



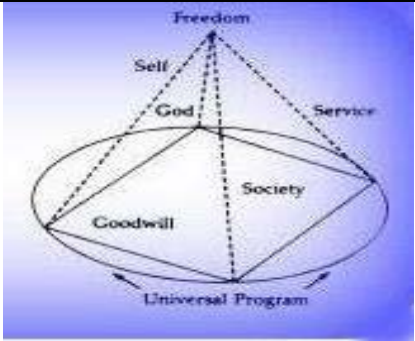
Core Issues

Nov., 2015 Vol. 3 Issue 11
By: Lester O.



Goals and Purposes

We believe there needs to be discussion among the members of NA with regard the purpose and direction of our fellowship. There are 'service' groups springing up throughout North America; their goals are as many and varied as our members. Our purpose at 'core' is to provide a venue to facilitate open and respectful discussion among the members of the fellowship. We discuss ideas about how to make the NA fellowship more responsive to the still suffering addict. We hold weekly meetings, publish a weekly newsletter, and plan events for the purpose of uniting our fellowship. These are not core meetings, core newsletters, nor core gatherings; they are our gift to the NA fellowship.

<p>We Believe that the Greater the Base (Global NA Society)</p>		<p>The Broader the sides and the Higher the point of freedom.</p>
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Email: lester7286@gmail.com
Phone: 321-215-5898

Yours in Loving Service,
Lester O.
Editor of Core Issues
(A non-profit Newsletter of the Core Group)

Summary of Core Group Discussions for the Month of September, 2015



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Core Group Minutes

October 6, 2015

FreeconferencecallHD.com

new number, 641.715.3660

8:30 pm EST, 7:30 pm CST, 6:30 pm MST; 5:30 pm PST

Tuesday Night CONFERENCE CALL

Attendance with area codes:

Bo S. 404 – John F 707 – Lester 321

Bo on Minutes

"Birds born in a cage think that flying is an illness."

Discussion:

8:30 Open conference call.

8:30

Following Posts will be referred to in these minutes...

Bill Wild

3:22am Sep 29

"The book has been in the public domain in the US since 1967. Nobody "owns" the Big Book in The USA. Anyone can reproduce it without seeking permission from anyone."

Seems to have worked out pretty OK for AA all these years. They still sell the Big Book and I've never heard of any problems with the content being changed. So really the only fear must be naw¢ losing money.

Bo – How about the files sent to you dated 1989 and 1992? Are you informed enough to realize this is the first hard evidence of a deliberate take over by a small group of people operating with plans to change and take over our service structure, starting before the Grateful Dave Baby Blue case was heard in Philadelphia? Check it out!

John F – Don't like.



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Lester – Wild Bill – listed workshops held at NA conventions in California. None of which were on the NA Steps and Traditions. Interesting...

Bo – Did you hear? – “I am a friend of Jim D” tee shirt? The RD’s need to hold a conference by themselves where they can exchange ideas, experience and concerns and report to the Members, Groups and Areas they are supposed to serve. The controllers would howl.

The RD’s don’t seem to have any idea they have been stripped of their investigative, deliberation and representative powers.

Lester – Still send email to both Gmail and EarthLink for you Bo.

Bo – I added Gmail to my accounts on earthlink.net. Thanks Lester!

Announcement: Willard Young passed away Sunday October 4th. He will be sorely missed. He was alert and participated at the Sponsorship Gathering at Gull Lake. Wonderful man, great NA!

Bo – How did you like the Know your member Project?

John – Want to do it again.

Bo – Dale A sending his from Bangkok.

John – There is a new ten grand IFS fine if a CPA makes a mistake on your return. Overreaction.

Bo – Charging \$250 for “Jim D.” tee shirts.

John – Don’t like the way NAWS talks down to the Fellowship. Some of *Living Clean* does this.

Bo – Stephen King says on one of his you tube, com videos that books are the best weapon against the asses of the world!

John – Everybody things NAWS is OK due to spin mastering and misinformation over a period of time.

Bo – Yeah, The members will start comparing notes and asking questions. I have great faith in the membership.

John – When I got clean I wanted to know all about NA – how it works and what the rules are, philosophy, why we go to 90 in 90, how things worked. Couldn’t get enough of it!

Bo – When members start playing ‘king of the mountain’, the wise members leave the field.



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People after money, power and prestige lose out in the end.

John – People react when I try to share what I found.

Bo – They are not members. They have not surrendered and do not evidence desire for recovery or they would want to know! Don't fight the obvious truth.

John – No stories on anonymous recovery, freaked out stories.

Bo – You are suffering from isolation, you keep trying to carry the message to people who are not asking for help because they are not surrendered. They are not NA!

John – Girl in meeting, black girl, had two years clean. Talked about living in a crack house giving head for her drugs. Got tired and somehow found NA.

Had a guy from California with AIDS kept having sex with guys to get \$ for drugs, stuff like that.

Bo – The work we have been doing on Daily Meditation stopped getting support when we passed four hundred quotes. Turned it over to Kermit. He is still interested. Check with Kermit. Have all those quotes and half that many inputs for essays.

Lester – Thinks you made a good decision to back off.

Bo – Yeah, it was a trap to see if I would go for the bait. No self-will for me thanks.

John – Me too. Everybody has new take on it. Wasn't allowed to photocopy 1st Edition when it came out. Couldn't because it was illegal. Members were strange. It is our book but we members have no rights.

Bo – You say group regarded legality over spirituality.

John – Had desperation from the beginning to know more. Writing, vitally interested. The more meetings and service, that protected me from relapse. Depending on your personality type, you got what you needed. That's why I started seventeen meetings!

John – That's one of the many things about NA that is great. Can do many things. Most advanced spiritual program on planet earth.

Bo - The strongest supporters get pushed away by the establishment. Feels like it did when the murderers in Vietnam gassed and shot anti-war activists.

John – When NAWS pushed away old-timer's, new comers picked up on that. Only non-profit



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that declared war on old-timers. Red Cross, Democrats and Republicans, Boy Scouts – all honor long time members.

Lester – Up against younger generation who don't value anything. Refuse to let anyone run me away from the Program.

John – They changed rules so I can't participate. Can't be serve as group secretary because I won't sign court slips. Can't go to conventions because I won't pay for a meeting.

Lester – Give out my number but never get a call. Didn't use to be that way.

Bo – Same here.

Lester – Want us to co-sign their bullshit.

John – Talked to my sponsor – he's in Hawaii. That's kinda cool. Sponsorship was like your teacher, your spiritual guide.

Bo – Sponsor is a guide to spiritual living. Check out Upper Cumberland ASC website for cool downloads. NA History buffs are collaborating. That's a good sign. Thanks for good job on core Issues newsletter Lester!

Lester – John, do you like the newsletter?

John – Yes.

Lester – Open to input and suggestions.

10:00 Closing Prayer – John, "God grant me..."

Note: You are already enlightened. Part of you knows this and part of you is aware that there are things around you that are wrong or at least not quite right. The problem is you are conditioned to not react because if you did, it would lead to – complications. So you await your destiny in fear. Take your time, it'll come to you...

Next meeting on 13, 20 and 27 of October, 2015

Other good closing prayers...

