

New Awakenings

I have felt powerless and helpless over whatever this is that is happening within the fellowship of NA for several years now. And more than a little frightened. After several years of dedicated service I began feeling that what I had begun being a part of had changed and taken on a negative force of its own and I was no longer serving the fellowship but instead was becoming consumed by a negative force that turned my energies and good intentions in a direction I didn't want to go. Instead of the suffering addict I felt I had begun serving a god called Money Power and Prestige. I panicked and ran. Thank God I ran only from the service structure and not from the program of NA. I have managed to stay clean and grow as a human being since being away from "the structure" but I must say that what I see from this distance is breaking my heart! What is going on today is not what we as recovering addicts, as decent human beings, as responsible members of society are about! What happened? When? What did we do wrong? What can we do now?

I decided that pure and simple what I was up against was the disease of addiction and my program, my experience, has taught me that the only answer is surrender. And I have. The disease of addiction is running rampant within our service structure, affecting all that my recovery and my life are based on. I'm watching "destruction from within" and grieving the loss. The loss of what used to be - or at least the illusion of what I thought was there. But now what? What's my part? If I played a part in the problem what was it and how will I not do it again? What is my part in the solution?

Maybe an alternative service structure is the answer. Maybe getting involved in the existing one is the answer to making changes from within "Let it begin with me" has always been something I've believed in - could it work here? I've tried and quite honestly am tired of being alienated and literally abused for standing up for such basic principles

continued on p. 2

from page 1

as honesty and humility. Anonymity and Unconditional anything seems to have been thrown out entirely. Unity has become Uniformity and the password to not getting beat down has become O B E Y ! Don't make waves!

I have become dedicated to strengthening what I believe to be the fellowship at the most basic level. I've worked diligently to become the best me I can be and received a spiritual awakening called unconditional love that I share on an individual level with any and all who are open to it. I'm no longer concerned with opening the hearts and minds of others - but rather of offering tidbits to fill those who are open and receptive. And from the personal addict to addict level of strengthening from within, I have committed without reservation to my home group. What a gift autonomy is! To walk into our group is not to feel the dis - ease.

We have been strongly united, deeply based in the traditions and of course controversial as hell! We were recently taken off the area meeting list for not following the rules... we give away Basic Texts, (yes we still use them and make that \$7++ involuntary donation to the disease every time we buy one...) we have functions to buy more literature to give away... we have requirements for home group members... we donate little or no \$ to ASC... all those transgressions have brought to us ostracism from outside and a strengthening from within. We are truly strong in our diversity and therefore our autonomy. We continue to be registered with WSO as an independent group. We don't know reasons why not and decided to go this way until and unless OBEY commands start coming at us from that direction, too.

We, I, don't know much about the concepts, except for the controversy surrounding them. We don't take a group vote on any thing but truly arrive at a god-conscious before making a decision. Isn't that based in the concepts somewhere? Exactly what is the story there? What happens if we're not registered with WSO? Can the newcomer still find us? Will the powers that be not intervene or will they inform them that they are attending a NON - NA meeting?

There are so many things that I, We, don't know. The articles in the *New Awakenings* are helping us become more informed and we in turn are passing along what we can. It's nice to know that we can copy what you print and not end up in court.

We briefly considered following behind our role model and suing the area for all the harassment and slander that they have dispensed to us. It felt too much like the disease of addiction for us to participate in. We try to remember that we have surrendered... But now what?

Love to all of you - please let me, us, know what we can do for you, for ourselves, for the fellowship...

LOVE♦

Publishing Box

We follow this way of life by example rather than direction. We share our experience and learn from each other. No individual inside or outside the fellowship represents Narcotics Anonymous. Nothing appearing in this newsletter is necessarily more than the feelings of one member, just for today.

The response from readers since the last issue has been beyond anyone's wildest dreams. All who have cared enough to send an article, a little feed-back or a few bucks should share this sense of the miraculous. We have proven again that addicts can and will write for addicts, that we can and will take responsibility for our recovery and our program, and that we will *voluntarily* support the services that we want. ¡Juntos Podemos!

Financial Statement

Received:

Missouri	4.40	Florida	10.00
New Jersey	5.00	Colorado	20.00
Arkansas	4.40	Alabama	25.00
Illinois	20.00	Washington DC	4.03
Georgia	8.00	Missouri	4.40
California	20.00	Pennsylvania	10.00
Maryland	10.00	Ontario	20.00
Illinois	10.00	Georgia	5.00
California	20.00	Alaska	10.00
New Mexico	10.00	Maryland	5.00
Missouri	10.00	Pennsylvania	15.00
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		Ohio	10.00
		Total	267.23

Expenses Issue 1:

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Total	137.04

In the last issue of New Awakenings we printed the 4th and 9th Traditions from the "Grey Book" review form of the Basic Text. The following is the 4th Tradition as last approved by the Groups of Narcotics Anonymous.

"Each Group should be autonomous, except in matters affecting other Groups, or N.A. as a whole."

