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### SERENITY PRAYER

GOD

*Grant us the serenity*

*To accept the things we cannot change—*

*The courage to change the things we can,*

*And the wisdom to know the difference.*

*Note- This booklet is a service. It is intended for use by group, area and regional service committees. It is not for use in regular NA meetings*

## INTRODUCTION

This simple booklet is intended to aid our fellowship back to recovery as quickly as possible from a natural disaster. These plans of action, experience, strength and hope are the result of a disaster that left us with over 11,000 square miles of devastation, 6 billion dollars in property damage, 50,000 people homeless, and 33 deaths. Experience has taught us that we can and do recover.

## HURRICANES

Hurricanes are common along our coastline, however, many members may have recently moved into your area and may be unfamiliar with securing their homes, storing supplies, and other general

information for storm preparedness. It is advisable to discuss these matters as well as the contents of this booklet at group business meetings during the season in which hurricanes are likely to occur.

Hurricane season runs from late summer through November, although they can occur at any time during the year. Our recent experience has taught us that during hurricane season coastlines experience the greatest amount of damage. However, devastation we know can be felt hundreds of miles inland; therefore, it is important for all groups and areas to discuss storm preparedness throughout the region

Encourage members to look into stocking supplies such as battery-operated radios, canned food, water, paper supplies, sheets of plastic, and first aid supplies for any emergency.

Before the storm hits, bring indoors all lightweight objects because loose objects travelling at a high rate of speed cause considerable damage. Tape or cover all windows. Unplug appliances, turn off the main breaker, and turn off water, gas, and water heaters. Fuel all motor vehicles.

If there is time to the area, do so. You will not be asked to leave your home unless your life is seriously threatened. The death toll from Hurricane Hugo was minimal because over 150,000 people were successfully evacuated from the coastline before the storm hit. When you receive word to go, leave. Follow the escape routes designated by local officials. You are unable to be evacuated and are unsure if your home or apartment is sound enough to weather a hurricane, go to an emergency shelter. Leave food and water for pets, as emergency shelters will not allow pets in their buildings. Take blankets, extra food, etc. with you. Take Your Basic Text and NA phone numbers. Take this booklet.

If you cannot be evacuated or get to a shelter during the storm stay indoors and on the downward side of the house, stay away from windows. Hurricanes often bring tornadoes. Do stay in small interior areas like hallways, closets, or bathrooms. Do not use candles or open flame for light or cooking. Use phones only for emergencies. Do not go outside during the Storm. Major hurricanes generally last anywhere from six to eight hours, in some cases longer. Remember when the eye of the hurricane comes over the storm is only half over and it will begin again within minutes. Stay indoors.

When the storm is over stay away from downed power lines, do not drink the water until you are told it is safe. Unless you are injured, stay where you are. Follow all instructions from local officials.

## **EARTHQUAKES**

The Carolina Region also sits on an earthquake fault. As we are generally unfamiliar with earthquakes it is important for all groups and areas to carefully read this section so we can be prepared. There is no prior warning for an earthquake.

Most casualties result from falling objects and debris because the shocks can shake, damage or demolish buildings and other structures. Earthquakes may also trigger landslides and generate huge ocean waves that can cause great damage.

During an earthquake remain calm. If indoors, watch for falling Plaster, bricks, light fixtures and other objects. Watch out for high bookcases, china cabinets, and other furniture that might topple. Stay away from windows, mirrors, and chimneys. Get under a table, desk, or bed, in a corner away from windows or in a strong doorway. Encourage others to do the same; it is best not to run outside.

If you are in a high-rise office building, get under a desk. Do not dash for exits since stairways may be broken and jammed with people. Power for elevators may fail.

If you are in a crowded store, do not rush for the doorways-since hundreds may have the same idea. If you leave the building, choose your exit carefully.

