



Narcotics Anonymous

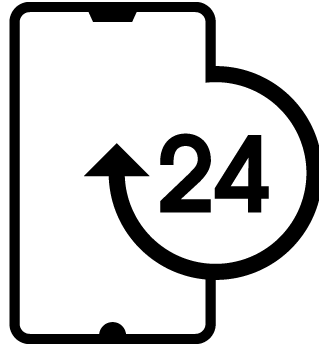
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Metro-Detroit Regional Helpline Common Calls & Best Answers

Approved: 8-14-2025

Drug Problem?

We Can Help!



(248) 543-7200

(248) 759-8032

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Common Calls and Best Answers

The following section outlines the common types of calls. Each call has a theme and there will always be variations to each theme. We will role play some of these scenarios during the training.

Our tone of voice is just as important as the words we use. We acknowledge what the caller is saying and feeling. Do not use judgmental words or preach to the caller. It is important to keep in mind that calls may not follow exactly the dialogue detailed in this section. However, familiarity with this information will make it easier to respond appropriately and to serve within the spirit of the Twelve Traditions of NA.

Common Calls from Potential Members

Q:	"I've been smoking pot for three years and I'm not sure if I am an addict. Can NA help?"
A:	"We suggest attending an NA meeting and speaking with some of the members there. Because NA meetings are a safe place, newcomers are encouraged to ask questions. Also, read some of our literature, which is available at most NA meetings or at the Michigan Service Office, and decide for yourself. The informational pamphlet "Am I an Addict" can be especially useful to someone who isn't sure if they are an addict. Can I direct you to a meeting near you?"
Q:	"I think I may have a drug problem. My life is a mess. I need to go to NA / Do I need to go to NA?"
A:	"I'm glad you called. Narcotics Anonymous has helped me and thousands of others stop using drugs, lose the desire to use, and find a new way of life. I can help you find a meeting. Where are you located?" [Direct them to a meeting near them]

NOTE: Find out if the caller wants to stop using. If the answer is yes, and he / she would like to hear about recovery from drug addiction, feel free to share a brief introduction of the NA program. Avoid using NA "jargon" such as "it works when you work it." Suggest an appropriate meeting location for the addict to find out more.

If the caller isn't ready, remember, "An addict who does not want to stop using will not stop using. They can be analyzed, counseled, reasoned with, prayed over, threatened, beaten or locked up but they will not stop until they want to stop."

Q:	"I heard that pot isn't addictive. Yet I want to stop. Can NA help?"
A:	"We suggest attending an NA Meeting and speaking to some of the members there. Give it a try and see if NA can help. We believe that addiction is not only about the drugs we used, but also about how we felt and our behaviors. NA is a non-specific drug recovery program. If you would like to give it a try, I can help you find a meeting. Where are you located?"
Q:	"I am getting drug-tested by my parole officer; how long does cocaine stay in your system?"
A:	"Narcotics Anonymous is a twelve-step fellowship for those who think they may have a problem with drugs. We are a self-help, recovery-oriented organization and employ no medical professionals. We do not give any medical advice or opinions, but we do help addicts find recovery through the NA program."
Q:	"What should I expect when I go to my first NA meeting? Do I have to talk?"
A:	"Typically, a more experienced member will conduct the meeting. There is usually time for participation in which members share about their experience, strength, and hope with staying clean. You do not have to speak during the meeting if you don't want to. We encourage you to get there a little early so that you can speak with some of the members and pick up some literature before the meeting starts."
Q:	"How much does NA cost? Are you counselors?"
A:	"NA is free. There are no fees or dues to be a member of NA. The only requirement for membership is the desire to stop using. We are not professional counselors; we are recovering addicts who share our experience to help each other stay clean."
Q:	"I am a nurse by profession, and I want to get clean. Where can I find a nurses' meeting?"
A:	"Some areas around the country have common needs meetings like those for professionals while others do not. We currently do not have a nurse specific meeting; however we do have a Professionals NA meeting in Bloomfield Hills on Friday night. We can tell you, however, that recovering addicts from all types of professions attend our meetings. Can I help you find a meeting near you?"
Q:	"I'd like to go to an NA meeting, but I don't have a car. Can you help?"
A:	"NA does not offer transportation services but the community resource listing has bus, train and taxi information so you can see which buses travel near or past the meeting. If you can get yourself to the meeting, it is usually possible to ask for a ride home from one of the members afterward."
Q:	"I'm going to kill myself; I don't want to live anymore. What should I do?"
A:	"We strongly suggest contacting 911 to get immediate assistance."