- *"They say a picture is worth a thousand words. But what if it reflects not reality but an agenda? In this age of airbrushed magazine covers, computer-generated images, reality*



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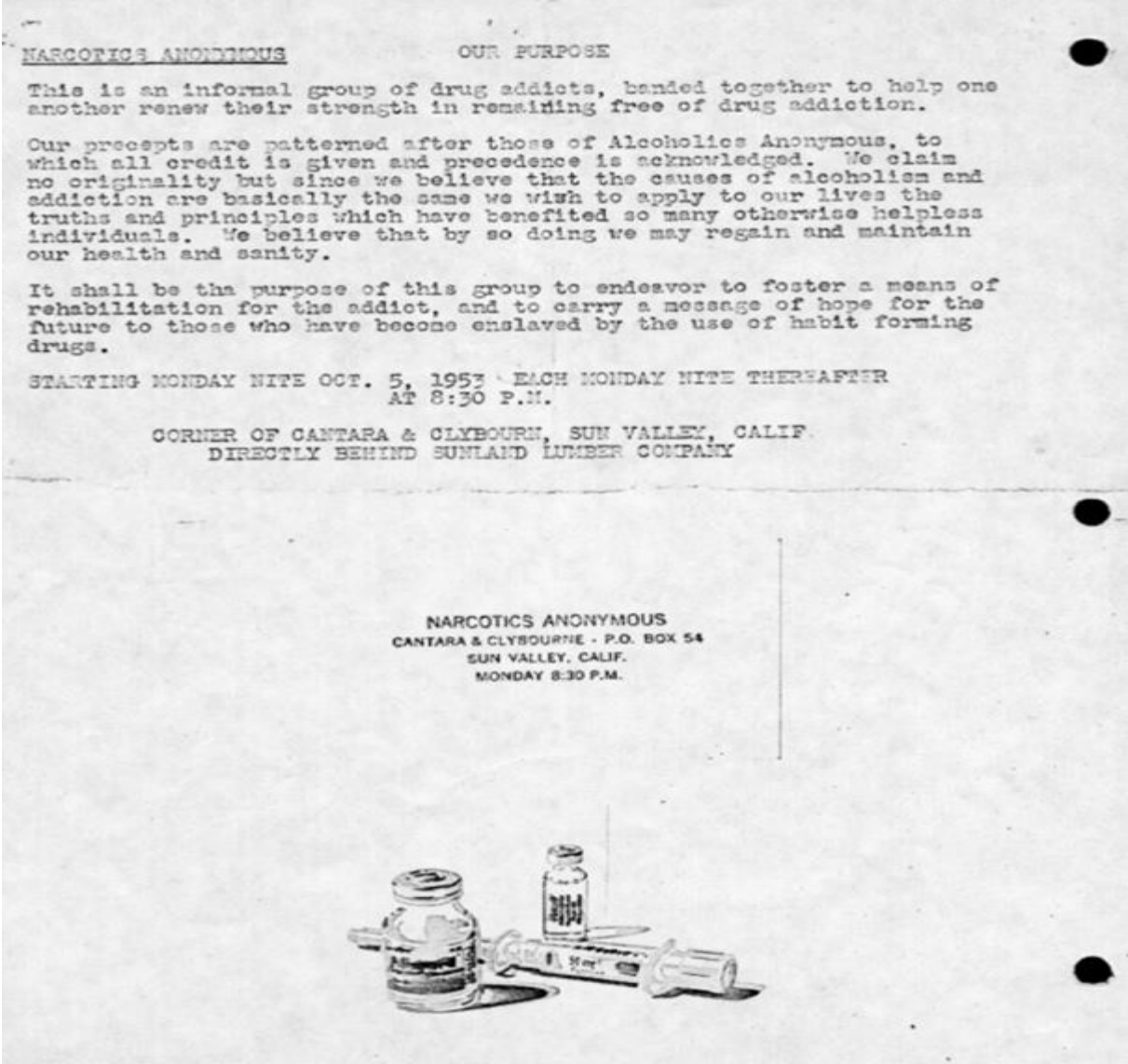
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By: Lester O.



- *TV, and phony viral video, have words lost meaning? Or have they become more important than ever?*
- “Dear God,

Please protect and provide for me. Guide and illuminate the path of my pilgrimage. Grant me courage, commitment and strength. Teach me to care and give without reservation. Remind me of gratitude and principle. Please allow me to recognize your presence in me and around me and allow my life to be a reflection of your love.” From Greg Pierce





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Core Group Minutes

October 13, 2015

FreeconferencecallHD.com

new number, 641.715.3660

8:30 pm EST, 7:30 pm CST, 6:30 pm MST; 5:30 pm PST

Tuesday Night CONFERENCE CALL

Attendance with area codes:

Bo S. 404 – Brian YE 540

Bo on Minutes

Recording 44479748-671212332.mp3

"Birds born in a cage think that flying is an illness."

Discussion:

8:30 Open conference call. (If no one is on call when I open, I will start talking and this will help me remember to cut on record utility. I get to talking with someone on call and forget now and then. – Bo)

Bo – It has been 33 years for me since the Basic Text dream became a Basic Text reality. The first year I served as World Service Conference Literature Chair-person we held one Conference. The result was the "Handbook for Literature Committees." The Second year we held three Conferences. The next term we held three more and the Basic Text was done. We did this work with open, participatory conferences and no clean addict was turned away from the work. Well, one kept breaking ash trays at WLC-2 but he contributed the longest story of anyone. Few people know this history. Why is that? How many NA members today have even seen or heard of the Handbook?

We are still attempting to carry the message of hope and recovery written based on the experience of clean addicts in NA but there is a force to make our literature into a sales product where income outweighs human values. You have to read, study and discuss to



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understand this but check it out. Egalitarian means the right of self-determination is extended to the many. Elitist means control of the many by the few. Business management is hierarchical and is a top down system. We use a bottom up system where the member is made important by design and intent. Many do not know why we do this and don't know it has to do with the spiritual nature of the Program. In NA, we do not want our employees to tell us what to do.

David B called in but dropped off call.

Brian YE – Hey there.

Bo – I guess everyone else had something else to do.

Brian – Guess so.

Bo – Why did you stop coming to the Grey Book Daily Meditation effort?

Brian – I felt like you were too controlling with the work.

Bo – I do not recall you saying so...

Brian – Well, that's how we felt.

Bo – Thanks for bringing it to my attention. Did you ever bring it up? Brian, you and I have worked on several projects. I am astonished you would not know you were free to discuss anything, at any time, with me.

Bo – Can you give me an example? We'll talk some more about this next week. OK? The only idea suggested by someone who dropped out of the effort was to not move the quotes to dates within the calendar year so that people working on it would be able to put their favorite quote on their clean date. I respectfully pointed out that would personalize the work and that was un-anonymous and would make for infighting and hurt feelings where two or more people wanted to 'own' the same date. Being open-minded and inclusive doesn't mean throwing away your painful learning experiences in service! Core group is about the least codified and controlling service body I have ever been a part of. Still, we had certain things in mind when we started work on the Daily Mediation Grey Book and the main one was the get enough quotes before setting new goals. At one point when we had more support many of the quotes were



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placed in the dates of the calendar year and someone moved them out of the dates without asking. We shrugged that one off, sticking to our main goal. The Traditions are full of freedom but they are not playthings to be disregarded when they don't suit our egos. We try to include everyone but that doesn't mean we have no focus. Being able to stick to our original goals is a function of a healthy mind.

Brian – We'll talk about it...

Closed at 10:25 Brian led us in Serenity Prayer.

Next meeting on 20 and 27 of October, 2015

Other good closing prayers....

