

# New Awakenings

## WAR IS OVER NOT

In early December I received a phone call from two local H&I members informing me that they were not allowed into a local rehabilitation center to carry the NA message of hope to the suffering addict. As Area Chair I informed them that I would contact the P.I. and H&I Chair to resolve this problem.

To my shock after a few days I found out that our Area was under full scale attack. Members and groups from another Area, with a personal endorsement from WSO Inc. had made an attempt to have our meetings removed from the facilities that they meet in.

This other Area was the result of a split a few years back, caused by a difference in basic service ideals. During recent months our Groups have expressed desire to improve relations between the two Areas and there's been some talk of producing a common meeting schedule. Even though, a few members of the other Area decided to write a letter to WSO Inc. that said: "We are requesting from you a letter to advise the churches, institutions and phone companies these meetings are held without being registered or following the vote of the World Services of Narcotics Anonymous". It also went on to say that our NA Groups were using the name, logo, and reputation of NA in hospitals and institutions. Their complaints against us included using the Baby Blue and collecting money for an individual to pay off a \$6000 debt from a failed history convention.

The WSO Inc. responded by sending an old letter dated 13 June 1991. The letter endorsed two individuals as representatives for the purpose of establishing an account and/or listing with the telephone company. It said in part that, "Individuals do not have the right to use the [NA] name without having first obtained permission to do so in writing." Using this and a copy of the letter they sent WSO Inc. they approached places our NA Groups held meetings at and argued that we were not NA and should not be allowed to meet there.

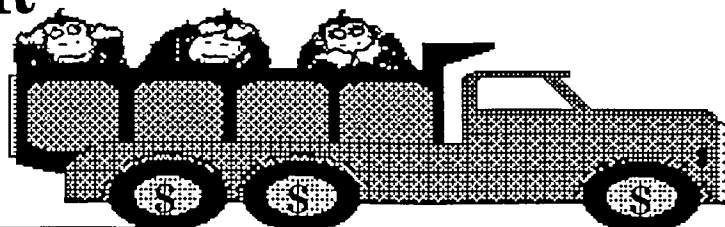
I called George at WSO Inc. to find out how to resolve the problem. He immediately blamed one individual as having resentments towards our Area. I asked him how he could have given out this letter. He said he didn't give them anything that wasn't already available to the Fellowship. I asked him if he could say whether or not we were NA. He said that he could not, but if we didn't follow the Literature Trust then we were not NA.

It baffled me to hear these words. Since when did the Fellowship surrender the 12 Traditions? Don't they tell us, "Because we hear about "suggested steps" and "no musts" so often, some of us make a mistake and assume that this applies to groups the way it applies to the individual. The Twelve Traditions of N.A. are not negotiable. They are the guidelines that keep our fellowship alive and free."? What happened to our Fourth and Ninth Traditions? What happened to group autonomy and our right to create service boards or committees directly responsible to those they serve?

Shortly afterward, one of the other Area's Groups withdrew from that Area. They were then visited by these same "approved" trusted servants. Meeting schedules were torn up, a death threat made and the secretary

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## SURRENDER



Hear no evil, See no evil, Speak no evil, Practice no principles

## NOT.

# The COVENANT and The PROPHECY

The original Fourth and Ninth Traditions from the "Grey Book" review form of Our Basic Text

## TRADITION FOUR

*Each group should be autonomous, except in matters affecting other groups, or N.A. as a whole.*

The autonomy our groups is one of our most precious possessions. This sounds great but what does it mean? What is it to be autonomous? Websters defines autonomous as "having the right or power of self government", "undertaken or carried on without outside control", "existing or capable of existing independently", "responding, reacting or developing independently of the whole". Autonomy is all these things to us and more. Our groups are truly self-governing and are not subject to outside control. Each group can exist on it's own if it must. Each group has had to grow on its own and stand on its own two feet. One might ask: Is this really true, are we truly autonomous, what about our service committees, our offices, our activities, our hotlines, and all the other things that go on in N.A.? The answer, of course, is that these things are not N.A. They are services that we can utilize to help us in our recovery and to further the primary purpose of our groups. Narcotics Anonymous is a Fellowship of men and women, addicts, meeting together in groups, and using a given set of spiritual principles to find freedom from addiction and a new way to live. All else is not N.A. Those other things we mentioned are the result of members caring enough to reach out and offer their help and experience so that our road may be easier. Whether or not we choose to utilize these services for the benefit of a group is up to us, they are not thrust down our throats. Some have taken offense to this, they say that when they started out they were told they had to register their group. This may be true, but many groups exist that have never registered. We ask groups to register because we can't recognize them unless we know that they exist. Once a group registers they are sent a starter kit. This contains many suggestions and is one of the ways we share our experience to help the group. Whether or not they take our suggestion is their

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### WAR... from p. 1

was physically assaulted.

Our Area had an emergency ASC to discuss what to do. We decided to contact all the meeting places and set up a meeting with them. All the people we met with were understanding and we still meet in their facilities. One church group commented that they could relate - they had had some splits in their history too.

The war is over? The charge that funds are going for an individual to pay off a debt are not true. The Group pays \$25 a month on this debt. This event was another ambush led by WSO Inc. They threw fliers in the waste basket and told NA members that the history conference was canceled. The Trustees labeled us "disaffected members" (one dictionary defines disaffected as disloyal to the crown). All we see is one ambush after another. We talk peace and all we received is the Concepts and the Literature Trust.