NOTE: If someone calls and is suicidal or has an emergency, refer them to 911. If someone calls and is afraid that they have taken an overdose or otherwise life-threatening dose, refer them to 911. We are not professionals; therefore, we are not trained to give medical or crisis advice. We must refer callers in crisis to the appropriate agencies. Do not try to handle crisis

calls by yourself. You are only an addict, regardless of what you do for a living (i.e., doctor, nurse, counselor, therapist, etc.). In this situation, you are simply a member of NA, and you are representing the Fellowship. Remember: We deal with suffering addicts. If we were to call the police (or 911) without their permission, we are most likely setting someone up for an arrest. Encourage them to get the appropriate help they need.

Common Calls from Loved Ones

Q:	“My boyfriend / girlfriend / wife / husband is using drugs, stealing, and cheating. What can I do to help him / her? Will you call him / her?”
A:	“Because Narcotics Anonymous is a self-help program, addicts themselves must have the desire to stop using. Once he / she is ready to stop using drugs, please have them call us so we can direct them to an NA meeting in their area. In the meantime, you may want to call your local Community Mental Health Access Number XXX-XXX-XXXX, Narcotics Anonymous is not affiliated with any outside organizations.”
Q:	“My son / daughter is using drugs and wants to stop taking drugs. Can I go with them to their first meeting?”
A:	“You may attend an “Open” NA meeting with your son / daughter. Open meetings welcome family members and the community at large. Closed meetings are for addicts only. Let me check our meeting list, so I can give you several choices of open meetings near you.”
Q:	“Will you call me if my son / daughter does not show up to meetings regularly?”
A:	“No, we are not able to do this. Narcotics Anonymous does not keep membership lists, there are no pledges to sign, no promises to make to anyone. It is not our position to monitor an addict’s willingness to attend or not to attend meetings. Can I help you with anything else?”

Common Calls from Community Members

Q:	“I heard that my old friend, Jane Smith, is in NA. Can I have her phone number?”
A:	“We are not at liberty to give out contact information for individuals who may or may not be members.”
Q:	“Drugs are being sold in my apartment complex. Can you come and arrest them?”
A:	“Narcotics Anonymous is a twelve-step fellowship for those who think they may have a problem with drugs. We are a self-help, recovery-oriented organization and employ no law enforcement professionals. I’m sorry but I cannot help you with that. Can I help you with anything else today / tonight?”

Note: When someone calls with a drug tip, advise them that we are a program for addicts seeking recovery from the disease of addiction. We are not affiliated with any outside organizations or law enforcement agencies. Do NOT advise them to call the police.

Common Calls from Professionals

Q:	"I am Jane Smith and I am a counselor at the "Last Stop on the Left" treatment facility. I would like someone to come and speak to our clients about Narcotics Anonymous."
A:	"I can help you with that. Let me refer you to the Michigan Service Office. Their phone number is (248) 544-2010."
Q:	"I am Joe Smith and I am the Administrator at "Prairie Drive Treatment Facility." Could I get a copy of your meeting schedule?"
A:	"Yes, no problem. You can reference meeting information online at https://michigan-na.org by selecting the area you are in and even download a printable meeting list or by using the BMLT App on your Smart Phone. Meeting lists are also available for sale at the Michigan Service Office."

Other Types of Calls

Q:	"Hi, this is Steve from the Florida Region. I'm looking for Greta P. to come and speak at our convention. Could I have her name and number?"
A:	"I'm sorry, I can't give out any information about anyone in Narcotics Anonymous. It is not our policy to take personal messages, but I can try. Could I have your name, phone, and email address and I'll do the best I can. I can't promise anything." [Take down information and email it to volunteer@na-helpline.org]
Q:	"Hi, this is Rhonda, and I'm an addict. I'm looking for Sarah. Could I get her number?"
A:	"Hi Rhonda. I'm sorry, but it is not our policy to take personal messages. Also, I cannot give out contact information. Is there anything else I can help you with?"
Q:	"Hi, this is Sheila and I was looking for NA events that are happening in the Metro Detroit Region this weekend. Can you tell me what's happening?"
A:	"Hi Sheila. The helpline does not have access to current activities. Some activities are published on https://michigan-na.org/ . I suggest you go to a meeting in the area you are looking for an event, they should have fliers, or a fellow addict could invite you to one of our many activity Facebook groups."
Q:	"Hi, this is Rochelle and I'm the contact person for the Granite Falls Tuesday night NA meeting. I have a change to the meeting schedule. We're meeting at 8 PM now, not 7:00 PM. Can you make that change?"
A:	"Hi Rochelle. You will need to contact your areas Outreach Chair. If your area does not have an Outreach Chair you can reach out to your area Co-Chair."

Calls in General

The following is some information about how to handle various types of calls that is not in script format.

