

PUBLIC RELATIONS

WORKSHOP

HANDOUT



EDMONTON & AREA NARCOTICS ANONYMOUS
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Service motives

“Everything that occurs in the course of NA service must be motivated by the desire to more successfully carry the message of recovery to the addict who still suffers.”

Basic Text, p. xxvi

Our motives are often a surprise to us. In our early days of recovery, they were almost *always* a surprise! We've learned to check our motives through prayer, meditation, the steps, and talking to our sponsor or other addicts. When we find ourselves with an especially strong urge to do or have something, it's particularly important to check our motives to find out what we *really* want.

In early recovery, many of us throw ourselves into service with great fervor before we have started the regular practice of motive-checking. It takes a while before we become aware of the real reasons for our zeal. We may want to impress others, show off our talents, or be recognized and

important. Now, these desires may not be harmful in another setting, expressed through another outlet. In NA service, however, they can do serious damage.

When we decide to serve NA, we make a decision to help addicts find and maintain

recovery. We have to carefully check our motives in service, remembering that it's much easier to frighten away using addicts than to convince them to stay. When we show them game- playing, manipulation, or pomposity, we present an unattractive picture of recovery. However, the unselfish desire to serve others creates an atmosphere that is attractive to the addict who still suffers.

Just for today: I will check my motives for the true spirit of service.

(derived from Just For Today, pg.367.)

Everything that occurs in the course of NA service must be motivated by the desire to more successfully carry the message of recovery to the addict who still suffers. It was for this reason that we began this work. We must always remember that as individual members, groups and service committees, we are not and should never be in competition with each other. We work separately and together to help the newcomer and for our common good. We have learned, painfully, that internal strife cripples our Fellowship; it prevents us from providing the services necessary for growth. *(Basic Text pg. xxvi)*

Our Message Is:

That an addict, any addict, can stop using drugs, lose the desire to use, and find a new way to live.

(Basic Text pg. 68 6th edition)

Our Promise Is:

Freedom from active addiction; just for today, you never have to use again!

(Basic Text pg. xxiii)



First Tradition

The Twelve Traditions of NA

Our common welfare should come first; personal recovery depends on NA unity.

Our First Tradition concerns unity and our common welfare.

One of the most important things about our new way of life is being a part of a group of addicts seeking recovery. Our survival is directly related to the survival of the group and the Fellowship. To maintain unity within NA, it is imperative that the group remain stable, or the entire Fellowship perishes and the individual dies.

Second Tradition

For our group purpose there is but one ultimate authority—a loving God as He may express Himself in our group conscience. Our leaders are but trusted servants; they do not govern.

Our direction in service comes from a God of our understanding, whether we serve as individuals, as a group, or as a service board or committee. Whenever we come together, we seek the presence and guidance of this loving Higher Power. This direction then guides us through all our actions. [...] When we choose a member to serve us in some capacity, we exercise mutual trust.

Third Tradition

The only requirement for membership is a desire to stop using. The Third Tradition encourages freedom from judgment. It leads us on the path of service toward an attitude of helpfulness, acceptance, and unconditional love. [...] Addiction is a deadly disease. We know that addicts who don't find recovery can expect nothing better than jails, institutions, and death. Refusing admission to any addict, even one who comes merely out of curiosity may be a death sentence for that addict.

Fourth Tradition

Each group should be autonomous except in matters affecting other groups or NA as a whole.

Each group does have complete freedom, except when their actions affect other groups or NA as a whole. If we check to make sure that our actions are clearly within the bounds of our traditions; if we do not dictate to other groups, or force anything upon them; and if we consider the consequences of our action ahead of time, then all will be well.

Fifth Tradition

Each group has but one primary purpose—to carry the message to the addict who still suffers.

What is our message? The message is that an addict, any addict, can stop using drugs, lose the desire to use, and find a new way to live. Our message is hope and the promise of freedom. When all is said and done, our primary purpose can only be to carry the message to the addict who still suffers because that is all we have to give.

Sixth Tradition

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.

Within the limits established by Tradition Six, we have tremendous freedom to carry the message of recovery and help other addicts. We have clear boundaries set by our identity as Narcotics Anonymous. When we take care to observe those boundaries, our outside relationships enhance our ability to carry the message to the addict who still suffers rather than diverting us from our primary purpose.

Seventh Tradition

Every NA group ought to be fully self-supporting, declining outside contributions.

By encouraging our group to pay its own way, the Seventh Tradition gives our group the freedom to share its recovery as it sees fit, not obligated to outside contributors. Further, it gives our group the freedom that comes from inner strength, the strength that develops through applying spiritual principles.

Eighth Tradition

Narcotics Anonymous should remain forever nonprofessional, but our service centers may employ special workers.

In this tradition we say that we have no professionals. By this, we mean we have no staff psychiatrists, doctors, lawyers, or counselors. Our program works by one addict helping another. If we employ professionals in NA groups, we would destroy our unity. We are simply addicts of equal status freely helping one another.

Ninth Tradition

NA, as such, ought never be organized, but we may create service boards or committees directly responsible to those they serve.

NA groups join together, combining their resources to create service boards and committees that will help them better fulfill their primary purpose. Those boards and committees are not called to govern NA; they are called, rather, to faithfully execute the trust given them by the groups they serve.

Tenth Tradition

Narcotics Anonymous has no opinion on outside issues; hence the NA name ought never be drawn into public controversy.

There are a great number of addiction-related issues that others might expect a worldwide society of recovering drug addicts to take positions on. [...] Our answer, according to Tradition Ten, is that our groups and our fellowship take no position, pro or con, on any issues except the NA program itself. [...] For our own survival, we have no opinion on outside issues.

Eleventh Tradition

Our public relations policy is based on attraction rather than promotion; we need always maintain personal anonymity at the level of press, radio, and films.

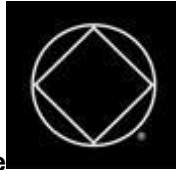
The existence of a public relations “policy” implies the importance of a public relations “program” in carrying out our fellowship’s primary purpose. [...] As NA groups, service boards, and committees, we deliberately and energetically cultivate good public relations, not as an incidental result of our normal activity but as a way to better carry our message to addicts. [...] Public anonymity helps keep the focus of our public relations on the NA message, not the PI workers involved.

Twelfth Tradition

Anonymity is the spiritual foundation of all our traditions, ever reminding us to place principles before personalities.

Anonymity is one of the basic elements of our recovery and it pervades our Traditions and our Fellowship. It protects us from our own defects of character and renders personalities and their differences powerless. Anonymity in action makes it impossible for personalities to come before principles.

Excerpts from the Basic Text and *It Works: How and Why*



Twelve Concepts for NA Service

First Concept

To fulfill our fellowship's primary purpose, the NA groups have joined together to create a structure which develops, coordinates, and maintains services on behalf of NA as a whole. The primary responsibility of an NA group is to conduct its recovery meetings, carrying the message directly to the addict who still suffers. Groups join their strength in the service structure, ensuring that other services—H&I, PI, literature development, for example—are fulfilled effectively and without distracting the groups from their own primary purpose.

Second Concept

The final responsibility and authority for NA services rests with the NA groups.

The groups have final responsibility for and authority over the service structure they have created. By fulfilling their responsibility to provide their service structure with the conscience and ideas, people, and money it needs, the groups also exercise their authority. Conversely, the service structure must always look to the groups for support and direction.

Third Concept

The NA groups delegate to the service structure the authority necessary to fulfill the responsibilities assigned to it.

In day-to-day matters, the groups have given our service boards and committees the practical authority necessary to do the jobs assigned them. This is not a blank check issued to the service structure; the groups still bear final authority. To make Concept Three work, we must carefully select trusted servants.

Fourth Concept

Effective leadership is highly valued in Narcotics Anonymous. Leadership qualities should be carefully considered when selecting trusted servants.

Leadership is very important to the welfare of our fellowship. The essay on this concept describes an array of leadership qualities to be considered when selecting trusted servants.

Fifth Concept

For each responsibility assigned to the service structure, a single point of decision and accountability should be clearly defined.

In defining a single point of decision for each service assignment, we eliminate confusion about who has authority to do what. We also clarify accountability for our services: whoever is given the authority for a particular task will be held accountable for the fulfillment of that task.

Sixth Concept

Group conscience is the spiritual means by which we invite a loving God to influence our decisions.

Group conscience is the means by which we bring the spiritual awakening of the Twelve Steps to bear in making service-related decisions. It is fundamental to our fellowship's decision-making process. It is not, however, merely a euphemism for "voting" and is not itself the NA decision making process.

Seventh Concept

All members of a service body bear substantial responsibility for that body's decisions and should be allowed to fully participate in its decision making processes.

All members of a service body bear substantial responsibility

All members of a service body bear substantial responsibility for that body's decisions; therefore, all of them should be allowed to fully participate in its decision-making processes. NA service is a team effort. The full participation of each member of the team is of great value as we seek to express the collective conscience of the whole.

Eighth Concept

Our service structure depends on the integrity and effectiveness of our communications.

Regular communication is essential to the fulfillment of all these concepts, and to the integrity and effectiveness of our services themselves.

Ninth Concept

All elements of our service structure have the responsibility to carefully consider all viewpoints in their decision-making processes.

To check judgment, to guard against hasty or misinformed decisions, and to invite the sharing of new ideas, our services must consider all viewpoints when making plans. This is essential to the development of a fair, wise, balanced group conscience.

Tenth Concept

Any member of a service body can petition that body for the redress of a personal grievance, without fear of reprisal.

The Tenth Concept encourages us to treat each other with respect in the service environment, and provides us with a means of making amends when we wrong others. The essay describes ways in

which an individual who feels he or she has been wronged can go about seeking redress of his or her grievance.

Eleventh Concept

NA funds are to be used to further our primary purpose, and must be managed responsibly.

The Eleventh Concept establishes the sole absolute priority for the use of NA funds: to carry the message. The importance of that priority calls for total fiscal accountability. Direct contributions to each level of service help us focus on our primary purpose, and enhance accountability.

Twelfth Concept

In keeping with the spiritual nature of Narcotics Anonymous, our structure should always be one of service, never of government.

Within the context of the Twelve Concepts, as a body, this concept serves much the same function as Tradition Twelve in the context of the traditions. It brings our consideration of concepts for NA service back to the spiritual root of selfless service. “A structure based on that foundation could only be one of service, never of government.”

Excerpts from the booklet, *Twelve Concepts for NA Service*

Public Relations Statement

Why public relations is important to the NA member (Internal)

The Narcotics Anonymous message is “that an addict, any addict, can stop using drugs, lose the desire to use and find a new way to live.” Our relations with the public enable us to share this message broadly so that those who might benefit from our program of recovery can find us. We perform public relations service to increase the awareness and credibility of the NA program. We share our message openly with the public at large, with prospective members, and with professionals. Maintaining an open, attractive attitude in these efforts helps us to create and improve relationships with those outside the fellowship. Establishing and maintaining a commitment to these relationships, can help us to further our primary purpose.

The spiritual principles of our steps, traditions, and concepts guide us in pursuing our public relations aims and our efforts to enhance NA’s public image and reputation. These principles apply to our community and service efforts as well as to the personal behavior and attitude of individual NA members.

Informing professionals and the public (External)

The following statement can be used to inform the public about NA:

Narcotics Anonymous is a global, community-based organization with a multi-lingual and multicultural membership. NA was founded in 1953, and our membership growth was minimal during our initial twenty years as an organization. Since the publication of our Basic Text in 1983, the number of members and meetings has increased dramatically. Today, NA members hold more than 61,000 meetings weekly in 129 countries. We offer recovery from the effects of addiction through working a twelve-step program, including regular attendance at group meetings. The group

atmosphere provides help from peers and offers an ongoing support network for addicts who wish to pursue and maintain a drug-free lifestyle.

Our name, Narcotics Anonymous, is not meant to imply a focus on any particular drug; NA's approach makes no distinction between drugs including alcohol. Membership is free, and we have no affiliation with any organizations outside of NA including governments, religions, law enforcement groups, or medical and psychiatric associations. Through all of our service efforts and our cooperation with others seeking to help addicts, we strive to reach a day when every addict in the world has an opportunity to experience our message of recovery in his or her own language and culture.

- As of March 2011.

CORE PUBLIC RELATIONS PRINCIPLES

Many of us understand the importance of NA's principles, but how do we go about applying those principles as we carry NA's message of recovery in a public setting? This chapter highlights NA's core principles and explores how to practically apply them in our public relations efforts. By understanding these principles, we are empowered to create services that are more reliable, responsive, and communicative.

The principles outlined in this chapter are contained in NA's steps, traditions, and concepts. Of course, all of the steps, traditions, and concepts have some bearing on our relationships with the public. We have simply highlighted the principles that seem particularly relevant to public relations service. The foundational principle of all our service efforts

is the group's primary purpose described by our Fifth Tradition. As the Fifth Tradition essay in *It Works: How and Why* states, "carrying the NA message is so important to the survival of NA that it is called our primary purpose." We work to fulfill our primary purpose within NA's principles.



The spiritual foundation This chapter illustrates the NA principles that apply to our relationships within the fellowship and with the public. When we truly understand NA principles, we are better able to act in a mature way when we are presented with unexpected challenges. Our service efforts often provide us with opportunities to apply principles to what might appear to be insurmountable obstacles. We can approach these challenges

with an open mind in order to discover possible resolutions. For example, we may find ourselves in a situation where two different subcommittees are interacting with the same correctional facility. Each subcommittee may be in contact with different people at the facility. What is needed in a situation like this one is good communication between subcommittees. Our public relations are strengthened when we can practice principles,

work together, and keep each other informed.

