

## Chapter I

### THE TWELVE TRADITIONS, THE TWELVE CONCEPTS, AND PI

#### **1.0 What do our Traditions and Concepts have to do with PI work?**

Everything!

Our experience has taught us that a working knowledge of our Traditions is a must in public information service work. Our recovery and our lives depend upon Narcotics Anonymous and NA cannot survive outside the guidance and principles of our Traditions and Concepts. We owe it to ourselves to thoroughly understand their basic principles before we begin active public information work. Many PI subcommittees take the time to study the Traditions and Concepts and how they apply to PI work on an ongoing basis. One procedure which has worked for many committees is to read one of the Twelve Traditions or Concepts at the beginning of a meeting, and then have a brief discussion about it.

#### **2.0 The Twelve Traditions**

##### **2.1 Which Traditions apply to PI?**

All of them!

Our service structure and our committees exist within the framework of our Twelve Traditions. Each Tradition applies to all aspects of service. The following comments on the Traditions as they may relate to public information service are intended to stimulate discussion.

**2.2 Tradition One:** Our common welfare should come first; personal recovery depends on NA unity.

This tradition tells us that our personal recovery is what is at stake. Unity of purpose can only be achieved when we are willing, as NA members and as subcommittees, to consider our common welfare. In our Basic Text, we're told "Our Traditions are the guidelines that protect us from ourselves. They are our unity." [Narcotics Anonymous Basic Text, 5th Edition, English, page 60]. It sometimes seems tempting to go it alone in public information. Our intentions are good. It seems like a great idea to do a radio talk show for a friendly disc jockey or it may be gratifying to accept an invitation to go back to our old high school and speak to the health science class. But we need to undertake these

activities through our PI subcommittees, not as individuals. We need to stop and ask ourselves, "Do I know what is best for our Fellowship?"

By supporting our PI subcommittees in the area and region where we live, we can assure that our message is one of anonymity. "The principle of anonymity gives form to our fellowship's public voice. Each of our members has personal opinions on a wide range of subjects. The public message our fellowship carries, however, is the message of our collective experience in recovery from addiction. As groups and as a fellowship, we have no opinions on anything but the NA program itself." [It Works How and Why, English Edition, pages 213 - 214]. By following this tradition, we can ensure that our common welfare will not disappear and our members will not perish.

The same principles apply to our PI subcommittees. Unity of purpose can only be achieved when, as a Fellowship, we cooperate to have a united public relations policy. That means we work closely with PI subcommittees in surrounding areas and regions and that we maintain communication with World Services. "With faith in a Power greater than ourselves, hard work, and unity we will survive and continue to carry the message to the addict who still suffers." [Narcotics Anonymous Basic Text, 5th Edition, English, page 60].

**2.3 Tradition Two:** 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.

In Narcotics Anonymous, we are often concerned with protecting ourselves from ourselves. Our Second Tradition is an example of this fact. "By nature, we are strong-willed, self-centered people, thrust together in NA; mismanagers all; not one of us is capable of making consistently good decisions." [Narcotics Anonymous Basic Text, 5th Edition, English, page 60]. We avoid many of the pitfalls awaiting us in PI work by adhering to the spirit of this Tradition.

First, our PI subcommittees must work within our service structure in order to receive the guidance of our ultimate authority, a loving God. A subcommittee that reports to its area or regional committee and actively seeks involvement of members from the groups of areas it serves will be functioning in the spirit of this tradition. Those of us who are given the opportunity to serve need to remind ourselves that we do not, in fact, govern.

But let us not be paralyzed by this Tradition. That is not its purpose. PI subcommittees need not be afraid to act if the actions are in the spirit of all our traditions. In fact, if we don't act at all, we are not truly serving our Fellowship. Public information service work is vital to our primary purpose of carrying the message of recovery. Once the group conscience has spoken through our election process, we must trust our elected trusted servants and support them to get the job done. If our trusted servants don't do it, who will? This Tradition tells us how to go about finding direction for what needs doing.

**2.4 Tradition Three:** The only requirement for membership is a desire to stop using.

"Addiction does not discriminate. This Tradition is to ensure that any addict regardless of drugs used, race, religious beliefs, sex, sexual preference, or financial conditions is free to practice the NA way of life." [Narcotics Anonymous Basic Text, 5th Edition, English, page 62].

Our PI efforts must reflect the message of this beautiful tradition. We must be willing to carry the message to all addicts. Our PI service work can and should open the doors of our Fellowship to every addict who wants to stop using. "NA has no classes of membership and no second-class members. The common denominator in NA is the disease of addiction. We are all equally subject to it's devastation. We share an equal right to recovery." [It Works How and Why, page 150]. Public Information committees must remember this and tailor their efforts to reach as wide and diverse of a group of people as possible.

As individuals of subcommittees, we may find ourselves inadvertently focusing our efforts on groups or organizations where the people look or talk or act like we did and avoiding places where we feel different or uncomfortable. In order to fulfill the spirit of this Tradition in PI, we may find it helpful to ask ourselves some tough questions--like who is missing from our meetings? If our members are mostly addicts who came through treatment facilities or detoxification centers, then that's great. It means we're working toward fulfilling our primary purpose in those types of facilities.

Now what about the addicts who may not live long enough to get to one of those places? What about addicts who don't speak our language but live in our communities? "The wording of the Third Tradition reflects the broad focus of our first step. It is written simply enough to include addicts from all countries and cultures no matter what drugs they used. Before finding recovery in NA, many addicts don't think that alcohol is a problem. Others abuse prescription medication, thinking that "legal" drugs are okay. Because of the wording of this tradition, we are able to attract and welcome addicts who might think they didn't use the "right" drugs to qualify for membership in NA." [It Works How and Why, English, page 147]. In order to work within the spirit of this tradition, we need to be aware of what we haven't been doing, where we haven't been going, who we haven't been writing to or calling, and then plan our PI efforts accordingly. We need to act pro-actively.

**2.5 Tradition Four:** Each group should be autonomous except in matters affecting other groups or NA as a whole.

A service committee is not a group, therefore it is not autonomous. Public information subcommittees act only with the support of their areas or regions, and are accountable to them. They are part of a service structure designed to serve and they must follow all the Traditions.

In PI work, our actions can and do affect other groups or NA as a whole. "We are challenged in Tradition Four to apply autonomy in ways that will enhance the growth and vitality of NA." [It Works How and Why, English, page 154]. Much of this PI handbook is about how to do PI service work within the spirit of this Tradition. A clear understanding of our service structure, combined with cooperation and communication among all our service committees (including neighboring areas and regions, as well as the World Service boards or committees) enables us to work together with unity of purpose. As we approach each new project in PI, we need to remember to ask ourselves what impact this will have on our groups, our area or region, and on surrounding areas and regions. In its discussion of this Tradition, our Basic Text tells us, "... if we consider the consequences of our action ahead of time, then all will be well." [Narcotics Anonymous Basic Text, 5th Edition, English, page 64].

**2.6 Tradition Five:** Each group has but one primary purpose, to carry the message to the addict who still suffers.

As service committees, our task is to help our groups fulfill their all-important primary purpose. Just as our groups must focus on NA recovery, our public relations message must be based on our fellowship's principles of recovery. This Tradition tells us what our message is and therefore determines for us what we must communicate to the world about NA. "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 a promise of freedom." [Narcotics Anonymous Basic Text, 5th Edition, English, page 65].

**2.7 Tradition Six:** 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, 5th Edition, English, page 66]. While it is important to reach as many people as possible with our message of recovery, it is imperative, for our protection, that we not risk our independence by becoming reliant on any outside source.

Cooperation with those who come in contact with addicts is important when carrying the message of NA. Without such cooperation, many of us would never have found the fellowship. "Contacts between our groups and the public help others understand NA better. They help increase public goodwill towards NA. They lead doctors, teachers, police, friends and relatives to recommend NA to addicts who want recovery." [It Works How and Why, English, page 168]. Affiliation would have the opposite effect: diverting us from our primary purpose. We certainly 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 would threaten our independence. Our aim is simply to make it known that NA is a resource for other organizations.

Without the guidance of this Tradition, our PI subcommittees would be in deep trouble. That fact that so much could be written about violations of this Tradition provides ample proof that we endanger NA when we have chosen to ignore it.

In our PI subcommittee meetings we need to take time to discuss this Tradition in detail. Some important discussion topics are:

- What is an outside enterprise?
- What does it mean to give a direct or implied endorsement of any related facility or outside enterprise?
- How can we best avoid implied or direct endorsement?

**2.8 Tradition Seven:** Every NA group ought to be fully self-supporting, declining outside contributions.

This Tradition applies to service committees just as it applies to our groups and our Fellowship as a whole. "Our policy concerning money is clearly stated: We decline any outside contributions; our Fellowship is completely self-supporting. We accept no funding, endowments, loans, and/or gifts. Everything has its price, regardless of intent." [Narcotics Anonymous Basic Text, 5th Edition, English, page 68].

We often receive many offers for assistance with our PI work. "Like the groups, NA service boards and committees decline contributions from sources outside the fellowship. Unlike the groups, however, our service boards and committees are not themselves fully self-supporting. They have been created to help the groups fulfill their primary purpose more effectively, and they depend on group contributions for the money they need to do their work." [It Works How and Why, English, page 168]. For example, organizations might offer to pay our travel expenses to speak to them about NA. As it says in our recovery literature, their intentions are good but we can't accept that kind of help without violating the spirit of this Tradition.

There has been some confusion about the appropriateness of public service announcements by television, radio or newspapers. These are not "gifts" but services provided by these organizations at no charge to the public. We are free to use that opportunity for informing the public without compromising our Seventh Tradition. Just as we can place posters on bulletin boards made available for public use, we can place announcements in the media.

At times we may feel frustrated by our lack of funds to take on what seem like much needed PI projects. The temptation of receiving "easy money," from others, is always a double-edged sword. Working together as a Fellowship to

raise the money to support our services, we strengthen the ties that bind us together in our common purpose.

**2.9 Tradition Eight:** Narcotics Anonymous should remain forever non-professional but our service centers may employ special workers.

"The difference between professionals and special workers should be defined for clarity. Professionals work in specific professions which do not directly service NA but are for personal gain. Professionals do not follow the NA traditions. Our special workers, on the other hand, work within our Traditions and are always directly responsible to those they serve, to the fellowship." [Narcotics Anonymous Basic Text, 5th Edition, English, page 69-70].

Many NA service committees already pay telephone answering services to handle incoming calls for their Phone Line committees. This allows NA members to do the actual twelfth step work and provides a twenty-four hour service which would otherwise be impossible for some local NA fellowship to offer in their community. Increasingly more regions and areas are opening up service offices to deliver services for our Fellowship. These offices can play a vital role in our PI work by handling phone calls and mailing out literature to addicts and those who come in contact with addicts through their work.

The specific NA subcommittee under whose jurisdiction these services fall — usually the PI subcommittee itself, or a Phoneline subcommittee — should maintain frequent contact with these professionals and endeavor to teach them a little about the spirit of our traditions. Since these professionals are not NA members, we cannot require them to uphold our traditions. However, we can try to educate them and, by contacting them regularly, we can ensure that they do the job we have hired them to do, faithfully and efficiently.

Area and regional PI subcommittees may find it advisable from time to time to hire special workers to perform other specific tasks such as doing office or graphic layout work or painting billboards. This tradition allows us to focus on our primary purpose while providing the services necessary to keep us functioning, unified and growing.

**2.10 Tradition Nine:** NA as such ought never be organized; but we may create service boards or committees directly responsible to those they serve.

Our PI efforts are carried out through committees created by our Fellowship. All service boards and committees exist to serve NA. "NA as such" is never organized, but we do have a service structure for our service boards and committees. If we haphazardly go about the business of NA, quoting this Tradition as our excuse, we are not serving our Fellowship. Our service boards and committees are given the responsibility of providing much needed services, while the groups go about the business of holding meetings, working with newcomers and generally focusing on recovery. The business of NA does not belong in our groups. We hold business meetings for our groups to discuss

matters that do not relate directly to recovery. And we elect trusted servants to carry out whatever work that could not be done efficiently by the individual group.

In public information work, we must remain directly responsible to those we serve. The members of a subcommittee or service committee cannot do this if the committee itself is not linked to the service structure in the local area or region. "By maintaining regular two way communication between NA groups and the boards and committees serving them, we create an atmosphere of responsibility that serves our fellowship and its primary purpose as well." [It Works How and Why, English, page 192]. PI subcommittees which start up without the support of an area or regional service committee may be working outside the service structure and outside the spirit of this Tradition. PI efforts need to be linked with all other activities in an area or region.

**2.11 Tradition Ten:** NA has no opinion on outside issues, hence the NA name ought never be drawn into public controversy.

Again, our Basic Text provides a clear explanation of what to say about NA in our public information work. It also gives us specific information about what not to say. "Our recovery speaks for itself. Our tenth Tradition specifically helps protect our reputation." [Narcotics Anonymous Basic Text, 5th Edition, English, page 71]. We do not have any recommendations for outside organizations, nor do we participate in their politics. To do so would invite controversy which would jeopardize our fellowship.

"With a price this high, is it any wonder we choose not to take sides in society's problems? For our own survival, we have no opinion on outside issues." [Narcotics Anonymous Basic Text, 5th Edition, English, page 71]. When we're talking about the survival of our Fellowship, it's worth spending time and effort to understand and practice the spiritual principle of this Tradition.

Anything we say while doing a PI presentation will be viewed as NA's opinion. We should be aware that an expression of a personal opinion can easily be misinterpreted as the opinion of NA as a whole. This can happen even if the member says that it is his personal opinion. We may be able to avoid some of these cases of misinterpretation by others if we think carefully before we speak in public.

In public information work, we are frequently in the position to respond to questions which may be controversial. If we can continually focus ourselves and our PI subcommittees on our message of recovery, and leave all else to the outside world to discuss and argue about, we'll be fine. As individuals, each of us has opinions. We have opinions on types of treatment for addicts, on what isn't being done to help addicts recover, on the treatment of addicts by law enforcement agencies — the list goes on and on. It's easy to slip into the thinking which tells us, as addicts, we are experts on all these topics. Vigilance is

absolutely necessary whenever we are dealing with the press or professionals or any outside agencies.

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

"The Eleventh Tradition is the cornerstone of NA's public relations policy." [It Works How and Why, English, page 203]. There are two distinct parts to this tradition and both address PI efforts directly.

First, our public relations policy is based on attraction rather than promotion: in our Fifth Tradition we are told what the message is that we have to share with the world outside NA. "Our attraction is that we are successes in our own right. As groups gathered together we offer recovery. We have found the success of our program speaks for itself". [Narcotics Anonymous Basic Text, 5th Edition, English, page 72]. We certainly don't make promises such as, "You will never use drugs again if you join us." That most definitely is promotion!

This tradition tells us we do have a public relations policy. "The existence of a public relation "policy" implies the importance of a public relations "program" in carrying out our fellowship's primary purpose. Public information work, done properly, is not promotion, rather, it seeks to make NA attractive to those who might need us." [It Works How and Why, English, page 203]. Our public relations policy is based on our individual recoveries and on the success of our program. That makes our job in PI simple. We simply share our experiences of recovery (while protecting our anonymity) and tell the story of NA. In order to effectively tell the NA story (most of us are familiar enough with our own stories), we need to know it. Please see *Section VIII, Resources*, for a listing of our pamphlets and bulletins. Each PI subcommittee might also want to write up a brief history of NA in their area or region.

Personal anonymity at the level of press, radio and films enables each of us to do this service work without endangering our recovery. There is simply never a situation that warrants violation of this Tradition NO MATTER WHAT. Anonymity is defined in the dictionary as "the quality or state of being anonymous." Anonymous is defined as "having or giving no name." In our dealings with outside agencies, other than press, radio or films, some PI workers use their own names since, technically, doing so would not be a violation of this Tradition.

The safest way to avoid problems with this Tradition is to understand it, accept it, and always do direct PI interviews and presentations with another NA member present.

**2.13 Tradition Twelve:** Anonymity is the spiritual foundation of all our Traditions, ever reminding us to place principles before personalities.



In PI work, as in our Fellowship as a whole, this Tradition tells us that the "I" becomes "we." "The spiritual foundation becomes more important than any one particular group or individual." [Narcotics Anonymous Basic Text, 5th Edition, English, page 72]. That view also refers to our first Tradition, that our common welfare should come first, that we need to be unified.

Humility is very important in public information service. The story of NA is more important than any of our own personal stories. Practicing the principles of this Tradition in PI will enable us to work together for the common good. It will remind us that each member is as important as every other member and that all ideas should be listened to regardless of the source.

When we talk about our Fellowship, when we share with the outside world, we need to practice the principle of anonymity. It is, we are told, the spiritual foundation of all of our Traditions. We've heard it said around this Fellowship that spiritual anonymity is the sacrifice of personal ambition. The integrity of the NA program must not be compromised by self-serving behavior. Personal anonymity ensures that we carry a pure message to the addict who still suffers, and to the professionals and/or non-professionals who work with and help those addicts.

Placing principles before personalities allows us to show the public what the principles are and how they work. When we take our personalities out of the picture, we allow the principle of anonymity to work. This also opens the door for other spiritual principles – such as unity, hope, and unconditional love – to guide us in our public information service work. "Tradition Twelve is all the traditions rolled up into one," summarizing and reinforcing the message of the previous eleven. [It Works How and Why, English, page 209]. When we practice and live these spiritual principles, we provide proof that the program of NA works.

### **3.0 The Twelve Concepts**

From the early days of our Fellowship, our Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions have guided us as a Fellowship and paved the way for our growth. The guiding principles of our Traditions have influenced our fundamental decisions, helping to protect us from ourselves. The Twelve Concepts, as guiding principles, empower the groups to create an efficient and responsive service structure to serve their common needs.

In the paragraphs which follow, we will discuss the Twelve Concepts as they apply to the delivery of services from a Public Information perspective. These essays are not intended to replace the more thorough discussion of the Concepts in the pamphlet, "The Twelve Concepts of NA Service." This discussion is solely our shared experience on the subject, from a Public Information point of view.

**3.1 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.**

Services should be developed, maintained and coordinated with the primary purpose of serving the addict who still suffers kept firmly in mind. Often in PI work, we don't speak directly with or touch the suffering addict, but our services must always consider that addict. For example, when we give a presentation to the public, we strive to keep our message clear and concise and share information about who we are, what we do, and how to find us. We do this so that the members of the public will remember that NA is a viable means of recovery and will refer addicts to us at whatever time in the future they come across an addict who appears ready for recovery.

Several spiritual principles are evident in the wording of this Concept. The principle of unity implies that NA groups have joined together and developed a service structure which provides services, by delegation, on behalf of the groups. Using the guiding principle of humility, this Concept states that our Public Information subcommittees exist because the groups created them, not the other way around. Implicit also is the principle of integrity, which tells us that all our actions in carrying out our responsibilities are a reflection of the groups which have created us.

**3.2 Second Concept: The final responsibility and authority for NA services rests with the NA groups.**

As a guiding principle for the delivery of Public Information services, the second concept holds special importance. That importance revolves around the balance between trust and delegation. Since the groups have created the service structure, they have the final authority over it. Public Information subcommittees must remember that they are responsible to the groups through their GSRs, RCMs, and RDs. They are not groups themselves; they are not autonomous. PI subcommittees serve at the direction and with the support of the groups.

As members of PI subcommittees, we provide resources to the groups and the groups provide resources to us. The voice of the groups gives us our direction in planning how to help guide the still suffering addict to our meetings. The resources—both human and monetary—with which the groups provide us, enable us to follow that direction. In working out the delicate balance between trust and delegation with the groups which created us, we have found that humility and patience are two of the principles which come before the personalities.

**3.3 Third Concept: The NA groups delegate to the service structure the authority necessary to fulfill the responsibilities assigned to it.**

The Third Concept speaks of delegation. The NA groups delegate to us the authority necessary to fulfill the tasks they have assigned us. We, in turn, are accountable to them for that authority. As PI subcommittees, it is equally

important that, when we select people to lead and to serve us, we also practice vigilance and accountability. When we ask people to speak about our Fellowship, it is important that those chosen practice humility and the other spiritual principles necessary to help them effectively carry out their task.

When we are designing a project, it is important to support that project throughout its entire life cycle, not abandon our responsibility for it part of the way through. When selecting speakers for PI presentations, we must keep in mind that what is important in the end is the credibility of our Fellowship itself, not that of the individual messengers. Again, humility and integrity play important roles here.

When delegating responsibilities, or when receiving delegated responsibilities, we must understand exactly what these responsibilities are, and precisely how much authority has been delegated. Sometimes with new projects or new committees, the groups will want to have more involvement in the decision-making process than they would if the project were a continuation of a previous one, or the committee had been in existence for a while. Trust in trusted servants is not automatic. We develop this trust by continuing to act with honesty and integrity within the committee framework, guided by group conscience and the will of our Higher Power.

**3.4 Fourth Concept: Effective leadership is highly valued in Narcotics Anonymous. Leadership qualities should be carefully considered when selecting trusted servants.**

We must carefully select our trusted servants, choosing them not only for their willingness to serve, but also for their abilities, skills, and experience. Qualities such as humility, honesty and trustworthiness are as important as willingness. We should choose leaders who will listen open-mindedly to the groups' direction and their fellow members' experience, yet who will also stand firm on sound principles if the need arises. After making the selection, we must continue to evaluate our leaders' work and give them direction.

In PI, our committees are generally project-oriented. Project leaders, or coordinators, must be given resource support to enable them to carry out their responsibilities efficiently. They should also be encouraged to involve others through delegation, and by asking for guidance from those who have had experience with similar projects in the past.

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

Each action we perform should have a clear point of accountability. For the committee as a whole, that point is the chair who reports to his or her respective ASC, RSC, or WSC. For specific projects, the usual type of work we do in PI service, a single coordinator, project leader, or ad hoc chair should be selected. This person should be held accountable for the responsibilities assigned to him

or her. These responsibilities and our other expectations of that person should be clearly defined; some committees include them in their guidelines or procedural manuals.

The spiritual principles important to the Fifth concept are integrity, respect, and trust. This concept's insistence upon accountability fosters all three principles. In essence, the committee tells the individual who has been selected as the single point of accountability for a task that it trusts him or her and that, through this trust, it is showing that it respects that person's personal integrity. Trust, as has been pointed out earlier, must be earned. The committee, in selecting this person as the single point of accountability, is saying that his or her past actions—both on behalf of service to the NA Fellowship, as well as in his or her personal life—have convinced them to trust that individual with the responsibility of carrying out the particular task assigned. They respect the individual's personal integrity, and trust him or her to accomplish the task with excellence, and within the time frame allotted for it.

### **3.6 Sixth Concept: Group conscience is the spiritual means by which we invite a loving God to influence our decision.**

Group conscience is essential to effective committee work. A single trusted servant's lone voice, putting forth a "brilliant idea" should bring that idea to the committee for discussion and input. Sometimes our brilliant ideas must be amended in light of past committee experiences or a broader understanding of NA's traditions. Committee members must remember that the group process serves NA and the decisions of the group should be respected and faithfully implemented.

Our own literature's narrative chapter on Concept Six reminds us that the word "group" in "group conscience" should be interpreted as "collective" when it states, "Developing a collective conscience provides us with the spiritual guidance we need for making service decisions." The last paragraph of its discussion begins, "Group conscience is the means by which we collectively invite the ongoing guidance of a Higher Power in making decisions." Thus, group conscience means the collective conscience of those (trusted servants) participating in the committee's decisions.

What exactly, then, is the individual conscience of each participant? It is an essentially spiritual characteristic. It is our innate sense of right and wrong. "Higher mental and emotional functions such as conscience and the ability to love, were sharply affected by our drug use. Living skills were reduced to the animal level. Our spirit was broken. The capacity feel human was lost. This seems extreme, but many of us have been in this state. " [Narcotics Anonymous Basic Text, 5th Edition, English, pages 101-102]. As we steadily apply spiritual principles in our lives, our decisions and actions increasingly become less

motivated by self-interest, and more motivated by what our conscience tells us is good and right.

Another way to put it is to realize that when we practice the development of a group conscience, we are applying the spiritual principles of selflessness, honesty, and humility, all byproducts of a personal spiritual awakening. Our own personal sense of right and wrong contributes to the development of our groups' consciences and thus influences our committees' direction and decisions.

The Sixth Concept's idea that individual consciences combine and interact to form a collective conscience is a very strong and spiritually sound view of the phrase "group conscience."

**3.7 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.**

The Seventh concept teaches us that all members of our service teams should truly participate in the teams' decision-making processes. All contributions count, and maximum involvement yields sound, sensitive service decisions. We welcome the Sixth Concept's idea that individual consciences combine and interact to form a collective group conscience. When applied conscientiously, the seventh concept tends to equalize each contributing voice in relation to the whole. The seventh concept also points out the reason we encourage full participation in our decision-making processes; it is because each person who helps make the committee's collective decision on some issue bears substantial responsibility for his and her individual decisions.

Full participation in discussion is essential to good decision-making. If a committee discovers that full discussion is frequently limited due to time constraints, it may wish to consider changing the length or the frequency of its meetings. Full discussion, of course, does not mean unlimited discussion with several members speaking repeatedly during the discussion. The chairperson may need to implement discussion tools to help manage the meeting. Some of these tools including limiting the number of pros and cons which may be discussed on each issue; calling on each individual only once or twice during each discussion; or limiting the time any one individual may speak on a particular issue. If any of these methods is used, it must be consistently implemented to ensure fairness, and so that each person present understands the committee's protocol for equitable participation.

Although full participation does not necessarily mean that each person in the room is permitted a vote, a committee's voting procedures should always be clearly stated, perhaps in its guidelines. Being inclusive, however, is always preferable to being exclusive. Committees often work by consensus and vote only when consensus is not reached.

### **3.8 Eighth Concept: Our service structure depends on the integrity and effectiveness of our communications.**

The groups have joined together to create a service structure which develops, coordinates, and maintains services on behalf of NA. The relationship of the groups to our structure is a two-way street analogous to the sponsor/sponsee relationship in our recovery. Our sponsors can only be effective in helping us if we honestly tell them who we are and what our experiences have been. Similarly, in Public Information work, our services are only as effective as the communications which support and guide them.

Full, honest reporting to those we serve ensures that the flow of information will support our continued growth as a Fellowship, since true group conscience comes best from having all available information on hand, and then from open-mindedly listening to it all. Clear, frequent communication helps ensure that our services will be effective because they will more fully represent the collective conscience of our groups.

This concept is directly important to our service committees as they communicate within themselves and with each other. Honest, effective, and complete internal communications, discussed later in this Handbook, paves the way for unity of purpose in developing, coordinating, and maintaining services on behalf of NA. A good part of communications involves listening to what others are saying, and the committee should always operate with an attitude of respect and attention to all participants.

Clear and effective communication is equally essential within the committee itself, other parts of the service structure, and with the public. For example, within the committee, new members should be guided by those with experience in making reports which are both inclusive and concise.

The committee may find the examples and samples contained in section 3 of this handbook, "Communications" helpful.

### **3.9 Ninth Concept: All elements of our service structure have the responsibility to carefully consider all viewpoints in their decision-making processes.**

The ninth concept reminds us that our selfless service to others requires that all viewpoints be considered. We need to seek out and listen open-mindedly to all available viewpoints during our decision-making processes in order to make a true group conscience decision.

That lone voice which often quietly says, "What about this..?" can often save the committee from stepping outside the limits of our concepts and traditions. That single voice which says, "Why don't we try this..?" can sometimes lead to exciting new possibilities for the committee. It is the chairperson's responsibility to include those voices in the discussion. It is the committee's responsibility to

carefully consider all viewpoints and it is the individual's responsibility to abide by the final decision of the group, whether or not consensus has been reached.

**3.10 Tenth Concept: Any member of a service body can petition that body for the redress of a personal grievance, without fear of reprisal.**

Although NA is a spiritual fellowship, its members are human. We have strong opinions and attitudes, and the free expression of those attitudes is our responsibility and right during the course of contributing to the decision-making process. We learned the value of considering all viewpoints in the Ninth concept. When we have been the minority voice ourselves, however, and have challenged the status-quo with our ideas and input, sometimes our freedom imprisons us. Occasionally we might become stereotyped and judged rather than listened to and understood. If we suffer hurt during the process, the Tenth Concept allows us a vehicle by which we might address our grievance without fear of reprisal.

A process for considering a Tenth Concept petition is an essential item for each service committee. Hearing such a petition is often a painful time during a committee's life together. If a process has been developed and clearly defined in the committee's guidelines or procedures, the anguish of hearing a fellow member's grievance can be lessened, and mutual respect between all parties involved should be more easily attained. As a guiding principle, the Tenth Concept is not designed to be used as a weapon against those who disagree with us. It is intended, rather, as a balance mechanism which can protect the integrity of our personal involvement in the delivery of Public Information services.

**3.11 Eleventh Concept: NA funds are to be used to further our primary purpose, and must be managed responsibly.**

The eleventh concept ties together many of the previous concepts. It requires that all financial resources be used to further the primary purpose, whether it directly or indirectly affects the addict who still suffers.

It is important to remember that it is the work, not the resources, which is important. Simply put: just because a committee has a lot of money, that doesn't mean it should take on the largest project it can imagine. Responsible management of resources, both financial and human, requires us to follow the direction of the groups and our own collective consciences when assigning priorities to service projects and tasks. Responsible management also requires that we practice regular reporting to ensure complete accountability for our financial resources.

Financial responsibility can be a difficult subject. Funds should be managed by the committee with periodic comprehensive review procedures, as well as safeguards designed to protect the individual trusted servants. Financial reports and written documentation should be kept and available for others to review.

Reports to the respective ASC, RSC, and WSC should include detailed financial statements as requested those committees.

The committee's decisions concerning how to spend the money allocated to it should always keep in mind the necessarily limited nature of our financial resources; it should also frequently monitor the effectiveness of its expenditures in furthering the primary purpose. We have found that making realistic budgets, and then living within them, is a laudable enterprise, both within the NA Fellowship, and in life in general.

**3.12 Twelfth Concept: In keeping with the spiritual nature of Narcotics Anonymous, our structure should be one of service, never of government.**

As a guiding principle, the Twelfth Concept teaches us that Public Information services should be kept within the spiritual boundaries which nurture our personal growth, and the growth of the NA fellowship. When working with one another on a committee or task team, we should express attitudes of cooperation, not dictation. As PI committees, we seek to cooperate and facilitate our public information efforts with other PI and other service committees whenever service boundaries are crossed. We never take action to "force" other PI committees to serve our will or accept our actions as justified. In fact, by following the will of the fellowship in doing PI work, we cover the range of most of the spiritual principles we've learned about in our personal recovery.

Two of these spiritual principles are especially important for PI workers. The first one is humility. Members of PI committees don't seek accolades for the work they do. PI workers carry the message anonymously, and most times, indirectly to those who still suffer. Much of the work done by PI committees is unnoticed by the average NA group member. However PI workers do see the gift of practicing humility when a Higher Power reveals the greatest gift of service; a newcomer who found NA through our PI efforts.

The principle of selfless service also rings true for PI workers. Those of us who succeed in putting what is best for NA as a whole over our personal interests, are acting in a truly selfless manner. The typical lessons experienced by most PI committee members, such as learning to let go of one's personal problems before entering a committee meeting, listening to new PI committee members with patience and respect, giving personal time and resources to educate the fellowship about the value of PI,—all truly show selfless service.

By faithfully applying the two principles, selflessness and humility, PI workers serve their respective service committees, as well as the groups, the public and the addict who still suffers. For us to best serve those who have asked us to do so, we must keep these spiritual principles in mind at all times.



## Chapter II

### Startup & Structure

If you were just elected to the position of area PI subcommittee chair, and are excited about serving the fellowship by carrying our message of recovery to the public, you may have a couple of questions on your mind. What do I do now? What should be my first project? How can I interest more people in serving on the committee? What's a budget? Do we need guidelines? What about an agenda for our first meeting? What should I put in my report to the next ASC? These are all good questions, and we'll address them in this section of the PI Handbook.

#### **1.0 What Do I Do Now?**

First, don't panic. Relax. Even though this handbook is full of exciting, fun and important projects, we do our service the same way we do our recovery, one step at a time, one project at a time. One should first look at the needs of the area, and decide which one is the most important and time-sensitive. That one should be worked on first.

In some areas, the recovery meeting list is the number one priority for their PI committee. If that is the case in your area, look at section 5 in this Handbook, "The Work Itself" and make a project plan to create or update their meeting list. That may sound complicated, but each project in "The Work Itself" already has a sample project plan included. Once the meeting list is printed, you can use its project plan as a tool for other projects. Figure out what the next project will be and start planning it.

#### **2.0 Committee Development**

Attracting more people to the PI subcommittee will always be high on your priority list. Here are a few suggestions to get more NA members on your committee:

- a) **Work hard and accomplish projects.** People are attracted to a committee that gets things done.
- b) **Make PI service attractive in announcements at meetings.** People want to serve on a committee that is fulfilling our primary purpose and carrying the message in concrete ways. They don't necessarily want to be part of a committee just because "it needs support."
- c) **Personally invite NA members to join your committee.** Although announcements are very important, it is often more effective to tell someone face to face how much he or she is needed, and about the exciting ways the PI committee is carrying the message. A personal invitation makes individual members feel important. Besides, they are!

- d) **Choose a consistent time and place to hold the subcommittee meeting.**  
Members need to have confidence that the PI committee meets regularly, at the same time and the same place, just as they expect of NA recovery meetings. Some committees list their meetings on recovery meeting lists.

### **3.0 Structure**

The most important thing to keep in mind when working on your committee's structure, guidelines, and procedures is to keep it simple. Remember, the more we talk about policy and procedures, the less time and energy we have to carry the message. Here are a few suggestions and reminders; they will be discussed at length in the remainder of this section.

#### **3.1 The Public Information Subcommittee Chair is ultimately accountable for the results of all PI projects.**

Our Fifth Concept states, "For each responsibility assigned to the service structure, a single point of decision and accountability should be clearly defined. It is important to remember that the chairperson is the person who has the responsibility to do whatever it takes to get the job done. This means that he or she must manage projects and their follow-ups actively to ensure that delegated tasks have been completed properly and on time.

#### **3.2 Each project, or portion of a project, should have one person who is responsible for its completion.**

Each person on the committee should know exactly the scope of his or her task, and its deadline for completion. If two people are assigned the same task, failure may result from two possible scenarios: first, they might disagree on exactly how to accomplish the project properly, or second, the task is not accomplished successfully simply because each of them thought the other was going to do it. Keep it simple.

#### **3.3 Two-way communication should always be open.**

Encourage each person always to speak his or her mind. It is very helpful, however, to remember to listen actively, without making judgments or becoming upset. Disagreements may still occur, but through mutually respectful discussion, differences can usually be resolved.

When delivering reports, remember that bad news is never pleasant to hear, but we must always encourage our committee members to report it as soon as possible. This way the committee as a whole can work on and resolve problems. It is always better to hear bad news sooner, rather than later.

#### **3.4 Make decisions by consensus whenever possible.**

We work together as a group. Everyone's input is helpful and necessary. The more perspectives available on an issue, the better that issue can be understood. Thorough discussion helps us to come together as a group and learn from each

other. We become more committed to each other when we know that each person's thoughts, ideas and opinions are vitally important to the committee.

In conclusion, starting a new PI subcommittee is a process, not an event. The first meeting is just the beginning. It's important that everyone on the subcommittee be kept actively involved during the process.

#### **4.0 Reports**

The PI committee chair is usually required to submit a report to the area or regional service committee. Even if it isn't required, it is still a good idea. This keeps the service committee and the groups informed about what the PI committee is doing. Sharing these experiences can also help our committees learn and grow, allowing the possibility for feedback and additional direction. A typical report should contain the following items:

- a) What the committee planned to do since the last report.
- b) What the committee actually did and who did it.
- c) What the effects were.
- d) What resources were used (money, literature, volunteers, etc.).
- e) The problems or obstacles we encountered.
- f) How the committee solved them.
- g) What the committee plans to do before the next meeting.
- h) The status of on-going projects not already reported on.
- i) Where and when the next PI committee meeting is scheduled.
- j) A description of service opportunities available.
- k) A "thank you" for the service committee's support.

#### **5.0 Committee Development and Guidelines**

Here are a few of the issues to consider when starting a committee.

1. First and foremost, is there a local service structure to support a PI subcommittee? Other issues include:
  - a) Who's doing the work?
    - i) It is important to do PI service with others. Never do it alone.
    - ii) If anyone is already doing PI service in your area without committee support, ask him or her to join you.
    - iii) Talk to PI chairs in neighboring areas in order to share their experience.

- iv) Contact the Regional PI subcommittee to learn how it can help you.
- v) Attend as many workshops and learning days as you can.
- b) Is there sufficient interest in Public Information service locally?
  - i) The level of interest and commitment to PI service by the members of the fellowship and the ASC is very important. Evidence of willingness from the ASC is seen in:
    - a) support to start a committee
    - b) funding
  - ii) Evidence of interest by the fellowship is seen by their willingness to come to your first meeting. Don't be discouraged if your committee starts small.
- 2. Preparation for the first meeting
  - a) A good place to start is by making contact with the ASC Chair. Arrange time at the ASC meeting to discuss the first planned PI committee meeting.
    - i) Be prepared by scheduling the time, place, and date of the first meeting in advance.
    - ii) Bring an attractive flyer.
  - b) It's very important to make the first meeting as convenient and as accessible as possible.
    - i) Anywhere a group might hold recovery meetings is an appropriate location. The local fellowship needs to know the location of the meeting, wherever it is held.
    - ii) Encourage as many people as possible to attend. The following are a few ways to invite NA members:
      - a) Announcements at recovery meetings
      - b) Items in the local NA newsletter
      - c) A well-designed flyer
      - d) Announcements at NA activities
      - e) GSR reports of ASC details at group business meetings
      - f) Addict to addict
  - c) Invite fellowship members with PI experience to help you get started:

- i) From nearby Areas
- ii) From Regional PI subcommittees
- iii) A World Services trusted servant who may live near by
- iv) Previous PI trusted servants
- v) Your Group Service Representative (GSR), Area Service Representative (ASR), Regional Committee Member (RCM), Regional Delegate (RD) or their alternates
- vi) Members from other subcommittees

3. The First Meeting

- a) In some places the ASC will elect the chairperson, although nominations for chair can happen either at the PI subcommittee meeting or on the floor of the ASC. In other places, the PI subcommittee will elect its own chairperson.
- b) Once the chairperson has been elected, the frequency, time, day, and location of the regular subcommittee meetings can be decided by group conscience.
- c) Acquire copies of the PI Handbook for subcommittee members, and review it as a committee.
- d) Decide on priorities, one or two projects the subcommittee wants to begin with. See Section IV, *The Work Itself: Project Planning*.
- e) Adopt guidelines for your subcommittee. See the suggestions later in this chapter. Several samples are also available in the *Samples* section of this Handbook; write your own, or modify some from neighboring areas.
  - i) An Area Service Committee is responsible for establishing and supporting a well-organized, informed PI subcommittee. The PI subcommittee, under guidance and direction of the ASC, should establish guidelines and develop a contingency plan to respond to all requests for information from individuals, agencies, or media within the geographical boundaries of the ASC.
  - ii) The Chair is the single point of accountability for the work of the subcommittee. Some subcommittees select a different representative to make reports or to be the conduit for information to the ASC or Regional PI Subcommittee.
  - iii) Each project, or portion of a project, should have one person who is responsible to get it done.

- iv) Communication should always be open.
  - v) Make decisions by consensus whenever possible.
  - vi) Some members may confuse PI work with promotion. This confusion often stems from lack of experience with our Twelve Traditions. Some subcommittees set aside time at each meeting to discuss the Traditions and Concepts and their relationship to PI service.
- f) A Regional PI Subcommittee has some additional considerations to keep in mind.
- i) When discussing a Regional PI Subcommittee, it becomes necessary to think in terms of representation from the Area PI subcommittees.
  - ii) Not every Area may be able to actively participate in the Regional PI Subcommittee, so it is very important for the Chair and Vice Chair to work closely with the ASRs or RCMs from the Areas not represented at the Regional PI Subcommittee.
  - iii) Some Regional PI Subcommittees allow a vote from each Area, while others allow anyone actively participating to vote. Some Regions have separate PI and Phoneline Subcommittees, while many have only a Regional PI subcommittee with participants from both Area PI and Phoneline subcommittees (if the Area has separate subcommittees). Your subcommittee or its RSC needs to decide what best suits your needs. (Further discussion of the pros and cons to having separate subcommittees is in the Phoneline Handbook and in Section \_\_\_\_\_ of this Handbook.
  - iv) Regional PI Subcommittees are formed by the RSC and are funded by, and accountable to that RSC, not to the Area PI committees.

#### 4. Guidelines

- a) Items to include in the guidelines are:
  - i) Statement of purpose
  - ii) Functions
  - iii) A Reference to the Twelve Steps, Twelve Traditions, and The Twelve Concepts of NA Service.
  - iv) Committee structure

- v) Responsibilities officers and members
- vi) How decisions are made
- vii) How often the committee meets
- b) As soon as the PI subcommittee agrees within itself that its guidelines are finished, the guidelines are then sent to the subcommittee's ASC or RSC for approval.

If guidelines for your committee are already in place, you won't have to spend a great deal of time and energy to create them. Remember, guidelines are supposed to describe the way the PI committee actually functions. They should help, not hinder our ability to carry the message. If changing or adding to the guidelines will help the committee do its job better, go ahead and change them. However, it is generally a bad idea to try to make the guidelines an exhaustive set of specific rules which describe every situation that could possibly come up. Have faith, keep it simple, and get on with the business of carrying the message.

#### 5. Setting Priorities for the PI Subcommittee

- a) This is the time to decide what the subcommittee will do first and to set priorities for new projects. See "The Work Itself" Section for ideas. New projects can only proceed as resources and opportunities are available. Go slowly and set attainable goals

#### 6. Structure

- a) The most important thing to keep in mind when working on structure, guidelines, procedures is to keep it simple. Remember, the more we talk about policy and procedures, the less time and energy we have to carry the message.

### 5.1 Simple Area PI Subcommittee Guidelines

#### 1. Purpose

- a) To carry the message of NA to the public through PI work as described in the Public Information Handbook.
- b) All participants shall conduct themselves in accordance with our Twelve Steps, Twelve Traditions, and the Twelve Concepts for Service in NA.

#### 2. Structure

- a) PI chair - Elected by and accountable to the ASC.
- b) Members - Any NA member who is willing to show up and help regularly.

3. Decisions
  - a) All committee decisions are made by consensus. When consensus cannot be reached, a two-thirds majority of regular members in attendance will decide the issue.
4. Meetings
  - a) The committee holds regular monthly meetings as scheduled by the chair.
  - b) Extra meetings are held whenever they seem necessary in order to accomplish particular projects.
5. Projects
  - a) All projects are planned with a budget.
  - b) A detailed report on ongoing projects is submitted to the Area Service Committee by the chair at regularly scheduled ASC meetings.

## **6.0 "Basic" or "Rural PI"**

The idea of "basic PI" is important where a service structure is new or emerging and is not yet fully developed. "Rural PI" is basic PI service—the efforts that members and groups take before a formal service committee structure has been developed. Rural PI takes place in an area where there may not be enough groups and NA members to sustain an area service structure. The area may be so spread out that the area PI committee cannot serve its geographically isolated groups.

The basic principle of rural PI is to "keep it simple". If you have only a couple of members who can do a PI project, pick a simple project which your group has the capacity to complete in a timely manner. A few simple and quick successes can build enthusiasm for PI which will ultimately help your committee to gather together enough recovering addicts to be able to take on larger projects.

In some geographic areas, only one or two NA groups may have formed, even if those particular groups may actually have been in existence for many years. In such circumstances, the groups often administer PI services themselves. A group might get a post office box so that community members may contact NA. Another group might even rent its own telephone line and set up an answering machine, in order to offer recorded information about the location and time of its local NA meeting. The whole group might decide to get together on Saturday to put up flyers around the town describing their meeting. Group members may make presentations to the local community service offices, churches and court system, in order to let them know about their NA meeting, and they may also place recovery literature in the local library.



Please refer to Section IV, *The Work Itself*, for more detailed information about this area of NA service. The Basic PI Guide, available from the World Service Office, can also give you more information, and is translated into many languages.

## **7.0 Funding and Budgeting**

NA subcommittee members often argue about money. It is often easy to lose focus on why we do service in the first place while arguing about money. One good way to minimize these arguments is to plan an annual budget. We always work best when we understand that we must work within our available resources.

Before we discuss our budgets and how to fund them, we must clearly understand the principles NA uses to manage its funds. Members may want to read the Seventh Tradition sections of the *Basic Text* and *It Works - How and Why* as well as the discussion about our Twelve Traditions and the Twelve Concepts for NA Service in Chapter 1 this Handbook. It is especially important to study Concept 11.

### **7.1 Developing a Budget**

7.1.1 If the PI committee had a budget in the prior year, look it over and evaluate it. Some question to answer are:

- a) Did the committee complete all of the projects it had planned?
- b) How did the amount budgeted to the various categories compare to what was actually spent?
- c) Is the committee planning to do more, less or about the same number of projects as it did during the prior year?

7.1.2 Take each project that your committee is planning and estimate the expenses which you expect for each one. Some of the expense categories that you might list are:

- a) Printing or copies
- b) Literature
- c) Postage
- d) Envelopes
- e) Phone bills
- f) Professional event registration
- g) Travel

7.1.3 It is especially important to remember the following when preparing our budgets and considering the issues of funding:

- a) PI committees are not autonomous, they are directly responsible to the service committee they serve and ultimately to the groups of NA.

- b) We must keep accurate and detailed records, receipts, and provide regular written financial reports to the committees we serve.
- c) We must carefully consider all spending decisions, taking care to manage NA funds responsibly.
- d) We should discuss financial guidelines with our committee's treasurer, and follow these guidelines.

Once your committee has established a financial plan for the projects it intends to do in the upcoming year, the service committee funding your PI efforts will need to approve it.

## **7.2 Funding**

In the best of all possible worlds, all the funding for our service work would come from our Seventh Tradition. The individual group members contribute to their basket, and that money is eventually passed down to the service committees that are directly responsible to those they serve.

The reality is that many PI subcommittees rely on their members' contribution of personal resources to fully realize their overall goals. How much and what an individual gives is their own decision. However we do not and should not contribute more than we can afford for our own personal well being.

## **7.3 Fundraising**

The primary purpose of the PI committee is to carry the message of recovery in NA to the public and, ultimately, to the addicts who still suffer. It is not the purpose of PI to raise funds for NA. PI committees must never accept donations from organizations or individuals outside of NA.

However, area or regional PI committees sometimes raise funds for a specific PI project. For example: one area has a picnic in the park each year to raise funds for a billboard. Another area has a "breakfast for books" fund-raiser in which each person who comes to the breakfast (which, itself, is self-supporting) buys one or more *Basic Texts*. These books are subsequently donated to the PI and H&I subcommittees for use in their work.

The PI committee does not accept funding from any group or individual in NA. All funds come through the Area Service Committee or Regional Service Committee. Fund-raising activities should only be undertaken with permission of the ASC or RSC. The Activities subcommittee will occasionally hold a function to raise funds for the PI committee.

## **8.0 PI Subcommittees: Their Place in the Service Structure**

### **8.1. Groups**

PI committees can help educate the fellowship by involving our groups. We can raise the fellowship's awareness of Public Information service – and its

spiritual rewards – through direct communication with our groups. When we educate the groups directly, we ultimately increase their involvement with Public Information service.

### **8.1.1 Group Presentations**

One way PI committees can interact with the fellowship is by making a PI presentation to the group itself. This can be done at the group's business meeting or at a specially scheduled meeting. We start by announcing, through flyers and at meetings that, upon request, our PI committee is available for group presentations. We can use set formats for presentations at group business meetings, or specially scheduled meetings, to share our PI experiences. *(A sample flyer and sample format are included in Section VII – Samples).*

### **8.1.2 Utilizing the Group**

Members of NA groups can, and often do, perform some basic PI work to help carry the message of recovery. Groups sometimes help us by posting bulletins, distributing meeting schedules and fliers within the community, and by assisting staff PI booths at health fairs.

Although groups may be useful by helping PI committees communicate within the fellowship and with the general public, they should certainly focus their chief efforts on their own primary purpose. It is extremely important that groups not make statements or commitments which overstep their abilities. Our spiritual foundation of anonymity can be seriously damaged by group members acting alone, or at least independently of their group and the fellowship.

### **8.1.3 Group PI Liaison**

Some areas involve groups directly in our PI committees through the use of a Group PI Liaison person. Such a person can provide a direct link between the PI committee and groups but certainly doesn't replace communication at the area service committee.