- *“They say a picture is worth a thousand words. But what if it reflects not reality but an agenda? In this age of airbrushed magazine covers, computer-generated images, reality TV, and phony viral video, have words lost meaning? Or have they become more important than ever?”*

- “Dear God,

Please protect and provide for me. Guide and illuminate the path of my pilgrimage. Grant me courage, commitment and strength. Teach me to care and give without reservation. Remind me of gratitude and principle. Please allow me to recognize your presence in me and around me and allow my life to be a reflection of your love.” From Greg Pierce

“Nothing blinds a person like fanaticism which is just an outward expression of obsession.”

“That we can all come together for the good of the Fellowship.”





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Core Group Minutes

October 20, 2015

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new number, 641.715.3660

8:30 pm EST, 7:30 pm CST, 6:30 pm MST; 5:30 pm PST

Tuesday Night
CONFERENCE CALL

Attendance with area codes:

Bo	John B	John F	Brian YE	Mitch	Lester
404	318	707	540	410	321

Bo on Minutes

Recording 44479748-671231047.mp3

"Birds born in a cage think that flying is an illness."

Discussion:

8:30 Open conference call.

John B – On October 22, I will celebrate two years clean.

Bo S – Congratulations John B! Glad for you.

Bo S. – Would like to discuss the need for a stabilized structure. Making un-necessary changes in service structure and new alphabet soup sub, sub, sub committees and paper work is becoming tedious.

Brian – Bob G died – I am helping with memorial. After reading his story, he only talked about recovery. He changed my feelings about him somewhat.

Bo S. - I picked up Bob Gray at the Atlanta airport in 1979. He had on plaid Bermuda shorts and was in his teens. Great guy. Always bought my books and helped any way he could.



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Brian – 99% people who go to NA, don't practice NA. Those committed to spiritual principles are out-numbered ten to one. Oh well, what I believe don't matter.

Bo – Does to me.

Brian – It's about what Jimmy K wrote about 'esoteric beliefs...'

If 7% people who come to our door, only 7% of the 7% get esoteric view, they see things of the world, not of the spirit.

People of world will outnumber and attack us. I just continue to reach one addict at a time. Clear and concise, they will get what they need.

John B – more stable structure get more done. The unstable, reading NA history – lots has changed. NAWS – trying to confuse Fellowship.

Mitch – See a lot more decisions without conscience.

Lester – Agrees with Brian that people don't practice program and don't understand group conscience. Fewer people getting on the bandwagon. Aren't ready to see the value of stabilized structure. Running on ego and personality – 90%.

Bo – Nobody knows it all.

John F – The disease of addiction is powerful. Multiply the disease by a billion. When an addict shoots dope, but the disease takes over. If we violate Traditions, whole organization is infected. First changes in Traditions Four and Nine in 1983 made a big difference in the service structure and how NA operates at all levels. Drug Court gives the illusion that NA is effective. Looks like NA works to the powers that be. DC can do whatever they want. Only way out is to end DC. There was a company that made a device that was supposed to improve the air in a room, like a filter that removed particles from the air. A study was made and it showed conclusively that the device made no difference at all. Filed for bankruptcy overnight. Bamboozled almost everybody. Those who raised questions were pushed aside.

Lester – When H&I in Portland began they could only do one on one's talking through glass partition to addicts who requested that we be there. Then we began going to the County Farm and later to the Restitution Center. They soon noticed fewer prisoners coming back to jail



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after they had been exposed to NA. Now, with Drug Court and members on Suboxone, recidivism will reverse itself and will hurt our standing in recovery.

Bo – Up to us to monitor and make changes before real trouble begins. When we began to allow WS to violate Traditions, we began to lose our spirit. WS celebrates WS, ignores and diminishes the Fellowship that opens all the meetings and carries our message. They should be the big deal!

John – Tobacco industry knows people die from smoking induced cancer, yet people will still buy and die.

Bo – People don't like to admit they have been taken in by incomplete information. It's an ego game. They are worried they will look bad and lose status.

Bo – How about Daily Meditation based on Grey Book? I spoke with another member about this last week and was surprised to learn that he felt I had run rough shod over group conscience. When first we began work on the Daily Meditation, it was agreed that we would start by finding good quotes from the Grey Book and when we had thoughts about the quote, we might often create some ideas for essays as the work progressed. Often a member marking a quote for inclusion had something in mind and it is a good time to get their thoughts. The items were not cut in stone and all were subject to later consideration by the group.

This progressed with good support but as happens sometimes, our core group members were drawn to other projects to help addicts, H&I, local affairs, etc. So, some new people came in and while we generally stayed true to our original goals and methods, we allowed some changes based on what attending members suggestions. We were very focused on achieving our group goals and cited them from time to time. So, I can see how someone just coming in might not fully get an understanding of our work and methods. But it shocks me to see needless conflict.

Brian – Well, I attended when I could.

Bo – I attended weekly for around three months. We reached our goal and have four hundred quotes. When people stopped showing up, I stopped working on it. I had no complaint from anyone at the time, it just seemed wrong to work on it alone. It is not meant to be the work of a few. You recall other projects we have worked on Brian. You know we had people come in



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and try to take over the project because we were friendly. Some people mistake friendliness for uncertainty and lack of commitment. They try to provide an order they do not yet see. In the future I will try to suggest we write out our plan of work at the front end.

Brian – Yeah, and when they tried to take over we just stood firm.

Bo – It is important to realize we are not starting these interpersonal problems. They come from the failure to abide by our 12 Traditions. In NA, our leaders are not authorized to judge members from positions of authority. When I learned service, we sought to be servants worthy of trust. Of course when it comes to spiritual principles, all we can do is try and be open-minded. Humans are not perfect.

Failure to exemplify anonymity in service breeds animosity and pattern setting encouraging members to attempt to take on authoritarian roles themselves. Why not when conspicuous 'leaders' in world services do so with no consequence? Yet the membership is staunch about certain things. The honor and practice the Twelve Traditions in their service and walk away when they see them violated. We have probably lost more members over this and they are never heard from again. Those who complain are ostracized and treated badly by the violators. As Brian said earlier, only 7% of 7% learn enough to know what we are talking about.

Thank you all for coming.

Bo – David B is putting up core group on FB this week. Free downloads of core group material and core issues will be available. If you wish to join this closed group for core group members only, please call or post and you will be included.

Closed 10:20 – John B said Serenity Prayer for us.

Next meeting on 27 of October, 2015

Other good closing prayers....

- *“They say a picture is worth a thousand words. But what if it reflects not reality but an agenda? In this age of airbrushed magazine covers, computer-generated images, reality TV, and phony viral video, have words lost meaning? Or have they become more important than ever?”*



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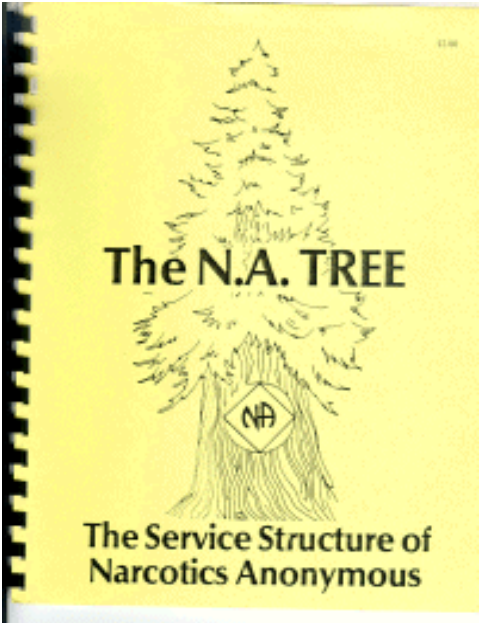
- “Dear God,

Please protect and provide for me. Guide and illuminate the path of my pilgrimage. Grant me courage, commitment and strength. Teach me to care and give without reservation. Remind me of gratitude and principle. Please allow me to recognize your presence in me and around me and allow my life to be a reflection of your love.” From Greg Pierce

“Nothing blinds a person like fanaticism
which is just an outward expression of obsession.”