We are Narcotics Anonymous no matter what someone else thinks or said. We will not be forced to register with the WSO Inc. or forced to join a service structure. Let's not talk about the Traditions, let's practice them! ♦

### *Financial Statement*

#### Received:

Florida	20.00
Virginia	5.00
California	5.00
Maryland	10.00
Pennsylvania	5.00
New Jersey	8.00
Colorado	60.00
Michigan	5.00
Washington D.C.	2.00
Missouri	18.00
Georgia	10.00
Maryland	6.00
New Jersey	20.00
Maryland	4.03
Missouri	4.40
Pennsylvania	5.00
California	4.40
Michigan	5.00

Total 196.83

#### Expenses Issue 6:

Printing	107.98
Postage	30.16

Total 138.14

*Because this is Volume 2, Number 1, the "Publishing Box" that usually appears here with the "Financial Statement" has taken the form of a full article and can be found on page 8.*

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decision. In this starter kit it says that we must abide by the Twelve Traditions in order to call ourselves Narcotics Anonymous. This is also true, but these Traditions are part of the set of spiritual principles that are N.A. Without the Traditions, N.A. does not exist. It really is up to the group, in the end they must choose for themselves.. They are autonomous.

But we said that for N.A. autonomy was more than this, and it is. For us in Narcotics Anonymous autonomy is also creative freedom. It gives our groups the freedom to act on their own to establish their atmosphere of recovery, to serve their members, and to fulfill their primary purpose. It is this aspect of autonomy that makes it one of our most precious principles. It is for this reason that we guard our autonomy so carefully.

We are autonomous; and from what we have said it would seem that we, in our groups, can do whatever we decide to do, regardless of what anybody says. Well, yes and no. Each group does have complete freedom except when their actions become a threat to other groups and the rest of N.A. This is the other half of Tradition Four and the way we use our autonomy is just as important as autonomy itself. Like group conscience, autonomy can be a two-edged sword. In the past group autonomy has been used to justify the violation of other Traditions. This should never be allowed to happen because as we have said spiritual principles are never in conflict with other spiritual principles. If a conflict or contradiction does exist that means that somewhere along the line we have somehow slipped away from the true principles.

When we use our autonomy for the good of our group we must be careful that our actions do not hurt other groups or N.A. as a whole. Again we are given a simple rule of thumb. If we check to make sure that our actions are clearly within the bounds of our Traditions, if we don't represent anyone but ourselves, if we don't dictate to other groups or force anything upon them, and if we take the time to consider the consequences of our actions ahead of time, then all will be well.

## TRADITION NINE

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

This Tradition defines the way we run our Fellowship. A lot of confusion has occurred because of misinterpretations of our Ninth Tradition. Our members are addicts who have the desire to stop using, who want what we have to offer, and who have chosen to join us. Our meetings are a gathering of members for the purpose of staying clean. Our principles are the Twelve Steps and the Twelve Traditions.

Another point of confusion is the term organized, which has several meanings. Our Steps and Traditions are uniform and set in a specific order. They are numbered; they are not random and unstructured. Certainly they are organized, but this is not the organization of our Ninth Tradition. For the purpose of this Tradition, organized means having an administrative structure, and this implies management and control. On this basis, the meaning of Tradition Nine is clear. N.A. should never be run by bureaucracy or management nor controlled by individuals within an administrative structure. If we were to allow this, N.A. would surely lose the best it has to offer and choke to death on our insanities.

Even without this Tradition, organization such as this would be in opposition to our spiritual principles. A loving God as He may express Himself in our group conscience would find no place within an administrative structure.

How could a trusted servant manage and control? Service and management are contradictory. Government implies control, but our leaders do not govern. How could autonomy exist in an administrative structure? Specialization and professionalism are the basis of any management scheme. Any administrative structure, by its very nature, eliminates the possibility of autonomy. An organized N.A. is a contradiction in terms and any attempt to force organization on us would destroy us.

The Ninth Tradition goes on to define the nature of these things that we can do, outside N.A., to help N.A. It says that we may create service boards or committees directly responsible to those they serve. This is the basis of our service structure, but keep in mind that although these entities are created to serve our Fellowship they are not, in fact, a part of Narcotics Anonymous. Our service structure consists of our groups in their business sense: our area service committees, regional service committees, World Service Conference, World Service Board of Trustees, and World Service Office. Each of these is directly responsible through the service structure, to the members of N.A. and to a loving God as He may express Himself in our group conscience.

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## SPIRITUALITY IN N.A.

I have recently gone through the thing with a new member where you sit down and draw the diagrams on paper with a bunch of little M's for member with connecting lines to a capital G for group. More little lines lead to an A for area and yet more to a R for region. The final set of little lines lead to the WSC with WSB on one side and WSO on the other side.

I also explained briefly how the Office has a cash flow system outside the fellowship which is a main source of income, like millions. I made little lines from Compcare, Hazeldon, US Military and penal systems not to mention direct sales to hospitals and treatment centers. These lines led to WSO. I made another little line out to them. In and out, millions sold, millions received.

All this has made me think.

Try the same thing for yourself. Sit down with an excited, sincere newcomer, a pencil and a piece of paper. Explain it all to them. Then resume reading this article. You can do it now, but keep the faith.

So. It looks to me like WSO can do whatever it wants as long as we don't interfere. Why would we want to interfere? Why would the WSO system want to protect itself from interference? What Fellowship interests need to be maintained? Are there some big concerns against other lesser though important concerns? Work all this out for yourself. If you've been doing your homework, it should be easy. I can't do it for you. If you haven't been keeping track of these subjects, start now.