The autonomy of our groups is necessary for our survival. A dictionary defines autonomous as "having the right or power of self government ... undertaken or carried on without outside control." This means our groups are self-governing and are not subject to outside control. Every group has had to stand and grow on its own.

One might ask, "Are we truly autonomous? What about our service committees, our offices, activities, and all the other things that go on in N.A.?" The answer is that these things are not N.A. They are services we 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 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 things we mentioned are the result of members caring enough to reach out and offer their help and experience so that our road might be easier. Whether we choose to utilize these services is up to the group.

A Narcotics Anonymous group is any meeting which meets regularly at a specified place and time for the purpose of recovery provided that it follows the Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions of Narcotics Anonymous. There are two basic types of meetings: those which are opened to the general public and those closed to the public (for addicts only). Meetings vary widely in format from group to group. Some are participation meetings, some speakers, some question and answer, some special problems discussion.

Despite the type or format a group uses for its meetings, the function of a group is always the same: to provide a suitable and reliable environment for personal recovery and to promote such recovery. These Traditions are part of a set of spiritual principles of Narcotics Anonymous, and without them, N.A. does not exist.

We say that for N.A., autonomy is more than this. It gives our groups the freedom to act on their own to establish their atmosphere of recovery, serve their members, and fulfill their primary purpose. It is for these reasons that we guard our autonomy so carefully.

It would seem that we, in our groups, can do whatever we decide regardless of what anyone says. This is partly true. Each group does have complete freedom, except when their actions affect other groups or N.A. as a whole. Like group conscience, autonomy can be a two-edged sword. Group autonomy has been used to justify the violation of the Traditions. If a contradiction exists, we have slipped away from our principles. If we check to make sure that our actions are clearly within the bounds of our Traditions; if we do not dictate to other groups, or force anything upon them; and if we consider the consequences of our action ahead of time, then all will be well.

I NEED TO SAY IT...

The seventh concept of service speaks of all members of a committee having full participation in the decision making process of their respective committee. Some members in the fellowship (most of whom are trusted servants) are wanting to use this concept to acquire a vote on the committee which they serve. The ninth tradition states that "NA as such ought never be organized, but we may create service boards or committees directly responsible to those they serve." Those that comprise these boards or committees are responsible to the groups of NA (i.e. "NA as such").

In my early recovery, one of the interesting characteristics I found in the fellowship was the hierarchy of authority beginning with the "Group Conscience". It was explained to me that our service structure resembled an inverted pyramid with groups at

the top, then areas, regions and at the bottom- world services. Since being presented with that explanation, I have seen the tendency to regard the service bodies beyond the group as above the group in level of authority. It seems that somewhere along our growth spurt we lost the distinction the ninth tradition makes between the NA fellowship, and our creation of service boards or committees directly responsible to those they serve (the groups). How did this happen?

I'm not totally sure as to this answer. But I do know that at this present time the groups and members at large are far removed from this service structure that supposedly is their creation. This severed relationship is primarily due to the service structure increasing its own roles and responsibilities. I'm of the opinion that if certain committees or boards are not getting the support that is necessary for their operation and are being held together by a group of revolving trusted servants, the fellowship probably does not need the

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NEED TO SAY IT...*from previous page*

service provided by that committee or board. Our so-called service structure is a closer parallel to an organized government, than the spiritual entity it was intended to be. I have heard addicts talk about how terrible it is that other members of the fellowship question their actions, or how they should be totally trusted by "those they serve". I believe that we have a spiritual system of checks and balances, and that policies that involve membership direction are the means by which this is carried out. When thinking of the seventh concept in the context of the **servants** of a committee possessing the same authority to make decisions as "**those they serve**", we need to seriously think about what this means.

For starters we need to realize that service by definition means to help, aid, or assist, not to direct or change. Granting the power to change or direct to those that **serve** is in conflict with the spiritual nature of service. Secondly, there is an issue of representation. The fellowship carries its conscience through representation. The groups are the fellowship and in matters affecting more than one group, the conscience of those groups are achieved collectively and so on. Our representatives carry the conscience of our fellowship. The obvious question is who's conscience would a trusted servant carry, (perhaps their own?).

I'm the kind of person that needs to know answers to certain questions. Why would trusted servants want or need a vote? The response that I have heard is because they have "the most experience". That answer is not good enough for me, it is irrational. I believe that certain members feel that the service structure doesn't need the support of the fellowship to operate. This would surely be the case if they were given a vote. My primary reasons for feeling it would be a mistake to let trusted servants vote are: 1) Only those that represent the fellowship, should vote on what impacts the fellowship. 2) The nature of service as explained before is to help, not direct. 3) **Those that are trusted servants already have a vote at their home groups**. And 4) Giving a vote to anyone other than fellowship representatives cheapens the importance of "the one ultimate authority, a loving god as expressed in our group conscience".