## **8.2 Area PI Subcommittees**

The Area PI Committee is a subcommittee of the Area Service Committee (ASC). It serves the ASC, the fellowship, the groups and the community. The members of the Area PI Committee are responsible for answering requests for information and presentations, both from the public and from the fellowship. The Area PI Committees must be ready to respond to referrals from their local Helpline, from the Regional PI Committee, and from other subcommittees. It also reaches out to the public through mailings and phone calls. *These subjects will be discussed in greater detail in Section III, "Communications" and Section IV, "The Work Itself."*

Billboards, Public Service Announcements (PSAs), bulletins, flyers, and bus posters are some other ways in which Area PI committees communicate with the public. *These topics are discussed at length in Section IV, "The Work Itself."*

The Area PI Committee is also a key member of the Regional PI Committee. Area PI Committees help promote effective communications within the fellowship by regularly supplying written reports. Through interaction with other areas at the Regional PI Committee meetings, Area PI Committees help each other by sharing their experiences and resources.

### **8.3 Communications with other subcommittees**

During our service experiences, we may occasionally come across a situation which directly or indirectly involves another subcommittee. It is important that we obtain and record all the necessary information for referral to the appropriate subcommittee. We have found that the development of a form for such referrals is a worthwhile practice. *A sample of such a form is included in Section VII – Samples.*

Another effective means for increasing communication and improving the working relationship between service committees involves simply getting together in a social setting outside service meetings. *For further details on Communications with other subcommittees, please see entitled, "Working with Other Committees." in this chapter.*

### **8.4 The Regional PI Subcommittee**

The Regional PI Subcommittee serves the Regional Service Committees (RSC), the fellowship, the groups and the community.

In addition, the RSC PI subcommittee is responsible for coordinating area PI efforts and for cooperating with other regions in joint PI efforts. The RSC PI subcommittee is the communication link between the areas, other regions and the World Services. This means that the RSC PI subcommittee should provide all information and material developed for Public Information at World Services to their areas.

Area and Regional PI Committees can help each other by sharing resources and experience. Area and Regional PI Committees can assist each other by providing the personnel and/or experience necessary to give a PI presentation or staff a PI booth. They can also support each other at workshops and learning days. In some cases, the financial burden involved with larger projects may be shared by several area PI committees.

Here is an example of such mutual cooperation. At the regional PI meeting there was much discussion about placing a PI billboard somewhere within the region. A location was agreed upon which would be seen by the communities of two neighboring area PI committees. The cost of the billboard was \$300 for three months, far exceeding the budgets of either area PI committee. They agreed that

each Area PI Committee would contribute \$150 (\$50 per month for three months) in support of the PI billboard project. The area PI committees involved also agreed to share the setup footwork. One area PI committee offered to contact the billboard company, while the other one agreed to create and submit the artwork for the billboard.

Regional PI subcommittees can respond to inquiries or requests received from outlying areas, or ASCs without a PI Committee, and can assist by forwarding such requests to neighboring ASCs that are willing to help.

### **8.5. World PI Committee**

*(Please note that as of this writing, February 1998, World Services is considering sweeping changes to its structure at the next WSC. The following information may not be applicable after the 1998 World Service Conference meeting. The final copy of this Handbook will be changed to reflect the decisions made at that Conference before the Handbook is submitted for Fellowship approval in the 1999 Conference Agenda Report. The text provided is informational, with those thoughts in mind - WSC PI Committee.)*

#### **8.5.1 World Service Conference Public Information Committee**

The World Service Conference Public Information Committee (WSC PI) serves and is responsible to the fellowship through the World Service Conference (WSC). When the World Service Office (WSO) receives information about events or requests about PI subjects, these are usually forwarded to WSC PI. The WSC PI committee, through its members, then forwards the information to the closest Regional PI committee which may be affected by the request or event. In cases where there is no local PI contact, WSC PI will contact the local fellowship through their Area or Regional Service Committee.

#### **8.5.2 Communicating with the WSC PI Committee**

In the interest of shared experience, it is important that area and regional PI committees also communicate with WSC PI. This can be accomplished by contacting a member of WSC PI and establishing a service rapport by exchanging ideas.

The opportunity to participate in WSC PI projects is another advantage of establishing communication with WSC PI. Area and Regional PI committees can have direct input, and receive information, concerning Public Information projects taking place throughout the world.

It is very important that your Area and Regional PI Committees register with the WSO. This gives the WSO and WSC-PI current contact information. Once registered, your committee will receive regular mailings from the WSO. It is also necessary to notify the WSO in the event of any changes on the committee with respect to leadership and/or the contact person. *Communication with the WSO can be done through the use of the Committee Registration Form found in Section VIII – Resources*

## **9.0 Working With Other Committees**

### **9.1 PI and the Activities Committee**

The Activities committee can be a great deal of help with planning learning days or other events. It is always a good idea to ask for help from trusted servants who have experience in putting on dances, picnics, or other activities.

### **9.2 PI and the Convention Committee**

We sometimes make joint presentations with H&I at conventions in order to share our combined experience, strength and hope with the fellowship and with the public. The main purpose of having a visible presence at the convention itself is to let members of the NA fellowship know about the service opportunities that are available in both H&I and PI. It is important to have someone on your PI committee attend the convention subcommittee meetings. Titles of some subcommittees which might be relevant to PI are "programming," "hotels," or "convention information" committees.

#### **9.2.1 Programming**

The programming committee usually coordinates the main speaker meetings, the marathon meetings, and all of the workshops. It's the workshops in which we are usually interested. The PI committee should work with the programming committee in order to efficiently schedule time and space to hold workshops appropriate to the size of the local fellowship and the public information needs of the local committees. For example, if your committee is just starting out and the local fellowship is small, you might want to have only one workshop about "What is PI and why it is important." If you belong to a larger fellowship, with more established PI committees, you might have several workshops about different topics like, PSAs, Web pages, phonedlines, mailing campaigns, etc.

Here are a few suggestions for smoothly working with the programming committee:

- a) Begin attending programming committee meetings as soon as possible, and continue until the end of the convention.
- b) Find out how the committee works. Will you be able to select your own speakers or simply make recommendations to the programming committee for their approval?
- c) Don't overextend yourself.
- d) Find qualified speakers.
- e) Make sure that the workshops are listed in the convention program.
- f) Make sure that appropriate signs are made.
- g) Stay in contact with your speakers so that they don't forget to come.

### 9.2.2 Host or Hotel Committee

The main reason to interact with the host committee is to ensure that you have a PI booth at the convention. The purpose of this booth is to focus on fellowship outreach, giving NA members a taste of what PI is, why it is important, how much fun it is, and how each person can help. Try to get a good spot for your booth, out in the main lobby where people congregate. The best locations are near the food, tape sales, merchandise sales, registration or convention information areas. Try to make the booth as interesting and inviting as possible, so people will want to stop by and ask questions.

Some suggestions:

- a) Be polite and courteous to everyone.
- b) Make sure that the booth is manned at all times in which traffic is likely. Your schedule can probably match the convention registration schedule, or that of the merchandising subcommittee.
- c) Two hour increments seem to work well when scheduling booth duty slots.
- d) Make sure that all booth volunteers are trained in what they need to know, so they are comfortable being there. Make sure that they smile, are excited, give a lot of hugs, and talk to as many people as they can about PI—especially the people they don't already know.
- e) If you can get a video cassette recorder and television, play the "Just For Today" video or a tape of public service announcements in order to grab people's attention.
- f) Consider inviting members of the H&I committee to share the booth with you.
- g) Make sure that there is a secure place to store the booth and any other equipment when it is not in use. Also ensure that anyone who will be required to store the booth or its equipment knows how and where to do so.
- h) Have information available about current ongoing PI projects and how people can help.
- i) Have sign-up sheets for PI work and/or projects. Follow-up within a few days on the contacts made at the convention.
- j) Have appropriate informational pamphlets available.
- k) If you have an unmanned booth, make sure that it is checked regularly, kept clean, and is well stocked with handouts.
- l) Made sure all booth volunteers know the media contingency plan. *For more information on dealing with the media at conventions, please refer to xxxx.*



### 9.2.3 Convention information

Our main goal is to have a good plan for communicating with the media. Inaccurate or misleading information in a news story can have a devastating impact on a local fellowship. It also affects NA as a whole. Keep in mind our 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."

Develop a statement with the convention committee regarding the media. Make sure that it is printed in the program and that it is read aloud at each main meeting. A suggested statement in communicating with the media:

*We want to remind you that anonymity serves a two-fold function: it protects individual members from the pressure or temptation to speak for Narcotics Anonymous as a whole, as well as protecting our Fellowship from being judged by the words or actions of one recovering individual. It is more than not having your picture taken or using your last name.*

*Everything that you do at the convention is a reflection on the NA program. If you are approached by members of the media, we ask that you do not grant an interview, answer questions, or in any other ways make statements for NA as a whole. Please refer or escort media representatives to the Information table located at \_\_\_\_\_. The Public Information Subcommittee has been trained, as part of their service to this fellowship, to facilitate communications with members of the media while staying within the spirit of our Traditions.*

### 9.2.4 Press Kits

In case the media comes to your convention, be prepared. Make sure that you have a several informational packets available for the press which provide background information about Narcotics Anonymous. Your packets should contain information about the local NA fellowship as well as about NA as a whole. Suggested contents are: *NA: A Resource in Your Community* or *Facts About Narcotics Anonymous*, *NA and Community Partnerships*, *Am I an Addict?*, and *What is Narcotics Anonymous?* You should also include a local meeting directory, phone-line numbers, and a copy of the "Communicating With the Media" statement printed directly above.

### 9.2.5 Interview Contingency Plan

You will need an interview contingency plan for your committee. This will require training several people to be comfortable in giving interviews to the media. See Section IV, "The Work Itself," for guidance concerning interviews. The potential interviewees will need to be available and easily accessible during the convention. Some committees use walkie talkies, beepers, or even cellular phones so that booth volunteers or convention trusted servants can find the selected interviewees. Others make sure the interviewees leave a written

schedule at the booth of their location at all times. Another option is to schedule interviews with the media after the convention.

### **9.2.6 Press Releases**

You may want to provide the media with press releases before and/or after the event. Doing this before the event would increase the probability of media attendance. Press releases are proactive and increase the probability that accurate information about NA and the event will be reported. Do not provide press releases without the consent of the convention committee. We need to respect the convention committee and work together with them. For more information on press releases, see Section IV, "The Work Itself."

### **9.3 PI and the Service Office**

Some areas and regions have local service offices which distribute literature and may also provide additional services. These offices provide the public with a physical presence of NA in the community. Using a service office as the single point of contact with the public lends consistency to our public information efforts:

- a) The public can call an office instead of a person's home.
- b) Some service offices have daytime business hours that are more convenient for professionals.
- c) Public Information committee minutes and archives can be stored at the office.
- d) Subcommittee meetings can be held at the office in some cases.
- e) The service office can coordinate mailings with the PI committee.
- f) A special worker, or volunteer, may refer professional contacts to the PI committee.
- g) The service office may provide a central location for the phoneline.

Some services offices can help the Public Information committee in a variety of ways. It is very important to stay in close contact with the office's board of directors. Communicate with the board regularly, letting it know what your committee needs, or simply forward newly-thought of ideas for cooperation. The more often your committee communicates with the board, the better working relationship you will have. New ideas and projects will develop as you work together, and trust builds from consistent communications.

Some suggestions:

- a) Maintain an attitude of working together on a team with the board of directors. We all have the same goal—to carry the message to the addict who still suffers. Requests tend to be received much more readily than demands.

- b) If the office has regular interaction with the public, discuss guidelines for effectively meeting the public's needs while working within our Twelve Traditions with the office staff and volunteers.

## **H&I/PI COOPERATION**

### **Rules of thumb for cooperation between H&I and PI**

#### **9.4 PI and the Hospitals & Institutions Committee**

~~Remember, we all belong to the same fellowship and our primary purpose is the same no matter which committee we belong to.~~

~~Communication between the two subcommittees ahead of time (that means planning together how to proceed) will help avoid problems and promote unity.~~

~~Flexibility (something most of us *many* addicts don't have much practice at) will allow for cooperative efforts that respond to the needs of the institution while staying within our Traditions.~~

~~"I can't, but we can" applies to subcommittee members and subcommittees.~~

~~Work together. When we don't, we divert ourselves from our primary purpose!~~

~~There may be instances where the most effective and productive presentation can only be accomplished by a combined effort of representatives from PI and H&I. This, of course, is a perfect application of our Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions—working together to carry the message of NA recovery to the still suffering addict.~~

~~Examples:~~

- ~~a) A hospital treatment center calls for a presentation to their doctors and nurses—  
PI~~
- ~~b) A hospital treatment center calls for a presentation to their clients—H&I.~~
- ~~c) A call comes requesting information, maybe a meeting, doesn't know—PI and  
H&I.~~

~~If a PI subcommittee doesn't exist in an area or region, H&I subcommittees may take on many of the responsibilities generally performed by PI subcommittees. Ask your ASC/RSC for support and information. If there isn't a PI subcommittee in your area or region, start one.~~

~~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. The approach with non-addicts differs from the more personal sharing appropriate to talks given to addicts.~~

The Public Information and the Hospitals & Institutions committees are of great importance to the Fellowship. Both serve the Fellowship to reach the still suffering addict by presenting the NA message in different forums. The PI committee "reaches out" to the addict through public forums while the H&I Committee "reaches in" by facilitating presentation panels to addicts in hospitals and other institutions who do not have full access to regular Narcotics Anonymous meetings.

There are situations when these two committees' purpose and method will come together for a common project to serve the Fellowship. This can be best accomplished by cooperative efforts for shared communications and shared presentations.

Examples:

- a) A hospital calls for a presentation to their doctors and nurses.
- b) A treatment center calls for a presentation to their staff and clients.
- c) H&I subcommittee reports communication problems with staff at a prison. The staff has misunderstandings about what NA is about.

If a PI subcommittee doesn't exist in an area or region, H&I subcommittees may take on many of the responsibilities generally performed by PI subcommittees. Ask your ASC/RSC for support and information. If there isn't a PI subcommittee in your area or region, start one.

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## **Guides for H&I Subcommittees**

### **9.4.1 Common Guidelines for H&I Committees**

All H&I committees (WSC, regional, area and local) should remain in frequent contact with their counterparts in PI.

Whenever possible, a liaison should be selected by the *H&I* committee to attend any PI meetings held within their area or region, so that a spirit of ~~absolute~~ cooperation can be fostered which will better enable us to carry out our primary purpose.

The purpose of an H&I meeting is to carry the NA message of recovery to addicts in hospitals or other institutions who do not have full access to regular Narcotics Anonymous meetings. H&I Panels, except for those in longer term facilities, are intended to simply introduce those attending to some of the basics of the NA program.

When ~~local NA members or groups of groups see~~ *recognize* the need for an H&I meeting at a facility, the local H&I committee should be contacted. H&I meetings are a function of the H&I subcommittee. Individuals should not take it upon themselves to do H&I work. Groups should only do it in places where an area H&I committee hasn't been formed yet and seek guidance from their regional H&I committee. ~~At these meetings, outside participation should be limited to the panel members who are invited in advance.~~

For a more comprehensive look at Hospitals and Institutions service work, ~~see~~ *read* the Hospitals & Institutions Handbook, which is available from the World Service Office.

## **Guides for PI Subcommittees**

### **9.4.2 Suggestions for PI Committee Cooperation:**

PI subcommittees should always check with the H&I subcommittee before making initial contact with any ~~H&I type~~ facility. These facilities are usually one of the following:

hospital, methadone clinic, jail, prison, ~~detox~~ *detoxification* center, or *drug* treatment facility ~~program~~. This Contact with *the* H&I *subcommittee* will determine whether H&I services are already being provided and if not, whether H&I is able to provide them if requested.

PI presentations are simply an information giving activity—whom and what NA is. ~~We do not give in-service training on addiction or drug abuse.~~ Whenever making a presentation, PI members ~~must~~ *should* have the name of an H&I contact to supply to the facility if it becomes apparent that an H&I meeting is requested or required. ~~Don't~~ Do not commit H&I services. *Refer requests for H&I services to the proper H&I subcommittee.*

## **The Spirit of Cooperation**

### **9.4.3 Communication and Cooperation between PI and H&I**

~~At the world, regional and area levels, PI committees and subcommittees are working to develop materials to use in presentations to people in the helping professions.~~

~~H&I subcommittees are working diligently to better carry the message of recovery to addicts in hospitals and institutional settings.~~

Cooperation and flexibility are the keys that will allow H&I ~~subcommittees~~ and PI subcommittees at all levels to ~~keep~~ *be* informed on what is being done by other subcommittees in their area or region. ~~If~~ *When* we work together, we can accomplish any task. Unity of purpose is vital to our efforts.

In some geographical areas H&I and PI have started cooperating by sending a liaison from one committee to the meetings of the other committee. This is done on an regular basis to ensure that both committees carry a unified message of recovery. The use of liaisons is also more efficient, preventing duplication of work and improving communication. NA's public image will be improved when we present a unified image of our fellowship to the community at large.

Some possible ways to cooperate and improve participation are:

- a) Schedule monthly H&I and PI subcommittee meetings in the some location.
- b) Schedule some meetings so that both committees meet together.
- c) Schedule meetings so that each committee meets separately but at the same time.

Some possible benefits of cooperation are:

- a) Increased interest and participation (on both committees)
- b) Ability to share different points of view
- c) Increased communication
- d) Continuity in project planning

- e) A more effective service structure

Some specific examples of common benefits are:

- a) H&I people volunteer to take phonenumber shifts
- b) Members of both committees learn to do presentations together.
- c) PI and Phonenumber volunteers find ways to fit an H&I commitment into their schedule.
- d) Offers an efficient way for new NA members to learn he or she can best fit into the local service structure.

Any efforts which improve communication and cooperation between the two committees will serve to carry the message more efficiently both to the still suffering addict and to the public who have yet to learn about Narcotics Anonymous.

Some areas and regions have been successful with the following joint efforts:

- a) Conducting Learning Days.
- b) Presenting single topic workshops.
- c) Conducting workshops at conventions.
- d) Placing NA literature in facilities served by H&I, such as jails and prisons.
- e) Maintaining a booth at events, such as a community resource fair.
- f) Maintaining a booth at jails and prisons on visiting days.
- g) Providing literature and meeting schedule in recovery facilities.
- h) Supporting joint PI/H&I presentations to parole and probation departments.
- i) Supporting joint PI/H&I presentations to corrections departments.
- j) Providing statewide or regional phone lists for facilities served by H&I.

#### **9.4.4 How can PI Enhance H&I Efforts?**

PI has the responsibility of creating a greater awareness that H&I is bringing the NA message into an institution. This can be done in a variety of ways.

1. Through panel presentations to correction officers' training classes.
  - a) Explain how a NA H&I meeting is conducted.
  - b) Provide samples of our literature.
  - c) Describe how and why we are different from other twelve-step fellowships.
2. Through panel presentations to the counselors, parole and education.

- a) Inform them what days or nights NA brings H&I meetings into their institution.
  - b) Explain how a NA H&I meeting is conducted.
  - c) Provide samples of our literature.
  - d) Explain that they may feel free to refer inmates or patients to attend NA H&I meetings.
  - e) Provide meeting schedules and phone lists.
3. Through presentations to pre-release and other types of inmates or patients.
- a) Inform them what days or nights NA brings H&I meetings into the institution.
  - b) Describe what is appropriate conduct and sharing in an NA meeting
  - c) Explain what they may get out of attending NA meetings.
  - d) Explain how to find NA when they leave the institution.
  - e) Provide meeting schedules and phone lists.
  - f) Have a plentiful supply of appropriate literature, such as *Am I an Addict? Staying Clean on the Outside, Welcome to Narcotics Anonymous*, etc.)

PI committees may do presentations to the staff in recovery homes, psychiatric facilities, detoxification centers, homeless shelters and similar facilities which may currently or potentially host H&I meetings. When H&I does not have the resources to support meetings at certain facilities, PI can step in to bring information about NA to the clients.

- a) Inform the staff what NA does and does not do.
- b) Explain what the clients may expect in a NA meeting.
- c) Provide appropriate literature to the staff, such as *In Times of Illness, NA, A Resource In Your Community, Welcome to NA, Am I an Addict, Some Facts About NA*.
- d) Describe the difference between NA and other twelve-step programs.

## 9.5 PI and the Phoneline Committee Cooperation

Phoneline cooperation in areas where PI and Phonelines are separate committees is vital to keeping open the lines of communication between NA and the community. The phoneline may provide the first contact both for addicts seeking recovery and also for professionals desiring information. It is important that phoneline volunteers have a basic understanding of the NA service

structure. It is helpful to have procedures in place which explain clearly how to refer calls from the community to the appropriate committee members. Please refer to the Phonline Handbook for a discussion of handling business calls and establishing an area or regional contingency plan.

In some areas the Phonline and PI committees require their liaisons to attend the other committee's meetings. This ensures clear communication between the two committees.

## **9.6 Combined PI/ Phonline Committee**

Areas or regions should give considerable thought to whether or not they need separate PI and Phonline committees. There is no right and wrong decision. Situations may change and the area or region may need to re-evaluate its decision at a later date.

In some areas it may be an inappropriate use of human and financial resources to have separate PI and phonline committees. Some of the considerations which may enter into the decision are:

- a) Funding.
- b) Area size and geographic boundaries.
- c) Number of calls received per month.
- d) Type of technology being utilized for phonline
- e) Availability of volunteers.

Some areas share services with other areas. In this situation, the geographic boundaries of each area are smaller than the geographic area shared by the phonline. If the areas have independent PI committees, the phonline would be better served by a multi-area or regional phonline committee.

Please refer to the Phonline Handbook for further discussion on this issue and before making any decision affecting phonelines.

## **10.0 Contingency Plans**

### **PUBLIC INFORMATION CONTINGENCY PLAN**

#### **Your Area or Region**

It is essential that all members of the area/region know what procedures are to be followed when Narcotics Anonymous is contacted by a print or broadcast news entity. This plan will outline how such contacts are to be managed and should be distributed widely throughout the area/region.

~~Additional details on why and how a contingency plan should be used can be found on pages 2, 3, and 4, PI at Various Levels of Service.~~

Any member receiving a request for information from a media contact must immediately ~~call~~ *contact* one of the following:



1. The area or regional PI chairperson or vice chairperson;

**OR**

2. The area or regional chairperson and vice chairperson.

One of the individual(s) listed above should respond to the media contact as soon as possible, preferably within the work day or within an eight hour period.

The following information should be determined:

1. What audience level the exposure is likely to receive. It is important to understand how the information we give and/or contact we provide is going to be used. Is it going to be used in a local, regional or national broadcast or print story? There are circumstances when a story may be used in a national, regional or local area. It is also important at that point to determine if the coverage will overlap into other areas and regions, or if it needs to be handled at a world level. The caller should be asked politely to help us in responding by giving us the range of the intended audience.
2. What is the scheduling and deadline information the individual is working with in the accumulation of information for media use? In the instructions following, a different approach must be followed if there is a 48-hour or less deadline. Politely ask their help. Making our response positive and successful can only be done if we know their schedule deadlines.

Upon gaining the necessary information, the responsible individual must decide whether the media request is to be handled by the area or region. Some requests may need to be coordinated with or forwarded on to world level PI

*NOTE: It is always advisable to contact the ~~World Service Conference PI Committee~~ **WSO Public Information Coordinator** to discuss any media requests which may result in film crews and/or TV interviews with addicts.*

If the determination is made that the area or region will handle the media request, follow up will be made depending on the deadline schedule.

AREA OR REGIONAL MEDIA AUDIENCE WITH LESS THAN 48-HOUR LEAD TIME. Contacts involving such short time require immediate action that to some degree necessitates a lack of communication and coordination within the fellowship among all the trusted servants who might otherwise be involved. One or more of the individuals listed above should act for that individual service arm, responding with whatever assistance they can provide.

AREA OR REGIONAL MEDIA AUDIENCE WITH MORE THAN 48-HOUR LEAD TIME. One of the individuals as listed above should respond by assigning an individual to be part of the team to work with the media contact. The assigned individual(s) should be named by your individual PI subcommittee and be the most knowledgeable and experienced members available.

For electronic media contacts wherein television or film crews will be involved, more specific guidelines are required that involve adherence to our tradition of personal anonymity.

- Area or regional PI chairperson or vice chairperson
- Your ~~ASR or RSR~~ *Regional Committee Member or Regional Delegate*

Those individuals listed above should assign members with the most training and experience in working with the electronic media contacts.

## **WORLD SERVICE CONTINGENCY PLAN**

This outlines how contacts with Narcotics Anonymous by national or *multi-national* ~~international~~ electronic or print media contact should be handled.

It is very important to ask every national or *multi-national* ~~international~~ electronic media contact the following:

- What is the audience exposure likely to be? (Will it be a local, regional, national, or international broadcast or print story?)
- How is the information going to be used? (Is the context of the article or program appropriate for our message of recovery?)
- What are the scheduling and deadline requirements?

As an ~~international~~ *a world wide* fellowship we need specific national or regional guidelines to ensure maximum support for members handling the media contacts. The trusted servants that are specified in these plans should have the most extensive experience possible in both public information work and in personal recovery. The principles contained in the guidelines below may be adapted to the needs of Narcotics Anonymous communities around the world. These should be adhered to in those countries where the trusted servants listed below are available.

### **National or ~~International~~ *Multi-National* Media Coverage That Does Not Affect a Member's Anonymity**

Responsibility for responding to media requests shall be assigned to the WSO PI Coordinator in conjunction with *trusted servants of World Services and executive management at the WSO.* ~~any one of the persons listed below:~~

1. ~~The WSC PI Chairperson or Vice Chairperson. If they cannot be reached the WSC Chairperson or Vice Chairperson should be reached.~~
2. ~~The World Service Office Administrative Assistant or the World Service Office Executive Director.~~
3. ~~The Board of Trustees member assigned to WSC PI and/or the Chairperson of the WSB. If both of these are unavailable the trustee geographically closest to the media contact should be reached.~~

### **National or ~~International~~ *Multi-National* Coverage Which Affects a Member's Anonymity**

Contacts involving a member's anonymity require prompt response from every World Service branch. One or more of the individuals listed above should be contacted to respond with whatever assistance they can provide. These types of media contact

may require the presence of *a trusted servant for World Services*. ~~trustee or WSC-PI committee members assigned to that region.~~

Certain types of electronic media coverage involving video or film crews may require the presence of a non-addict ~~trustee~~ *designated by the service structure* to be interviewed on camera in order to ensure protection of our member's anonymity.

## Chapter III

# Communications

In this section we will define and discuss different ways to communicate with the public, the fellowship, and within our own service structure.

Clear and concise communications are essential in PI service. Whether answering a request for information, or doing a presentation to the fellowship, it is necessary that we maintain consistency in our responses, and in our message.

### **1.0 Behavior**

#### **1.1 Appropriate Behavior**

Who we are, what we do, and how we act creates an image of NA. It also influences how other people see us, and how we see ourselves. We are not simply members of NA who serve on a committee. We are responsible for the image of NA that we convey to the public and to the fellowship.

We can improve relationships for our fellowship by taking care to treat everyone with courtesy and respect. We need to project a positive image of NA so that individuals will feel comfortable directing addicts seeking recovery to our meetings.

While no one person represents NA, the general public may perceive the things we say and do as being representative of the behavior of members in Narcotics Anonymous. Whether we are interacting within the fellowship, or out in the public's eye, we need to ensure that we behave in a manner that is attractive.

#### **1.2 Carrying the Message**

While some personal disclosure is encouraged, we must keep our focus on a clear NA message. We should avoid telling "drug stories," speaking only about how, through NA, we have found a new way to live, free from active addiction. Our stories should not focus on who we were in as individuals in the past, or are now in the present, but rather on how we became recovering addicts through the Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions of NA.

It is important to remember that ours is a program of attraction, not promotion. Our attraction is not that we get back our jobs, our families, and our material possessions – things which we may have lost during our active addiction. Our attractions, instead, are the attractions of the NA program itself – the fact that it works, it's free, and it's available to help the addict that still suffers.

Our behavior is a direct representation of Narcotics Anonymous. We need to be aware of this fact when we carry the message of recovery while representing the fellowship.

### 1.3 How We Dress

Our image is also affected by how we dress at PI events. It would be just as inappropriate to wear jeans and a T-shirt to a presentation for a panel of professional counselors, as it would be to wear a suit to a high school assembly presentation. Never wear ripped or torn clothing, or jewelry which sends a message of affiliation with another organization or product. *Please see Section 5, "The Work Itself: Presentations" for more information.*

### 1.4 Image

When thinking about issues concerning our image, we need to ask ourselves the following questions:

*What do we look like to the newcomer when he or she walks into a recovery meeting, or service meeting?*

What a newcomer or a visitor sees when he or she enters one of our recovery meetings is an important aspect of the image we portray. As PI workers and also as members of the fellowship, we should be doubly ready to welcome them. By drawing upon our PI experience, we can help answer questions which explain the program and our Traditions. We can also hand newcomers a meeting list, and provide information about our literature.

What do newcomers to service experience when they attend one of our service meetings? Do they see a "circus" or an organized service gathering? Again, we can draw on our previous PI experiences. By applying the Twelve Traditions and Twelve Concepts in our recovery, we can be a positive "power of example" when serving the fellowship. As PI workers, we must always maintain an attractive and positive image of service to the fellowship.

*What do we do for each other within the fellowship?*

PI workers must always be ready to assist the fellowship, and be willing to offer direction. One of the purposes of PI committees is to help educate the fellowship. We learn how to practice the Twelve Traditions during our service experiences, and can share this experience with others in our fellowship. When questions arise at our recovery or service meetings concerning the application of a certain Tradition, we may use what we have learned to inform and educate others. We can also share our experience through the example we set by following the spiritual principles found in the Traditions. It is important to remember, however, that no one is the final authority and none of us has all the answers.

*How do we deal with internal controversy?*

The way we deal with controversies which occur within our fellowship and our service structure is directly related to our application of the Twelve Traditions, the Twelve Concepts, and the spiritual principles they contain. We should remember to guide, not lead, and to engage the members of the fellowship and service structure with the spirit – not the law – of the Traditions and the Concepts.

*How do we work together within our subcommittees at the area, regional, and world levels?*

Our ability to communicate is the cornerstone of serving effectively with others in our service structure. It is important to be proficient in our reporting. We should also be prepared to respond efficiently to requests for assistance. *Later in this section we will discuss specifics concerning communications within our service structure (Section III. B. - PI Committees/The NA Member / Group / ASC / RSC /WSC).*

## **2.0 Verbal Communications**

### **2.1 The Language We Use**

The language we use as PI workers is as important a part of the image of NA we present as anything else we do. Our language is not just what we say, but also how we say it. It is necessary to remember that we may be seen by the general public as representatives of NA. We may also be seen by members of the fellowship as an example of what it means to be in service.

The language we use at public information events is an important part of the image we project. 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 must also remember not to use program talk. The sort of NA language we use in our recovery meetings is foreign to non-addicts, and should be avoided during presentations to the public.

We should also be aware of the language we use at recovery and service meetings. Are we loving and caring when we share, or do we attack what somebody has said or done? Do we wait until after the meeting to offer our experience concerning someone's behavior in a meeting, or do we embarrass that person in front of everyone? Do we share our experiences concerning the application of the spiritual principles found in the Steps and Traditions, or do we cite tradition violations? While we are not perfect, we must remain aware that our actions are not only expressions of our personal recovery, but also of our PI committee as well.

We must also remember that our image is often closely examined before and after our PI presentations, not only during the presentations themselves. We

cannot afford to be rude or argumentative or use profanity. If we should accidentally offend someone, we should apologize immediately.

## **2.2 Speaking to Non-Addicts**

Much of our communication with the general public involves talking to non-addicts. We need to be aware of our audience, and be receptive to its needs. When interacting with the public, we must carry a clear message of our Fellowship's principles of recovery.

It is important to keep our traditions in mind when speaking to non-addicts. PI members must have a clear knowledge of our program and its Twelve Traditions. It takes practice to learn to use and apply the Traditions. *We have reserved a portion of this Handbook (Section I - Guiding Principles) for a discussion of the Traditions, and how they impact PI service.*

## **2.3 Telephone Calls**

In many cases, our initial contact with professionals is made through a phone call. Professionals may reach us by calling our local helpline, or the local service office. We should respond to their requests in a timely manner, because this may be the first and only impression of NA which they receive. We have found that the most effective means of response is to return the phone call directly to the person who made the call. Our credibility as a practical recovery program is enhanced when we answer requests in a professional manner.

PI committees can also use phone calls proactively by contacting professionals and asking them if they are interested in receiving information about Narcotics Anonymous. *See Section V. - The Work Itself, for guidance with telephone projects.*

We should remember that phone calls are an important informational supplement, both for giving and for receiving information. Do not overlook the use of the telephone in your PI work. A phone call can save time in our responses and add a personal touch to our contact with professionals.

### **2.3.1 The Phone Conversation**

It is important that we plan our conversation before contacting professionals. We do not necessarily need to use a script, but here are some points which should be considered during the conversation:

- a) Be prepared. Outline the conversation ahead of time. Know what you want to say and what you want to accomplish and how much authority your committee has delegated to you.
- b) Make sure you're talking to the appropriate person.
- c) Introduce yourself as a member of the Public Information Committee of Narcotics Anonymous, and state the purpose of the call.

- d) Insure the person that you contact that the call will be brief.
- e) Be direct, polite, and to the point.
- f) Remember - we may be the only introduction to NA that the professional has. Focus on recovery as it is found in Narcotics Anonymous.
- g) Take notes during the conversation to ensure an accurate response and/or follow-up.
- h) Exchange the necessary information.
- i) Never commit to doing anything without checking with your PI committees first.
- j) Thank the professional for their time and attention.
- k) If there is to be additional contact, whether it be through another phone call or in the mail, give the professional a date by which he or she can expect a response.

### **2.3.2 After the Telephone Call**

We need to make sure that we follow-up after any conversation we have had with a professional. Some things to consider:

- a) Our credibility rides on our words. If we promise to return a call, send information, or to be somewhere, we *must* follow through!
- b) Never commit to doing anything without checking with our PI committee first.
- c) Place the professional on your mailing list, or in your database, to facilitate future communications.
- d) Report the results of all communications, in writing, to all related service committees; e.g. your PI Committee, Hospitals and Institutions Committee, Activities Committee, Area Service Committee, etc.

## **3.0 Follow Through**

### **3.1 When Communicating with the Public**

Whenever a verbal contact is made, it is important to follow up with some form of written communication. A letter of introduction, including information about the NA program, is one way to follow-up. This establishes a record of the contact for ourselves, as well as helping to establish and maintain the credibility of NA. When we fail to follow through we may not only lose the opportunity to present the NA program in one situation, but we may also damage our image in the eyes of the public.

Don't just send information and forget the contact. Follow up again to make sure that the material answered your correspondent's questions and to



determine if more information is needed. Make sure that your correspondent knows how to reestablish contact with the PI committee and understands that we don't have paid employees responding to calls but are an all-volunteer organization. Many committees send a thank you note or letter, along with the name, address, and phone number of a contact person (i.e., PI chair, PI Vice-Chair, etc.). Whenever possible, use an area or regional service office number, or use the local helpline number. *Sample letters and thank you notes can be found in Section VII- Samples.*

### **3.2 Within Our Service Structure**

There may be times in our PI work when we may need to refer a contact we have made to another subcommittee, such as H&I. It is important that we document any contacts we make, so that when we forward the information obtained, we are assured of its accuracy. Some areas have developed printed forms to ensure consistency in the information we obtain and forward. Some committees use liaisons or contact people to enhance communications between committees. Don't just deliver a message to another committee by sending a note, referral form, or leaving a message on an answering machine. Make sure that the message is received. *A sample of this type of form is included in Section VII - Samples.*

Example: While staffing a PI booth at a community health fair, we are approached by the administrator of an area rehabilitation center. He states that he is interested in having an NA meeting at his facility. We make a note of the name and address of the rehab, and get the phone number of a contact person.

Our follow through consists of contacting the Area or Regional H&I Chair by phone, and immediately sending documentation of the contact by mail.

### **3.3. Consistency**

Consistency in our responses, and in our follow through, is an important part of the image we portray. Maintaining consistency ensures effective communications, both internally and externally.

If we commit to do a presentation on a specific date, at a specific time, we follow through on that commitment. If we say we will mail out information the next day, we mail the information promptly. If we are not available to receive a phone call, we make sure we return the call as soon as possible. If we do not follow through, we are not fulfilling our primary purpose—to carry the message to the still suffering addict.

Consistency within our committee can also serve as a learning tool for our PI workers. When we follow through consistently, we improve the effectiveness of our communication. Filing a report after a presentation and recording the results of a phone conversation with a professional are examples of ways we are

consistent in our follow through. When we are consistent internally, we establish a firm foundation for future PI committees.

Another way to ensure consistency and unity in our PI efforts throughout the fellowship is to use common resources. The World Service Office (WSO) has many items that can aid you in providing accurate and consistent information about the NA program. These items range from audio and video public service announcements to press releases and packets of information on the history and growth of NA worldwide.

*A list of these resources can be found in Section VIII – Resources, and may be obtained from the WSO.*

## **4.0 Written Communications**

### **4.1 Letters**

We can use letters to introduce our fellowship to professionals in health organizations and social services, and to others who work with addicts. If you do not use first class postage and individuals' names, your letters may end up in the trash can. Professionals often do not have time to read every item they receive. If your letter looks like advertising or bulk mail, it may never be read.

A mailing should consist of a letter explaining who you are, where you can be contacted, and some basic information about Narcotics Anonymous in your community, including the fact that we are part of a worldwide fellowship. Normally we include a local meeting list and, if possible, some NA pamphlets. If appropriate, the letter might also mention that speakers are available to meet with them and/or their staff, if your local fellowship is able to fulfill this type of request. *Examples of letters are available in Section VII – Samples.*

*For more information on the use of introductory letters in your PI service work, see Section IV – The Work Itself.*

#### **4.1.1 Following Up with Letters**

After talking to a professional on the telephone, it is a good idea to follow up with a letter. When following up, refer to any notes you made during the conversation. This will ensure that you send the information requested. When answering requests for information, or when following up, it is imperative to respond in a timely manner. Our image can suffer damage if we fail to respond quickly.

Many times PI committees create standard "packets" for this type of mailing. Be realistic when budgeting the cost and choice of pamphlets. In addition, acknowledge the fact that you may need pamphlets that relate to specific requests. There may also be a need for pamphlets in a language other than your own; include translated pamphlets whenever necessary. If you don't have any translated pamphlets available, you may be able to use pamphlets in

another language to fulfill the request. You may also want to include information on how the professional may obtain additional literature through your local service office, or directly from the World Service Office (WSO).

#### **4.1.2 General Recommendations for Letter Writing**

- a) Use first class mail. Most mail is often sorted by postage; third class mail is seldom read. Don't use bulk rate mail.
- b) Have a point of contact (Dear Mr. Jones). It takes extra effort to gather this information, but most people appreciate a personal touch in our contact. Don't use generic titles (ÒDear Health Care ProfessionalÓ) if at all possible.
- c) Use standard form and layout. No one is going to take you seriously if your letters are messy and disorganized.
- d) Use typewritten letters. If you can't type, don't have a typewriter or a computer with letter quality printer, find someone who can help you.
- e) Use definitions from our literature (ÒNarcotics Anonymous is a fellowship, or group of men and women, for whom drugs had become a major problem.Ó) If you use terms the professional cannot understand, he or she may miss your point. Don't use slang or language unique to NA.
- f) Make it clear that we are not here to take the place of the professional. Never make it sound as though we believe that we can do the professional's job for him, or do it better. Point out that we have a common goal, to help the addict that still suffers.
- g) Follow up. We have learned through our experience that a personal contact (phone call, visit, etc.) is much more effective than a single mailing with no follow-up. Don't send mail and forget about it!

#### **4.4 Announcements and Flyers**

One of the ways in which we educate the fellowship is by keeping the NA member aware of Public Information and the services we provide. Without the involvement and concern of NA members there would be no PI Committees in the first place. There may be times when we feel discouraged by the lack of members on our PI committee. These are the times when we must step up our efforts to recruit new members. It is often effective to speak personally with others about the rewards of service. We can communicate the benefits which come with being of service to the fellowship by making announcements to groups, Area Service Committees (ASC), and Regional Service Committees (RSC). We should always to announce any upcoming workshops or learning days in which our PI committee is taking part.

We can make our communications more effective by distributing flyers accompanying our announcements. When using flyers, make sure that all the information on the flyer is accurate. It is important to give accurate directions to

workshops and learning days. Try to be creative when making flyers. The use of colored paper (as opposed to plain black and white), and clever phrases can make your flyer, and PI service in general, seem more interesting. A final caution: do have fun, but make sure the flyer is the result of your committee's group conscience.

## **5.0 Technology**

In this section we will define various forms of technology which can be used in PI communications. While some of these methods may not be available to everyone, it is important to fully utilize the one(s) which best suits your committee's needs.

### **5.1 The Telephone**

In many cases the telephone is our initial contact with the public. Incoming calls to our helpline, local service office, or members of the fellowship, are examples of telephone communication.

The telephone is also used by members of PI committees to reach out to those who may have direct contact with the still suffering addict. The telephone is also used to respond to inquiries, and to forward requests to other subcommittees.

Many PI projects start and/or end with a phone call. It is very important not to overlook the usefulness of the telephone in our PI service work. *More information on the use of the telephone can be found in Section IV – The Work Itself and the Phoneline Handbook, available from the WSO.*

### **5.2 Computers**

A computer is a machine capable of many tasks. Depending on its design and features, a computer can be used to maintain databases, access the Internet, send and receive electronic mail (e-mail), and perform word processing functions such as writing letters, writing reports, and making flyers. A computer can also act as an electronic storage facility for all of the above mentioned files.

A computer (hardware) is outfitted with software that enables it to perform a number of tasks. Computers can assist us in preparing and storing such things as meeting lists, committee minutes, and reports.

While computers can be very useful, it should be made clear that a computer is not a necessity when performing PI services. *For more information on the practical use of computers in PI service, see Section IV – The Work Itself.*

### **5.3 Databases**

A database is a large body of information stored in a central location, for use and analysis. The information is organized and sorted into familiar groups for easy access and retrieval. Databases can be useful for many things in PI work. One example of the use of databases is the storage of information containing the names, addresses, and phone numbers of contacts and PI members.

Databases can be stored as files on computers disks, or stored on paper, and kept on file by your PI Secretary, or at the local service office. Wherever the information is stored, it should always be accessible to other members of the PI

committee who may need to use it. *For more information on databases, see Section IV – The Work Itself.*

#### **5.4 Word processing**

Word processing is much like using a typewriter, except the typing is done on a computer or dedicated word processor. The use of a printer is necessary to transfer written material from the computer to paper. Some word processors have features that allow the user to check spelling and grammar

#### **5.5 Computer Generated Form Letters**

Computer generated form letters, or "mail merge", is a computer feature, usually a part of a word processor program, that helps the user to write form letters. The form letters have sections, or fields, which can be easily replaced with information from a database. This allows one to write individually addressed form letters, and address all the envelopes, as well. *For more information on mail merge, see Section IV – The Work Itself.*

#### **5.6 The Internet**

The Internet is a network of computers that link a computer with a modem to other computers and modems. The computer user must subscribe to an online service or an Internet Service Provider (ISP) to establish access and maintain the link. The link comprises thousands of computers hooked together, each storing its own unique information. Some larger computers, known as servers, contain huge masses of information that can be accessed through the Internet. The Internet may be used by your committee to locate information from the WSO Web site, or as a PI tool by providing a place to electronically publish a web page. (All information on the WSO web site is also available by contacting the WSO.)

#### **5.7 Web Pages**

A Web Page is a site, or page, on a network called the World Wide Web, which is a part of the Internet. A Web Page provides a place where information about a specific subject can be stored. This information can then be viewed by someone with a computer, a modem, and access to the Internet.

Web Pages can be useful in PI service work by providing information about such things as the NA program itself, the local fellowship, meeting lists, helpline numbers, and activities. Copyrighted material from our books and pamphlets should not be put on a web page. Web pages should not be used for transmitting information intended to be internal communications, such as meeting minutes or announcements within the fellowship. A web page is a public medium of communication and should be understood in that context. *For more information about Web Pages, see Section IV – The Work Itself.*

## 5.8 E-mail

The term "e-mail" stands for "electronic mail." It is very similar to a written letter, except the information is transmitted and received electronically. The e-mail is sent over the Internet with the use of a computer and a modem, and is received by someone else who also has a computer and a modem. *For more information on e-mail, see Section IV – The Work Itself.*

### 5.8.1 General Recommendations for E-Mail Writing:

- a) Make your communications brief.
- b) Be sure to include all the information that was requested.
- c) Specify if you want a response, and give a date by which a response is desired.
- d) List all other parties to which the e-mail was also sent. Don't send "blind" e-mail. (This is an e-mail where the recipient does not know that you have sent someone a copy of the same e-mail message.)
- e) Make your message as personal as possible. Open e-mail letters with proper greetings and end them with standard closings. Don't use all capital letters. Words with every letter capitalized is equivalent to shouting, and is considered rude in electronic communications.
- f) Obtain a committee e-mail account if your committee will be communicating with the public through e-mail.
- g) Keep printed copies of your e-mail for committee records if you are communicating with the public or official committee business .
- h) Although you can send computer files to others as an "attachment" to your e-mail, bear in mind that not all e-mail providers enable the recipient to read attached files.
- i) Don't rely on e-mail as your only means of communication! Phone calls and handwritten mail through the postal service are much more personal.
- j) Consider the fact that not all committee members have the capability to receive e-mail, and would feel excluded if they didn't have the opportunity to read your message. If all members of the committee do not have e-mail, you should print out and mail your message to them.
- k) Personal phone numbers in e-mail should not be used if the e-mail will be read by the public; use service office numbers or helpline numbers for referrals or responses to referrals.
- l) Personal e-mail addresses or accounts should not be used when communicating with the public.

## 5.9 Fax

A "fax", or facsimile, is an electronic transmission of a document over a telephone line which enables the creation of a reproduction of the original at the receiving end. The sender and receiver of the document must both have the appropriate technology to complete the transmission. A "fax machine" or a computer with fax capabilities are necessary pieces of equipment for sending and receiving faxes. If you don't own a fax machine or computer, there are services available to the public, at a cost, which will send or receive a fax for you.

## 5.10 Broadcast Fax

A "broadcast fax" is a way to send a document to many fax addresses at the same time. Since many professional organizations now have fax machines, this can be a convenient way to deliver information about NA to the community. This method of communication does not require printing, copying, envelopes or postage.

The information sent through a broadcast fax is as varied as the projects that PI committees work on. Meeting lists can be distributed to treatment centers, recovery houses, probation offices, police stations, etc. Letters offering presentations to schools or professionals in the community may also be sent by this method. *More information on the use of a broadcast fax in your PI work, see Section IV – The Work Itself.*

*For information about fax equipment, contact computer and electronics stores. For more information about fax services, contact local telecommunications vendors.*

### 5.10.1 General Recommendations for Broadcast Faxes:

- a) Make a phone call to get permission before sending a broadcast fax. In some locations there are actually laws against sending an unsolicited fax. Penalties may apply if someone receives a fax that they did not request.
- b) Assemble a directory of your fax recipients. This will help your committee identify and target specific groups.
- c) Provide a contact phone number on the fax. Use your local service office or helpline phone numbers. This will allow the person who received the fax to get more information. The person, or group, which received the fax may also need to contact someone if they want to be removed from your fax list. Providing a contact phone number will make this possible. Avoid using personal a phone number as a contact.
- d) Send a test fax to see how well the document will appear when received. Documents with small print (such as meeting lists), complicated logos, colored paper or odd-size paper may not transmit well.



- e) Keep the fax brief and to the point. It is important to remember that when we send a fax we are using someone else's supplies (paper, ink cartridges, etc.) on the receiving end.
- f) Don't compromise an NA member's anonymity by sending a fax to his or her place of business without their prior permission.

## **6.0 Workshops and Learning Days**

Workshops and learning days are an internal service PI committees offer to the members of our fellowship. Usually a few dedicated members of a PI committee will set aside time to share their experience with other interested members and NA groups on how to do some of the basic work of Public Information. One of our responsibilities is to inform the fellowship at large about our function in service and how to get in touch with us if anyone is contacted by the public or media.

We can assure effective communications during workshops through our preparation. This preparation should include: the gathering of literature and meeting lists, what type of presentation to have (mock presentation, skit, PI booth, etc.), discussion and/or rehearsal of the workshop itself, and the members who will participate. The date and time of the workshop should be well publicized throughout the fellowship. Workshops and learning days also provide our committees an excellent opportunity to recruit of new members. As PI workers, we need to maintain a positive image of service to the fellowship during our workshops and learning days. *For more information about Workshops and Learning Days, see Section IV – The Work Itself.*

## **7.0 The Media**

When used effectively, the media can be a powerful help to communication in your PI work. The media offers the possibility of reaching hundreds, even thousands of people. Because of the scope of its impact, we need to proceed slowly, taking every precaution with regard to how we carry the message of Narcotics Anonymous.

