

## How Recovery Happens

We compulsive workers have found that no amount of will power or determination can make us stick to a sensible program of work for any permanent or lasting period of time. We have found that self-reliance, good as far as it goes, failed us because it did not go far enough. Some of us once had self-confidence, but it did not solve our work problem—or any other problem—completely. We have felt a need and have been seeking an answer to our dilemma. We have realized that our work obsession is only the outward manifestation of our inner emotional turmoil and our essential spiritual disconnection.

We who are recovering from the destructive consequences of work addiction understand, as perhaps few others can, the fear, depression, anxiety, and loneliness of being a workaholic. We are learning that the high we get from the praise of others, the sense of security that we get from avoiding or accomplishing certain tasks, and the chaos engendered by our frantic activity are all means we use to cope with the reality that we cannot completely control our life or our experience of it. We are learning that we will never accomplish or accumulate enough to truly feel good about ourselves. Workaholism is a disease not cured by status or money, and—like all other addictive diseases—it is progressive and fatal if not arrested.

We are also learning that recovery is possible. We start by noticing and identifying our personal “bottom line” addictive behaviors. Workaholism does not lend itself to complete abstinence like many substance addictions, but—with the assistance of a Higher Power—we can begin to identify when we are using work in a compulsive fashion. We can then stop and pray or call a fellow WA member for support when we feel tempted to default to our old behavior patterns. We have experienced healing in the WA program.

Our stories detail what life was like in active addiction, how we found Recovery, and what has changed since we began working the WA program. We hope that you decide that you want what we have and are willing to take the Steps necessary in order to get it for yourself. We now know that we deal with an obsession that is destined to overwhelm us if we do not ask for help. Half measures availed us nothing, but we recovered when we surrendered completely to something greater than ourselves.

Moving through the Steps with a sponsor may take varying amounts of time and effort. We can create Step meetings to discuss them and Step groups for actively working them together. We may revisit certain Steps and find new meanings in them. Ultimately, we find we practice them best by fully integrating them into our lives.

*(Workaholics Anonymous Book of Recovery, 2nd ed., 2015, pp. 24-25)*