Now, the other thing. Narcotics Anonymous is a Fellowship of men and women for whom drugs have become a major problem. We die without recovery. Our recovery process is spiritual in nature. Nowhere are we asked, encouraged or expected to surrender to anything less than the fact of admitting our addiction personally and turning our life and will over to the loving care of God. Even if our understanding is different from other people, we still deal primarily with spiritual matters and have great respect for anything that can alleviate our suffering and lead to our recovery. Our message has to be true to what works for us - not treatment trends or in response to market pressure.

There was a time when our service structure could be trusted to carry our message in more than administrative terms. Obviously we are having to make other arrangements since something has gone wrong. If you are a surrendered, loving member of N.A. and get despondent about some of our troubles, snap out of it. You are only experiencing some of the emotions other pioneering members felt in their turn. Go out and politely ask if you can have a meeting at a few hundred churches and watch the smiling faces turn cold when they realize you are an addict. How about that? Which came first, the widespread growth of recovering addicts in N.A. or the widespread existence of treatment centers? We will never have it easy. Besides, easy ain't worth nothin'. I mean if we don't have to go to some trouble to get something, we tend to discount it's value and if we discount our recovery process, it won't work for us.

It seems we are going to have to construct some other thing within N.A. that can reliably offer strength and guidance and this something is going to have to be something greater than an overgrown kangaroo court system like our structure at it's worst. This will work no hardship on our structure at it's best or at it's slightly less than best. But as we move into the much less than best and the just about awful, we will have something to do and a way to go instead of feeling like it is all over and there is no hope.

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When I first became involved with the effort for our Basic Text, it struck me that the simple things we were doing had not been done earlier by members more experienced and skilled than we were. What seemed to explain it at the time was that we needed the anonymous shelter from egotism to do the work. In other words, we needed to know that it was in a very real sense, "Thy Will, not ours, at work." This is because only very sincere members were drawn to the work and very sincere members wanted to stay clean. There was a distinct visible pattern to relapse that involved caring too much about something, then letting that thing push its way to the forefront of our consciousness until nothing else mattered, including at some point, recovery. So we were careful. And the events and happenstances of the times served both us and our cause very well.

So we became committed. We had to almost keep it quiet how committed we were. It didn't help a thing that many of these oldtimers were also AA members who sincerely believed us to be incapable of the enduring love and consistency required to do things like recovery books...

We hid out in the safest place imaginable: the service structure. In time we were rooted out. Our guise as incompetents began to fail as the book got written and hundreds of thousands of addicts got clean, stayed clean and grew spiritually. Still, it was unpopular to be dedicated just to N.A. Strange conflicts began to crop up with the new special workers who quietly insisted on taking over portions of the service structure. Even the term volunteer was used to undermine the great spirit of love and devotion created by the fine and exemplary behavior of so many thousands of grateful, clean addicts who brought life and meaning to our services. Some began to believe professionals could be trusted. Like their indifference to our pressing concerns made them impartial. They were paid employees who appeared impartial. We get led down some strange hallways at times, don't we?

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Another thing that was emphasized in the attractive, young Fellowship was that we have no bosses in N.A. The saying was, "There are no big shots or little shots in N.A. One shot and we're all shot." There was a friendliness that is the hallmark of a young organization of any type. We were all made to feel important and we were able to find old timers who somehow had trod the path we wished to follow and they would take time out of their lives to talk on the telephone, exchange letters or host us in their homes. Clearly, N.A. was something different in my life and it kept me working on my steps of surrender, belief, decision, inventory and amends. Many of the things I had learned about spirituality from books or people suddenly took life and became working parts of my program. Like all members, I had a circle of friends who share my thoughts, ideas and interests with me. We were like college students in the university of life.

Today, the beat goes on. Our shared knowledge and experience of recovery from the disease of addiction has grown into a mountain in the last ten or fifteen years. We have a sizable problem organizing what has been learned and there is more being brought to light every day. We are able to utilize the tools of recovery and the skills of service to get the strength and guidance to go forward. The journey is still inward. Spirituality for me has become the way to describe things that deal with how we live and what we are free to experience in life. "The eye cannot see and the ear cannot hear that which the mind cannot understand." These things are called: my attitude, my belief, my willingness, my honesty and so forth. I tried to live by manipulating things out there in the world that I was powerless over. Now, I find I can manipulate myself very well and get the results I want in many cases. Whenever I forget my basics, my life gets complicated again.

This is why we have problems in world service. Sometimes errors are made and people fall short. Still, we should not let this form of expectable difficulty crush us or distract us from the many things that are going well. It is a great comfort to read this newsletter and know that we are getting back to sharing our solutions again. The subscribers are like a quite, thoughtful convention where we may in time know some of the faces, but all attention is focused on what is shared and what is to be learned of value to addicts seeking recovery. ♦

## LETTER

I am a GSR for my little group that meets smack dab in the middle of what is affectionately called the armpit of California. Each month we have a business meeting and each month I go to the Area Service meeting to carry my group conscience.

This is just my opinion but it seems at this point the primary purpose gets lost and forgotten. The steps and traditions are not worked or applied and the ASM body - Chair - Vice Chair - Secretary and Treasury armed with egos and personalities turns Area Service into Area Circus. These Trusted Servants turn into Trusted Serpents and that sets the mood for the remaining six hours it takes to conduct business.

This is sad, very sad but what's even more sad is that we have a Area Service Representative (ASR) who goes to Regional and reports back to us what's going on there. I personally was amazed at his report. He said that at Regional the ASR's get together to report what's going on at each area in the Region.