There are basically three different types of media: print (newspapers, magazines and web pages), radio, and television. Our Eleventh Tradition reminds us to always maintain personal anonymity at the level of press, radio, and films. We as NA members must maintain personal anonymity (bearing no name), but by no means should the name of Narcotics Anonymous be unknown. Tradition Eleven speaks to personal anonymity, not fellowship anonymity. As members of PI we are the link between NA and the public. How we respond to requests from the media can have a great impact on our fellowship. *For more information about the Media, please see Section IV – The Work Itself.*

## Chapter IV

### THE WORK ITSELF

PI service work is probably one of the most exciting areas of service in Narcotics Anonymous. Almost every member at one time or another will be in a position to provide information about our program of recovery to addicts and non-addicts. The ways and means of providing this information are so varied that volumes could be written about each type of PI activity that has ever been attempted throughout the fellowship. The following sections of the handbook will highlight the most commonly used PI tools and provide details that will strengthen the foundation for each PI subcommittee's ongoing project.

~~An active PI subcommittee needs financial support from the fellowship. The money can come from groups, ASCs, and RSCs. Prior to beginning any PI activities, make a realistic evaluation of the expenses involved for various types of PI work (mailing fliers, copying, printing, telephone charges, audio and video tape duplicating, etc.). The approach your subcommittee takes may well be determined by the funds available.~~

#### **1.0 PI Project Design**

Public Information committees work on a project basis, with both continuing projects, and projects which have a specific beginning and end. This section of the handbook discusses many of those projects and various actions which have been successful in carrying out those projects. We will also discuss particular problems areas and regions have had in the past with certain projects in order to help your committee avoid those same difficulties. Projects can often be implemented in more than one way, and at times we will present options for your committee to discuss and choose. These projects and suggested plans are not the only way to do things. If your area or region has PI projects not mentioned in this new edition of the Handbook, please send that information to the World Service Office so we can share that information and perhaps use your committee's experience in future revisions of this Handbook.

The projects in this section of the Handbook have been grouped together by type:

- Internal PI
- Indirect PI Projects
- Direct PI Projects
- Mass Media Projects

## 1.1 PROJECT PLANNING

This section discusses the essential elements of project planning and is intended to assist you as you plan and implement projects for your committee. We will be using an example of a Library Book Project to illustrate the project planning process.

### 1.1.1 Goals

- a) Set the goals for your project.

*What do you wish to accomplish?*

- b) Goals should be: **Simple, Attainable, and Measurable.**

For example:

"We want to put our Basic Text in libraries."

*It is simple.*

- c) Whether it is attainable is not known because it isn't adequately defined.

*It is not measurable.*

- d) A better goal would be:

"We want to place two Basic Text books in libraries each month in language(s) common to that community, until all the public, college, high school, hospital, and jail libraries in the area and have a copy of our book."

*It is simple:* place books in libraries.

*It is attainable:* two books each month.

*It is measurable:* it defines the types of libraries to be filled and how many books each month.

- e) Write down the goals and refer to them to help keep your committee on track.

## 1.2 Accountability

Public Information subcommittees are not autonomous groups in NA, they are subcommittees that are accountable to a service body. The PI chairperson is the single point of accountability for the entire committee and is responsible for giving timely, accurate, and complete reports to the ASC or RSC.

For each project undertaken by PI, the point of accountability should be clearly defined, such as a project leader or coordinator. After defining accountability, a you should establish a budget and clearly define all responsibilities. Project leaders are responsible for making timely, accurate, and

complete reports to the PI subcommittee so that its leadership will be able to adequately prepare its report on the activities of the PI subcommittee as a whole.

For example:

- a) A project leader is assigned by the committee.
- b) At each meeting the project leader reports where the books were placed.
- c) At the ASC meeting, the PI Chair reports where the books were placed.

### **1.3 Timelines**

Develop a timeline and set milestones for the project. Timelines are developed backward, from the end to the beginning. Set your timeline before you begin your project. Timelines often have two parts: planning and implementation.

#### **1.3.1 Timeline Example**

##### **Planning Portion of Timeline:**

- a) January: Start placing two books each month (taken from our goals).
- b) December: Purchase two books (or get them as part of funding from ASC). Project leader presents sample cover letter for approval by the committee.
- c) November: Committee approves the project and a budget, including all costs.
- d) October: The project leader gives a report on the number of libraries, and how long the project will take to complete. The project leader also finds an assistant so that he or she won't be going alone to place the books.
- e) September: The committee decides to investigate a library project, appoints a project leader and sets the timeline.

##### **Implementation part of timeline**

- a) Each October, investigate any new library sites and verify that our book is still in the libraries on our list. A budget and timeline will be prepared if additional books are needed to be placed in the following year.
- b) Each September: begin training new people to take over the project for the next year (if there is a next year).
- c) After all books have been placed, the committee will contact each location periodically to ensure that sure the books are still in place.
- d) Each month:
- e) Acquire two books for the project.

- f) Place two books in libraries.
- g) Write thank you notes to libraries that accepted books last month.
- h) Report which libraries received books this month and keep a detailed list.

### **1.3.2 Common Timeline Characteristics**

Each project can generate its own timeline but the characteristics common to all projects are:

- a) Be specific about details.
- b) Work backwards.
- c) Include all the actions which need to take place in order to implement the project.

The preparation of a timeline can help the committee determine whether it has sufficient financial and human resources to implement the project. Sometimes there just isn't enough time to properly prepare and it is best to not proceed with a project that cannot be adequately implemented.

The committee can help organize itself by preparing an annual calendar containing a more general type of timeline. Significant annual events like elections, regional conventions, learning days, deadline for budget, etc. can be placed on the calendar so important committee business is not forgotten.

## **1.4 Budgeting and Resources**

Your committee must determine the financial and human resources for each project. As with the timeline, you should be specific.

Remember to include all expenses for the project. You might want to consider the following list:

- a) literature costs
- b) fees with outside organizations
- c) equipment needed
- d) copies
- e) postage
- f) telephone
- g) mileage

A budget is not just prepared and then filed. The budget should be a working document referred to and updated throughout the project or throughout the committee's year. Consider all your resources when planning your financial and human budgets.

Let us continue with our Library Book example. Its financial budget includes expenses for the following:

- a) two books each month
- b) copying for cover letters to accompany books
- c) copies of our *NA, A Resource in Your Community* IP for the librarians
- d) a thank you card for each library on list
- e) stamps to mail the thank you cards
- f) rubber stamp with area contact phone number and mailing address
- g) ink pad

Some committees operate with an annual or monthly budget amount approved by their area or region; then throughout the year, the committee selects project on a case by case basis as they come before the committee. Committee resources include not only money, but also:

- a) materials (such as literature)
- b) equipment (such as literature racks or tapes public service announcements)
- c) human resources (committee members and volunteers)

Resources outside the committee include:

- a) assistance from other Public Information committees
- b) trusted servants from neighboring areas and regions, and at the world-level
- c) cooperation from other subcommittees in your location

In the Library Book example, we decided that we need three people working on the project so there will always be two available to visit the libraries and place each book.

## 1.5 Priorities

Since a committee is rarely able to do all the projects it would like to do because of financial and human limitations, it must set priorities. Your committee will have to evaluate its options and make decisions. One method that may help is to set *levels* of priorities. Some areas consider meeting schedules and phonelines to be the highest priorities for Public Information. After these high priorities are met, it might consider booths at public events, presentations to schools and professionals, and community meetings as next highest priorities, with media public service announcements, a mailing list for the meeting schedule, and billboards as the lowest priority for a particular year. Priorities

may change from year to year due to differences in available financial and human resources.

The committee might want to develop a list of criteria to help evaluate projects and determine where each one fits in the committee's priority list.

Some helpful questions might be:

- a) Will the project further NA purposes?
- b) How many people are we likely to reach with this project?
- c) Which projects reach more people?
- d) Which projects do NA members care most about?
- e) Is this project supported by your area or region?
- f) Does the project fit into your financial resources; exactly how much will it cost?
- g) Does this project support other aims of NA, such as H&I work?
- h) Will it increase meeting attendance?
- i) Do we have sufficient people to implement the project?
- j) Do we have enough time to devote to the project?
- k) Do we have sufficient preparation time to effectively implement the project?
- l) Is it controversial? (If it is, we might want to pass.)
- m) Do we have the experience or guidance necessary for this kind of project?
- n) Are we familiar with the projected audience and what it expects?

In our example, the area decided that a library book project was less important than its meeting directory, phonelines, presentations in schools, joint PI/H&I presentations, booths at professional conferences, an annual learning day for the area, four training sessions each year for new volunteers, and a mailing list to send the meeting directories to professionals who refer people to NA. Since, however, those projects were all operating well, it decided to take on a new project. The library book project was deemed more important than two other project proposals—billboards and assembling a broadcast fax database. It was determined to be equally important as public service announcements, but volunteers on the committee were more interested in pursuing the library book project, so the committee chose to begin the library book project first.

Like goals, the priorities should also be clearly defined, written down for reference, and then referred to throughout the year to help keep the committee on track.

We have learned that it is better to choose not to do a project than to do it poorly since NA's image with the public may be adversely affected.

## 1.6 Follow Through

We must finish our projects and our reports. Too often we stop our project at the main event: the presentation, the booth, the learning day, the placement of the book. A committee chair may begin to feel that donating two books each month to libraries, or doing a presentation to another high school has become boring and stop reporting on these activities to save time. With new GSRs each month, we need to be aware that although our reports may seem repetitive to us, they are brand new to someone and we need to follow through with complete reporting of our activities.

Follow-up after contact with the public will help committee members to develop ongoing relationships. Thank you cards leave a positive impression on people in the community, such as the librarians we met in our book example. The project leader should update contact lists continually. Those lists may be used by PI project leaders working on other projects. For example: if they wish to receive it, the libraries may be added to a mailing list to send our updated meeting directory. Keeping written records of our contacts will help next year's project leader. For the library book example, we want to reestablish contact each year to make sure the books are still in place.

Follow-up within the committee is equally important. We want to inventory our literature and provide a financial report to the committee of all our expenses to help with the preparation of future project budgets. We want to discuss the event's success with the volunteers, to learn what we can do to improve the next one. When we train volunteers, we are training future project leaders and future committee leaders. Some committees have assistants for each project leader who are learning the skills necessary to move into the leadership position at the next election. We can keep people involved by having experienced volunteers help with training sessions. Some project leaders send thank you cards to volunteers after big events.

With our Library Book example, we might ask these follow-up questions:

- a) Did we reach all the libraries on our list?
- b) What was their general reaction?
- c) Do we need a better letter of introduction?
- d) Did they also ask for information pamphlets?
- e) Is there a large portion of the community which speaks a language other than our own? Do we have literature that we can provide in those languages?
- f) Did any libraries refuse our donation? Why?



- g) Did we reach the correct contact person, or should we change our approach?

## **1.7 Evaluation and Assessment**

It is important to get feedback from the community, the volunteers who participate on projects, the PI committee members, the ASC or RSC we serve, and the individual members of the fellowship.

We can receive feedback by asking people to fill out questionnaires after we have done a presentation. (See the samples section of this handbook.) We can spend some time talking with people to receive their feedback. We should make note of any questions which are asked of us, in order to help us modify our approach. This will aid us to give members of the community the information which is important to them.

We should meet with volunteers after a project to find out what worked and get suggestions for improvement. Here are some sample questions we could ask them:

- a) Did we bring enough literature?
- b) Did we bring the right kind of literature, including translated literature where applicable?
- c) Did we adequately answer their questions?
- d) How might we have answered the questions better?
- e) Was there anything else requested from the PI committee?
- f) Were the volunteers adequately trained?
- g) Have we been invited back; why or why not?

Project leaders should keep notes on the project and report to the committee. Some committees have developed project procedures books to supplement their committee guidelines and this handbook. It helps with the rotation of service when an outgoing project leaders is not available to train the new leader, or when a project is periodic in nature without one continuous project leader.

# **~~LEARNING DAYS AND WORKSHOPS~~**

## **2.0 Internal PI**

### **2.1 Workshops and Learning Days**

A public information learning day or workshop can be the most valuable PI function the fellowship has. Learning days and workshops are held primarily to provide a forum in which experience in all aspects of PI work can be shared. The basic difference

between a learning day and a workshop is that workshops focus on one particular issue or project and are ~~usually~~ *sometimes* part of a larger event such as a convention or unity day. Learning days are, for the most part, *day-long or weekend-long* events with a broad spectrum of topics covered in meetings held throughout ~~each~~ *the day or weekend*.

A Learning Day is used to train NA volunteers to do NA service. A Learning Day can be a single-topic workshop, or a multi-day event covering many topics with speakers and attendees coming from great distances. This section will discuss the following types of learning days:

- a) single-topic workshops
- b) a day-long area-level learning day covering several topics
- c) regional learning day
- d) a several day-long large regional or multi-regional learning day

There are some things common to all learning days. Refer to the project planning section of this Handbook for suggestions on how to plan for an event and pay particular attention to suggestions about developing a timeline. Make sure to begin your work far enough in advance of the actual learning day to give your committee sufficient time to plan and to publicize the event. At the beginning of the planning process, define exactly what kind of learning day you plan to have, develop a timeline, and assign specific points of accountability within the committee. It is important that no one member of the committee do more than the other members. This helps to prevent burn-out and promotes teamwork and unity within the committee.

Be very clear about your financial limitations when planning the event. How is it being funded: as part of your PI committee's regular budget, by the ASC as a special event, by the RSC, by the participants, or by committee fundraising? Be clear about expenditures and establish a detailed budget. What happens to money and supplies that may be left after the event?

Although only multi-day learning days generally ask participants to pay a registration fee, any of the different learning day types may ask them to help cover expenses by donating towards supplies and food, or by paying for admission to associated events.

It is important to coordinate with the Activities subcommittee the planning of associated events like meals, meetings, a dance or other event following the learning day. Activities subcommittee members have specialized experience and resources in this general area. Sometimes the associated event draws more people than the learning day. Some areas use the associated event to help attract people to the learning day itself. Other areas use the associated event to help pay for the learning day.

The issue of food needs careful attention. Some workshops or learning days may include food events. Some things to consider are:

- a) Who will pay for the food?
- b) Is it an appropriate use of Seventh Tradition funds to pay for food?
- c) Will the participants pay for the food?
- d) Will participants bring food to share?
- e) Will the event be catered?

- f) Is the food event separate from the learning day?
- g) Is the food event intended to break even, or be a fundraising part of the learning day?
- h) Are there any legal requirements or restrictions on serving food at this kind of event?
- i) Has the facility established any other restrictions for the room(s) where the workshop or learning day is being held?

When you are working with Activities committee members to help you with your event, make sure to involve them with the entire event – from planning to clean up. Establish at the beginning how the funds from the associated event will be distributed. Keep the PI event money separate from Activities money unless other arrangements have been made ahead of time.

Plan to distribute training material. You may find parts of this Handbook suitable for your needs. Make sure to print the copyright credits on any parts of this Handbook that you copy and distribute at your learning day. You may want to have copies of the entire Handbook available for purchase by attendees.

It is important to remember that we sponsor learning days to share information and to network with others in NA service. Appreciate the presence of each person who attends the event. Experienced members share with the newer members. Newer members may eventually join our committee. Even the most experienced members usually find they learn something new at each event; education is the purpose of a learning day. Many areas find that, by establishing regular learning days and being consistent and enthusiastic about them, attendance usually grows as more people become involved in service. Small events often give us more opportunity to share, one-on-one, with all the attendees.

### **2.1.1 Frequently Asked Questions About Learning Days**

*2.1.1.1 Why should we have a learning day?*—The purpose of a PI learning day is to provide a forum in which trusted servants involved in PI can share their challenges, innovations and solutions with one another. Many areas have the same concerns ~~which are specific to public information work~~, such as attracting members to PI service, how to best present the program when speaking to non-addicts, how to educate the members in their respective areas about the importance of the Twelve Traditions and maintaining anonymity, and a variety of other important issues.

Learning days also provide an opportunity for area PI committees and individual members to give and receive information about the current direction of PI. Any new materials being used by an area can be passed around to others at these events.

Whatever a committee or an individual learns about carrying the message more effectively can be passed on.

*2.1.1.2 Who plans the event? — ~~Usually an area PI committee, with the support and coordination of the region, actually hosts the event.~~ A workshop or learning day can be planned by an area, region, multiple areas, or multiple regions. As you read these guidelines, insert the type of whatever appropriate service committee you are working with.* In some cases, the area PI committee will do all of the actual planning. Other times, a special ad hoc committee will be formed with members from both the area(s) and the region(s). In the case of a multi-regional event, participation might be sought from all the regions involved. The event planners should take care to select members who are not responsible to maintain vital services, such as answering the local helpline or chairing recovery meetings while the event is taking place.

Once the planning committee is formed or an area committee is selected to host the event, the actual work can begin. Several decisions should be made immediately; some of these are the dates of the event, the content of the program, and the cost of the event.

*2.1.1.3 Who pays for the event?—In keeping with our Seventh Tradition, the money to initiate this project will come from the sponsoring areas or regions. While large, multi-day learning days often have a registration fee, single-topic workshops and even day-long area or regional learning days usually do not. Your committee should decide and plan the budget appropriately.* A projected budget should be drawn up as soon possible to determine a registration fee, if any. *Some learning days might have no registration fee, but have a charge for lunch, dinner, or refreshments served during the event. Each committee must decide each event's financing separately.* While small amounts of money may be raised through pre-registration, it is hoped that fund raising will not become the primary focus of the event. *If the goal is for the event to be self-supporting, which that can be attained through careful planning and support from the sponsoring area or region.* Your budget ~~should~~ *could* include line items for printing *announcements, registration flyers information handouts or literature*, postage, rent, *insurance*, and phone calls. ~~refreshments.~~

You may also wish to consider adding line items for *taping*, speaker travel and lodging, and merchandise, keeping in mind the size of the event.

*2.1.1.4 When should we hold our learning days?—It is very important to plan the event well in advance to allow ample time for committee work assignments, site selection, program development, speaker selection, printing of materials and announcement of the event. It is suggested that at least ~~six months~~ one year be*

allowed for a multi-regional learning day. For a regional learning day, ~~three to six~~ months is sufficient. For an area event, ~~one to two to four~~ months is appropriate.

Selecting the date the learning days will take place can be a make or break factor in the success of your event. It is important that the event does not conflict with other major NA events, such as your regional convention *or events in nearby areas*. Non-holiday weekends are considered a good choice.

*2.1.1.5 Where should we hold our learning days?*—Possible sites include hotels, college campuses, community centers, campgrounds, or any place that has sufficient meeting rooms and can accommodate your needs. Your committee will need to determine specific criteria including the number and size of meeting rooms, a registration area, facilities for preparing and service refreshments, nearby lodging and restaurants, and space for an entertainment function, if one is to be included in you program.

*You may want to consult with your area or regional activities subcommittee for help finding and selecting a site. For multi-regional learning days which involve hotels or other large spaces, you may want to get assistance from the regional convention committee. Some regional convention committees have a contract negotiator who can assist you in getting what you need in terms of space and help you avoid contract pitfalls.*

*2.1.1.6 Who should we invite?*—Absolutely everyone! As with all successful events, the more members in attendance, the more enriching the experience will be for all. ~~As soon as you have decided on dates for the event, the WSO PI coordinator should be notified so that you event can be announced in all of the fellowship's publications. As soon as you have decided on the dates for the event, contact appropriate newsletters in your area or region that might help you publicize the event. For multi-regional learning days, contact the WSO PI coordinator and ask that the information be announced in the fellowship's publications.~~ The WSO PI coordinator and your regional chairperson should be able to provide you with *addresses* for trusted servants in the surrounding areas so that they may also be invited. It is suggested that pre-registration flyers be mailed at intervals to surrounding areas and regions right up to the date of the event.

*2.1.1.7 How do we plan the actual structure of the event?*—When discussing the theme and program, the size and duration of the event will most likely become the deciding factors. For a multi-regional learning day, it is suggested that the event be held over the course of a weekend. Multi-regional learning days can be broad-based in focus and include meetings on several topics. The possibilities for a weekend-long event are

virtually unlimited. Meetings can be held simultaneously in order to give those in attendance a choice of which topic they are most interested in, or you may choose to have one meeting at a time so that those in attendance can attend all of the discussions. Most weekend-long events include a recovery meeting along with some sort of entertainment.

For regional or area learning days, a day-long event is suitable. In addition, it is wise to narrow the focus of the event to two or three topical issues in PI. Consecutive meetings are the preferred format for a day-long event.

Many variations exist for the formats of the individual meetings. The style you choose for the meetings will depend on the availability of speakers, the issues that are of current interest in PI, and of course, the size of your event. You may choose to have mock presentation, skits, examples of interviews, sharing sessions, visual aids presentations, speaking rehearsals or anything else your committee feels will stimulate discussion and a broader understanding of our Twelve Traditions as they apply to PI work. It is suggested that lecture-type meetings be avoided and full audience participation be encouraged. If you plan to include speaker presentations, it is a good idea to allow plenty of time for those in attendance to ask questions and share experience. There is a tremendous amount of experience at the area level with issues such as open meetings, cooperation with the legal community, attraction to PI, media relations and many others. It is important that we provide a forum at all learning days in which all members can share this valuable experience with each other.

Many day-long area and regional learning days, and most multi-day, multi-regional learning days have begun incorporating other service committees into their program such as Phonelines, H&I, and Outreach (for those areas or regions which have Outreach committees).

It is important to create written guidelines for any learning day which becomes a periodic event, and to provide a means of updating them when necessary. Be sure to include procedure for the disposition of any remaining funds if the event is ever discontinued.

## **2.2 Single-Topic Workshops**

An example of a single-topic workshop might be a PI workshop at a larger event like a regional convention or an area unity day. These may be speaker or panel presentations and could be on either general PI topics or specific PI projects or issues.

A single-topic workshop might be used to train local phoneline volunteers, speakers, or booth volunteers. Keep the focus of the meeting on the topic. Plan

to have one or two people with experience share the “How To” of the subject as well as their personal experiences with this type of service. Leave plenty of time for questions and answers or perhaps some role playing exercises.

### **2.3 Day-Long Learning Day**

A day-long event will often cover several topics with a common theme of service. Many areas are now having PI/H&I Learning Days where various Public Information, Phonenumber, and Hospitals and Institutions topics are presented. PI and H&I working together gives experienced members a wider perspective and newer members a broad look at service, helping them to decide where they want to fit into the service structure.

It is important to keep the day-long event on schedule and each topic focused. Don't be too ambitious and try to cover every possible topic. You may want to cover additional topics at a future learning day. Choose your topics carefully, leaving plenty of time for questions and answers. Don't forget to plan breaks between the workshops. Some areas assign one person the task of starting and ending all meetings on time.

In some areas, the region itself sponsors the area-level learning days and assisting with funding and experienced speakers. The area then plans the day, the topics to be covered, the location, and does all the footwork and plans associated events to help cover expenses.

The region should have clear, written guidelines about how the money can be spent and the expectations for replenishing the seed fund.

With such longer events, more detailed planning is required. Consider carefully how to efficiently manage your funds. Some typical expenses might be:

- a) rent
- b) flyers
- c) copies of handouts
- d) travel for speakers from within the region
- e) deposits
- f) insurance
- g) meeting expenses.

Such events generally take about six months to plan and implement. Flyers should be readied for distribution at the ASC, RSC and through area and regional PI, Phonenumber, H&I and Activities committees several months prior to the event.

### **2.4 Regional Learning Days**



Regional Learning Days are best coordinated with other regional subcommittees to support our unity of purpose.

One region has a quarterly regional PI meeting combined with a learning day; the meeting travels to different areas of the region each time. The regional committee meets in the morning, takes a lunch break and then has a learning day in the afternoon. Other regions might hold the learning days at a regional service office or another regular location. When the location changes, make sure everyone knows where the next one will be.

Regional workshops held in different areas can help support the areas by giving the local PI and Phoneline committees experience planning an event. They are also opportunities for training, attracting new members to NA service, and for involving the committee and the local fellowship in regional services. They also give the local fellowships an opportunity to better understand NA's service structure.

In some places, the region will cover the entire financial burden; in other regions, the costs are shared between the region and the areas involved.

Some committees include funds for serving lunch in their budget. Others only specify a particular time for lunch and had out a list of appropriate places nearby.

A sample meeting format is given in the Samples section of this Handbook.

## **Workshops**

~~Workshops may be done as a single event, although they are usually part of a larger event, such as a convention or unity day, or as an adjunct to PI learning days. The focus of a workshop is usually limited to one topic.~~

~~Workshops emphasize the exchange of ideas, demonstration and application of techniques, and/or gathering input for a project. These may be conducted in a round table discussion or with a moderator to keep the discussions focused on the issue at hand. Generally speaking there are two types of workshops, those conducted to offer and exchange information and others for the sole purpose of gathering information from the fellowship for a specific project.~~

~~It is important to establish clearly defined goals. A successful workshop depends on how well prepared the event is. A particular goal should be decided upon and a plan outlined for accomplishing the task. As with learning days, those in attendance should be provided with an agenda of the event.~~

~~Input workshops are the means by which PI committees can determine their priorities. The fellowship should be invited to share what their needs are so that PI committees can develop projects based on the actual needs of a given area. The WSC~~

~~PI Committee will, on occasion, host workshops to gather information from the fellowship on their current projects. A local WSC PI Committee member will be able to advise you of what is currently being developed.~~

#### In Conclusion

Learning days and workshops are different from celebrations of recovery such as unity days and conventions. Their goals are to educate the fellowship on how to inform the public, share experience, and set priorities for the future direction of public information work. When consistency of message, unity, and spiritual principles guide our actions, all will be well. The unity created, the experience gained, and the knowledge and ability shared are the true measure of success.

### **3.0 Indirect PI**

Indirect PI projects are those in which PI members do not meet face-to-face with the public but inform them about our fellowship by indirect means.

#### **3.1 Meeting Directories**

A meeting directory is a document which details the time, place and identity of a NA meeting. The meeting directory is usually arranged so that it can be referred to by day of the week, time of day, city or locality, or any combination thereof. It can detail meeting information for a group, an Area, or a Region. A meeting directory is one of the most common Public Information tools used to communicate the presence of the Fellowship of NA.

A meeting directory is often a project of a PI committee. It serves the needs of both the Fellowship and the community and is an essential PI tool.

##### **3.1.1 The Master Directory**

Determine where the master directory will be kept. Depending on available resources, your meeting directory may be kept in one or more of the following places:

- a) An Area or Regional Service Office computer
- b) A computer owned by the printing company where the meeting list is printed
- c) A typewriter used to retype the document when needed
- d) A fellowship member's home computer

A master copy should always be kept in at least two locations.

##### **3.1.2 Pre-Planning and Organization**

There are many factors in the design and production of a meeting directory. Make it easy to update. Good organization and pre-planning will accomplish this goal.

Here are some things to consider when organizing the directory information:

- a) Decide how to structure your meeting directory.
- b) Some meeting directories organize first by day and time, then by location.
- c) Meeting directories for larger areas often organize first by geographical location, then by day and time.
- d) Use clear and simple language.
- e) Use both upper and lower case lettering and proper punctuation

Many meeting directories use one or two letters to specify meeting format, smoking or non-smoking, common and additional needs, wheelchair accessibility, open and closed, etc., which are then defined in a legend. Some meeting directories put the legend in a prominent place to make it easier to understand.

Decide what other information you would like to see appear on your meeting directory. Many directories contain:

- a) NA Logo
- b) The month and year in which the directory was printed
- c) Portions of our Readings
- d) The Serenity Prayer
- e) The times and places of other boards and committee meetings
- f) Name and address of the Group, Area or Region that created the directory
- g) The Local Fellowship Information Line or Help Line Phone Number
- h) Surrounding area or regional phonelines
- i) A place to write phone numbers
- j) A brief history of the Group, Area or Region producing the directory
- k) Any other pertinent information which might benefit the reader of the directory

Some areas print personal phone numbers of committee chairs. Those numbers should be removed from directories distributed by PI and H&I subcommittees in facilities and projects.

There are many methods which may be used to gather the information which appears in the meeting directory. The group registration form in the Resource Section of this Handbook can be used to help gather information.

Determine the information that will be printed for each listing. Here are some options:

- a) The name of the group or meeting
- b) The day of the week of the meeting
- c) The times and length of each meeting
- d) The physical address (including City and State where necessary)
- e) Some meeting directories specify the name of the facility while others indicate only the type of building (i.e. church, hospital, community center).
- f) Whether the meeting is accessible to people with additional needs; wheelchair, hearing impaired, sight impaired, speech impaired, other physical challenges, etc.
- g) Whether the meeting is smoking or non-smoking.
- h) Whether the meeting is open to all interested or closed to addicts only.
- i) What type of meeting format is followed; speaker, participation, panel, book study, eating meeting, etc.
- j) Cross streets
- k) Public transportation availability
- l) Common needs meetings (men's, women's, gay and lesbian, different language, bilingual, etc.)

Many locations have chosen to not print group or meeting names on the meeting directory. Sometimes this is done simply because of the lack of available space on the directory. Other times they are omitted because group or meeting names, while descriptive, attractive, or even humorous to those in the fellowship, may not be attractive to or properly understood by the public.

Determine the following, and keep written records of your decisions:

- a) How many copies, and how often is the directory to be printed and updated?
- b) How many and which language(s) will it be printed in?
- c) Who will distribute the directory? How?
- d) Should a certain number of directories be kept for local mailings or other PI efforts?

- e) Will the directory stay on the same color of paper with each new printing?
- f) Develop a budget including quantity, frequency of printing, and cost.

### **3.1.3 Designing A Layout and Printing**

Design a layout of the meeting directory using all the information gathered and the decisions on the content. Create a draft first to review. Proofread and make sure all the information is accurate and up-to-date. Then, see if a newcomer or a member of the public can read and understand the meeting directory.

Before deciding on a printing vendor, your committee should obtain and consider several quotes. In traditional printing, initial setup and changes to the document may incur additional costs; be sure to inquire about such charges. Investigate both printing and photocopying costs.

### **3.1.4 Post Production Work**

Remember to follow up on the effort by:

- a) Establishing a single point of accountability for updating the directory.
- b) Making update forms available to the groups.
- c) Establishing procedures for communicating changes.
- d) Keeping the document current.

Your committee may want to develop a mailing list in order to send your updated meeting directory to other groups, areas, or regions of NA. Also send a copy to the WSO.

Please be aware that simply sending your meeting directory to the WSO will not register your groups. Be sure to fill out a group registration form for each new group or meeting and each change. Many ASCs request their current list of registered meetings from the WSO once or twice a year, review it for accuracy and send changes to the WSO. It is a good idea to assign someone (perhaps the ASC secretary or meeting directory coordinator) the responsibility for helping new meetings get registered with the WSO and for deleting meetings which close.

If your area (or region) has meetings in more than one language, it is a good idea to have separate meeting directories for each language. In the following example we will use Spanish or bilingual meetings in a predominately English-speaking area. You will want to list all the meetings on your main meeting directory because that is used by professionals in the community, as well as by H&I staff and phonline volunteers, to direct people to meetings. However, it is not likely that a non-English speaking person would find the Spanish meetings from that directory. It is a good idea to have an additional directory (maybe including meetings in surrounding areas) that lists only the Spanish and

bilingual meetings. One can copy the 12 steps and 12 traditions from the Spanish Little White Book.

All the additional information listed on your regular meeting directory should also be listed on the second-language meeting directory. Service committee meetings should be listed on the directory even if they are not in the secondary language, accompanied by a note indicating that those meetings are conducted in English. Although some members attending the Spanish or bilingual meetings may read only Spanish, they may speak English and be able to participate in English service committee meetings. Some mention should be made on the directory about the phonenumber, even if only English volunteers are available. See the Phoneline Handbook for further discussion of phonelines in areas where more than one language is used in NA meetings.

Remember that creating a meeting directory is one of the first and most basic of all PI projects. Your second-language meeting directory will help that community within NA grow as it helps members find NA meetings in their own language. Your PI committee may then be able to reach out to that growing community in NA and do other projects in the second language such as hanging posters, or even billboards.

If your area has two or more common languages with many meetings in both languages, you might consider a two-sided meeting directory, one side for each language.

See the Resource section of this Handbook for group and subcommittee registration forms.

## **~~PHONELINES, BULLETINS AND LETTERS~~**

~~Phonelines, bulletins and letters are probably the most commonly used PI tools. These and all other PI activities should always be carried out in accordance with our Traditions and in cooperation with the area or regional service committee as suggested in previous sections.~~

### **3.2 Phonelines**

Phonelines are an important part of NA services. They are often the first contact suffering addicts have with our fellowship. Some areas and regions have separate Phoneline and PI committees while others manage their phonelines as a project of Public Information. Refer to the Startup and Structure portion of this handbook for a discussion which may assist your committee in deciding how to structure your committees. Make sure to have written guidelines for the Phonelines whether they are a project of PI or a separate committee.

One of the most overlooked aspect of phonelines is the telephone directory. We need to make sure the public can find us. NA phonelines often cover an area greater than is served by a single telephone directory. Special

effort needs to be taken to make sure NA is listed in each directory in which we need to be listed. Sometimes this is considered a separate project for PI even if the area has a separate phonline committee. The details of placing your phone number in multiple telephone directories is included in the Phonline Handbook.

Phonelines are ~~usually~~ *sometimes* handled by a separate subcommittee. A large amount of work and planning is required to establish an efficient phonline in your area or region. For this reason, phonline guidelines have been printed in a separate handbook and may be ordered through the World Service Office.

## **~~THE USE OF LETTERS IN PUBLIC INFORMATION~~**

### **3.3 The Use of Letters in Public Information**

#### **~~Letters to Specific Individuals or Groups~~**

When your committee decides to target a specific segment within the community, i.e., treatment counselors, doctors, or employee assistance directors, one of the example letters should be used and mailed with Informational Pamphlets (IPs). Use first class postage and individuals' names whenever possible. Otherwise, your letters may end up in a trash can. Professionals often do not have time to read every item of mail they receive. If your letter looks like advertising or bulk mail it may never be read.

At this point many PI subcommittees also decide to arrange for a community meeting. After an initial letter of introduction has been sent, you may follow up with letters inviting members of the community to a community meeting. Always be sure that your choice of letters accurately reflects the type of individual or group you are contacting.

Before beginning a mailing be sure that your ASC or RSC is aware of your activities and that any other subcommittees that may be affected are involved in the activity. You will need support for both manpower and money. Remember that planning a community meeting will require the rental of a meeting space and the purchase of sufficient literature for those attending to take with them.

#### **3.3.1 Mailing Lists**

A well-maintained mailing list can be a powerful public information tool. We develop a mailing list of organizations which may be in a position to refer addicts to NA. We regularly mail them updated meeting directories.

Sometimes the list will also be used to offer PI presentations or send IPs or other information about NA. Start small. Your subcommittee can begin by using the telephone directory classified ads to compile a list of organizations to contact. Some subcommittees start with one category of organization, such as treatment centers or schools, then add other types later. Other such categories include:

##### **3.3.1.1 Religion**

- a) Members of the clergy
- b) Church groups— young people's social, etc.

- c) Clergy associations
- d) Theological seminaries

#### **3.3.1.2 Industry**

- a) Unions
- b) Employee assistance programs
- c) Personnel directors

#### **3.3.1.3 Education**

- a) Teachers
- b) Teachers associations
- c) Student teachers
- d) High schools and grammar schools
- e) (social studies or health classes are usually the best options)
- f) Colleges—health services departments
- g) Seminars on addiction or chemical dependency

#### **3.3.1.4 Governmental**

- a) Police academies
- b) Judges
- c) Probation officers
- d) Wardens
- e) Military
- f) Police departments

#### **3.3.1.5 Medical**

- a) Doctors, dentists, etc.
- b) Medical students
- c) Nurses and student nurses
- d) Hospital staff
- e) Clinic staff

#### **3.3.1.6 Other Organizations**

- a) Clubs (service or social)
- b) Neighborhood organizations



- c) Nursing homes and rest homes
- d) Youth groups
- e) Fraternal organizations
- f) Ethnic associations
- g) Suicide prevention or crisis centers

Add to the list each time your committee does presentations. Also add any organization which contacts your committee for information.

Be consistent with periodic mailings. Allow organizations to be taken off your list if they request. Remove organizations if their mail is returned to you and you cannot locate a new address. Take care to maintain your mailing list. This is an excellent opportunity to use a database, especially a computer-based one.

The contents of your mailings should vary with your audience and purpose, but many PI subcommittees find that their response rate is greatly increased when they include a self-addressed return postcard or a tear-off section to allow organizations to respond more easily. Using check-off boxes next to optional responses (see samples section) makes responding easier. Other tools to help you initiate your mailing list activities may be found in the letter-writing, broadcast fax, and database sections of this Handbook.

### **Do's and Don'ts for Letter Writing**

~~The workers in the field of drug and alcohol treatment, rehabilitation, etc. are overloaded with mail. The biggest enemy that stands in the way of getting the message out is the wastebasket. Here are some suggestions that others have found to help get your mailings read:~~

#### **Do**

- ~~• Use first class mail. Most mail is sorted by postage; third class mail is seldom read.~~
- ~~• Have a point of contact (Dear Mr. Clagari). It takes more time to find out this information, but most people are put off by impersonal headings.~~
- ~~• Use standard form and layout. No one is going to take you seriously if your letters are a mess.~~
- ~~• Use typewritten letters if possible. Many times correspondence is sent out on photocopies that are next to illegible. If you can't type, find someone who can (even a paid professional, if the price is affordable).~~
- ~~• Use the definitions from our literature (NA is a fellowship or group of men and women for whom drugs had become a major problem). If you use terms that mean nothing to the professional or have different meanings to them your point is lost.~~

- ~~Get to the point, try to stay away from “drugalogs.” Try to stick to facts like:~~
  - ~~1. It works~~
  - ~~2. It’s free~~
  - ~~3. It’s available.~~
- ~~Point out that we are not here to take the place of the professional. Never make it sound as though we believe we can do the professional’s job for him. Point out that we have a common goal, to help the addict who still suffers.~~
- ~~Follow up, research has shown a personal contact (phone call, visit, etc.) is much more effective than a simple mailout.~~

## **Don’t**

- ~~Use bulk rate mail.~~
- ~~Use generic titles (Dear Health Care Person).~~
- ~~Be sloppy.~~
- ~~Use bad copies.~~
- ~~Use slang or “catch” phrases such as “Just a bunch of hope to die dope fiends who stopped cooking and live one day at a time”~~
- ~~Ramble on.~~
- ~~Threaten the professional.~~
- ~~Mail and forget.~~

## **3.4 General Recommendations for Letter Writing**

- a) Use first class mail. Most mail is often sorted by postage; third class mail is seldom read. Don't use bulk rate mail.
- b) Have a point of contact (Dear Mr. Jones). It takes extra effort to gather this information, but most people appreciate a personal touch in our contact. Don't use generic titles (“Dear Health Care Professional”) if at all possible.
- c) Use standard form and layout. No one is going to take you seriously if your letters are messy and disorganized.
- d) Use typewritten letters. If you can’t type, don’t have a typewriter or a computer with letter quality printer, find someone who can help you.
- e) Use definitions from our literature (“Narcotics Anonymous is a fellowship, or group of men and women, for whom drugs had become a major problem.”) If you use terms the professional cannot understand, he or she may miss your point. Don't use slang or language unique to NA.
- f) Make it clear that we are not here to take the place of the professional. Never make it sound as though we believe that we can do the professional's job for him, or do it better. Point out that we have a common goal, to help the addict that still suffers.

- g) Follow up. We have learned through our experience that a personal contact (phone call, visit, etc.) is much more effective than a single mailing with no follow-up. Don't send mail and forget about it!

*The sample section in this Handbook gives many sample letters to assist your subcommittee.*

### **3.5 Placing Books in Libraries**

This section describes how your PI subcommittee can get involved in placing books in libraries, how to prepare for the project, and how to do it. It also suggests steps to follow-up after the books have been placed in the libraries and gives a sample letter to a library at the end of the section.

The coordinator is responsible for assembling a list of all the libraries in the area the PI subcommittee serves and proposing to the PI subcommittee a method to place the books in libraries. The coordinator is assisted by several interested members.

Your subcommittee may wish to dedicate enough funds so that several books can be purchased and donated on a monthly basis until all the libraries in your area receive books. Many PI subcommittees have found the Basic Text to be the best introduction to Narcotics Anonymous and have used it for this project rather than our other books. If your subcommittee is short on funds, you may wish to provide libraries with WSO or Regional literature order forms and encourage the libraries to purchase the books. Keep in mind that libraries often tailor their purchases to the requests of the local communities they serve.

Keep simple, attainable, and measurable goals in mind, both for the convenience of your project and to help your local fellowship see clear results from your efforts. Decide how to best handle the project, define the number of books your subcommittee will distribute on a monthly or quarterly basis, and be sure to keep records so you can measure your performance.

Start with the public libraries for all the communities in your service area. Some additional types of libraries are:

- a) member-only libraries
- b) specialized libraries
- c) bookmobiles
- d) hospitals
- e) high schools or secondary schools, community college, and university libraries

In addition, some PI subcommittees have cooperated with H&I subcommittees in placing Basic Texts in jail and prison libraries. Finally, and

again in cooperation with an H&I subcommittee, you may want to survey recovery facilities to see if they maintain libraries for their clients.

Once your subcommittee has a list of libraries and a commitment to buy books, the work can begin. Begin with a telephone call to determine the appropriate contact person and perhaps make an appointment. Many libraries have one or more staff members who deal with acquiring books and it may help to begin by asking for the acquisitions staff. In larger communities, all acquisitions may be channeled through the main library. It is preferable to visit libraries in person to explain what Narcotics Anonymous is and why we wish to donate the book. If the coordinator and other libraries project members' schedules do not allow them to visit libraries, mailing the book with a cover letter will serve this purpose. A sample letter is included in the Sample section of this Handbook.

It is important to put stickers or use a rubber stamp inside the front cover of the books with your phonenumber number and address. Keep track of where you placed the books to avoid duplication. If your phonenumber number or address changes, you can return and replace the information in the books with updated information.

Whether you place the books in person or by mail, each donation of a book should be accompanied by the following materials:

- a) A cover letter
- b) The IP NA, A Resource in Your Community
- c) Several Meeting Directories (if you will be sending updated directories as part of a mailing list project)
- d) A Copy of the WSO or Regional Literature Order Form

You may wish to use your contact with the library to collect additional information. Some possible questions to ask might be:

- a) Does the organization have community presentations on health or other issues?
- b) Does it maintain public bulletin boards?
- c) Does it maintain any type of database, such as listings of community resources in three-ring binders or on a website?

This information can be passed on to other PI working groups such as the speakers bureau or mailing list coordinator.

It is important to ensure that our books actually reach the public. When placing the books, you may wish to ask how long it may take to catalog and shelve the book. Check to see if the book is on the shelf and where it should be. Also, check the card catalog or information retrieval system to make sure that it

is listed correctly. Check again to make sure it is still there in six months or a year. Some subcommittees continue to check each year.

Be sure to save any thank-you letters your subcommittee receives. If other libraries have some initial resistance to accepting a book donation, showing the thank-you letters from these other libraries may help. If resistance continues, it is best to back off graciously. You can keep such “holdouts” on your mailing list and plan to approach them again in the future.

### **3.6 Literature Racks**

This is a project of placing NA literature and meeting schedules in public places and keeping it stocked. Sometimes NA provides the racks. Sometimes large racks are available and we arrange with a facility for some space. Sometimes we only provide business cards with our phonenumber number.

Our primary audience is the still suffering addict who may pick up our literature and find hope and the way to a meeting. Our secondary audiences are members of public that might refer friends and relatives to NA meetings and professionals working with addicts.

We target public places where addicts might be.

- a) Probation offices
- b) Parole offices
- c) Police station waiting rooms
- d) Visitation rooms in jails or prisons
- e) Hospital emergency rooms
- f) Clinic resource libraries
- g) Public libraries
- h) High school, secondary schools or college libraries
- i) Public assistance offices

Decide which literature to use. It is not a good idea to supply each location with a large variety; it will quickly become costly and most locations do not have room for large literature racks. Many committees pick two or three pieces of literature plus their meeting schedule. The most widely used are:

- a) IP #1 Who, What, How and Why
- b) Am I an Addict?
- c) A Resource in Your Community
- d) Youth in Recovery
- e) Welcome to NA

A project leader will maintain literature inventory, keep in regular contact with the volunteers, and make sure the teams of volunteers have the necessary literature. Teams of volunteers (two to each team) are responsible for keeping the literature racks supplied on a regular basis. Volunteers should be trained to answer questions about NA as they may be approached while they are refilling the racks.

The 16-pocket literature rack sold by the WSO is too big for this project. If NA needs to supply the rack, the committee may need to purchase a two, three, or four pocket rack from a fixture supply store. Sometimes large office supply stores sell such hardware. If NA supplies the rack, some kind of ownership tag or sticker should be placed in an unseen location identifying it as NA's property. That way if the project ends in that location it is clear that the rack belongs to NA. Sometimes NA's phonenumber or a flyer from the poster project can be prominently displayed on the front of the rack.

The committee should select a few sites. Remember to start small. The project leader and the volunteer team will go to the selected site(s) and discuss with facility staff the possibility of establishing a literature rack, or using space in the facility's literature rack. Remember, NEVER leave literature in a location without permission. Leave a contact phone number or address so the facility can contact NA.

The project leader and volunteer teams will establish a relationship with the staff at the facility. This creates a good public image for NA and helps with the project. Always check in with the staff on arriving at a facility and let them know you are there to check on the literature. Once a relationship is established, the staff person might call to inform us of problems so we can react quickly. Staff people can be a source of information about the public's reaction to our literature.

It is important to have contact information with the name of the area and address and/or phone number on the literature so the public can find NA. Many areas do this with a rubber stamp.

This is a project that rural locations can do at the group level. Sometimes a group will adopt a site and maintain the literature supply from their Seventh Tradition collection or become part of the PI project and get literature from the project leader and supply the volunteers from members of their home group. The group service representative or group project leader would report the status of the site to the PI project leader. Sometimes meetings pay for their rent with literature and this project is carried out in that manner.

This project can use up substantial financial resources and requires high levels of communication and coordination by the project leaders. Each team should report to the project leader how much literature was put in each site. Because we are accountable, records are kept:

- a) To verify how much literature is being used.
- b) To provide detailed financial reports back to the ASC.
- c) To help prepare budgets for similar facilities under consideration.
- d) To determine which pamphlets are most popular and effective with the audience.
- e) To verify that the teams are still functioning.

It is possible to create a negative image for NA if the project is not consistently supported. Consistency is important with the public. Literature racks should be monitored regularly – sometimes monthly, sometimes weekly, depending on the location. Old meeting schedules should be removed from the facility and replaced with new ones. If NA's literature is placed on a large rack provided by the facility where other organizations also display literature, the volunteer team should plan to spend some time straightening up the display rack and making sure NA's literature hasn't become mixed up and disorganized by the public. This may also help provide the staff with a good impression of NA.

Some facilities have budgets for purchasing literature for their information racks and don't accept literature from outside organizations. If this is the case, then the volunteer team may be able to arrange for the facility to purchase NA literature. The team might want to supply a sample of the literature listed above, and ASO, RSO, or WSO order forms for the facility to use. The PI teams probably do not want to get into the business of selling literature, and most area literature people are not set up to handle orders from the public. A volunteer team from a nearby location might want to visit these facilities periodically to see if they need anything which the PI committee can provide.

Sometimes the facility does not have the space for us to provide information pamphlets, or even meeting directories, but they might have space for business cards with our phoneline number. Sometimes the PI committee does not have the financial resources to provide information pamphlets to a variety of locations, but distributing a phoneline card would fit in their budget.

If we can no longer keep the literature racks supplied, we should collect our racks and communicate in writing to the facility staff that the project is ending. Be sure to provide them with literature order forms and PI contact information.

#### **4.0 Direct PI Projects**

Some PI projects bring us directly in contact with the public. It is especially important for PI members dealing with the public to have a firm understanding of the steps, traditions, and concepts. These sections and the samples in the back of this Handbook can offer direction. Your committee will tailor them to suit your committee and your community. The most important part of dealing

directly with the public is to practice, practice, practice, and practice some more. All volunteer should be trained and many areas find that experienced members benefit from helping to train newer members.

#### **4.1 PI Presentations**

A PI presentation occurs whenever two or more members of the PI committee appear in front of a group from the public, and inform it about NA. Sometimes a PI presentation is part of a panel in which NA is one organization of many invited by the public organization. Sometimes a PI presentation is in a closed setting such as a classroom or for members of a civic organization. Sometimes a PI presentation is at a public event and people may be coming and going throughout the presentation.

A PI presentation is a direct way to inform the public about NA. Your committee may respond only to requests which come before it, or it may have a more organized project protocol in which a presentation coordinator sends letters to public organizations informing them that speakers are available. Whenever your committee comes in contact with an organization, offer to do a presentation if the resources are available. Some committees have several presentation coordinators specializing in different types of presentations such as those for schools, the military, professional organizations, and public organizations. Some PI committees maintain on-going PI presentations for staff, clients, or families of clients in locations where their H&I committee has meetings.

