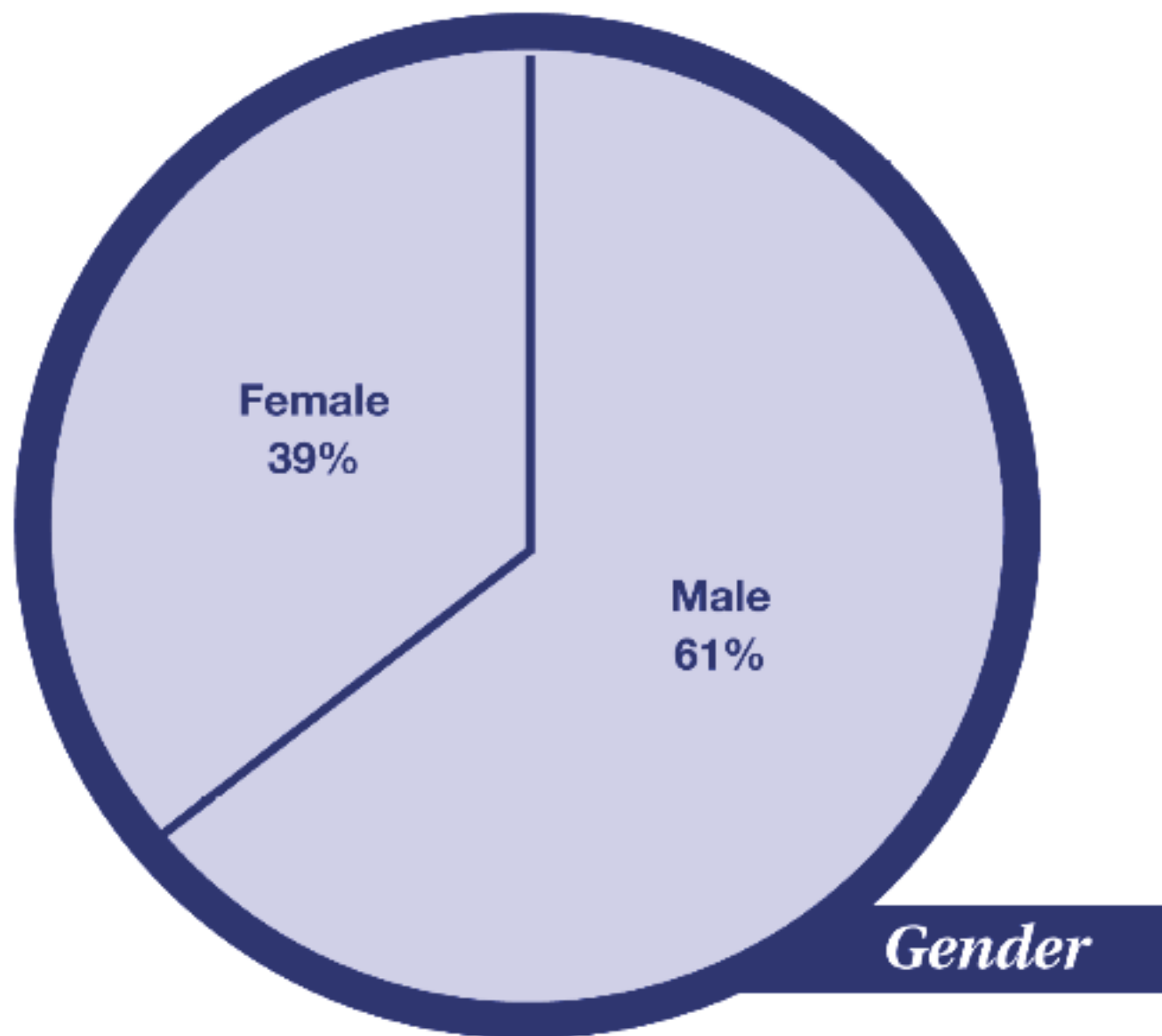
- Today there are more than **49,000 weekly meetings** in **135 countries**
- Our literature is available in **65 languages**
- In the UK, NA started with a single weekly meeting in London in 1980
 - We celebrated our 25th anniversary in 2005
- Now there are over **770 weekly meetings** nationwide, with a new meeting starting on average once every two weeks