If you are outside, avoid high buildings, walls, power poles and other-objects that could fall. Do not run through the streets. Stay out of damaged areas

After the earthquake is over check for injuries in your family and neighborhood. Do not move seriously injured people unless they are immediate danger of further injury. Check for fire or fire hazards. Check for gas, water, and sewage breaks, check for downed electrical lines, turn off utilities. Clean up

materials that are potentially harmful. Check closets and storage shelf areas. Open closet and cupboards doors carefully and watch for falling objects. Do not use toilets if sewer lines have been broken.

If water is off emergency water may be obtained from water heaters, toilet tanks melted ice cubes and canned vegetables. Do not eat or drink anything from open containers near shattered glass. Liquids should be strained through a clean handkerchief or cloth if there is danger that glass particles exist.

Be prepared for additional Earthquake shocks and aftershocks. Although most of these shocks are smaller than the main Earthquake they can sometimes cause additional damage.

### **AFTERMATH OF A NATURAL DISASTER**

In any major disaster services that we have come to depend upon could in all, likelihood cease to exist. No disaster preparedness can depend on telephones for information, although it is critical to maintain up to date and accurate phone numbers.

Electricity is another service we cannot depend on being available to us. For example gasoline pumps run on electricity, if there is no electricity for weeks there will be no gasoline.

Any services run by computers will also be downed such as banking. You will be unable to cash checks or use credit cards. Cash is the only thing Streetlights, television and radio stations and refrigeration will also be discontinued.

Transportation could be drastically affected. Roads and bridges could be washed out, collapsed, or impassable from debris. Airports could be closed

There may be no food supplies except what is in the effected area for days or weeks. There may be no clean water.

In a major disaster the saving of human life of course the first and foremost priority. As recovering addicts staying is also a priority. Our lives depend upon it. The following sections deal with plans of action to begin NA meetings quickly and in an organized manner.

### **THINGS TO CONSIDER**

This booklet is formulated to be used in conjunction with following: the NA Regional Meeting Directory, Regional NA Officer and ASR List, all current H&I information, current information on phone numbers and addresses of all local radio stations and newspapers state and local maps

During a national disaster if all modern services are out, getting information back and forth may have to be done by hand. Therefore, it is important to consider every alternative that is available to you. For example, a disaster hits ---there are no phones, roads are damaged, and the status of meeting places is uncertain.

Listen to the radio. Map out meeting places on your local maps, check the radio again for broadcasts on any road information and reroute accordingly. Motorcycles can be invaluable as they can travel over rough roads and are extremely gas efficient.

The use of maps is very important for traveling safely. Also, well-known land marks such as 'signs, buildings, etc and other "familiar" terrain may look totally different. Later, if you need to get information out of the affected area to other parts of the region (nearest area not affected) map out where you need to go! In the event of a hurricane travel south, southwest away from where the hurricane made landfall. As earthquakes have an epicenter and send shock waves over a wide radius, listen to the radio and travel away from the epicenter away and from the coastline. Do not travel unless you are sure the way you are headed is clear. Never send a recovering addict alone - together we can.

If marshal law and curfews have been imposed-follow all directions exactly. Remember marshal law and curfews are for your protection and to insure emergency services can get through to injured persons and to aid setting up relief stations.

## **HOSPITALS AND INSTITUTIONS**

NA members who are in hospitals and institutions are particularly vulnerable during a disaster. Like everyone else, they may have lost friends, family and homes. Remember they are away from their loved ones, frightened, and unsure of what will happen next. (See article on feelings) They may also have little clean time.

Some facilities such as treatment centers may be evacuated, however, many may be in "lock down" or housed in damaged buildings. Contacting these-facilities quickly is very important to assure these recovering addicts that the fellowship of NA is with them after the crisis. Contacting these facilities should be a priority. If your area H&I members are unable to conduct meetings immediately after a disaster,- most-facilities-will still accept literature.

Your H&I commitments with phone numbers and addresses- are listed in the back of this booklet. Reminder - Do not-carry notes-or letters in or out of a facility. Don't give yours or another person's address or phone number. Don't make phone calls on behalf -of-the client or prisoner. Follow these and all other H&I Guidelines.