##### **Preparation**

To develop a budget for your committee, determine:

- a) how many presentations you plan to do during the year (or month)
- b) which literature you may want to distribute
- c) how much the literature will cost
- d) cost of copies and postage for letters informing the public that we have speakers available

Requests may come in through the phonenumber or through your area's mailing address. It is important to develop a contingency plan so this information is directed to the PI committee quickly. The presentation coordinator should respond promptly and begin collecting information about date, time, audience, and other needs .

The presentation coordinator often needs to inform the requesting organization what we do and do not do in our presentations. Sometimes it becomes clear in this initial contact that the organization does not want the kind of presentation we offer. It may be necessary to not do a presentation if what we do and what they want do not match. For example: Sometimes teachers want us



to give a presentation telling students our personal stories, “scaring” the students, and convincing them to not use drugs. The presentation coordinator would explain that we are a recovery organization, not a prevention organization and that we will talk about recovery in NA and how to find us if the students, or someone they know, decide they have a problem, not our personal using histories. Sometimes the caller will decide that they do want our presentation. Sometimes the presentation coordinator will determine that we cannot do the kind of presentation they want and we will pass on the request. It is better to pass on an opportunity, or schedule it for a later date, than to go unprepared.

It may be necessary for the coordinator to explain a little about our process. Some committees do not do any presentations until each one has been brought before the committee and voted upon. Other committees delegate authority to the coordinator to set up presentations and proceed. The organization should be told what kind of time frame to expect. Explain that we are a volunteer organization and the coordinator will have to determine if any volunteers are available for the time the organization would like a presentation. It might be a good idea to get several different time and date options. Sometimes the coordinator declines an opportunity because there is not enough time to prepare.

Some committees keep a supply of literature available, others order literature specifically for each presentation. Some committees have general training sessions for all volunteers and a special meeting before each presentation to discuss the audience, any special information to be presented, and how the presentation will be divided between the volunteers.

It is often helpful to develop specific guidelines for volunteers using material from this handbook. Most committees have found the two most important parts of presentations are training and practice. Some committees use experienced members to train new members giving them additional practice doing presentations themselves. Some committees require new volunteers to attend one or two presentations as an observer prior to being a presenter. Some committees use newer member reading during the presentation, but only experienced members during the question and answer period.

The committee should review both the language of the letter and the detail of the mailing list. It is not a good idea to send letters to all names on the mailing list at once because we are usually not prepared to do a large number of presentations at one time. Some areas might target different categories at different times of the year. Others might send letters to several organizations in each of several categories each month. Volunteers should be trained to do the presentations before the coordinator tries to solicit opportunities to do presentations.

It takes research to learn about the agencies and organizations we might contact. Some areas rely solely on the phone book in order to get their initial information, and then send letters. Some areas make phone calls first to determine if there is any interest and find out who the best contact person is. After a contact person or department has been determined, a letter of introduction with some literature about the program is sent. Some areas follow up with a telephone call. It is very important to have a professional demeanor in our approach.

## **~~SPEAKING TO NON-ADDICTS~~**

### **Preparation:**

1. ~~Investigate the audience.~~
  - A. ~~Make sure there is a need for a presentation. What are their needs, wants, and expectations?~~
  - B. ~~Consider how we can best relate to the audience.~~
2. ~~Plan.~~
  - A. ~~Select persons who will deliver a positive presentation about NA.~~
  - B. ~~Read the section on "do's and don'ts" in A Guide to Public Information.~~
  - C. ~~Consider with whom the audience may best identify when selecting speakers.~~
  - D. ~~Establish goals as to what points we wish to communicate to the audience.~~
  - E. ~~The individuals making the presentation should prepare an outline (i.e., a list of brief points from which the presenter will elaborate).~~
3. ~~Practice.~~
  - A. ~~Make your presentation to your committee.~~
  - B. ~~Did we achieve our predefined goals?~~
4. ~~Consider.~~
  - A. ~~In addition to presenting information about NA, you are demonstrating a living example of recovery.~~
  - B. ~~You may share from your personal experience in such a way as to enhance the presentation.~~
  - C. ~~CAUTION: Remember, the focus is on the fellowship of NA, not on your personal life. Try not to get drawn into a lengthy discussion of your personal history.~~
  - D. ~~Based on our experience, the use of personal stories before teenage student groups is not advised.~~

The following information may be helpful:

1. ~~Meeting lists~~
  2. ~~Literature order forms~~
  3. ~~Basic Text (for display)~~
  4. ~~IP #1 or White Book (Newly Revised)~~
  5. ~~The NA Way Magazine~~
  6. ~~A few IPs most appropriate to your audience~~
  7. ~~Current Phoneline Directory~~
- ~~State your local helpline number and/or put up your local NA poster so it is visible throughout the presentation.~~

#### **4.1.1 Guidelines for Presentations**

Following are some suggestions that areas use as guidelines for their presentation volunteers. Your area or region may develop some additional guidelines.

Be prepared. All the volunteers should know about:

- a) the Steps and Traditions
- b) the audience
- c) the format to be used for this presentation
- d) each volunteer's part in the presentation
- e) where and when the presentation is, and how to get there
- f) who the contact person is at the facility
- g) where the presentation group will meet prior to the presentation

Each volunteer should:

- a) Have sufficient resources available.
- b) Know who the PI, H&I, ASC and other contact people are if needed for follow-up
- c) Know what literature will be distributed and who will be bringing it

Some areas use a professional booth at presentations, while other areas donate a Basic Text to all school and church libraries after presentations.

Match volunteers to the audience, but also provide diversity. A presentation to students might be comprised of mostly young people, but older people can participate too. If possible, have men and women (unless inappropriate for the audience).

Never go alone. Some areas send at least three people to each presentation to ensure that at least two arrive. We want to make sure no one person is speaking for NA and make sure correct information is being given about NA.

Dress appropriately and neatly. Many areas develop guidelines for their speakers. It is important to ensure our dress does not imply an endorsement of any organization or fellowship (this includes NA). Be careful not only of clothing, but also of jewelry that might endorse a religious group, other fellowship, musical group, or other outside organization. Make sure the clothing is appropriate for the audience. We might dress up more for a presentation to a professional organization and more casually for a high school or employee assistance program at a manufacturing plant. See the Sample section of this Handbook for more specific recommendation about appropriate dress.

Know our literature and understand the traditions. Some volunteers read *The Little White Book* for themselves before each presentation. The answers to most questions can be found there. It is not necessary, but you can't go wrong if you accurately quote the literature.

Emphasize that the only requirement for membership is the desire to stop using.

Always mention that our program is free. We are totally self-supporting through our own contributions and we pass a basket at meetings, but everyone is welcome even if they don't have any money.

Don't break the anonymity of any member of the audience you might know from the NA program.

Point out that NA isn't exclusive to one kind of addict; but to anyone who believes he/she might have a problem. Explain that meetings listed as open on the schedule are open to the public and members of the public may attend to find out what a meeting is like or they may bring a friend with a problem.

Always avoid controversy and do not make a statement about a public issue or give your personal opinion. Even if the speaker says "This is just my personal opinion..." it will always be connected in the mind of the listener with NA.

Don't refer people to outside agencies or other fellowships. Don't speak for outside agencies or other fellowships. During a PI presentation, you can say "that's not what we're here to talk about today" if questions come up. Direct the person to that organization for answers about them.

Don't break your anonymity by using your last name or alluding to geographical area or profession. This is important for several reasons:

- a) to protect your own anonymity
- b) to let the listening audience know that their anonymity will be protected. If the speaker is using their full name, a still suffering addict might be afraid that they too will be expected to stand up and give personal information about themselves if they become a member of our fellowship

- c) it reminds us that “we are more important than me” and that a PI presentation is about NA, not about the individual speaker. We tell NA’s story, not our personal story.
- d) the spirit of anonymity is the sacrifice of personal ambition
- e) Don’t argue with those whose views differ from those of NA.
- f) Don’t accept contributions from sources outside of NA.
- g) Be early to avoid being late.

Keep your presentation short and the question and answer period long. The presentation should cover the most important points, not every point. The balance of the presentation will be completed during the questions and answers. This not only keeps the audience involved in the presentation, but it makes sure they get the information most important to them. Sometimes it is hard for the audience to begin asking questions, and after a short silence the presenter might say, “Lots of times we are asked... .” And then answer that question.

Practice, practice, practice. In the resource section of this Handbook is a list of questions areas have been asked at presentations. Volunteers should know how to answer these questions and stay within the 12 traditions of NA. Some areas use the list of potential questions as a training tool and discuss one of the questions and possible answers at each PI meeting. Some areas will use a panel of volunteers for the presentation and have the newer members do the presentation and the experienced members answer the questions. Sometimes we do not answer the questions directly, but bridge the question to an answer that gives information about NA.

For example: An often asked question is, “What drugs did you use?” An answer might be “It’s not important what drugs I used. The important thing about Narcotics Anonymous, and one of the things I like best about Narcotics Anonymous, is that it doesn’t matter what drugs we used, everyone is welcome in Narcotics Anonymous. I know people that used every drug they could get their hands on and others that only smoked marijuana or drank alcohol so it really isn’t important what drugs we used. It is only important that drugs had become a problem for us and we meet regularly to help each other stop using and find new ways to live.”

Avoid NA language, acronyms, and slang. This takes training and practice. When we come to NA, we begin to use a new language, a language not understood by the public. When doing a PI presentation, it is important to use language better understood by the public. Your committee will probably find some examples to add to the list below.

Avoid saying...	Instead use...
NA	Narcotics Anonymous

Clean	Drug free
I am an addict	I am a <i>recovering</i> addict
PI	Public Information
H&I	Hospitals & Institutions
"Hit bottom"	Reach a point of desperation...
"Fix"	Use drugs
"Hit"	Use drugs
ripping and running	Crime
B and Es	Crime

At the end of the presentation, ask if all the questions have been answered.

A follow up thank you letter is always a good idea. It lets the facility's officials know that you were grateful for the opportunity to speak to them. This additional contact may be useful in the future when attempting to set up additional presentations. Always remember to include your area's (or region's) address and phone number, so they will know where to reach NA. We are not a secret organization.

#### 4.1.2 General outlines for presentations

Some areas have developed specific scripts for presentations. This is often very helpful for new volunteers, and it can also help keep the message at presentations consistent. If your committee uses a script, the volunteers should practice reading it until it flows naturally. There are some sample scripts in the Resource section of this Handbook you may wish to adopt or use as guides. Here is a brief outline you may use to develop your presentations.

- a) Introduce the presenters and describe the outline of the presentation.  
*Example:* My name is \_\_\_\_\_. We are recovering addicts in the program of Narcotics Anonymous. John and Mary will be briefly presenting some information about our program and then I will join them in answering your questions.
- b) Each person should introduce himself or herself as a recovering addict.
- c) Describe the literature which is available that day and state that it is free.
- d) Give the appropriate phonenumber as contact information. Mention the listing in the phone book.
- e) Mention our books and information pamphlets that are available, that they are available on audio tape, in Braille, in large print, and in several different languages. Bring order forms and explain how they can purchase them.)
- f) Give a brief history of NA and current availability of meetings locally.

- g) Describe Narcotics Anonymous.
- h) Speak briefly on the subject, "What is addiction?" Some areas read "Am I an Addict" or a set of questions modified for students and pause to give the audience time to think about them. Emphasize that you are not looking for a show of hands in answer to the questions; audience members should answer them only for themselves.
- i) Briefly discuss our Twelve Steps as tools to help us learn to live without drugs.
- j) Briefly discuss the topic, "Life after drugs."
- k) Repeat the fact that NA is free and describe, again, the various ways to find us.
- l) Questions and answers.

#### **4.1.3 PI Presentations and Personal Stories:**

A straight PI presentation does not use any personal stories. A split PI presentation uses a brief personal story as part of the overall PI presentation. . Some areas only use split pitches when they are specifically requested by the outside agency.

In most situations we do not use personal stories with PI presentations for the following reasons:

- a) We don't need to qualify ourselves as addicts by giving personal examples. If we say we are recovering addicts, the public will believe us.
- b) They didn't call asking about us, they called asking about NA. That is the information we should give them. Sometimes the places which want us to tell our personal stories want a message of the dangers of drugs, or a scare story for their students. That is not what NA is about or what we do. We are a program of recovery, and that is our message.
- c) With students, a personal story may have the opposite effect. No matter how careful we are, personal stories tend to glamorize using. They may see us today, hear our story, and believe that they too can do the things we did and then get clean. A short pitch will not be enough time to adequately convey the pain of addiction and the struggle to get clean.
- d) Professionals have a limited amount of time and are generally not interested in spending it listening to our personal stories. They want facts and information about NA.
- e) Very little will be remembered about any presentation, maybe about 10%. We want the audience to remember the important parts about NA, not our personal story. We want them to remember who we are, what we do, and how to find us.

When using a split pitch...

- a) It should be very generic and focus on recovery It should be:
  - 1. non-drug specific
  - 2. non-crime specific
  - 3. non-gang related
  - 4. non-prison related
- a) In addition to being generic about the using part of the story, the recovery part of the story should be generic as well. Don't discuss your job, your family, your address or social position except in the most general of terms.

Example: "When I was using drugs no one was happy to see me except my drug-using friends. Narcotics Anonymous has taught me how to repair the damage I did in the past with my friends and family, and how to build new relationships with people who do not use drugs.")

Example: "When I was using I couldn't hold a job or keep a place to live. After sleeping on the couches of friends, I ended up in homeless shelters and finally on the streets. Narcotics Anonymous has taught me how to live my life without the use of drugs. By continuing to follow the principles of Narcotics Anonymous, I have become a productive member of society. I have a job and have been in the same apartment for several years now.")

- b) Make the personal story in a split-pitch format a minor part of the overall presentation. Remember the focus of the presentation is NA: who we are, what we do, and how to find us. The personal story should not take more than 10-15 minutes.
- c) The speaker for a split pitch needs to be experienced with regular PI presentations and chosen carefully. The PI committee should make sure he or she clearly understands the difference between a PI split-pitch presentation and a personal story at a regular NA meeting or H&I panel.
- d) It is wise to set up special training sessions about how to tell your personal story during a PI presentation, how to stay within a 10-15-minute time limit, and how to tell the whole story without telling all the details.
- e) Remember: the public will believe you are an addict just because you say you are. They don't believe someone would say that if it weren't true. The important part of your story to the public is that you are a recovering addict. Don't use the 10-15 minutes telling what it was like, let them know how it is different now.

#### **4.1.4 What to Bring; What to Handout**



Some areas have very formal presentations, others are more casual. You might consider bringing the following to use in your visual presentation:

- a) PI booth to give a professional appearance and show a variety of literature
- b) Basic Text in a variety of languages to show our international diversity
- c) It Works - How and Way and Just For Today to show our other books
- d) Phoneline poster
- e) Steps and Traditions Posters
- f) Just For Today Video

Most presentations use some core literature for all presentations and then some additional literature specific to the audience.

NA literature has been translated into various languages; that fact helps us show that Narcotics Anonymous is a worldwide fellowship and can be a useful tool in our public information work. You may want to take some translated materials if members of your audience may speak other languages.

Here are some examples of literature which may be translated for use in public information:

- a) Narcotics Anonymous, "A Resource in Your Community."
- b) Facts about Narcotics Anonymous.
- c) Narcotics Anonymous- "A Commitment to Community Partnership."
- d) IP #1: Who, What, How and Why
- e) Little White Book
- f) IP #7: Am I an Addict?

You can obtain a complete a complete current list of translated literature from the World Service Office (WSO).

Here follows a short list which is useful for most presentations. In the next section in which we discuss different presentation locations, additional literature will be suggested.

- a) IP #1: Who, What, How and Why or The Little White Book
- b) IP# 7: Am I An Addict?
- c) Local meeting directory
- d) Literature order form (to the agency contact only)
- e) Worldwide Phoneline directory, as available from the WSO (for reference only)

A special note about literature order forms: In several of the sections below we suggest giving the audience a literature form as well. We recommend you use the World Service Office or a Regional Service Office literature order form. Most area committees are not prepared for sales to outside organizations and do not have professional-quality order forms for PI to use.

A special note about the Just For Today video: The video may be useful in your presentations, but it may take up too much time and not leave enough time for questions and answers. You might want to show a portion of the video during your presentation and then leave it for a few days for the staff to review in full. The staff at different facilities might want to purchase the video for their own future use and training. Information should be available on how they can order the video from the World Service Office or your local regional office.

#### **4.1.5 Specific information about organizations**

This section contains some ideas about approaching different organizations for a PI presentation. Remember to refer to the preceding section for information about presentations in general. This section supplements that information. Refer to the Sample section of this Handbook for letter you may use to introduce the fellowship when making your initial contacts. For each type of organization it provides:

- a) a description
- b) suggestions on who to contact
- c) additional literature which might be appropriate
- d) special notes about the audience

##### **4.1.5.1 Employee Assistance Programs**

Employee assistance programs are human resource services available to employees from various large private and government employers.

Contact:

- a) Employee assistance program director or coordinator
- b) Human resource personnel
- c) Substance abuse counselor or coordinator

Your presentations could be to staff who might refer employees to NA, or to employees at workshops or health fairs put on by the employee assistance department.

For staff—additional literature:

- a) For Those in Treatment
- b) NA presentation papers (see resource section of this Handbook)

- c) NA - A Resource in Your Community
- d) Recovery and Relapse
- e) Literature order forms for region or world offices

Focus on how we find ongoing recovery and support with the NA program. We must present a professional-quality presentation. Remember, these are people who will be making referrals to NA. Tell them how to find us and how to get up-to-date meeting information. Some areas will give staff a sample of literature or the Introduction Guide to NA and order forms. Make sure they understand what we don't do. We don't run hospitals or recovery programs. We have no paid social workers. We do not pay for treatment for addicts. Point out any meetings that might be close to their location during an employee's lunch hour.

For employees – additional literature

- a) For Those in Treatment
- b) NA - A Resource in Your Community
- c) Recovery and Relapse

The presentation may be to a group of employees already identified with drug problems, or to a large group of employees for general information. Find out which kind of group you are addressing and tailor the presentation to the audience. If your presentation is to a general audience, suggest to them that they might want to pick up some literature for a friend. This gives them an ability to remain anonymous in the work setting.

#### **4.1.5.2 Schools**

Any educational institution dedicated to teaching and learning. There are four distinct groups within the schools category; each one requires different considerations:

- a) middle and high school students
- b) college students
- c) parents
- d) teachers and staff.

##### **4.1.5.2.1 Students in Middle and High Schools (Secondary School)**

Some areas concentrate only on high school students. Others reach out to the lower grades. Some give presentations to high schools, but will respond to requests from elementary and middle schools.

Contact:

- a) Health teachers

- b) Counselors
- c) School Nurse
- d) Principals

Some committees have found it helpful to contact the district administrative office to find out the most appropriate staff people to contact at the different schools.

#### Additional Literature:

- a) Youth in Recovery

Many areas find it effective to have their presentation team made up of young people. Some areas ask the students attending their presentations to write what they think NA is and does: before and after the presentation. Collecting this anonymous evaluation can help the presentation team learn if they are being effective. The most important information for students seems to be that NA is free, that anyone is welcome, that a phoneline is available, and that we are listed in the phone book. Let them know we are not there to tell any of them they have a problem with drugs, only that NA is available should they need it in the future for themselves or someone they know.

Some areas request the teacher leave the room during the question and answer period. The student's often ask very different questions when the teacher is present. This format should be arranged before the beginning of the presentation during a private conversation with the teacher. Some teachers will not feel comfortable with this. Remember, we are guests in the classroom, and the teacher's decision should not be questioned; they know their students best. Some presentations pass a basket for the students to put written questions in so they are not embarrassed by having to raise their hands. This also gives the NA volunteers the ability to discard inappropriate questions. Sometimes the volunteers can reuse good questions from other classes, or use them later for volunteer training sessions.

Many areas take this opportunity to donate a Basic Text to the school library. They let the students know it will be there for them if they want more information. Some areas leave meeting directories with the school nurse or librarian. Make these arrangements before giving the presentation so you can refer the students to those locations. Is not a good idea to leave meeting directories unless you have a mailing list project that will send updated meeting directories. Phoneline referrals are simpler option.

Many areas find it helpful to put the literature on each student's desk so individuals don't call attention to themselves by coming up after the presentation to get it. We then ask the students to keep it until the day someone they know needs it.

If your area has meetings for young people, make sure to point out those meetings.

Leave literature order forms with interested staff members.

#### **4.1.5.2.3 College or University Students**

College presentations to general health classes or student groups should be handled much like a high school presentation. Classes where the students are training to go into a particular profession in which they might refer addicts to NA need a different type of presentation. In these circumstances, please refer later in this Handbook to the type of presentation you would give to the professional in their specific field for additional information.

Contact:

- a) Guidance counselors
- b) Health department
- c) Student services
- d) Law enforcement or law departments
- e) Medical departments (science majors such as Biology, Chemistry, Physics, etc.)
- f) Psychology or counseling departments
- g) Campus organizations or affiliations

Some college students speak language(s) other than our own. Find out ahead of time if there is a large number of students which speak a common second language, and try to bring literature in that language.

Visual aides can be a great tool for presenting information, i.e., the "Just for Today" video. Make your presentation very brief, students will want a lot of time for questions. Explain that they can attend open NA meetings to get a first-hand experience of our program. Let them know that they can also contact the PI committee if they want additional information.

If your area has meetings for young people, make sure to point out those meetings.

#### **4.1.5.2.4 Parents**

This will usually be at a parent/teacher meeting in the evening.

Contact:

- a) Parent/teacher association at the school
- b) Parent/Teacher Association staff liaison
- c) District or county association or offices

d) Principal

Additional Literature:

- a) Youth in Recovery
- b) NA - A Resource in Your Community
- c) Recovery and Relapse
- d) Welcome to Narcotics Anonymous
- e) Literature order forms

Often NA is part of a panel. Presentations to parents are sensitive, because they may be looking for a place to fix their children. In the spirit of cooperation, not affiliation, you might let Nar-Anon's PI committee know of the presentation and they might be included in the panel.

Many times the presentation speakers may have children of their own. It is very important to not share how they deal with their own children and drugs. That is a personal opinion that does not represent the program of NA. Remember, personal opinions will be remembered by the audience as opinions of NA members.

Invite parents to attend an open meeting so they can see for themselves what our meetings are like. They may be afraid to allow their children to go to a place where drug addicts meet. Don't promise them it will be safe. Encourage them to go and see for themselves. Recommend that the parents pre-arrange transportation to and from the meeting for their children.

If your area has meetings for young people, make sure to point out those meetings.

**4.1.5.2.5 Teachers and staff**

Contact:

- a) Principals
- b) Guidance counselors
- c) Librarians
- d) Attendance clerk
- e) Health teachers
- f) Student services
- g) School board

Additional Literature:

- a) Recovery and Relapse

- b) Sponsorship
- c) NA - A Resource in Your Community
- d) Youth in Recovery
- e) Another Look
- f) NA presentation papers
- g) Literature order forms

It is important to present the information we normally give to students and then, present additional information, specifically targeted to educational staff. They have different priorities and questions than their students, and will want to know more about the structure of our fellowship and our method of recovery. Let them know we have speakers available for student classes or student groups.

The possibility of establishing a meeting in the school might come up. Don't volunteer to do this unless you are prepared to continue working with the school in order to maintain the meeting. Some areas work with their H&I committees to make these kinds of arrangements. While this situation doesn't fall within the traditional H&I guidelines, it shares the characteristic with conventional H&I meetings that it often can't be open to the public. In some places, Outreach committees might help to arrange a meeting on a high school campus. Regulations about non-students on campus, however, can be an issue. Perhaps one or two members of the fellowship might serve as Secretary and GSR. Often there are school regulations about raising money, so the Seventh Tradition collection might not be permitted; this may be another reason to consider this situation an H&I meeting. Although high school students are not confined to campus, sometimes the evening meetings we have are not available to them because of the time factor.

If your area has meetings for young people, make sure to point out those meetings

#### **4.1.6 Helping Professions (Medical, Therapeutic, Clergy, Social Services)**

Those in the helping professions may refer their clients to NA for help. Our presentations vary widely, depending on the specialty and their reason for referring people to NA. Presentations may be done at a single facility, or with professional associations. The phone book is a good place to start your research.

##### **Contact:**

##### **Medical**

- a) Emergency room staff
- b) Hospital human resources departments
- c) Paramedic organizations

- d) Doctor and nursing associations
- e) Therapeutic
- f) Psychologists or psychiatrists
- g) therapists
- h) drug counselors
- i) residential drug and alcohol treatment centers
- j) drug abuse counseling agencies
- k) chemical dependency hospital units
- l) addiction research centers

#### Clergy

- a) ordained leaders
- b) lay leadership
- c) professional clerical organizations
- d) religious counseling centers

#### Social Services

- a) child protective services
- b) Public assistance departments
- c) general nonprofit relief organizations
- d) social security office

#### Additional Literature:

- a) *Another Look*
- b) *Recovery and Relapse*
- c) *In Times of Illness*
- d) *NA - A Resource in Your Community*
- e) *Youth in Recovery*
- f) NA presentation papers
- g) Literature order forms
- h) Audio versions of the Basic Text and IPs

The "Just for Today" video might be appropriate for professionals and they may want to purchase a copy to use with their clients..

It is important for them to know what we do and do not do. A long question and answer period will help make sure they get the information they need.



Some of these professionals might want to be added to a mailing list to receive updated meeting directories if your area is working on that project. Emphasize the fact that we are free.

The pamphlet “Am I An Addict” and phonenumber cards or lists are most helpful for reaching addicts and making referrals. The addicts with whom these professionals deal may have trouble reading or may be illiterate. Be sure to express the availability of certain types of our literature on audio tape.

Remember, we are not in competition with the professionals. We do not replace what they do. Some may have a different view of addiction. Don’t argue with them. They may be confused by our program of complete abstinence from all drugs. They may misunderstand and think that means medication. Some members of our fellowship require medication for physical or mental ailments. This is outside the scope of our fellowship and certainly they can recover and learn to leave drug-free (not medication-free) lives and establish stable, productive lifestyles. It may be helpful for all presentation volunteers to read the Chapter “More Will Be Revealed” in the Basic Text and the “In Times of Illness” pamphlet prior to a presentation to helping professionals.

Some professionals believe that all Twelve-step programs are the same and we may need to explain how we are different. This is a good opportunity to explain why we identify ourselves simply as addicts. It can help their clients to better fit into our environment if they understand the meaning behind our language.

It may also be important to explain about our traditions of non-affiliation. For example, some areas have had problems with recovery homes advertising their events as an NA function, treatment centers regulating how NA meetings should be conducted in their facilities, facilities offering monetary compensation or favors to meetings and/or members to promote that particular facility, or addiction researchers soliciting NA members to participate in some type of study by handing out flyers during meetings or at functions.

When addressing treatment professionals, discuss our Seventh Tradition and the way in which our meetings are self-supporting; they can then pass this information along to their clients. The literature and coffee distributed at meetings is paid for by donations from our members. It has occasionally been necessary to discontinue meetings at locations in which they are overwhelmed by vans of treatment-center newcomers who do not contribute to the Seventh Tradition collection. It is important to explain that everyone is welcome, but we do have costs for literature, chips, refreshments, and rent.

It may be helpful to explain the following characteristics of NA meeting etiquette:

- a) different meeting formats

- b) the concept of raising our hands to share
- c) no cross talk or problem solving for others
- d) the Seventh Tradition
- e) anonymity
- f) what is said in a meeting stays in a meeting
- g) we share our recovery in NA with NA literature
- h) we don't discuss outside organizations (like treatment centers) or outside events.

It might also be helpful to discuss the suggestions we give at the end of our meetings:

- a) Come to 90 meetings in 90 days.
- b) Read or listen to some NA literature every day.
- c) Get phone numbers and use them.
- d) Get a sponsor, learn to work the steps, and don't use drugs.

Any presentation given at a treatment facility should also include members from your H&I committee in order to help answer questions about H&I meetings which might be asked. The possibility of establishing a regular NA meeting in the facility might also come up; therefore members of the PI committee should know the area's contingency plan and policy for helping new meetings to get started.

When addressing clergy, we should emphasize the spiritual principles of the program such as honesty, open-mindedness, willingness, compassion, integrity, responsibility, accountability, acceptance, humility, forgiveness, and making amends. One of the most-asked questions from this group involves our affiliation with religious organizations and our definition of God. Keep in mind that NA is a spiritual program based on spiritual principles and we have no opinions about a God other than the importance to find a Higher Power which works for a particular individual's recovery.

Many professionals are in contact with addicts on a regular basis. Many of us at one time or another have found ourselves needing assistance. Our intention is to inform these professionals about Narcotics Anonymous and make information available to the addicts through those who work closely with them.

#### **4.1.7 Government Agencies**

Government agencies are designed to administer the use of public funds to support and enhance services in the community. In some countries the government plays different roles, particularly in relationship with NA. In some

countries NA meetings must be registered with the government. Sometimes government officials will introduce NA to the country.

Contact:

- a) city councils
- b) county or district supervisors
- c) state or provincial legislatures
- d) state, provincial, or national boards of education
- e) state or provincial department of alcohol and drug programs
- f) elected officials
- g) departments that deal with addiction or laws regulating addicts

Additional Literature

- a) Recovery and Relapse
- b) Sponsorship
- c) NA - A Resource in Your Community
- d) Youth in Recovery
- e) Another Look
- f) NA presentation papers
- g) Literature order forms

This group is interested in factual information about the number of meetings already taking place in the community, and in our method of recovery. Government organizations are often concerned with statistics before they are willing to listen to information about our program. "NA - A Resource in Your Community" or some of our professional resource papers may be useful in opening a dialogue with them.

We might also spend time explaining our structure and self-supporting nature. The "Just For Today" video can add a level of professionalism to the presentation. As with our other presentations, a short presentation with a long question and answer period is recommended.

#### **4.1.8 Law Enforcement, Probation/Parole Officers, Judges, Prisoner Services**

In many places these organizations are familiar with our program but may have misconceptions about what we do. These groups have the ability to make significant differences in the lives of still suffering addicts, and often refer newcomers to our meetings.

Contact:

- a) judges
- b) lawyers
- c) district attorney's office
- d) parole offices
- e) probation officers
- f) precinct supervisors
- g) community resource managers or volunteer coordinators at jails and prisons
- h) affiliation groups

#### Additional Literature

- a) Recovery and Relapse
- b) Sponsorship
- c) NA - A Resource in Your Community
- d) Youth in Recovery
- e) Another Look
- f) Staying Clean on the Outside
- g) H&I and the NA member
- h) NA presentation papers
- i) Literature order forms

You may be speaking to a range of individuals from local law enforcement officer, probation or parole officers, to lawyers and judges. This could take place at you local police station, parole officer's office, district attorney's office or even in the judges chambers at the court house. It may not be practical (or safe for the volunteers) to do this type of presentation in all locations. In countries where it is illegal to be an addict, even an addict in recovery, these types of presentations must be approached with great caution or postponed until government officials understand more about addiction and recovery.

Some officials may confuse our program with other programs. Keep your presentation very brief. Your answers to their questions will help to ensure that they get the information they need.

It might be helpful to discuss the suggestions we give at the end of our meetings:

- a) come to 90 meetings in 90 days

- b) read some NA literature every day
- c) get phone numbers and use them
- d) get a sponsor, learn to work the steps, and don't use drugs

Explain the concept of anonymity and that we do not keep records on our members. Explain that many meetings will sign attendance cards from the courts as a courtesy, but only with the secretary's first name. Some meetings use a rubber stamp rather than the secretary's signature. Each NA meeting is autonomous and not all meetings or secretaries sign these cards.

Add these people to your mailing list (if you have one) so they can regularly receive updated meeting information. If you do not have a mailing list, give them phonenumber cards and explain how your local phone system works so they can explain it to their clients.

A discussion about surveillance at meetings is always appropriate. Sometimes these organizations feel it is necessary to check up on the people they referred to us. An explanation about our program and our traditions may help this potentially controversial situation from occurring.

#### **4.1.9 Military or Armed Forces**

The military usually has a policy of no tolerance for drug use. Your committee's speakers must take special care to give those still suffering addicts that might be in the audience the information they need while still protecting their anonymity.

##### **Contact**

- a) Unit commander
- b) Substance Abuse Specialist
- c) Chaplain's office
- d) Installation medical facility

##### **Additional Literature**

- a) Recovery and Relapse
- b) Sponsorship
- c) NA - A Resource in Your Community
- d) Welcome to NA

Your presentation might be part of a panel shared with other fellowships at the officers or enlisted men's hall. Some areas have a monthly presentation coordinated through a drug abuse program. Some installations have a regular program and the NA PI committee might be able to become a regular part of that program.

Because many of the men and women are from outside the area or even the state, it is important to emphasize how to find NA in addition to giving them local meeting directories. Explain the difference between open and closed meetings, (closed meetings are for addicts only, or for people who think they might have a problem with drugs.) Let the members of your audience know about the local phonenumber and how it works. Make sure to let them know they can contact the World Service Office (address on each piece of literature) to help them find meetings in their home town or next station if they cannot find NA in the phone book. Give them the WSO phone number and let them know the office will accept collect calls.

Special care must be taken to protect the anonymity of the audience. Let them know we are not there to tell anyone that he or she has a problem with drugs. Let them know that although our meetings are anonymous, the presentation is not. We are on a military base and they should protect their own anonymity. NEVER let it be known if you recognize anyone from one of our meetings. Explain that our meetings are anonymous, but not confidential, and they should take special care of their anonymity in NA meetings while they are still serving.

Any potential addicts in the audience will not be able to identify themselves as such, so make your question and answer period short and make sure all of the material is covered in the actual presentation. This is a situation where a split pitch works really well. A split pitch is part standard PI presentation, part personal story. You might be able to coordinate with H&I to get speakers experienced at telling their personal stories in a short period of time focusing on recovery.

Make sure the literature is placed at each seat before the meeting starts because someone with a drug problem might not want to risk exposure to come pick up our literature. Tell the audience that we ask them to do only one thing for us—keep this literature until they find someone who needs it because chances are, someday, someone they know will need help with a drug problem. This not only gives them the literature, it also gives them a reason for having it in their possession later on.

## **~~PUBLIC INFORMATION COMMUNITY MEETINGS~~**

### **4.1.10 Public Information Community Meetings**

Public information community meetings may result from your subcommittee's invitation, *inquiries from*, or at the request of an individual or group. The most frequent contact is initially made through the phonenumber, which is one important reason for communication between subcommittees. Phonenumber volunteers must have contact names and numbers of those members active in PI so that requests can be responded to quickly and efficiently-

#### **4.1.10.1 What Is a Public Information Community Meeting?**

~~The point is,~~ This is a meeting hosted by Narcotics Anonymous and structured to effectively carry the message to addicts and to people who come in contact with addicts.

The purpose of this type of meeting is to inform the public about our fellowship. A public information community meeting (~~call it what you choose~~) differs from an open NA meeting in that we invite people outside our fellowship to attend and we structure the meeting to address the particular focus of our guests. This is a “special meeting” rather than a regular NA meeting.

The focus of a meeting of this type will be determined in part by your choice of the people who will attend. Examples include 1) a community meeting in the neighborhood inviting clergy, teachers from nearby schools, or members of a neighborhood association, or 2) a city-wide or county meeting to inform health care professionals and workers in governmental agencies.

An important point to consider is what time of day and day of the week will best accommodate the people you are trying to reach.

A community meeting presentation may use a brief personal story that is non-drug specific, non-crime specific, non-gang, non-prison, etc., and overall very generic with the focus on recovery. Generally a personal story in a community meeting format will not take more than ten or fifteen minutes. The speaker for a community meeting needs to be experienced with regular PI presentations and chosen carefully and make sure he or she clearly understands the difference between a PI presentation and their personal story at a regular NA meeting or H&I panel. It may be necessary to set up special training sessions about how to tell your personal story during a PI presentation.

### **Legwork *Preparation* for Setting Up a PI Community Meeting**

#### **4.1.10.2 Preparation for a PI Community Meeting**

- a) Target the groups or individuals you want to reach.
- b) Find a location that is easy to reach, centrally located, *affordable for the committee*, and if possible, well known.
- c) Send ~~out~~ a letter of invitation to these individuals and groups.
- d) Follow up by calling organizations/groups to see if they will be sending a representative.

- e) If you wish to reach the community at large, have the meeting announced as a *public service announcement* on radio, community calendars, in newspapers, etc.
- f) Set up speakers ~~and guest speakers~~ ahead of time.
- g) ~~Get~~ *Decide what refreshments to serve.*
- h) Make sure speakers understand the time limit, *the importance of not exceeding it, and how you will remind them when their time is almost up.*
- i) Be sure that all participants understand the need to dress nicely, ~~and~~ avoid foul language, *slang, and program talk.*
- j) Start on time.
- k) End on time.
- l) ~~Bring~~ *Distribute* NA literature and meeting lists.

## **~~Do's and Don'ts~~ Recommendations for Presentations to Groups and Community Meetings**

### **4.1.10.3 Recommendations for Presentations to Groups and Community Meetings**

#### **Do**

- a) Prepare PI speakers for PI presentations.
- b) Try to match speakers to their audience to create the best possible identification.
- c) Stress our common welfare and the importance of unity.
- d) Stress that there are no leaders—only concerned members.
- e) Express the spirituality of the program.
- f) Express our primary purpose—to carry the message of recovery to the addict who still suffers.
- g) Stress that the only requirement for membership is the desire to stop using.
- h) Point out that NA isn't exclusive to one kind of addict; but to anyone who believes his/her life is unmanageable due to ~~whatever the drug of choice use.~~
- i) *Keep your message simple, brief, and understandable.*

#### **Don't**

- j) Don't do it ~~by yourself~~ *without help.*
- k) Don't take a stand on any controversial ~~or~~ public issue.



- l) Don't do this for personal gain.
- m) Don't refer to outside agencies *or other fellowships*.
- n) Don't be a spokesperson for NA as a whole.
- o) Don't break your anonymity by alluding to geographical area or profession.
- p) Don't forget—the spirit of anonymity is the sacrifice of personal ambition.
- q) Don't argue with those whose views ~~of addiction~~ differ from those of NA
- r) Don't accept contributions from sources outside NA

Refer to the Sample Section of this Handbook for a sample format and sample script for speaking to non-addicts.

## 4.2 PI AT PROFESSIONAL CONFERENCES

Many professional organizations have large conferences for their members and others in the same profession. Most of these large conferences have exhibitor halls where NA can prepare a booth to distribute information to conference attendees. Some also have opportunities for NA to give a presentation as part of their program. Many program agendas are planned far in advance, so contact the organization as soon as possible.

Many professional conferences change their location each year. If you know where next year's conference will be, inform the NA service committee in that location. This will allow them the opportunity to make arrangement with the organization to do a presentation. Give the mailing address of the committee where next year's conference will be and the WSO address (attention Fellowship Services) to the professional organization so they can add them to their mailing list.

In addition to the booths, meetings, or presentations we might have at a professional conference, this is also an opportunity for us to network with conference participants. All volunteers at a professional conference should be trained to do networking in addition to their other tasks.. See the section on Networking later in this section of the Handbook.

In the initial planning stages we must determine the following information by contacting the professional organization hosting the event. Make sure to present a professional image on the telephone:

- a) What is the deadline for registration?
- b) Who is the contact person?
- c) What is the cost of booth space and what does it include?
- d) Is there a discount if we do not need conference registrations?
- e) Is the cost lower for non-profit or 12-step organizations?
- f) (Often this information is not publicized, so you often need to ask.)

- g) How large is the booth space?
- h) Is electricity available; do we have to pay extra for it?
- i) Do we need to pay extra for chairs or tables?
- j) May we bring our own equipment, or must we rent facility equipment?
- k) May we set up our own booth, or are we required to use facility staff?
- l) Do we make arrangements for electricity, tables, chairs, etc. with the conference planners, building facility, or with third party equipment organizers?
- m) Are there requirements concerning what we can display and distribute?
- n) Are parking receipts validated?
- o) Where do volunteers park?
- p) Is public transportation available?
- q) Who is the target audience?
- r) What is the length of the conference?
- s) What are the hours the booth must be staffed?
- t) What is the booth location? (Registering early may give us the opportunity to choose our booth location.)
- u) Where do we pick up the badges?
- v) How many badges are available?
- w) Do we need to hand off the badges to other volunteers?
- x) (Often we must explain that we will be using several teams of volunteers, not staff as other exhibitors might be using)
- y) Are there opportunities to hold an open NA meeting at the conference for conference attendees who might be members, or attendees who might want to experience NA first-hand?
- z) Can we present at a workshop?
- aa) If we can, what kind of presentation abstract is required? (More about this later)

#### **4.2.1 Booths**

An exhibition booth is the most common type of PI presence at these events. They require careful planning and coordination; often booths must be planned many months in advance. Begin investigating and planning for the event as soon as your committee becomes aware of it.

In some locations, the regional PI committee handles the finances for these large events and the area PI committee works with the regional PI committee to staff the booth.

Once the committee decides to proceed with a booth, other decisions must be made:

- a) What area(s) or region is responsible for providing funding?
- b) What area(s) or region is responsible for providing volunteers?
- c) Who is coordinating the volunteer effort (single point of accountability)?
- d) How long will the volunteer shifts be?
- e) How will we arrange to change shifts?
- f) What do volunteers do; who do volunteers contact if there are problems?
- g) How much literature do we need?
- h) What literature will we distribute?
- i) Do we have booths, signs, TV and VCR, and other equipment available?
- j) Can we borrow other necessary equipment from a nearby region?
- k) Is there a world-level trusted servant who can help us with our planning and training?

(Contact the WSO for the name of someone near you)

After investigation, many committees decide that an event is not appropriate for their committee. Some of those reasons are:

- a) The cost is too high for the number of people we will reach.
- b) The committee does not have enough experience.
- c) The local NA fellowship does not have sufficient volunteers available during conference hours.
- d) The conference time conflicts with other NA events or PI projects.
- e) Doing this type of presentation is not a priority for the committee.
- f) The target population is not a priority for the committee.
- g) The ASC or RSC does not think it is an appropriate use of funds.

When the booth effort for the event has been planned, the coordinator chosen, and the volunteers recruited, it is a good idea to sponsor training sessions for volunteers. Those with previous experience can help new volunteers learn about booth service. Practice role playing and mock question and answer periods. This can help us to present a clear message of recovery in Narcotics Anonymous.

Experience has shown that it is always good to keep two volunteers in the booth at one time. Some areas make sure to team new volunteers up with experienced members.

It is important that we choose volunteers who are capable of presenting simple and accurate information about NA. Previous PI experience at smaller events is helpful. A knowledge of our literature and the steps and traditions is vital. Volunteers should be well-dressed when meeting the professional community.

The booth itself should be well stocked with literature appropriate to the audience. Depending upon the type of event and where the attendees come from, some areas stamp the literature with their committee's name and address to indicate where the literature came from and how to contact us. Some commonly used pamphlets are:

- a) *Am I An Addict?*
- b) *Who, What, How and Why or The Little White Book* (most areas and regions use IP #1 instead of *The Little White Book* because of cost)
- c) *NA-A Resource in Your Community*
- d) *Another Look*
- e) *Youth in Recovery*
- f) *In Times of Illness* (with health care or mental health professionals)
- g) *For Those in Treatment* (with drug counselors and other professionals working in treatment)
- h) NA presentation papers (contact WSO and ask for the PI coordinator in fellowship services for more information about presentation papers)

It is best to keep the variety of literature you distribute reasonably small and specifically targeted to your audience. Many conference attendees will want a copy of each piece to take back and read at their leisure. Some areas have packets made up ahead of time to make this easier both for the attendees, and for booth volunteers.

Many areas distribute WSO or RSO literature order forms. Professionals may want to use NA literature to help their clients understand addiction and to help them find NA. You may want to use the Product Catalog, available from the WSO. It has a picture with a brief description of each piece of our literature, designed to help members of the professional community find literature most helpful for their clients. Contact Fellowship Services at the WSO for a copy. It is printed on 8.5 by 11 paper to make it easy for you to reproduce for distribution, and is updated periodically.

Areas and regions which have a mailing list may wish to place a basket at the booth in order to collect professional's business cards and add subsequently add their names to the mailing list. A notebook for taking down contact information and requests for presentations is also helpful. The PI committee would then use these notes later for follow-up. If attendees have come from outside of your mailing area or region, you should forward the cards and contact information to the appropriate committee. The PI Coordinator in Fellowship Services at the WSO can help you find the current addresses for contacts in other areas and regions. Please inform other areas promptly if contact has been requested.

Many areas make local meeting directories available because some attendees may want to attend a regular NA meeting while at their conference. Some areas have phone lists for surrounding areas and regions; this helps the professional find NA in his or her local community. Another good resource go have on hand is a copy of the World Phonenumber Directory. Be prepared to network and be as helpful as possible.

The booth should be a visual attraction to the conference attendees. You will want your booth to be attractive and catch the attention of attendees as they walk through the exhibit hall. If your committee begins doing booth projects, it will begin to accumulate equipment. This equipment must be properly stored and cared for to maintain its usefulness and attractiveness.

Many areas use these things in their display:

- a) a booth professionally made for a table-top display
- b) information pamphlets laminated for display
- c) a lighted sign saying Narcotics Anonymous
- d) samples of all of our books
- e) samples our books in different languages (to indicate our international scope)
- f) samples of our literature on audio tape
- g) NA signs on easels
- h) TV and VCR playing our public service announcements (Generally, the *Just For Today* video is too long to play in an exhibit hall.)

Volunteers will interact with conference attendees on a one-to-one basis. In short, this is an opportunity to give a PI presentation in less than five minutes. Keep your message short. Listen to what this person says. Make sure that he or she understands that we have no fees or dues and that everyone is welcome regardless of their drug of choice. Answer all questions. Do not offer opinions or any answers you are not sure are correct.

If you do not know the answer to a question, say so. If none of the volunteers at the booth knows the answer, tell the attendee that you will research the answer and get back to them. Take down the contact information and follow through. When we keep our promises, we give the public a favorable impression of Narcotics Anonymous, and of the public information committee itself.

Sometimes we hear conference attendees making negative comments about NA. These opinions are often based on incidents which happened many years ago when our fellowship was much younger. Explain that NA has grown considerably since then. Encourage them to attend an open meeting to see what we are like today. If, however, the attendee is talking about something that is current, collect that information and pass it on to the PI chairperson who will deliver it to the proper person or committee.

It is not unusual to spend long periods of time at this type of conference then most of the participants are in workshops or meetings. During this time it is a good opportunity to network with the other exhibitors. Be prepared to share the same information with them that you provide to the conference attendees.

Most of these opportunities come because we find out about an event happening in our area or region and the PI committee follows up on the possibility of NA participation. If your committee is really active, it might want to seek these opportunities. There are several ways to find out about professional conferences happening in your area. One way is to contact organizations or get on mailing lists to find out what is planned for the future.

- a) Professional organizations of target audiences
- b) treatment professionals
- c) medical professionals
- d) legal professionals
- e) clerical organizations
- f) AIDS organizations
- g) local chambers of commerce
- h) county or city hotels and visitors' bureaus
- i) local newspapers

Sometimes a professional organization, such as one who members are medical doctors, might plan a conference focused solely on drug problems. This sort of conference is good to target. Other groups, such as AIDS organizations, might plan a more general topic, but still have a large client population of addicts needing recovery.

#### **4.2.2 NA Meetings at Conferences**

Some conferences, particularly those in the treatment field, plan twelve step meetings for conference participants. Sometimes the sponsoring organization organizes a generic twelve step meeting; many areas have found participation in this type of meeting difficult. At other times, a conference might make space available and rotate it among several twelve step fellowships; NA might get space on one day while other fellowships would hold their meetings on other days. If an NA meeting (not a generic twelve step meeting) is planned, it is appropriate to announce this fact with a sign at your booth.

If it is likely that the meeting is going to be for conference attendees that are actually members of the fellowship, then you should carefully plan the meeting format. Sometimes only a short period of time is allocated and it might be best to have a *Just For Today* book study. Read the day's meditation and open the floor for discussion.

If it appears likely that the meeting is planned to be an opportunity for the conference attendees who are not members of the fellowship to experience an NA meeting, then it might be better to use a short personal story (fairly generic, as we might use at a community meeting or in a split-pitch PI presentation), and then open the floor for discussion, or provide a question and answer ("Ask it basket") format. *Refer to the sections of the Handbook concerning "Community Meetings" or the "Split Pitch" for more specific guidance.*

Often, this NA meeting is provided as a service to the conference and no rent is charged. If this is the case, the committee may decide it is more like a community meeting than a regular NA meeting and not pass a Seventh Tradition basket. If the committee does this, it should take time to explain the Seventh Tradition and the reason we are not making a collection in this situation. (We don't accept donations from outside the fellowship.)