“That we can all come together for the good of the Fellowship.”

Stable Service Structure NA Tree	Non Stable Service Structure	Non Stable Service Structure	Non Stable Service Structure
Member	Group	Group	World Board
Group	Area Service Committee	Area Service Committee	World Service Conference
Area Service Committee	Regional Service Conference	Regional Service Conference	Zonal
Regional Service Conference	World Service Board	Zonal	Regional Service Conference
World Service Board	World Service Office	(World Service Conference	Area Service Committee
World Service Office	World Service Conference	Influenced by World Board)	Group
World Service Conference			





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Core Group Minutes

October 27, 2015

FreeconferencecallHD.com

new number, 641.715.3660

8:30 pm EST, 7:30 pm CST, 6:30 pm MST; 5:30 pm PST

Tuesday Night CONFERENCE CALL

Attendance with area codes:

Bo - 404 – John F -707 – Lester - 321

Bo on Minutes

Recording 44479748-671298504.mp3

"Birds born in a cage think that flying is an illness."

Discussion:

8:30 Open conference call.

John – Secretary called me down for saying Drug Court is outside issue.

Lester – Very few group secretaries know their job. Know better but exempt themselves from standing up for NA members.

Bo – Don't know their job or afraid of criticism from uninformed members.

Lester – Four to five meetings a week and see secretaries evade their duties all the time. No matter where I am at. Now a mix with five or six clean with time and many under five years.

Bo – Not a safe place for addicts seeking recovery. Start a 2nd Edition meeting.

What John F is experiencing is spreading throughout the Fellowship. It is a, "Ask not for whom the bell tolls, it tolls for thee." Situation. WS seems oblivious. Who will they sell books to when all the members are gone?

All this stems from original violation of trust with printing the 1st Edition Basic Text. Violate one, you violate them all. Does WS dream that Court Slip involuntary members will support NA when the members are gone?



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Not Drug Court is not only controlling the composition of persons in our meetings, but group secretaries are loyal to DC over NA!

Lester – They know but get drummed out by some figurehead of NAWs.

Bo – Will ask Kermit to come up with plan of action for Daily Meditation. Possibly they could do workshops on the core group NA FB group. We could always start a 'secret group' for their work area.

Will call David about possible changing to secret group or doing something to insure privacy of discussion prior to reporting to Fellowship on our deliberations. Need to discuss every side of a question might mislead those trying to follow open discussion.

Need more downloads on core group NA.

Lester – Go to FB list for closed group and check out who is there. Persons invited to closed group should be drawn from core group members.

John – came on at 9:15

Bo – What Lester says is they know better than to praise outside issue, they just ignore Traditions. It is like World Service ignores the concerns of informed members.

John – Will go down local meeting list and mark some to avoid for a while. Increased Drug Court funding by 250% in March 2016. Obama says more people dying of drug overdose than automobile wrecks. DC will grow from 100 addicts in their government program to 1000. Where will these people park? Where will they get 900 extra chairs? Where will they get 900 white chips? Where will larger meeting be held? Who will pay the rent?

Bo – These are demographic problems not foreseen by WS.

Lester – Secretaries see them all as NA newcomers!

Bo – Newcomers are no longer NA members. This is an example of inexperienced policy makers.

Lester – They think court slippers are NA members!

Bo - Headed for brick wall and brick wall usually wins.

John F – Tired of whole thing. Every meeting in Kansas City signs court slips – this is an endorsement! Passive approval.

Lester – South Florida RSC moving further north. Used to come up to West Palm, now up to Daytona.

Bo – Way past Orlando!



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Had a great visit with my sponsor.

John F – What do I do to carry message? Need to just stay clean until someone asks for help.

Bo – Could pass out IP's and files or web addresses.

John – New Court Slip signing meeting with speaker from all over.

Lester – Don't need permission to start a meeting. Up to local ASC to put on schedule.

John – Maybe I'm the one who is messed up.

Lester – Started a Sunday am meeting. Went to ASC and asked for help. Told them we needed support – or would die! 3rd month, third week, twenty people from ASC showed up and attended one meeting. After that meeting took off. They reported to other groups that it is a great meeting!

John – I started 17 meetings in Napa, some are still going.

Bo – Usually, a low attendance is followed by renaissance. That's because the insincere no longer attend and the atmosphere of recovery goes up. That is why you are not giving up. That's why they resent you – you are a long time member and evidence that they are not really working the NA program.

John – Cross talk, affiliation – come to room, wait an hour, and go home. That's it, that's NA to them.

Bo – It is not NA.

John – One secretary went off on me. Said Drug Court saved her life. DC gave her food stamps, housing, counselor, school, - coming to NA did not register with her. Twenty or thirty thousand dollars of services over a few months is a tasty deal.

Closed 10:20 – Lester 3rd Step Prayer...

Next meeting on 3, 10, 17 and 24 of November, 2015

Other good closing prayers....

“They say a picture is worth a thousand words. But what if it reflects not reality but an agenda? In this age of airbrushed magazine covers, computer-generated images, reality TV, and phony viral video, have words lost meaning? Or have they become more important than ever?”



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“Dear God,

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“Nothing blinds a person like fanaticism
which is just an outward expression of obsession.”

“That we can all come together for the good of the Fellowship.”

Recording 44479748 - 671197300.mp3

Fan Page – “core Issues”

Recorded weekly meetings of the core group. We have downloads from all the calls to date. Listing is a chore. Some may not be on our hard drives but no one has asked about them and we go where you directs us with emails or phone calls. You can still dial in for recording of last Tuesday night call by using access code. The downloaded calls I can send you if you need them. - Bo

Addendum: for core group members:

May includes some emails or phone conversations
from core group members during past week.

Please select material below and set to 14 point size to read and review following articles. You can reset to 7 point when done or paste to another document. Let us know what you think and like/dislike.

Without including this in our minutes, the situation is almost impossible to believe, much less explain. This is why we need big change now! – Bo S.

Forwarded by core group member for your information and consideration:

[History of NA – date...](#)

[What is Unity - Bill F 9.30.15](#)

History of NA

By the World Service Board of Trustees (Note: not the NAWS, Inc. World Board) and the WSO Board of Directors in 1990 09 A report on the NA literature trust

This article was generated jointly by the World Service Board of Trustees and the WSO Board of Directors in



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September 1990 in response to the needs of the fellowship. It represents the views of those two boards at the time of its writing.

The substance of NA's recovery message appears in its literature. There's a process that exists to allow that literature to be available to the NA Fellowship. Our adherence to this process assures the consistency of our message.

After a piece of literature is approved by our World Service Conference, it is copyrighted and published by NA's world service corporation, World Service Office, Inc. Once copyrighted, no one may publish NA literature--altered or unaltered--without the permission of WSO, Inc. Not only is this a legal condition, but it also reflects the instructions of the World Service Conference. This copyright protects our printed message, both in English and in translation, from distortion.

From time to time, questions about NA's literature copyrights are asked by members of the fellowship. Questions commonly asked include, What authority has the World Service Conference given to World Service Office, Inc., to protect our copyrights? How were the rights to NA's Basic Text initially transferred to WSO, Inc.? Why has the World Service Conference produced five editions of the Basic Text? Can NA members or groups reprint NA literature? This report serves to answer those questions.