## **WHAT TO DO**

- 1) Check-- - the location of your meeting place, if it okay for member to meet, contact the radio station and newspaper. (See Emergency P.I. announcements)
- 2) If your regular meeting place has been destroyed, sufficiently damaged or you cannot reach it, set up a new location. NA meetings can be held anywhere during an emergency! Contact a-radio station and newspaper with the new-location. (If-under marshal law or curfew set meetings for 12:30 p.m. and 5:00 p.m.
- 3) Contact H&I facilities. If you are allowed to meet, do so. If you are not allowed to meet leave your phone number and address so the facility can contact NA Check back with the facility of often.
- 4) Check emergency shelters for NA members who may be housed there.
- 5) Contact an area committee member. Be sure to give them detailed information of where your meetings are-being held and the correct time; Give information: on status of H&I. Tell them of any-other needs the meetings might require.- Tell them how many members you currently have. Give them the name, address, and phone number of the radio stations and newspapers you are using. Leave your name and address. -
- 6) Area committee members contact the RCM, RCM Alternate, Regional Chairman or Regional Service Office (1-336-273-4204).

Regional Service Committee numbers and addresses are listed in the back of this booklet. Give them information as to how many groups have reported in and how many meetings have been set up. Give detailed information on days, times, and locations of these meetings and whatever needs your meetings might have.

If you have not heard from any groups or members within 72 hours contact a regional officer or the regional service office.

**NARCOTICS ANONYMOUS EMERGENCY ACTION PSA's**

RADIO STATION: \_\_\_\_\_

PHONE#: \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_

ORGANIZATION: \_\_\_\_\_ AREA NARCOTICS ANONYMOUS DUE TO REASONS BEYOND OUR CONTROL THE REGULAR MEETING OF THE \_\_\_\_\_ GROUP OF NARCOTICS ANONYMOUS HAS CHANGED THE MEETING \_\_\_\_\_ (TIME &/OR PLACE) TO \_\_\_\_\_ AM/PM. AT: \_\_\_\_\_

Recovery IS What Happens At NA Meetings. It is possible to stop using drugs!! (If phone numbers can be reached, please list them below

---

RADIO STATION: \_\_\_\_\_

PHONE#: \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_

ORGANIZATION: \_\_\_\_\_ AREA NARCOTICS ANONYMOUS DUE TO REASONS BEYOND OUR CONTROL THE REGULAR MEETING OF THE \_\_\_\_\_ GROUP OF NARCOTICS ANONYMOUS HAS CHANGED THE MEETING \_\_\_\_\_ (TIME &/OR PLACE) TO \_\_\_\_\_ AM/PM. AT: \_\_\_\_\_

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PHONE#: \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_

ORGANIZATION: \_\_\_\_\_ AREA NARCOTICS ANONYMOUS DUE TO REASONS BEYOND OUR CONTROL THE REGULAR MEETING OF THE \_\_\_\_\_ GROUP OF

NARCOTICS ANONYMOUS HAS CHANGED THE MEETING \_\_\_\_\_ (TIME &/OR PLACE) TO \_\_\_\_\_ AM/PM. AT: \_\_\_\_\_

Recovery IS What Happens At NA Meetings. It is possible to stop using drugs!! (If phone numbers can be reached, please list them below

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### SAMPLE MEETING FORMAT

This sample meeting format is just that: a sample. It's designed so that, if your group chooses, you can use it exactly as it is. However, you're encouraged to change it and rearrange it according to the needs of your, group.

---

Leader.

Welcome members to the meeting and introduce yourself. Hello, my-name is \_\_\_\_\_ and I'm an addict. Welcome to this meeting of the \_\_\_\_\_ - Group of Narcotics Anonymous. I'd like to open this meeting with a moment of silence (15 to 20 seconds) for the addict who still suffers, followed by the Serenity Prayer.