Demographics

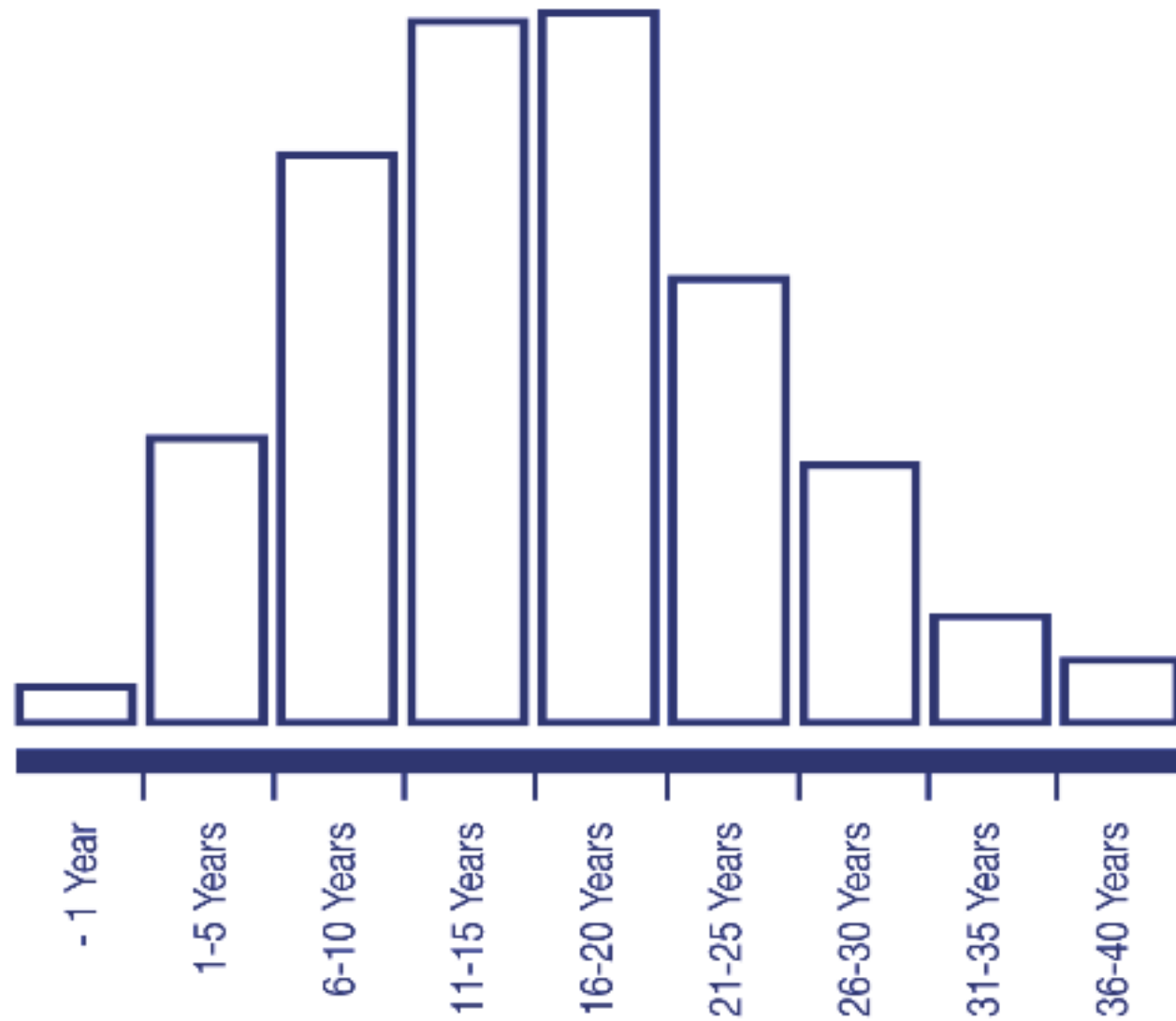
- Although anonymity prevents us from keeping meeting attendance records, we have some surveys that give snapshots of our membership's makeup
- The following numbers arise from a survey at the UK National Convention in 2006