NA'S LITERATURE TRUST

Narcotics Anonymous, as we know it today, began in 1953 in Southern California. For many years, the fellowship grew very slowly, and had little organization. In 1971, a membership business meeting at our first world convention decided that the fellowship should open a World Service Office. This office would publish NA literature, and serve as an information clearinghouse for new groups. At a similar meeting held at our fourth world convention in 1974, officers were elected to a board of directors for this office; these officers were directed to incorporate the WSO. On January 25, 1977, the corporate charter and bylaws were filed with the State of California. The World Service Office became a legal entity.

During the 1982 meeting of the World Service Conference, participants discussed the office's place in the NA service structure. Participants found one article of WSO's bylaws particularly troubling. Though that article clearly stated that WSO, Inc. "operates under the guidelines of the Twelve Traditions," it also asserted that WSO was "fully independent of... the Narcotics Anonymous Society." A motion was passed which directed WSO to amend its bylaws by deleting language that made WSO completely independent from NA, and incorporating in its place the following language:

That the WSO, all members, directors, and officers shall be and are subject to, and will abide by, motions adopted at each WSC meeting and implement decisions reached by the WSC as they pertain to the operation of the WSO. [See Note #1 at the end of this bulletin.

The 1982 World Service Conference participants also discussed the need to clarify WSO's role in the publication of NA literature. Another recommendation, approved as part of the motion already referred to,



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stated that "the WSO was legally created to be the publishing arm of Narcotics Anonymous as a means of accurately reproducing the message of recovery. It is appropriate and essential that all publications used by NA be [reproduced] under the direct control of WSO." When approving these and other recommendations affecting WSO's bylaws, the 1982 conference provided that "these changes [be held] in abeyance... [for] a period not to exceed one year. We, [the World Service Conference of Narcotics Anonymous], will at that time vote to reaffirm same."

At the 1983 World Service Conference, the chairperson of the WSO Board of Directors presented participants with revised WSO bylaws. "We at the World Service Office board have voted on these changes," the board chairperson related in his report, "and we would like the approval of the World Service Conference." (See Note #2.) The WSO board chair then proceeded to read aloud every section of the 1982 bylaws which had been revised, referring participants to printed copies of the new bylaws. The conference offered no objection to the revised bylaws.

Section 15.02 of the 1983 bylaws directly addressed some of the 1982 conference's primary concerns: 15.02. All members, Directors and officers of this corporation shall be, and are, subject to, and will abide by, the principals of the "Twelve Traditions" of Narcotics Anonymous Society as set forth in the pamphlet identified and entitled as "Narcotics Anonymous" and shall further abide by, motions adopted, at each WSC meeting and implement decisions reached by the WSC as they pertain to operation of WSO. It is herein specifically acknowledged that WSO acts as a fiduciary [see Note #3] in its dealings with WSC and the fellowship of Narcotics Anonymous and that the net proceeds resulting from the sale and distribution of any literature and/or other materials for WSC and the fellowship is received by WSO.

On August 15, 1987, the World Service Office Board of Directors adopted new bylaws. Those new bylaws reflected the intent of 1983's section 15.02, while providing additional detail concerning protection of NA literature and trademarks.

Article 2. Objectives and Purposes.

...A specific purpose of the corporation shall be to hold in a fiduciary capacity the rights to, by license agreement from Alcoholics Anonymous General Service Office, the use, control, publication and management of the Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions as adapted by Narcotics Anonymous...

A specific purpose of the corporation shall be to hold in a fiduciary capacity the ownership rights to the control, use, printing, duplicating, sales, distribution, licensing for production, printing, duplicating, sales and use of all of the intellectual properties, logos, trademarks, copyrighted materials, emblems or other intellectual and physical properties of Narcotics Anonymous, the spiritual fellowship of Narcotics Anonymous as a whole and such boards and committees of the World Service Conference as may be directed by the World Service Conference.

A specific purpose of the corporation shall be to control and manage the production, printing, manufacturing of the properties of the spiritual fellowship of Narcotics Anonymous and offer said properties for sale to the fellowship and general public...



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A specific purpose of the corporation shall be to publish and distribute periodicals written or prepared by and for the fellowship of Narcotics Anonymous as the corporation may be directed to by the World Service Conference...

The WSO corporate bylaws adopted in 1987 continue in force as of this writing. In accordance with the direction of NA's World Service Conference, the World Service Office Corporation holds the copyrights to all NA literature in a charitable trust (see Note #4) on behalf of the entire Fellowship of Narcotics Anonymous.

SUMMARY: GENERAL TRUST FOR NA LITERATURE

In 1971, the NA Fellowship officially designated the World Service Office as its publishing house. In 1974, the fellowship directed the World Service Office to become a corporation. In 1982 and 1983, the World Service Office corporation's role as NA's literary trustee was clarified by the World Service Conference. The corporate bylaws of 1983 reflect the conference's specific intention. They state that "WSO acts as a fiduciary"--that is, someone who is given something, subject to the direction of the party who has given the thing--"in its dealings with WSC and the fellowship of Narcotics Anonymous." NA books, pamphlets, and service guides are developed and approved by the World Service Conference. Then, they are given to WSO, Inc., to be published for the fellowship, and to be legally protected on the fellowship's behalf from expropriation or distortion by unauthorized parties, subject to the direction of the World Service Conference.

BASIC TEXT TRUST

As for all NA literature, the copyright for our Basic Text is held in a charitable trust by World Service Office, Inc., which acts at the direction of the World Service Conference. After three years of work by the WSC Literature Committee, the text, formally titled Narcotics Anonymous, was approved by the World Service Conference in May 1982.

On September 15, 1982, the chairman of the World Service Conference Literature Committee executed the following document (see Note #5):

As of September 15, 1982, the World Literature Committee of Narcotics Anonymous, 890 Atlanta Road, Marietta, Ga., 30060, by authorization of [the] chairman thereof, release in full and turns over all release forms, copy wrights, and any and all material contained in pertinent to the Narcotics Anonymous Book and the stories of Narcotics Anonymous Members to be included in the Narcotics Anonymous Book, to the World Service Office of Narcotics Anonymous, Inc., Box 622, Sun Valley, Ca., 91352, ...to be used as directed by the World Service Conference of Narcotics Anonymous in session May 5 through May 9, 1982. [Sic]

This document does two things. First, it satisfies the requirement of the United States Copyright Law for transfer of copyright. (See Note #6.) Second, it creates a charitable trust under California law (see Note #7), where the World Service Office is the "trustee," the WSC Literature Committee is the "trustor" or "grantor," and the members-at-large of the Fellowship of Narcotics Anonymous are the "beneficiaries."

This charitable trust, including both its trustee (WSO, Inc.) and its beneficiaries (the members of the NA



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Fellowship), is subject to the jurisdiction of the Superior Court of the State of California. (See Note #8.) The trust obligations of the WSO have been set forth at the World Service Conference that was held in Santa Monica in May 1982.

BASIC TEXT-- FIRST THROUGH FIFTH EDITIONS

Approval form

In November 1981, the approval form of Chapters One through Ten of the Basic Text were released to the fellowship. In February 1982, the approval form of forty-seven personal stories intended for publication in the Basic Text were released to the fellowship. At the May 1982 meeting of NA's World Service Conference, the entire Basic Text was approved. (See Notes #9, #10.)