- **Talking to a Potential Addict**
 - Listen and respond to the caller. A suffering addict probably will indicate that they want information or help.
- **Addict Wants Information About NA**
 - Answer the caller's questions. If you sense that the caller wants more, ask, "Do you have any more questions about Narcotics Anonymous?" After the caller has asked all his / her questions, and if you sense that the caller wants to continue the conversation, then respond, "It sounds like you are really hurting. I know the desperation that you must be feeling. Do you want help to quit using drugs?" The addict will indicate if he / she wants help. Then direct them to a meeting.
- **Addict Interested IS NOT READY for Help**
 - Conclude the call by saying, "When you are ready, we are here to help you. Our program works for those who want to stop using. Always remember there is a way out."
- **Addict Interested and IS READY for Help**
 - If the caller wants help that is beyond the scope of services that NA can provide (e.g., detox, treatment information, etc.), provide the 211 or the Community Mental Health Access Number listed at the end of this packet. Be familiar with "How to Handle Special Calls". Do not hang up until you are fairly sure you have done all you can for this caller. If it is not a crisis call, listen to the caller and express your concern. But ask questions to see if they are ready for help. Remember, your job is to get them to a meeting, NOT to counsel them.
- **Addict Wants to Stop Using, Or is Not Sure**
 - Respond empathetically. Share BRIEFLY about what it was like, what happened, and what it is like for you today. You might sum it up by saying, "There was a time in my life that I thought I'd never be able to quit using drugs. However, since I found NA I haven't had to use. Would you like to go to an NA meeting?"
- **Refer Addict to a Meeting**
 - Give the caller information (time, location, and directions if needed) about the next available meeting. Take a few moments and explain to the caller what they can expect at a meeting. Include the structure and format of the meeting

if known (e.g., speaker, topic discussion, Basic Text Study, etc.). It is helpful to go into a little detail to make them feel as comfortable as possible. Suggest they tell the members that this is their first meeting. The members will help you get access to our meeting list and possibly literature. Conclude the call by saying, “To get the most out of the meeting, try to get there a few minutes early. You’ve done the right thing by calling us. IF APPLICABLE: I will / won’t be at the meeting, I’m looking forward to meeting you. If you need further help, give us a call again.”

- **Addict Won’t Go to a Meeting**

- Ask them, “Why not?” The following are examples of ways to respond to excuses for not going to a meeting. The addict’s questions and statements may sound like they are not ready yet. Remember that the caller has already expressed that they need help. Our intention is to help the caller focus on the solutions rather than the problems keeping them from attending NA meetings.

Q:	“What happens at a meeting?”
A:	“We are a group of people in recovery who meet regularly to help each other stay clean. Addicts share about what life used to be like and what life is like today. You aren’t required to do or say anything.”

If the caller presents obstacles:

Obstacle:	“My car doesn’t work”
Response:	“Does this problem have a solution?”
Response:	“Some of our meetings are on bus lines (depending on their location).”

Obstacle:	“I don’t have anyone to take care of my children.”
Response:	“If you have to, you can bring them to a child friendly meeting.”
Response:	“If they are school age, you can attend daytime meetings.”

Obstacle:	Caller is too scared
Response:	“You’re not alone. During my first meeting I felt so self-conscious I was afraid to say anything. You don’t need to worry, we’re all pretty friendly.”

Obstacle:	"I can't stay clean long enough to go to a meeting."
Response:	"If you want to stop using, then you are welcome. We only ask that you not have any drugs or paraphernalia with you during the meeting. But you are not required to be clean at the meeting. The only requirement for membership is a desire to stop using."

Obstacle:	"I am too hopeless; it won't work for me. I'm too far gone."
Response:	"I felt that way too, however, with the help of NA, I have a choice today."

Obstacle:	"I can't go because I have family or work obligations."
Response:	"If you don't get help, are you going to be able to keep your job, family, etc?"

Obstacle:	"My wife/husband doesn't approve of me going to a meeting."
Response:	"If you don't get help, are you going to be able to keep your relationship?"

- After discussing the caller's reasons for not going to a meeting and some possible solutions, ask the caller, "Do you want to go to a meeting?"

How to Handle Special Calls

The Narcotics Anonymous Helpline is strictly for dispensing information about the NA Fellowship, NA meetings, and recovery. The volunteer must remember that they are only a recovering addict sharing their experience, strength, and hope. As volunteers, we are not professional crisis counselors, doctors, or psychologists, etc., and do not have the right to give professional advice. Callers with issues that are beyond the boundaries of Narcotics Anonymous should be quickly and politely given an appropriate referral to 911 or the Community Mental Health Access Number listed below.

Always explain that Narcotics Anonymous is not affiliated with, nor recommends, any other organizations, institutions, emergency services, agencies, or programs. We simply offer 911, 211 or The Community Mental Health Access Numbers listed below for those callers who need services other than NA.

Community Access Numbers

Community	Access Phone Number
Blue Water	(888) 225-4447
Macomb County	(855) 996-2264
Monroe County	(734) 243-7340 or (734) 884-0226
Oakland County	(248) 464-6383
Wayne County	(800) 241-4949

Michigan Regional Helpline

(800) 430-2085