I hope that the right thing happens with regard to this issue. I foresee in the coming months discussions may arise at our area and region. This is what prompted me to write this essay, along with my enjoyment of writing and discussing issues surrounding Narcotics Anonymous. Though this perspective may seem extreme and will probably not be welcomed by many people, I had to say the words that came to me. Take this as you wish or not at all, but I would hope that at least this opinion may cause you to look at or develop your own.

A concerned member. ♦

Just Won't Go Away

Many NA members associated with the known service structure are gearing up emotionally for what has been described as the "Baby Blue controversy of the 90's" - the World Service Conference motion to degenderize our Steps and Traditions. This usually comes out as, "They're trying to..!", and seems to indicate a lack of understanding that this was a perfectly legitimate motion offered by a Region and tabled for review last year. It also seems that the nature of the "Baby Blue Controversy" (some of us called it "the World Service Controversy") remains generally unknown.

The roots of the Baby Blue can be said to lie in the unauthorized changes to Our Book made years ago by administrators who forgot they were but servants. Over the subsequent years there was an evolution of the Fellowship and the service structure toward administrative control, with those World Servants who supported such policies winning out and the other school of thought, more deeply rooted in the 2nd Tradition, basically shit on and shuffled out. Issues of money, property and prestige seemed heavily involved. Finally Grateful Dave proposed that "our Groups have become little more than storefront franchises for WSO, Inc." Of the original unauthorized changes in the Basic Text it has been said, "They deleted the lines that prevented them from deleting lines."

This past year my Region increased the daily meals allowance for regional travel (most of us could eat well on half that) and eliminated free newcomer convention registrations. Retrospectively it seems like the structural game plan might have been: alter the literature and thus the program, secure control of the means of communication, hunker down to brave the inevitable democratic backlash, watch the Fellowship fill up with new members who know no different. Today the mind-set in many places is such that this region's financial priorities are not considered odd by thousands of addicts. Today the mind-set is such that we wait faithfully for servant-authorities to tell us what should be. Today the mind-set is such that I have been asked by truly uncomprehending structure-worshippers, "What would you have the leadership do?". The only good answer to this is that our world-level trusted servants have but one honorable thing they can do now: to use that illegitimate authority to inform the Fellowship that they are only servants and without authority, that a terrible mistake has been made.

The problem with the degenderizing of Our Steps and Traditions is that our Traditional decision-making process has been so effectively dismantled that we have no way of discovering what WE believe. With a better understanding of our history we may discover, rather than new controversy, an old one that just won't go away. ♦

NARCOTICS



ANONYMOUS

IRELAND

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To: World Service Conference
From: NA Service Committee Of Ireland
Re: Fellowship Report
Date: 19th February, 1994.

Greetings to the World Service Conference from the Irish fellowship of Narcotics Anonymous. We regret, yet again, we will not have a representative at this years conference. This is due to all available funds being used to support our office requirements.

Many members have expressed concern at the recent credit card scandals and the subsequent handling of same. As non-attenders we feel we cannot express our views as effectively as we would wish. We would have liked the opportunity to voice our opinions and support on many motions, especially motions 20, 21, and 23.

As you can see, we have changed our name from Regional Service Committee to the above. This was due to lack of support at a regional level. The Dublin /Leinster Area has also been disbanded and its committee elected as the Irish Service Committee.

On the topic of 'Political Correctness' re; our Steps and Traditions, it is felt that this is an unnecessary journey into intellectualization and in short; "if it works, don't fix it!"

The Fellowship in Ireland continues to grow steadily. Currently we have 40 meetings a week throughout Ireland.

P.I.

Members have over the year responded well to requests for talks to schools, community groups and the medical profession.

Our Dublin phone-line has been busy receiving on average 30/40 calls per week. Many of these calls have been from professionals/third parties looking for information and talks and these are passed on to the relevant H&I or P.I. committee. Galway Area now has its own phone-line in operation.

Limerick and Cork are also dealing with its own P.I. business for their areas.

H&I.

Prison meetings are now in operation in Dublin, Cork and Limerick. We have approximately 8 meetings established in Hospitals and Treatment Centres in Dublin, Belfast, Cork, Wexford and Tipperary.

OFFICE.

The Office has now completed its first year in operation and is currently in credit. It has received good support from the fellowship and is regularly manned.

CONVENTION.

The 9th Irish Convention held in Tralee, Co. Kerry last year was a great success. Our 10th Irish Convention will be held in October, venue yet to be decided.

Our goal for the coming year is to strengthen our service structure to enable us to carry the message of recovery more effectively to those in need.

Yours in fellowship,

James M.
Irish Service Representative.

THE N.A. TREE (1975)

Much thought has gone into the structure to be described in this pamphlet. One of our primary aims has been to lay out the structure in such a way that the integrity of the conscience of each group is maintained throughout the service arm of N.A. The Second Tradition also describes the nature of those members active in N.A. Service as trusted servants and only by emphasising this relationship between the group and its representatives can the principle of democracy and group conscience, which we have tried to build into this structure, work. We find it necessary to stress that adherence to the Second Tradition is of the utmost importance, without it no effort to strengthen N.A. as a whole can be successful.