#### **4.2.3 Presentations at Professional Conferences**

Please refer to the PI Presentation section for how to do a presentation. The planning part is more complicated for a professional conference. We often have to provide an outline or abstract our presentation for acceptance by the conference organizers. It is important to plan this part carefully and make sure that you follow your abstract in order to maintain a good image of NA with conference organizers. If we present an abstract and, instead, do something different, we will present a negative image for NA and will probably not be asked to do presentations in the future.

If your committee has never prepared an abstract before, talk to people who have. Contact members of the WSC-PI committee, or call the WSO PI coordinator for referrals. In a pinch, you might also explain to the conference organizers that you have never prepared an abstract before and ask for their assistance.

## ~~PUBLIC INFORMATION BOOTHS AT COMMUNITY EVENTS~~

### **4.3 PI BOOTHS AT COMMUNITY EVENTS**

The purpose of this section is to provide information on how to prepare a booth and to help train volunteers to better present the Narcotics Anonymous message. Introducing the Narcotics Anonymous program to the general public is an important part in the future growth of NA and provides an means to reach those who need to contact us to hear our message of recovery.

#### **4.3.1 What is a booth?**

A booth is a display area where we distribute literature, meeting directories, answer questions, and deliver information about NA to the public.

#### **4.3.2 Where do we have booths?**

- a) college or community health fairs
- b) community or drug awareness days
- c) farmers' markets or flea markets
- d) outdoor community events
- e) music festivals which have booth space for community groups
- f) county or state fairs
- g) any other venue which the committee determines is appropriate for spreading our message

#### **4.3.3 How do we find out these events are?**

To locate the events in you wish to participate, contact:

- a) Local media (newspapers or radio public service announcements)
- b) Local Chambers of Commerce
- c) Hotel and Visitors Bureaus
- d) City or Town Hall

#### **4.3.4 How to prepare for a booth event.**

- a) Contact the manager or event coordinator.
- b) Find out who to contact in case there are problems or changes.
- c) Should you contact a different person if there are problems on site?
- d) Confirm date(s) and time(s) including times of the event, as well as setup and tear-down times.



- e) Determine the deadline for registration and get the appropriate forms, if any, and get the correct name and address and instructions concerning how the check should be made out.
- f) Ask about special requirements to determine if there is anything we should not display.
- g) Determine the booth-space size and location.
- h) Find out who will be in the other booths near us, to make sure there will not be controversy. If this may be a problem, discuss it with the event coordinator to see if our booth space can be relocated.
- i) Determine costs for the booth space and the literature you will distribute.
- j) Check the availability of electrical hookups. Is there a cost for using them?
- k) Do we need to provide our own tables and chairs or rent them from the event?
- l) Train volunteers.
- m) Provide maps and directions for booth location to the volunteers.
- n) Order literature and meeting directories for the booth.
- o) Schedule booth volunteers.
- p) Arrive early.

#### **4.3.5 Training Volunteers For Booth Service**

Role playing is an excellent tool for training volunteers to more effectively respond to frequently asked questions. We suggest using a panel of volunteers to answer questions asked by other members. After allowing the panel to answer, experienced members can add positive feedback and other possible answers to those questions. This exercise works best when a number of different panels are created with a variety of volunteers. For role playing to be a successful learning tool, it must be a positive experience. The answers to most questions can be found in the Little White Book and other NA literature.

See the Sample Section of this Handbook for a list of frequently asked questions to use during training sessions.

Refer to the previous section concerning booth guidelines for professional conferences regarding the physical setup of the booth.

#### **4.3.6 Recommended Behavior**

- a) Be prepared.
- b) All the volunteers should know the audience.

- c) Match volunteers to the audience, but also provide diversity.
- d) Never go alone. Some areas send at least three people to ensure that at least two volunteers will be in the booth at all times. It is important to make sure that more than one person is speaking for NA, and that correct information is being given about NA.
- e) Dress appropriately and neatly. Many areas develop guidelines for their volunteers. It is important to ensure that our dress does not imply an endorsement of any organization or fellowship (This includes NA, as well.) Be careful not only of clothing, but also of jewelry which might endorse a religious group, other fellowship, musical group, or other outside organization. Make sure that the clothing is appropriate for the audience. The casual way we dress at meetings is not appropriate for doing PI service with the public. See the Sample section of this Handbook for recommendation about appropriate dress.
- f) Know our literature and understand the traditions. Some volunteers read *The Little White Book* for themselves before each event. The answers to most questions can be found there. It is OK, but not necessary, to quote our recovery literature word for word.
- g) Emphasize that the only requirement for membership is the desire to stop using.
- h) Always mention that our program is free. We are totally self-supporting through our own contributions and, although we pass a basket, everyone is welcome—even if they don't have any money.
- i) Don't break the anonymity of anyone you might know from the NA program who stops at the booth.
- j) Point out that NA isn't exclusive to any one kind of addict; rather, our meetings are open to anyone who believes he or she might have a problem. Explain that meetings listed as open on the schedule are open to the public and that members of the public may attend to find out what a meeting is like or they may bring a friend who thinks he or she may have a problem.
- k) Always avoid controversy and do not make any statements about a public issues or give your personal opinion. Even if the volunteer says "This is just my personal opinion..." it will always be connected in the mind of the listener with NA.
- l) Don't refer people to outside agencies or other fellowships. Don't speak for outside agencies or other fellowships. Direct the person to that organization for answers about them.
- m) Don't break your own anonymity.

- n) Don't argue with those whose views differ from those of NA.
- o) Don't accept contributions from sources outside of NA.
- p) Be early to avoid being late.
- q) Avoid NA language, acronyms, and slang. This takes training and practice. When we come to NA, we begin to use a new language, a language not understood by the public. When doing a PI presentation, it is important to use language better understood by the public. Your committee will probably find some examples to add to the list below:

Avoid saying...	Instead use...
NA	Narcotics Anonymous
Clean	Drug free
I am an addict	I am a <i>recovering</i> addict
PI	Public Information
H&I	Hospitals & Institutions
"Hit bottom"	Reach a point of desperation...
"Fix"	Use drugs
"Hit"	Use drugs
ripping and running	Crime
B and Es	Crime

- r) Don't lecture people about NA or drugs.
- s) Bring RSO or WSO literature order forms.
- t) Be courteous to everyone.
- u) Don't get in over your head. It's OK to say "I don't know." Politely take the visitor's number and offer to have the PI Chairperson contact them with the information requested.
- v) Don't attempt to answer questions that are inappropriate, such as "How can I tell if my kid is using drugs?", "How long does marijuana stay in your system?" Or "Is cocaine more dangerous than heroin?"
- w) Don't allow anyone to photograph or videotape members of Narcotics Anonymous.
- x) Don't leave the booth unattended.

- y) Do not eat or smoke in or near the booth.
- z) Keep beverages out of sight.
- aa) Do not allow any NA members who are not trained into the booth. No exceptions.
- bb) Discourage members of the fellowship from hanging around the booth. It may prevent the public from approaching the booth because we may look too busy to help them. Members not trained to do PI service may give out misinformation to the public. This may be a good opportunity to recruit these people for future booth service.
- cc) Have nothing on table that is not NA-related, including newspapers and other materials from the event..
- dd) Stay inside the booth.
- ee) Engage people in conversation about NA.
- ff) When using audio/visual equipment, keep it on at all times, (but not too loud.)
- gg) Always keep literature racks well-stocked, but not crammed full, and always display meeting directories on the table.
- hh) Keep the booth neat and clean at all times.

#### **4.4 Networking and Public Information**

What is networking? Networking is building and sustaining contacts in the community. In this context, we are developing contacts with people who may refer addicts to NA.

We may use the resulting contacts to create a list for use with various PI projects such as mailing lists, PI presentations, and other PI activities. These contacts will help NA become known better in the community. Our goal is to reach the still suffering addict as effectively as possible. Being familiar with NA literature can help us keep our message clear.

We come into contact with people in various settings. We can begin by exchanging information and contact information such as telephone numbers and addresses (NA's information, not our personal information). This may be the first time they have had any contact with our fellowship. We should always present a positive image of NA by our appearance, behavior, and responses. We need to remember that we are trusted servants of NA and our responses to any questions should follow the guidelines outlined in the Public Information Handbook and our Twelve Traditions.

We network at events where there are professionals such as teachers, school counselors, probation officers, government officials, doctors, lawyers, counselors, treatment center staff, and anyone who may have contact with the still suffering addict. We never attend events alone. However, you may find yourself speaking one-on-one with

various people and it is good to be prepared and to practice your responses to potential questions. Remember, there are no stupid questions. If you don't know how to answer a question, it is okay to say that you don't know the answer, but let the questioner know you will get the answer to them. You might refer the question to another PI member who is present. It is important to listen to what the other people are saying.

It is a good idea to have resources available to give to your contacts. Please refer to the Professional Events section for a list of useful literature.

## **12-Step Service**

In some areas, 12-step service is done entirely on the telephone. A phonline volunteer answers phone calls and gives meeting information. If the caller want to talk with a recovering addict, the phonline volunteer will call someone on the 12-step list who will return the phone call. In other locations, the phonline volunteer handles the entire call. Refer to the Phonline Handbook for more information about 12-step service on the telephone. This section of the PI Handbook will discuss 12-step service on a face-to-face basis.

12-step calls are when we reach out on a personal basis to a still suffering addict. Some PI Committees have 12-step bureaus or 12-step lists of volunteers, and 12-step service is an organized effort. If your location has a separate phonline committee, it may be handled by that committee. Some locations have decided to not engage in organized 12-step activities at all. The following are some of the benefits and concerns your committee should discuss when making its decision.

12-steps calls in the best of circumstances can be the moment a still suffering addict finds that first glimpse of hope that recovery is possible. It is a two-on-one personal experience for the PI volunteers and addict alike. In PI, we never do service alone and especially not in 12-step work.

12-step calls in the worst of circumstances have led PI volunteers into physically dangerous situations that have sometimes resulted in threats of violence, actually violence, robbery, and arrest of the PI volunteer as a result of actions by the still suffering addict.

If an area decides not to do 12-step calls, some members may become upset. They may point out that the other fellowship does 12-step calls. We must remember we deal with a larger variety of drugs and lifestyles that are often accompanied by illegal behaviors with more severe consequences for the 12-step volunteer.

If your committee decides to develop an organized 12-step project, develop guidelines for your volunteers and make them available to all volunteers. The following suggestions should be considered:

- a) Never go alone.
- b) Don't go to anyone's home.
- c) 12-step volunteers should not be on probation or parole.
- d) Don't carry large amounts of cash.
- e) Don't wear expensive jewelry.
- f) Men with men, women with women, or a mixed couple.
- g) Be careful about giving rides.

For safety as well as legal reasons, it is best to not go alone. If a problem develops, we don't want it to be the word of one individual against another. Further, problems are less likely to develop with two PI volunteers present. 12-step service brings us in contact with a situation that may threaten our recovery. We'd all like to believe our own recovery is strong enough for anything, but the truth is we are all vulnerable and the risk of going alone is too great.

Going to an active addict's home can be dangerous physically, legally, and in terms of personal recovery. This can mean putting the PI volunteers face-to-face with drugs. It is always a dangerous situation no matter how strong the recovery or how long the volunteers have been clean. Weapons and violence sometimes accompany drugs in the lifestyle of the active addict. The house may be under surveillance and the PI volunteers may find themselves in the middle of a sticky legal situation.

Although the caller may have been sincere about wanting to recover at the time of the call, the situation may have changed by the time the PI volunteers meet with the addict. The caller may have had a change of mind (or mood). The caller may be sincere, but others in the household may be threatened by the prospect of recovery.

Be careful about rides. A using addict may have motives other than recovery, such as car theft or robbery. Even with the best of intentions, the addict may be carrying drugs, paraphernalia, or weapons that could accidentally, or in a moment of paranoia or panic, be left in the PI volunteer's car to be found later by the volunteer, the volunteer's family, or the police. A routine traffic stop can panic an active addict and cause complicated legal problems for the driver.

In some areas, 12-step calls only occur at NA meetings when two PI volunteers meet with the active addict, perhaps shortly before the meeting. They might sit with the active addict during the meeting lending confidence and explaining the meeting process, encouraging the newcomer to raise his hand and introduce himself, and making sure the newcomer leaves with literature. It may be appropriate to take the newcomer to coffee after the meeting (again, never alone). Even in meetings, the PI volunteer does not do a 12-step call alone.

If your committee decides to organize a 12-step effort, it is important to train your volunteers thoroughly and emphasize the concerns expressed here. The examples related above are from the actual experiences of PI members. We need to remember where we have come from and remember that new callers to NA are still there.

Some committees have regular meetings with the 12-step volunteers so the experienced members can share their experiences with newer members. It is also a forum to provide on-going training and discuss the rewards and difficulties of this kind of service.

Recovery happens in NA meetings and our goal should always be to help active addicts find meetings. We share our experience, strength, and hope with the still suffering addict. Not our money, property, and safety.

## **~~MASS MEDIA PUBLIC INFORMATION PREPAREDNESS INVENTORY~~**

### **5.0 PI and Mass Media**

*Mass media projects are ones where a single message is seen by many people. This could be on radio, television, newspapers, the Internet, or broadcast fax. It could also be a sign or flyer on a bus bench, shelter, billboard, poster, or flyer. In mass media projects we usually do not have immediate contact with the public. We make our statement, or grant*

*the interview, and then the media carries the message for us. The following sections will deal with various different ways our message can be carried to the mass public by different media.*

The following are types of mass media public information projects currently being used by our fellowship to inform the public of our existence:

- a) Radio PSAs
- b) Television PSAs
- c) Billboards
- d) Bus benches
- e) Transit signs
- f) *Web sites*
- g) *Broadcast fax*
- h) Other mass media tools

The mass media public information preparedness inventory is based on a series of questions for regional and area committees to answer. With their answers and assessment, public information committees can then *prepare a report and* approach ~~their respective~~ *the responsible* service committee *for permission* to proceed with a mass media project. We have used the word “area” as a model for the questions to follow. If the committee in question is an RSC, insert the word “region” wherever “area” has been used.

Don’t rush your mass media project as it may have a long-term impact on your community. Follow-up on this project is a *high* priority. If your committee is having trouble completing this mass media preparedness inventory, it may ~~be an indicator of~~ *indicate* problems your committee will incur trying to follow through with your project.

If other areas are going to be affected by your project, invite them to ~~participate~~ *cooperate* with your committee from the beginning phases through the completion of the project.

## ***Preparedness Inventory***

### **5.1 Preparedness Inventory**

It has proved beneficial to develop a long-term plan for how the mass media project will be accomplished. Development of this plan will need the support of your phoneline committee. Upon completion of your plan, present it to your ASC.

#### **5.1.1 Public Information Committee Questions**

1. Why does your committee want to do this project?
  - a) Does this project fit the need of your area/region?
  - b) Does this project fit the experience of your committee?
  - c) *Are the goals attainable?*
2. Do you have a functioning committee? *Are there sufficient members to support the project?* How many members on the committee have a history of following

through with their service commitments? It's not only what we do well that counts, but what we can do consistently well.

3. What types of projects has the current public information committee accomplished? *Can the skills learned in those projects be used for the media project?*
4. Does your committee have a working, updated contingency plan? See sample contingency plan in ~~Section One~~ *the Sample Section of this Handbook*
5. ~~How will this project affect~~ *Will this project interfere with the normal functioning of your committee?*
6. Has your committee considered setting up ~~an ad-hoc committee~~ *a work group* that will coordinate and follow up on this project?
7. *Are you prepared to explain the difference between attraction and promotion to the members of the Area Service Committee when explaining this project? Many ASC members think any publicity is promotion. Refer to the Traditions Section of this Handbook and It Work - How and Why for more thorough understanding before proceeding.*

## **~~Phoneline Committee Questions~~**

### **5.1.2 Phoneline Questions**

1. What type of phoneline service does your area have? Will this type of service be compatible with this project? A member's phone number should never be used with a mass media project.
2. Is your phoneline listed in the phone book *and directory assistance*?
  - a) How long has your area had the same phoneline number?
  - b) Can your area determine that your phoneline number will not be changed in the near future? *(If so, delay your media project until the number changes.)*
3. *Will the media project increase your phoneline costs?* Does your area consistently meet the costs of your phoneline service? Would additional costs become a problem?
4. Can your phoneline committee handle an extra influx of calls, particularly from non-addicts? Does your phoneline committee have a contingency plan if your phoneline becomes overloaded with addict or non-addict calls? *Is there a limit to the number of calls you can receive with your type of phoneline service?*
5. Is your phoneline committee functioning? Do you keep log books and are they up to date? Are volunteer positions consistently filled? What is the average response time to calls received on your phoneline service? *Will you be providing extra training to your volunteers to handle the new calls coming from the media project?*
6. How does your phoneline committee handle the following?
  - a) Calls for meeting locations
  - b) Requests for speakers
  - c) Requests for literature



- d) Calls from family members
- e) Calls from professionals and institutions
- f) Calls from the media
- g) Calls for other fellowships
- h) Crisis calls

Often these calls are referred to specific subcommittees, service offices or designated trusted servants. It is our experience that many of these calls should be covered in your contingency plan.

### 5.1.2 Area Service Committee Questions

1. Is your area service committee well organized and receiving support from the groups? Does your ASC agree to support this public information project?
2. Is your financial situation stable with a consistent fund flow from group to area to region?
3. Can your area afford to allocate sufficient funds to complete this project? We have found that the costs vary widely from area to area.
4. Are the WSC and adjacent areas *and* regions *affected* aware of this project? ~~Have you discussed this project with your WSC PI liaison? Do you need guidance from the WSCPI committee or the WSO PI Coordinator?~~
5. Have you discussed this project with other areas and regions to gain their experience or input?
6. Have your public information and phonline committees developed a thorough plan for implementation and follow through on this project?
7. *Does the Area Service Committee understand how this project fits within the traditions of NA and fulfills our primary purpose?*

## ~~PUBLIC INFORMATION AND THE MEDIA PROJECTS~~

### 5.2 Media Projects - Overview

Contact with the media can be a wonderful opportunity to carry the message of recovery in Narcotics Anonymous. However, it can also be a major source of tradition ~~violations~~ *conflicts*, personal ego inflation and fellowship disunity which is detrimental not only to the individual member(s) involved, but may affect NA as a whole. *Choose our spokespeople carefully, script and practice our responses, and follow through and evaluate their effectiveness as you continue with the project.*

Each PI subcommittee should be aware of the WSC PI Contingency Plan found ~~on page 5 and 6.~~ *In the Sample Section of this Handbook.* This should be supplemented by area/regional contingency plans of your own. The following guides can help prevent problems if they are used in responding to all kinds of media contact. ???

#### 5.2.1 Responding to Media Requests

The two basic types of requests which PI subcommittees receive from the media are either for: 1) general information on Narcotics Anonymous, or 2) requests for NA members to do interviews.

Many area and regional PI subcommittees have a standard letter and literature packet which is mailed out in response to every request. ~~Often these are left at~~ *If the location has a helpline offices in order that they can be left there* so members who work the phones may assist PI in responding as quickly as possible to callers' requests.

It must first be determined whether this request falls within the committee's area of responsibility. Many media now reach across several NA communities. Some locations have defined a station's physical location as the determining factor to determine which NA committee has responsibility. Some locations refer all media to the regional committee. In metropolitan locations, one of the outlying NA communities might be approached by the media but it has been defined as the responsibility of another area. It should be a clear part of each area's contingency plan how those requests are handled. Should the other committee's phone number be given to the media, or should the NA volunteer follow-up by contacting the appropriate PI person who will get back to the media.

The following are some frequently asked questions during initial phone calls. Many requests can be handled easily over the phone and require little or no other follow up.

Q1. Can you provide updated information for a directory of self-help groups (or any other type of phone/contact list)? How should NA be listed?

A1. Usually they will want a service office address and number as the main heading (should the WSO be used?). Check the geographic parameters of the listing. In any case, encourage them to indicate something like "contact with Narcotics Anonymous in your community can be made through the local phone directory."

NA may be listed under "self-help," "drug abuse," "community services," and/or other related categories.

Q2. Do we provide public information speakers/meetings outside of NA?

A2. Yes. We have found this to be a good way to inform the general public of who and what we are.

The reasons for speaking are two-fold. First, it establishes awareness and communication between NA and the non-addict community. Second, there might be individuals at the presentation who need us and what we have to offer.

Q3. What if a reporter wants to attend a meeting?

A3. A reporter may attend open meetings only and should be accompanied by a member of the PI subcommittee. It's always best to provide the reporter with a copy of an anonymity statement. For an explanation on the difference between "open" and "closed" meetings, please refer to page 48.

Q4. What if the reporter wants to bring a camera crew and take pictures at a meeting as part of the story?

A4. NO!

- Q5. Why not?
- A5. Photographs taken at an NA meeting, regardless of whether it's a regularly scheduled meeting of NA or a meeting at any NA function or activity, can be a potential danger to individual members' anonymity.
- Q6. How about blackouts, silhouettes, or covered faces on camera?
- A6. Generally, this technique is used to protect the anonymity of persons engaged in or accused of criminal activities. We are working very hard to correct this negative image of the addict. Some addicts have been interviewed using rear upper torso camera angles. We have had more success with interviews which have been pre-recorded in a studio setting than recorded live or on location. The best way to ensure our members' anonymity, however, is to utilize non-addicts who have an understanding of our fellowship's Steps and Traditions.

Even when it is unclear whether or not the media is requesting general information or an interview with an addict, we can never go wrong by having literature and a letter on hand to provide them with an immediate response and clear, written information. Sometimes the media caller is unclear on what NA is and whether an interview with an addict is appropriate for their purposes. Often our literature can answer their questions better than we can and our open meetings can let them know what NA is when our words fall short.

When a reporter, producer or writer calls requesting an interview with an addict, your area/regional contingency plan should be put into effect immediately. The contingency plan ensures that no one is doing it alone. It helps us define geographical boundaries, it ensures NA unity and helps uphold the Twelve Traditions.

Contingency plans provide a guide and checklist which enable us to determine if the request is 1) appropriate for Narcotics Anonymous to handle at all and 2) appropriate for our particular area or region, or requires joint action, or needs to be referred to WSC PI

Often national media requests are referred back to the region/area in which the event will occur. The sections that follow provide guidelines for handling area and regional and national/international PI media events. The role of the PI subcommittee will be discussed, as well as the role of the NA members who find themselves involved in some way. ~~Whether you are an interview coordinator, interviewee, the member who answered the phone or the member who gets to welcome the newcomer who got the message due to our PI efforts, SERVICE IS A PRIVILEGE!~~

## 5.2.2 Pre-interview Coordination

### Point 1

Not all interviews should be granted. It is important to evaluate the request and make a decision. This must often be done quickly and part of the contingency plan should outline who is responsible for making this decision. Several people should form the group conscience and agree before proceeding. Important things to consider are:

- a) Who is making the request?

- b) What are the surrounding circumstances of the request?
- c) What is the format of the show?
- d) Will we be the only people on the show or will it be a group situation?
- e) Will the media personality be the only person answering questions?
- f) Is it a viewer or listener call-in situation?
- g) Is it live or pre-recorded?
- h) Are they likely to do a sensational or controversial interview?
- i) Is the station or the media personality known to be opposed to or supportive of
- j) recovery?
- k) Will they commercialize the interview and attempt to profit from their relationship with NA?
- l) Do they only want personal stories and drug histories?
- m) Is the area or region prepared for an interview?
- n) Are there others with more experience we can call for help?
- o) Do we have volunteers available with SUBSTANTIAL experience doing
- p) presentations and answering questions?
- q) Does the media reach into other areas or regions and can we coordinate our
- r) efforts?
- s) Which PI committee has responsibility?

## Point 1 2

At the time the contingency plan is put into effect, a coordinator should be selected who will be responsible for all direct contact with the media until the interview or project is completed. The coordinator is very often the *area or regional* PI chairperson. *The coordinator should seek out others with experience with media project for assistance and ideas. The WSO PI Coordinator in Fellowship Services is an excellent resource and can help or direct you to people in World Services with the proper experience.* The coordinator should be someone other than the person(s) to be interviewed in order to avoid giving out phone numbers or work places of the interviewees. The coordinator is responsible for keeping the area or regional ~~or world~~ PI media contingency group informed of ongoing progress and any last minute changes that may arise. The coordinator should agree ahead of time to prepare a report for the media contingency group at the end of the project. If the ~~contingency~~ project is area or regional only, the coordinator should send a copy of the report to *World Services* in care of the WSO. This ensures continued evaluation of our procedures and decisions in order to help us improve our effectiveness in dealing with the media and national organizations.

The coordinator needs information about the reporter and the paper or station they are from. This information should include: name, address, phone numbers, date of contact, probable date the information will be used, and the different papers or stations that will use the information.

**Point ~~2~~ 3:**

As soon as a request for an interview is received, the coordinator will make sure that an informational package is ~~express~~ mailed or hand delivered to the people in the project:

- a) Executive producer of the show
- b) Producer
- c) Reporter (person doing the interview)
- d) NA interviewee
- e) NA member coordinating the interview

The informational package should include literature, an anonymity statement, demographic data on NA (number of meetings, estimated number of recovering addicts, etc., which is available from the WSO upon request). The NA members involved (interviewee and coordinator) should know what information has been given to the media and should have extra copies of the anonymity statement to give to the camera and audio crew at the shoot. *Refer to the Samples Section of this Handbook for a list of Frustrations, Concerns and Suggestions one area received from the local media. It may help you design your informational package and your responses to the media contacts.*

**Point ~~3~~ 4:**

The NA member to be interviewed must be someone with experience and knowledge of the traditions. As trusted servants, our responsibility is to find NA members who can handle this type of interview “on their own.” The coordinator should spend time with the possible interviewee and feel confident that they are not doing the interview for any personal gain, don’t have ~~an axe to grind~~ a *personal agenda*, and fully appreciate the importance of maintaining their anonymity for themselves and for the fellowship as a whole. As trusted servants, we have a responsibility to avoid putting someone in a situation that would be very difficult for them to handle. We also have the responsibility to find NA members who can best articulate NA recovery in an interview situation. *It is important to choose people with substantial experience with PI presentations, not just the person with the most clean time in your area.*

**Point~~4~~ 5:**

Once an interview has been scheduled and an NA member or members have agreed to participate, it may be helpful for the interviewees to talk directly with the reporter or coordinator in order to get a better idea of what the interview will be like. The producer or reporter for a story may be concerned that the NA service structure is attempting to censor or control the interview situation, that the concern about anonymity was overstated, and that we were going to attempt to give them a line of propaganda rather than a personal interview. Having the interviewee(s) talk directly with the media contact may alleviate many of the producer’s fears and make for a much smoother situation the day of the interview. The producer or reporter will usually want to know something about the person they will be interviewing ahead of time in order to better

prepare themselves and to make sure they aren't wasting their time talking to someone who doesn't fit their story or show. *This does not mean we share our personal histories with the media. Remember the 11th tradition.*

#### **Point 6**

The PI committee should notify the fellowship of the interview's air date and time so members of the fellowship can watch or listen to the interview. It is a good idea for someone on the committee to be responsible for recording the interview as part of the final report on the project and for future training purposes. For newspaper interviews, make sure to keep copies of the article that was published for the area archives and PI committee's records.

#### **Point ~~5~~ 7:**

Immediately after the interview, the coordinator should make clear records about the subject discussed, information revealed and other pertinent facts about the interview. A written ~~or verbal~~ report should be given to the subcommittee chairperson immediately after the interview is over. *It is also a good idea for the interviewees to make notes immediately following the interview of the questions that were asked. Often many questions are asked, but only a few are used in the final broadcast or article. It is good to know what information the media found less useful in preparing for future projects. This information will be useful during your post-interview follow-up meeting.*

#### **Point ~~6~~ 8:**

THE ANONYMITY OF THE NA MEMBER BEING INTERVIEWED SHOULD BE MAINTAINED WITHIN THE FELLOWSHIP AS WELL AS WITHOUT. The NA member(s) being interviewed may be concerned that they would have to deal with jealousy, judgments and opinions from other NA members about their participation in the interview. Most of us who agree to be interviewed do so because it might help an addict who is out there using but we do not want it to adversely affect our own recovery within NA. The identity of the NA members involved should be disclosed only on a "need to know" basis. *An interview is a project of the PI committee, not an individual and should be treated that way without singling out individuals on the committee for praise or criticism. If members of the fellowship express concern, reassure them that the interview was done within the traditions and under the guidance of this handbook.*

#### **Point 9:**

Many newspapers or television stations will want some kind of picture or photo. Don't say "No" as a final answer. Work with the media professionals to find a way of giving them some visual material to use with their story and still protect the anonymity of the members of our fellowship. You will probably need to spend some time explaining the importance of the spiritual principle of anonymity. Review the traditions section of this Handbook. Some suggestions are:

- a) [TV or newspaper] Have the camera angle over the individual's shoulder with the PI booth or sign in the background.

- b) [TV] Use a graphic instead of a photograph such as the local phoneline, the NA logo, the three-dimensional service symbol in the preface of the Basic Text, a local billboard or flyer.
- c) [TV] Have the camera angle over shoulder of the NA volunteer with the interviewer on screen.
- d) [Newspaper] Use a photo of the PI booth.
- e) [Newspaper] Use a photo showing an assortment of our literature. Particularly good will be our books (in more than one language if that is applicable for your area) and the pamphlet Am I An Addict?

## **Sample The Interview—Questions and Answers**

### **5.2.3 The Interview**

~~Following are~~ *In the Sample Section of this Handbook are* some question and answer formats which seem to come up frequently when contact occurs with newspapers, magazines, radio and TV. Every PI subcommittee should study and discuss these sections in preparation for any media contact. Note: Both questions and answers are only examples. Answering questions about our fellowship is easy and can be very informative if we remember three things:

- a) The first thing to remember is to use ~~one~~ *some* of the best tools we have for providing information about our fellowship, the Basic Text *and It Works - How and Why*. ~~It contains~~ *These contain* a wealth of information about almost every aspect of the program. You can feel safe quoting from ~~it~~ *them*. *Familiarize yourself with the professional papers prepared by the WSCPI committee and Trustees. A list can be found in the Resource Section of this Handbook, by calling the WSO PI Coordinator, or on the WSO web site at <http://www.wsolnc.com>.*
- b) The second thing to remember is that the ~~person asking the questions~~ *interviewer will usually* may have only a limited knowledge about NA. ~~Because of this, whatever~~ *The way* you end an answer with will usually help lead the interviewer into the next question. ~~So~~ *The better informed you are about your answer, the better prepared you are for the next question. Carefully framed responses will guide the interviewer in a preferred direction.*
- c) The third thing to remember is that every question has an answer. Any question, no matter how obscure it may seem, can be used to give information about Narcotics Anonymous. *Use the technique called "bridging" to bridge the question to an answer about NA and avoid conflicts with our traditions, personal opinions, and controversial subjects. These three things can best be shown by the following examples:*

### **5.2.4 Some Insight about Reporters**

If the reporter learns from any source about the participation of a "public person" (a professional sports figure, entertainer, etc.) they may go to almost any lengths to get information, even an acknowledgment of the individual's membership in NA

Reporters are people doing a job. They have a responsibility to their editors and papers or stations to produce stories that contain facts, revealing facts if possible,

including names and other specific items that they believe are important. They will direct the questioning in ways that they believe will be informative to their audience as a whole. The story, as they envision it in their minds, may not necessarily involve information that you feel is important for them to know about NA. Your task is to respond to their needs and to our needs by providing positive information that does not cause problems for you or the fellowship.

Reporters are trained to use every item of information that comes to them, written or orally. If you mention names of people, events or places, they will record that, whether on paper, with their equipment, or in their minds, and use it, even if you think they missed it. If you reveal something to a reporter that should not have been stated, such as an anonymity break, you must—immediately before the next word is spoken—ask that that item of knowledge not be reported. If you do not immediately make that request, it may be too late. They are not likely to respond favorably to a phone call the next day with the same request.

There is a difference between the objectives of reporters and PI subcommittee members. The reporter is responsible for obtaining information for a story that is better if it has specific names, dates, places and phone numbers. They will particularly want to know about the relationship of the members and the fellowship to drug use generally and about specific levels of drug use for certain drugs. They will want to know the relationship of members to former suppliers and others currently using.

The task of the PI subcommittee is to take advantage of opportunities in talking with reporters to provide information about Narcotics Anonymous, NOT to provide information for an expose. It may take some experience and patience to steer clear of giving answers to such questions as illustrated above, but it is important to do so. Our experience has shown that reporters' questioning often relates to specific substances or issues. Although direct answers to these would seem to be in violation of our traditions, it is possible to answer reporters in such a way as to provide more information while protecting the integrity of our spiritual principles.

## **~~Initiating Media Requests~~**

### **5.3 Initiating Media Requests for Public Service Announcements**

In addition to responding to requests from the media, some area and regional PI subcommittees have taken it upon themselves to contact newspapers, radio and television stations. In addition to the information listed previously for reporters overall, there are several other points to consider in this type of PI effort.

1. Make a contact list of the stations in the area. Call the station and ask for their mailing address and the names of the station manager, program director, public service director (PSD) and the news director. This is important, for you will be using them all at a later time. *Refer to the Sample Section of this Handbook from a list of Frustrations, Concerns and Suggestions one area received from the local media.*
2. Then pick the station you want to use first and call to make an appointment with whoever handles PSAs. Have available different types and lengths of PSAs.
3. If you receive an appointment, then you have the opportunity to *send trained volunteers to make a brief PI presentation*. Take written information in order to



share about who we are and what we are trying to do. ~~Usually, we share a little about ourselves.~~

4. Remember to present information only. Don't promote! The media has no responsibility to follow our traditions, that is our job.
5. Wherever possible, quote from or discuss NA Conference-approved literature. This will ensure a consistent message and provide information on the literature we have available.
6. All persons involved in the contact should feel prepared, be polite and be patient! Creating a good rapport with the media will make future contacts more productive.
7. If the Public Service Director doesn't have time for an appointment, ask ~~them~~ if you can drop off a PSA at the front desk. ~~(be sure to call back later and ask if they received it and when they'll be finished with it).~~ *Make sure to include a cover letter or more information about NA so they will know what the content of the PSA is without having to view it.* In each case, try to find out when they would start airing. *Remember, most stations do not have a process for returning tapes, so your committee should consider it a donation. In smaller communities, you can sometimes develop a relationship with the PSD that will enable your tape to be reused or returned to you, but rarely is this possible in metropolitan areas.*
8. Immediately after the contact is made, send a thank you note for the appointment and/or their time regardless of whether you got to see them or not.
9. In about two weeks, call the PSD and inquire when you might pick up your copy of the tape. This serves two purposes. One, the PSA won't get lost in the shuffle. Two, it offers you the chance to enhance the relationship and show continued interest.
10. Always report to the ASC/RSC about which stations have the spot and ask groups to let you know if a member reports seeing it. This gives the opportunity to send another thank you letter to the station. This time, send it to the station manager, thanking him for the station's efforts.
11. ~~Call the PSD regularly and ask if anything is needed.~~
- ~~12-11.~~ Take a new selection to each of your stations ~~every six months~~ *regularly* and review their commitment *to air your PSAs. The new 10-second TV PSAs are less expensive for the committee and may have a greater chance of being aired more often. You may want to discuss with the PSD, if possible, their preferences.*
- ~~13-12.~~ Keep a calendar of contact dates and action taken.

As always, regional and area boundaries must be considered prior to any contact. Although you may feel quite prepared for the outcome of any media contact, an *nearby* area that might be affected by the contact may not feel prepared.

The advantage of this type of contact is that you are asking the media to broadcast our message, rather than fulfilling their informational needs. It is ~~therefore~~ important to have all information to be presented prepared prior to the actual contact.

### **~~Some Points to Remember~~**

### 5.3.1 Some Points to Remember

Don't get frustrated if your PSA effort does not seem to be resulting in new members or increased phoneline activity. At first, there may be a good deal of concern about phonelines being flooded with calls. In many cases, the amount of incoming calls stay about the same. Remember our primary purpose and if just one addict calls, it's worth the effort.

You may start getting more calls from concerned individuals and organizations requesting written information. Advance preparation for this is a good idea.

There are ~~several thousand~~ non-profit groups competing for the limited amount of free air time. ~~In the near past, the US Government required that the stations provide free air time, but that has been deregulated now.~~ The station decides how much air time is available and that's not much.

You might ask that the running times be after 11:00 p.m. and before 6:00 a.m. and you will have a better chance of getting them run. Most non-profit groups want prime time ~~and there isn't much. It seems like many addicts watch TV during that period of time. We have been happy with that.~~ *During prime-time, the 10-second spots have a better chance of being aired because the stations may not have a lot of 10-second spots available. The longer, 30-second spots will almost always be relegated to the late night or early morning.*

#### When Using the Mail

- a) *When you send a public service announcement, make sure to include all the information, including: who, what, when, and where, and a phone number for listeners to get more information.*
- b) *For events (like marathon meetings at the holidays): provide the date, time, street address of the event, the hours, and a phone number. Include a description of the event and date the public service announcement should stop running.*
- c) *If you send a generic PSA, include the PI contact person's name and daytime phone number. The station may want to call and verify the information is still valid. If you use the area or region's phoneline number, make sure there is a good procedure in place for getting messages to the media coordinator quickly.*
- d) *Always send a name and phone number that the station can call to get more information. The stations have deadlines and often need to get information or more details from us immediately. If the PI contact person is away from the phone most of the time and the station gets voice mail or answering machines, they become frustrated. The public affairs director works during regular business hours. List a second or third person's number if necessary.*
- e) *If you want the announcement to air during a certain time period, make sure to include that information on the tape as well as the outside of the envelope. Do not send an announcement the same week as the event.*
- f) *Try to send information that does not need major re-writes. The station often does not have the time to do that for you and you want to make sure that our message is clearly written by NA, not the station. Have the committee and*

*several others read the announcement before sending it to the station. It might be a good idea to have both newcomers and people outside our fellowship read the announcement to make sure it is clear to everyone.*

- g) Update your mailing list. Do not mail information to someone who doesn't work at the station anymore. Usually a quick phone call to the station's main number can confirm that the person is still working at the station in that same job. Don't send multiple copies on a given event to several people at the station. Make sure to send it to the correct person.*
- h) Do your homework. Find out what the deadlines of the station are. Some need the information 2-3 weeks in advance... others need 5-6 weeks.*
- i) Understand that it takes time for the station to process, screen, and get videotaped spots on the air. Try to avoid dated videotaped spots. You may be wasting your money. Some stations won't even accept them. Or, at least try to give enough lead time, like two months.*
- j) Do not send newsletters, photos, slides, reports, minutes from meetings, or announcements for our own fellowship.*
- k) Always try to send additional information with a taped public service announcement. Sometimes the station cannot tell from the box label who the spot is for. Provide support information such as a cover letter, information about NA, and the IP "NA - A Resource in Your Community."*

### **When Using the Telephone**

- a) Wait at least 4-5 days before following up with a phone call, preferably a week. If the public service announcement can't wait, it is probably too late.*
- b) Try to limit your calling. Remember, the station receives a lot of mail every day, and if everybody called to ask if they had received their mailing, the station staff would not have time to do anything except talk on the phone. Use common sense. Do not call and say "Hi, did you get our PSA?" Tell them what PSA, what organization, and give details.*
- c) Do not beg or plead or ask the station to make an exception to their deadlines for us. Make sure to provide ample lead time. Remember, if you approach the station too late, and they will have already promised the time to another non-profit. They won't go back on that promise because our information was sent late.*
- d) Don't make follow-up phone calls for events that are still weeks away.*
- e) Fax and Modern Technology*
- f) Do NOT fax public service announcements. If you are in that much of a rush, it's too late for station deadlines. Many stations plan their public service announcements at least a month in advance.*
- g) Make sure to have the right fax number for the person you are trying to reach. Sometimes the station will have different fax numbers for different departments,*

*so the fax number for the news director will be different from the fax for administration or public services. If it is sent to the wrong place it may sit for days or weeks before being delivered to the appropriate person.*

- h) Don't fax long documents. It ties up their machine. The news station would rather receive the real material than a faxed copy.*
- i) Don't send a fax and then the original in the mail. Just send the original.*

### **Miscellaneous Pointers**

- a) Do your homework! If you are trying to get on the station's local program, find out what day and time it airs and watch it a few times before you approach the producer. See if your idea fits into the format of the show.*

*Many people don't realize the importance of following up with thank you letters. Letters go into the Public Inspection File (so make sure to protect your anonymity at all times when dealing with the media). Often they will work closely with an organization on a campaign and never get any feedback after the PSA has aired.*

## **Local Programming**

### **5.3.2 Local Programming**

*Most stations produce their own local community service/action programs. These are usually thirty minutes to one hour in length. Call the station and ask for the producer or assistant producer of the show. ~~Ask them if they need a new topic for one of their shows. If yes, arrange time, send them information on NA and start getting ready. If no, thank them for their time and send them information. Usually, the ones who say no will give you a scheduled time on the second call after they receive your written information. Either way, we call each program monthly.~~ Discuss the possibility of a show about Narcotics Anonymous. Follow up this phone call with written information about our fellowship and then another phone call to see if they are interested. If it is not of interest now, it may be in the future and you may want to try again at some future date, but do not become annoying with frequent persistence.*

*Keep abreast of any activities of the local media regarding drugs or addiction. This will help you know when the time is most appropriate to make your contact.*

*Many papers/stations have public service projects on a periodic basis, ranging from awareness days to fairs to simply listing information on local services. Initiating a contact in connection with these projects can be an opportunity to provide the public with information on NA on a recurring basis with regularity and oftentimes less work.*

*Local talk shows are always in need of and grateful for a new idea or story. There is so much talk in the media about the negative area of drug abuse. Call and offer them the other side of the story. *Carefully watch these shows prior to making your contact. Narcotics Anonymous does not want to invite controversy or sensationalism.**

*Inviting the would-be host to attend an open meeting can be of great benefit or it may be a very foolish thing to do. She/he will then be able to ask informed questions on the show, about what it's like at a meeting. *Choose the meeting carefully and make sure all the members of the meeting know the media person is present with the PI subcommittee member. Preferably, discuss this with the meeting the prior week at a**

*business meeting so they can prepare and choose their speaker or topic accordingly. If some of the meeting members don't agree, it is probably better not to use that meeting. Step or book study meetings might be better than an open speaker meeting format. . Another problem could come from members hearing about the media's attendance and coming to the meeting in the hopes of getting personal media attention. The PI committee might prefer to set up a mock meeting with PI volunteers instead of a regular open meeting. It's a very real possibility that some members of our fellowship may become upset by PI inviting the media to our meetings and choose to have a direct confrontation with the media present. Always explain the Twelve Traditions prior to their attendance in order to protect the group.*

Again, after each contact, follow up with thank you notes, NA information and the like.

## **Local Newscasts**

### **5.3.3 Local Newscasts**

Although you may call news directors and give them our name as a contact, it's a good idea to shy away from the news program. The reasons are:

- a) Short time notices
- b) Possibility of being picked up at a national level
- c) Editing can take our statements out of context
- d) High exposure to anonymity breaks
- e) Helpline number is hard to get on the screen

What about volunteers to speak and their selection? The first consideration is to select different *trained* speakers each time. *Remember, not everyone is qualified to interact with the media and we need to pick our best presenters. By doing this, dissension and jealousy can be avoided. PI administrative members and coordinators should appear only when there is a "no show." Everybody should get a chance to speak but not a chance to be a star or representative. As for the volunteers, whenever the media is involved we never have a shortage. Many people may volunteer for this project who do not have the extensive PI presentation experience, skills, or training necessary for this service. We must tell them in a loving way that they need to participate in PI with more presentations to gain the necessary experience fielding questions from audiences.*

In trying to keep the selection process simple, *potential* speakers may come from the "helpline" list or PI subcommittee.

Important speaker assets include the following:

- a) ~~The most clean time available in the area~~
- b) An active commitment to NA
- c) ~~Extensive Prior~~ service experience with *Public Information* presentations
- d) Experience in articulating NA recovery
- e) Working knowledge of the Twelve Steps and Traditions
- f) Good speaking ability

- g) *Neat appearance and dress (see dress code for presentations in the Sample Section of this Handbook)*
- h) *Humility and an NA sponsor*

## Newspapers

### 5.3.4 Newspapers

Almost all the newspapers have community ~~meeting/happening~~, *events or referrals* sections in them. Get all the ~~papers~~ *newspapers* you can and determine the availability of the announcement section. Prepare a press release and mail it out.

The World Service Office has many items that can aid you in providing accurate and consistent information on the NA program. These items range from audio and video public service announcements, to press releases, to packets of information on the history and growth of NA worldwide. It will be important to give the media some information on the growth and history of NA in your area and region as well. The actual amount and type of information appropriate for a contact of this type will depend on the size of the media audience, the size and support available in NA in the area to be covered and the willingness of the media to honor your request. Regardless of the media's reaction to your request, you will have provided them with a view of NA recovery. If you continue to keep in touch with them, through follow-up or thank you letters, chances are you will have a very successful vehicle to help carry the NA message.

## ~~Public Service Announcements: General Information~~

### 5.4 Public Service Announcements: General Information

Generally speaking, there are three types of PSAs for radio and TV.

1. Television--10, 20, 30 and 60-second spots supplied to stations on \_\_, 1 or 2 inch video tape.
2. Radio—"Prepared" cassette or reel, 10, 20, 30 and 60-second spots.
3. ~~Typewritten~~ *Printed* spots read by the station's disc jockeys.

## Suggestions

### 5.4.1 Overall Suggestions for PSA Projects

- a) Quality is more important than quantity. Go slowly, be careful and be thorough.
- b) Keep records.
- c) Be sure that radio and TV tapes are stored in a cool, dry, dark area. Heat and water can quickly ruin tapes.
- d) Be sure spots have a *cover letter with* the name and phone number of a PI contact, spot length and title particulars on labels, both on tape and case. *The PI contact person should be someone available to answer the phone during regular business hours. Most stations want immediate responses to their phone calls.*
- e) A 10-second spot has approximately 20 words.
- f) A 20-second spot has approximately 50 words.

- g) A 30-second spot has approximately 75 words.
- h) A 60-second spot has approximately 150 words.
- i) (See ~~pages 60-66~~ *the Sample Section of this Handbook* for scripts of radio and TV PSAs available from the World Service Office).
- j) Use spots provided by the world or regional level PI committee whenever possible.
- k) Do not hand write or print. Use typewritten spots only. Use 8 \_ x 11" white bond paper. Provide only one announcement per page. The copy must be clear and easy to read. Do not fold or staple the paper. Do not use abbreviations, *NA language or acronyms*. Use double spaces, and upper and lower case type. A sample set of a properly prepared radio spot is provided ~~on the above mentioned pages.~~ *In the Sample Section of this Handbook.*

## **~~GUIDE TO WRITING NEWS RELEASES~~**

### **5.5 GUIDE TO WRITING NEWS RELEASES**

- a) Content needs to be news *of interest to the general public*—something has to have happened *or will be happening*; a newsworthy event should be the focus. *Carefully consider whether this is attraction or promotion.*
- b) All information must be accurate. In order to preserve credibility and an attractive public image, we must always do our best to carefully check any information, such as addresses, etc., and any figures, claims made, or any other data we present, for accuracy.
- c) Press releases should be written in journalistic style, presenting facts, using clear, concise, simple, to-the-point sentences, with information placed in order of importance (~~sample news release attached~~ *A sample news release is in the Sample Section of this Handbook*). The release should give the "five W's," telling what happened or will be happening, whom is involved, where the event took place or will take place, when the news event took place or is to take place, and why it happened or will happen. "How" it happened or is expected to happen should also be included. The release should end with a journalistic closing symbol, "-30-" or "###."
- d) Use no more than one sheet, if possible. Use letter size paper (8 \_ by 11 inches). Type and double space the text, leaving large margins on the top, bottom and sides. When it is necessary to use a second sheet, put "-MORE-" centered at the bottom of the first page, and "-2-" or "page 2" at the top of the second page. Also at the top of the second page, include a short identification line, such as "Narcotics Anonymous," or an abbreviated version of the heading used on page one. This will help if the second page is accidentally mislaid or separated from the first page.
- e) The top of the page should say "PRESS RELEASE" or "NEWS RELEASE." It is a good idea to use a special style of stationery instead of regular letterhead paper. The upper left hand corner of the page should give the appropriate address, including the name Narcotics Anonymous, and a phone number if there is one. Also on the heading should be a release date which says "for immediate release," or, if you need more control over the timing of the release, gives a specific time for release, such as "for release June 3, 1987" or "for release after

11:00 a.m., Wednesday June 3, 1987.” The heading should also include the date of the release. Before the text of the news release, put a title line which describes the contents to follow. The line looks like a headline, but it is provided for the news editor or reporter’s information, and it may not be used in print.

- f) A press release should be designed to be read in a very short period of time. It should not contain advertising style attention-getting statements. Reporters can contact us for background information if they want to. Then we may supply further information, such as a press kit. Provide your release to the media in a timely fashion. If you are informing the media about a community meeting to be held, be sure they get the release ~~several days in advance.~~ *in plenty of time.*

## Web Pages

This section deals with creating and maintaining web sites on the Internet at the area and regional level. Hopefully this section will answer many questions concerning the World Wide Web, and aid the decision of whether or not to place a “page” on the Web. Our guidance to the Fellowship concerning the use of the World Wide Web is strictly from the perspective of public information. We do not believe this Handbook to be the proper vehicle to address the use of the Web Wide Web for communications between NA members and the service structure. We believe our best competence is public information and aim to address those issues only.

