

III.

NARCOTICS ANONYMOUS

A CHRONOLOGY OF SIGNIFICANT EVENTS

- June 1953: Six people met at Sun Valley, California for the purpose of organizing the first "AA-NA" group. The Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions of Alcoholics Anonymous were adapted for use by the group from the very beginning. Between mid-June and September 14, 1953, this original "governing" or "steering" committee held various meetings for the purpose of writing by-laws.
- September 14, 1953: After checking with the Alcoholics Anonymous General Service Office, the committee voted to change the name from San Fernando Valley AA-NA to "Narcotics Anonymous."
- September 21, 1953: The committee met one last time to iron out details for the first N.A. meeting.
- October 5, 1953: The first meeting was held in facilities rented from the local Salvation Army Dad's Club, Sun Valley, California. Seventeen people attended that first meeting. These original members made a commitment to continue for one year, agreeing that one recovery would be "significant."
- 1956 (or later) The first N.A. (unofficial) publication, "Narcotics Anonymous," was printed. This was a brief (eight-page) information pamphlet containing the "20 Questions," a brief outline of N.A., the Twelve Steps and the addresses of groups at Studio City and San Diego, California.
- November 1959: N.A., per se, disbanded briefly. It was almost immediately revived by several original members. The early years of N.A. were a period of slow growth.
- 1960: Entering the new decade, N.A. again entered a period of crisis. The Fellowship was still in a state of slow growth. During the early 1960's only four groups contributed to support of a general service office. All in California, they were at Studio City, Hollywood, Burbank and Los Angeles.

1962: The original white book, the pamphlet, "Narcotics Anonymous," was published without stories.

1963: In order to insure unity of purpose, the general membership in California established a Board of Trustees. A literature sub-committee was established as part of the service arm of the Board of Trustees.

1966: The new white book with stories and a white cover was printed.

1967: The Board of Trustees was expanded in size.

February 1968: Volume I of the Voice appeared.

1969: Because of continued growth, the limited capacity of the Board of Trustees to adequately coordinate a unified "world" effort and frequent regional conflicts, a decision was made by the Board of Trustees and the general membership to establish a central office. This central office was to function as a clearing house, rather than a legislative body.

As a result, the Parent Service Committee of Narcotics Anonymous was created.

197-1971: The name, Parent Service Committee of Narcotics Anonymous, was changed to Narcotics Anonymous Central Office Committee.

July 23, 1971: The Board of Trustees authorized a central office.

November 5, 1971: The first "world" convention was held at LaMirada Country Club, LaMirada, California. The convention ran November 5 through November 7.

November 6, 1971: At a business meeting during the world convention, the general membership voted to elect a Narcotics Anonymous business manager with a "formal" office. Various problems followed the establishment of a business manager/business office--primarily money. There were inadequate resources to pay the manager and he was unable to serve without pay.

November 15, 1971: The financial statement for the general service office for January 15, 1971 through November 15, 1971, reported income received from groups in Georgia, Nevada, Colorado and Idaho, as well as California.

December 13, 1971: The Narcotics Anonymous Central Office Committee announced by letter the firm decision to open a "world central office: in January 1972.

January 1972: The world central office opened at 2335 Crenshaw Blvd., Los Angeles, CA.

February 15, 1972: The Board of Trustees authorized by letter the publication in hardback of an N.A. book on recovery--not yet written.

October 23, 1973: The first Area Service Committee, the San Fernando Valley (CA) A.S.C., was created.

November 1974: Following moves to 1346 Highland Ave., Los Angeles; a room in the Suicide Prevention Center, Los Angeles; a room above a bail bonding company on Van Nuys Blvd., Van Nuys; the World Service Office was moved to its present location in Sun Valley.

Following the move to Sun Valley, it was discovered that several boxes of records and other historical data had been lost.

Prior to the move to Sun Valley, the name had been officially changed from World Central Office to World Service Office.

November 15, 1975: At the California Service Conference, Arroyo Grande, CA, the first "N.A. Tree" was accepted for publication. In addition, the California Service conference authorized publication of a World Director.

November 17, 1975: The "N.A. Tree" was published. This publication is the parent Service manual of Narcotics Anonymous.