The guarantee that our society will remain an open fellowship in which recovery is available to all and not limited to a select group is one of the principles (Third Tradition) which the implementation of a formal structure can help to ensure. We hope that N.A. will never become weighted down with rules, regulations, requirements, initiation fees, selective membership, and discrimination which prevent recovery and which have, in time, destroyed most programs designed to help addicts.

Tradition Four talks about the autonomy of each group, except as it affects other groups and members. Again this Tradition can be strengthened by lines of communication and unity, freeing the individual group from the arbitrary actions of another group.

Our primary purpose, as expressed in the Fifth Tradition is, along with some of the other Traditions, the reason we are writing this pamphlet. The hope that we can, in some way, carry the message of recovery more successfully and on a broader scale has been our motivation.

The Sixth Tradition concerns the use of the name Narcotics Anonymous. Formal service structure with active member participation can help prevent the misuse of our name and guard against the problems of money, property and prestige and their ultimate weakening of the fellowship.

Undoubtedly one of the most widely used terms in N.A. is the "7th Tradition." Most groups, in fact, even call the collection which is taken during most meetings the Seventh Tradition. This is unfortunate, the Seventh Tradition is not a basket with money being put into it; it is a principle — probably the most widely confused and abused principle within all the 12-step fellowships. Few of us, it seems, have given much thought to this principle and its far-reaching consequences. The 12 Traditions of Alcoholics Anonymous were not adopted by the fellowship until 1950 and during the 15 or so years prior to this adoption A.A. was not fully self-supporting. Numerous cash gifts from non-members and organizations were accepted, loans were taken, a cash advance on Big Book sales was accepted, stock was issued, and money came from many sources outside the fellowship. Because of the "strings" so often attached to free or easy money, A.A. had to pay its dues for this outside support. All the Traditions are there for good reasons and the reason we must be fully self-supporting is obvious in the history of A.A. It is, in more than any other way, through the practice of this principle that our fellowship maintains its freedom. The acceptance of a service structure for N.A. will give us a guide to what needs to be supported, a context in which one can see where the money goes, a chance for the group to use its funds to benefit N.A. as a whole, and some checks to help prevent our contributions from supporting someone's habit or paying someone's rent.

Tradition Eight describes the nature of people who will make up this service structure. That they should be non-professional just as we are individually non-professionals in our 12 Step work is obvious, and for the same reasons. The nature of professionalism contradicts the principle of giving freely of one's self for the common good. This principle of giving and sharing is, of course, one of the cornerstones of our program of recovery.

This is a selection from the approved service document for N.A. If you are interested in the history of Narcotics Anonymous please write to: History Committee P.O. BOX 206 Central Lake MI 49622 U.S.A.



N.A. TREE



N.A. STRUCTURE



TWIGGS

STEP ONE

"WE ADMITTED WE WERE POWERLESS OVER OUR ADDICTION, THAT OUR LIVES HAD BECOME UNMANAGEABLE."

I believe this step means exactly what it says. It is simple in form and its meaning not nearly as ambiguous as many would have us believe. The total achievement of overcoming our disease in practice is most difficult and elusive, but ADMITTING powerlessness over the disease and the recognition of the devastation caused by it is a simple, humbling disclosure.

The difficulty in admitting powerlessness over any situation or life circumstance is a burning desire on the part of ego to be in control. Our addiction has us almost unconsciously ruled by a mind-set of extreme separateness and attack, a condition of mental isolation in which we look upon the world through condemning eyes, paranoia, judgement, and anger. This condition throws us into a state of war with the world and at war with ourselves. It cripples spiritual growth with guilt and fear of the world around us. I want to be the one responsible for change and my ego masks the "I" by allowing me to give the credit to God after I've made all the decisions.

Yes, I am powerless over my addiction; my life is unmanageable. I cannot make it alone. Left to my own devices, I will be trapped forever. Not by anything outside of myself, but by the encircling wall of my own false beliefs. I live in and for the lies and fantasies that tell me things are not really as they are. The Truth is, things are NOT as I see them, nor as I fantasize them.

We have two choices: To move towards ultimate Truth and recovery; or pursue the insanity of our disease and be forced to continue the cycle. My every thought and action will be based on FAITH, TRUST, LOVE, and FORGIVENESS. Should I falter or slip along the way, I mustn't give up my journey for I cannot. I can only postpone the outcome.

My disease and my ego are one in the same. The longer I stay clean, the clearer it becomes that we addicts are not as unique within the human race as we would like to believe. We simply pursue our self-destruction with more enthusiasm. The consequences of practicing our defects are more immediate and apparent for us than for "normal" people. It is this very curse however that blesses us, for it is the catalyst that drives us back to God when inertia and apathy would let us slip away into self-centered complacency. We are on a journey without distance to a goal that has never changed. That goal is to be at one with God. The method is the steps of Narcotics Anonymous. The vehicle to carry us will be love and forgiveness for ourselves and all others.