While much of this material seems obvious to experienced users of the World Wide Web, many of our members do not understand what the World Wide Web is or how it functions. Many of the terms used in this section may be new to the reader. Please refer to the glossary in the back of this Handbook for definitions.

### What is the Internet and the World Wide Web?

The Internet is a massive collection of hardware and software physically located in various locations around the world, but closely linked together to provide quick access to many types of information. The Internet provides many ways to access and use this information, from the ability to exchange messages (“email”) to retrieving text or graphic images, but the best know feature of the Internet may be the “World Wide Web.”

The Internet has experienced explosive growth in recent years. One part of that growth is the World Wide Web. On the Web anyone with a computer and a modem can get almost any kind of information they want, from A to Z. The World Wide Web, also referred to as the Web or simply “WWW,” is a vase collection of “pages” of information, both text and graphics, which are connected together in a way that is not predefined but is created by the designers of each page by using “hyperlinks” that move the user from one page to the next. Because of its ease of use (users make simple choices, by clicking on labeled buttons) and its pleasing look (due to its sophisticated use of graphics), it is extremely popular with Internet users and so it an excellent way to convey information. The web site is much like a bulletin board in a clubhouse, but you don’t have to leave your house to look at the pages.

How do NA Web sites get started?



An ASC or RSC may assign a subcommittee, often Public Information, the task of researching the issues and being the primary point of accountability for the page. Announcing the intention to begin investigating an area or regional web page will often bring new members to the committee that have some experience with the Internet and the World Wide Web.

Web pages featuring information about Narcotics Anonymous come from various sources. Sometimes an individual will bring the idea to a service committee. The service body may discuss the value of having a presence on the World Wide Web. It is important to develop a web page that follows guidelines, conforms to the group conscience of the area or region, and exists within the Traditions of NA.

When an individual addict, or a small group of addicts take action without the benefit of the area or region's group conscience, it is important to remember that these individuals are enthusiastic about their recovery and are trying to find ways to reach the still suffering addict. Often they do not have Public Information experience and do not understand some of the issues or traditions that affect public information service. They may not even understand that a web page is a public information project. Most areas will find ways to bring them into the service structure by educating the individual about public information and encouraging the member to continue working on the project within the committee structure.

Should my service committee put up a web page?

Each committee needs to analyze its own priorities with respect to Public Information. The Internet and the World Wide Web are powerful media, and can reach millions of people all over the world both inside and outside the fellowship of NA. Keep in mind however, that although computers and the Internet are very exciting and the Web is being given a lot of attention in the media, to date, there are still a relatively small percentage of people **in the world** who are on-line. A web page should not come before a phone line, public service announcements, a poster campaign, or community meetings. These efforts will reach a higher percentage of people in your local community. The World Wide Web is a global public medium of communication. Your local PI committee should focus on reaching still suffering addicts locally who will benefit from attending your meetings. ~~The idea ideal~~ is to reach the most suffering addicts with the ~~least amount of money~~ funds available. Our Eleventh Concept says, "NA funds are to be used to further our primary purpose, and must be managed responsibly." This concept can be extended to our service efforts in general. We can't do everything, so we must choose what we can do and do it well.

What can I put on a web page?

The contents of a page can be varied and are really only limited by your imagination, as long as you stay within the Twelve Traditions of Narcotics Anonymous. Very important, do not duplicate any copyrighted material whether it is owned by WSO or anyone else. Refer to the FIPT and bulletins written about copyrighted material. The Resources Section of this Handbook has these resource papers listed.

Keep in mind that the overwhelming majority of people viewing your site will be NA fellowship members and recovery professionals. The contents of your page should be geared to help them as much as possible. Some web sites include the following:

- a) a meeting list for your area or region
- b) a geographic description of your area or region
- c) a helpline number
- d) a business number (if any) for the committee
- e) an address where the committee gets postal mail
- f) the World Service Office phone number and address
- g) the RSO phone number and address (with their permission)
- h) a simple statement about NA, who we are and what we do
- i) NA's published presentation papers (written for addiction care providers):
- j) "Facts About Narcotics Anonymous"
- k) "Narcotics Anonymous-a Commitment to Community Partnerships."

In general, keep it simple. Put the most important information at the top. Start slow and build. We suggest that you look at the World Service Office's web page at <http://www.wsoinc.com/> for some ideas.

A button for individuals to request additional information via email will require additional effort to set up and consistent maintenance to respond to requests. The committee should decide who will be responsible and what kinds of information will be sent either by email or by surface mail.

Remember that a web site is ~~available~~ **accessible to** the public. It is not a private communication tool for your area or region. No individual's home phone number, **address**, or private email address should **ever** be put on the web for the public to contact NA. It would not be appropriate to put your area service committee meeting minutes on a web pages for your GSRs to access and read because this is not the kind of information that we would make available to the public. Likewise, area or regional newsletters are not appropriate materials for web pages. These communications are meant for fellowship distribution only. A web page is accessible to the scrutiny of the public and, it should not present opinions or materials not representative of Narcotics Anonymous as a whole.

Some areas use a simple question to help determine whether material is suitable for a web site. Is it appropriate to print this in a local newspaper? This helps the area remember that a web site is focused on NA in a public medium.

What can we do with links?

We suggest that you have a link to the World Service Office web site. If you choose to link your page to other NA web pages you will need to investigate the site as ask some questions:

- a) Is it an officially sanctioned and supported by a service committee of Narcotics Anonymous?
- b) Does it link to any non-NA pages?
- c) Does it link to other NA pages that link to non-NA pages?

- d) Does it follow the same guidelines for content that your committee is using?

There are pages on the Web today that contain recovery material, but they are personal pages and don't necessarily contain an NA message. Some also contain links to non-affiliated organizations or ~~even~~ commercial pages. We must keep our Sixth Tradition in mind and be careful not to provide an implied endorsement of any outside enterprise.

Links change constantly. It is a good idea for your committee to establish firm guidelines about links and then to monitor each link on a regular basis (maybe monthly) to confirm that the links still follow your guidelines. Because web pages often start simple and grow, the site that one day contained only an area meeting list might have references to every treatment center in the state the next day. One or two individuals should be assigned the task of monitoring links and reporting to the committee on a regular basis. The web master might be given the authority to immediately cancel any link to goes outside the established guidelines for your committee.

Be aware that other web pages can link to your web page without your permission and knowledge. A "reverse search" to find these web pages is recommended. We suggest using the guidelines stated above along with the spirit of the Sixth Tradition.

Some simple guidelines are important:

- a) The Internet account that is attached to the page should be owned by the committee, not an individual, for the same reasons we don't recommend NA phone lines located in members' homes.
- b) In line with our Seventh Tradition, the committee should fund all costs associated with the page. If a community access account is obtained, it should not be subsidized to any greater degree than any other non-profit organization.
- c) Exercise care in selecting an Internet Service Provider (ISP). Be sure that neither the name of the ISP nor any of its policies involve NA in outside controversies. Your web page address will be linked to the ISP as part of the complete address to reach your site.
- d) Take care in selecting an ISP that is stable. Look to see that it has been in existence for awhile and check references.
- e) The web coordinator should regularly check all your links to make sure that they are still active and contain NA public information that is in line with our traditions and the PI Guide.
- f) A notice should be placed at the beginning of the web site that signifies that it is the official web site of the XYZ area or region of Narcotics Anonymous.
- g) A project such as this should not be started unless the committee is committed to continuing it. These web pages will be viewed by the public at large. It hurts NA as a whole if they pop up and disappear all the time.
- h) If your web site contains any information that changes (like meeting lists) then a process must be established for updating the information on the web page. This may be a process where the meeting directory coordinator, the phoneline coordinator, and the web coordinator are all contacted with changes. Or the

meeting directory person accepts changes from the fellowship and immediately informs the phoneline coordinator and web coordinator. Or all changes are reported at the area service committee meeting where the meeting directory coordinator, phoneline coordinator, and web master all attend to get updated information. Define a process and then make sure the plan is followed.

- i) At least two members of the committee responsible for the web site should know everything about the page, how to maintain it, how to update it, etc. This helps to ensure that if one member leaves the committee, gets sick, or goes on vacation, the web site will continue.

How do we let people know the URL of our web site?

You can place the URL for your web site anyplace that you would list a helpline phone number: on your meeting lists, posters, etc. However, most people will find your web site through search engines on the Web itself. It is important to register your web site with these search engines. By registering your web site you define what kinds of key words will get people to your site. Search engines are being developed and changed all the time, so we can't tell you here what they are. Ask your local fellowship what search engines members familiar with the web already using. This will give you a good start.

If you still have questions, get them answered before you proceed. We suggest you contact the PI Coordinator in Fellowship Services at the World Service Office.

Common Terms Used in the World Wide Web:

- a) Surfing (as applies to the World Wide Web) Browsing various sites on the Internet or the World Wide Web.
- b) Search Engines (as applies to the World Wide Web) A program on the Internet that searches web sites and other Internet resources by keyword. To find all the locations that refer to "addiction" or "recovery," simply type the keywords and start the search.
- c) URL (as applies to the World Wide Web) Uniform Resource Locator. This is the "address" of a web page.
- d) HTML (as applies to the World Wide Web) Hypertext Markup Language. This is the computer language that is used to create a web page.
- e) Java (as applies to the World Wide Web) Another web programming language. Java applets allow animation, sounds and instant updates of information.
- f) VRML (as applies to the World Wide Web) Virtual Reality Modeling Language. A tool that enables programmers to create three-dimensional virtual worlds on the Web.
- g) ISP (as applies to the World Wide Web) Internet Service Provider. To access the World Wide Web, anyone, including your service committee will need an ISP. There is usually a fee charged by any ISP to access the Internet on a monthly or hourly basis.
- h) FIPT (as applies to the World Wide Web) Fellowship Intellectual Property Trust. This is a legal document that describes the copyrights of NA literature. All

copyrights of NA literature are owned by the WSO in trust for the fellowship of Narcotics Anonymous.

- i) Web Master (as applies to a web page project) This is a term used in the general public to refer to the person who creates and maintains the web side. Many NA committees prefer the term web coordinator, or even web servant. This is the person who is the single point of accountability for maintenance of a web page. This individual is responsible to carry out the wishes of the service committee, forwarding e-mail.
- j) Link (as applies to the World Wide Web) A way to immediately jump from one web page to another. On a web page, a link is usually a graphic icon or bold-faced text.
- k) Hits (as applies to the World Wide Web) The number of times that a web page or site has been accessed.
- l) Counters (as applies to the World Wide Web) A feature on a web page to count the number of hits, or the number of downloads, or any other type of event.
- m) Email - electronic mail. Email is sent over the phonelines by a computer connected to an Internet service provider. Each user has a unique email address. It is a quick and easy way to communicate provided both parties have a computer and Internet access. It should be considered a communication tool along with postal mail, fax, and telephone.

### **PSAs and Train and Bus Posters, Benches, Shelters**

*One method to make NA visible in the community is to use posters in the local public transit system. Typically, public transit systems generate additional revenue by leasing space on transit vehicles such as buses and subway cars, in subway stations, at bus shelters, and on benches at bus stops. A simple NA message, with the local helpline phone number, can reach many individuals in widely varying parts of your community. Where transit lines cross subcommittee boundaries, remember to coordinate your efforts with the other PI subcommittees. If the transit system covers an geographic area that is served by more than one helpline, the text on the signs should refer not to a specific helpline number, but to the yellow pages listing. The transit system may also cover areas of certain communities that have a large portion of their population that speaks another language(s). This can be a common occurrence in larger transit systems and/or communities. In this case you may want to identify the language(s) and develop a bi-lingual, or multi-lingual poster. [See the Sample section for example of a bilingual poster.]*

Keep in mind that public transit agencies usually delegate all responsibilities concerning these advertising venues to a company that handles the work and pays them a fee. However, a portion of the advertising space is often set aside for public service announcements. The fee for these community announcements is often low or non-existent. If the fee is waived, you may wish to volunteer meeting directories and IPs for the transit agency and advertising firm, in keeping with NA's Tradition of being always self-supporting. In addition, the

firm may even be able to guide you through the process of preparing the graphics for the particular advertising space you are using.

Contact the public transit agency's Public Information, Public Affairs, or Marketing Manager. This individual will be able to put your subcommittee in touch with their advertising agency. He or she may also be able to give you additional information, but in general, is likely to simply refer you to the ad agency. Whenever we make contacts with the public, we should be prepared to inform him or her about NA and what we do. It's possible that this individual could be a strong advocate with the ad agency for your PI subcommittee.

When talking to the ad agency, be prepared not only to talk about NA, but also to collect information. Your questions should include the following:

- a) What costs are involved in renting space for our PSAs?
- b) What additional costs are involved in preparing the PSA for placement?
- c) Can you help us with the graphics or direct us to a low-cost firm who can?
- d) How many spaces will we get?
- e) Where will they be located?
- f) How long will they stay up?

Maintaining a good relationship with both the ad agency and the public transit agency is very important for a positive, ongoing effort in this area. However, be wary of requests by either of these parties that might compromise our Traditions, specifically Traditions Six and Ten. Often, the transit agency or ad agency may wish to "partner" with NA to show that they are doing good things in the community. This can involve a degree of affiliation or implied endorsement that violates our Traditions. Be gentle in explaining this to the agency; they often don't understand why, if they are doing a good thing, we shouldn't let their name be used with ours. You wouldn't want to "win" the battle over this but never again have the opportunity to use their facilities again.

## **HOW TO DEVELOP BILLBOARDS, BUS BENCHES AND TRANSIT SIGNS**

This section discusses billboards, but all the material could apply to bus benches and transit signs. They can be an excellent method of spreading the NA message. Basically, this is a large print public service announcement (PSA) or poster effort. While you may wish to place the PSA on a billboard, you may also wish to consider selecting a site for a painted sign. This can allow for a longer term PSA.

### **Media Agencies**

Some agencies that own billboards set aside a portion of advertising space for public service announcements. The fee for these community announcements is often low or non-existent. If the agency offers to waive the fee, you may wish to discuss the Seventh Tradition with them (please refer to the Traditions section of this handbook).

First, you must determine who these agencies are. Often the billboards have the media company's name at the bottom. Empty billboards often display the company's name and phone number. In addition, local telephone directory classified ads will list them. Contact one agency to begin with and ask to come in and talk to someone about community announcements or PSAs.

Be ready to educate your local Fellowship about "personal anonymity vs. program anonymity" and the difference between promotion and attraction. For help in explaining how the Traditions relate to this type of PI activity, please refer to the Traditions section of this handbook. Select text for the billboard or painted sign that does not make or imply any promises.

When talking to the ad agency, be prepared not only to talk about NA, but also to collect information. Your questions should include the following:

- a) What costs are involved in renting space for our PSAs?
- b) What additional costs are involved to prepare the PSA for placement?
- c) Can you help us with the graphics or direct us to a low-cost firm who can?
- d) How many spaces will we get?
- e) Where will they be located?
- f) How long will they stay up?

Maintaining a good relationship with the ad agency is very important for a positive, ongoing effort in this area. However, be wary of requests by the agency that might compromise our Traditions. Often, the ad agency may wish to partner with NA to show that they are doing good things in the community. This can involve a degree of affiliation or implied endorsement that violates our Traditions. Be gentle in explaining this to the agency; they often don't understand why, if they are doing a good thing, we shouldn't let their name be used with ours.

### **Signs on Private Property**

Your subcommittee may decide to find a site and paint a sign on your own. The first step in this case will obviously be to select a site. Be sure to check with local authorities to see if permits may be required. Keep in mind our need not to involve NA in controversy or any type of outside endorsement. The site, whether it is a wall or an empty lot, should not contain any other signs for services or products that are too close to our PSA.

In making arrangements for the sign, be very careful to be clear with the property owner about your intentions. A written agreement is a good way to ensure that both parties understand the arrangement and who is responsible for what. This can avoid many problems later when trusted servants rotate to new positions. Be especially sure that the property owner understands what NA is and exactly what the sign will say. It is important that you show the property owner the design of the sign. Negotiate a rental price so that your subcommittee carries the message of recovery in a self-supporting manner.

Carefully consider all the necessary costs. Be sure that the work to paint the sign is well done, as the sign will reflect upon how people think of NA. Set aside the funds to produce the sign and make a plan to complete the project. You might consider a light to illuminate the sign at night. The cost of electricity can be factored into the monthly rent.

### **Considerations for the content are:**

*Keep it simple, and don't make promises!*

Billboards, bus benches and transit signs should always include the full name, Narcotic Anonymous.

Phoneline number may or may not be used, according to area/regional needs. *Make sure to use the full phone number on your sign including area code or city code. Some areas refer people to the telephone book instead of listing any phone number.*

The message on the billboard, bus bench or transit sign should be tasteful and in keeping with NA's positive message. *Avoid NA language, acronyms, slang, and ethnic or religious messages.*

The message should be simple and ~~easily comprehended~~ *easy to comprehend.*

The billboard, bus bench or transit sign should not be cluttered with extraneous material.

The message should mention drugs in general or that NA is a program of recovery from drug addiction

Care should be exercised in the layout and art work done for this project. Committees should consider using contrasting colors and limiting their layouts to two types of print.

*Sample billboards are included in the Sample Section of this Handbook under Billboards and Posters.*

### **Posters and Flyers**

~~Bulletins~~ *Posters and Flyers* are used to inform the still-using addict, and the community at large, of what Narcotics Anonymous offers, how and where to obtain help or additional information, and when and where local meetings are held. Phoneline numbers and/or meeting places (open meetings only) may be listed in ~~bulletins~~ *posters and flyers*.

Many local newspapers provide space for community announcements. The ~~bulletins~~ *posters and flyers* your committee chooses for posting may also be used in newspapers.



Public information work carried out via newspapers and other forms of media is discussed in more detail in ~~a later section~~ *the section on public service announcements*.

The following guidelines have been compiled from the experience of PI subcommittees throughout the fellowship. Read them carefully before you begin posting ~~bulletins~~ *posters and flyers*.

*Choose a poster coordinator and assistants.* Divide the area into smaller, geographical areas for which one PI committee member ~~on either a full time or part time basis,~~ agrees to be the contact person. This commitment involves determining where to place ~~bulletins~~ *posters and flyers*, how many will be needed for that person's particular geographical area, and being responsible to see that they are posted.

*Decide on a size for your flyer.* Some areas use a standard size piece of copy paper. Other areas use 1/3 that size because it fits easily into a standard business envelope or to save money. These can be used with a mailing project to get NA's phone number to places that might refer addicts to NA.

*Your committee may use the name "Narcotics Anonymous" on your posters and flyers. For public information, we prefer to use the full name instead of the NA initials or symbol.*

*Many areas place date in small print in one corner to help keep track of different versions.*

Work through your ASC and RSC to be sure the meetings being listed are aware that this activity is going on. They must be ready to handle a possible increase in new member attendance.

Arrange for printing the ~~bulletins~~ *posters and flyers* and provide them, along with guidelines for each person who will be posting, to the contact person.

Determine any follow-up procedures you may need, i.e., mailings of information packets to community members or professionals, possible increase in volunteers to work phonelines and Twelfth Step lists.

Post five to six ~~bulletins~~ *posters or flyers* at each location, if possible, so that interested people may take one, if desired. Larger numbers are suggested in some places—it is left to the discretion of the contact person to determine this depending on the size and location of the facility.

~~Post bulletins~~ *Hang posters and flyers* at all public institutions where large numbers of people will see them. Generally, permission is not necessary; ~~however, if in doubt ask, especially if larger numbers of bulletins posters or flyers are to be left.~~ *So it is best to always ask before posting our flyers.*

Do NOT put ~~bulletins~~ *posters or flyers* on telephone poles, trees, fence posts, etc., nor leave them in public rest rooms. Many communities have ordinances concerning this type of activity, ~~so it.~~ *It is most important to use discretion in distribution as it can affect the reputation of the entire fellowship.*

*Consider a bilingual, or multi-lingual, poster or flyer. [See the Sample section for an example of a bilingual flyer.]*

## Places for Distribution

### **Public Institutions**

- a) Police stations
- b) Health clinics
- c) ~~Welfare~~ *Public Assistance offices*
- d) Hospitals (both emergency rooms and employee bulletin boards)
- e) Courthouses
- f) Colleges and Universities
- g) Junior high and high schools
- h) Libraries
- i) Post offices
- j) *Civic auditoriums*
- k) *Unemployment offices*
- l) *Vocational rehabilitation offices*

### **Private Businesses**

- a) Stores (groceries, drug stores, etc.)
- b) ~~Civic auditoriums~~ *Treatment Centers, halfway houses, detoxification centers, etc.*
- c) Churches
- d) Laundromats
- e) Factories
- f) ~~Supermarkets~~ *Homeless Shelters*
- g) *Bulletin boards at clubhouses and fellowship halls*
- h) *Union halls*
- i) *Job training centers*
- j) *Health clinics and offices*
- k) *Family planning clinics*
- l) *AIDS support service organizations*
- m) *Crisis intervention offices*
- n) *Counseling offices*
- o) *Child care centers*

## **~~Do's and Don'ts for Phonelines, Bulletins and Letters~~** ***Suggestions for Posters and Flyers***

- a) Study these guidelines.
- b) Remember the Twelve Traditions.
- c) Ask permission ~~when necessary and don't post without permission~~.
- d) Remember that our public relations policy is based on attraction rather than promotion.
- e) Remember that, though you are not a representative of NA, you are being seen as an NA member. Conduct yourself accordingly. *Follow the dress guidelines suggested for PI service (in the Sample Section of this Handbook).*
- f) *Keep your flyer short and easy to read.*
- g) *Always include the full phone number.*
- h) *Indicate what geographic area is served by the phone number. Once a flyer is posted, it often travels somewhere else.*

## **Don't**

- i) Don't go alone to post ~~bulletins~~ posters or flyers—there is less possibility of Tradition violations when two or more members are present.
- j) *Don't use controversial artwork on the poster or flyer (like syringe chasing someone).*
- k) Don't act as spokesperson for NA as a whole.
- l) Don't ~~antagonize~~ *argue with* those whose ideas ~~of addiction differ~~ from those of NA
- m) Don't take contributions from outside sources.
- n) Don't refer to any agency or other fellowship.
- o) Don't state an opinion or take a stand on any controversial or public issue.

### **Suggested dress code for PI Service**

- a) No shirts with commercial (or non-commercial) messages and logos should be worn, including any NA memorabilia.\*
- b) All shirts and blouses must cover shoulders. No tank tops!
- c) Dress type shorts only. No bicycle shorts, cut-offs, or short shorts!
- d) Pants must be in good shape. No holes, rips, etc.
- e) Shoes with socks must be worn. No sandals!
- f) No sweats or body suits of any kind.
- g) No hats or sun glasses for indoor events.
- h) Clothes should be clean, wrinkle free, and in good repair.
- i) Undergarments must be worn.
- j) No NA jewelry of any kind!\*
- k) Tattoos should be covered as much as possible.
- l) Dress appropriately for the audience. It would be appropriate to wear a suit and tie to a professional conference and jeans and a casual shirt to an outdoor booth.

*\* By agreeing to not wear NA shirts, memorabilia, and jewelry, we don't give confusing messages to the public. Some of our merchandise has graphics or sayings that can be confusing to the public. It is best for the committee to agree not to wear any, than for the committee to have to decide on a case by case basis which ones are appropriate and which ones are not.*

## **Questions and Answers Sometimes Heard in Media Interviews**

~~Q. — How do you feel about the “war on drugs”? (Or NA’s opinion on needle-exchange programs?)~~

~~A. — Our Tenth Tradition says that Narcotics Anonymous has no opinion on outside issues, hence the NA name ought never be drawn into public controversy. The “war on drugs,” specific drug usage or drug education are issues that are outside the purpose of our fellowship. In NA we deal only with recovery from the disease of addiction. This tradition helps keep us focused on our primary purpose of carrying the message to the addict that still suffers.~~

~~Q. — What is the “NA message”?~~

~~A. — Our message is that an addict, any addict, can stop using, lose the desire to use, and find a new way of life through the Program of Narcotics Anonymous.~~

~~Q. — Is NA only for narcotics addicts?~~

~~A. — We believe our problem is not the use of any specific drug or group of drugs. Our problem is the disease of addiction, and our program is one of abstinence from all drugs.~~

~~Q. — What about dual addiction?~~

~~A. — The term dual addiction has no application for us. We believe there is one disease, regardless of drugs used. All addicts are welcome in NA. We make no distinction among them.~~

~~Q. — Explain to me what you mean by being clean and sober?~~

~~A. — Clean and sober is a phrase made popular by the media and the therapeutic community and we don’t use it in Narcotics Anonymous. To~~

~~Speak in this manner suggests that there are two diseases, that one drug is somehow separate from the rest, requiring special recognition. Narcotics Anonymous makes no distinction between drugs. Our identification as addicts is all inclusive, allowing us to concentrate on our similarities, not our difference. We refer to clean time and recovery to specify our total abstinence from all mood and mind altering substances.~~

Q.——~~What is the difference between “open” and “closed” NA meetings?~~

A.——~~An “open” meeting is one which non-addicts may attend to see how NA functions. A “closed” meeting is only for those who are there because of their own addiction problem.~~

Q.——~~When did NA start?~~

A.——~~Refer to the Resource Paper Facts About Narcotics Anonymous for answers to this question. NA began when several addicts who were seeking recovery held their first meetings in Southern California in 1953. The primary purpose in the beginning was the same as it is today, to help suffering addicts find a solution that would help them get clean and recover from the disease of addiction. Since, the fellowship of Narcotics Anonymous has experienced a tremendous amount of growth. By mid-1987, the number increased to over 10,000 Narcotics Anonymous meetings in 40 countries. Around the end of 1987 the number increased to over 12,000 Narcotics Anonymous meetings in over 43 countries. We are currently increasing in size at the rate of about 50<U7> annually. Note: You may wish to add information on when NA started in your area.~~

Q.——~~What is the Basic Text?~~

A.——~~In 1982, the book Narcotics Anonymous was first published. In its pages the disease of addiction is described by recovering addicts who share their personal experiences, strength and hope. The Basic Text of recovery provides general information and discussion about the principles of recovery found in the Narcotics Anonymous Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions.~~

Q. — ~~What's the difference between NA, AA or any other Twelve Step Program?~~

A. — ~~The response should focus on the First Step, the fact that NA deals with the disease of addiction, not any specific drug.~~

Q. — ~~What is your World Service Office?~~

A. — ~~The World Service Office is the publishing and distribution center of the fellowship, and also provides clerical and administrative services. Note: Contact with the World Service Office can provide additional information.~~

Q. — ~~Who funds NA and how much does it cost?~~

A. — ~~We decline any outside contributions; our fellowship is entirely self-supporting. A collection is taken in our meetings to cover our expenses, and whatever is left over goes to support services such as phonelines to further our primary purpose. *Sometimes we have fund-raising events associated with celebrations of recovery, but these are for our members, we do not do fund-raising outside of our own membership.*~~

Q. — ~~Who can become a member of NA?~~

A. — ~~Anyone can be a member of Narcotics Anonymous. The only requirement for membership is the desire to stop using. Anyone may join us regardless of age, race, sexual identity, color, creed, religion or lack of religion.~~

Q. — ~~What unique service does NA offer?~~

A. — ~~The unique aspect of our program is our approach to the disease of addiction: the therapeutic value of one addict helping another.~~

Q. — ~~What is the best way to get help from NA for a person with a drug problem?~~

~~A. — Get the number of Narcotics Anonymous from your local phone listing. Give the number to the person and suggest they call. Get information where and when local NA groups meet and suggest the person attend a meeting (local meeting lists are often available upon request through the phoneline or contact the World Service Office at: PO Box 9999 Van Nuys, CA 91409) or at <http://www.wsoinc.com>.~~



## 5.9 Frequently Asked Questions by the Public

*Many PI subcommittees practice answering questions at each meeting or at training sessions. These questions might apply to booth or presentations projects, phoneline volunteers or 12-step volunteers. The questions listed below are presented for discussion purposes within your committee. As these questions and possible answers discussed, the entire committee will expand its understanding of public information service for NA. We also furnish the same list of questions followed by suggested answers in the next section of this Handbook.*

### 5.9.1 List of Frequently Asked Questions by the Public

1. Does NA consider alcohol a drug?
2. Is the “bottom” you spoke of different for alcohol than for drugs?
3. My employee is clean two years after treatment and doesn’t go to meetings. Is that OK?
4. Is drug addiction hereditary?
5. Aren’t nicotine and caffeine drugs?
6. Do you also recognize (gambling, excessive shopping, overeating, obsessive-compulsive behavior) as addiction?
7. I believe in NA and want to help you. What can I do?
8. NA, AA, CA...aren’t they all the same? What’s the difference?
9. How can you tell if someone is an addict?
10. How can I tell if someone is under the influence of drugs?
11. What’s the difference between drug use and drug abuse?
12. How can I can get someone to stop using drugs?
13. What do I do if I find drugs in my home or at work?
14. I know someone who is (deaf or blind) but refuses to go to your meetings. Is there anything you can do for them?
15. Do you verify attendance at your meetings? Can I check with you if my (friend husband, employee, etc.) is really going to your meetings?
16. What’s the difference between NA and drug treatment centers? NA and Psychotherapy?
17. Is the (X) Treatment Center any good?
18. If a person is under the influence of drugs, can they participate in NA meetings?
19. What can we do to prevent our (children, employees, friends, etc.) from becoming drug addicts?

20. Where is your office located?
21. How much do you charge for your services?
22. How do you deal with the mentally ill addicts?
23. Do you refer addicts to detoxification centers? Which are the best ones?
24. Do you have information about (AA, CA, Naranon, Alanon or other 12 Step Program)?
25. What about using drugs while you're pregnant?
26. Isn't (person's name) a member of NA?
27. Are your meetings confidential? Is that legal?
28. Do you have counselors? Is that a "sponsor"?
29. Do you certify addicts are clean of drugs for (law enforcement, doctors, social welfare organizations, etc.)
30. I'm not an addict, but can I attend your meetings?
31. How long do you have to attend meetings before you get cured?
32. Do you teach AIDS prevention techniques?
33. Does NA support harm minimization?
34. Do you have special meetings for (youths, homosexuals, HIV positive addicts, etc.)?
35. Do you help addicts get (jobs, social welfare assistance, education, housing, health services)?
36. Does NA operate any treatment centers or detoxification centers?
37. Do recovering drug addicts have a sense of humor like recovering alcoholics seem to have?
38. Is NA only for narcotics addicts?
39. What does it mean "dual addiction"?
40. Are you "clean and sober"?

(When answering these questions, remember to keep your responses short and to the point. Use the opportunity to bridge your answer to give information about our Fellowship. The longer your answers are the more likely you will go into areas that may become difficult to disengage from. Its also OK to say "no" when answering some of these questions. Be sure not to make your audience feel like they are "dumb" or that you are talking down to them.)

### 5.9.2 List of Suggested Answers to Frequently Asked Questions by the Public

1. Does NA consider alcohol a drug?
  - a) *Yes, we do. One of our group readings, "How It Works", states...(read last paragraph of How It Works).*
2. Is the "bottom" you spoke of different for alcohol than for drugs?
  - a) *For each of us, our "bottom" is an individual experience. These experiences are different for each and every addict. The one common link is we all feel there is no where left for us to go, we can't go living as we have been living .*
3. My employee is clean two years after treatment and doesn't go to meetings. Is that OK?
  - a) *We really can't tell you if this is "OK" or not. We can say that part of our program is attending meetings on a regular basis.*
4. Is drug addiction hereditary?
  - a) *NA does not have an opinion on this topic. This is something that scientists and doctors could answer better than we.*
5. Aren't nicotine and caffeine drugs?
  - a) *Although it can be said that nicotine and caffeine are mood or mind altering drugs, we believe that each individual member of NA must make their own decision on whether to the use of these substances is acceptable. We believe that an NA member can still be clean and maintain a spiritual program while drinking coffee and tea or smoking tobacco. We don't believe this is possible by still using marijuana or liquor, for example.*
6. Do you also recognize (gambling, excessive shopping, overeating, obsessive-compulsive behavior) as addiction?
  - a) *When we refer to addiction, we refer to the obsessive and compulsive use of drugs. Our meetings are for those persons who have a problem with drugs.*
7. I believe in NA and want to help you. What can I do?
  - a) *Your positive remarks to others about our Fellowship are a beginning. We do not accept outside contributions nor do we have non-addict volunteers in our Fellowship. The best thing you can do to help us is to advise a person with drug problems is NA is here, that we are free, and that we might be able to help that person.*
8. NA, AA, CA, OA...aren't they all the same? What's the difference?
  - a) *The similarities of all these Fellowships are the 12 Steps, the core of our programs. The difference is our first step, where we state that we are*

*“powerless over our addiction”, whereas other Fellowships address other drugs specifically. We have our own literature and program which makes us what we are, and that is what makes us attractive to the addict seeking recovery.*

9. How can you tell if someone is an addict?
  - a) *We don't give that kind of advice to others on this topic. We don't even tell people who come into our meetings whether they are an addict or not. We allow them the opportunity to know for themselves if they are an addict. We do have a pamphlet titled “Am I An Addict”. It has many questions from our Fellowship's collective experience on what it's like to live as an addict. The person who reads it can answer for themselves whether they have a drug problem and may possibly be an addict.*
10. How can I tell if someone is under the influence of drugs?
  - a) *NA does not have an opinion on this topic. This is something doctors could answer better than we.*
11. What's the difference between drug use and drug abuse?
  - a) *NA is a Fellowship of men and women for whom drugs have become a problem . We can not tell if someone is a social user or an addict . This is up to the individual person , a time will come when the answer to this question is obvious.*
12. How can I can get someone to stop using drugs?
  - a) *From our personal experiences, you can't stop a drug addict from using. They will only stop when they have the desire to stop and seek help. If you know somebody who is using, you may wish to give them some of our literature and a meeting schedule so that they can come to one of our meetings to see if NA can help them, stop. NA does not do drug “interventions” nor do we advise family members, friends or employers in how to deal with a using addicts.*
13. What do I do if I find drugs in my home or at work?
  - a) *We do not give you legal advice on this topic. You'll have to deal with your own conscience as a family member and a member of society.*
14. I know someone who is (deaf or blind or disabled) but refuses to go to your meetings. Is there anything you can do for them?
  - a) *Depending on which the situation is about a deaf or blind or disabled person, you may answer like this “**We have special materials for this type of person with [audio tapes of our Basic Text and Braille editions of our pamphlets] or [we have meetings that have handicapped access at XXX location]**”. Its always difficult for an addict to attend an NA meeting for the first times due to feelings of*

***separation and shame. Especially in a situation where the person has a physical challenge in receiving our message of recovery."***

*You may not have the answers at the moment for the particular situation, advise the person asking that your committee will seek the information and get back to them.*

15. Do you verify attendance at your meetings? Can I check with you if my (friend husband, employee, etc.) is really going to your meetings?
  - a) *No, NA does not verify the attendance of addicts at meetings. However, as a courtesy to those persons attending our open meetings because of legal issues or for out-patient treatment programs, some of our groups will allow the secretary of that meeting to initial a form provided by the attendee. And not all groups will honor this request. Some groups will do it with or without restrictions. But on a whole, we do not verify the attendance of any member nor do we maintain any type of membership roles.*
16. What's the difference between NA and drug treatment centers? NA and Psychotherapy?
  - a) *Narcotics Anonymous is a non-profit organization which charges no fees or dues to its members. We do not have medical staff or professional counselors to treat or advise our members. We do not present ourselves as professionals to the addict that comes to us seeking recovery. We offer ourselves as addicts, the same as them, who have learned how to stop using drugs, lost the desire to use drugs and have found a new way to live.*
17. Is the (X) Treatment Center any good?
  - a) *We have no opinion or endorse any organization, treatment center or hospital programs. We do have some of our meetings at treatment centers, hospitals or institutions to carry our message of recovery to the addicts within them. This should not be interpreted as an endorsement of these organizations or their particular modality of treatment for drug addiction. We still adhere to our Traditions as best we can while carrying our message to addicts at these institutions.*
18. If a person is under the influence of drugs, can they participate in NA meetings?
  - a) *We do not exclude addicts who may be under the influence of drugs at our meetings. Our Third Tradition states the only requirement for membership is the desire to stop using. We do not require our members to be clean to be a member or to attend our meetings. However some of our groups do not allow the active participation in their meetings, such as sharing or holding a position of service at the meeting. To keep our message in meetings clear, most groups ask that if a person has used within the last 24 hours that they refrain from sharing and that they speak*

*to someone after the meeting if they need to talk. We also suggest that those under the influence not be volunteers in service such as the members you see here today.*

19. What can we do to prevent our (children, employees, friends, etc.) from becoming drug addicts?
  - a) *We can't give you advice on this topic of concern. We would all like to know the answer to that question. Our Fellowship is not about preventing people from becoming drug addicts. We are about helping those men and women who cannot live life without using drugs.*
20. Where is your office located?
  - a) *(If you have a local service office, give the contact information) We have a World Service Office in the Los Angeles area of California in the United States. This is where our world wide efforts are coordinated from. The majority of our literature is manufactured and distributed there also. Extensions of the World Service Office are located in Canada and in Belgium. The address and contact information is printed on all of our pamphlets and on our Basic Text if you wish to order literature or seek more detailed information on NA as a world wide organization.*
21. How much do you charge for your services?
  - a) *We charge no fees or dues for our services nor do we accept outside contributions. NA is supported by the individual NA member through donations and the sales of literature.*
22. How do you deal with the mentally ill addicts?
  - a) *We do not exclude addicts who may be mentally ill at our meetings, we realize that this is a mental, physical, and spiritual disease. Our Third Tradition states the only requirement for membership is the desire to stop using. We also suggest those members that are mentally ill not to be volunteers in service such as the members you see here today. Although these members are able to serve by helping to set up our regular meetings.*
23. Do you refer addicts to detoxification centers? Which are the best ones?
  - a) *NA does not refer addicts to any outside organizations nor do we endorse any organizations.*
24. Does NA operate any treatment centers or detoxification units?
  - a) *No, NA does not run any treatment center or detoxification services to addicts.*
25. Do you have information about (AA, CA, Naranon, Alanon or other 12 Step Program)?
  - a) *We only have information about our Fellowship. We are not affiliated with*

*(X) Program. We can only suggest that you check the telephone book or an informational referral agency.*

26. What about using drugs while you're pregnant?
- a) *We are not doctors and we cannot advise you on this topic.*
27. Isn't (person's name or popular personality) a member of NA?
- a) *We do not identify members of our Fellowship to anyone, even among ourselves! We try our best to practice anonymity within our Fellowship and strictly so outside of it. We practice anonymity at the level of press, radio, films and video.*
28. Are your meetings confidential? Is that legal?
- a) *We try our best to be confidential and respectful of anonymity. However we cannot fully guarantee confidentiality or full anonymity in the community nor do we have a legal right to confidentiality such as a doctor or an attorney has..*
29. Do you have counselors? Is that a "sponsor"?
- a) *We do not have professional counselors in NA. A "sponsor" is a NA member with experience in working the 12 Steps of NA who advises a new member how to participate and experience our program.*
30. Do you certify addicts are clean of drugs for (law enforcement, doctors, social welfare organizations, etc.)
- a) *We do not test, certify or guarantee any member is clean from drugs.*
31. I'm not an addict, but can I attend your meetings?
- a) *We have meetings that are open to the public and are listed as such on our meeting schedule. We do ask that you respect our closed meetings which are for addicts and for those who believe that they have a problem with using drugs.*
32. How long do you have to attend meetings before you get cured?
- a) *For ourselves only, we do not believe there we are ever cured from the disease of addiction. We believe this to be a lifelong issue. Going to meetings is a part of our program and we are encouraged to attend meetings regularly.*
33. Do you teach AIDS prevention techniques?
- a) *No, we do not teach AIDS prevention techniques.*
34. Does NA support harm minimization?
- a) *NA has no opinion on the harm minimization concept. NA has a place in the field of recovery from addiction and in itself, a form of harm*

*minimization. However we do not participate with other organization to promote harm minimization or other organizations' philosophies.*

35. Do you have special meetings for (youths, homosexuals, HIV positive addicts, etc.)?
- a) *[If your area does support the specific orientated meetings mentioned in the question, advise the questioner so by to your local meeting schedule as a guide.] If your area does not have this special type of meeting, you may answer something like this, "We currently do not have any of these meetings in our area, although in other areas of the (world or region), these types of meetings are well supported."*
36. Do you help addicts get (jobs, social welfare assistance, education, housing, health services)?
- a) *NA is not a social service or makes referrals for addicts to social or government agencies that provide these types of services. [optional] Our program teaches us self-responsibility, we learn to solve our living problems with those that can best help us: if you have a medical problem, seek health assistance, legal problems, seek legal assistance, etc.*
37. Do recovering drug addicts have a sense of humor like recovering alcoholics seem to have?
- a) *As recovering addicts, we want to enjoy life as other people do. A sense of humor is an important asset in our recovery.*
38. Is NA only for narcotics addicts?
- a) *We believe our problem is not the use of any specific drug or group of drugs. Our problem is the disease of addiction, and our program is one of abstinence from all drugs.*
39. What does it mean "dual addiction"?
- a) *The term dual addiction has no application for us. We believe there is one disease, regardless of drugs used. All addicts are welcome in NA. We make no distinction among them.*
40. Are you "clean and sober"?
- a) *Clean and sober is a phrase made popular by the media and the therapeutic community and we don't use it in Narcotics Anonymous. To speak in this manner suggests that there are two diseases, that one drug is somehow separate from the rest, requiring special recognition. Narcotics Anonymous makes no distinction between drugs. Our identification as addicts is all inclusive, allowing us to concentrate on our similarities, not our difference. We refer to clean-time and recovery to specify our total abstinence from all mood and mind altering substances*



(When answering these questions, remember to keep your responses short and to the point. Use the opportunity to bridge your answer to give information about our Fellowship. The longer your answers are the more likely you will go into areas that may become difficult to disengage from. Its also OK to say “no” when answering some of these questions. Be sure not to make your audience feel like they are “dumb” or that you are talking down to them.)

## ***ORPHAN SECTION - SHOULD GO INTO "INDIRECT PI" SECTION.***

### **Databases and PI Work**

What is a database? It's generally defined as a collection of information arranged for ease of use and retrieval. Some everyday examples are checkbooks, phone lists, or meeting directories. While an address book or card file may suit your needs perfectly, as your PI subcommittee continues to expand its activities and contacts, you may wish to investigate using an electronic organizer or computer database.

It is important to keep your database well organized, whether it is electronic- or paper-based. You can use a notebook to write names, addresses, and phone numbers, or you can collect business cards and add them to a card file. Decide how you want to sort the information: alphabetically, by geographic location, etc. Whatever method you use, changes to addresses or phone numbers should be promptly made. One way to do this is to use any returned mailings to make the corrections.

A key advantage of an electronic database is the ability to sort contacts in different ways, simply and quickly. You may normally want a mailing list sorted alphabetically by name, but what about breaking down the list by city? Or by category, like treatment center, hospital, health professional, etc.? In addition, a database allows you to add information that may not fit in an address book, such as additional contact names and titles, information about the facility, and so on. For example, if we're distributing radio PSAs, each broadcast station in our service area may have a different set of rules for tape or script submission and return.

One labor saving and simple application of a database is mailing labels. Your PI subcommittee can periodically create mailing labels for sending a meeting directory, along with pamphlets, event flyers, and a cover letter. A database can also be when placing Basic Texts in libraries. The database can help keep a record of names and addresses of the libraries in a location.

Even if you do not use a computer database, mailing labels need not be typed or handwritten over and over. You can type or neatly print names and addresses once on a form and use the form to photocopy onto pages of self-adhesive labels. Be sure to use label pages that are specially designed to go through photocopiers. New names and addresses can be added. Periodically, you will want to completely update and verify the mailing list. Have a process in place for maintaining your database in whatever format you are using.

Although we have briefly discussed a number of different applications for databases in PI projects, we are not necessarily describing a number of independent databases. That would be confusing and inefficient. One well-organized database can usually serve several needs. For instance, if you have a field for each record that identifies that record for type of PI project, you can easily retrieve specific groups of records when you need to. You can also work with the entire list. This allows maximum flexibility.

When creating a computer database, we find it is best to buy standard, commercially available software. There are many fine database products available. In addition, standard database software is more easily upgraded to remain compatible with new

hardware and operating systems. Clear and simple instructional books on popular database programs can be found in most bookstores, allowing other trusted servants the opportunity to learn the software and support the database.

Your subcommittee should carefully think through the issue of where the computer-based database should be located. Some options to consider include:

- a) An Area or Regions Service Office computer
- b) A computer owned by a member

Be sure to back up your database frequently. The back-up copy of the database file should always be kept in at least one other location.

## Chapter V

### COMMON QUESTIONS ABOUT PUBLIC INFORMATION

In response to many letters from the fellowship regarding PI service, the World Service Board of Trustees and the WSC Public Information Committee, has supplied written answers to a variety of questions. Some of the most frequently asked questions are included below, accompanied by answers based on our common experience.

The answers, formulated by the Board of Trustees and the WSC PI Committee, are not meant to be the last word on the subject, but may prove helpful to many members in gaining a better understanding of the relationship between PI service and our Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions.

*Q1. What is the importance of anonymity?*

A1 Our Eleventh and Twelfth Traditions talk about anonymity. Tradition Twelve states that "anonymity is the spiritual foundation of all our Traditions, ever reminding us to place principles before personalities." Tradition Eleven cautions us to maintain our anonymity at the level of press, radio and films.

When an individual member of the fellowship finds himself or herself in the limelight as a member of Narcotics Anonymous, that person often feels as if he or she is speaking for Narcotics Anonymous. Such a situation also creates an artificial barrier between the particular member and other members of the fellowship. It tends to tap into the grandiosity which is a part of our individual characters, setting that person up as an expert. Breaking anonymity at the level of press, radio and films is dangerous to the individual's recovery and might also be a deterrent to other individuals coming into the program. Some potential newcomers might feel that we can't be trusted to maintain their anonymity or that they, too, will be required to discuss their addiction and recovery on a public level.

The fellowship at all levels of service needs to be very careful in selecting individuals to do PI work. Some individuals actively seek media exposure; these individuals are probably the least qualified to do PI work. The individuals which may be the best qualified are those who value anonymity and are willing to serve out of love for the fellowship, not as a boost to their egos.

Q2. *In writing to radio and television stations, should PI chairpersons or committee members use their full names?*

A. Above all else, we must adhere to the Twelve Traditions and maintain anonymity at the level of press, radio and films. Some of our members have had the unfortunate experience of trusting individuals from the press who promised that their anonymity would be maintained, only later to see their names in print or referred to on television.

We suggest that your committee use the following language at the end of letters written to radio and television stations: "In keeping with the NA program's tradition of personal anonymity, I respectfully request that you not use my full name if any portion of this letter is to be printed or referred to in your program. "

Q3. *What should we do when writing letters to government, non-government organizations, hospitals, civic groups, etc.? Should PI chairpersons or committee members use their full names?*

A3. If there is any reason to believe the letter will be published or find its way into the public media, then it is important that last names be avoided. Although letters without a full signature often have less credibility in the eyes of the recipient, the use of the first name and last initial is appropriate.

Q4. *How do we answer the question, "Who is the founder of Narcotics Anonymous?"*

A4. Narcotics Anonymous evolved as the result of a group effort and did not have a single founder. Along the way, a number of individuals played key and important roles. The process through which Narcotics Anonymous grew and developed highlights our strengths: the strength of the group, and the strength of anonymous people working together.

Q5. *When is it appropriate to use non-addicts to provide information about Narcotics Anonymous to the media or outside agencies?*

A5. We believe that non-addicts should help us to provide information about our fellowship on national television, radio, magazines, newspapers, etc. whenever there is the possibility that an addict's anonymity could be compromised. The non-addict(s) could be provided with a script which would accurately reflect our message.

In the case of local TV stations, we believe it would similarly be helpful for a non-addict to appear, but also realize that a non-addict may not always be available for this purpose. In the case of outside agencies, it may also be beneficial to use non-addicts, depending on the agency. For example, in

approaching a medical association, it might be helpful to have a physician who is a non-addict explain how physicians might utilize Narcotics Anonymous in working with their addict patients. Endeavors which target governmental agencies might find it helpful to utilize a non-addict who has knowledge or expertise in the agency being approached.

We also believe that we need to avoid the use of blacked-out faces, silhouettes and shadows. Some of these techniques have been used in the past to maintain anonymity. However, these techniques are also used by the media to protect the identity of criminals, informers and other nefarious characters, therefore denoting a very negative image and giving the impression that we have something to hide. That negative image is something we are actively working to avoid.