Well guess what? They are talking about degendering the Basic Text!! That means they want to take the He's and the Him's out! Does this mean a 6th Edition? I still don't know what was wrong with the 1st one. Does this mean that N.A. has an indifference or intolerance towards Spiritual Principles? I must have been outside helping a newcomer (or an oldtimer) when that was voted on at group level. Or was it even brought to group level? Like I said, I must have been outside. It couldn't possibly be one of WSO's great ideas sent down? What happened? Why haven't we got that Basic Text right? I thought it was fine the first time.

Then another question comes up. If it cost \$9.53, tax included, for a Basic Text now, how much is the Spiritually intolerant Basic Text going to cost? Here's another question to ponder - What does this have to do with the addict who still suffers?

I must be living in some fantasy where World Service services the world and instead of taking out the He's and Him's they spend the money from the 7th tradition to translate the Basic Text into other languages like Spanish, Italian, Russian, and Chinese first, to name a few. Where each level of service is not diverted by money, property and prestige. Where our primary purpose is to carry the message to the addict who still suffers. Where any addict seeking recovery need not die from this disease. Where we have spiritual tolerance. Where each addict has paid the price of membership with their pain. Where the service structure truly works from the member up and not from World down. Where God is truly the Ultimate Authority. GOD - NOT B.O.D. OR B.O.T.!! And most definitely not WSO.

Wow what a fantasy! ♦

Step Ten is a continuation of a fearless and searching look within ourselves in order to repair disorders that fear, pride, jealousy, and other ruinous defects can cause. It helps us avoid the occurrence of relapse due to other areas which we may be reluctant to look. "If you take the drugs away from a drug-crazed maniac, you still have a maniac." Since our problems entail much more than using, we cannot recover until we recognize the need for taking a good look at our attitudes and motives.

-excerpt from the "Grey Book"

## WORLD CONVENTION and/or EXTORTION 1993

I have been able to attend the last several world conventions and it seems as if a definite trend has begun, that being, the extortion of money from members of our fellowship. The Merriam-Webster dictionary defines extort as being — "to obtain by force or improper pressure". This year hosting hotels had been instructed to add a surcharge to every nights accommodations provided to any member of our fellowship who asked for the convention rate, and put this money aside for a direct contribution to the World Convention Corporation. It seems that the WCC has lost sight as to whom they are "directly responsible" to. The N.A. fellowship is who I thought they were directly responsible to, not themselves. It seems that the WCC needs vast sums of money to fly the board members all around the world through out the year, so to preserve this practice along with the practice of free hotel suites, food, rental cars, etc. they decided to put a little WCC tax on my hotel room bill and call it needed capital for the meeting space. Well it seems to me that if they had negotiated a prudent contract with the hotels (which should be one of their primary functions) we wouldn't have had to concern ourselves with paying for meeting space.

Another marvelous feat on behalf of the WCC was to make me pay for my 1st night's stay 90 days in advance. Thank you very much. And a very special thank you for having the hotel mail me a letter purporting that if I canceled my reservation after Aug. 1st I would lose my money, which is in direct contradiction to the Truth in Lending Laws of the United States. I do know that we need to pay a certain amount of money for registration at conventions to defray costs of hospitality, entertainment, and the expense of getting the best speakers possible etc., but \$25.00 ? That seemed very far out of line but to do my part I registered, yet I can not help but feel improper pressure to register, so I can hold my head up high for being a responsible N.A. member. Where will I have to draw the line? When the registration price is \$50.00? I hope I'm showing how the tide has turned from convention to extortion.

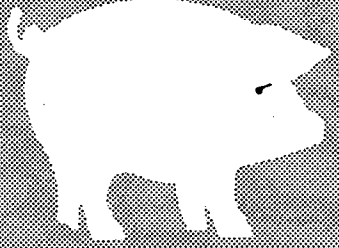
The merchandise Room (store) was a good lesson for me. I saw WCC members who decided that the room should be non-smoking and free of any food or drinks, smoking and eating and drinking. Is this the type of leadership we need from one of our 3 Corporations? It wasn't just a few of the WCC members either. It was rampant. They have a policy of money being transported with at least 2 people yet I saw it not being lived up to. The merchandising committee for the Hosting Region was stripped of any influence they should have had by the WCC. They could have been instructing people on how to operate the cash registers for weeks before the convention and drawn up a work schedule so a system could have been set up to count and exchange money in a manner that would not have left itself open for easy theft, and difficult account-ability. It was almost as if the WCC wanted the store to be chaotic and befuddled. Why this is, I can only wonder, because it didn't seem to really help matters having both the store customers and volunteers in this state of mind. About 1 hour before the store opened is when the WCC decided to unleash the secret of how to operate their cash registers. And even though the Hosting Region has one of the most successful R.S.O.'s in the country either the W.S.O. or the WCC decided that they needed to fly out a special worker to sell "IT WORKS HOW AND WHY" books in the store.

To make mention of the store without discussing the rape that took place when the merchandise was purchased would be unjust. T-shirts that cost \$3.28 were sold for \$10.00. Coffee mugs that cost \$2.01 were sold for \$6.00. Posters that cost \$.80 sold for \$5.00 (\$20.00 if you wanted a numbered one). A lapel pin that cost \$1.00 sold for \$4.00. Sweatshirts that cost \$6.22 sold for \$17.50. Long sleeve T-shirts that cost \$5.30 sold for \$15.00 and cardigans that cost \$10.31 sold for \$25.00. Why do these prices need to be so high?