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Each group has but one primary purpose—to carry the message to the addict who still suffers.

Tradition Five

	As members of NA, we have a primary purpose to support. While groups focus on that primary purpose, the
	responsibility of supporting those efforts is delegated to an area service committee. For those of us performing public
	relations services, this means we approach our service with an attitude of humility: We are simply recovering addicts
	trying to carry a message of recovery—one that someone else freely shared with us—to other suffering addicts. Our job

is to let others know that Narcotics Anonymous is a simple, spiritual, twelve-step recovery program that can help any addict find freedom from drug addiction. We confidently acknowledge what services we can and cannot provide. We approach public relations with the knowledge of what NA is to the community and what NA's relationship is with that community. The principles of humility and service can help us carry NA's message in a way that acknowledges NA's role in the community.

Anonymity

When a friend tells us about the struggles another person is having with addiction, we may want to let that friend know about Narcotics Anonymous and what it has done for us. When a coworker has a drug problem, we may want to share our experience with that person. None of us will want to indiscriminately trumpet the gory details of our addiction to everyone in town, nor will we want to disclose our NA membership to everyone we meet. When we think it may be helpful, however, it may be appropriate to share a bit of our story and the recovery we've found in Narcotics Anonymous.

It Works: How and Why

We do not break our anonymity when we share with someone, directly and openly, about our personal experiences with addiction and freedom in recovery. Many members share their recovery experiences with their former treatment counselors or probation officers. This could be considered

public relations, as treatment counselors and probation officers are more likely to refer new clients to NA when they see that the NA program of recovery is working in the lives of these members. This approach creates opportunities for addicts to learn about NA, and it generates an attitude of goodwill toward our program.

In NA, the principle of anonymity encourages what our literature describes as “selfless generosity.” The principle of anonymity guides us to behave in ways that put the group’s welfare ahead of our own: The “we” becomes more important than the “I.” When we accept our individual strengths and weaknesses, we are practicing humility—and humility is anonymity in action. We practice humility when we understand that the group is the strongest vehicle for carrying NA’s message. We are all equal when we sit together in an NA meeting; anonymity asks us to carry that equality and selflessness into our relationships with the public.

In joining anonymously in a fellowship with other recovering addicts, placing the welfare of the group ahead of our own, our own spiritual growth is enhanced beyond measure, not diminished.

It Works: How and Why

The principle of anonymity encourages equality and a focus on the greater good of NA, rather than our own personal interest. In NA, we don’t care who you are; we care about the therapeutic value of one addict helping another.

Many members view anonymity simply as not stating our last names. This would only be an issue of concern in a media setting. It is each member’s choice whether or not to disclose a last name or personal information.

Anonymity supports our ultimate goal of focusing on our primary purpose instead of our individual concerns. The principles contained within our traditions encourage us to humbly join together in hope of forwarding the ideals of our fellowship.

Anonymity and confidentiality

We sometimes confuse anonymity with confidentiality—but they are not the same. It’s helpful to remember that when we are sharing in an NA meeting, we are sharing in a public place. There is a good chance that members will identify with what is shared. Generally, there is no reporting of what has been shared in a meeting, even when a member shares about a criminal act. There is, however, no guarantee that what is shared in an NA meeting will stay in that meeting, despite an NA group’s best intent. . Another part of confidentiality has to do with sponsorship. Unlike therapists, psychologists, and counselors, sponsors generally don’t keep written records of what their sponsees share with them. Usually, a sponsor keeps what is shared confidential—but this is not guaranteed. Sponsors are recovering addicts, not paid professionals. Understanding this distinction can help members be more realistic about anonymity and confidentiality in NA.

Anonymity on the Internet

The Internet can often give the illusion that it is not a public sphere. As a result, the role of personal anonymity on the World Wide Web can be a confusing one. Many members, in enthusiastic efforts to carry NA’s message of recovery, have set up personal websites or weblogs. One way a personal site could respect the principle on anonymity would be to state that the site does not represent NA;

it speaks only for the individual. Personal sites can also provide links to a local registered website or to NA.org. Personal websites can further protect members' anonymity by using words like "recovery" instead of specifically stating that they are members of Narcotics Anonymous. Using "recovery" instead of "Narcotics Anonymous" will help the site avoid being recognized by a search engine if someone is looking for an NA meeting or information about Narcotics Anonymous. It can also help members maintain their anonymity in this public medium.

Anonymity with nonaddicts

Tradition Eleven emphasizes that no one personality is more important than another. When our Eleventh Tradition

tells us that "we need always maintain personal anonymity," it does not say that we need to do so under all

circumstances. Tradition Eleven says that "we need always maintain personal anonymity at the level of press, radio, and

films." This public is carefully outlined within our Eleventh Tradition as the press (print and electronic media), radio, and

films. If we are asked to participate in a radio talk show about recovery in NA, for instance, we are strongly encouraged

to seek support from experienced NA members in our service community; discuss, plan, and rehearse our presentation

with committee members; and represent Narcotics Anonymous with another NA member.

Anonymity is not in conflict with making the NA message more available and understood in our communities.

Speaking about NA to a correctional facility to provide H&I information, or presenting the program of NA to a secondary

school to inform an audience about recovery, are positive efforts of our service committees—actions that demonstrate

NA's message of recovery. These examples do not involve the public media, where maintaining personal anonymity is always encouraged. There may be times when nonaddicts can help us protect our anonymity as recovering addicts in the public media. Those outside of NA often have the ability to enter media venues in a manner that can help further our primary purpose. For example, a judge may talk about their positive experience with NA, describing how hundreds of addicts have changed their lives because they started to attend NA meetings, and speaking about the effectiveness of our program of recovery. We are not asking nonaddicts to carry NA's message, we are asking them to speak about our message of recovery. The role of nonmembers is to simply carry information about

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NA. our

A nonaddict professional helps members to retain their personal anonymity with the press and protects any individual NA member from being considered a spokesperson for Narcotics Anonymous. We don't risk our program's credibility as much, since a nonaddict is completely separate from our membership. Members can also maintain the focus of carrying NA's message instead of becoming overwhelmed with representing NA in the media. Nonaddict professionals, like judges, are often inclined to discuss their experiences with our program. It is our responsibility to make sure that these members of the public are well-informed and

that they have had a positive experience with NA.

If an area service committee has decided to use a nonaddict in a public media event, the area needs to responsibly address any possible challenges. One important concern is that an outside nonmember could possibly become associated as “the face of NA.” One way a local service body can ensure that they have been responsible in this type of situation is to make certain that they have clearly defined the nonmember's role in and relationship to NA. Being responsible helps these relationships to be successful.

Each public event and opportunity is unique. The local service body is usually best equipped to make informed decisions about the appropriate use of nonaddicts. Evaluating the nature of the event and the relationship with the nonaddicts involved can help an area decide if including a nonaddict is appropriate for each situation.

The traditions describe a fellowship that takes collective guidance from spiritual principles rather than individual personalities. That kind of selflessness is what the Twelfth Tradition means by the word “anonymity.”

It Works: How and Why

Anonymity and equality

Anonymity gives every addict who attends NA meetings an equal chance at finding recovery. When members live by principles, it doesn't matter how addicts look, where addicts came from, how educated or uneducated they may be, or how much money they have or don't have. If an attractive newcomer begins attending a meeting and the members in the group give that newcomer more attention, then the group members would be treating this newcomer differently. Would these members have behaved the same had the newcomer not been so attractive? Is this attractive newcomer receiving a certain type of attention that might prevent them from hearing the NA message? We try to treat all members equally, so everyone has a chance at finding the freedom our program offers.

In the final analysis, our personal differences make no difference; we are all equal. It's true that we

all come to Narcotics Anonymous with our own personal histories, using patterns, backgrounds,

talents, and shortcomings. But for the purpose of our own recovery, our occupational identity has

no bearing on our ability to care for one another in NA. A college degree, a trust fund, illiteracy, poverty—these circumstances that so powerfully affect so many other areas of our lives will neither help nor hinder our chances at recovery. Likewise, they will not aid or impede our efforts to carry the message, one addict to another.

It Works: How and Why

The only requirement for membership is the desire to stop using.

Tradition Three

Narcotics Anonymous is open to anyone seeking freedom from active addiction and our public relations efforts to support that inclusiveness. Our service efforts need to ensure that everyone is welcome in NA—from the householder

to the convict. As our Basic Text says, our service efforts should strive to reach all addicts “regardless of age, race, sexual identity, creed, religion or lack of religion.” Our Third Tradition also addresses the fact that no one can judge the desire of another addict. Desire is personal, eliminating the need for any standards on a member’s desire to stop using.

Narcotics Anonymous offers recovery to addicts around the world. We focus on the disease of addiction rather than any particular drug. Our message is broad enough to attract addicts from any social class or nationality. When new members come to meetings, our sole interest is in their desire for freedom from active addiction and how we can be of help.

It Works: How and Why

Unity: “Together we can”

NA is more attractive when we are able to demonstrate our unity. Our unity shows when we use our diversity as strength in our meetings and our services. When a group of addicts from different backgrounds and with varying beliefs

serves together, they highlight our unity in a way that is extraordinarily attractive. When thinking about our unity in terms of attracting a variety of using addicts, we can ask ourselves the following questions:

- ❖ How do we demonstrate an atmosphere of recovery in our meetings?
- ❖ Are we open and welcoming to all those who attend our meetings?

❖ In our service committees, are we receptive to members in the fellowship and attractive to the public?

We are the ones who bring to life Narcotics Anonymous' simple message of recovery from addiction—a message that ensures freedom for any addict, from any background or age group, to experience recovery from active addiction.

In our efforts to fulfill the all-encompassing goal of remaining open to and inclusive of all addicts, members may want to take time to identify groups that reside in their local community and that are missing from NA meetings. Addiction crosses all cultural boundaries; the absence at our meetings of individuals from a certain cultural group doesn't mean that no one from that culture suffers from addiction or needs what we have to offer. Asking questions like Who in our community is missing from our meetings? and Who in our community does NA need to reach? will help to focus service efforts where they are needed the most. Having group discussions about the area's goals will help to focus PR efforts.

One approach for attracting potential members to NA is to create service projects specifically designed to reach those potential members. If members live in a community where the largest population is made up of retired citizens or those confined to convalescent homes, members of the area might consider creating a presentation that would show two important realities about NA: that there are older people clean and recovering in NA, and that those members participate in a fellowship with a diverse membership. This could be accomplished by asking some older members in the local area to participate in a presentation with a diverse group of NA members. These steps can illustrate both the diversity and the unity of our fellowship. Our public relations efforts are likely to be more valuable and effective when we take some time to plan the best ways to approach potential members.

Our common welfare should come first; personal recovery depends on NA unity

Tradition One

Unity is the spirit that joins thousands of members around the world in a spiritual fellowship that has the power to change lives.

It Works: How and Why

Our collective service efforts help other addicts find recovery. NA has been growing since the 1950s because of members working together to further NA's primary purpose. Many of us are familiar with the group's power to carry the message of recovery to addicts coming to our meetings, and we use groups of members in service in the same way. We can see our First Tradition at work when members put their individual wants and needs aside for NA's common good. Working together to make NA more visible and viable in our local communities not only helps addicts find our program, it is also a powerful way of practicing the unity described in the First Tradition.

Attraction ...

The attractiveness of the behaviors and attitudes of individual NA members and the collective appearance of our fellowship is essential in making our public relations efforts more valuable. Attraction means that we function (as

members and as groups) in ways that naturally draw others to us. When members act in a way that is attractive, newcomers and potential members are more likely to get a positive impression of NA.

We can also think about attraction as it relates to those—who may not be addicts—who help addicts find NA. Our individual attitudes have an effect on our collective appearance. How do we help professionals become aware of what NA has to offer? We cannot expect nonaddicts to fully understand addiction in the same way we, as addicts, do. What we can do is illustrate the power of recovery within the NA program to those who are not members.

What is likely to be attractive to the public and to professionals who interact with addicts is reliable communication,

responsibility, commitment, and behavior that reflects recovery. We can demonstrate the reliability of NA by showing

up and fulfilling the obligations we make, whether it is to return a telephone call for information about NA or supplying

meeting directories at a public library. We can learn to draw on the experiences of NA members to fulfill the commitments we make to professionals. In the event that something prevents us from our keeping an appointment, we can ask a fellow member to fulfill our commitment for us and notify the person with whom we have the commitment to let them know someone else will be coming in our place. We can also maintain good communication within our committee by staying in contact with the committee chairperson. We need other NA members to be truly successful in building and maintaining relationships with the public. Cooperation and collaboration in our areas and committees can help us provide an attractive message of recovery to the public.

... Rather than promotion

When thinking about the difference between promotion and attraction, it may be helpful to think about the difference between informing the public about NA and insisting that NA is better than any other recovery program. The

essay on the Eleventh Tradition in It Works: How and Why describes promotion as “fanfare, overblown claims, [and] celebrity endorsements.” Informing the public that we are a credible program of recovery is a principled action, whereas comparing NA to other programs or approaches, offering recovery incentives, or making claims about our effectiveness can all be considered promotion. The only promise we make is the opportunity for addicts to experience freedom from active addiction; guaranteeing any other outcome is promotion.