We like to extend a special welcome to newcomers. Is there anyone attending their first NA meeting? Would you like to introduce yourselves? Is there anyone attending this meeting for the first time? -

*If this is a closed meeting:* This is a "closed"—Narcotics-Anonymous meeting. "Closed" NA meetings are only for drug addicts or those who think they might have a drug -problem. Closed meetings provide an atmosphere in which addicts can feel more certain that those attending will be able to identify-with them.: If there are-any non—addicts visiting, we'd like to thank you for your interest in Narcotics Anonymous. Our local -NA meeting list on the literature table will direct you to an NA meeting in our community that is open -to non-addicts.

*If this is an open meeting:* -This -is-an "open" Narcotics Anonymous: meeting; which means that non-addict friends, relatives, and—community members are welcome-to-attend. Other NA meetings may be closed to non-addicts. -We'd like to welcome our visitors,- and- thank you for your interest in Narcotics Anonymous. We ask that you respect the primary-purpose of this meeting, which is to provide a place where drug addicts can share their recovery with one another.

Leader.

*You may want to read an anonymity statement at the beginning of an open meeting. A sample anonymity statement appears immediately following this sample meeting format. For the protection of our group as well as the meeting facility, we ask that no drugs or drug paraphernalia be on your person at the meeting.*

It costs nothing to belong to Narcotics Anonymous. You are a member when you say you are.

Leader.

*Recognize those with various periods of clean time. Key tags, chips, or medallions may be given out.*

*Select people before the meeting to read one or more of the following short pieces. These readings can be found either in our Little White Booklet or the group reading cards.*

- a) Who Is An Addict?
- b) What Is The NA Program?
- c) Why Are We Here?
- d) How It Works.

e) 12 Twelve Traditions.

Leader:

*Ask for topic or step for discussion and call on people to share, or introduce the speaker.*

Leader:

*About ten minutes before the meeting is scheduled to close, announce: That's all the time we have. I'd like to thank you for attending.*

Leader:

*Begin passing the basket around, announcing: The basket being passed around is one way of practicing our Seventh Tradition, which says, "Every NA group ought to be fully self-supporting, declining outside contributions." 'The money we collect pays for rent literature, and refreshments. Through contributions from this group to various NA service committees, it also helps carry the NA message of recovery in our area and around the world.*

*If this is an "open" "meeting: I'd like once again to thank our non-addict guests for the interest they've shown in Narcotics Anonymous. Because of NA's tradition of self-support, this group asks that you not contribute any money when the basket passes your way.*

Does the group service representative have any announcements? (The GSR will make announcements of upcoming group activities and NA events in the area.)

After the-basket has come back around: Again, thanks for coming tonight. Would all those who care-to, join in a circle to close? *Various groups close in different ways: with prayers, brief recitations from NA literature, etc.*

Keep coming back. It works!

## **POSSIBLE TOPICS FOR MEETINGS**

Step One

Step Two

Step Three

Just for Today

Denial

H.A.L.T.

Willing to Go to Any Length

Freedoms

Anger

Faith in a Higher Power

Keep it Simple

Powerlessness

Tools of the Fellowship

H.O.W.

## **LONG RANGE PLANS**

Major national disasters have very long-range problems: Getting meetings started again is the beginning. When radio and television stations, and newspapers are back in working order it is important to begin as many Narcotics Anonymous Public Service Announcements (PSA's) as possible. Areas should consider thorough public information efforts to last 4 to 6 months after the disaster. Refer to the Public Information Handbook often. Also, do not hesitate to contact the Regional Public Information Committee for any assistance.

Keeping the region informed of the progress of H&I and, regular meetings is very important. In some instances meeting directories for the area and region may need to be altered and reprinted. Area phone lines may need to be changed.

Groups and areas might also consider holding social events such as special speaker meetings, dances, bring a dish dinners, and outdoor activities to keep up moral. With effort the fellowship will return to normalcy much more quickly

## **FEELINGS**

Emotional upset is a normal reaction to a national disaster. It is hoped that by addressing some common feelings and issues that the healing process can begin. Our feelings are our feelings; the Twelve Steps of Narcotics Anonymous are the way out of pain for all of us. Whatever events we may experience or feelings we may encounter our principles of recovery will work on every situation.