For all these reasons, non-addicts who have an understanding of our fellowship, our Twelve Steps and our Twelve Traditions are very important to us.

*Q6. Is it all right if some of our members take photographs or use a video camera during an NA meeting?*

A6. Photographs or videos taken at an NA meeting, regardless whether it is a regularly scheduled meeting of Narcotics Anonymous or a meeting held at an NA function or activity, can be a potential danger to individual members' anonymity, and should be strongly discouraged.

Taking photographs and using video cameras, however, at conventions, banquet dinners, dances and picnics seems to be a common practice throughout the fellowship. We believe this practice does not constitute a violation of our Traditions, provided that those individuals photographed or videotaped have no objections, and that the photographs or videos are intended solely for the enjoyment of the individuals involved, and are never used at the level of press, radio, or films. We suggest that your committee make announcements to this effect during these events for the benefit of all NA members involved.

*Q7. May a group choose to announce the time and location of their NA meeting in newspapers, radio or TV in order to reach still-suffering addicts in the community?*

A7. A group may announce the time and location of its meeting in newspapers, on radio or TV in order to reach still-suffering addicts, but should do so only when it is absolutely necessary. Whenever possible, phoneline numbers, instead, should be used in newspapers, radio and television announcements. We realize that this is not possible in some areas and regions which do not have the resources necessary to maintain a phoneline. These areas

and regions can then announce the times and locations of meetings in the print and broadcast media until they are able to maintain phoneline(s).

*Q8. Is it a violation of any Tradition for members of Narcotics Anonymous public information committees to participate in public health fairs? Would members talking in person about NA constitute a breach of anonymity? May PI committee pay a fee to participate in a health fair?*

A8. Participation in a public health fair would be an appropriate endeavor for PI committee efforts. Health fairs provide an excellent opportunity for the members of our fellowship to let the community know who we are and what we do. A booth or table is often provided at these functions where we can make literature available and tell people that we exist and can help anyone with a drug problem to recover.

Such participation would not be a violation of anonymity. Individuals talking in person about Narcotics Anonymous do so of their own volition and at this level, anonymity is a matter of personal choice. We suggest that first names be used and further caution participants that at the level of press, radio and films, anonymity needs to be maintained as specified by our Eleventh and Twelfth Traditions. Your committee, however, should not allow its members to be photographed or videotaped under any circumstances.

It would no more be a violation of our Traditions to pay a fee to participate in a health fair than it would be to participate in one. Any funds expended in this fashion, however, should go through a standard service committee budgeting processes.

*Q9. When an outside organization or agency requests a public information speaker and offers to pay travel expenses, should the PI committee or individual accept such reimbursement?*

A9. Sometimes these offers come from organizations or agencies who do not understand our program, our Twelve Steps, or our Twelve Traditions. These organizations and agencies are often accustomed to paying a fee or offering reimbursement for expenses as a matter of course. However, this practice is not appropriate for Narcotics Anonymous service workers. We are self-supporting through our own contributions, and we cannot accept a fee for PI work nor a reimbursement check for expenses incurred. It is important that we explain this aspect of our Traditions to such an organization, and the reason why it is not appropriate for us to accept this type of fee or reimbursement.

Members of a PI committee may be reimbursed by the PI committee itself for travel expenses. Reimbursement for travel expenses is a very responsible course of action by a PI committee, and is well within the spirit of our Seventh

Tradition. All PI committees are responsible to those they serve. This reimbursement must go through the budgetary process which has been set by the service board or committee to which the PI committee is responsible.

*Q10. Our public information committee is currently using the NA logo, NA service symbol, and the name of our fellowship, "Narcotics Anonymous," on its stationery. It has been brought to our attention that this may be a violation of our Traditions. Can you clarify this matter for us?*

A10. There is no Tradition violation in the use of the NA logo, NA service symbol, and the words "Narcotics Anonymous" on any PI committee's stationery. The confusion may stem from the misinterpretation of a motion passed by the World Service Conference in 1982.

This motion stated that only the NA logo and not the name "Narcotics Anonymous" was to be used on convention and activity brochures and fliers. This motion does not apply to stationery. Hence the name Narcotics Anonymous may be used on stationery of service boards and committees at all levels of NA service.

Additional information on the proper usage by the Fellowship of the NA logo, NA service symbol, the words "Narcotics Anonymous", NA literature and NA service material may be obtained from the World Service Office upon request.

*Q11. Is it promotion or attraction when a PI committee contacts schools, probation officers, county or government offices and treatment centers to let them know about NA?*

A11. Our Eleventh Tradition tells us that our public relations policy is one of attraction rather than promotion. When PI committee members go out into the community and inform government agencies, non-government organizations or individuals who work with addicts about who we are and what we do, they are operating well within the level of attraction. We provide information regarding our program and inform those agencies, organizations and individuals that we are a Twelve Step program of recovery from the disease of addiction.

We must exercise care in order to avoid any promises or make any commitments we cannot keep. We must not present ourselves in a manner which is inconsistent with the spirit of service within Narcotics Anonymous. When we begin to do this, we have crossed the line into promotion.

*Q12. Are radio PSAs attraction or promotion?*

A12. Whether PSAs which are broadcast on the radio are attraction or promotion depends directly on the content of the material presented in that



particular PSA. It seems to us that there is a fine line between attraction and promotion. Providing basic information and letting the public know who we are and what we do is clearly attraction. When we go beyond the act of letting the public know who we are and what we do, we begin to cross over into the area of promotion. When we start making exaggerated promises or statements beyond the scope of recovery from addiction, we have definitely crossed the line into promotion.

*Q13. Should local area or regional PI committees produce TV PSAs?*

A13. It has been our experience that most regionally produced PI video spots have been of a very poor quality. In one incident, a local PI committee expended considerable time, energy and money only to find the spots they produced did not meet government standards and the local television stations refused to air them because of their overall poor quality.

Videos have been made by the WSC PI Committee and are available from the World Service Office for a nominal price. They are professionally produced, have been carefully reviewed by world level trusted servants, including the Board of Trustees, and fall well within the guidelines of our Twelve Traditions.

Since these videos are now available, we recommend that PI committees should use their time and resources in other higher-priority areas of public information service.

*Q14. May the video PSAs currently available from the WSO be translated and overdubbed for use in our country?*

A14. Yes, however the translation from English should follow the script and the audio overdubbing should be done by professional technicians for proper quality. Contact the World Service Office and the World Services Translations Committee before beginning a project of this type.

*Q15. In our PI efforts, is it appropriate to convey the message that addiction is a disease?*

A15. Addiction is a disease. Our literature states that addiction is a disease. Our Basic Text states, "We have a disease: progressive, incurable and fatal." As a fellowship, we have had firsthand experience with thousands of addicts. Based on our firsthand experience, we believe we have a chronic, progressive and fatal disease which if untreated will result in jails, institutions and death for us. We believe it is absolutely necessary to state these basic facts about our fellowship's philosophy concerning addiction in all our public information endeavors.

On the other hand, we must emphasize that Narcotics Anonymous does not qualify its use of the term "disease" in any medical or specialized therapeutic sense, nor does NA make any attempt to persuade others of the correctness of its view.

There is still an enormous stigma attached to drug addiction, and as long as addicts and those individuals working with addicts believe that drug addiction can and should be controlled by the addict, addicts will die trying to find ways and means to develop control. A by-product of public information committee activities will be the education of those working with addicts concerning the fact that addiction is a disease and the addict is powerless over it. We must to accept ourselves as persons who have a disease, and we need to inform those who work with us and those who love us of that fact. We can best do this by talking about addiction as a disease in our PI efforts.

*Q16. Why is it not advisable for a PI committee to do PI work separate from an area or regional service committee?*

A16. When a committee acts on its own or is not a part of a regional or area service committee, it is not accountable to anyone. The PI committee is responsible for area, regional or world level PI work; these committees have a great responsibility to the fellowship.

Any committee which acts apart from the NA fellowship creates a very dangerous situation both for the individuals involved and for the fellowship itself. PI subcommittees must be started by the area or region in order to be true PI subcommittees.

*Q17. Why is it not advisable for an individual to do PI work separate from a PI committee?*

A17. Our First Tradition states that "our common welfare should come first" and that "our personal recovery depends on NA unity." This tradition teaches us that the "we" comes before the "I" Often, what may seem like a wonderful idea to an individual turns out to have disastrous results. Most of the very serious anonymity breaks which have occurred over in the past have resulted from individuals acting on their own, not as the result of public information committee members carrying out projects discussed and approved by a public information committee. When we act on our own we tend to be grandiose, and often operate on self will. One of the reasons we found our way into Narcotics Anonymous is that we could not do it alone. In public information work the "I can't, but we can" ideal still applies. Sometimes when a PI committee does not accept our idea or project we want to rush out and do it anyway. We grow in our recovery when we can resist this urge.

*Q18. Can a member of the media attend an NA meeting?*

A18. A member of the media may only attend open meetings, and should be accompanied by a member of the local PI committee. It's always best to provide this member of the media with a copy of the anonymity statement printed earlier in this chapter.

*Q19. A local entertainer has been seen wearing an NA T-shirt during public performances. Is this a violation of the Eleventh Tradition?*

A19. Wearing NA memorabilia in public is not in itself a violation of the Eleventh Tradition. However, wearing NA memorabilia in such a manner that the media can expose that person's identity and association with NA is prohibited.

In the question posed, if the entertainer is a member of the fellowship, he or she should be approached by the PI in order to educate and inform that member of the consequences of that action for his or her personal recovery, as well as for NA as a whole. If the entertainer is not a member of NA, the PI committee should seek to educate this person about NA and our Traditions, explaining the harm that might be done to the fellowship. The PI committee should request that NA memorabilia not be worn at public performances.

We should not wear NA T-shirts and/or other NA memorabilia during PI events. By following this suggestion, we ensure a consistent message about our program and do not differentiate ourselves from each other and from the public. Many opinions expressed on T-shirts sold by NA service committees and boards do not support the message PI committees endeavor to give the public about our Fellowship.

We should also note that the NA symbol, the service symbol and the words "Narcotics Anonymous" are copyrighted material. Violations of that copyright will be pursued by the WSO. The PI committee should be alert to the possible misuse of our symbols, and should contact the WSO about such occurrences. The damage to the fellowship on a public relations level can hurt us immeasurably, possibly preventing us from reaching the addict who still suffers.

## **Chapter VI**

### **Samples**

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## **Sample Guidelines for Area/Regional PI Committees**

### **Purpose**

The purpose of a PI subcommittee is to inform the public that NA exists. It offers recovery from addiction and information about how and where to find it. All activities directed to that end shall be carried out in accordance with the Twelve Traditions and Twelve Concepts of Narcotics Anonymous.

### **Functions and Responsibilities**

The basic functions of a PI committee are:

1. To open and maintain lines of communication:
  - a) Between NA and the public.
  - b) Between the ASC/RSC and the WSC/RSO.
2. To respond to all requests for information in a timely and effective manner.
3. To be sure that those requests are handled at the appropriate level of service (see page \_\_, Section IV. - Samples). Remember, our Ninth Tradition states subcommittees are “directly responsible to those they serve.”

### **Meetings and Membership**

All PI committees should meet regularly at a designated time and place that is well publicized, encouraging all members to attend. Members of PI committees should be defined according to one or more of the following suggestions:

1. Those assigned to lead specific projects as needed.
2. Those willing to help on various projects as needed.
3. Voting members (usually defined as those representatives chosen by individual groups or areas with PI experience.

4. Elected trusted servants (chair, vice-chair, secretary, treasurer, etc.). Be sure to define:
  - a) Suggested clean-time requirements (may vary according to position, and by area or region).
  - b) Length of term.
  - c) Qualifications and duties.

Active membership should be further defined to include regular PI meetings. Some subcommittees have included various attendance requirements such as: members are considered active only after attending two consecutive meetings, attendance at two of the last three meetings to retain voting rights, or a provision for removal of a trusted servant after they have missed two consecutive meetings.

### **Voting Participants and Procedures**

1. Who is eligible to vote?
2. What is the required quorum?
3. Decide upon the members who will be eligible to participate in your subcommittee's group conscience. These might be:
  - a) Elected trusted servants.
  - b) Representatives sent by the groups or areas within your area/region.

### **Requirements and Duties of Voting Participants**

Some suggested requirements:

1. Personal time and abilities to perform their duties.
2. Willingness and desire to serve in their position.
3. Clean time and experience as stated within your guidelines.
4. Maintenance of clean time throughout term of office or participation.
5. Understanding and practical knowledge of the Twelve Steps, Twelve Traditions, and Twelve Concepts of Narcotics Anonymous.

Further discussion within the committee will determine the specific requirements and duties of the trusted servants. Previous experience in PI or related activity is desirable.

Other details may also be found by reading ASC/RSC guidelines. Samples of guidelines can also be obtained throughout the World Service Office or neighboring PI committees.

### **Task Force Committees**

Task force committees are often established by PI committees, as the need arises, to work on specific projects such as:

1. Speaker lists.
2. Information packet mailings.
3. Creating and updating contact lists.
4. Poster projects.
5. Formats for speaker presentations.
6. Developing agendas for workshops and learning days.



## **Guidelines for Cooperative PI Efforts in Overlapping Areas/Regions**

### **Purpose**

To coordinate and direct PI requests that overlap areas/regions to the proper service committee.

### **Objectives**

1. Maintain contact with the person in each area/region who handles their PI contingency plan.
2. Share information on meeting lists, volunteer lists, ongoing projects, etc.
3. Coordinate multi-area/regional workshops and learning days.

### **Membership**

Choose one or more of the following from each area/region as voting members.

1. PI chair or PI vice-chair.
2. RCM/RD
3. Alternate RD
4. ASC/RSC chair or vice-chair.
5. Phonline chair or service office manager.

### **Meeting Schedules**

We suggest quarterly meetings with regular monthly correspondence.

### **Communicating and Coordinating with other PI Subcommittees**

Find out what is being done by other PI subcommittees in neighboring NA communities. Avoid duplication of effort and work together. If feasible, hold an all-day workshop on public information service and invite members of the fellowship and PI subcommittees from surrounding areas. It is suggested that areas and regions follow guidelines that describe the coordination of PI activities that may overlap geographical boundaries.

### **Communicating and Coordinating with Other ASC/RSC Subcommittees**

It is also important to consider how PI efforts may have an impact on other subcommittees within your ASC/RSC. Usually the first contact made by a person responding to a PI effort is through an NA phoneline. If a phoneline subcommittee is separate from a PI subcommittee, it should be included in planning and implementation of programs that promote public awareness or invites contact with the fellowship. Similarly, there may be some overlap in the efforts of PI and H&I subcommittees. When a project crosses the boundaries between PI and H&I, the two committees must cooperate. The ASC/RSC provide ideal settings for such cooperation. Encourage the attendance of other subcommittee chairs to your PI committee meetings.

### **Sample PI Committee Meeting Agenda**

XYZ Area/ Region  
of  
Narcotics Anonymous  
Public Information Subcommittee

[Date]

1. Open meeting with the Serenity
2. Read Twelve Traditions and Twelve Concepts
3. Take attendance
4. Review last month's minutes
5. Chairperson's Report
6. Budget Report
7. Committee Trusted Servant/ Area PI Committee Reports
8. Nominations and Elections
9. Old Business
  - a) Newspaper PSA update
  - b) Radio interview
  - c) Mailing list update
10. New Business
  - a) Web page project
  - b) Radio PSAs
  - c) Convention workshop
11. Review/Study/Discuss a Tradition/Concept
12. Review/Discuss sample questions that may be asked at presentation or workshops
13. Schedule the next meeting

**Sample PI Referral Form:**

Anywhere Area Service Committee of Narcotics Anonymous Public  
Information Subcommittee

**PI Inter-subcommittee Referral**

Date: \_\_\_\_\_  
Referred by: \_\_\_\_\_  
Title: \_\_\_\_\_  
Name of contact: \_\_\_\_\_  
Name of agency / organization: \_\_\_\_\_  
Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip Code: \_\_\_\_\_  
Contact person's phone number: \_\_\_\_\_  
Hours available: \_\_\_\_\_

Reason(s) for referral:

\_\_\_\_\_ Hospitals and Institution meeting request  
\_\_\_\_\_ Hospitals and Institution problem  
\_\_\_\_\_ Joint PI and H&I presentation  
\_\_\_\_\_ Literature request (purchase information)  
\_\_\_\_\_ Phonenumber information  
\_\_\_\_\_ Schedule of activities request  
\_\_\_\_\_ Other (describe in detail) \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Refer request to (check the appropriate selection(s)):

\_\_\_\_\_ Area \_\_\_\_\_ Region  
\_\_\_\_\_ Chairperson  
\_\_\_\_\_ Hospitals and Institutions Chairperson  
\_\_\_\_\_ Literature Chairperson  
\_\_\_\_\_ Activities Chairperson  
\_\_\_\_\_ Phonenumber Chairperson  
\_\_\_\_\_ Other \_\_\_\_\_

## **Cover Letter for Information Packets**

[Date]

Organization / Individual / Etc.

Mailing Address

Dear Friends,

The purpose of this letter is to bring an awareness of the fellowship of Narcotics Anonymous to the community. We hope to create an understanding of our fellowship so that if you feel that if our program may be of benefit to you, or the people you serve, you will know how to contact us for further information. Narcotics Anonymous is a non-profit fellowship of men and women for whom drugs had become a major problem. We are recovering addicts who meet regularly to help each other stay clean. This is a program of complete abstinence from all drugs. Our fellowship is concerned with the disease of addiction and recovery from that disease; the drug (or drugs) of choice is unimportant.

We, in Narcotics Anonymous, would very much like to give more information to the public, in hopes that those who can use us, will be able to find us. Feel free to use our literature, meeting directories, etc. as referral to our program. If you would like NA speakers at your facility, please allow us a two to four week notice. Please address your requests to:

Group / Area / Region Name

Address

City, State, Zip

Thank you for your time and we hope that we may be of some service to you, your group or organization.

Sincerely,

Public Information Committee Chairperson

Group / Area / Region of Narcotics Anonymous

*\* When composing your subcommittee's letters, please remember that these sample letters are just that--samples. They may be used just as they are, or they may be modified to meet your subcommittee's needs.*

### Sample Letter to Library

[Date]

Your local Public Library  
Acquisitions Department  
Address

Dear Sir or Madam,

Enclosed please find a donation of the Narcotics Anonymous Basic Text for your library. Narcotics Anonymous is a fellowship of recovering addicts who practice a program of complete abstinence from all mind and mood altering drugs and who follow a spiritual program of life, based on the Twelve Steps of Narcotics Anonymous.

Our local Public Information committee is donating these books to your library in the hope that people suffering from the disease of addiction will find the books on your shelves and seek out our program. While the books describe the program, the program truly lives in our meetings and in "one addict helping another" to stay clean from all drugs.

There are over \_\_\_\_ Narcotics Anonymous meetings in [insert the name of your locality here]. Should you wish to put a supply of our meeting directories in your community bulletin racks, or to post on your bulletin boards, please call me at \_\_\_\_\_ and we will make them available to you.

I have also enclosed two literature order forms. Our goal is to ensure that every public library in [your locality] has at least one copy of NA's main book, the blue covered book entitled *Narcotics Anonymous* and referred to as our Basic Text. If your library system can buy books of these books for each of your branch libraries, we believe that you would be doing a great service to your community. Thousands of addicts have been able to get off drugs, stay off drugs and live productive lives because they read this book and began attending our meetings.

We would very much appreciate a return letter acknowledging this donation for our records. Thank you.

Sincerely,

[Area/Region] Public Information Committee  
of Narcotics Anonymous

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**Letter of Introduction for PSA Placement - Example #1**

This should be edited to reflect the correct information for your area/region.

[Date]

Dear \_\_\_\_\_,

The [Area/Region] Public Information Committee of Narcotics Anonymous is requesting the help of radio/TV stations in an effort to reach people with a drug problem who may want to stop using.

In order to do so, The \_\_\_\_\_Area Service Committee of Narcotics Anonymous operates a phoneline, available for those seeking help with their drug problem. This service covers your broadcast area. The number is \_\_\_\_\_.

We are trying to let the public know of this service and have prepared [10/30] second public service announcements that we would greatly appreciate you airing during your broadcast day.

Narcotics Anonymous is a fellowship of recovering addicts who meet regularly to help each other stay clean and free from drugs. We also offer a means of recovery to others who wish to stop using. We charge no fees or dues. We are not affiliated with any hospitals, drug recovery centers, agencies or institutions.

If you would like to help us help others by airing these public service announcements, you can contact me at \_\_\_\_\_. Thank you.

Sincerely,

[Area/Region] Public Information Committee  
of Narcotics Anonymous

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**Letter of Introduction for PSA Placement - Example #2**

This should be edited to reflect the correct information for your area/region.

[Date]

Dear Public Service Director,  
*(use names wherever possible)*

We are writing in response to our recent conversation with your station concerning Narcotics Anonymous.

Narcotics Anonymous is a worldwide fellowship of men and women for whom drugs had become a major problem. We are recovering addicts who meet regularly to help each other live drug-free lives. We are a non-profit organization, self-supporting through our own contributions. Therefore we charge no dues or fees for our service.

We believe that it is of vital importance for the community to be aware of the service we offer. It is our hope that your station will be able to aid us in this task by airing our PSAs. If there are any questions concerning Narcotics Anonymous or our status as a non-profit organization, please do not hesitate to contact us. We can be reached through our phonenumber, the number is\_\_\_\_\_. Ask to leave a message for the Public Information Committee.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

[Area/Region] Public Information Committee  
of Narcotics Anonymous

*\*When composing your subcommittee's letters, please remember that these sample letters are just that-- samples. They may be used just as they are, or they may be modified to meet your subcommittee's needs.*



### **Sample Letter to Professionals - Example #1**

[Date]

Dear Counselor,  
*(use names wherever possible)*

The purpose of this informational packet is to familiarize you with Narcotics Anonymous, also known as NA. You may have clients with a drug addiction, and you may want to suggest that they attend Narcotics Anonymous. Possibly together we can help the addict who still suffers.

Narcotics Anonymous is a fellowship of recovering addicts who meet regularly to stay clean by sharing their experience, strength and hope. NA is composed of men and women of all ages, from all walks of life. We are an anonymous fellowship so that addicts who seek recovery may here may be confident that their anonymity will be protected.

We also operate a phoneline to aid those who want to stop using. Our fellowship provides much to the addict. It does not, however, provide medical or legal counseling.

NA costs the addict nothing. NA costs you nothing and is entirely self-supporting, declining outside contributions.

We have enclosed literature and a current schedule of NA meetings. If after reading this literature, you would like to obtain additional copies, please call or write us and we will make them available to you.

Many addicts have credited professionals such as yourself for directing them to NA.

Thank you for your time and concern.

Sincerely,

[Area/Region] Public Information Committee  
of Narcotics Anonymous

Address

Phoneline number

*\*When composing your subcommittee's letters, please remember that these sample letters are just that-- samples. They may be used just as they are, or they may be modified to meet your subcommittee's needs.*

## **Sample Letters to Professionals #2**

[Date]

Dear Educator,

*(use names wherever possible)*

The purpose of this informational packet is to familiarize you with Narcotics Anonymous, also known as NA. You may have students addicted to drugs, and you may want to suggest to them that they attend Narcotics Anonymous. Possibly together we can help the addict that still suffers.

Narcotics Anonymous is a fellowship of recovering addicts who meet regularly to help each other stay clean by sharing their experience, strength, and hope. NA is composed of men and women from all walks of life. We are an anonymous fellowship, so that addicts who seek recovery here may be confident that their anonymity will be protected.

We also operate a phoneline to aid those who want to stop using. Our fellowship provides much to the addict. It does not, however, provide medical or legal counseling.

NA costs the addict nothing. NA costs you nothing and is entirely self-supporting, declining outside contributions.

We have enclosed literature and a current schedule of NA meetings. If after reading this literature, you would like to obtain additional copies, please call or write us and we will make them available to you.

As an educator, we know you will impact many individuals who may be addicted or who you may want to inform about our fellowship. Many addicts have credited professionals such as yourself for directing them to NA.

Thank you for your time and concern.

Sincerely,

[Area/Region] Public Information Committee  
of Narcotics Anonymous

Address

Phoneline number

*\*When composing your subcommittee's letters, please remember that these sample letters are just that-- samples. They may be used just as they are, or they may be modified to meet your subcommittee's needs.*

### **Sample Letters to Professionals #3**

[Date]

Dear Doctor/Nurse\_\_\_\_\_,  
(use names wherever possible)

The purpose of this informational packet is to familiarize you with Narcotics Anonymous, also known as NA. You may have students addicted to drugs and you may want to suggest to them that they attend Narcotics Anonymous. Possibly together we can help the addict that still suffers.

Narcotics Anonymous is a fellowship of recovering addicts who meet regularly to help each other stay clean by sharing their experience, strength, and hope. NA is composed of men and women from all walks of life. We are an anonymous fellowship, so that addicts who seek recovery here may be confident that their anonymity will be protected.

We also operate a phoneline to aid those who want to stop using. Our fellowship provides much to the addict. It does not, however, provide detoxification, hospitalization, medication, psychiatric or medical diagnosis.

NA costs the addict nothing. NA costs you nothing and is entirely self-supporting, declining outside contributions.

We have enclosed literature and a current schedule of NA meetings. If after reading this literature, you would like to obtain additional copies, please call or write us and we will make them available to you.

Many addicts have credited professionals such as yourself for directing them to NA.

Thank you for your time and concern.

Sincerely,

[Area/Region] Public Information Committee  
of Narcotics Anonymous

Address

Phoneline number

*\*When composing your subcommittee's letters, please remember that these sample letters are just that-- samples. They may be used just as they are, or they may be modified to meet your subcommittee's needs.*

## Sample Response Letter

[Date]

Dear \_\_\_\_\_,

In response to your request, we have enclosed an informational packet to acquaint you with Narcotics Anonymous. NA is a fellowship of recovering addicts who meet regularly to help each other stay clean. We charge no dues or fees; we are fully self-supporting through our own contributions.

Enclosed you will find pamphlets that further explain the NA program. These are available in other languages as well. Please note the meeting directory, which lists all the current meetings in the \_\_\_\_\_ area. For meetings open to the public (i.e., non-addicts), please refer to the meeting list. We have included an order form should you wish to purchase additional literature.

We also operate a "helpline," with addict volunteers, to aid those who want to stop using. Our number is \_\_\_\_\_ (*You can be more specific about what your helpline/phoneline offers*).

If you have any further questions or if we can be of further help to you, please contact the Public Information Committee at the address below.

Sincerely,

Public Information Chairperson

[Area/Region] Address

Helpline phone number

*\*When composing your subcommittee's letters, please remember that these sample letters are just that-- samples. They may be used just as they are, or they may be modified to meet your subcommittee's needs.*

**Sample Thank You Letter for Attending and/or Response to Request**

[Date]

Dear \_\_\_\_\_,

On behalf of Narcotics Anonymous, I would like to thank you for the time you took to attend our recent community meeting presentation. Community members/professionals like yourself are often the vehicle through which suffering addicts first hear about NA meetings.

In response to your request (during the meeting or on the sign-up sheet) we are enclosing additional information about the NA program of recovery which I hope will be very helpful to you.

If you or other need further information or presentation, please don't hesitate to contact our committee at the address below. A message can also be left by calling our phoneline at \_\_\_\_\_.

Sincerely,

Public Information Chairperson

[Area/Region] Address

Helpline phone number

*\*When composing your subcommittee's letters, please remember that these sample letters are just that--samples. They may be used just as they are, or they may be modified to meet your subcommittee's needs.*

**Sample Thank You Letter for Use After Speaking or Community Meeting**

[Date]

Dear \_\_\_\_\_,

On behalf of Narcotics Anonymous, I would like to thank you for allowing us the opportunity to speak at you school/facility/etc. Our presentation seemed to be very well received by the students/patients/etc. Should other teachers/counselors/etc. be interested in a presentation by NA, we can be reached at the address below. A message can also be left through our phoneline at\_\_\_\_\_.

Once again, thank you for your assistance.

Sincerely,

Public Information Chairperson

[Area/Region] Address

Helpline phone number

*\*When composing your subcommittee's letters, please remember that these sample letters are just that--samples. They may be used just as they are, or they may be modified to meet your subcommittee's needs.*

**Sample Thank You Letter for Interview (Radio/TV)**

This should be edited to reflect the correct information for your area/region.

[Date]

XXXX News

Mr./Miss/Mrs. \_\_\_\_\_

Address

Dear \_\_\_\_\_,

Thank you for the opportunity to share with you and your viewers the recovery program of Narcotics Anonymous. We appreciate the cooperation and open-mindedness shown to us by your news staff. The [radio/television] media provides us with an excellent form of communication to the suffering addict who doesn't know where to turn for help. In their most desperate hours, many have [heard/seen] a public service announcement with an NA phonenumber and made the call for help.

We would appreciate a copy of the broadcast in order to keep a record of our committee's work and for use as a training tool within our fellowship.

We are always grateful to organizations that are understanding and respectful of the Twelve Traditions of Narcotics Anonymous. If there is any additional help or information you may need, now or in the future, please feel free to contact our committee, either through our phonenumber or at the address below.

Sincerely,

Public Information Chairperson

[Area/Region] Address

Helpline phone number

*\*When composing your subcommittee's letters, please remember that these sample letters are just that-- samples. They may be used just as they are, or they may be modified to meet your subcommittee's needs.*

**Sample Thank You Letter for PSA Placement - Example #1**

[Date]

Dear \_\_\_\_\_,

The [Area/Regional] Public Information Committee of Narcotics Anonymous would like to thank you for your cooperation in our effort to carry the message of Narcotics Anonymous by airing the public service announcements we previously sent you. The response has been positive and extremely valuable.

Being aware that it is not possible for you to air public service announcements on a continuing basis, we have prepared and enclosed updated versions. We thank you again for your cooperation and if you have any questions you can contact our committee through our phoneline at \_\_\_\_\_, or at the address below.

Sincerely,

Public Information Chairperson

[Area/Region] Address

Helpline phone number

*\*When composing your subcommittee's letters, please remember that these sample letters are just that-- samples. They may be used just as they are, or they may be modified to meet your subcommittee's needs.*



**Sample Thank You Letter for PSA Placement - Example #2**

This should be edited to reflect the correct information for your area/region.

[Date]

XXXX TV/Radio Station

Public Announcement Director

Address

Dear \_\_\_\_\_,

The purpose of this letter is to express the gratitude of the [Area/Regional] Public Information Committee of Narcotics Anonymous for the airing of our public service announcements.

We feel that it is very important that we bring to your attention the impact these PSAs have on addicts, on the families of addicts, and on the friends of addicts. It seems people who suffer from the disease of addiction reach a point of total defeat. They are then ready to admit that they have no control over their drug use and become willing to seek and accept help. It is crucial that they are aware that there is a fellowship and program available to them in which addicts help each other stay clean.

We are grateful to your station for the part you play in circulating the message that recovery from the disease of addiction is possible in Narcotics Anonymous is possible. We feel that as a result of your support many people are now aware that they can lead a clean, healthy, and productive life.

Sincerely,

Public Information Chairperson

[Area/Region] Address

Helpline phone number

*\*When composing your subcommittee's letters, please remember that these sample letters are just that-- samples. They may be used just as they are, or they may be modified to meet your subcommittee's needs.*

## **Sample News Release**

[Date]

From:

[Area/Region] of Narcotics Anonymous

Address

Contact:

Public Information Committee

Phoneline Number

### **Number of Narcotics Anonymous Groups in [name of town] Tops [number]**

[Date] - Narcotics Anonymous (NA), a non-profit group offering recovery for addicts, announces that [number] NA groups are now meeting each week in [name of your town]. In addition to those meetings, [number] Hospital and Institutions meetings are regularly held in area hospitals, recovery centers, and prisons. The number of NA groups worldwide surpassed twenty thousand (25,000) in 1997.

Narcotics Anonymous offers hope and help to addicts seeking recovery. At NA meetings, addicts meet other people who have had similar experiences and problems who are now staying off drugs and learning a better way to live. There are no dues or fees required for attendance at NA meetings.

Founded in 1953, NA now exists in over seventy (70) countries worldwide. Narcotics Anonymous is for any addict, regardless of which drug or combination of drugs that person may have used. NA literature emphasizes that when addicts substitute one drug for another, they release their addiction all over again. By focusing on recovery from the common problem of addiction, NA provides an environment where addicts who may not have used the same drugs identify and help each other.

The only requirement for membership in NA is a desire to stop using. Open NA meetings may be attended by any interested members of the public. Information about Narcotics Anonymous and local meeting schedules are available from:

[Area/Region]

Address

Helpline phone number

*\*When composing your news releases, please remember that this sample is just that-- a sample. They may be used just as they are, or they may be modified to meet your subcommittee's needs.*

**Sample Radio Public Service Announcements (PSAs) - #1**

*(World Service Conference approved; available through the World Service Office)*

[Area/Regional] Public Information Committee  
of Narcotics Anonymous  
Address

Contact: \_\_\_\_\_

Phoneline number

Reading time - 10 seconds

Voice/Over 1

Recovery is what happens at NA meetings. It is possible to stop using drugs.

Voice/Over 2

Call Narcotics Anonymous, we can help.

[Add your phoneline number here]

**Sample Radio Public Service Announcements (PSAs) - #2**

*(World Service Conference approved; available through the World Service Office)*

[Area/Regional] Public Information Committee  
of Narcotics Anonymous  
Address

Contact: \_\_\_\_\_

Phoneline number

Reading time - 10 seconds

Voice/Over 1

It is possible to stop using drugs.

Voice/Over 2

Call Narcotics Anonymous, we can help.

[Add your phoneline number here]

**Sample Radio Public Service Announcements (PSAs) - #3**

*(World Service Conference approved; available through the World Service Office)*

[Area/Regional] Public Information Committee  
of Narcotics Anonymous  
Address

Contact: \_\_\_\_\_

Phoneline number

Reading time - 20 seconds

Voice/Over 1

I was searching for an answer when I reached out and found Narcotics Anonymous.

Voice/Over 2

Surrounded by fellow addicts, I realized I was not alone.

Voice/Over 3

Recovery is what happens at NA meetings. It is possible to stop using drugs.

Voice/Over 4

Call Narcotics Anonymous at, we can help.

[Add your phoneline number here]

**Sample Radio Public Service Announcements (PSAs) - #4**

*(World Service Conference approved; available through the World Service Office)*

[Area/Regional] Public Information Committee  
of Narcotics Anonymous  
Address

Contact: \_\_\_\_\_

Phoneline number

Reading time - 20 seconds

Voice/Over 1

I admitted I was powerless over my addiction - that my life had become unmanageable.

I had tried to quit on my own, but it never worked.

In Narcotics Anonymous I learned that it is possible to stop using drugs.

Voice/Over 2

Call Narcotics Anonymous, we can help.

[Add your phoneline number here]

**Sample Radio Public Service Announcements (PSAs) - #5**

*(World Service Conference approved; available through the World Service Office)*

[Area/Regional] Public Information Committee  
of Narcotics Anonymous  
Address

Contact: \_\_\_\_\_

Phoneline number

Reading time - 30 seconds

Voice/Over 1

I was searching for an answer when I reached out and found Narcotics Anonymous.

I came to my first NA meeting in defeat, and didn't know what to expect.

Voice/Over 2

Surrounded by fellow addicts I realized I was not alone.

I heard them talk about the same feelings I was afraid to share.

Voice/Over 3

Recovery is what happens at NA meetings. It is possible to stop using drugs.

Voice/Over 4

Call Narcotics Anonymous, we can help.

[Add your phoneline number here]

**Sample Radio Public Service Announcements (PSAs) - #6**

*(World Service Conference approved; available through the World Service Office)*

[Area/Regional] Public Information Committee  
of Narcotics Anonymous  
Address

Contact: \_\_\_\_\_

Phoneline number

Reading time - 60 seconds

I admitted I was powerless over my addiction, that my life had become unmanageable.

I had tried to quit on my own, but it never worked.

I was searching for an answer when I reached out and found Narcotics Anonymous.

I came to my first NA meeting in defeat, and didn't know what to expect.

Surrounded by fellow addicts I realized I was not alone. I heard them talk about the same feelings I was afraid to share.

Recovery is what happens in NA meetings.

It didn't matter what drug, or how much I used. In Narcotics Anonymous I learned it is possible to stop using drugs.

I don't have to do it alone.

Call Narcotics Anonymous, we can help.



**TV Public Service Announcements (PSAs) Script- #1**

*(World Service Conference approved; available through the World Service Office)*

[Area/Regional] Public Information Committee  
of Narcotics Anonymous  
Address

Contact: \_\_\_\_\_

Phoneline number

30 Second PSA

Title: Basic Text

"I was searching for an answer when I reached out and found Narcotics Anonymous. I came to my first NA meeting in defeat and didn't know what to expect"

"Surrounded by fellow addicts I realized that I was not alone; I heard them talk about the same feelings I was afraid to share"

"Recovery is what happens in our meetings."

"It is possible to stop using drugs."

"Call Narcotics Anonymous, we can help."

"Check your local phone book or write,

Narcotics Anonymous  
PO Box 9999  
Van Nuys, California 91409-9999."

**TV Public Service Announcements (PSAs) Script- #2**

*(World Service Conference approved; available through the World Service Office)*

[Area/Regional] Public Information Committee  
of Narcotics Anonymous  
Address

Contact: \_\_\_\_\_

Phoneline number

30 Second PSA

Title: Woman at Table

"I admitted I was powerless over my addiction that my life had become unmanageable. It didn't matter how much or what drug I used."

"In Narcotics Anonymous I learned that it is possible to stop using drugs."

"I don't have to do it alone!"

"Call Narcotics Anonymous, we can help."

"Check your local phone book or write,

Narcotics Anonymous

PO Box 9999

Van Nuys, California 91409-9999."

**TV Public Service Announcements (PSAs) Script- #3**

*(World Service Conference approved; available through the World Service Office)*

[Area/Regional] Public Information Committee  
of Narcotics Anonymous  
Address

Contact: \_\_\_\_\_

Phoneline number

30 Second PSA

Title: Man in Phone booth

"I remember how scared I was. I was desperate. I know I was desperate because I wouldn't have called otherwise. I was sick and I was beginning to do things I'd promised myself I'd never do. There wasn't anyone left who was glad to see me anymore. So I took a chance and called Narcotics Anonymous. You don't have to wait until you're as bad off as I was before you reach out."

"Check your local phone book or write,

Narcotics Anonymous  
PO Box 9999  
Van Nuys, California 91409-9999."

**TV Public Service Announcements (PSAs) Script- #4**

*(World Service Conference approved; available through the World Service Office)*

[Area/Regional] Public Information Committee  
of Narcotics Anonymous  
Address

Contact: \_\_\_\_\_

Phoneline number

30 Second PSA

Title: First Meeting

"When I went to my first meeting I was scared. I didn't know what to expect."

"A bunch of drug addicts in a room together, give me a break."

"But it was weird, no matter what anyone said, nobody was surprised. Other people felt the same way."

"I'd been running alone for so many years and now I wasn't. You know what I mean?"

"It is possible to stop doing drugs. The proof is at the meetings. But you've have to get there first."

"Check your local phone book or write,

Narcotics Anonymous  
PO Box 9999  
Van Nubs, California 91409-9999."

### **Sample Annual PI Calendar**

January:	Schedule volunteer training sessions for the next six months
February:	Review and update Guidelines and volunteer training materials
March:	Update volunteer recruitment list
April:	Select volunteers for booth at NA regional convention
May:	NA regional convention
June:	Give suggested PI topic to Unity Day committee
July:	Schedule volunteer training sessions for the next six months
August:	Announce upcoming elections at ASC and meetings
September:	1. Election of new officers and project leaders; 2. Begin budget planning process
October:	Committee approves next year's budget
November:	PI budget to ASC budget meeting for review Area Unity Day
December:	PI revised budget to ASC for final approval

## **Sample Guidelines for Public Information Booth Service**

### **Booth Coordinator**

Suggested clean time requirement is one year and the ability to present a clear NA message.

#### **Duties:**

- a) Member of the PI committee, attends regular meetings, and report on booth events, planning, and implementation.
- b) Establishes and maintains contact with the organization planning the event and the facility where the it is being held.
- c) Gets approval and funding from the appropriate PI subcommittee (area/regional).
- d) Keeps a list of trained volunteers.
- e) Recruits and trains new volunteers.
- f) Arranges the booth set-up and tear-down.
- g) Identifies the number of volunteers required for each event.
- h) Coordinates the scheduling of volunteers for each event.
- i) Keeps track of booth literature inventory and reports after each event.
- j) Keeps track of booth "equipment."
- k) Orders literature necessary for the event.
- l) Is responsible for follow-up on events brought to the attention of PI and makes recommendations on our participation.
- m) Find new events for possible participation.

### **Literature typically used in booth situations:**

#### **Use at all events:**

- a) Area meeting schedules and Phoneline number(s)
- b) Product Catalog
- c) The Basic Text (in several languages)
- d) It Works: How and Why
- e) IP #1 - Who, What, How and Why
- f) IP #7 - Am I An Addict?
- g) IP #16 - For The Newcomer
- h) IP #22 - Welcome To Narcotics Anonymous

- i) NA - A Resource in Your Community

Use depending on the event:

- a) Behind The Walls
- b) In Times of Illness
- c) IP #5 - Another Look (use with professionals)
- d) IP #13 - Youth in Recovery
- e) IP #17 - For Those In Treatment

**Planning**

As a committee:

- a) Get full details from the organization holding the event.
- b) Bring information to the appropriate PI committee(s) for approval.
- c) Identify the literature that will be needed.
- d) Identify and schedule the volunteers.
- e) Work closely with the organization holding the event.
- f) Try to match speakers to the audience to create the best possible identification
- g) Schedule about 3 people in the booth at all times making sure there are at least 2.
- h) Follow-up after the event with the volunteers and organization holding the event.

**Booth Volunteers**

(Suggested clean-time requirement is 6 months and ability to present a clear NA message.)

**How to Dress:**

- a) Dress appropriately for the event. (Might want to wear professional attire\* to a conference of medical or legal professional, but very casual wear at an outdoor community fair.)
- b) Do not wear clothing or jewelry from another organization (including religious organizations) or advertising merchandise for groups, bands, or products, etc.
- c) Dress to be comfortable (especially shoes) since you might be standing for the entire shift.
- d) Be aware that leather-wear is sometimes connected with motorcycle organizations and would not be appropriate for a PI booth.

*\*shirt and slacks or skirt and possibly a tie and jacket*

**Do's:**

- a) Be on time for your shift.
- b) Keep the literature and the booth neat and in order.
- c) Remember that you may have only a short period of time to speak with most of the people that approach the booth - keep the message simple.
- d) Remember that the primary purpose of any Twelve-step work is to get addicts seeking recovery to meetings.
- e) Remember that you will may not be speaking with addicts, but with professionals, friends and relatives of addicts, so the message must be one of hope and encouragement that NA can help addicts recover.
- f) Remember you will be giving up a certain amount of anonymity sitting in the booth.
- g) Remember that the answer to most questions asked in a booth are in the *NA White Book* or the meeting schedule.
- h) Stress that there are no professionals, only volunteer members.
- i) Express spirituality (not religious aspect) of the program.
- j) Express our primary purpose - to carry the message of recovery to the addict who still suffers.
- k) Stress that the only requirement for membership is the desire to stop using.
- l) Point out the NA is not exclusive to one kind of addict; but to anyone who believes his/her life is unmanageable due to their addiction.
- m) Point out that NA is free, and completely self-supporting through our own contributions.
- n) Report any problems or concerns to the Booth Coordinator.

**Don'ts:**

- a) Don't tell your personal story (or drug use history), where you work, or other personal information. Share personal experiences of your involvement with the fellowship of NA as examples of how NA works.
- b) Don't give out your personal phone number to anyone.
- c) Don't take a stand on any outside issue. We only talk about NA, not recovery facilities or other twelve-step fellowships.



- d) If you are approached by a member of the media, do not agree to an interview. Get their name and phone number and let them know a member of the PI committee will get back to them in the near future.
- e) Don't make any promises or schedule presentations without taking the request back to your committee first. Get their name and phone number and let them know a member of the PI committee will get back to them in the near future.
- f) Don't do this for personal gain.
- g) Don't be a spokesperson for NA as a whole.
- h) Don't accept contributions. Explain we are completely self-supporting, and we pass a basket at our meetings to pay our expenses and purchase literature.
- i) Don't argue with those whose views of addiction differ from those of NA
- j) Eat, drink or smoke in the booth.
- k) Don't use foul, derogatory, or abusive language.
- l) Don't give advice except to suggest people go to meetings to find out more about NA and what we have to offer.

### **Sample Fliers, Posters, Newspaper Ads**

Fliers, posters and newspaper ads should always include your PI committee's or Area's/Region's mailing address, and phoneline number. Some committees use the back of fliers or posters to list local meeting locations.

Here are samples of text that may be used on your fliers, posters and in newspaper ads:

---

(1) *Drug Problem?*  
*Call Narcotics Anonymous*  
*We can Help*  
*n \_\_\_\_\_ (city/area) \_\_\_\_\_ call \_\_\_\_\_ (phone number) \_\_\_\_\_*

---

(2) *If using drugs isn't fun anymore and you've tried to stop but you can't -*  
*There is a group of recovering addicts who can help you live life without the use of*  
*drugs...*  
*Narcotics Anonymous*  
*For more information call \_\_\_\_\_.*

---

(3) *If you think you may have a problem with drugs, give yourself a break.*  
*There is a way out -*  
*With the help of other recovering addicts in Narcotics Anonymous.*  
*We have been there.*  
*Call \_\_\_\_\_ for more information.*

---

(4) *Narcotics Anonymous is a group of recovering addicts,*  
*Who live without the use of drugs. It costs nothing to be a member.*  
*The only requirement for membership is a desire to stop using.*  
*Call \_\_\_\_\_ for more information.*

---

---

(5) *Drug addiction is a disease.*  
*Narcotics Anonymous is a group of recovering addicts -*  
*Who help each other stay clean.*  
*There is a way out of having to use through the help of Narcotics Anonymous.*  
*Call \_\_\_\_\_for more information.*

---

(6) *As recovering addicts, we have found that it is possible to live without the use of drugs...*  
*With the help of Narcotics Anonymous.*  
*If you are still using and can't stop, we can help.*  
*Give yourself a break.*  
*Call \_\_\_\_\_for more information.*

---

(7) *If you have found that drugs are causing you problems, there is a solution.*  
*There is a program that works if you want to stop using.*  
*Narcotics Anonymous,*  
*We can help.*  
*Call \_\_\_\_\_for more information.*

---

(8) *If life seems hopeless and you can't stop your drug use,*  
*Narcotics Anonymous offers a way out--*  
*and a new hope for life without the use of drugs.*  
*Give yourself a break.*  
*Call \_\_\_\_\_for more information.*

---

- (9) *Can't stop using drugs? There is a solution.*  
*Call someone who's been there.*  
*Narcotics Anonymous.*  
*We can help.*  
*Call \_\_\_\_\_ for more information.*
-

### **Sample Workshop/Learning Day Agenda #1**

Area /Region PI Committee of Narcotics Anonymous

[Date]

#### **PI Learning Day**

- 1) Open with prayer
- 2) Welcome your audience and introduce the members of your committee that are participating in the Learning Day. Make sure there is a sign up sheet available for those in attendance.
- 3) Purpose - (state the purpose of the learning day and/or your Public Information Committee)
- 4) Structure - (cover the qualifications and duties of the committee's trusted servants position. Discuss your accountability to the area/region and the fellowship. Also be sure to mention when your committee meets)
- 5) PI Committee Projects - (discuss various projects your committee has done or is presently doing)
- 6) Mock Presentation - (inform your audience that you will now show them how to do a presentation to a school, recovery center, etc. Ask your audience to participate by imagining that they are school students, counselors, etc. Also ask them to ask questions during the Q&A session of the presentation that would be asked by that audience. You may also choose to do other presentations or skits.)
- 7) Presentation Review - (discuss different aspects of the presentation and how the Traditions played a part in answering the questions that were asked.)
- 8) Open Question and Answer Session
- 9) Close with prayer

## **Sample Workshop/Learning Day Agenda #2**

Area /Region PI Committee of Narcotics Anonymous

[Date]

### **Day One**

3:00 PM Registration Begins

5:00 PM Merchandise Sales

7:30 PM Registration & Merchandise Sales End

8:00PM Speaker/Discussion NA Meeting Focused on Service

9:15 PM Close of the Day's Activities

### **Day Two**

8:00 AM Learning Day Sessions:

*PI and the NA Member: Happenstance PI & Educating the NA Member*

*PI at the World Level: What's Available from the WSO for PI*

*H&I and the NA Member: Initial Contact with Institutions Recruiting for H&I Work*

8:50 AM Break

9:00 AM Learning Day Sessions:

*PI Requests and the Phoneline: Forwarding Requests & Following Up (James L, Las Vegas)"*

*PI & H&I Cooperation: Regional Cooperation*

*PI at Professional Conferences: Getting In & Setting Up PI Booths*

9:50 AM Break

10:00 AM Learning Day Sessions:

*PI and Outreach: Rural PI & PI as Outreach Tool*

*Phonelines and 12 Step Work: Recruiting Volunteers & Handling 12 Step Calls*

*PI and the Internet: The Web Page as a PI Tool*

10:50 AM Break

11:00 AM Learning Day Sessions:

*H&I at the World Level & "The H&I Skit"*

*PI and Phonelines: New Technologies*

*Public Presentation Speaking - Speaking at Schools & Speaking at Treatment Centers*

11:50 AM Lunch Break

1:10 PM Learning Day Sessions:

*Area Service Committee Workshop*

*PI and Additional Needs: Reaching Out to All Addicts*

*Regional Service Committee Workshop*

2:00 PM Break

2:10 PM Learning Day Sessions:

*PI and H&I Services: The 12 Concepts of Service*

*PI and the Media - PSAs and the Media*

*Multi-Regional Forum: PI and H&I Services in Developing NA Communities*

3:00 PM Break

3:10 PM Learning Day Sessions:

*PI and the Internet: 11th Tradition Concerns / FIPT Issues and the Internet*

*PI and Addiction: Public Relations with other 12 Step Programs & Treatment Centers*

*Keeping PI and Phonelines Happening: Cultivating Interest in PI & PI Start and Restart*

4:00 PM Break until Dinner

5:30 PM Dinner

7:00 PM Main Speaker Meeting

8:30 PM Dance

12:00 PM Close of the Day's Activities

### **Day Three (Optional)**

8:00 AM Breakfast

9:00 AM Spiritual Speaker

1015: Close of the Day's Activities

## **Sample Community Presentation Format**

*This presentation is written for a panel of five members. You may need to adjust the number of members according to the size of your PI committee. Remember, never do a PI presentation alone.*

Introduction:

Member #1:

Hello, I'd like to welcome everyone to this public information presentation, sponsored by the \_\_\_\_\_ group/area/region of Narcotics Anonymous. My name is (first name only), and I'm a recovering addict. I would also like to introduce \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, and \_\_\_\_\_ [the other members in attendance].