Promoting Narcotics Anonymous doesn’t need to be an option for us because the program speaks for itself when we humbly and honestly share how NA is working in our lives. Consistently providing services to the community and to professionals, letting the public know about NA and what the NA program has to offer is a way for our service efforts to make our program more attractive to the public and to potential members.

As outlined in the essay on Tradition Eight in It Works: How and Why, we perform our service work energetically, and we seek to carry the message of recovery throughout our cities, towns, and villages. We take vigorous steps to attract still-suffering addicts to our program. We have faith in the effectiveness of our fellowship. We know that NA works because we have experienced it working in our own lives. We know that any addict seeking recovery in NA can find the same freedom we have found.

Self-support

Our first experience with the Seventh Tradition may be when the basket is passed at the meetings we attend. Our
contribution in a meeting may have been the first time we experienced feelings of responsibility and a growing sense of
belonging to something bigger than ourselves. Yet, a broader definition of NA's principle of being fully self-supporting
means that our organization is sustained by our own energy through member donations and service efforts. We don't
solicit for financial contributions from the public. When we practice the Seventh Tradition, the spirit of self-support

encourages responsible actions, anonymity, and integrity in our relationships with the public.

Self-support and public service announcements

We are a not-for-profit organization; therefore, we are often offered charitable rates on things like group meeting- space rentals or public service advertisements, such as radio spots or public transit placements. We may fear that when we aren't charged for a thirty-second spot on a radio program or for an informational NA poster in a train station, we are not being self-supporting. Public service announcements are often available to charitable organizations. In these situations, the media is providing the public with a service through these announcements. Public service announcements do not compromise or jeopardize our principle of self-support. These are opportunities that the public creates for community service organizations. What we offer the still-suffering addict in NA has a benefit to society. Accepting charitable rates and discounts that are offered to other similar community service

organizations is in keeping with the principle of self-support.

In fact, this example of public service announcements can be an opportunity for us to build a cooperative relationship with members of the public in our community. This offering of services to charitable organizations is a way that public organizations and businesses enter into cooperative relationships within the community. By combining our efforts with these organizations and taking a team approach, we demonstrate our ability to cooperate. We are not attaching ourselves or affiliating ourselves with these organizations. Rather, we can enter these relationships based on the spirit of cooperation.

Self-support and nonaddicts

Just as we are permitted to accept free public service announcements and discounted rates for meeting space, we may accept help from nonaddicts. This volunteering of services by nonaddicts may be considered a typical part of their community service. For example, a healthcare professional may offer to volunteer time to NA by sitting in on an inventory session to discuss challenges both parties are facing in finding ways for addicts to easily reach NA. In this example, there is a distinction between services that are normally billable (such as a nonaddict accountant offering to manage a local committee's bank records) and a relationship that benefits both NA and the outside party. When both parties are benefiting from the cooperative interaction, and are closer to reaching their mutual goals, then both parties involved equally support the relationship. NA is not being given any special treatment by accepting this volunteer service from a non-member. Instead, NA is merely one of many not-for-profit organizations that can obtain a volunteer's time. When considering using a nonaddict volunteer, local NA communities can ask themselves the following questions: Will accepting this service give the person or organization undue influence over NA? Will accepting this service make us reliant on this person or organization? Undue influence can also be avoided by asking if the service being offered benefits both NA and the outside party.

In understanding the principle underlying the Seventh Tradition, practical simplicity walks hand-in-hand with our faith in a Higher Power. So long as we take direction from that Power, our needs our met. Likewise, the decision to decline outside contributions, meeting the group's need from the group's own resources, is based firmly in faith.

It Works: How and Why

Self-support and cooperation

Our experience has shown that as the public gains more knowledge about NA, they become more inclined to offer their support. Often this support is expressed through referring clients, family, or friends to the NA program. They refer

people to us because they support our organization's mission. This type of rapport builds relationships with the public founded on trust and goodwill.

Often, we will find that the question we need to ask ourselves is if we are doing all we can do in the relationships we have formed with those outside of NA. It would be good if professional and community organizations that want to help addicts get clean feel that NA is available, willing, accessible, and helpful. Self-support means more than just carrying our own financial weight—it means that we fulfill our responsibility to provide information about our program and engage in meaningful relationships with others who have similar goals.

Another way that those outside of NA may lend their support is through helping us reach suffering addicts. Sometimes professionals help carry information about NA's message of recovery because they know that the NA program of recovery is credible.

There are people outside of NA who help start recovery meetings in homeless shelters; there are professionals who help make recovery literature available to incarcerated addicts. Those outside of NA who share with others what they have seen working in the lives of addicts are a testimony to the power of recovery that our program offers. There are many ways to ensure that the NA message

continues to reach addicts, and sometimes advocates outside of NA help further our primary

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purpose.

There are limits to the amount and kinds of support we can accept from the public. There have been times when family or friends of NA members have been so overwhelmed with gratitude for the recovery of their loved one that they have offered financial support to NA. We understand this, and we appreciate their good intentions. But we don't accept financial contributions from nonmembers, even from

the grateful members of an addict's family. We put ourselves at risk of compromising the autonomy of NA and the spirit of the Seventh Tradition when we accept monetary contributions.

There are, however, many other ways in which nonaddicts can help us fulfill our primary purpose. We can encourage them to buy NA literature and donate it to detoxification centers, treatment centers, or correctional institutions. We can encourage them to volunteer at community agencies that serve addicts. And we can encourage them to help addicts they know by purchasing NA literature for them. These are all ways in which we can encourage our supporters to act on their compassion without compromising the spirit of our Seventh Tradition.

Cooperation, not affiliation

Cooperating means that we work together; it means that we associate with one another in actions that benefit all those involved. When we cooperate, we willingly help someone who requests our assistance. In NA, this may mean supporting a struggling committee from another area when they ask for help with our ideas and our time. We are here to support one another. When we work with each other and with our communities, we are able to take positive steps that help make our message more available.

How can we work with the public and other organizations without merging or affiliating with them? One of the ways

in which we practice cooperation is by remembering that NA members are responsible for observing the principles of

our traditions. Facilities and other organizations do not have this responsibility. We can practice this responsibility by	
following our own principles, relying on our service committees, and studying NA's traditions and concepts.	
<i>We are more likely to form productive and cooperative relationships when we simply and honestly review what</i>	
<i>services we can and cannot offer to others.</i> For example, if we are forming a relationship with a treatment or	
correctional facility, we ask about their expectations of NA. Maybe they have requested weekly meetings and, after an	
honest assessment, we decide that we cannot meet their request. Instead, we can offer a meeting on a monthly basis. In	
this manner, we create a relationship that we can responsibly sustain over time. We practice cooperation by being	
honest about what we are able to provide, and we still find a way to respond to requests.	As a result, public
organizations learn to trust our members and rely on our program as a credible community resource.	

Another aspect of cooperation is when organizations outside of NA want to research the effectiveness of our program. NA members may decide to cooperate in outside research projects. If this is the case, there are some points to consider. First is that healthcare professionals rely on independent, objective data about effective treatment outcomes to make decisions about their patients' recovery options. When information about NA is missing from the databases relied upon by professionals, it is a stumbling block for referrals. Research has the potential to open doors for addicts, but NA has no control over what kind of data is collected or how it is used. We have much to learn about cooperating with outside research, and we don't have much experience to draw on. We can remain open to gaining more experience and to learning how to cooperate with those who conduct research.

On a rare occasion, an area or region could decide to conduct its own internal research of the NA program in its locale. Although members are free to participate in research, this is something an area can discuss. A service body can decide to provide a forum for members to discuss this issue if they are feeling uncertain about research that is occurring in their community. Members are more likely to stay informed and aware about research of NA if local NA communities provide the opportunity for open discussion.

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.

Tradition Six Narcotics Anonymous has no opinion on outside issues; hence, the NA name ought never be drawn into public controversy.

Tradition Ten

A big part of our credibility comes from the fact that we maintain our single focus of recovery from addiction. We be seen as credible, and we can be present in an organization's decision making, but the only way we can be drawn into

public controversy is if we offer an opinion on an issue outside the scope of our own program. If a facility wants us to endorse or lend our name to its program, or an organization requests our support on a piece of legislation, we refrain. If we become involved in an outside organization's decision-making process, such as sitting on a board for a nonprofit agency as a representative of NA, we offer no opinion on the organization's business practices. We do not take sides on an outside issue, and we do not put NA at risk or compromise the clarity of our message. If we took one side or another on a legal issue or a medical practice, we would undermine our credibility and our primary purpose. We work to avoid being identified as taking any side or giving an opinion in a controversy. We stay focused only on how we can help those suffering from addiction. This focus allows us to build relationships where our role is clear and free of controversy.

Our experience has shown that we have many nonaddict friends who can advocate for NA. If a professional wants to support NA by sharing about the effectiveness of our program, they are free to do that. What we can do is try to ensure that the nonmember's enthusiasm for our program doesn't misrepresent the addict-to-addict nature of our program. NA is not a program where professionals treat addicts, although professionals often want to advocate for NA's viability because they have seen recovery working for their clients or loved ones. The role of the local service body in a situation like this is crucial. The NA community can provide training and establish accountability with the nonmember supporter; this way the nonmember supporter can become an asset to NA in fulfilling its primary purpose.

One of our public relations goals is to build long-lasting relationships that further our primary purpose through the

pursuit of those mutual goals we may share with other organizations. Compromising any of our traditions in an effort to

build these relationships is never beneficial to individual members or NA as a whole. We maintain a consistent focus on

our primary purpose with the public. By creating positive relationships with those outside of NA and with our own

members, we foster unity and harmony with each other and the community around us. We put the common welfare of

NA first, and we remember that we are only autonomous as long as our actions do not affect NA as a whole.

Personal responsibility as a member

Our personal interactions with the public have the potential to affect the way members of the public view NA as a

whole. As recovering addicts, we interact with the public in our daily lives. And we are often faced with public relations

opportunities when we least expect it. We may have decided to share our recovery with our doctor. Although we hadn't

expected an NA service opportunity, it may dawn on us that the PI committee could target other local doctors in our

community. We could bring this information to our local service committee and discuss how to proceed with this

contact. A situation like this demonstrates how members can take responsibility to follow up with the local service

committee on an unexpected public relations opportunity.

The accountability of our service committees

Our entire service structure is based on the spiritual principle of accountability. We go to the appropriate service body to seek direction for our public relations efforts. Service bodies, which were created by groups to provide services on their behalf, maintain accountability through their collective conscience and communication with NA groups. There should be no such thing as an unaccountable service body.

We can further foster accountability by working with others in service. We can perform these services in a way that gives a Higher Power an opportunity to work through our group conscience. Local committees can work together, through the process of a group conscience, to create opportunities for a Higher Power to influence services. By working with the area committee, we are less likely to let our personal agendas be the driving force of our service efforts.

There are responsibilities that accompany the principle of accountability. These responsibilities apply to all parties engaged in an accountable relationship. A committee has responsibilities to fulfill to the area service committee, and the area committee has a responsibility to its committee. For instance, if a convention committee is accountable to a regional service committee that means that the regional committee has agreed to take on certain responsibilities for that committee. If the committee encounters challenges such as financial crises or problems with NA's

public image during an event, the service body needs to take constructive steps to help the convention committee. It is helpful for service bodies like areas or regions to understand and accept this responsibility before creating subcommittees. This understanding can encourage regions and areas to be proactive in their role with committees that are accountable to them. Requesting financial budgets and asking questions of committees encourages accountability and can help avoid larger problems in the future. Remaining within budget guidelines and maintaining accurate financial records may save an NA community the embarrassment of having to contact an accountant, a lawyer, or even the police. Accountability may also save us from having to cancel other services because we have overspent our budget.

Delegation is another aspect of providing accountable and responsible services. Just as groups have delegated

responsibilities to service committees, those service committees can delegate appropriate responsibilities to members.

When we delegate responsibility, we expect members or committees to be accountable and keep the larger service

committee abreast of their activities. At the same time, the larger service body practices trust by not micromanaging or trying to control the responsibilities they have delegated to another body or another member. It may be in the best interest of a public relationship to have the point person who is in contact with the public remain in that position even after their term is up. This could be beneficial both to NA and to the public organization. The area will be best

suited to make this decision based on their needs.

Sometimes we fear that delegation will mean a loss of control over our services. Together, Concepts One, Two, and Three have been designed to help us maintain responsibility for our service structure without tying our trusted servants' hands.

Twelve Concepts for NA Service

“Forever nonprofessional”

During a public presentation, we remember that we are simply trusted servants helping to carry the message of recovery. What does remaining nonprofessional mean in NA's public relations efforts? In NA it is defined as the equality

we share. As members, we have an equal place within the fellowship and are equally valued in our efforts to carry the NA message. The principle of remaining nonprofessional also supports the groups' integrity—we are working in service of the group.

Most members may be able to provide information about NA to the public. However, we can also utilize the special skills and talents of certain members. Some of the members in our service community may have public-speaking skills or experience that better fits a particular audience. For example, a member who is also a doctor might better understand the philosophies and vocabulary of the medical community. Forming a panel of members with particular skills and talents, along with other members from various backgrounds, illustrates the range of membership in NA. Using a

member's skills in our service efforts adds to how effectively we can communicate information about NA to the public.

Communication

Our service structure depends on the integrity and effectiveness of our communications.

Concept Eight

Communication is a two-way street. We strive to be effective, honest, open, consistent, and straightforward in our communications. We keep channels of communication open with those we are trying to reach in the public sphere. Communication is not just feedback.