A few members who attended the convention bought some little pink pig stickers to give out to friends in jest of their apparent weight gain. However these stickers took on new light in the eyes of many other members, and definitely aroused the attention of the WCC, when they heard that they signified a protest of sorts underway in regard to a bunch of Money Hungry Pigs running the convention. It sure seemed like some guilty consciences were being felt by the amount of interest being paid to such a little thing that didn't have anything to do with the WCC at all.

I believe the time has come for us to expect the WCC to remember why we have a World Convention. It's not to try and milk our members dry so they won't be back next year. It's to have a celebration of personal recovery and growth as a fellowship trying to provide the greatest accessibility to every member, with the foundation rooted in providing a place for sharing personal Experience, Strength and Hope from all corners of the globe. And if we choose to buy memorabilia let's make it affordable to everyone, and insure that it can be had by revamping our system to include a space on pre-registration forms for ordering cups and T-shirts. It has been my experience that the memorabilia can bring back very fond memories of different times in my recovery.

It's our job to insure that a Corporation that was set up by us continues to be "directly responsible" to us. Therefore I urge every member to ask the WCC for a copy of their detailed books on the expenditures and income. And if we can't have the information lets find out why. ♦



**WCNA-23 FINAL BUDGET**

TOTAL INCOME	\$491,270.50
TOTAL EXPENSES	\$310,698.35

*Hotel room kick-back and Saturday night basket not reported.*

The following questionnaire is for information only. Completing it doesn't commit you or your group to anything. The Alternate Service Information Structure (A.S.I.S.) is exploring any and all options to better serve the addicts who still suffer. We as a body feel the current service structure is lacking in several areas including, but not limited to, the current usage of the group conscience process, and the literature review process.

Please return this completed form to, A.S.I.S., P.O. Box 4504 Allentown, PA 18105

thank you for being a part of!

1) Do you as a member of a home group, wish to be part of a structure seeking new alternatives?

2) Do you want your home groups' conscience to be part of this alternate service structure, regardless of whether or not your group is part of the current service structure?

3) Do you want to be involved in individual/group tally?  
(Where each individual/group votes on all issues)

4) How should the Alternate Service Information Structure (A.S.I.S.) communicate and meet? (Modem, common meeting, conference calls, etc.)

The dedication of our member groups can be....

1) To form a bond between the isolated groups and areas within our fellowship to have a unified conscience on issues and decisions that effect our fellowship.

2) To have a collective literature development process that allows for open participation from all of our groups.

3) To create a single layered service structure outside the group level, with the only function providing communication and service to the groups, as directed by the groups.

4) To finding creative, new solutions, commonly shared by our member groups.

5) Through the informed application of the traditions, seeking to further our primary purpose.

6) To the unrestricted availability and distribution of NA literature.

7) To the furtherance of unity within NA.

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***This document was written by members from several States on July 5, 1992.***

# New Awakenings 1 Year Old

Dear Folks, A year ago this month the first *New Awakenings* (Vol 1 No 1) was printed and mailed out. At the time, a pressing need for an unaffiliated NA newsletter to promote communication was the principle thing of which we could be sure. It was felt that, at the very least, all vehicles of Fellowship-wide communication being in the hands of the World Service Office, Inc., some sectors of the Fellowship would not otherwise be heard.

On this one-year birthday it appears that the newsletter is a viable and continuing success. Those of us who have been reading the *New Awakenings* have had an opportunity to struggle with our belief systems, some more. Those of us who have provided material for the *New Awakenings* have brought what we consider significant to the attention of other members. The frustrated literature types among us have had encouragement to write (Keep it coming, Family!). Some of us have been put in touch with others through the newsletter, made new friends, stayed in touch with old ones, and got involved in some projects. It seems now that maybe a number of isolated members are being connected and old-timers are thankfully back in touch. This is especially gratifying.

Some of us have had in the last year a real learning experience in the technology of communication. Those of us who work most closely together on this newsletter have had an unparalleled opportunity to struggle over Principles in a new (and old) arena where we hope to keep Traditional NA service alive and creative and available to all. Most fittingly, such struggles have a way of sending us back to fundamentals and we are grateful over and over again.

From the beginning of the *New Awakenings* the questions were posed, "Will this be an off and on thing, produced or not produced as circumstances seem to dictate?". The answer was no, this is a commitment. We will send out a newsletter every 60 days come hell or high water. "Will the newsletter have a 'party line', a narrow set of acceptable topics, a board of censors or a single Boss?". The answer was no, no, no. Let's have an open forum and try to be of service without ruling, censoring, deciding, or dictating. Let the people speak! Early on there was a rejection of any titles like "Editor", "Publisher", or "Policy Chair". "How much money should we ask for a subscription?". *New Awakenings* was founded on the Principle of services at cost, full financial disclosure and the

1993 Financial Statement	ISSUE 1	ISSUE 2	ISSUE 3	ISSUE 4	ISSUE 5	ISSUE 6	TOTALS 1-6
Donations Received	0.00	92.00	113.43	251.02	97.94	101.00	655.39
Printing Cost	119.94	76.24	157.21	125.12	133.15	107.98	719.64
Total Postage	30.16	43.50	53.65	44.37	46.11	43.50	261.29
Copies Made	250	300	300	300	300	275	1725.00
Print Cost per Unit	0.48	0.25	0.52	0.42	0.44	0.39	2.51
Per Copy Delivered Cost	0.77	0.54	0.81	0.71	0.73	0.68	4.25
Donations Less Costs	-150.10	-27.74	-97.43	81.53	-81.32	-50.48	-325.54

**There are currently 81 paid subscribers.**

Spiritual Principle of self-support as embodied in our Seventh Tradition. In addition we have seen that funds generated from one project, if allowed to finance another, can give rise to a self-perpetuating bureaucracy and undercut the Principle of direct responsibility. Each issue we report actual costs and what you send is up to you. We really would not have it any other way. The increasingly obvious problem is that we must cut the number of "free" copies going out. Our battle with the printing costs being (knock on wood) settled, we have no other way to "balance the budget" than to disappoint some of you.