First Edition

Having no experience in publishing a full-length book, publication of the First Edition was a very difficult job for the World Service Office. In addition to major problems with the printer initially chosen to publish the book, conceptual problems arose. In the course of preparing the approval-form book for publication, it was noted that portions of the essays on Traditions Four and Nine made it appear that the NA service structure should not be considered a part of Narcotics Anonymous. The following are the two paragraphs in question; note especially the italicized text.

From the essay on Tradition Four: "Are we truly autonomous? What about our service committees, our offices, activities, hot-lines, and all the other things that go on in NA? The answer is that these things are not NA. 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 NA. 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."

From the essay on Tradition Nine: "The Ninth Tradition goes on to define the nature of the things that we can do to help NA. It says that we may create service boards or committees to serve the needs of the fellowship. None of them has the power to rule, censor, decide, or dictate. They exist solely to serve the Fellowship, but they are not a part of Narcotics Anonymous. This is the nature of our service structure as it has evolved and been defined in the NA service manual."

After much discussion, the WSO Board of Directors and the World Service Board of Trustees agreed that the portions appearing above in italics should be removed from the book before publication of the First Edition. In response, the chairperson of the WSC Literature Committee attempted to revoke the earlier release of rights to the Basic Text. However, when the World Service Conference met in May 1983, no motion was made to uphold the literature chairperson's action. On the contrary, new WSO bylaws were accepted, clearly stating that NA literature should be held in a charitable trust by the corporation. The WSO-copyrighted First Edition was officially released on April 27, 1983 by the World Service Office, using the fictitious business name of



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CARENA Publishing Company.

Second Edition

Conference minutes of 1983 reflect that an amended motion was passed, directing "that our book be completely returned to its [original] approved form in subsequent printings." **[I think any reader would imagine this means the original form approved by the general membership. Instead, it is taken to mean the First Edition as printed by WSO with the unauthorized changes in the 4th and 9th Traditions. This is an excellent sample of the devices and abuses that caused many members to leave the NA fellowship since the evidence pointed to a service structure no longer representing the fellowship's considered voting response. The failure to follow the fellowships will surely resulted in many addicts dying in active addiction. Surely it is not improper to bring this sad element into the realm of consideration because sometimes impropriety kills people. There is no other way to honor their deaths but this. – Bo SJ]**

(See Notes #11, #12.) The Second Edition of the Basic Text was released on September 28, 1983, with the missing lines reinserted. The copyright holder was again listed as CARENA Publishing Co., a fictitious business name of World Service Office, Inc.

Third Edition

One year after the conference directed WSO to reinsert the missing lines, the WSC decided that the issue should ultimately be settled directly by the membership of Narcotics Anonymous. In 1984, regional service representatives were asked to poll their groups on the following question: Should the wording of the essays on the Fourth and Ninth Traditions be as reflected in both the original approval form and the Second Edition, or as reflected in the First Edition? Their responses were to be mailed to the conference chairperson within sixty days of the end of the conference, and prior to the printing of any more books by the World Service Office. A change from the language of the Second Edition was to require a two-thirds vote. The results were to be published in the *Newsline*. (See Note #13.)

The question was submitted to the fellowship in a seven-page document which included the proposed changes, plus the reasons both for making the change and for keeping the text as approved. The response was thirty-six votes in favor of changing the text, and eight against changing the text.

Therefore, at the next printing--the Third Edition--the words originally deleted in the First Edition were again deleted, this time in response to a direct vote of the fellowship. The Third Edition was formally released on October 20, 1984.

Editing ordered which ultimately resulted in Fourth Edition

On May 3, 1985, the WSC approved a motion "that the WSO be instructed to have the Basic Text professionally edited to ensure consistent and correct use of capitalization, verb tenses, gender, singular/plural endings, and other grammatical errors and that the edited text be returned to the Literature Review Committee [at the time, a division of the WSC Literature Committee] for acceptance and approval prior to printing and distribution." (See Note #14.)



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One RSR suggested that, once the edit was completed, the text should be sent out for a fellowship wide review prior to publication. The conference engaged in heated discussion of this suggestion. However, because the required editing would affect only matters of grammar, not conceptual issues, the discussion ended with the WSC strongly in favor of allowing publication of the edited text after review only by the Literature Review Committee. (See Note #15.)

Work on the editing project was begun late in 1985, but was not completed before the 1986 annual meeting of the World Service Conference.

Third Edition, Revised

At the 1986 WSC meeting, a substantially revised version of NA's Little White Booklet, developed by the World Service Board of Trustees, was approved by the conference. (See Note #16.) The motion to approve the revised White Booklet stated specifically that the Basic Text should also be revised to reflect the changes in the White Booklet. The revised text, known as the Third Edition, Revised, was released in November 1986.

Fourth Edition

While the Third Edition, Revised, was being put into production, the edit mandated by the WSC in 1985 continued. The editor, working from a typescript of the Third Edition, completed his work in mid-1986. **[What is left out here is first of all, it took three years to find an editor, who I heard was a college student in Austin, TX. He was also an ardent NA member. So for the same \$3,000 he offered to do either a light edit or a deep edit. The offer was well intended but the 1985 motion enabling the edit contained exact language like, 'typos, tense, gender, person, etc.' in other words, a light edit only. No paragraph relocation, no sentences deleted or rewritten. Deep edits are anything from a typo correction to rewriting and restricting paragraphs. This was an important item when the motion was written and the word 'grammar' was removed from the motion to prevent over doing the edit. Also, the entire edit was done in a series of two hour teleconference calls. I asked one of the committee members who participated when they got together to review the manuscript to make sure the changes they discussed were accurately reflected in the final draft. No one noticed they were working from the wrong version of the Basic Text instead of the Third Revised. It was a closed edit. This also took place where the members on the committee missed the point that they were editing a deep edit instead of a light edit, as authorized. This is a serious problem with our literature being handled by professionals in absence of our ardent members. These members were left out because they were regarded as 'trouble makers' even though many had actually written the book being edited. No senior literature workers were included. I guess the idea was they would be 'personally' attached to the material. This is not an uncommon problem with fledgling bureaucracies. It is important that we make it clear that even though we have found and reporting our findings, it is not out of mean spirit or some sick idea of revenge. It is, after all, our book because we wrote it. Competition and bad blood between office workers and volunteer workers should not be allowed to hinder doing a good and proper job. – Ed]** On July 30, 1986, the WSC Literature Committee chairperson mailed the edited version to members of the Literature Review Committee. **[Again, the lack of critical thinking is a real problem because the sentence says the material was approved. Another way of saying it is that no one on the committee was sharp enough to catch the errors and lack of adherence to the enabling motion! – Ed]** The edit was approved by the Literature Review Committee at its October 1986 meeting in Charlotte, North Carolina.



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The original 1985 motion which mandated the editing of the Basic Text required only that the Literature Review Committee approve the edit prior to publication of the Fourth Edition. The conference had not asked the WSC Literature Committee to return the edited book to the World Service Conference, nor had the WSC directed the committee to send the edited text out for fellowship wide review prior to publication. [This reads like it justifies the lack of attention and good workmanship. – Ed]

However, in the November 1986 Fellowship Report, the committee chairperson wrote, "During the course of their review, the Literature Review Committee came across six sentences which are... inconsistent with the Newly Revised White Book," approved by the WSC in April 1986. Those six sentences were not found in the portions of the Basic Text drawn directly from the White Booklet. However, they conflicted with the conceptual spirit behind the changes that had been made in the booklet.