It is listening, accepting constructive criticism, and asking questions. Communication is verbal and nonverbal, written and oral, and it affects all of our public relationships. Good communication means listening to a member of the public after we have had an initial interaction. It is the quality of our correspondences and our awareness of various cultural environments.

	Above all, our communications are strengthened when we demonstrate integrity, trustworthiness, consistency, and
	accountability. The principle of integrity applies to all of our service efforts. In our communications, integrity means we
	present information in a clear and honest way, even in very challenging situations. Trust creates unity in our service
	committees and confidence in the public. Trust is built when we are accountable for what we say and do. It is our
	behaviors and actions that communicate most clearly to those around us. Our integrity is expressed when we strive to
	practice NA's principles in all of our affairs; it is demonstrated in all that we do, and all that we don't do. We need to

remember that we communicate when we take no action. Communication is more than the words that come out of our mouths. Communication is listening, following up, and responding; it is how we carry ourselves through our service work and into the public.

Communication can be considered the foundation of all the principles that support our public relations efforts. As

we begin dialogues with each other about how to bring the principles of our program into our services and daily affairs,

our public relations efforts have already begun. The image we present to the public begins long before we contact an

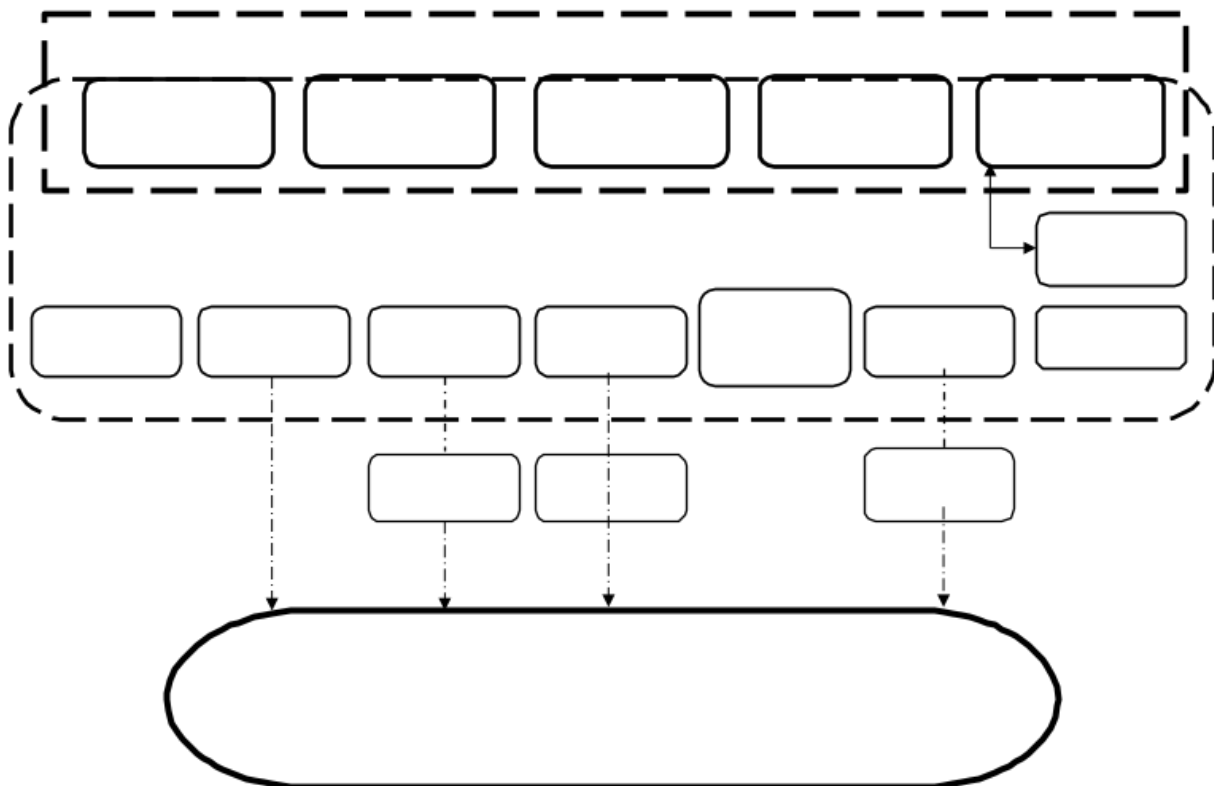
organization to make a presentation about Narcotics Anonymous. Often, the first impression of NA is made when a member of the public sees us standing outside a meeting facility. NA's image is affected by the ways individual members live their lives.

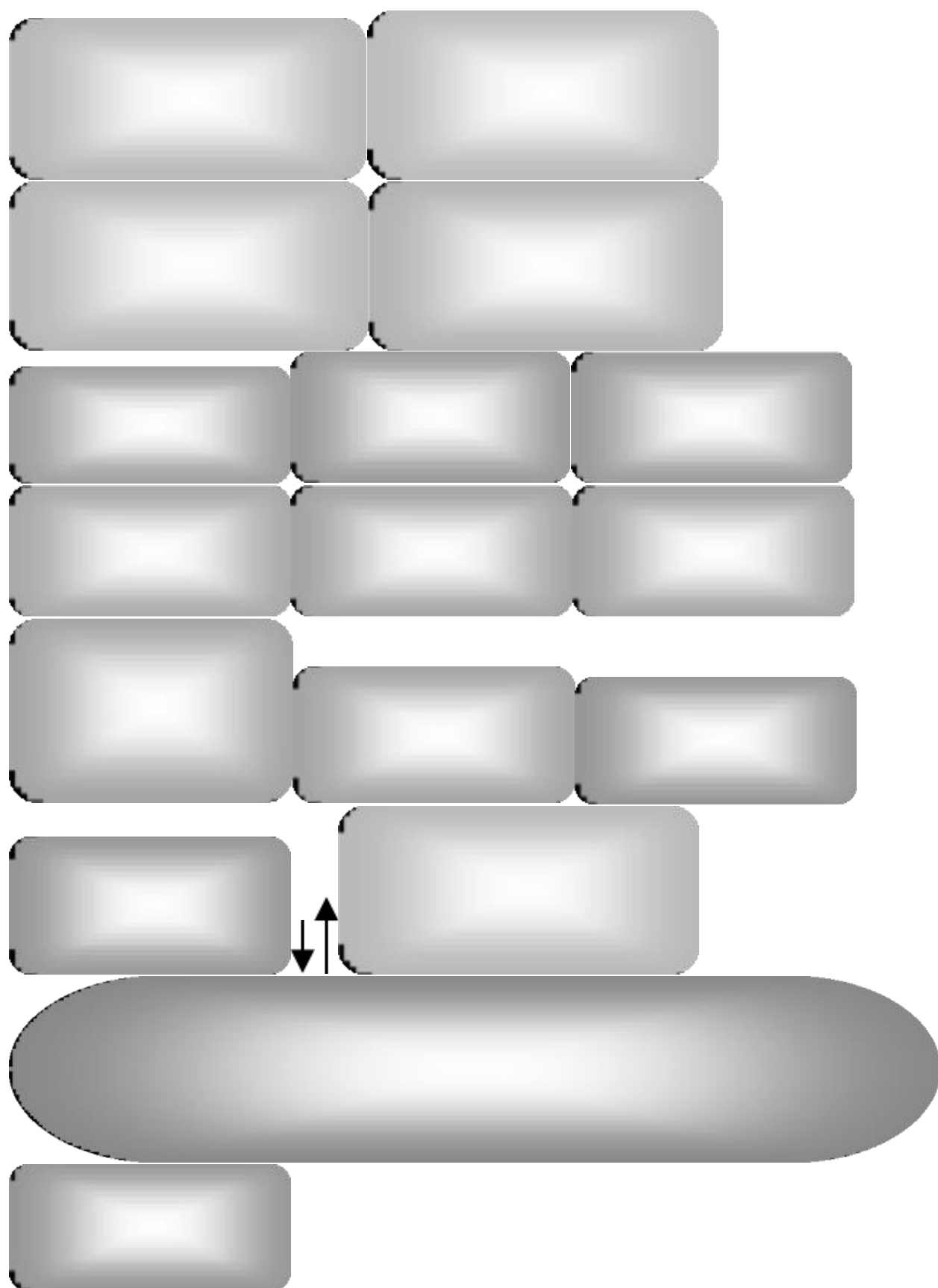
Taking a moment to reflect on the underlying principles of our program and how our actions can demonstrate those principles will provide our service efforts with a strong foundation. We can begin by opening our minds and initiating a dialogue with members in our areas. Working with a group of addicts to carry NA's message can be an incredibly rewarding and meaningful experience. When we come together and do the right thing for the right reason, we often begin to feel a growing sense of our own purpose and the purpose of NA as a whole.

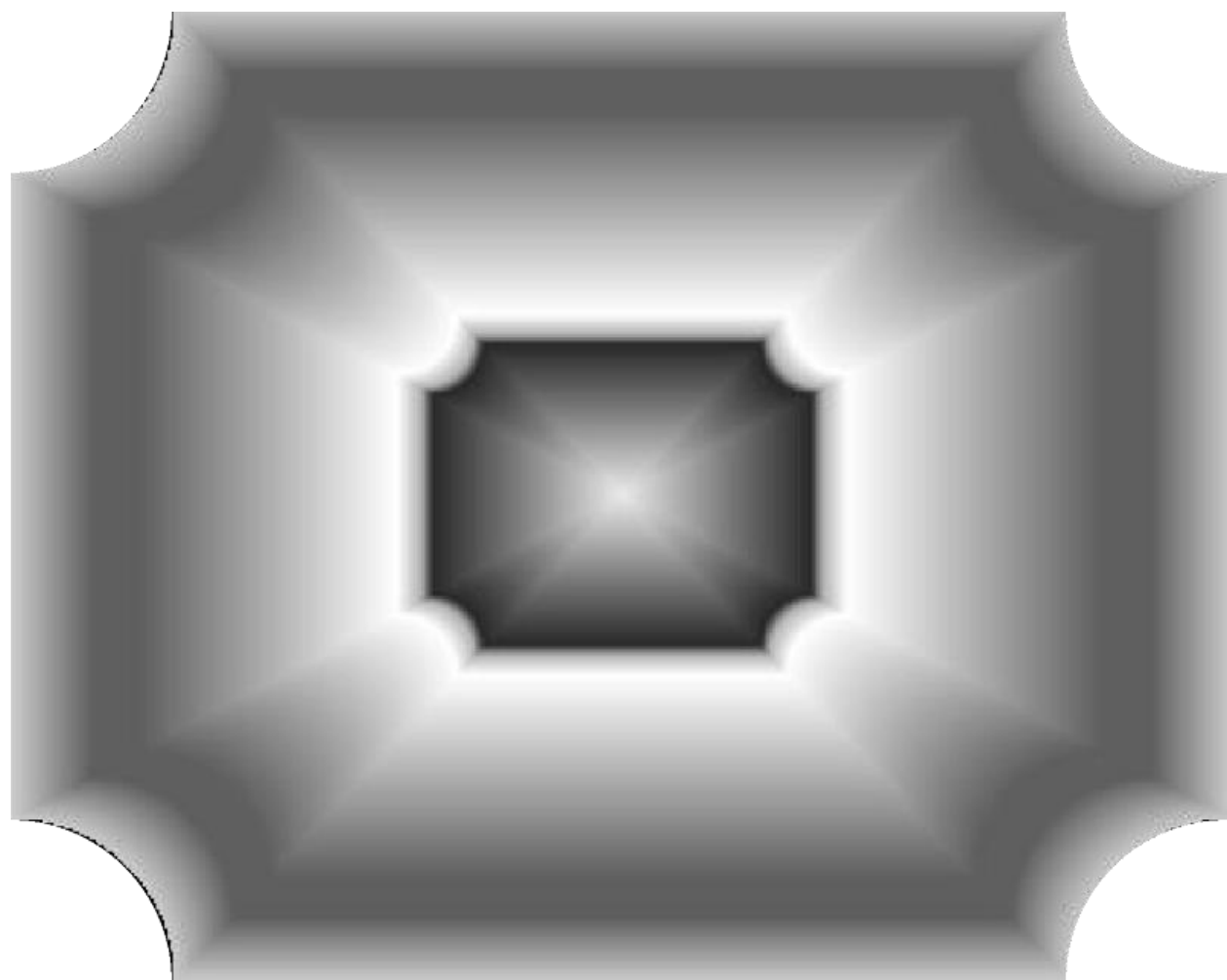
***Edmonton & Area
Public Relations
Subcommittee***