Some of the feelings described by all (not just recovering addicts) are a sense of life being out of balance, disbelief, flashbacks, sleep disturbances/nightmares, sadness, a desire to use, a tendency to minimize the critical event, anger/irritability, forgetfulness, cold like symptoms, survivors guilt, social withdrawal, emotional numbing, feelings of being out of control, fears of "going crazy", loss of feeling secure in the world, diminished sex drive and self-doubt in all, area of our life. These feelings are normal to everyone affected by a national disaster.

The feelings that we experience during a traumatic event often go in Blazes stages. These stages and the words that label them are very familiar to all recovering addicts. They are denial, anger, bargaining, depression, and finally surrender and acceptance.

Denial - The first stage is denial, shock, disbelief, Panic, and an overall refusal to accept or acknowledge reality. We experience anxiety and fear, or we refuse to believe what has happened. We screen out information that we do not want to see, hear or think.

Anger - When we can no longer suppress the events and strong feelings that are beginning to emerge, we feel angry. Our anger can take many differing forms, outwardly and inwardly. The stress we have been under begins to surface. We can be angry with ourselves, angry with other people, and angry with the God of Our Understanding.

Bargaining - When the anger we feel begins to subside and the reality of the drastic changes in our day to day life becomes more evident, we may attempt to bargain with life, other people, or with our Higher Power. Again, remember our feelings are our feelings.

Depression - When our attempts changes the situations have failed, the sense of powerlessness can leave us sad and exhausted. We begin to realize the full impact of the shock. We may experience profound grief over our losses and sorrow for the losses of others around us. Recovery is a painful process.

Surrender and acceptance - Working through denial, anger, bargaining, and depression leads us finally to surrender and acceptance. We surrender to the fact that the situation is as it is,



and we accept whatever we have to do to pick up the pieces of our life and go on with it. The only thing permanent in life is change.

A disaster is a very frightening and disturbing event. Our reactions are bound to vary widely from one day to the next. The re-emergence of these and other feelings are common after days, weeks, or months after the actual event. We may go through this process many times.

Our program of recovery teaches us that “Just for Today” is an important ingredient in living life on life’s terms whatever those terms might be. It is important to remember that grieving for our losses is a natural and normal human response and that all of us accept changes at different times and on different terms. Another may not easily accept what one person easily accepts. Various things are important to various people. Sharing our feelings, one addict helping another, is the fastest way to recovery.

A natural disaster and the changes that come with it are no different. By not using, going to meetings whenever and wherever possible, contacting our sponsor regularly, and by working the Twelve Steps, together we can and do recover.

### **FROM A NEWCOMER**

I would like to share with other addicts how NA, the Twelve Steps, and the fellowship of NA helped me and many other recovering addicts survive Hurricane Hugo on September 21, 1989 and the days to come afterward. I am a grateful recovering drug addict and I live in Charleston, South Carolina.

I can say today with honesty that if I hadn’t had the support of the God of my understanding, the NA Fellowship, and the Twelve Steps on my side during Hurricane Hugo I would either be in a jail, a hospital, an institution, or dead because I would have used drugs. I, along with many other Charleston recovering addicts, had just lived through the most dramatic physical and emotional upheaval that a person could ever imagine going through and I didn’t use.

The confusion, depression, anger, sorrow, fear and other feelings you could muster up were flying through the air in Charleston. The most intense part of the disaster lasted about a month but the feelings still lingered on. Before the hurricane actually hit us, I was pretty skeptical about the whole thing, but as I watched people drive half crazed, snatching things from people’s hands in the stores, working like madmen to- prepare their homes and business for the storm and pack to leave, I changed my views about the entire situation.- I too then began this crazy routine to prepare myself but not only for whatever awaited us as far as physical damage but to stay-clean and composed or the days ahead of us.