TRADITION FIVE

"EACH GROUP HAS BUT ONE PRIMARY PURPOSE - TO CARRY THE MESSAGE TO THE ADDICT WHO STILL SUFFERS."

What does this statement mean to us? Our Basic Text covers the topic of our primary purpose very well. As recovering addicts, our primary purpose is to stay clean and learn to practice spiritual principles in our lives. However, as our book says, "groups aren't addicted and don't recover."

What then is the group's purpose and responsibilities? The Basic Text tells us, "All our groups can do is plant the seed for recovery and bring addicts together so that the magic of empathy, honesty, caring, sharing, and service can do their work. The purpose of this tradition is to ensure that this atmosphere of recovery is maintained. This can only be achieved by keeping our groups recovery-oriented. The fact that we, each and every group, focus on carrying the message provides consistency; addicts can count on us. Unity of action and purpose makes possible what seemed impossible for us - recovery."

Autonomy, as described in the fourth tradition, gives groups the right to express themselves in different forms while still remaining in harmony with other NA principles. The fifth Tradition tempers complete autonomy by reminding groups that our message should be as consistent as possible everywhere in the world. It is a good feeling to know that we can walk into a Narcotics Anonymous meeting that we've never been to before, secure in the knowledge that an atmosphere of recovery is present and NA's message will be heard. Our responsibility as a group member is to promote that atmosphere of recovery in our actions and our sharing.

What is our message? "The message is that an addict, any addict, can stop using drugs, lose the desire to use, and find a new way to live. Our message is hope and the promise of freedom."

There are many ways to do good in this life. We are generally people who walk in the doors of NA with more experience in doing harm than doing good. Through our recovery, we have been given a tool to eliminate a segment of human suffering on a scale that is unparalleled by anyone else in the world. To waste this gift by pursuing other purposes would not only dilute what we have, but would be a tragedy for those we could have helped and didn't. Maybe you would have never gotten or remained clean if it were not for addicts, collectively doing their part, carrying the message to the addict who still suffers. Those addicts were (are) fulfilling their primary purpose, are you??? ♦

with feeling

I have been in recovery for a little over 4 years. I have seen and heard so much. Some of the things I've heard I use and some I throw away. I have learned so much that has helped me in my recovery, through the good times as well as the bad. I have had a lot happen in my life since I got clean that has shattered the illusion that I had, like most newcomers, that life will be perfect now that I'm clean.

Life is not the perfect little illusion that I tried to set up when I was using, and it didn't change at all when I got clean. I changed instead. It is the only way that I can survive the reality of what life is. It is good and bad, love and hate, fear and faith. It is full of things that I have no control over. I laugh when I think of all the time, still, that I spend trying to trick myself into believing old addict beliefs. You know the ones I'm sure. "You can change that situation", "That's not the way it really is", and of course my all time favorite, "For god's sake don't feel that feeling".

How do those thoughts keep getting in my head? I couldn't understand it at all. I sure as heck didn't know how to do anything about it. Then I heard somebody say something that peaked my interest. They said...Try a higher power. So I started to investigate. What does this higher power thing mean, what does it do? It is a long journey. One that I don't think ever ends. I have learned that having God in my life means peace. It means not being alone, or having to control everything all of the time. It means having trust and using it. Life throws so many things at us that are hard to deal with. Don't go through it alone. You don't have to. Reach out and take the gift of a higher power.

Four years ago I started down the road of learning how to use God in my life and it was then I believe that recovery really started for me. That is when I stopped having to do things alone. Now, I don't want to give the impression that I never do anything stupid anymore, cause I do. But I try to do them with God in my life. I'm only human after all, I have to make mistakes. But through it all, I have never felt alone. I know for a fact that I am a good person. And best of all I am getting to know who I am. No more masks or lies.

I started writing this letter cause I wanted to share with everyone something that I have learned. That is, that no matter what, we have to "feel" what is going on inside us no matter how painful or scary. You're probably saying to yourself, of course we do, that's one of the first things we are told when we come into recovery. But how many of us can truly say that we do deal with our feelings without trying to hide from them, or by telling ourselves that we shouldn't be feeling them. I thought that I was so good at feeling things, but I learned that I was still telling myself that I wasn't supposed to. I have been through several scary and heart wrenching things in the last four years, and to expect myself to NOT feel is insane. I almost didn't know how to, to be honest. But then somebody told me something that I will never forget, they said...It's ok. It's ok to feel. And they let me know that I didn't have to do it alone. God is there for me, all I had to do is reach out for him. People in the Fellowship are there for me, I just have to ask for help.