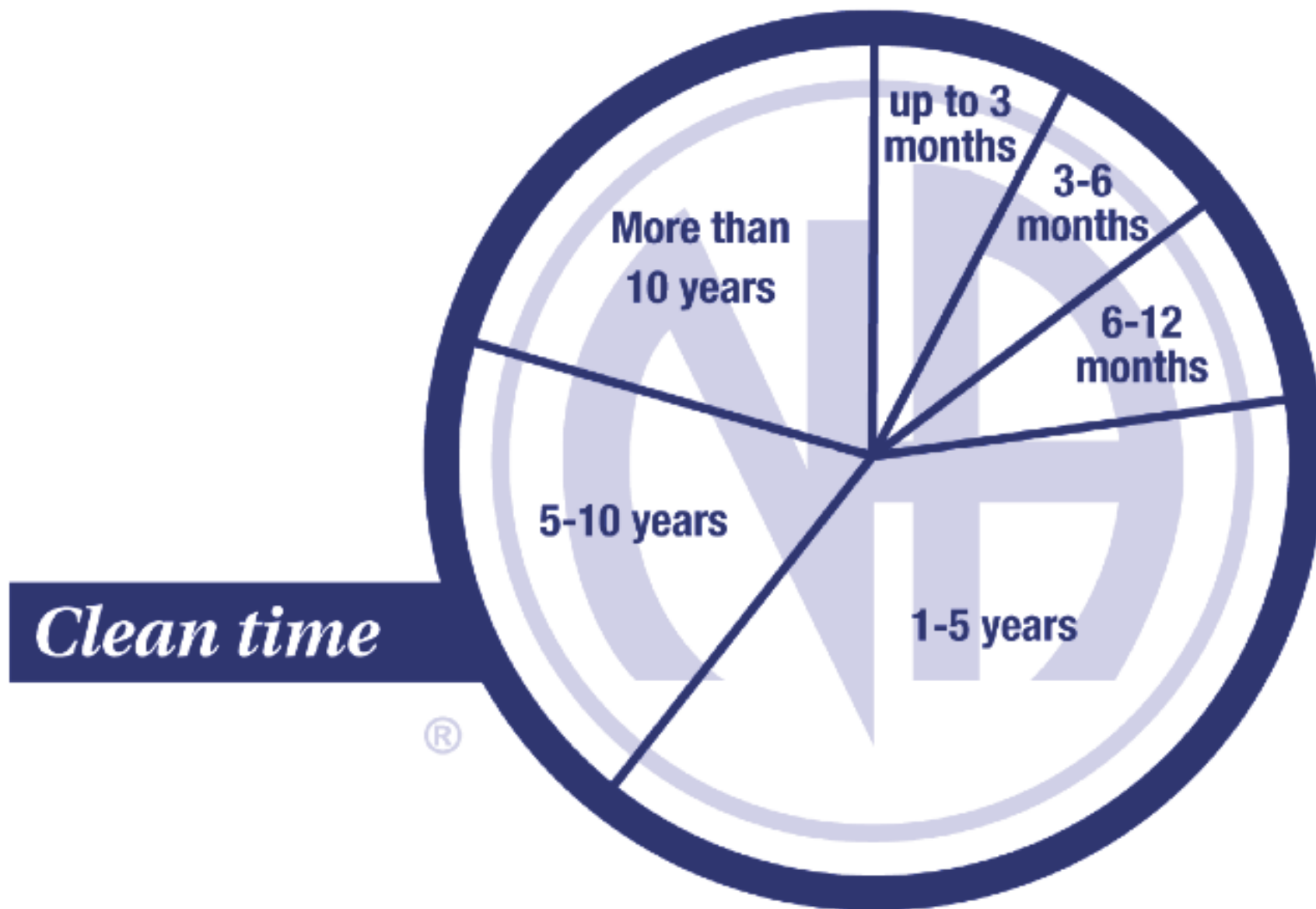
Years using before recovery





What was the drug you mainly used?