January 7, 1976: The Board of Trustees accepted the "N.A. Tree" as an official N.A. publication.

August 28, 1976: The first foreign language (Spanish) publication was authorized. This was followed by a German translation in late 1976, early 1977.

October 24, 1976: At the general business meeting of the Ventura County Convention, Ventura, CA, three major decisions were rendered: an "N.A. Tree" Committee was established to revise and republish that pamphlet; the qualifications for Trustee as they now exist were established; and the decision for a "World Service Conference" was made.

November 13, 1976: The "first" World Service Conference was held at Ventura, CA.

January 25, 1977: The World Service Office was incorporated.

April 17, 1977: The first Regional Service Committee, the Southern California R.S.C., was created.

July 1977: The first "N.A. Newsletter" outside California (Kansas) began publication.

November 1977: The "second" W.S.C. was held in conjunction with the Seventh World Convention at San Francisco.

The conference was cancelled due to lack of quorum as defined by the "N. A. Tree." Only three people showed for the conference.

November 11, 1977: The Board of Trustees predicted by letter that the next two or three years would hold greater growth for the Fellowship than that of the preceding twenty-five years.

December 1977: Two more "N.A. Newsletters" appeared outside California, in Georgia and Pennsylvania.

During this period, through early 1978, printed copies of the white book were in short supply, and groups were furnished emergency photocopies.

February 1978: W.S.O. assumed publication of the Voice.

April 1, 1978: The "third" World Service Conference (the first as it is now known) opened at Van Nuys, CA. The basic concepts of world service and the World Service Conference as they now exist were formulated at this two-day conference.

The Literature Committee as it exists today was established at this conference.

Early 1979: Mainline began publication.

April 28-29, 1979: The World Service Conference, meeting in Los Angeles, directed the Literature Committee to conduct a World Literature Conference for the purpose of collecting material to write an "N.A. book on recovery."

May 19, 1979: The groundwork for a World Literature Conference was laid at a meeting in Atlanta, GA.

May 27, 1979:

The steering committee for the World Literature Conference meeting in Atlanta, tentatively scheduled the conference for Wichita "in the fall."

August 26, 1979:

The conference committee in Wichita held the first planning session for the conference.

October 6-7, 1979:

The first W.L.C. was held at Wichita, KS. Attending the conference were a total of thirty-five members from Kansas, Ohio, Nebraska, Georgia, California, Tennessee and Virginia.

This conference established an initial style guide for the proposed book and began the task of cataloguing hundreds of pages of material submitted by the Fellowship worldwide. The Wichita conference staff guide was later edited and released in pamphlet form as "The Handbook for Narcotics Anonymous Literature Committee."

The Wichita Conference opened at 9:00 A.M. Saturday, October 6, at Ash House. Morning details included a presentation by various members of the steering committee on the history of N.A. literature and the need for a definitive text. The members then were presented a proposed workshop agenda and the session closed for lunch.

The conference reconvened in the Offices of Home Owners' Trust Insurance, Parklane Shopping Center, in workshop form at 1:00 P.M. The Saturday sessions closed at 4:30 P.M.

The conference reassembled at 9:00 A.M., Sunday, and continued in workshops until noon break. Reconvening at 1:00 P.M., the workshops presented a report to the full assembly. The conference ended with a group consciousness session to approve the two-days' work. The conference closed at 5:00 P.M.

In addition to preliminary work on the basic text, the Wichita conference established general guidelines for the Literature Committee concerning the need for a treasury, ways and means of raising money, the need for area newsletters and guidelines for publication, and expanding and improving the I.P. library.

Respective of the basic text, the conference proposed a Fellowship-wide effort that would be an N.A. work--not a supplement to the A.A. big book. Guidelines for collecting material were established. Of 62 proposed topics of material to be included, 59 topics were accepted. Fourteen chapter outlines were proposed and twelve were adopted.

More than 500 man-hours of effort went into the Wichita Conference.

Sept. 8-12, 1980:

The second W.L.C. was held at the Lincoln Federal Building, Lincoln, NB. Attending this conference were thirty-six members from Georgia, Pennsylvania, Ohio, British Columbia and Oregon.