Structure

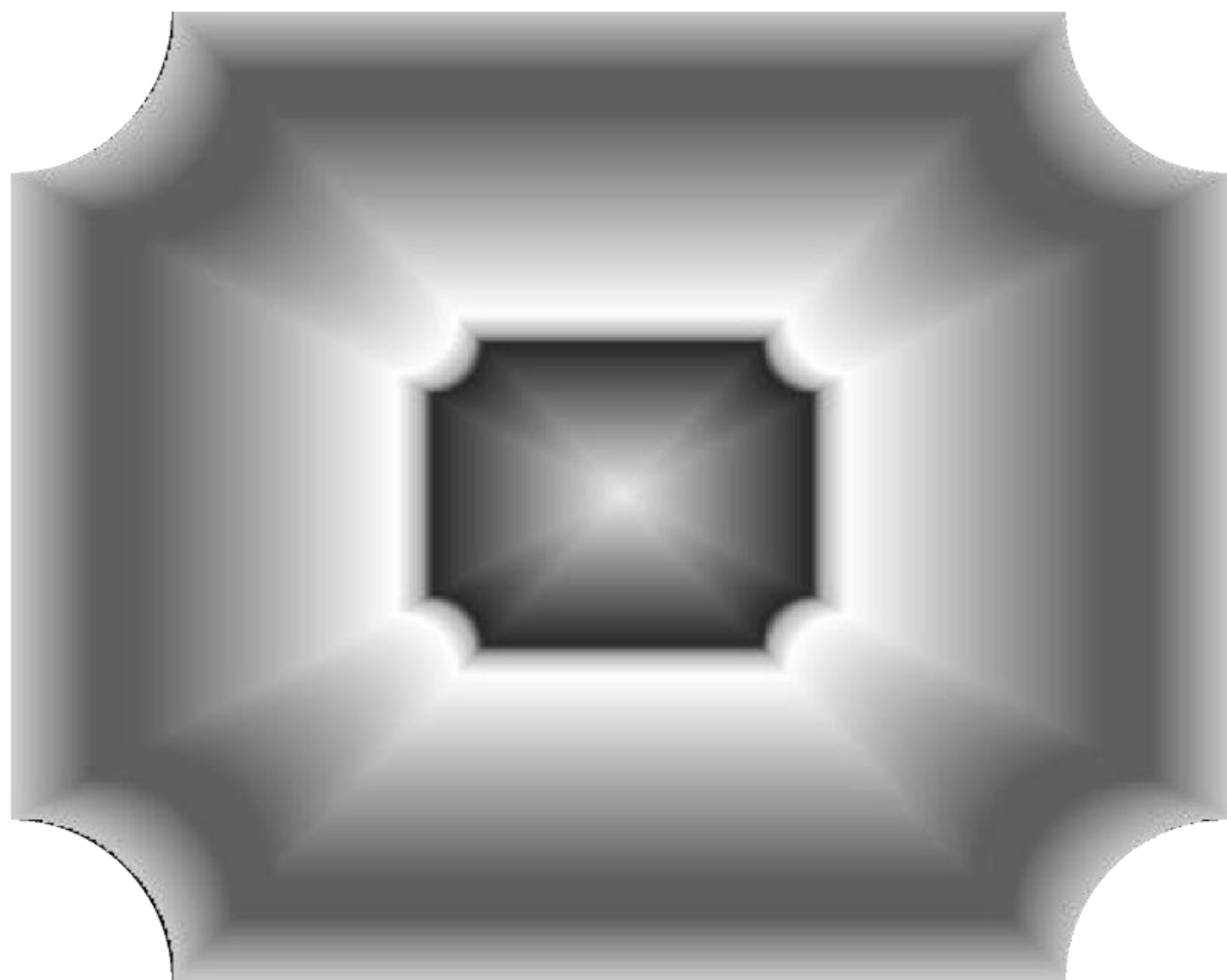
Subcommittee Officers

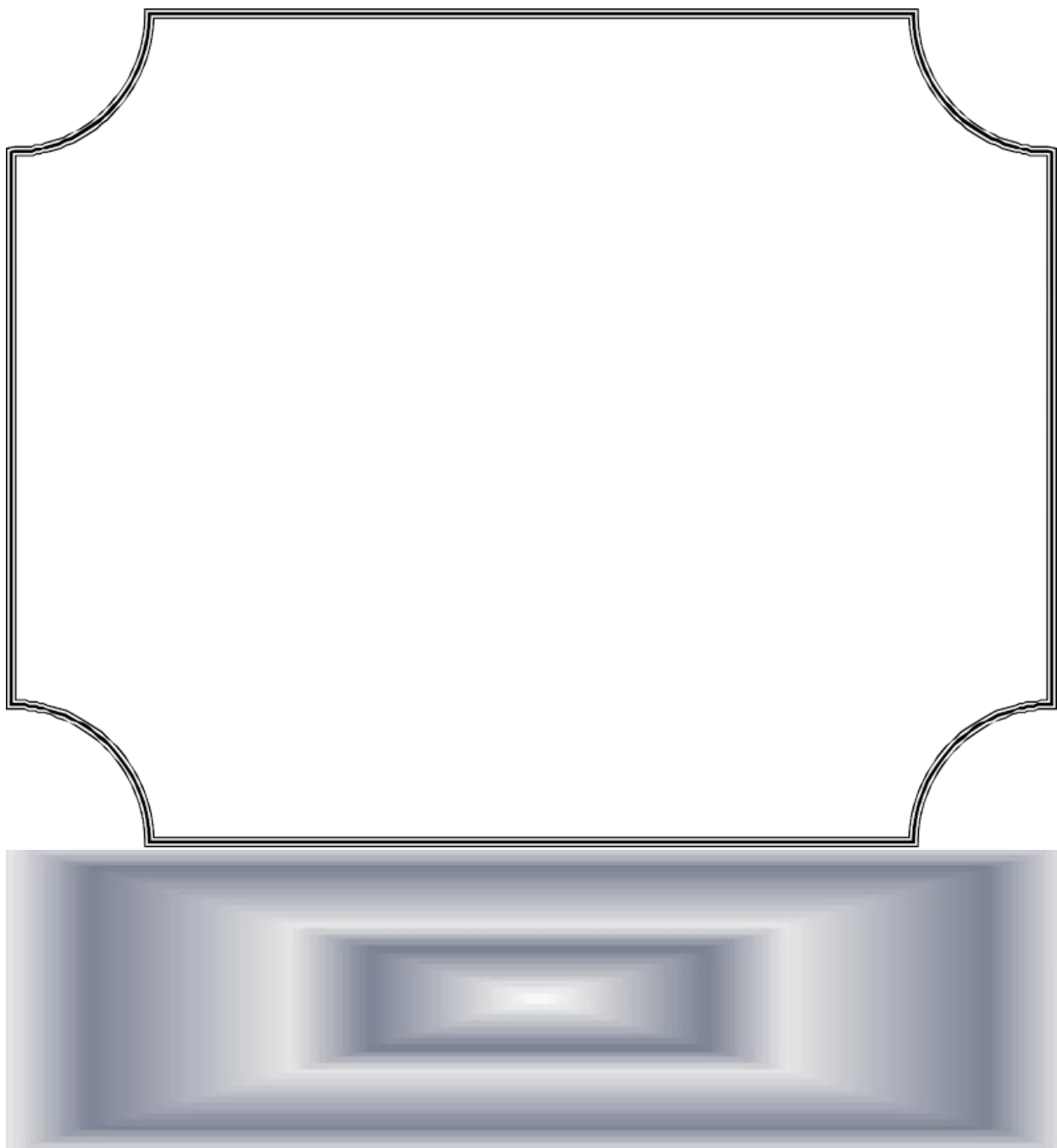














PUBLIC RELATIONS CHAIR

PUBLIC RELATIONS VICE-CHAIR

PUBLIC RELATIONS SECRETARY

PUBLIC RELATIONS TREASURER

PUBLIC RELATIONS LITERATURE

Newsletter Coordinator

Phoneline Coordinator

Outreach Coordinator

Subcommittee Admin

PI

Coordinator

Workshop/ Orientation Coordinators

H & I Coordinator

Schedules Coordinator

Web Coordinator

Outreach Focal

PI Project Leaders

H & I Panel Leaders

RESOURCE POOL

H & I PANEL MEMBERS, PHONELINE CARRIERS, 12 STEP VOLUNTEERS, PI PANEL MEMBERS & OUTREACH PARTICIPANTS



Hospitals and Institutions Service and the NA Member

Many Narcotics Anonymous members have found Hospitals and Institutions service to be an important part of their personal recovery. Our members, who actively participate in H&I service, are very important resources in our fellowship. A commitment to H&I service is one of the many ways to become involved with the NA service structure and help us feel a part of our fellowship.

We know that active addiction leads to jails, institutions, and death. Also, NA's primary purpose is to carry the message of recovery to the addict who still suffers. It is not surprising that carrying the NA message of recovery into hospitals and institutions is one of our priorities.

NA members have consistently supported this belief by forming Hospitals and Institutions (H&I) committees around the world.

Still, some NA members have been reluctant to become involved in H&I service because they have never been incarcerated, arrested, or institutionalized. With our personal experience and proper preparation, all of us are uniquely qualified to carry our message of recovery.

This pamphlet is intended to be a brief introduction to Narcotics Anonymous H&I service, and to encourage more members to avail themselves of this opportunity to serve.

Why Do I Get Involved?

Hospitals and institutions service offers addicts an opportunity to demonstrate gratitude, fulfill responsibility, and share the NA message without expectations. It is also an effective tool that helps us stay clean, and keeps us coming back. The H&I message is the same as the NA message: *"That an addict, any addict, can stop using drugs, lose the desire to use, and find a new way to live."* The gift we share is hope and freedom from active addiction through the program of Narcotics Anonymous. Any NA member who wants to carry this message is encouraged to get involved with H&I service. There are many ways to serve in Narcotics Anonymous, and many of us have found H&I service to be the most rewarding aspect of our recovery. We hope that this pamphlet will encourage you to get involved with H&I service and

experience these rewards for yourself!

Basic Text, p. 65

Basic Hospitals & Institutions Guide.

Why is an H&I Meeting/Presentation Needed
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The purpose of an H&I meeting is to carry the NA message of recovery to addicts who do not have full access to regular Narcotics Anonymous meetings. H&I meetings/presentations, except for those in longer term facilities, are intended to simply introduce those attending to some of the basics of the NA program.

H&I and Public Information Cooperation

Generally, a PI activity is geared to people outside our fellowship and includes people who come in contact with addicts and can help addicts to find NA. If a PI subcommittee doesn't exist in an area or region, H&I subcommittees may take on many of the responsibilities generally taken on by PI subcommittees.

Meeting / Presentation Format

The format of any particular H&I meeting/presentation may vary from meeting to meeting depending on the type of facility. In short term facilities, the format will be more focused on the panel members carrying a message in to the residents, while at a long term facility we may encourage more participation from the residents. **Whatever format is chosen, we normally get the residents involved with a question and answer session at some point in the meeting/presentation.**

Who is Best Suited to Carry the NA Message in an H&I Meeting

In our experience, it is best for members to have three months clean before attending an H&I meeting, and six months clean before speaking at one. It is not important whether or not we have been in a similar facility ourselves. Anyone with a clear and consistent Narcotics Anonymous message who is willing to share is well suited for H&I work.

H&I Meetings/Presentations where no Area Service Committee or H&I Subcommittee Exists

As Narcotics Anonymous grows, meetings are starting up more and more frequently in smaller communities and rural areas. Often because of their geographical location, or because of the limited development of an NA service structure in an area or region, formation of and participation in an ASC and its H&I subcommittee is not yet possible or practical. Yet once an H&I meeting/presentation is started, the news seems to spread very quickly. Facilities may seek out local members and request an NA meeting. Usually, these original members in an area are very committed and try to say “yes” to all requests, so H&I meetings are started. These commitments are many times taken on by one or a few dedicated members who mean well, but usually discover that the demands of supporting one or more H&I meetings, week in and week out, can quickly lead to burn-out. It is possible to do H&I work in such circumstances, but be sure to use some common sense. Here are some tips:

- Never take on an H&I commitment alone. In the absence of an area H&I subcommittee, any H&I work has to be the effort of one or more groups. Remember, I can't--we can. The H&I member working alone may end up doing more harm than good in the long run.
- Make sure the group is ready for the responsibility. Don't be afraid to say "no, we're just not able to support a meeting in your facility at this time." Don't take on additional commitments until you are ready.
- Get other groups involved whenever possible, perhaps alternating weeks or months. Reach out. There is the possibility that some member from neighboring areas or the region would be able to come and help occasionally.
- If you find that you have over-committed yourselves, go to the facility and let them know that you need to discontinue the meeting for a while. They will respect you more for letting them know face to face than if you just stop showing up.
- Always keep an awareness that H&I work is best done by area H&I subcommittees using the panel

system.

Orientation

PANEL MEMBER ORIENTATION PACKAGE

EDMONTON & AREA HOSPITALS & INSTITUTIONS

H&I orientation is a period that allows NA members to become familiar with H&I work so they aren't rushed into it without any preparation for this service. Many people are quite apprehensive about getting into H&I for a variety of reasons. Don't be put off, everyone has something to offer.

This packet has been compiled by the Edmonton Area H&I coordinators to give a brief outline of some of the specifics that will be important for you as a panel member. The H&I Handbook gives a much more in-depth look at H&I work in Narcotics Anonymous if you decide you want to learn more about this rewarding type of service.

Many areas as a part of orientation bring those that are new to H&I, to their first H&I meeting/presentation or two as an observer. This will give you a chance to just listen at first and see

how an H&I meeting/presentation really works. Also this helps many feel more comfortable when they come join the panel.

The Meeting/Presentation Format

There are a variety of formats that we use when carrying the message into facilities, but there are some key points to keep in mind about all of them.

The format of any particular H&I meeting/presentation may vary from meeting to meeting depending on the type of facility. In short-term facilities, the format will be more focused on the panel members carrying a message in to the residents, while at a long-term facility we may encourage more participation from the residents. In H&I we are carrying the message into the facility. At an H&I meeting we are not there to dump our problems, but rather to help these addicts become aware of what NA is and how it works in our lives. In effect, an H&I meeting is an introduction to our fellowship for addicts.