So I have let myself feel, and it has been really weird. I expected for myself to feel just like I did when I was using: wanting to die, life sucks, etc. But it wasn't like that at all. I could feel, yet at the same time life could be ok. That's how we get through things. I could feel pain and loss and still look forward to the future. And that is where I am now, today. I think that I have learned that if you try and have faith that everything will work out. Not necessarily my way, but the way it's supposed to. When I try to control things I cheat myself. I want what God wants for me, nothing less. Life is hard sometimes, believe me I know. But recovery is all about learning HOW to live. It's why we are here, and it's why we'll be here tomorrow, and the day after that. All of this takes time to learn, so don't get frustrated. Just do the footwork and try to have faith and it will come. Enjoy the journey. Welcome to recovery. ♦



Problem Here Is A Failure To Communicate - or - The Continuing Saga of An Area Under Attack

I'm a member of NA and have been ever since I said I was. I belong to an NA Home Group. I have an NA sponsor. Up till now you members in the NA Fellowship have told me that no one could take my membership away. I believe this to be true, but some people don't think so. I have commitments in NA from the highest level of service - member, Home Group, Area Service - to my lowest level of service at Regional.

The only requirement for an Area to join our Region is that the new Area make a statement of intent to abide by the Twelve Traditions. After that they are admitted without a vote.

Well here it goes. At one time a large Area in our Region split. Some of the Groups formed an Area and kept the name Little Apple (LA) Area and the others formed an Area called the Group Conscience (GC) Area. The LA Area stayed in the Mid-Atlantic Region and the GC Area did not. Some of the services in the two Areas overlap.

Anyway, the MA Region puts on a workshop and convention every year. Here's what happened. An NA member from the GC Area was asked to share his experience, strength and hope on NA history by the convention's Program Committee. He accepted the invitation, happy to serve. After he arrived he was told by the Program Committee Chairperson that he could not share at the workshop because he was not a member of NA. When the Program Chairperson was asked who said he wasn't an NA member, he said that the Convention Chairperson had determined that after talking to some World leaders meeting in Baltimore. When some of these people were confronted later it was denied.

This was Friday and on Saturday during the banquet there was news of an unscheduled, secret meeting between the LA Area, MA Regional, and World Trusted Servants to discuss the conflict of two Areas whose services overlap. The GC Area was not invited. When asked why the GC Area was not invited it was said, because they use the NA name without being registered with WSO, Inc., they use the Baby Blue Basic Text, and they copy NA literature.

At the meeting the LA Area asked the World Trusted Servants several questions:

Q. Could the GC Area use the NA name without being registered with WSO, Inc.?

A. Groups are not required to register but Areas are.

Q. How about them using the Baby Blue Basic Texts.

A. We don't want to talk about that.

Q. Can they copy the literature and hand it out at meetings?

A. Yes, as long as it isn't more than 25% of any piece of literature.

They also asked: Is the GC Area an NA Area? Can they use the NA name? Can they collect money? To this the World Trusted Servants said that the GC Area is not represented at the meeting and told the LA Area that they had more in common with the GC Area than not.

Then an LA Area member said that there was a policy in effect since Dec. '91 that the LA Area is not to talk to anyone from the GC Area and this would hinder communications.

I've attended meetings in the GC Area. I have always felt welcome. I have always seen the newcomers feel special and needed. The atmosphere of recovery has always been maintained. A clear NA message is always heard and on many occasions I have seen members of the other Area attending these meetings. I know in my heart that the GC Area follows the Twelve Traditions of NA. ♦

Dear Family,

How refreshing to get a copy of *New Awakenings*! I couldn't put it down till I had read the whole thing. Now this is uncensored recovery. I love it. After all, I have paid the cost of membership and have a right to recover from my pain.

I came to NA 1½ years ago. I didn't understand how it works but I know it does. I became secretary of my home group "I Can't We Can" with just over 30 days clean. I have remained in service to this day. I don't go to lower levels of service such as area or region. The more I hear about them the more I am confused. I have a sponsor, I read, write and live the steps and have a working knowledge of the traditions. I attend my home group regularly and I don't use.

I've taken most suggestions I've heard and things are going along ok today. I got my hands on some real interesting literature and have read it all and want more. Its not World Approved but neither am I. The Grey book has helped me get a better knowledge of the traditions and its so spiritual, why its not approved is beyond me. The baby blue is the same, very spiritual and to think I got them both for only \$3. Why pay \$9 when Hazledon can get them cheaper? Don't get me wrong, I started my recovery with the Basic Text (fifth edition) and I treasure it also. But it seems mechanical to me now. I'll read anything that helps me recover.

Much thanks and appreciation goes out to all addicts that have made and make this literature available. That's what I strive for: "to carry the message". We don't have to use till we die. We can learn to live without drugs and this journey is most exciting. I love you all and we are never alone.

I Can't We Can ♦

NARCOTICS



ANONYMOUS

IRELAND

4/5 Eustace Street Dublin 2.
P.O. Box 1368 Sherrif St Dublin 1.
Tel: 300944 ext 486

To: World Service Conference
From: NA Service Committee Of Ireland
Re: Fellowship Report
Date: 19th February, 1994.