As the newsletter evolved the commitment to publish regularly was kept. The incoming funds and the *New Awakenings* bank account are used for printing and mailing the *New Awakenings* only. Virtually every article sent in has been printed. All editing of text has been done with the approval of the author and this has been limited almost exclusively to matters of spelling and punctuation. There has been an affirmation of a surrender to a multitude of viewpoints and a "mix" of pieces long and short, old and new, positive and negative, news and principle, text and graphics, poetry and prose, etc., etc. Surrender to this ideal mix is one form of insurance against self-will. The unwillingness to control content guarantees everyone a turn to be irritated, too. What you've seen has been what you sent, a diversity whose quantity promises to increase this coming year. We do draw a line at the advocacy of AA language; this newsletter is about NA. If you wish to do that we're sure you'll have no problem finding a forum. We can do better and we renew our commitment for another year.

The toughest issue to be dealt with so far was the printing of the notice for the "alternative", often called the "atheist", basic text. The notice was first submitted with a member's name and a dollar amount. It had already been seen that for various reasons, not the least of which was principles before personalities, the printing of living

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members' names was something to be avoided. Further, printing "ads" with "send \$x to" opened the newsletter to any number of pitfalls such as promoting for-profit enterprises and jeopardizing the newsletter's integrity. The individuals in this case readily agreed to a rewording of the notice and in it went, with a renewed commitment to help members and Groups communicate (period). **Nothing appearing in New Awakenings is necessarily more than the view of one member, just for today.**

We want very much to include more of you in this effort. We have begged and pleaded for your participation every way we could think of. It has been revealed that some still assume this newsletter is produced by one or two people. This is not in any sense true. The seven issues have been written by approximately 20 people, not counting "Bits from the Mailbag" nor the items written obviously by committees. Additionally, some of the articles have been the fruit of collaboration between two or more addicts. The individuals who ultimately print and mail the newsletter generally refuse to write it as a matter of principle.

So how do you participate? The most obvious answer is you can write an article; send a few bucks. We have run through our large mailing lists and could use more names and addresses. Send these and the members will receive two issues, to the best of our ability.

But certainly there's more: we need your feedback. Once upon a time someone advised us to shrink the text down small so that more could be gotten in. Another person wrote to say, "Don't make the font any smaller or I will have trouble xeroxing it for others." While this may seem like trivial and contradictory feed-back, both concerns became a part of the newsletter conscience. Let us know what you think, what you can do, what you'd like to do. New ways of working together are evolving. With honesty, open-mindedness and willingness we are well on our way. It begins by reaching out. Please write. ♦

## Pennsylvania & Colorado in Alaska

I really want to express my gratitude after a visit to Alaska. Outside a meeting I met an ex-administrative member of the Denver Area Service Committee. We were fellowshiping and I asked him if he knew the We Do Recover Group in Colorado. He took pride in telling me that he had ousted that Group from the Area. I said well what do you mean YOU ousted them, and what right did you have to do that? Well, he said, it was a service committee that did that. There were ten of us and we had seen in the book they had, the Steps and Traditions were changed. I said, did you read the book? Well no, he says. It turned out that two of the ASC members had seen the book. Had the book been produced there in the ASC for the members to review? Well no, he said, we trusted our trusted servants.

At that point two local members who usually do not get along, as our Tradition says, came over and wanted to know yeah, where did this ASC get the right to oust a Group? And eventually it came down to, well we trust our trusted servants so we voted on it. I asked the one of the two members who had joined us if she had a Baby Blue on her and she said yes. She gave it to me and this guy said oh, this isn't the same one. I said take it, read it, tell me what's missing; it's the same except for the cover. And the three of us wanted to see the changes. Ultimately, I wanted to know where had he got the right to oust an NA Group that was carrying the message of hope, especially since this Group was ousted after the supposed court agreement. His response was that World Services wouldn't let his RSR participate in any committee because of We Do Recover Group.

We wanted to compare his fifth edition Text with our book but it turned out all he had with him was an Alcoholics Anonymous Big Book. We made sure he took a free NA Basic Text with him when he left.

I want to express my gratitude to We Do Recover Group for their endurance in living the Principles of Narcotics Anonymous. They request our support. Please write them at: P.O. BOX 104 AURORA CO 80040 ♦

## FSSBNA V

On March 11, 12 & 13th, 1994, at the Marco Polo Hotel in Miami Beach Florida FSSBNA V, The Florida Spring Service Break of Narcotics Anonymous will take place! FSSBNA is the Service themed Conference put on yearly by the South Florida Region.

This year we will be doing something new with FSSBNA by making it a 7th Tradition event. Now it isn't like FSSBNA has ever been a great moneymaker! On the contrary, it has always been one of our main goals to "just break even". We just want to create a forum where we can all come and celebrate (on the beach of course!) Service. And share the joy of giving back what has so freely been given us!

A 7th Tradition event, for those of you who are unfamiliar with such a strange concept, is an event where there is no set fee for registration. Registration will be by donation only and we will pass the basket at meetings to help cover costs.