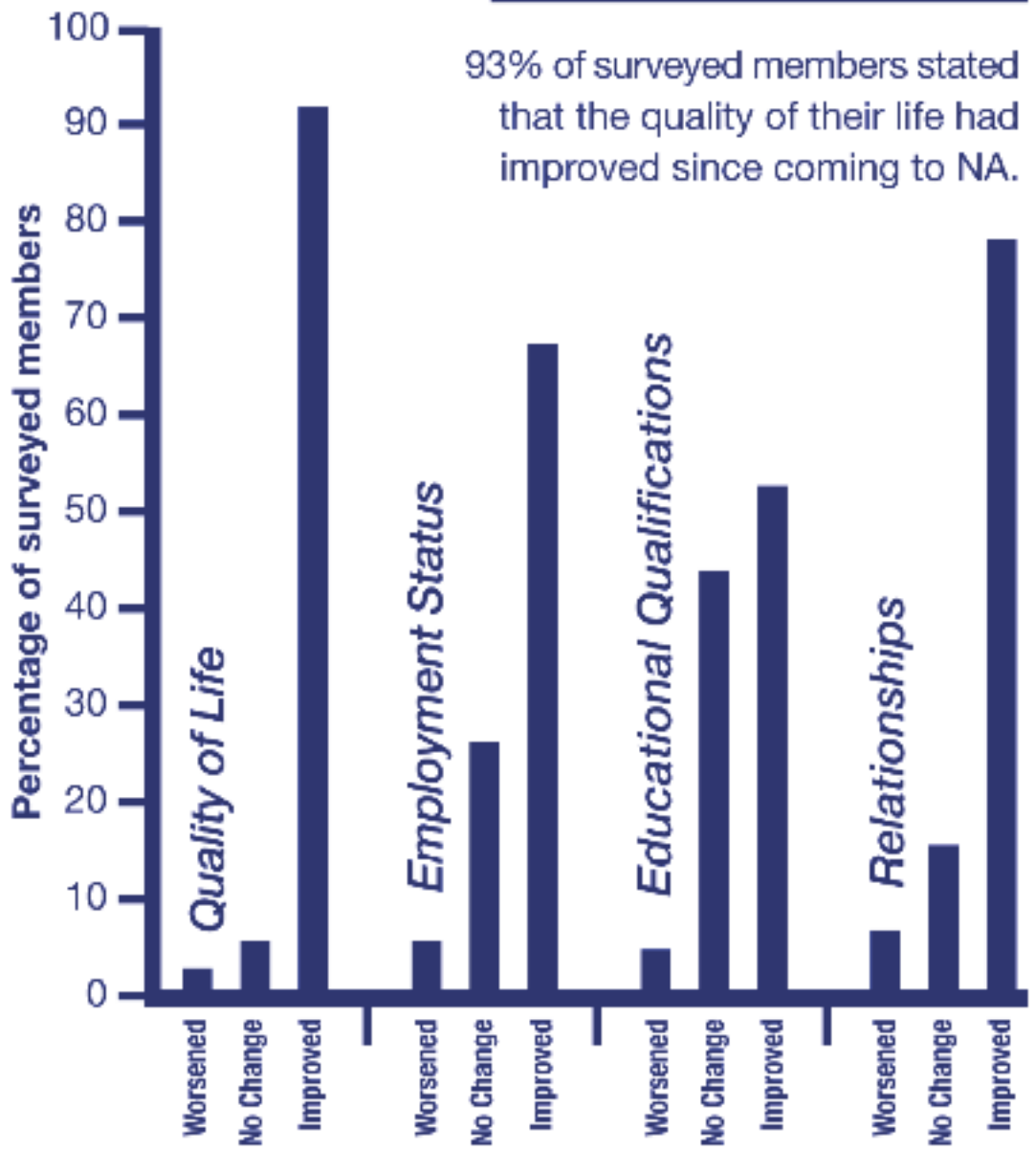






Life Improvement

93% of surveyed members stated that the quality of their life had improved since coming to NA.





Some of our Traditions

- “The only requirement for membership is a desire to stop using.”
 - People do not have to be clean to attend NA meetings
 - We do not attempt to judge anyone’s desire - that is up to the individual
 - We have no initiation fees or dues, no pledges to sign, no promises to make to anyone



Some of our Traditions

- “Every NA group ought to be fully self-supporting, declining outside contributions.”
 - Our programme is free
 - We are funded through voluntary contributions from members, from literature sales and from fundraising events such as Conventions
 - We accept no donations from outside sources



Some of our Traditions

- “Narcotics Anonymous has no opinion on outside issues; hence the NA name ought never to be drawn into public controversy.”
 - For us, ‘outside issues’ include the role of drugs in society; Government drug policy; and the effectiveness of various modalities of addiction treatment
 - Our sole purpose is to help those who decide they have a drug problem



Some of our Traditions

- “An NA group ought never endorse, finance or lend the NA name to any related facility or outside enterprise, lest problems of money, property or prestige divert us from our primary purpose.”
 - But we do co-operate with individuals and organisations such as Government, medical, educational and legal



Anonymity

- Allows addicts to attend meetings without fear of legal or social repercussions
- Supports an atmosphere of equality in meetings
- Means that we don't keep attendance records
- We ask your help in maintaining our tradition of personal anonymity
 - Please do not identify people by name or in full-face photos as members of Narcotics Anonymous
 - Please do not describe details of their personal circumstances which could reveal their identities