Literature Review Committee minutes relate that the committee "was in favor of making these additional changes, however, the Literature Review Committee decided to request a broader group conscience by referring the matter to the World Service Office Board of Directors and the Board of Trustees. The Literature Review Committee had decided that if the Board of Directors and the Board of Trustees were also unanimously in agreement, the Fourth Edition would then be printed."

Following discussions with the directors and trustees, a decision was made to defer publication of the Fourth Edition until the World Service Conference could consider the additional changes necessary to bring the text in line with the revised White Booklet. On April 28, 1987, in his report at the World Service Conference annual meeting, the WSC Literature Committee chairperson stated that, "pending Conference action on the white book consistency motion... the World Service Office will be able to proceed with the printing of the Fourth Edition." (See Note #17.) On April 29, the World Service Conference voted to make the five suggested changes in Book One of the Basic Text, but did not approve the sixth change, which would have altered one of the personal stories in Book Two. (See Note #18.)

The edited Basic Text, incorporating the 1986 revision of the Little White Booklet and the five changes authorized in 1987 by the World Service Conference, was published as the Fourth Edition on October 27, 1987, two and a half years after the original motion to edit the Basic Text was passed by the World Service Conference.

Fifth Edition

The edited Fourth Edition text differed significantly from both the Third Edition and the Third Edition, Revised. This was due partly to the editing (which was intentional), and partly to a series of WSO production errors (which were unintentional). When the typescript of the Third Edition, from which the Fourth Edition editor worked, was created, the transcriptionist skipped a number of lines of text at a time, in twenty-five separate locations throughout the book. At no time prior to publication of the Fourth Edition was the editor's typescript proofread against the published Third Edition text; hence, the original transcription errors went unchecked.



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Early in the winter of 1988, the World Service Office and the WSC Literature Committee began hearing complaints about the differences between the Third Edition, Revised, and the Fourth Edition. Early in April 1988, the entire WSO staff was diverted from its routine work to conduct three separate rounds of line-by-line comparisons between the Third Edition, the Fourth Edition editor's typescript, and the published Fourth Edition. The findings of the WSO staff were reported in full to the World Service Conference. Following a meeting of the conference as a committee of the whole to discuss a variety of possible remedies, the WSC approved a motion to reinsert the missing lines from the Third Edition back into the Basic Text. In the meantime, "the Fourth Edition, with current errors, [was to] continue to be sold as Conference-approved literature until such time as the corrected Fifth Edition [was] ready." The conference passed an amendment to the motion which specified that the resulting Fifth Edition could not be revised any further for five years. (See Note #19.) **[No one seemed to notice among those working on the project that the many other unwanted and unauthorized changes were allowed to remain in place even though everyone seemed to agree that something bad had happened and expected the material to be returned to the proper Third Revised version. The only way to avoid this is to get really good people as defined by experience and background adequate to insure a good and proper result. No one expected the improper changes to be left in as an oversight. – Ed]**

In the course of considering the motion which created the Fifth Edition, an amendment was proposed which would have specified that "this motion would be acted upon following a special ballot sent to RSCs.... The RSCs would be requested to reply in 30-60 days...."

Intent: To collect a Fellowship-wide group conscience and unify this Fellowship [behind the] WSC decision." So great was the desire to put the Fourth Edition controversy in the past, the conference voted not to even consider this amendment. (See Note #20.)

Immediately following the passage of the motion creating the Fifth Edition, the conference considered--and defeated--two additional motions. Both were very similar in language, the major difference being that the second stated its intent. The motions sought to direct the World Service Office to publish the Third Edition, Revised, rather than the corrected Fourth Edition (or, as it was known, the Fifth Edition). **[Of course, WSO was trusted to do a good and proper job even after their horrible performance with the Fourth Edition. WSC oversight and letting the World Service Board of Trustees carefully review the material would have been a better way of ensuring the errors and poor judgement by unqualified employees would not repeat itself. – Ed]**

The second motion read: "That the World Service Conference direct the World Service Office to immediately cease the publication and sale of the fourth edition of our Basic Text, Narcotics Anonymous, and immediately begin publication and sale of the third edition revised of our Basic Text, Narcotics Anonymous. Intent: To prevent the sale of unapproved literature by the WSO. The editing of our Basic Text and subsequent approval by the LRC so far exceeded any reasonable interpretation of the authority granted by the motion to edit the Basic Text as to require that the fourth edition be treated as new literature, and as such, be subject to the standard review and approval process." Both motions were defeated by overwhelming majorities. (See Note #21.)



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SUMMARY:

THE BASIC TEXT CHARITABLE TRUST

In 1982, trust rights to the Basic Text were given unconditionally to World Service Office, Inc., to be held by the corporation in a charitable trust on behalf of the NA Fellowship, subject to the direction of the World Service Conference. Though a challenge to that trust was raised by the WSC Literature Committee chairperson early in 1983 that challenge was not placed on the agenda of the 1983 meeting of the World Service Conference, and fell moot.

Successive editions have been created as the direct result of action taken by the World Service Conference to revise the original version. Those editions have also been copyrighted by the World Service Office Corporation, and the Basic Text continues to be held in a charitable trust by the corporation on behalf of the members of the NA Fellowship.

CAN NA MEMBERS OR GROUPS REPRINT NA LITERATURE?

The most commonly asked question is whether members or groups of members of the fellowship at large have the right to translate, edit, and reprint the Basic Text or other NA literature on their own. The answer is "no." First of all, NA literature--including the Basic Text--is the copyrighted property of World Service Office, Inc.

Under United States copyright law, only the World Service Office has the right to reproduce, translate, or prepare new versions of NA literature. (See Note #22.) Because of the international copyright protection afforded by the Berne Copyright Convention, the World Service Office has the same rights in eighty other countries around the world. (See Note #23.)

The World Service Office Corporation holds these copyrights in trust on behalf of the NA Fellowship, subject to the direction of the World Service Conference. To date, the World Service Conference has not directed the World Service Office to grant permission either to individual members or groups of members of the fellowship at large who request to reproduce the text. (See Note #24.) In fact, the most recent directive from the World Service Conference has been that the World Service Office was to prosecute a party which had infringed the fellowship's rights. In 1989, a trustee from Philadelphia "requested that the Conference give general consent to the WSO Executive Director and its Board of Directors to proceed with the legal matter relating to the illegal production of NA materials or any extralegal matter relating to the situation, as they see fit. [The request was approved by unanimous consent." (See Note #25.) While the consent given by the conference in this instance related to one particular case at hand, it also established a precedent for the kind of principles to be applied in similar cases.

If the members of the fellowship feel that their rights are being violated by the "trustee" WSO, they have the right to request that the protector of charitable trusts in California, the California Attorney General, investigate and, if appropriate, file an action to prevent the misuse of trust property. They cannot resort to simply taking the property and using it themselves. In fact, WSO has an affirmative duty to take steps that will stop actions



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that will result in a loss to the trust. (See Note #26.)

Therefore, under United States copyright law, only the World Service Office has the right to reproduce the Basic Text or prepare new versions of the Basic Text. (See Note #27.)

The fact that the copyrights may be held in trust does not affect the legal right and responsibility of WSO to enforce the copyrights on behalf of the fellowship.