The panel leader should let you know what the format is before the meeting/ presentation and should be able to answer any questions you may have about it. If you would like to see samples of a variety of formats, there is an explanation of several of them in the H&I Handbook.

Whatever format is chosen, we normally get the residents involved with a question and answer session at some point in the meeting/presentation. Also, you may be asked to stay after the meeting for a while to talk with the residents if that is allowed.

Personal Commitments

Please **DO NOT** volunteer for an H&I meeting/presentation if:

1. You are not sure that you want to attend, or
2. You are not sure you will be able to attend the meeting. If something comes up and you will be unable to make it, try to give the panel leader at least forty-eight hours' notice so that he/she can invite someone to fill your spot. **DO NOT** ask someone to take your place or even to come along with you to the meeting. The panel leader is the only one that is allowed to invite people to the meeting.

Questions and Answers

This a good idea to encourage questions concerning what was presented at the meeting or other general questions about NA, but there are a few things you should keep in mind. Please remember that NA has no opinion on outside issues. Occasionally during the question and answer period or when talking after the meeting/presentation, the residents will ask us to give an opinion on outside issues such as:

1. Other recovery programs or fellowships.
2. The facility, i.e., "Do I need to stay in treatment?"
3. Many other issues that do not pertain to recovery from addiction in the Narcotics Anonymous Fellowship.

It is very important that we are not drawn into these types of discussions! Always remember to only share your experience, strength, and hope about YOUR recovery in Narcotics Anonymous.

Working with Others: Men with Men, Women with Women

Some facilities house only men or only women. Other facilities house both men and women, but keep them separate. In these facilities, where your meetings/ presentations will consist of only men or only women, we feel strongly that only same-sex Narcotics Anonymous members should participate. Remember, our primary purpose is to carry the message of recovery, not to make our meetings more popular with the addicts we are trying to help. Problems that arise in this area have the potential to seriously damage the credibility of Narcotics Anonymous. Experience has taught us that we can avoid these problems if we follow this simple guideline.

Adolescents

When adolescents are referred to in this handbook, we are referring to anyone under the legal age of majority in your state or country. We need to remember that adolescents are prospective members and should be treated with respect. When sharing in an H&I meeting/presentation, we need to remember that to an adolescent, the stress experienced due to peer pressure or the relationship with their parents and/or teacher may be just as much a crisis to them as losing a job, marriage, or house may be to others. In NA, we learn to deal with our feelings and emotions, and share with others how we have been able to work through them by utilizing the Twelve Steps of Narcotics Anonymous.

Due to the governmental statutes regarding adolescents, we need to be especially aware of facilities' rules and regulations as they relate to our interaction with these prospective members. For example, some facilities may require a staff member to be present during meetings/presentations. One suggestion we may make to administrators of facilities for adolescents is that they make attendance at the H&I meeting voluntary. We have found this reduces distraction, increasing the opportunity for recovery in the Narcotics Anonymous Fellowship.

While some people maintain that adolescents respond better to people closer to their own age, the bulk of our experience suggests that the age of the person sharing at an adolescent H&I meeting is secondary to their ability to share a strong, clear message of recovery. Adolescents seem to respond more to the message than to the messenger. All H&I meetings are highly structured and should be geared towards recovery through the Twelve Steps of Narcotics Anonymous. Our experience has shown that we do not need to use a special format when carrying the message to adolescents.

In addition to the do's and don'ts found at the end of this package, we feel that the following should be included.

Do's

Do Remember that this is a "we" program. No addict should feel that he/ she is being preached to. Do Remember that an addict is an addict, regardless of age.

Do Tell them that there is fun in recovery, i.e., social events, fellowship, etc. Do Acknowledge and validate their feelings and emotions.

Don'ts

Don't Glorify your past.

Don't Say, "I feel like I'm talking to my kids." Don't Compare your bottom to theirs.

Don't Patronize adolescents. Don't Use profanity.

H&I Requirements

You have been invited to carry the message of recovery through H&I meetings/ presentations because: 1. You have at least six months abstinence from all drugs.

2. You have a strong NA message of recovery from addiction.

3. You seem willing to comply with all of the H&I subcommittee's and the facility's requirements. 4. You are willing to carry the message in a responsible way.

Do's and Don'ts for H&I Participation

Do's

Do Make directories of outside meetings available to residents. Do Clarify the facility's rules with anyone you bring in.

Do Start and end on time!

Do Briefly explain what H&I is.

Do Make it clear that NA is separate and distinct from the facility as well as other fellowships.

Do Try to get residents involved, especially those in long-term facilities (i.e., literature person, coffee maker, readings, etc.)

Do Obey all dress codes. Exercise common sense and dress appropriately. Do Keep staff aware of your whereabouts at all times.

Do Stamp all literature you bring into a facility with the local helpline number.

Do Screen all panel members carefully, especially regarding the clean time or other requirements.

Don'ts

Don't Break another person's anonymity, or tell his or her story. Don't Debate any issues involving facility rules or regulations.

Don't Get involved in discussions on outside issues; remember why we are there. Don't While sharing, put too much focus on what it was like. They already know.

Don't Debate which drugs are acceptable. NA is a program of complete abstinence from all drugs. Don't Discuss conditions within the facility, or opinions about staff members.

Don't Carry excessive cash, or wear expensive or flashy jewelry. Don't Show favoritism to any resident(s).

Don't Take messages in or out of the facility.

Don't Give out any other person's address or phone number.

Don't Carry in any contraband items, such as cigarettes (if applicable) or weapons.

Remember at all times that you have a responsibility to the facility, to the residents, and to NA. If you observe the above suggestions, and follow the Twelve Traditions, you will uphold your responsibilities to all three.

OUTLINE FOR SHARING PERSONAL EXPERIENCE

1) How were you introduced to N.A.

2) Describe your surrender

- *What were your first meetings like?*
- *What was your early recovery like?*

3) Share your experience getting a sponsor.

4) Share your experience working the steps.

5) Any other significant recovery or service experience you'd like to share.

6) Suggestions for newcomers. (*the basics*)

RESOURCE FOR TREATMENT

FREQUENTLY AS K E D QUESTIONS TREATMENT

These questions and responses may help a volunteer when presenting to treatment clients and/or potential addicts. Discussing these questions and answers before an event can help committee members provide reliable and consistent information about Narcotics Anonymous. When preparing for such an event, be mindful that short answers seem to work best. Clear and concise answers help give the audience the information they desire, and trusted servants are better able to maintain a focus on sharing pertinent information. Responding directly to questions asked also helps members avoid venturing off into personal opinions. Pointing to recovery literature, or even holding it in your hand for the audience to see, is often better than directly quoting our literature for responses to questions posed by an audience. Additionally, if NA specific language such as "home group" is used, please explain the meaning for the audience.

Does NA consider alcohol to be a drug?

Yes. A statement to that effect is part of our fellowship-approved literature, [refer audience members to the White Booklet] and is read at most meetings.

What is the difference between AA and NA?

AA helped start NA in 1953 by giving NA's founding members permission to adapt their traditions and steps. The primary difference between the two programs is that AA's focus is alcohol and alcoholism, whereas NA's focus is recovery from addiction. In NA, we believe that the use of drugs, including alcohol, is but a symptom of the disease of addiction.

Is help only available for narcotics addicts?

No. NA's focus is not on a particular class of substances, but is on recovery from the disease of addiction. It is possible that when NA first started, the majority of our members used heroin. It is also worth noting that when NA was founded, drugs such as marijuana were referred to as "narcotics" in the United States. Today, as indicated in our *Membership Survey*, our members use a variety of drugs, including alcohol. Interestingly, 89% of those surveyed list alcohol as one of the drugs used on a regular basis. This survey also provides information about employment status, occupation, gender, and age.

Is NA a religious program?

No. The NA program is based on a set of spiritual principles that are not associated with a particular religion. Although our steps call for finding and believing in a "power greater than oneself," this is a personal decision for each and every member to make. Members choose their own "power greater than themselves." Members' beliefs range from nature to organized religion, from no belief that a power exists, to belief in the power of inanimate objects such as rocks.

Members are free to choose a belief that works for them personally, and there is no opposition to anyone's choice within the fellowship. We perceive this to be a strength of our program — the unconditional freedom members have with choosing their own personal belief — and in NA meetings one can hear members state that this is an attractive and safe aspect of the fellowship. NA doesn't endorse or oppose any religion. Experience of our members has shown that the spiritual principles work for all members, from the devoutly religious to the atheist and agnostic.

What is your position on treating the dually diagnosed? On medications prescribed for the treatment of mental illnesses?

NA's sole focus is recovery from drug addiction. We do have a booklet titled *In Times of Illness* that discusses the use of medications and the issues that arise for addicts in recovery.

What are your criteria for calling someone an "addict"?

We don't have any criteria. It is for the individual to decide that they are an addict.

This helps NA to be inclusive and nonjudgmental concerning anyone's level of drug usage. However, we do offer a pamphlet titled *Am I an Addict?* with questions designed to help people decide for themselves.



PUBLIC INFORMATION

The purpose of public information work in Narcotics Anonymous is to inform the public that NA exists and offers recovery from the disease of addiction. A public information body helps to ensure

that accurate information about our fellowship is available to the public.

NA World Services has compiled the following guidelines to support emerging NA communities needing some basic guidance in fulfilling our primary purpose in the public arena.

Our primary purpose as a fellowship is to carry the message to the addict who still suffers. PI is a vital part of "carrying the message." This type of service calls upon us to communicate and participate in areas of the community in which, as using addicts, we were once unwelcome. Courage and humility are necessary ingredients in our recovery when approaching the public about our fellowship. We hope that you find this part of NA service as rewarding as we have.

Public Information and the NA Member

Every member of NA has a role in helping us carry the message to the still-suffering addict. Much of the goodwill that

exists between NA and the community at large is based on the relationships that we develop and maintain as NA

members. We can improve these relationships by taking care to treat others with courtesy and respect. This is especially important when we represent the fellowship to professionals and members of other organizations who may spread their good or bad impressions of us to others. We need to project a positive image of NA so that these individuals feel comfortable directing addicts seeking recovery to our meetings.

When we participate in a public information event, we are responsible for our behavior. If we are rude, use profanity, or

show a lack of respect for a facility or for other organizations, we bring into question the effectiveness of our recovery

program.

We can also be seen as representative members of Narcotics Anonymous when we wear NA T-shirts in public, stand around outside a group meeting, or attend an NA convention or service conference. As a fellowship, we have no control over the behavior of individual NA members. As members, however, keeping our spiritual principles in mind, we can share our concerns about our public image with other members. We can communicate to them that a bad image of Narcotics Anonymous could easily keep the message of recovery from reaching the addict who still suffers.

Public Information and the Hospitals and Institutions Coordinators

Cooperation between coordinators is an important part of providing service in NA. We may understand our own functions well but know little of how other operates. It is critical to understand the relationship between the hospitals and institutions role and the public information role.

The purpose of H&I, is to carry the NA message to addicts in hospitals or other institutions who do not have full

access to regular Narcotics Anonymous meetings. The H&I coordinator will organize a team of NA members, called a panel, to go into these institutions and introduce the basics of the NA program to addicts in those institutions. The basic difference in function is that H&I panels present the program primarily to addicts and PI makes its presentation primarily

to non-addicts.

Here is an example to illustrate our different responsibilities and cooperative spirit: If a hospital contacted the local fellowship to request a presentation of the program to their doctors and nurses, PI would be primarily responsible to do a presentation. However, H&I should be informed of the event and invited to participate. A member from H&I would be most knowledgeable about the local H&I Committee and could answer questions about its ability and requirements to

bring panels to the hospital. Using the same example, if the request were to present the program to the patients at the hospital, it would be the H&I's responsibility to make this presentation. The PI body should be available to the H&I if this contact were to become an opportunity for a presentation to the staff at the hospital.

The Work Itself

It is clear that we cannot be everything for everybody. We are a recovery organization whose members meet regularly to help each other stay clean. It is all right for us to decline a request that is outside our fellowship's primary purpose. It is also reasonable for us to decline a request that is within our purpose if we do not have the time, money, and members to honor the request. The important thing to remember is that we respond! Failure to respond, even if we intend to decline a request, demonstrates a lack of reliability on behalf of our fellowship.

To carry a clear NA message to the public, we as members need to have a clear knowledge of our traditions. It takes practice to learn the traditions and understand how to apply them. We have reserved a portion of this guide for a discussion of the traditions and how they impact PI work.

Our objective in doing public information work should be simply to spread the word that the fellowship is available, that it works, and that it's free.

The Twelve Traditions and Public Information

Public information work is done by service committees or groups created by, and directly responsible to, those they serve. We try to do the best we can with what we have while upholding our Twelve Traditions. Our experience has taught us that an understanding of the Twelve Traditions of Narcotics Anonymous as they apply to public information is helpful. With that in mind, it may be beneficial to spend time studying and discussing the traditions. The knowledge gained may help us to be more confident in our presentation of NA. This confidence can be apparent to our audience and may assist in developing a positive image of our fellowship. The following traditions can play an important role in PI work and may have direct applications to PI service we conduct.

Our Sixth Tradition states: *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.* "This tradition is the basis for our policy of non-affiliation and is extremely important to the continuation and growth of Narcotics Anonymous." (Narcotics Anonymous Basic Text) While it may be important to reach as many people as possible with our message of recovery, it is imperative that we not risk our independence by becoming reliant on any outside source. If NA becomes strongly identified with any "related facility or outside enterprise" (club houses, drug treatment centers, or other twelve-step fellowships, for example), our primary purpose and independence can become confused with the priorities of others.