The meeting opened with a background report on the growth and development of literature. Five achievable goals were proposed for the conference: establish an outline of chapter headings; inventory materials collected; collate material into outline form; select material ready for print; and determine further material needed.

The first goal was tentatively achieved on day one when the assembly, reporting back from workshop, adopted a ten-chapter outline with additional preface, introduction, dedication, personal stories and appendix.

Beginning with day two, the actual sorting of material began. Due to the large volume of materials, each chapter was subdivided in various categories. By the end of day three the inventory and sorting process had produced an initial draft of "Chapter One" ready for rewrite. By the end of day four, the ten chapters had been divided into nearly 100 sub-headings.

Prior to the end of the conference on day five, the various workshops had sorted through hundreds of pages of raw material and had produced 511 sheets of paste-up material, the genesis of the book. These 511 sheets were the basic outline of a rough draft. Of 42 pages of paste-up devoted to Chapter One, six final "rough draft" sheets were set aside as the "first draft." The conference ended with a book in recognizable form.

The members at the Lincoln conference worked around the clock during the last three days of the assembly. More than 1100 man-hours of labor went into this conference.

January 31 -
February 8, 1981:

The third W.L.C. was held on campus at Memphis State University, Memphis, TN. The conference opened with 27 people from 8 states in attendance. The initial meeting of this conference established two goals: complete the final draft of the N.A. book; and submit the approved text to the Fellowship as a whole two months prior to May 1, 1981, the date of the World Convention, with final approval for a hardback publication to be sought at the Los Angeles convention.

Day two of the conference began with a consensus on workshop guidelines. It was decided by group consensus to divide into smaller groups and to put each chapter through more than one workshop. It was also decided to "workshop" one chapter at a time until a final draft was achieved.

Beginning with day two, the assembly began daily contact with the local areas. Members in various areas and regions were located to accept long distance calls for the purpose of further input, as well as to solicit funds.

From day one, January 31, through day nine, February 8, the conference worked nearly around the clock in shifts. Each line in every paragraph, on each page of every chapter went through several group-conscious workshops before reaching "final typing." Chapters were rewritten, revised, expanded, cut and edited several times. Not all of the final effort was done at Memphis. One chapter was roughed out in California and air-expressed to Memphis. One chapter travelled to Ohio with a committee member, and was re-written on the plane back from Ohio to Memphis. Long distance calls were made from coast to coast to verify input, assemble new data and to collect stories.

Some of the chapters were found to be in an acceptable first draft stage, based on the work performed at Lincoln. One chapter was incomplete through day six of the Memphis conference.

During the course of the Memphis conference, more than 70 people from 13 states were in actual attendance at some time during the nine days. In addition, dozens more members from coast to coast were consulted by telephone and contributed either by phone, mail or air express.

At Memphis alone, more than 4,500 man-hours were expended in the various stages of writing, rewriting, assembling and final compilation. Nine typewriters, two photocopiers, three cassette players, two telephones and a dictaphone were kept in almost continuous use; and more than 20,000 sheets of paper were used to produce 200 pages of basic text.

February 9, 1981:

The Memphis conference ended and the files, equipment and now-approved text of the review copy were moved to a local member's home. A small group of committee members from Kansas, Ohio, Georgia, California, and Tennessee remained to carry out the conference directive to have the work printed and assembled for mailing.

The members from Georgia, California, Kansas and Ohio eventually returned home and the few dedicated members from Tennessee continued working around the clock to coordinate efforts with the stenographer and printer. This group remained in constant telephone contact with committee members from Georgia, California, Oregon and Ohio.

The eleventh hour efforts of the group in Memphis included dozens of telephone calls to Georgia, Oregon, California, Missouri and other areas, as well as miles of driving from the work area to the stenographer to the printer; lengthy visits with a lawyer (for copyright of the review copy) and post office (for mailing permits); trips to Western Union to collect money orders and to the bank for deposits; the slow, tedious task of proofreading and final assembly of 1200 copies; and the actual addressing and mailing of the review copy to the Fellowship worldwide.

February 27, 1981:

The review copy is mailed.