Greetings to the World Service Conference from the Irish fellowship of Narcotics Anonymous. We regret, yet again, we will not have a representative at this years conference. This is due to all available funds being used to support our office requirements.

Many members have expressed concern at the recent credit card scandals and the subsequent handling of same. As non-attenders we feel we cannot express our views as effectively as we would wish. We would have liked the opportunity to voice our opinions and support on many motions, especially motions 20, 21, and 23.

As you can see, we have changed our name from Regional Service Committee to the above. This was due to lack of support at a regional level. The Dublin /Leinster Area has also been disbanded and its committee elected as the Irish Service Committee.

On the topic of 'Political Correctness' re; our Steps and Traditions, it is felt that this is an unnecessary journey into intellectualization and in short; "if it works, don't fix it!"

The Fellowship in Ireland continues to grow steadily. Currently we have 40 meetings a week throughout Ireland.

P.I.

Members have over the year responded well to requests for talks to schools, community groups and the medical profession.

Our Dublin phone-line has been busy receiving on average 30/40 calls per week. Many of these calls have been from professionals/third parties looking for information and talks and these are passed on to the relevant H&I or P.I. committee. Galway Area now has its own phone-line in operation.

Limerick and Cork are also dealing with its own P.I. business for their areas.

H&I.

Prison meetings are now in operation in Dublin, Cork and Limerick. We have approximately 8 meetings established in Hospitals and Treatment Centres in Dublin, Belfast, Cork, Wexford and Tipperary.

OFFICE.

The Office has now completed its first year in operation and is currently in credit. It has received good support from the fellowship and is regularly manned.

CONVENTION.

The 9th Irish Convention held in Tralee, Co. Kerry last year was a great success. Our 10th Irish Convention will be held in October, venue yet to be decided.

Our goal for the coming year is to strengthen our service structure to enable us to carry the message of recovery more effectively to those in need.

Yours in fellowship,

James M.
Irish Service Representative.

WAR? GOOD GOD! WHAT IS IT GOOD FOR?

I must pause to reflect on what has happened here. There has certainly been a successful war waged on the disease of addiction for quite some time. The wins have been many and the deaths fewer. The craftiness of the enemy continues to increase and so must the abilities of its opponents. The height of ability in waging war is in not having to fight. Not easy to do when your enemy is as insane as addiction. Ongoing spiritual growth has proven itself as the only way to kill this foe. Yet the disease has managed many times to place those who might be allies into oppositional camps.

We have evolved a doctrine of workable solutions for this campaign against the disease. This is best seen in the Basic Text. It doesn't enter the realm of dogma which implies forced compliance. The simplicity is it's beauty. So we have something to fight for here. Things like autonomy and anonymity, to mention only a two. Things of the spirit that we had never known before. These principles are the weapons that we must use to fight for our freedom. Else the neurotic elements within blow us to bits.

Yet, currently, there is a very large effort towards an ongoing propaganda to change these rights. This plan of enforceable dogma will change the lessons that we've learned here, that work in helping the addict to evolve. If you look at the production of this information you will see that it is from a very limited minority of the Fellowship. The funding comes from your seventh tradition and outside enterprises. Do you believe you know the whole picture? Does the fellowship in it's current state of apathy even care? Yet where else can you get information, that you might be able to trust? The propaganda says anyone that is doing it different is destroying our unity. Their effort has to be considered in good faith and well intended. Yet many times good is the enemy of the best and only the best will bring true good.

The last major underground propaganda was in the early 80's surrounding the Basic Text. It was that addicts should and could write for addicts. That the process included everyone. Well that wasn't true when it was first discussed. It became true through the participation of addicts like you that were willing to look at things other than what the system produced. Will new ideas, pawned off by propaganda kings fair as well? I think not, because they limit your participation and change the way we do literature and service. The next effort was the Baby Blue. It was about the derailment of the literature process and money. The propaganda machine went wild with that one. Thousands of dollars in the first few weeks alone. Only a very few of you ever heard the other side. Those that did still distribute it today. We must dare to know the truth if we are to continue winning this war.

Our financially backed leaders (your money) have the ability to send out a message that our structure and ways of doing things are our problem. The truth seems to lie somewhere closer to the fact that we have become apathetic in our recovery and our procrastination about taking a stand stifles us. These are enemies of our recovery. Surrendering while there is still a valid war has been found by many to be cowardly. The fighting spirit has but to have a spiritual goal. If what you see, hear and learn about N.A. isn't all that you hope for it then you simply must not give up while the war with the disease continues. In your silence and inaction you are collaborating with the enemy.

Many of your former generals in this war are dead. Some of the survivors are hiding out. Some of the shrewd generals are now your bureaucrats leading you on a correct political path to surrender of your God conscience and group autonomy. Many have been wounded badly by those to whom winning is more important than who survives. The incredible number of people that I have talked to that felt degraded and slandered, lied about and neutralized, worse yet, ignored in their pain from what we sometimes do to each other in the name of being right. Those that want to come home to N.A. and feel they can't. These are our comrades and they have been injured in this war, we need to take care of them too. Our lesson here is to love one another no matter what our beliefs. If you find you can't do that then don't expect others to follow you.

