

## Twelve Steps of CPA

1. We admitted we were powerless over pain and illness– that our lives had become unmanageable.
2. Came to believe that a Power greater than ourselves could restore us to sanity.
3. Made a decision to turn our will and our lives over to the care of God *as we understood Him*.
4. Made a searching and fearless moral inventory of ourselves.
5. Admitted to God, to ourselves and to another human being the exact nature of our wrongs.
6. Were entirely ready to have God remove all these defects of character.
7. Humbly asked Him to remove our shortcomings.
8. Made a list of all persons we had harmed and became willing to make amends to them all.
9. Made direct amends to such people wherever possible, except when to do so would injure them or others.
10. Continued to take personal inventory and when we were wrong promptly admitted it.
11. Sought through prayer and meditation to improve our conscious contact with God *as we understood Him*, praying only for knowledge of His will for us and the power to carry that out.
12. Having had a spiritual awakening as the result of these steps we tried to carry this message to others with chronic pain and chronic illness and to practice these principles in all our affairs.

Phone Numbers:

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**God, grant me the serenity  
to accept the things  
I cannot change,  
the courage to change  
the things I can,  
and the wisdom  
to know the difference.  
Thy will, not mine, be done.**

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## What is Chronic Pain Anonymous ?



*“... a fellowship for those with chronic pain and chronic illness.”*

## **An Introduction to Chronic Pain Anonymous**

The members of Chronic Pain Anonymous (CPA) understand how it feels to come to a meeting for the first time. For some of us, CPA was a last resort. We were in pain or we were ill; we were isolated and we were desperate. Some of us had abandoned hope. We came to our first meeting to find relief from the emotional pain and suffering related to our health challenges.

In CPA, our definition of recovery is the ability to live peacefully, joyfully, and comfortably with ourselves and others. Our experience has taught us that through working the Twelve Steps, it is possible to achieve this even while pain and illness persist.

We continue to come to CPA because it works. Our recovery is grounded in the common experience of our members—people who live with ongoing pain, disability and illness.

CPA's simplicity is reflected in the principles of the program which include the Twelve Steps and the Twelve Traditions. These simple tools remind us that beyond our individual differences, there is a spiritual core that unifies us and helps us find serenity. That's what keeps us coming back.

Since there may be a few things you are wondering about, we would like to share with you some answers to frequently asked questions about CPA and what happens at our meetings.

### **Who are the members and why are they here?**

Some members of our fellowship are living with chronic pain related to injuries or physical disabilities, while others are living with illnesses,

such as cancer, arthritis, fibromyalgia, MS and many others. At our meetings we share our experience, strength and hope with each other and learn new ways to deal with our common problems.

### **How can it help me?**

You will probably hear about a situation much like your own. If you don't find someone with the same set of circumstances, you may still be able to identify with the way many of us feel about the effects of chronic pain or chronic illness in our lives. In CPA there is help for everyone.

At our meetings we concentrate on our feelings and attitudes toward our situation rather than on the details of the situation. As we work on our individual recovery, we contribute to the group's unity. We reflect on how chronic illness or pain has affected our thinking and our behavior. We talk about the part we play in our own problems and how we can change our attitudes and actions by applying the Twelve Steps in our lives.

### **Do I have to say anything?**

If you'd like to speak, please do. If you'd prefer to just listen that's okay, too. We practice listening to each other with an open mind, and we encourage you to "take what you want and leave the rest."

### **Is this a religious fellowship?**

CPA is a spiritual fellowship, not a religious one. Members of any faith or none at all are welcome. We make it a point to avoid discussions about specific religious beliefs. The CPA program is based on the idea that we can depend on a "Power greater than ourselves" for

help in solving problems and achieving peace of mind. In CPA we are free to define that Power in our own way.

### **Why is it "Anonymous?"**

Anonymity is the spiritual foundation of our program of recovery, reminding us to "place principles before personalities." We guard the anonymity of all CPA members so that we can provide a safe place to share. This means we do not reveal to anyone what we hear or whom we see at meetings. The free expression in our meetings is held in strict confidence to protect each member's privacy. We use first names only to remind us that we are all equals in CPA. This keeps us humble and enables us to develop emotionally and spiritually. Ultimately, anonymity is about equality and fellowship.

### **Does CPA recommend medical treatment programs or comment on my medical care?**

The position of CPA is that the medications you take and the treatment you receive is between you and your healthcare practitioner. Medications and treatment programs are generally not discussed at our meetings.

Because we are non-professional, we do not recommend any sources of outside help. Through sharing our personal experiences, members gain insight into dealing with their own situations.

### **How much does it cost?**

There are no dues or fees to join CPA. We are self-supporting through our own voluntary contributions.