Cooperation with those who come in contact with addicts is important when carrying the message of NA. Without this cooperation, many addicts may never have found our fellowship. We want to work with other organizations, but we do not want to be merged with them in the mind of the public. To give the impression that we are one and the same might threaten our independence. Our aim is simply to make it known that NA is available. It may require additional effort to make clear the distinction between NA and other organizations. However, we will be rewarded as more addicts find us through other sources and our fellowship continues to grow.

Our Tenth Tradition states: *Narcotics Anonymous has no opinion on outside issues; hence the NA name ought never be drawn into public controversy.* "Our recovery speaks for itself. Our Tenth Tradition specifically helps protect our reputation." (Narcotics Anonymous Basic Text) We have no recommendations for any outside organizations, nor do we participate in their politics. To do so might invite controversy, which may jeopardize our fellowship's standing in the community. If we voice an opinion on any public issue, we may block the path for a new member to join or feel welcome

in our fellowship. It is critical that we remember this aspect of keeping our fellowship open to any addict who has the desire to stop using.

Our Eleventh Tradition states: *Our public relations policy is based on attraction rather than promotion; we need always maintain personal anonymity at the level of press, radio, and films.* "Our attraction is that we are successes in our own right. As groups, we offer recovery. We have found that the success of our program speaks for itself." (Narcotics Anonymous Basic Text) This tradition tells us that we do not have to promote recovery; the changes in our lives will be apparent to those around us. The positive effect of our own personal recovery can be a powerful element of attraction to our program.

We may decide that we do need to inform the general public of our existence. Is this attraction or promotion? The difference between attraction and promotion is in the content of the message and its presentation. Providing basic information and informing the public who, what, and where we are is well within the definition of attraction. When we go beyond the act of simply informing the public that we exist, we can cross the borderline into promotion.

Participation by NA members in public information events typically is not a violation of anonymity. Those who serve may personally choose to give up some of their anonymity in this fashion. But to give our full names to the press, allow our faces to be photographed, or appear on television or film in association with or identified as a member of Narcotics Anonymous is plainly a violation of the

Eleventh Tradition. This can threaten an individual member's personal recovery and give a false impression to newcomers that they will have to reveal their identities to others.

Our Twelfth Tradition states: Anonymity is the spiritual foundation of all our Traditions, ever reminding us to place principles before personalities. "The spiritual foundation becomes more important than any one particular group or individual." (Narcotics Anonymous Basic Text) This tradition reminds us that NA is a "WE" program, and that the sacrifice of personal recognition may be inherent to the spiritual principle of anonymity.

When we act on our own in public information we can lose the spirit of humility inherent in a "we" program. The damage that can be done to NA's reputation by individuals acting on their own can take a long time to repair. Being of service in PI we get a glimpse of humility every time a newcomer walks through the door of an NA meeting. We can then recognize the spiritual aim of the fellowship and our own place within it. We are grateful to be able to carry the message of recovery and can acknowledge the actions of a power greater than ourselves.

What We Do and What We Don't Do in Public Information

We Do:

- Follow our traditions, public relations plans, and guidelines.
- Try to be consistent. We follow through on our plans of action.
- Keep updated records of contacts, posted flyers, PSAs, etc.
- Remember that quality is better than quantity.
- Present a good image of recovery. We are punctual, dress appropriately, and avoid using obscenities when we speak.
- Consult with members experienced in PI work before contacting the media.

We Don't:

- Do public information service alone.
- Abuse our precious resources. When we don't complete a project, we create a negative image of NA.
- Present ourselves as the only spokesperson for NA.
- Accept contributions from outside our fellowship.
- State an opinion or take a stand on any non-NA or public issue.
- Give out personal information about individual NA members.

Narcotics Anonymous Does Not:

- Operate hospitals or recovery houses for addicts.
- Solicit or persuade others to join.

- Engage in or sponsor scientific research on addiction.
- Keep case histories of its members.
- Make medical or psychological diagnoses.
- Provide marriage, family, or vocational counseling.
- Provide monetary or social assistance.
- Provide or participate in primary drug prevention education.
- Accept money for its services or funding from any public or private agencies.

Please keep in mind that the information contained here is a very small piece of what is available to anyone interested in knowing more. Speak to someone on the P.R. committee to advise you further.

We can't keep what we have unless we give it away. Public information service allows us to do just that!

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS GENERAL PUBLIC

This resource can be used when interacting with the general public in the local community (such as at a community meeting, local event, or local conference).

These frequently asked questions are meant to help trusted servants provide clear, consistent, and informative responses. In an effort to gain an understanding of the information here, trusted servants can discuss and rehearse the questions and answers below.

Trusted servants can consider the following points when preparing for interactions with the public:

♦*Responding to questions in your own words often works best – the responses listed below can be used as a guide.*

♦*Short, simple, direct responses work best. Audience members or those who stop by an exhibit booth usually have limited time and will appreciate a brief response.*

♦*When we use NA specific language such as “home group”, please explain the meaning for the audience.*

♦*Try to keep responses focused on the questions asked. Remember, the goal is to inform members of the public about Narcotics Anonymous – personal disclosure is usually not appropriate or helpful. (For example, sharing about the step you are working, how many members you sponsor, and your service commitments is not necessarily relevant.)*

What follows are possible answers to questions frequently asked by the public:

What is the difference between AA and NA?

AA helped start NA in 1953 by giving NA's founding members permission to adapt their traditions and steps. The primary difference between the two programs is that AA's focus is alcohol and

alcoholism, whereas NA's focus is recovery from addiction. In NA we believe that use of drugs, including alcohol, is but a symptom of the disease of addiction.

How can I find NA meetings in my neighborhood or in various countries around the world?

The easiest way to find NA meetings is by visiting NA World Services website, www.na.org. Since our members provide the data for the meeting locator, we cannot guarantee the information is completely accurate (some meetings may have changed locations, for example). Contacting local area and regional helplines or websites (also listed at www.na.org) will often provide more accurate meeting information. (Have a local meeting directory with you during the presentation.)

Are most of your members heroin addicts?

When NA first started, it is possible that the majority of our members used heroin.

Today, as indicated in our *Membership Survey*, our members use a variety of drugs, including alcohol. Interestingly, 89% of those surveyed list alcohol as one of the drugs used on a regular basis. This survey also provides information about employment status, occupation, gender, and age. Our basic tenet about addiction is that it is a disease and not related to a specific substance.

What support does NA have for adolescents?

Adolescents are welcome at all NA meetings. If there are meetings in a local NA community specifically designated for young people, the meeting schedule will identify those meetings as such. Although any NA member is welcome at any NA meeting, specially designated youth meetings can help younger addicts find their peers.

It was briefly mentioned that NA has a variety of recovery literature. What kinds of literature and recovery materials do you have, and how can I obtain these?

NA has five book-length pieces:

- *Narcotics Anonymous, Basic Text*
- *It Works: How and Why*, which contains essays about the Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions
- *Just for Today: Daily Meditations for Recovering Addicts*
- *Sponsorship*
- *The NA Step Working Guides*, a companion piece to *It Works: How and Why*.

We also have a host of informational pamphlets, booklets, and a quarterly journal called *The NA Way Magazine*. All of our literature and recovery materials can be obtained directly from www.na.org or by contacting the local NA area or region.

How can we schedule an NA presentation?

At the end of this presentation, please provide us with your contact information and we will arrange for a presentation with you.

Is someone who is still using drugs welcome to attend NA meetings?

Yes, they are more than welcome to attend meetings. Many of our members actually came to meetings while still using drugs and are now drug-free and recovering today. Often, if a member is still using, he or she will be asked to refrain from speaking during a meeting. Instead, these addicts are encouraged to speak with members during break or before or after the meeting.

What resources do you have for single parents? Are children welcome at meetings?

Most groups welcome children who are behaved and under the supervision of a parent. Sometimes a group will offer babysitting services for its members. Contact the local NA helpline for additional information or look for meetings in the local NA meeting directory that indicate childcare or that the group is children-friendly.

I referred someone to NA who was taking medication, and NA members said they were not clean. Would you explain what you mean?

NA is a program of complete abstinence, and members refer to time (days, weeks, months, years) without using drugs as “cleantime.”

Since Narcotics Anonymous is an abstinence-based recovery program, persons who are taking drug replacement medication are not considered drug-free. These persons are encouraged and welcome to attend NA meetings; however, they are asked to listen rather than speak at meetings, and it is suggested they talk to members on a break, or before or after a meeting. Meetings that follow this format do so to preserve the atmosphere of recovery.

For members who have a need to take prescribed medication for medical or mental health issues, we suggest reading the booklet *In Times of Illness*. This piece provides helpful, experience-based information regarding medication and illness, and outlines the idea that the decision to take medication is left to the member, physician, and sponsor. This pamphlet was written to help members who have achieved total abstinence from drugs and are faced with a need to take medication.

Unfortunately, our members often voice their own opinions about the use of medication even though NA has no opinion. Although this may be a disconcerting issue for professionals, it can be equally as confusing to many members. Typically, members of NA make a distinction between drug replacement medication and medication that a person needs to take once they are completely abstinent from drugs.

What happens at an NA meeting?

An NA meeting is where two or more addicts gather for the purpose of recovery from the disease of addiction. Members offer each other peer support by sharing experiences about how they manage life situations without returning to using drugs. Some meetings have speakers who share their experience with getting and staying clean, while others have structured formats that focus on NA literature (our Basic Text, informational pamphlets, or our *Just for Today* daily meditation book). All meetings focus on recovery and supporting each other in recovery.

Here are some other things that can occur at an NA meeting:

- *During the course of a meeting, a basket is passed for our members to contribute money to support the cost of the meeting facility and other NA services. One of our traditions speaks to our self-support through our own contributions.*
- *Meetings often open and close with the Serenity Prayer or some quote from NA literature. [In some communities this may require some explanation. The word “prayer” could be troublesome.]*
- *Some meetings also provide keytags to recognize days, months, and years of continuous abstinence from drugs.*

Is NA connected with any religious organizations?

No. The NA program is based on a set of spiritual principles that are not associated with a particular religion. Although our steps call for finding and believing in a “power greater than oneself,” this is a personal decision for each and every member to make. Members choose their own “power greater than themselves.” Members’ beliefs range from nature to organized religion, from no belief that a power exists, to belief in the power of inanimate objects such as rocks. Members are free to choose a belief that works for them personally, and there is no opposition to anyone’s choice within the fellowship. We perceive this to be a strength of our program — the unconditional freedom members have with choosing their own personal belief — and in NA meetings one can hear members state that this was an attractive and safe aspect of the fellowship. NA doesn’t oppose or endorse any religion. Experience of our members has shown that the spiritual principles work for all members, from the devoutly religious to the atheist and agnostic.

PHONELINES

A call to an NA Phonenumber may be someone’s first interaction with Narcotics Anonymous. These calls are vital; a Phonenumber call can make major difference in whether or not an addict makes it to a meeting. We need to respond to

callers in a way that makes them feel they matter. We can encourage volunteers to bring all their experience and all their public relations awareness to this important service opportunity.

PHONELINE DO’S AND DON’TS

DO’S

- Do always identify yourself with your first name only and state that you are an addict.
- Do always have the necessary materials (e.g., White Booklet, meeting list, NA pamphlets, and referral sheet) close to the phone, in order to avoid delay and confusion.
- Do find out what the caller needs. Ask questions.
- Do if you are returning a call, be certain that the person requesting help is on the line before identifying yourself as an addict or mentioning Narcotics Anonymous.
- Do remember to be helpful and polite to all callers.
- Do make appropriate referral when necessary.
- Do contact the phonenumber coordinator if problems arise.

DON'TS

- Don't argue with people whose views of addiction differ from yours or NA's. If the caller does not want to stop using, do not try to persuade him/her to stop.
- Don't try to handle calls that you are not qualified to answer. Don't give medical advice.
- Don't give out other members names or phone numbers.
- Don't answer questions about who was at an NA meeting (e.g. to police officers, probation officers, or significant others). However general information may be given about NA's make-up (variance in size of meeting, NA open to all age groups, etc.).
- Don't glorify active addiction by talking war stories.

COMMUNITY REFERRAL LIST

The following is a community referral list, to be used when the caller is asking for help that does not fall within our primary purpose and our traditions. We offer information in the spirit of cooperation. We can provide a list of numbers rather than any one specific number. We do not recommend one referral over another. We simply provide contact information as a courtesy. (In many parts of Canada, a community services helpline can be reached by dialing 211; it may be the easiest and most complete referral that you can make.)