In our region more areas than ever are coming to rely on fundraising activities (dances, picnics, merchandise sales, conventions, etc.) in order to generate the funds necessary to conduct business. The traditional 7th Tradition - member to group, to area, to region, to conference via "the basket" - fund flow is getting further and further away from us.

It has gotten to the point that our regional Activities Chairperson spends the majority of time "coordinating" so that the Areas don't step on each others toes, or even the Region's by scheduling 2 events at the same time. (We have even had 2 different events scheduled for the same night at the same Hotel!!!!)

So please, won't you come to Miami Beach in March (warm weather!) and help us restore our beloved 7th Tradition!

In Loving Service  
The FSSBNA V Committee

## BABY BLUE BASIC TEXT (THIRD EDITION REVISED WITH ORIGINAL 4th & 9th TRADITIONS)

### ONE MEMBERS EXPERIENCE

The following is an essay on my views/ideas/opinions based on my experience regarding events associated with the use of the Baby Blue Basic Text. I do not speak for my Group, or any other member of N.A.

Let me first say that I don't like the unfortunate nick-name that this book has acquired, because I feel the name alone conjures up images of disunity, unhealthiness and outrage, (most people don't even know it is a Basic Text), it did for me when I first heard it was being used in the U.K. over a year ago now.

This name, Baby Blue, was something I already knew about - this bogus text, this unauthorized printed text, this money diverting text, this disuniting book etc. I already had my information, my facts.

My Truth about this whole issue was already acquired before I had met and spoken to even one person who supported or had anything good to say about this Text.

Already acquired before I read even one article, letter, document or anything else, was the absolute knowledge that this Text was one horrendous affair that needed to be crushed, stamped out, killed, if it should arise in our Beloved Fellowship. And here it was, not only over here in the U.K. but being used and available in one of our neighboring Groups in my Area (Cambridge).

I have always, to date, been actively involved in N.A. since I got Clean (Aug.87). I have always worked with a Sponsor and attended meetings regularly and frequently, especially my Home Group. I have been involved in Service at Group level always and Area, PI, H&I, Region (which was U.K.S.A. when I was ASR for East Anglia). Not really surprising that by early 1992 (when these events began to happen) I considered myself somewhat of an expert on the 12 Steps and 12 Traditions of N.A.

I did not need to investigate the reasons for the use and approval of this Text book - I just knew it was wrong. (Unspeakably and unholy event!).

On May 16th 1992 at an East Anglian A.S.C. (I was Vice Chair acting Chairperson) it was suggested to the Cambridge GSR that their Group hold a Group Conscience on "whether or not they want to continue to use unapproved literature in their Meetings". The matter wasn't raised again until around March/April 1993.

Meantime around early summer last year members from Cambridge started visiting our Meetings in Colchester, particularly Saturday nights. The member who was (still is) associated with the Baby Blue Basic Text, came most weeks and usually brought others. It was a real delight to have them down. Colchester has always been a very welcoming Group and we love to have visitors from other Groups. Never once did they bring the Baby Blue Text with them, nor try to coerce us in any way.

After some time myself and others began to reciprocate their visiting by visiting them on a Friday night for their Step

Meeting. This was particularly nice for me as I try to attend at least one Step Meeting per week if possible.

This was nice I should say, except for the first couple of visits because when we arrived - there it was - the dreaded book - my almost worst N.A. nightmare - and I had to touch it and even read from it at the beginning of the Meeting. I literally had a bad physical feeling the first couple of times. After all I knew about this book, what was I doing?

From taking a copy or two home (I think ones never enough and they are free) and reading it, I realized there was (apart from a few lines in the 4th and 9th Traditions) absolutely no difference between this book and my own hardback W.S.C. stamp approved copy I had been reading since I was new.

That was the first crack in acquired Truth.

Since then its been like a dam breaking open. Today my mind is open to so many new ideas, particularly my understanding of our 12 Steps and 12 Traditions, and our Service structure. I am probably more involved now in N.A. than I ever have been - sometimes its hard work being involved in the same Home Group now for over 6 years. But most of the time its superb and I love it. N.A. is by far the best thing that has happened to me and I don't go anywhere else for my Recovery.

I also know I have plenty to learn and experience, and often feel like my Recovery is just beginning. It is an exciting prospect knowing that it keeps getting better, though not at my pace, but gradually. And Recovery is an ongoing process, so we never arrive, we don't fully Recover, we are never cured, helps me to live in the day and enjoy the journey.

Meantime around March this year there was much talk of starting another Meeting in Colchester on a Sunday morning. Its been just talk for a long time, but enthusiasm is up and just at the right time we get not one but two newcomers coming regularly to our Meetings. So its decided, we want to make as much Recovery available as possible so the Sunday morning Meeting is confirmed in a Colchester Group Conscience Meeting. The date is announced and postponed once (London Convention weekend) and starts late April.

The format is decided in the Meeting, which was to use the Baby Blue Text and do a book study. The Group Conscience was unanimous. Two Colchester Group members were unable to attend. In the first Sunday Meeting another Conscience was called for the following Sunday (announced Tuesday and Saturday nights also) to see if we are happy to continue the format.

In Colchester we function as one Group with x number of Meetings. We have some guidelines on how this works, gathered from many Group Consciences. One is that we decide everything by Group Conscience. Group Consciences are always arranged and announced at all Colchester Meetings well in advance on anything major. We are one Group but the Meetings still decide their own formats by the members that will attend those Meetings. All Group Consciences are minuted and minutes are available for referral. We tend to remember things somewhat differently after a few days - or even less.