I made phone calls to other addicts to find out where they were going to be so I would know where to look after the hurricane. I made sure I Had food for plenty of people so we wouldn’t go hungry. I opened my doors to anyone in recovery who needed a safe place to stay. Then I did the best thing I could have ever done. I kidnapped my sponsor and a friend. Not only was I concerned about her well being and safety but I also knew I was going to need her guidance, support, love and companionship through the whole thing. Then as the storm grew closer and closer I prayed more and more, not for everything to be all right but for faith, strength, courage, and serenity and not to use even if my bottom fell off. We kept in contact until the phone lines went down and then it was complete isolation. We were cut off from any kind of formal recovery except what we had already deposited in the bank. Thank God I had been making big recovery- deposits and working a Twelve Step program so I had lots of recovery to withdraw and use to see me through.

The hurricane hit and the day’s to follow were devastating. The emotions everyone were experiencing were controlling everything. We were without phones, gas, water, and electricity. We did have guns on our streets, looting, price gouging, homeless people, stranded people, some hurt and some dead and a whole lot of chaos. My gratitude and faith were stronger than ever

before in my life. We cried, we laughed, we hugged, we were depressed, we were happy, we felt guilty, we had survived; We shared the most intimate times in our life.

You can imagine how hard it is to live with one addict, then try lots of them under one roof Lots of us did. We pulled together something that the NA fellowship has taught us to do. We lived and felt the feelings and there were lots of them. Then we let go of them.

After the initial shock wore off we were worn thin and we needed each other badly. In my community there was a couple in recovery that I had lost touch with over the last couple of years. Because of the hurricane we were reunited and we gathered at my house for a meeting by candlelight. Again, we cried, we hugged, we yelled, we laughed, and shared our deepest feelings. It was wonderful. We did this until we got phone service and we could start looking for our fellowship friends. Once we located others we started setting up meetings by word of mouth at people's houses. We had to have our meetings during the daytime due to the marshal law that was in effect. All our regular meeting places were either damaged or we could not get to them. We pulled together "one addict helping another". We made it.

My own faith replaced my fears and I survived clean and with serenity. When the hurricane hit I had only 27 days back in recovery from a long hard relapse. My mother had just died and I was a wreck. Three days after Hurricane Hugo hit, in the midst of debris, an emotionally bankrupt city, smelly people, and total chaos, I picked up my thirty-day chip. I call it my faith chip and when I feel hopeless and afraid and I look at it and remember what that chip means to me and what I went through to get it. To all the other recovering addicts I want to say thank you all and I love ya'll.

### **CHECK LIST**

1. Do all groups in your area have a current Regional Directory, state and local maps, and a copy of this booklet?
2. Are all addresses and phone numbers up to date?
3. Are all H&I information, addresses and phone numbers current?
4. Do you have any ham radio operators in your local fellowship? If so, do you have their phone numbers and addresses?
5. Do your groups have an extra copy-of the Little White Book newly revised, Basic Text, H&I and P.I.-Handbooks?
6. Do you have note pads, pens and pencils (to leave notes on doors), candles, matches, and flashlights?

*It is important that' one set of these materials be kept in the group meeting place and one set kept in a separate location in case the meeting place cannot be reached or has been damaged.*

**PHONE NUMBERS AND ADDRESSES**

**AREA:** \_\_\_\_\_

**ADDRESS:** \_\_\_\_\_

**CITY:** \_\_\_\_\_ **STATE:** \_\_\_\_\_ **ZIP:** \_\_\_\_\_

**PHONE #:** \_\_\_\_\_

**AMERICAN RED CROSS:** \_\_\_\_\_

**ADDRESS:** \_\_\_\_\_

**CITY:** \_\_\_\_\_ **STATE:** \_\_\_\_\_ **ZIP:** \_\_\_\_\_

**OTHER PHONE NUMBERS:** \_\_\_\_\_

Carolina Regional Service Office

2140 Carolina Place Drive

Fort Mill, SC 29708

803-802-5034 or 866-720-CRSC (2776)

Fax:803-802-5269

**RD:** \_\_\_\_\_

**RD-ALT:** \_\_\_\_\_

**CRSC CHAIR:** \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
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