Addiction

- NA uses a simple, experience-oriented disease concept of addiction
 - We do not qualify our use of the term 'disease' in any medical or specialized therapeutic sense
- To us, drug use is only a symptom of the underlying problem, which is the disease of addiction
 - Some typical behaviour patterns of active addiction include
 - Compulsive, self-centred, obsessive behaviour
 - Living in isolation
 - Being in denial of drug and living problems



Abstinence and recovery

- Narcotics Anonymous encourages its members to observe complete abstinence from all drugs, including alcohol
 - It is our experience that complete and continuous abstinence from all drugs is the best foundation for recovery and personal growth
- We have found that the therapeutic value of one addict helping another is without parallel
 - This is primarily achieved through regular meetings



The NA Group

- Meets regularly at a specific time and place; follows the 12 Steps and 12 Traditions of NA
- Key components of a meeting:
 - Identification of one addict with another, recognition of ourselves in others
 - Sharing of personal experience, strength, and hope
 - A “sanctuary” where addicts can support one another in fellowship and form new friendships



The NA Group

- Typical meeting structure
 - Readings, Chair, Sharing, Announcements, Key rings, Serenity prayer
- The newcomer is the most important person at any meeting
- We keep what we have only by giving it away
 - Service opportunities in groups help people become involved, eg making tea, handling literature, greeting others
- We run Open meetings where non-addicts can attend and observe



The 12 Steps

- These are tools that help us learn to live and enjoy life without the use of drugs
- The 12 Steps of NA teach us honesty, open-mindedness, willingness, acceptance, humility, love, integrity, faith, selfless service and more
- Our 12-Step programme is based on principles that we can follow in our daily lives
- The pace of the programme is always up to the individual



Spirituality

- Narcotics Anonymous is non-religious and encourages each member to cultivate an individual understanding of a Higher Power, religious or not
- Central to the programme is an emphasis on what is referred to as a 'spiritual awakening', emphasizing its practical value, not its philosophical or metaphysical importance



Sponsorship

- The essence of NA is the therapeutic value of one addict helping another
- Sponsorship is a very practical way of achieving this
- Members are free to choose a sponsor (or not to, though it is suggested they do)
- Sponsors act as mentors or guides, helping sponsees to work through the 12 Steps



Some aspects of recovery

- The honest admission of being an addict
- Finding hope and developing faith
- Coming to a better understanding of ourselves, changing our old behaviours, removing defects of character, making amends for past wrongs
- Continuing to develop faith and improve our living actions, helping and sharing with others



Life after drugs

- We develop new interests
- We practice spiritual principles in our lives
- We develop freedom from self-obsession
- We gain self-respect, as well as respect for others
- We get together and develop new friendships
 - Every year the UK (like most other countries) holds a national convention where hundreds of addicts meet to celebrate and share their recovery; there are also many local conventions and other social events across the UK
 - Every two years there is a World Convention attended by thousands



The UK service structure

- Groups exist to serve individuals
- Area and Regional Service Committees exist to serve the groups
- Hospitals and Institutions Committee
 - Carries the message to addicts who are unable to attend regular meetings of NA
- Public Information Committee
 - Informs all areas of the public about who and what we are, and how we can be found



The UK service structure

- National Helpline Committee
 - Runs the National Helpline and spoken meeting list, with phones covered 24 hours a day
- UK Service Office
 - Maintains stock of literature for sale to groups, individual members and professionals; prints the national meeting list
- Parent & Carers
 - Caters for the needs of parents in recovery with crèches at meetings and child minding services
- Ad hoc committees
 - For example to organise the UK Convention



How we can help you

- Provide a resource in the community - a soft landing for people finishing treatment programmes
- Provide literature and meeting information, including which meetings will sign attendance cards
- Give Public Information presentations
- Take you to a meeting
- Start and run meetings in institutions
- Advise on how to start public meetings



Some limitations

- We are volunteers and we rotate service commitments
- We answer to the groups and it can take time when we consult them
- We can't guarantee the authenticity of attendance cards or that they will be signed
- We do not provide vocational, social, or welfare services
- We don't engage in education or propaganda about drugs
- We do not persuade or recruit anyone to join NA



How to contact us

- National Helpline 0845 3733366 (0845 FREEDOM)
- National website www.ukna.org and NA World Services website www.na.org
- To contact UK Public Information subcommittee (UKPI) email ukpi@ukna.org or call via UKSO on 020 7251 4007
- To order literature call UK Service Office on 020 7251 4007 or use www.ukna.org



Narcotics Anonymous

Thank you



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