Every day there seems to be a little additional hope for us. It is not like an addict to give up and I believe we never shall. Your responses to this newsletter and ongoing projects has shown the beginnings of what is to come. We possess today more educated, knowledgeable, experienced and spiritual members than ever before. It would be returning to insanity to not use these talents to the best of our ability. Limiting gods' opportunities to effect our efforts should never be tolerated. Your strength is what is needed to continue our winning ways.

If what your home group is doing is keeping addicts clean then you are carrying OUR message. There can be many questions about political correctness, but the bottom line is saving lives. Don't ever let someone in their great knowledge or wisdom take that from you. If what you are doing isn't working you will know it and then be able to pursue new alternatives.

So let this be a call to arms. Gather all your available intelligence, seek knowledge, plan your strategy, heal your wounded and do everything that you can think of to do the next right thing. Look for leaders by their example, these are the ones who can support you even in opposition. "Our goodwill best exemplified in service is doing the next RIGHT thing for the RIGHT reason". The lies, slander, manipulation, and propaganda should not come from those that serve us. So make a decision, write to me, this news letter, for Gods sakes do something. Either you're politically correct or you belong down here with me at the base of the pyramid in the trenches fighting off the disease. War? what is it good for... absolutely nothing ...without a spiritual goal. Only you can prevent fellowship fires. ♦

bits from the mailbag



Although people are used to having a "governing body", it's time to dismantle and reassemble, or destroy and move on. -Ontario

Keep up the work! -New York

What can I say? I love Narcotics Anonymous and I'll read anything I can get my hands on. -Maryland

I now understand about war and why the pegleg Redman is hot! -U.S. Penitentiary

I just finished reading Vol I #1-4 cover-to-cover which were copied & passed on to me... I'm really excited about the NA History project. -New York

Thank you for your refreshing information in the *New Awakenings*. I had gotten hold of one issue at the last world convention WCNA 23 in Chicago. I still consider myself a newcomer even though I have over 2½ yrs cleantime. I've been fortunate to be able to talk to and listen to some oldtimers in N.A. and it has been a real eye opener to hear how it used to be and what unity really was about. And again my thanks to the *New Awakening[s]* for strength hope and courage to put into print on how it used to be, how it should be and how it can be again. -Illinois

It is refreshing to see an alternative point of view. Blind allegiance is never a good substitute for open debate and healthy discussion. -Massachusetts

At this point I am not sure how I feel about what you have to say, but that tells me that I probably need to hear more of it. -Wisconsin

Please hurry! We need more! -Maryland

There is a check for \$8 in this letter. Put half to a 1yr subscription and the other towards the cost of sending me those past issues. If there's any change put it in the basket or buy some of those \$1 Basic Texts and give em to a newcomer.

-New Jersey

Also we were wondering if you know where we can get some keytags and/or medallions. We choose not to support WSO. -An NA Group

I love [the] newsletter. I don't want to miss the next one so I'll send money now and a letter later.

-Michigan

Thank God, the Cosmic Clowns, and my sponsor for putting me in touch with you! I've got a bit over 6yr clean and have been catching hell for expressing the same view point that has been bringing tears to my eyes while reading over your July issue. I thought I'd have to go to the wall by myself for that stance, & believe me I'm willing to go__ but it's nice to know there are some allies out there somewhere. -Georgia

Keep carrying our message. -Pennsylvania

I am finally sending this [\$] in to shut _____ up so he quits asking for his issues back. -Missouri

I am not interested in receiving *New Awakenings*. There are a lot of newcomers out there so I better get on with it. -England

Keep up the good work. WSO is going to hell.

-The Right Reverend _____

To get *New Awakenings*

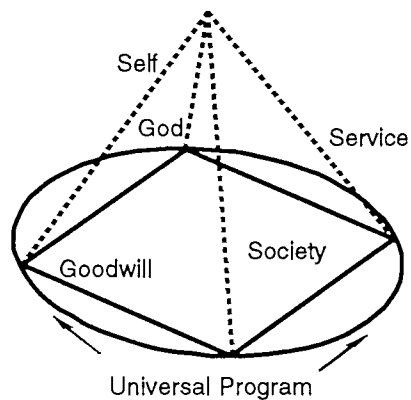
Just send us your name and address. Use this form if you wish. Send us a letter if you can. We publish the first week of every other month. Getting you one issue #1 in the U.S. cost 68.6¢ Projecting from this cost we figure a year's subscription (6 issues) should be \$4.12. Sending more enables *New Awakenings* to go out to addicts who haven't seen it yet.

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

Name _____

Address _____

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



Sometimes we can miss the point in its simplicity, and must return to the source with greater willingness.