Child Abuse Hotline 1-800-387-5437 County/City/Province Emergency Services 911 Domestic Violence Services 1-800-799-7233 Drug Crisis Hotline 1-800-378-4435 Intervention Services 1-800-419-7941

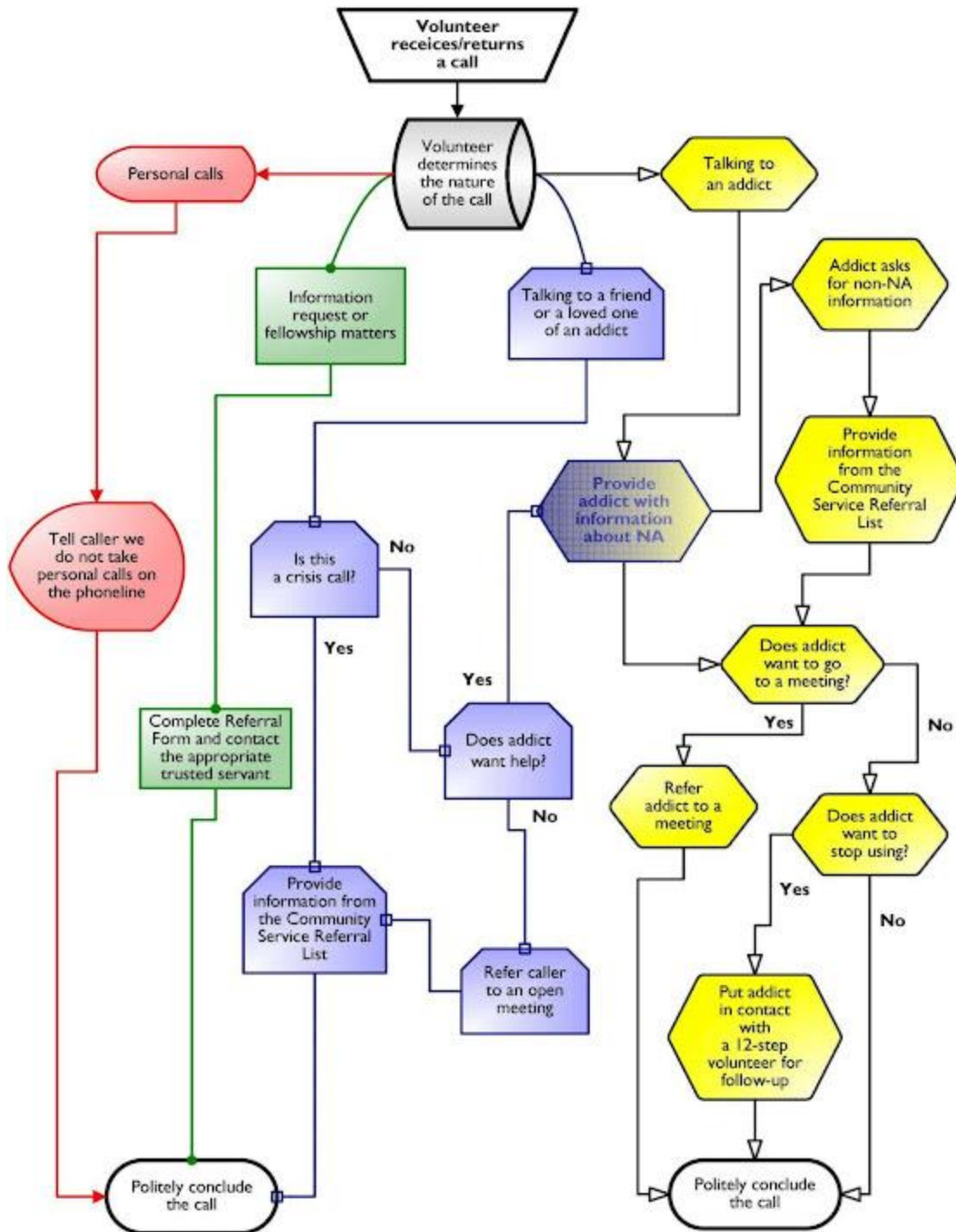
Local Homeless Shelter 780-448-5820 Mental Health Helpline 1-877-303-2642 Nar-Anon 780-966-4806

Poison Control 1-800-222-1222

Probation Department 780-422-4266 Rape Crisis Center 780-423-4121 Services for Runaways 1-800-999-9999 Suicide Prevention Hotline 780-482-4357

Additional community resources and numbers

Phoneline Flowchart



FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS PHONELINE VOLUNTEERS' EXPERIENCE WITH CALLS

This resource can be used by volunteers answering phonline calls when interacting with addicts, loved ones, professionals, and the community at large. These frequently asked questions are meant to help trusted servants provide clear, consistent, and informative responses. When responding to a question using NA terminology, such as “leader”, please explain to the listener what we mean by that language. In an effort to gain an understanding of the information here, trusted servants can discuss and rehearse the questions and answers below. What follows are possible answers to questions frequently asked by phonline callers.

Questions asked by potential members

I’ve been using (smoking pot) for three years and I’m not sure if I am an addict. Can NA help?

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, and decide for yourself. The informational pamphlet *Am I an Addict?* May help you in your decision making.

I am getting drug-tested by my parole officer; how long does cocaine stay in your system?

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.

What should I expect when I go to my first NA meeting? Do I have to talk?

Typically a leader or chairperson 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.

How much does NA cost? Are you counselors?

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.

I am a nurse by profession and I want to get clean. Where can I find a nurses’ meeting?

Some areas have common needs meetings while others do not. This area does/does not have a nurses’ NA meeting. We can tell you, however, that recovering addicts from all types of professions attend our meetings.

I’d like to go to an NA meeting but I don’t have a car. Can you help?

Yes, we can try. Where do you live? Let me take your number down and see if I can find a ride for you.

I’m suicidal and I don’t want to live anymore. What should I do?

We strongly suggest contacting the suicide prevention number, which is____, or 911 to get immediate assistance.

Questions asked by loved ones

My boyfriend is using drugs, stealing, and cheating. What can I do to help him? Will you call him?

Because Narcotics Anonymous is a self-help program, addicts must have the desire to stop using. Once he is ready to stop using drugs, please have him call us so we can direct him to an NA meeting in his area. In the meantime, you may want to call Nar-Anon or Families Anonymous. Although we are not affiliated with these organizations, we are happy to provide their telephone numbers.

My son/daughter is using drugs and wants to stop taking drugs. Can I go with him/her to their first meeting?

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...

Will you call me if my son/daughter does not show up to meetings regularly?

No, we are not able to do this. Because this is a self-help program, it is not our position to monitor an addict’s willingness to attend meetings.

Questions asked by community members

I heard that my old friend, Jane Smith, is in NA. Can I have her phone number?

We are not at liberty to give out contact information for individuals who may or may not be members.

Drugs are being sold in my apartment complex. Can you come and arrest them?

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.

Outreach

The main purpose of outreach is to help overcome the isolation that hinders the growth and survival of our groups. The focus tends to be on groups that are geographically isolated but may also include assistance to groups isolated by such things as personal choice, language, cultural differences, or location within a locked facility not served by a Hospitals and Institutions Committee. While the main emphasis of this material is on outreach efforts that are aimed at bringing geographically isolated NA members into the larger community, outreach committees are not limited to those. What outreach does should depend upon local needs.

Outreach efforts can range from supporting groups that are far away to informing members that local groups are in need of support. This can be done simply through meeting attendance and sharing recovery. Outreach committees work closely with H&I and Public Information committees

because each type of service has some areas overlap. Just like H&I and PI committees organize and/or participate in workshops and learning days. In urban centers, outreach efforts may involve attendance at groups that have not participated in the service structure for some time. In some cases, these groups may have withdrawn their involvement because of resentments. More often, it is because the group lacks members willing and/or qualified to represent the group in the service structure. Members engaging in outreach to such isolated groups can promote re-involvement through direct, open discussion of concerns. This can also recreate enthusiasm for service work within the group. Some groups may not want their isolation to end, and this decision should be respected.

Some things to remember while on an Outreach trip and also some things the Outreach Service can accommodate are:

- Offering communication between groups via flyers, newsletters, and phone calls. These tools are useful for communication; however, face-to-face contact between addicts is the most effective method.
- When visiting groups, it is very important not to negatively judge the way local groups operate. Many outreach efforts have been hampered by “experts” arriving to tell local members how things should be done. Such advice is rarely appreciated nor does it usually further the goals of outreach.
- Outreach committees do not start or run groups. The time commitment is too great and would detract from other duties.
- Outreach should be organized to encourage service work, and their structure to reflect locally identified needs.

Helping Struggling Groups and Areas

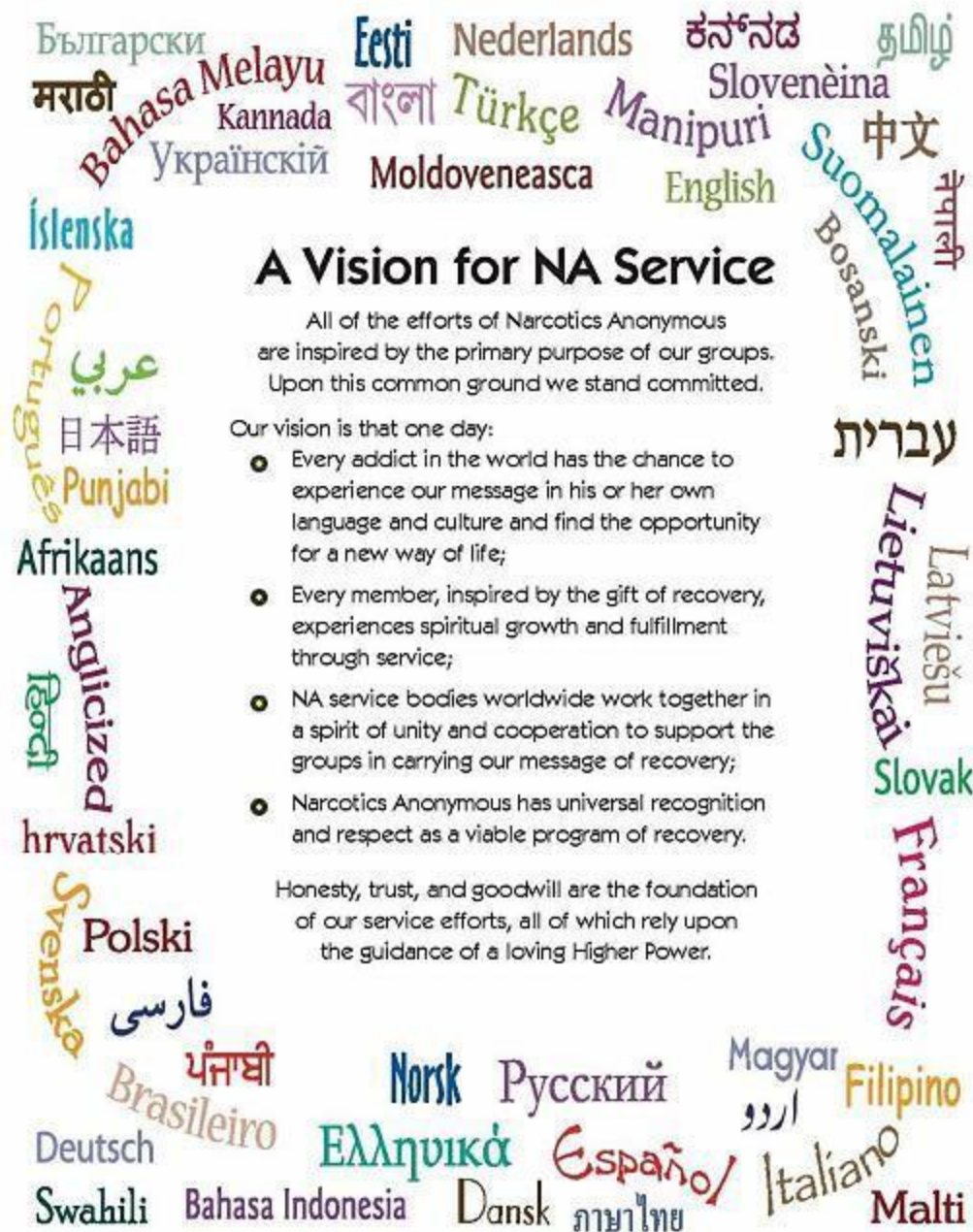
- Outreach to isolated NA groups provides a beneficial and much needed service. A group that is the recipient of these efforts is assured of its welcome in the fellowship and will feel a sense of belonging. Consequently, the group will take an interest in the workings of NA and will help with the growth and development of NA as a whole. The very presence of such efforts confirms that carrying the message is the primary purpose of NA.
- Ongoing communication and follow-up visits are essential. Letters and telephone calls are committee responsibility.

Summary

Outreach attempts to end the isolation of groups and areas in order to help them survive and grow. Outreach service may be formalized through committee structure, or done informally by interested members. Activities include; visiting isolated groups and ASC's; hosting workshops; providing basic service and meeting information; and sponsoring simple fellowship events such as campouts. Through the efforts of NA members doing Outreach service, it is hoped that all parts of our fellowship can be connected for our mutual benefit in recovery and carrying the message to the addict who still suffers.

Panel Contacts

Panel	First name	Email
Edmonton Institution for Woman	Dawn R	eifw@eana.ca
Men's Remand	Mike W	mensremand@eana.ca
ARC Detox	Jas C	arcdetox@eana.ca
	Bruce H	
Henwood	Devon M	henwood@eana.ca
George Spady Detox	Zane D	spadydetox@eana.ca
Alberta Hospital	Michael F	abhospital@eana.ca
Women's Remand	Cheryl B	womensremand@eana.ca



A Vision for NA Service

All of the efforts of Narcotics Anonymous are inspired by the primary purpose of our groups. Upon this common ground we stand committed.

Our vision is that one day:

- Every addict in the world has the chance to experience our message in his or her own language and culture and find the opportunity for a new way of life;
- Every member, inspired by the gift of recovery, experiences spiritual growth and fulfillment through service;
- NA service bodies worldwide work together in a spirit of unity and cooperation to support the groups in carrying our message of recovery;
- Narcotics Anonymous has universal recognition and respect as a viable program of recovery.

Honesty, trust, and goodwill are the foundation of our service efforts, all of which rely upon the guidance of a loving Higher Power.