We have only one GSR so we collectively only have one member - one vote at Area, Region etc., in the interest of Equality.

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I've seen many changes over the years particularly in Colchester. I've seen dozens come and go, I've seen people relapse and die, people stop coming to Meetings over personalities or politics. People move to other towns and areas, other Fellowships, other forms of Recovery. I try to practice "Live and Let Live" and each to their own - whatever works for you - if you are happy and Recovering.

When I got Clean in N.A. Colchester, the Fellowship and Meetings were strong, we had 3 Meetings a week in Colchester and went every Friday night to Ipswich (the most local N.A. Meeting to us) about 18 miles up the road. It was like having 4 meetings a week here, and we used to travel out a lot. I needed very much a Meeting a day. In the beginning this often felt crucial. Over the next 2-3 years N.A. in Ipswich folded and N.A. in Colchester went down to 2 and then 1 Meeting a week. For some time there was only myself and 2 or 3 other members. This was a very difficult time for me in terms of Fellowship. I have my own ideas about the demise of our Fellowship but that's another story. Now time and events have moved on, we are still here - some of us - and we have grown again. Again we have 3 Meetings a week in Colchester, and regularly attend and support a Group in Ipswich on Thursday nights.

To get back to events that inspired (and deemed necessary) this essay. There seemed a reasonable acceptance around by members that Cambridge Group were still using this book in some of their Meetings. However, when we began our Sunday morning meeting with the use of this book in Colchester things changed drastically - within just a few weeks. At Area Service three Groups - one newly formed - and two that had been accepting of Cambridge previously - put forward and supported a motion to have Colchester & Cambridge Groups removed from Area and be non N.A. Groups. In effect the idea was that if we use this Text we are not N.A. and they wanted to throw us out. Realizing this was of course impossible they then resigned instead and formed a new Area. From the Regional Service Committee 3/4 July 1993, motions are to be sent to the Groups, via ASR's that call for similar action, i.e. to have us thrown out of N.A. (There might be nicer ways of putting it - but this is the reality).

If they are successful it means that, of course, we shall continue our Meetings in Colchester - but if and when an addict in Colchester phones the helpline they will be told there is no N.A. in Colchester. To me this is despicable - but hopefully won't come about. N.A. has been in Colchester now for over 8 years and is as strong today as I have ever known it.

As I said earlier, there is much more information (documents, tapes, letters etc.) available as to why I believe and feel how I do today. It took me some months to conclude how I feel to date.

I believe in Co-Existence. Where we have this Text available we also have the 5th Edition Text available. Also in Colchester we only use the Baby Blue Basic Text in one Meeting a week. Initially for me it was - lets try it and see. Obviously I was impressed by visiting Cambridge, and had already spent much time and energy into formulating my own views so far about it all.

When we commenced using the Baby Blue Text in Colchester I was very naive, like Cambridge had been for well over a year, I assumed we would be allowed to make our own decisions about our Meetings in Group Conscience. I also thought we would be treated with Respect, Tolerance, Open-mindedness and other Spiritual Principles. I thought people would be able to disagree without being disagreeable. In Tradition One it says "No one can revoke our membership or make us do anything we do not choose to do".

I also believe that an N.A. Group is only that when practicing all 12 Steps and all 12 Traditions of N.A. I believe if a Group acts outside of these Principles for long, it will struggle and fold, whereas working Together within these Principles (all 24) we will grow.

If the use of this Text is a mistake, we will find out soon enough and stop using it. On the other hand if its OK as we believe today, well you'll sooner bring back the dead than kill something that is Spiritually alive.

N.A. is Spiritually alive.

I don't speak for my Group, or anyone else, I am just a member doing the best I can to try and live the N.A. Way. I don't have all the answers by a long way, but I'm looking for

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Just send us your name and address. Use this form if you wish. Send us a letter if you can. We publish the first week of every other month. Getting you one issue #6 in the U.S. cost 68.3¢ Projecting from this cost we figure a year's subscription (6 issues) should be \$4.10. Sending more enables *New Awakenings* to go out to addicts who haven't seen it yet.

♪ If you move don't forget,  
let us know where you went! ♪

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Mail to: *New Awakenings* P.O. BOX 21232  
OAKLAND CA 94620 U.S.A.

from page 11...

Solutions and the way forward. Today I have more questions than answers. Questions such as:-

Can anyone revoke our membership or make us do anything that we do not choose to do?

Can we disagree without being disagreeable?

Is there only one ultimate authority in N.A.?

Must we rely on a loving God as expressed in Group Conscience?

Are all addicts in N.A. Equal?

Are we truly Autonomous?

How do my Home Group Meetings affect your Home Group, or N.A. as a whole?

Is our Fellowship completely self supporting?

Can we accept money from anywhere apart from our own contributions?

Is our Service structure directly responsible to the N.A. Groups?

Can our Service committees decide where there is and where there is not an N.A. Group?

Do our Service boards and committees exist SOLELY to Serve the Groups or do they have another purpose?

Is a Service committee ever an authority over an N.A. Group?

Does practicing the Principle of anonymity make it impossible for personalities to come before principles?

Can we disagree about something and still both be right?

Do disagreements and conflicts mean disunity?

Can Group Conscience be formed anywhere apart from in N.A. Groups?

Are the 12 Traditions of N.A. negotiable under any circumstances?

Must we practice Spiritual Principles in ALL our affairs?

I have more but I think that's enough for now.

Thank you for taking the time to read this.

See you in the Rooms. Love and Fellowship, ♦

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