The purpose of this meeting is to inform the community of what we offer in Narcotics Anonymous: recovery from the disease of addiction. Our message is simple - 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 from active addiction.

Member #2: My name is (first name only), and I'm a recovering addict.

Narcotics Anonymous, also known as NA, is a worldwide fellowship of recovering addicts who help each other stay clean. NA was founded in July of 1953. It grew very slowly for the first twenty years, but began to spread quite rapidly in the early 1970's. By the early 80's, that growth was explosive, in part as a result of the publication of our Basic Text, *Narcotics Anonymous*. By January of 1988, there were 12,000 NA groups in 43 countries. In 1997 the number of groups grew to over 20,000 in more than 70 countries, with several new groups being added each day.

Here in \_\_\_\_\_, NA was formed in [year], and has grown to [number] meetings per week. We will discuss the local NA fellowship in more detail later.

Member #3: My name is (first name only), and I'm a recovering addict.



We will begin tonight's meeting by reading from some NA literature to better acquaint you with our program. A recovering addict will then be called on to share his/her personal experience with addiction and recovery. Next we will give you a detailed description of our local NA groups, including meeting lists, contacts, and helpline numbers. We will finish up with a question and answer session. Any opinions you hear tonight are the speaker's, and not necessarily those of NA as a whole. The meeting will last until (time). You are invited to stay for coffee after the meeting is over. There is also a sign up sheet for anyone interested in additional information about Narcotics Anonymous.

Readings:

I have asked \_\_\_\_\_ to read "Who is an Addict."

I have asked \_\_\_\_\_ to read "What is the NA Program."

I have asked \_\_\_\_\_ to read "How it Works."

Before I call on the first speaker, I would like to say a few words about anonymity. We remain an anonymous fellowship so that addicts who seek recovery here may be confident that their anonymity will be protected. Many of us eventually come to have nothing to fear from society if it becomes known that we are recovering addicts; still we maintain anonymity as a reminder that it is not our personal identity that is important in NA. What is important is that we are addicts who have learned to live without drugs. Personal anonymity at the public level remains an important spiritual principle, reinforcing the humility necessary for ongoing recovery. Thank you for respecting our anonymity when you leave here tonight.

Our first speaker tonight is [first name only].

Member #4 : My name is (first name only), and I'm a recovering addict.

(Share your experience, strength and hope)

*\* Remember, when speaking to non-addicts you should not mention the drugs you used, or go into a prolonged history of your drug use. Focus on recovery as you have found it in NA*

Member #5: My name is (first name only), and I'm a recovering addict.

I will now share with you the local history of NA [where and when the first group started, when expansion began, how many groups there are today. *(It may be helpful, if applicable, to be candid about the change in atmosphere in the local groups since the "early days." This may address any preconceptions or fears about NA)*

Samples - The Work Itself

Member #5 (continued):

To better serve our fellowship, and the public, we have formed service committee. *(Describe local NA's service structure, H&I efforts, how to obtain literature, phonenumber arrangements, PI efforts, etc.)*

You may be asking yourselves, "How can NA be of service to me?" *(Describe how to contact NA, and how they may expect you to respond. Tell them about Twelfth Step lists, if applicable. Pass out meeting lists, including your phonenumber number. Explain sponsorship and how it is handled locally, and describe what happens at an NA meeting. Explain how they may get an H&I panel or PI speakers to come to their facility, etc. Include other relevant local information.)*

Member #1: The floor is now open for questions and answers.

*(you may want to consider setting a time limit for Q&A)*

*(After Q & A)*

The pamphlets and magazines on display are free; the books are for sale. World Service Office order forms are also free, should you want to order your own literature directly.

Thank you for your time and attention tonight. Feel free to contact NA at any time should a need arise.

*This presentation is written for a panel of PI members. You may need to adjust the number of members according to the size of your PI committee. Remember, never do a PI presentation alone.*

**OUTLINE FOR PRESENTATIONS: TO NON-ADDICTS FROM AN ORGANIZATION  
(Clubs, Fraternal Organizations, Business Groups, Etc.)**

**1. Preparation**

- a) We suggest selecting members of your PI committee to whom the audience can relate to, if possible.
- b) The following items are helpful in giving to your audience:
  - i) Local meeting lists (as applicable for geographic area)
  - ii) Literature order forms (local service committee generated or from the WSO)
  - iii) Basic Text for display (multiple languages if possible)
  - iv) IP “Who, What, How and Why” or the “White Book” Newly Revised
  - v) IP “Am I An Addict?”
  - vi) IP “NA—A Resource In Your Community”
  - vii) Other IP’s of your PI committee’s choice.
- c) If you have a local Helpline telephone number(s), make it visible to your audience throughout the presentation. Use a local NA poster, a chalkboard or other means to accomplish this. If its not possible to do this, then make sure the literature or meeting schedules have the telephone number(s) printed on them. Repeatedly remind the audience that the telephone number(s) are there for their use in contacting NA.

**2. Identify Yourselfs to the Audience**

- A. Using first names, each NA participant identifying themselves as an addict.

**3. Statement of Purpose and Anonymity Statement**

- A. Thank the person(s)/agency(s) who invited us here today
- B. Opening statement to describe why are we here and what do we hope to accomplish: “Narcotics Anonymous is grateful to have this opportunity to speak to you today about our Fellowship. It is always a pleasure to meet members of the public, such as yourselves, who are concerned with the problem of drug addiction in our community. We have no answer for you today about how to stop someone from becoming involved with drugs or saving them from the disease of addiction. We have found through the experience of recovering addicts that our program of recovery works for those who apply themselves to it. Our program works in our meetings...but the addict has to get to our meetings first to find this recovery. It is our hope that you will remember the name Narcotics Anonymous for it is almost a certainty that all of you at one time or another will know someone who may need our help.”
- C. Read statement concerning anonymity: “We ask your help today in maintaining our tradition of personal anonymity by not identifying us as members of Narcotics Anonymous: by name or in full face photos in the public media, or by

describing the details of our personal circumstances which could reveal our identities. Thank you for respecting our request.”

**4. History of Narcotics Anonymous**

- a) “Narcotics Anonymous sprang from the Alcoholics Anonymous movement in the late 1940s, with meetings first sprouting up in the Los Angeles area of California, USA, in the early Fifties.”
- b) For many years the Narcotics Anonymous grew very slowly, spreading from Los Angeles to other major North American cities and Australia in the early 1970s.
- c) In 1983 Narcotics Anonymous published its self-titled basic text, and growth rates have since risen dramatically.
- d) Our literature has been translated from English into more than 7 major languages.
- e) We have more than 24,000 weekly meetings in over 72 countries and our message continues to help addicts all over the world find a new way of life.
- f) Give local NA history (date first meeting was held, number of meetings presently being conducted, etc.)

**5. Description of Narcotics Anonymous**

- a) “The name “Narcotics Anonymous” does not refer to any particular drug or group of drugs. Very simply, it is any mind or mood-altering substance. It makes no difference to us how or what drugs were used. The only requirement for membership is the desire to stop using.”
- b) Read “What is the NA Program”.

**6. Local Narcotics Anonymous Service Structure**

- A. State the different levels of service identifying the member as the highest level to whom we serve.
- B. Hospitals and Institutions Committee—purpose is to carry the message to addicts who are unable to attend regular meetings of NA. Local information should be given by an H&I member
- C. Public Information Committee—state committee’s purpose is to inform all areas of the public about who and what we are, and how we can be found. Maintains meeting schedules. If applicable, advise audience PI committee usually maintains a phone line to help addicts anonymously.
- D. Literature Committee--Maintains stock of literature for sale to the groups. Conducts review of literature written for the Fellowship.

**7. The Group**

- a) Meets regularly at a specific time and place, follows the 12 Steps and 12 Traditions of NA. Describe different types of meetings, difference between open and closed meetings, etc.
- b) Identification of one addict to another, recognition of themselves in others.
- c) Sharing of personal strength, hope and experience.
- d) A “sanctuary” where addicts can relax among friends in fellowship.

**8. Addiction**

- a) Read “Who is an Addict”
- b) Make a statement about our concept of addiction, “The Narcotics Anonymous program uses a very simple, experience-oriented disease concept of addiction. Narcotics Anonymous does not qualify its use of the term “disease” in any medical or specialized therapeutic sense.”
  - i) Compulsive, self-centered, obsessive behavior
  - ii) Drug use only a symptom of the underlying problem (The disease is more than just the drugs we used)
- c) Duration of drug use does not determine addiction.
- d) Living in denial and isolation; to deny recognition of our drug and living problems.

**9. Abstinence and Recovery**

- a) “Narcotics Anonymous encourages its members to observe complete abstinence from all drugs, including alcohol, even substances other than the individual's drug of choice. It has been the NA members' experience that complete and continuous abstinence provides the best foundation for recovery and personal growth.”
- b) We have found that the therapeutic value of one addict helping another is without parallel.
- c) We follow a 12 Step program based on principles that we can follow in our daily lives.
- d) The progression of recovery is primarily up to the individual.

**10. The Steps and Spirituality**

- A. “Narcotics Anonymous itself is non-religious and encourages each member to cultivate an individual understanding of a Higher Power, religious or not.”

- B. “Central to the program is an emphasis on what is referred to as a "spiritual awakening," emphasizing its practical value, not its philosophical or metaphysical import .”
- C. Spiritual benefits of the 12 Steps:
  - i) Honest admission, finding hope, developing faith, come to a better understanding of ourselves, change our old behaviors, remove defects of character, make amends for past wrongs, continue to develop faith and improve our living actions, and sharing with others.

**11. Life After Drugs**

- a) We develop new interests.
- b) We get together and plan social activities of all types (mention local activities, dances, picnics, etc.).
- c) Every two years we hold a world wide conventions where thousands of addicts meet to celebrate their recovery.
- d) We practice spiritual principles in our lives. We experience freedom from self obsession. We gain self respect, as well as respect for others.
- e) (Closing statement): “Narcotics Anonymous offers a program of recovery that is more than just a way of life without drugs. Not only is this way of life better than the self-destructive life we lived, it is better than any life that we have ever known. We have found a way out. We see it work in our lives and we see it working in other addicts.”

**12. Where to Find Narcotics Anonymous**

- a) Local Helpline phone number(s).
- b) Area Service Committee Address information.
- c) Regional Service Committee Address information
- d) World Service Office Address information (Web site address also).

**13. Question and Answer Period**

**SAMPLE OUTLINE FOR PRESENTATIONS: SPEAKING TO PROFESSIONALS IN  
THE FIELD OF ADDICTION  
(Treatment Center, Hospital or other Institution)**

**1. Preparation**

- a) We suggest selecting members of your PI committee to whom the audience can relate to, if possible.
- b) The following items are helpful in giving to your audience:
  - i) Local meeting lists (as applicable for geographic area)
  - ii) Literature order forms (local service committee generated or from the WSO)
  - iii) Basic Text for display (multiple languages if possible)
  - iv) IP “Who, What, How and Why” or the “White Book” Newly Revised
  - v) IP “Am I An Addict?”
  - vi) IP “Recovery and Relapse”
  - vii) IP “Sponsorship”
  - viii) IP “NA—A Resource In Your Community”
  - ix) IP “For Those In Treatment”
  - x) Other IP’s of your PI committee’s choice.
- c) If you have a local Helpline telephone number(s), make it visible to your audience throughout the presentation. Use a local NA poster, a chalkboard or other means to accomplish this. If its not possible to do this, then make sure the literature or meeting schedules have the telephone number(s) printed on them. Repeatedly remind the audience that the telephone number(s) are there for their use in contacting NA.

**2. Identify Yourselfes**

- A. Using first names, each NA participant identifying themselves as an addict.

**3. Statement of Purpose**

- a) Thank the person(s)/agency(s) who invited us here today
- b) Opening statement to describe why are we here and what do we hope to accomplish: “We have accepted this opportunity to share with all of you about the Fellowship of Narcotics Anonymous. We understand that you, as professionals in the field of addiction treatment, come in contact with addicts daily. Our program is designed to help the addict stop using and find a new way of life. We have no opinion on which treatment center is best or what modality of treatment may be more effective than others. We have by no means found a cure for drug addiction. We offer a plan for daily recovery that has worked for thousands of addicts world wide. Many of our members have come to us through various hospitals and institutions (such as yours).”

**4. History of Narcotics Anonymous**

- a) “Narcotics Anonymous sprang from the Alcoholics Anonymous movement in the late 1940s, with meetings first sprouting up in the Los Angeles area of California, USA, in the early Fifties.”
- b) For many years the Narcotics Anonymous grew very slowly, spreading from Los Angeles to other major North American cities and Australia in the early 1970s.
- c) In 1983 Narcotics Anonymous published its self-titled basic text, and growth rates have since risen dramatically.
- d) Our literature has been translated from English into more than 7 major languages.
- e) We have more than 24,000 weekly meetings in over 72 countries and our message continues to help addicts all over the world find a new way of life.
- f) Give local NA history (date first meeting was held, number of meetings presently being conducted, etc.)

**5. Description of Narcotics Anonymous**

- a) The name “Narcotics Anonymous” does not refer to any particular drug or group of drugs. Very simply, it is any mind or mood-altering substance. It makes no difference to us how or what drugs were used. The only requirement for membership is the desire to stop using.
- b) Read “What is the NA Program”.

**6. The Narcotics Anonymous Service Structure**

- A. State the different levels of service identifying the member as the highest level to whom we serve.
- B. Hospitals and Institutions Committee—purpose is to carry the message to addicts who are unable to attend regular meetings of NA. Local information should be given by an H&I member, if possible.
- C. Public Information Committee—state committee’s purpose is to inform all areas of the public about who and what we are, and how we can be found. Maintains meeting schedules. If applicable, advise audience PI committee usually maintains a phone line to help addicts anonymously.
- D. Literature Committee--Maintains stock of literature for sale to the groups. Conducts review of literature written for the Fellowship.



**7. The Group**

- a) Meets regularly at a specific time and place, follows the 12 Steps and 12 Traditions of NA. Describe different types of meetings, difference between open and closed meetings, etc.
- b) Identification of one addict to another, recognition of themselves in others.
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- a) Read “Who is an Addict”
- b) Make a statement about our concept of addiction, “The Narcotics Anonymous program uses a very simple, experience-oriented disease concept of addiction. Narcotics Anonymous does not qualify its use of the term “disease” in any medical or specialized therapeutic sense.”
  - i) Compulsive, self-centered, obsessive behavior
  - ii) Drug use only a symptom of the underlying problem (The disease is more than just the drugs we used)
- c) Living in denial and isolation; to deny recognition of our drug and living problems.

**9. Abstinence and Recovery**

- a) “Narcotics Anonymous encourages its members to observe complete abstinence from all drugs, including alcohol, even substances other than the individual's drug of choice. It has been the NA members' experience that complete and continuous abstinence provides the best foundation for recovery and personal growth.”
- b) We have found that the therapeutic value of one addict helping another is without parallel.
- c) We follow a 12 Step program based on principles that we can follow in our daily lives.
- d) The progression of recovery is always up to the individual.

**10. The Steps and Spirituality**

- a) “Narcotics Anonymous itself is non-religious and encourages each member to cultivate an individual understanding of a Higher Power, religious or not.”.
- b) “Central to the program is an emphasis on what is referred to as a "spiritual awakening," emphasizing its practical value, not its philosophical or metaphysical import.”
- c) Spiritual benefits of the 12 Steps:
  - i) Honest admission, finding hope, developing faith, come to a better understanding of ourselves, change our old behaviors, remove defects of character, make amends for past wrongs, continue to develop faith and improve our living actions, and sharing with others.

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- d) We practice spiritual principles in our lives. We experience freedom from self obsession. We gain self respect, as well as respect for others.
- e) (Closing statement): Narcotics Anonymous offers a program of recovery that is more than just a way of life without drugs. Not only is this way of life better than the self-destructive life we lived, it is better than any life that we have ever known. We have found a way out. We see it work in our lives and we see it working in other addicts.

**12. Where to Find Narcotics Anonymous**

- a) Local Helpline phone number(s).
- b) Area Service Committee Address information.
- c) Regional Service Committee Address information
- d) World Service Office Address information (Web site address also).

**13. Question and Answer Period**

- a) We do not advocate sharing personal stories in this PI format.

## **Sample School Presentation Format**

*This presentation is written for a panel of five members. You may need to adjust the number of members according to the size of your PI committee. Remember, never do a PI presentation alone.*

Member #1:

Hello, my name is \_\_\_\_\_ and I am a recovering addict, and a member of Narcotics Anonymous. I would also like to introduce the other members of our panel (members introduce themselves).

Narcotics Anonymous, also known as NA, is a non-profit, 12-step fellowship for men and women, for whom drugs had become a major problem. We are not connected in any way, nor are we affiliated with any other organizations. We are not connected with any political or law enforcement groups. We appreciate the opportunity to let the kids in schools know about NA, so that no addict seeking recovery need ever die from addiction. For the first time in history, a simple way has been proving itself in the lives of many addicts. It is available to us all and it is free. This is a simple program known as Narcotics Anonymous.

Member #2: I am a recovering addict, and my name is\_\_\_\_\_.

We are here today to tell you about the fellowship of Narcotics Anonymous: who we are, what we are, and where we are. We are not here to tell any of you that you have a problem with drugs. Perhaps you, and someone you know, may need help in the future because of a drug problem. It is our hope that if that day comes, you will remember the name Narcotics Anonymous.

We passed out literature and a current meeting schedule for you to keep. Please keep them in case someone you know needs them. Meeting schedules change, so it is best to call our phoneline number on the schedule for up to date meeting information. Narcotics Anonymous may also be listed in your phone book.

It costs nothing to belong to our fellowship. We have no dues or fees, no pledges to sign, no promises to make to anyone. We are fully self supporting through our own contributions. We accomplish this by passing a basket for donations at

our meetings. No one is required to put anything in the basket, so don't worry if you don't have any money.

The Twelve Traditions of Narcotics Anonymous states, "Anonymity is the spiritual foundation of all our Traditions, ever reminding us to place principle before personalities." This means that what is said in meetings, and who we see at meetings, stays in the meetings. Narcotics Anonymous meetings are a safe place to get help and to talk about our drug and living problems.

All of us are here today to give back so freely what we have gotten from the program of Narcotics Anonymous. If you feel you have a problem with drugs, come and check us out.

Member #3: I am a recovering addict, and my name is\_\_\_\_\_.

Our panel members have some prepared material that we will read for you. When we are done, we will answer your questions about Narcotics Anonymous. We are not here to tell our personal stories about drugs, but about NA

Today's presentation will include:

The History of Narcotics Anonymous

Who is an Addict?

What is the Narcotics Anonymous Program?

I will be reading the History of Narcotics Anonymous

Narcotics Anonymous was formed in 1953, when a handful of addicts seeking recovery held the first NA meeting in Southern California. The fellowship grew erratically, but quickly spread to other parts of the United States and various parts of the world. From the beginning, the need was evident for an organization for recovery.

In 1982, the fellowship published a book entitled, *Narcotics Anonymous*. Our book and our literature has been translated into several different languages throughout the world. We will be leaving a copy of this book in the school library if you would like to read it. Our fellowship now consists of over \_\_\_\_\_

weekly meetings in over \_\_\_\_\_ countries. Right here in \_\_\_\_\_, we have \_\_\_\_\_ meetings each week. If you would like to know where they are, you can consult the meeting list we distributed at the beginning of the presentation.

Member #4: I am a recovering addict, and my name is\_\_\_\_\_.

I will be reading “Who is an Addict?”

Most of us do not have to think twice about this question, WE KNOW! Our whole life and thinking was centered in drugs in one form or another- the getting and finding ways and means to get more. We lived to use and used to live. Very simply, an addict is a man or woman whose life is controlled by drugs. We are people in the grip of a continuing and progressive illness whose ends are always the same; jails, institutions and death.

As addicts, we have an incurable disease called addiction. This disease is chronic, progressive and fatal. However, it is a treatable disease. We feel ,that each individual has to answer the question, “Am I an addict?” for themselves.

Most of us did not consider ourselves addicted before coming to NA As long as we could stop using for awhile, we though we were all right. We looked at the stopping not the using. We thought we were in control. As our addiction progressed, we thought of stopping less and less. Only in desperation did we ask ourselves, “Could it be the drugs?”

Some of us used, misused and abused drugs and still did not consider ourselves addicts. We visualized an addict’s life as violence, prostitution, jail, and dirty needles. It can be this, but it doesn’t have to be. You can be an addict without doing any of those things. Throughout our addiction, we kept telling ourselves, “This won’t happen to me.” You don’t have to wait for bad things to happen before you get help. Each of us has a few things that we never did. We cannot let these things become excuses for us to use again. We all have different tolerances for pain. Some of us found that we had enough before going to the extremes of jails, institutions, and death.

Member #5: I am a recovering addict, and my name is\_\_\_\_\_.

At times, we were defensive about our addiction and justified our right to use. We were proud of our sometimes illegal, often bizarre behavior that made our using seem “cool.” We fell into a pattern of selective thinking. We only

remembered the “good” drug experiences. We justified and rationalized the things we did.

We were constantly searching for the answer - that person, place, or thing that would make everything all right. As our addiction progressed, many of us found ourselves in and out of trouble. These experiences indicated that there was something wrong with our lives. We wanted an easy way out. Some of us even thought of suicide.

Our reaction to drugs is what makes us addicts, not what or how much we used, or how we used it. Even when others told us that we had a problem, we were convinced that we were right and the world was wrong.

At first, we were using in a manner that seemed to be social, or at least controllable. We had little indication of what the future held for us.

We may have tried to moderate, substitute or even stop using, but we went from a state of drugged success and well-being, to complete mental and emotional loss. Those of us who don't seek recovery end up dying, going to prison or institutions as our disease progressed.

Member #1: I am a recovering addict, and my name is\_\_\_\_\_.

Drugs had given us the feeling that we could handle whatever situation might develop. We became aware, however, that drug usage was largely responsible for some of our worst predicaments. Some of us may spend the rest of our lives in jail for a drug-related crime.

We begin to treat our addiction by not using. Many of us sought, but failed to find, any workable solutions until we found each other. Once we identify ourselves as addicts, help becomes possible. We can see a little of ourselves in every addict and see a little of them in us. This insight lets us help one another. Our future seemed hopeless until we found recovering addicts who were willing to share with us. The people of Narcotics Anonymous showed us that we could live without drugs.

Unfortunately, our disease makes us deny our addiction. If someone you know is an addict, he or she can find a new way of life in the NA program. Through abstaining from drugs and through the Twelve Steps of Narcotics Anonymous, our lives have become meaningful.

Our message is very simple: we have found a way to live without using drugs and we are happy to share it with anyone.

Member #2:

I will be reading "What is the NA Program?"

NA is a nonprofit Fellowship or society of men and women for whom drugs had become a major problem. We are recovering addicts who meet regularly to help each other stay clean. This a program of complete abstinence from all drugs. There is only one requirement for membership, the desire to stop using. We suggest that you keep an open mind and give yourself a break. Our program is a set of principles written so simply that we can follow them in our daily lives. The most important thing about them is that *they work*.

There are no strings attached to NA. We are not affiliated with any other organizations, we have no initiation fees or dues, no pledges to sign, no promises to make to anyone. We are not connected with any political, religious or law enforcement groups, and are under no surveillance at any time. Anyone may join us, regardless of age, race, sexual identity, religion or lack of religion.

Member #3

NA offers a way to live drug-free. If you are not sure if you're an addict, don't worry about it; just come and check out our meetings. You will have all the time you need to make up your mind. Non-addicted people don't spend their time wondering if they are addicts. They don't even think about it. If you are wondering whether or not you are an addict, you may be one. It is not important which drugs you used, everyone is welcome in Narcotics Anonymous.

We didn't know how to stop using drugs before we came to the NA program. We are recovering today because we reached out for help. What helped us can help you.

Member #4

The Twelve Steps of NA offers us a way to change. In the NA fellowship, we support one another in our efforts to learn and practice a new way of living that

keeps us healthy and drug-free. One of the ways to do this is with a sponsor. A sponsor is a person who has been in NA for some time and knows about the Twelve Steps. Everyone gets to pick their own sponsor. A sponsor is your personal helper in learning how to live without drugs.

There is a respect and caring recovering addicts because we've all have had to overcome our addiction. We support each other in our recovery. Nothing will be asked of you and our meetings are free.

We can do together what we found impossible to do alone- learn to live without drugs. We invite everyone to make use of our strength and hope, and to share our experience with us.

Thank you.

Member # 5

Our message is 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 from active addiction.

We will now open the presentation for the question and answer period.

*(It is suggested to set a time limit for the Q&A period)*

*(After Q&A)*

We would like to thank you for your time and attention. For more information contact the phoneline number on our meeting list.



### Sample H&I / PI Presentation

Participants:

H: \_\_\_\_\_ (H&I Representative)

P: \_\_\_\_\_ (PI Representative)

I: \_\_\_\_\_ (Institution Representative)

P: Good morning! My name is \_\_\_\_\_, and I am here as a representative of the [Area/Region] Public Information Committee of Narcotics Anonymous.

H: And I'm \_\_\_\_\_, also from the [Area/Region] of Narcotics Anonymous. I am here representing our Hospitals and Institutions Committee.

I: Thanks for coming today. My name is \_\_\_\_\_, and I am the program coordinator at (blank) Recovery Center.

P: Thank you for expressing an interest in Narcotics Anonymous. It is our hope that we can inform you who we are, how our fellowship works, and what we have to offer addicts in your facility.

We understand that you come into contact with addicts daily. Our program is designed to help the addict stop using and find a new way of life. We have by no means found a cure for addiction. What we offer is a plan for daily recovery that is working for millions of addicts all over the world. Many of our members found their way to NA through hospitals or institutions. We are always grateful to have the opportunity to inform people about Narcotics Anonymous so that no addict seeking recovery need ever die from active addiction. We in NA know that addicts can recover.

Here is a brief history of our fellowship:

Narcotics Anonymous was founded in July of 1953. It grew slowly for the first twenty years, but spread rapidly in the 1970's. By the early 1980's that growth was explosive. By 1997, there were over 25,000 meetings per week in

over 70 countries, with new groups forming regularly throughout the world. Our literature has been translated into several languages, including Braille.

I: I had no idea your fellowship was so widespread. Is it just focusing on heavy narcotics users?

P: No, Narcotics Anonymous does not refer to any specific drug or group of drugs. Our program focuses on the disease of addiction, and recovery from that disease. We have learned to take the emphasis off the drugs in order to better identify with other recovering addicts, regardless of their drug of choice. The only requirement for membership is the desire to stop using.

I: Can you explain a little about these NA groups I have heard of?

P: Sure. An NA group is any meeting that meets regularly at a specific time and place, and follows the Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions of Narcotics Anonymous. One of our traditions states that we are fully self-supporting, declining outside contributions. Another states that we have no outside affiliations. Yet another states that the primary purpose of our groups is to carry the message to the addict who still suffers. However, there is also a tradition that provides a chance for our members to express themselves, and to hear the recovery experiences of other addicts who are learning a better way to live.

I would now like to turn this presentation over to \_\_\_\_\_  
form our Hospitals and Institution Committee. He/she will explain what NA has to offer your facility.

H: Thank you. The ultimate goal of the Hospitals and Institution Committee is to get our Fellowship's message of recovery to those addicts whose attendance at regularly scheduled NA meetings is restricted. We do this by presenting an introduction to Narcotics Anonymous at H&I meetings in institutions such as yours. We carry a message of recovery through the Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions of NA, offering an opportunity for addicts to improve their lives while at the facility, and after leaving. We are not doctors, counselors or social workers. We are recovering addicts who are willing to carry the message of NA to the still suffering addict, in the hope that the freedom of recovery may also be theirs someday. We have learned that the therapeutic

value of one addict helping is without parallel. We are dedicated to the premise that no addict seeking recovery need ever die from the horrors of addiction.

I: How many members do you bring in to an H&I meeting?

H: It varies, depending on the situation. We will look at your facility and determine what is best for you. Our handbook suggests that not less than two, but no more than five members be brought into a facility.

I: Do your members discuss our facility or staff during the H&I meeting?

H: Absolutely not! At the beginning of the meeting, we clarify that we are here as members of Narcotics Anonymous and that we are not associated with your facility. We also state that we are not here to discuss their treatment and hold no opinions regarding your facility. If questions come up, we steer the discussion back to our experience with recovery in Narcotics Anonymous.

I: That sounds great! I think that we would like to start a meeting soon.

H: We were hoping you would say that. We will need a list of possible time slots and a list of your facility regulations including: dress code, your check in procedure, if there is a need for passes and your clean time requirement. It is very important that we know what is required of our members, as we also have our own guidelines that we must follow. For example, we wouldn't be able to monitor or report on anyone attending the meeting. Occasionally, we aren't able to comply with all of your facilities requirements for one reason or another. In that case, we would not be able to send our members, but we may be able to provide NA literature and meeting lists.

We would also like to identify a contact person from your facility and have them meet with our committee's contact person to address how the meeting will be handled from your side and answer any other questions you may have.

I: Thank you for your time. I will get a list together and mail it to you. I will also have our contact person get in touch with you as soon as possible.

P: We would also like to thank you for the opportunity to present the fellowship of Narcotics Anonymous to you. Please contact our committee if you have any more questions, or concerns.

H: Thank you for your interest in our fellowship.

**Sample Questionnaire for Use a After PI Presentation**

The [Area/Regional] Public Information Committee of Narcotics Anonymous would appreciate it if you took a few moments to answer the following questions Please return the form to our committee at the address below. Thank you.

1. What did you expect from our presentation?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
2. What did you get from our presentation?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
3. Was the meeting: \_\_\_\_ too long? \_\_\_\_ too short? \_\_\_\_ just right?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
4. What was your impression of NA before this presentation?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
5. Has your impression changed? If yes, how?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
6. Do you need more information on:  
  
    \_\_\_\_ literature  
    \_\_\_\_ meetings lists  
    \_\_\_\_ speakers  
    \_\_\_\_ other, please be specific

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7. After hearing our presentation, would you refer someone with a drug problem to NA?
8. Do you have any suggestions for how we could improve our presentation?
9. Other comments:

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Name (optional)

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Phone number

[Area/Region] of Narcotics Anonymous  
Address

We will also add your name to our mailing list, which we use to mail updated meeting lists.

Phone number[illegible]

<b>SAMPLE PROFESSIONAL EVENT CHECK LIST FOR REGIONAL/ZONAL PI COMMITTEES</b>
--

- ☐ 1. PI Committee nominates event - Writes purpose for attendance at event- Projects financial costs for project. (Remember to include literature stock expenses and shipping costs if applicable)
- ☐ 2. PI Committee Chair advises Zone/RSC/ASC - submits request for funding event - Approval or denial of project by Zone /RSC
- ☐ 3. Upon Approval of event, Coordinator chosen by PI Committee/RSC/ZONE
- ☐ 4. World Services abstract to be presented to conference secretariat for consideration - Action item: Coordinator
  - ☐ a. After acceptance of abstract , Coordinator will need to send off one paid registration to secure place on program
- ☐ 5. Event Coordinator communicates project initiation and intended activities to all PI / H&I Committees in affected areas - Event dates, organizations and other pertinent information shared - Requests for assistance and specialized needs are communicated
- ☐ 6. Selection of all primary attendees made by PI Committee and/or Event Coordinator following PI Committee guidelines
- ☐ 7. Event Coordinator briefs all attendees on:
  - ☐ a. Details of previous conference(s) provided by coordinator, if possible.
  - ☐ b. Date and times they are expected to attend the event.
  - ☐ c. Responsibilities and roles.
  - ☐ d. Do's & Don'ts for PI - Re: speaking to professionals, dress code, etc.
- ☐ 7. a. Send request for space, or inclusion on program schedule for an open NA meeting
- ☐ 8. Has conference secretariat acknowledged receipt of abstract/ request for display space? Action by coordinator?
- ☐ 9. Has conference secretariat acknowledged invitation to present? Action by coordinator?
- ☐ 10. When requesting a workshop or plenary session presentation: Try to ensure presentations are in the morning, afternoon workshops are normally not well attended. Which World Services paper is appropriate for what session?
- ☐ 11. Have coordinator establish contact with:
  - ☐ a. Conference organizer
  - ☐ b. Planning / Program committee
  - ☐ c. Travel agent for conference
  - ☐ d. Secretariat



- ☐ 12. Check that all prospective attendees have current, valid passports/visas, if applicable
- ☐ 13. Check if hotel accommodations need to be verified for visa reasons
- ☐ 14. Fill out registration forms for everyone attending  
Note: If multiple attendees are participating (for training purposes) you may be able to get "student/training" registration at a discount rate. (usually U.S. \$50—\$100.00 per attendee)
- ☐ 15. Pay registration fees (unusual in some countries to accept credit cards. Arrange bank draft where possible in advance if this applies)
- ☐ 16. Pay deposit on hotel (usually one—two nights rates)
- ☐ 17. Advise conference secretariat of attendees' arrival, departure times, flight numbers. This will usually enable you to be picked up at the airport. Again if applicable.
- ☐ 18. Determine whether registration fee covers meals
- ☐ 19. If meals not covered with registration, arrange for personal expense advance if needed.
- ☐ 20. Determine rates, methods for currency conversion in advance if applicable.
  - ☐ a. Attendees should be familiar with zonal/regional travel policy guidelines.
- ☐ 21. Ensure travel expenses have been approved.
- ☐ 22. Arrange and purchase travel tickets (air, rail or other), arrange travel insurance.
- ☐ 23. WSO-Van Nuys, WSO-Europe, or the nearest RSO or ASO should be advised of literature requirements in advance should stocks not be sufficient (especially world meeting directories) *Did you include this in your budget?*
- ☐ 24. Check that RSC has sent literature and display at least one week in advance if not being walked through customs.
  - a. Make sure video equipment was ordered (check to see if this viable as it can be expensive)—and don't forget the looped tape of the *Just for Today* video!
- ☐ 25. Have predetermined contact person who will take responsibility for literature when it arrives (e.g. conference secretariat, hotel concierge, shipping agent) The hotel is usually the best if your a listed guest
- ☐ 26. Arrange display booth/space, tables, video machine arrangements well in advance to avoid disappointment upon arrival. Sometimes it will be with the conference secretariat; at other times, directly with the hotel. Always check with secretariat first, then check with hotel regarding feasibility. Some conferences charge for space, make inquiries. Try and get the display next to the coffee "set up".

- ☐ 27. Ask the local NA community for help staffing the display table and for assistance with an open NA meeting should the conference allow you to have one. *Note:* Check to see if the conference organizers will let the local NA members into the venue first. This will save an unsuspected embarrassment. Sometimes they will want to charge extra or deny entry based on security reasons.
  - ☐ a. Delegate local volunteer coordinator.
  - ☐ b. Review PI Do's & Don'ts with local volunteers.
  - ☐ c. Review with local NA members about anonymity and their participation at an open NA meeting for the public and professionals. Stress caution to these members on making statements that can compromise personal anonymity and express opinions on issues outside of NA's purpose.
  - ☐ d. Make a note of difficult questions, or general questions asked of you many times, as it could be input for future papers and articles for the NA Update or local PI training materials.
- ☐ 28. Space for open NA meeting usually needs to be arranged in advance. If this does happen, impromptu arrangements upon arrival can lead to a successful outcome. *Note:* Make sure the meeting does not conflict with other conference workshops or social events, the organizers would not like this.
- ☐ 29. Check that all primary attendees are aware of the dress code and/or decorum standards for the particular conference in question.
- ☐ 30. Check that all primary attendees are aware of the full array of assignments during the week—presentations are only a small part of our participation in the event. Social activities, hallway talks, and general outings are all opportunities for public relations work that will make this exercise meaningful. Remember, have fun, people are attracted to smiles and stress-free individuals.
- ☐ 31. Follow up—ensure there are enough PI committee business cards available.
  - ☐ a. Business cards should only have the address and phone numbers for NA (local, regional or both). Business cards should not have an individual's full name or personal address information.
- ☐ 32. If selling literature, prearrange a cash float and an *official* receipt book.
- ☐ 33. Keep a follow up book (journal) for mailing out further information after the event to those we meet. Pass onto World Services any professional contacts that you feel needs following up. Do not make any promises. Make sure WS gives you feedback what was done or not done. Follow up is imperative.
- ☐ 34. Also locate local NA communities for further communication if you are visiting an isolated area.

- ☐ 35. Document trip in order to update or add to this checklist for further trips.
- ☐ 36. Write report for Zonal/Regional Committee. cc WSC PI if appropriate. *Always remember who may get a copy of your report. Be sensitive to local cultures or outside issues. If you need to report on a sensitive or confidential issue, attach an addendum marked confidential to the Chairs of the RSC/Regional PI*
- ☐ 37. Write a general article on your trip for local newsletters or *The NA Way Magazine*. Again watch out for sensitivities and out-side issues. Treatment agencies may subscribe to the newsletter
- ☐ 38. Obtain copy of conference proceedings for local archives.
- ☐ 39. Prepare curriculum vitae or resume if you are going to make a presentation; you will need it for your introduction by the chairperson. The planning committee or conference organizer usually likes this well in advance.
- ☐ 40. After conference, send a thank you letter(s) to the conference organizers, and also to the attendees who gave their time.
- ☐ 41. Make recommendations to the Zone/RSC regarding future attendance.
- ☐ 42. Try to mix with researchers and policy makers; they dictate treatment and create trends in dealing with drug addicts. Try and split up to avoid clinging together. Make the most of our people resources.
  - ☐ a. Ensure that entire delegation gets together once a day, at a time and location everyone knows about, to debrief and make plans for next round of engagement.
- ☐ 41. Write report from notes on the way home; otherwise, it will not get done within thirty days.
  - ☐ a. Fill out appropriate expense report.
  - ☐ b. Keep copies of your currency exchange receipts for purposes of justifying the conversion rates you will show in your expense reports **(if applicable)**.

## **Chapter VII**

### **RESOURCES**

#### **THE FOLLOWING IS A LISTING OF MATERIALS AVAILABLE FROM THE WORLD SERVICE OFFICE**

**How to Use Presentation Papers**, available as the foundation for an oral presentation, for distribution, or enclosure in mailings about our fellowship to government, professional, trade, and civic organizations. 2 pages.

**Facts About Narcotics Anonymous**, a presentation paper originated for the International Council on Alcohol and Addictions (ICAA), 18<sup>th</sup> International Institute on the Prevention and Treatment of Drug Dependence, 7/1990. Describes NA's historic roots, how our recovery program works, and how our service organization operates. 5 pages.

**Basic Public Information Guide**. 6 pages.

**Open Meeting Anonymity Statement**. 1 page.

**Anonymity and Open NA Meetings**. 2 pages.

**Narcotics Anonymous – A Commitment to Community Partnerships** - a presentation paper originated for the International Council on Alcohol and Addictions (ICAA), 37<sup>th</sup> International Congress on Alcohol and Drug Dependence 9/20-25/1995. Addressed specifically to addiction care providers. 8 pages.

**Narcotics Anonymous and Harm Minimization Strategies** - a presentation paper originated for the ICAA's 22<sup>nd</sup> International Institute on the Prevention and treatment of Drug Dependence 5/1995. Aimed at policy makers and care providers who are approaching their community's drug problem from a new angle. 3 pages.

**Narcotics Anonymous, A Society of Recovering Drug Addicts** - narrative explaining what Narcotics Anonymous is, and what we think is important about the program. 6 pages

**Booth Sitting Guidelines** - example from the Southern California Region. 15 pages.

**Disaster Contingency Plan** - to aid our fellowship back to recovery following a natural disaster, from the Carolina Region. 14 pages.

**Trustee Bulletins** - for internal use only, **see following listing and order form**.

**Fellowship Intellectual Property Trust (FIPT)**, NA's statement on copyright

materials.

**Speaker Training** - A list of commonly asked questions. 1 page.

**Train the Trainer - for Public Information Presentations** - currently draft format to be released at a later date.

**NA Public Information Service Bulletin** - "Your Public Information Subcommittee: getting it going, and keeping it going." 8 pages.

**NA Public Information Service Bulletin** - "Public Information use of billboards and bus signs." 4 pages.

**NA Public Information Service Bulletin** - "Public Information Reprints" from the September 1987 issue of Newslines. 3 pages.

**NA Public Information Service Bulletin** - "Public Relations and the Traditions". 4 pages.

**Sample Interview** - 10 pages.

**Sample Public Information Contingency Plans**

**Sample Area and Regional PI Guidelines**

**Considerations for Meeting Lists**

**Sample Flyers**

**Just for Today, Video**

**Public Service Announcements (PSAs), (radio and television)**

## **WORLD SERVICE BOARD OF TRUSTEE BULLETINS**

### **Catalogue, June 1996**

Since October 1983, NA's World Service Board of Trustees has issued thirty bulletins on a wide variety of topics. During 1995, a number of bulletins were removed after a review and revision process. The following is an index of the WSB bulletins currently available, free of charge, upon request.

### **Some Thoughts Regarding our Relationship to Alcoholics Anonymous**

"Cooperation, not affiliation." What does this oft-repeated phrase mean with regard to NA's relationship to Alcoholics Anonymous? What is our relationship to AA? And what about "AA bashing"? Bulletin #13, November 1985. 3 pages. NLII.6.

### **The Relationship of Narcotics Anonymous to NarAnon and Families Anonymous**

As individuals, we have tremendous respect for these other fellowships and support the need for them. We must remember, however, that NA, NarAnon, and Families Anonymous are separate fellowships, each with its own purpose. Bulletin #14, August 1987. 2 pages. NL IV.6.

### **Open and Closed NA meetings**

How to use open meetings to carry the message to the community, while maintaining meetings closed to non-addicts that provide a safe haven for NA members. Bulletin 415, August 1987. 2 pages. The NA Way Magazine. December 1987.

### **What is Addiction?**

When we say addiction in NA, do we mean drug addiction? Is addiction a disease? These questions and others are addressed in Bulletin #17, 1988-89. 2 pages.

### **Special Interest Meetings**

A report from the WSC Ad Hoc Committee on Special Interest Meetings "concluded that special interest meetings must be appropriate in some NA communities since they exist and flourish with little controversy in these communities. In NA communities where special interest meetings do not exist, and where the need for them is not apparent, there is no reason to create them. Groups, therefore, exercising their autonomy are best suited to decide whether there is a necessity to have special interest meetings. Bulletin #18, April, 1989. 3 pages.

### **Gender-specific Language and Use of the Word A God in NA Literature**

A preliminary examination of these issues. Bulletin #19, February 1992. 1 page.

### **The Generation of Funds (fundraising) and the Seventh Tradition in Narcotics**

### **Anonymous**

When we depend on fundraising activity instead of voluntary donations from our members, we create a number of problems for ourselves. Bulletin #2 I, December, 1991. 3 pages.

### **Direct Contributions**

Does the "fund flow" plan for funding NA services work? What if groups contributed directly to areas, regions, and world services? Bulletin #22, December, 1991. 2 pages.

### **Participation and Decision-making at the World Service Conference**

Should only RSRs vote at the conference, or should all WSC participants be given the ballot? A history of the issue, and ten questions with pros, cons. Bulletin #23, December, 1991. 4 pages.

### **Public Relations and The Traditions**

Thought-provoking essay on the practical and spiritual importance of our public relations and what NA's traditions say about our fellowship's P1 efforts. Bulletin #25, October, 1990. 4 pages.

### **A Report on the NA Literature Trust**

How was our fellowship's Basic Text developed? What are the differences between each edition, and how were those changes made? How are NA's legal rights to its Basic Text protected? Can NA members or groups reprint NA literature? Bulletin #26, September, 1989. 8 pages.

### **HIV and AIDS in NA**

More on addressing HIV infection. Bulletin #27, April, 1993. 2 pages.

### **Freedom from Prejudice, Parts 1 and 2**

Two articles examine prejudice in NA, becoming aware of it, and doing something about it. Bulletin #20, 1991, 1992. 2 pages. Also see Bulletin #28.

### **Freedom from Prejudice, Part 3**

An additional article on prejudice in NA, complementing pieces prepared by the World Service Board of Trustees in 1991 and 1992. Bulletin #28, 1993. 1 page. Also see Bulletin #20.

### **Regarding Methadone and Other Drug Replacement Programs**

How is NA service affected by methadone maintenance and other drug replacement therapies? Membership, group autonomy and service are examined in this article. Bulletin #29, June, 1996. 2 pages.

### **Theft of NA Funds**

Responsible management, safeguarding of funds, and selection of trusted servants are noted as ways to minimize misappropriation of NA funds. Methods to inventory and resolve theft issues are also addressed. Bulletin #30, June, 1996. 3 pages.



## **ORDER FORM FOR TRUSTEE BULLETINS**

- #13 Our Relationship to AA
- #14 NarAnon and Families Anonymous
- #15 Open and closed NA meetings
- #17 What is Addiction?
- #18 Special Interest Meetings
- #19 Gender-specific Language, "God"
- #20 Freedom from Prejudice, Parts I and 2
- #21 Fundraising and Tradition Seven
- #22 Direct Contributions
- #23 WSC Participation, Decision-making
- #25 Public Relations and The Traditions
- #26 The NA Literature Trust
- #27 HIV and AIDS in NA
- #28 Freedom from Prejudice, Part 3
- #29 Regarding Methadone and Other Drug Replacement Programs
- #30 Theft of NA Funds

**THESE BULLETINS ARE INTENDED AS AN INTERNAL RESOURCE – NOT  
FOR DISTRIBUTION TO NON-NA MEMBERS**

**PUBLIC INFORMATION AND PHONELINE SUBCOMMITTEE  
REGISTRATION FORM**

The World Service Office maintains a list of Public Information and Phonline subcommittee chairpersons. This is to keep local NA communities informed about new and developing PI/phoneline service activities and professional cooperation opportunities which may arise. If you are already registered, please share this form with other PI/phoneline chairs who may be interested in linking up with world services. All registered PI and Phonline chairpersons will receive the *NA WAY*, as well as other general PI/Phonline correspondence.

**PUBLIC INFORMATION SUBCOMMITTEE CHAIRPERSON**

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City, State, Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Country \_\_\_\_\_

Daytime phone \_\_\_\_\_

E-Mail Address \_\_\_\_\_

**PHONELINE SUBCOMMITTEE CHAIRPERSON**

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City, State, Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Country \_\_\_\_\_

Daytime phone \_\_\_\_\_

E-Mail Address \_\_\_\_\_

Area/Region \_\_\_\_\_

**REGIONAL/AREA INFORMATION**

What region is your committee in?

\_\_\_\_\_

Is this an [area] or [regional] subcommittee? (circle one only)

Area or regional service committee (not subcommittee) name

\_\_\_\_\_

Mailing address \_\_\_\_\_

Phoneline number \_\_\_\_\_

Is your committee responsible for [public information], [phonelines], or [both]?  
(circle one only)

**Please send this information to:**

**World Service Office**

**Post Office Box 9999, Van Nuys, California 91409,**

**or by FAX ~ (818)700-0700. Thank you for your support**