NOTES

- Minutes, WSC'82, pp. 59-64. The published minutes of the 1982 meeting of the World Service Conference do not bear printed page numbers. For the purpose of these references, page numbers in the WSC'82 minutes have been counted from the first page of recorded proceedings. That page bears the legend, "Wednesday evening, May 5, 1982," at the top. In counting page numbers, blank pages within the body of the published minutes were also counted.
- From a transcript of WSC'83 proceedings.
- Fiduciary, as defined in the 1971 edition of the Oxford English Dictionary (Unabridged Version): "In Rom. Law Fiduccia denoted the transfer of a right to a person subject to the obligation to transfer it again at some future time or on some condition being fulfilled. Adj.
- "1b. of or pertaining to a trustee; pertaining to or of the nature of a trusteeship.
- "2a. of a thing: In trust of a person; held or given in trust.
- "2b. of or pertaining to something held in trust.
- "Cf. fiducial, f. Fiduccia trust, confidence.
- "1. Theol. Of or pertaining to, or of the nature of, trust or reliance."
- Restatement of Trusts, 2d, Sec.s 348, 349.
- This document is on file at the WSO and bears a notary's seal adjacent to the signature.
- 17 U.S. Code, Sec. 204[a].
- California Probate Code, Sec. 15200 (b) and/or (e).
- California Probate Code, Sec. 17003, 17004.
- Record of the approval of the first ten chapters of the Basic Text appears in the minutes of WSC'82, pp. 65-67. The stories were approved separately.
- Record of the approval of various personal stories for publication in the Basic Text appears on page 4 of the corrections to the minutes of WSC'82, published as an addendum to the minutes of WSC'83.
- Minutes, WSC'83, pp. 14-15. The amended motion carried, 24 in favor, 15 against, 5 abstaining.
- A later motion gave "a [vote] of confidence to WSO and WSB by approving the basic text with changes suggested by WSB and carried out by WSO as NA approved literature." The motion carried, 23 in favor, 0 against, 9 abstaining. (Minutes, WSC'83, p. 36.) According to the maker, this motion was made to insure that the First Edition would be considered conference-approved literature and, thus, appropriate for use in NA meetings.
- Revised minutes, WSC'84, pp. 32 and 33.
- Minutes, WSC'85, p. 36. The motion carried, 47 in favor, 1 against, 3 abstaining.
- From a transcript of WSC'85 proceedings.



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- Minutes, WSC'86, pp. 12-17, and pp. 37-38.
- Report of the WSC Literature Committee to the 1987 World Service Conference, April 28, 1987, page 6.
- Minutes, WSC'87, pp. 20-21. The motion to make the five proposed changes in Book One carried, 64 in favor, 4 against, 5 abstaining. The motion to make the single change in Book Two
- was defeated for lack of a two-thirds majority, with 34 in favor, 25 against, 12 abstaining.
- Minutes, WSC'88, pp. 17-20. On a roll call vote, the amended motion carried, 56 in favor, 12 against, and 8 abstaining.
- Minutes, WSC'88, p. 19. The motion to object to consideration was carried, 49 in favor, 18 against, 7 abstentions.
- Minutes, WSC'88, p. 20. The first motion was defeated, 4 in favor, 51 against, 8 abstaining; the second was defeated, 5 in favor, 60 against, 6 abstaining.
- 17 U.S. Code, Sec. 106.
- The Berne Convention (Paris Text, July 24, 1971), Article 5, Paragraph 1, reads, "Authors shall enjoy, in respect of works for which they are protected under this Convention, in countries
- of the Union other than the country of origin, the rights which their respective laws do now or may hereafter grant to their nationals, as well as the rights specially granted by this Convention."
- It is true that, in the past, the World Service Conference has given assent to license agreements between the WSO and the boards of four national service offices, allowing those national offices to reprint White Booklets and information pamphlets for distribution only in their own countries. Those agreements were made to make NA literature more readily available in Europe and the South Pacific at a time when the WSO was less prepared to
- Distribute literature to those parts of the world than it is now. Those license agreements are not currently in force, were never signed, and only certain sections have ever been implemented.
- However, it is important to note that those agreements were made with national service offices outside the United States--not with individuals or groups of members, nor with any American service board--to provide for the distribution of NA literature in territory the WSO itself could not serve at the time the agreements were made.
- Minutes, WSC'89, p. 25.
- California Probate Code, Sec.s 16010, 16011 (Deering 1990).
- 17 U.S. Code, Sec. 106.

WHAT IS UNITY?

What is unity anyway? What is it for and why bother about it?

The dictionary says that unity is a state of being united as a whole, the different parts in harmony or agreement. This cohesion is not possible without a common goal or purpose.

Does this mean that we need to find some rules that we all act by so that we don't annoy each other? Does it mean that we are being told to conform to some behavior and thinking for the sake of everyone else just as we were told to do in school? Does it mean that we need to be like others like the way we copied our friends so that we would be accepted and feel like we belonged? And who sets the rules of this thinking, feeling, and acting?



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Tradition One tells us that the common purpose of our unity is our common welfare. Tradition 5 tells us that purpose is to carry the message to the still-suffering addict. These two overlap because our recovery is contingent on helping others. But It Works How and Why (IWHW) says on p. 127 that this unity is not the same thing as uniformity. It goes on to say, "Encouraging each member to speak openly from the heart enhances our ability to work together." Are we sometimes afraid of taking the reins off of members and by various means pour cold water on them? Isn't that a fearful attempt at control, a lack of faith?

The Traditions are not man made laws for certain purposes. They contain eternal spiritual principles which are not dented by time, place, venue, or situation. They were discovered by many others as well as Bill Wilson and the members of AA.

John Fitzgerald Kennedy said, "The unity of freedom has never relied on uniformity of opinion."

Herbert Clark Hoover said, "Honest differences of views and honest debate are not disunity. They are the vital process of policy making among free men."

Louis D. Brandeis said, "America has believed that in differentiation, not in uniformity, lies the path of progress. It acted on this belief; it has advanced human happiness, and it has prospered."

Dogen, a Japanese Buddhist monk and philosopher, said in the 13th century, "Do not follow the ideas of others, but learn to listen to the voice within yourself. Your body and mind will become clear and you will realize the unity of all things."

NA was born in 1953 but it all but died during the late 50's. Our Founder, Jimmy Kinnon, latched onto the Traditions which were made in 1946 but adopted by AA in 1953. He said that the reason NA had gone down was from not following the Traditions. It appears that the Traditions are necessary for our unity.

IWHW says in Tradition 12 that anonymity in its full sense is the foundation of our unity. In other words, "Principles before personalities." IWHW goes on to say, "We pray that Narcotics Anonymous never becomes a gray, faceless collection of addicts without personalities. We enjoy the color, the compassion, the initiative, the rough-and-tumble liveliness that arises from the diverse personalities of our members. In fact, our diversity is our strength. We find that the stronger our individual members are, the more strongly united our fellowship becomes. This is a great paradox of NA recovery: In joining together in a commitment to the greater good of Narcotics Anonymous, our own welfare is enhanced beyond measure."

If we are to be unified don't we need to determine what is our motivation for each action in NA? Can we discern who or what is making the rules and agenda? Is it strong personalities? Is it an accepted notion from some mysterious source? Is it the ways of the world that we have learned so well? Is it habitual thinking such as collecting resentments or taking revenge as in Hollywood movies? Is it custom? Is it fear? Or do we judge by the spiritual principles in the Traditions?

"Let a difference be observed between "unity" and uniformity. The one is a Divine, the other a human thing. Acts of uniformity are the product of man. God only can make us the subjects of sacred 'unity.' Uniformity we get in trees and hedges hacked, cut, and clipped, so as to reduce them to a common size and shape. 'Unity' without uniformity we get in the trees of the forest, all growing according to the course of nature, of diverse shape, and size, and worth, but dependent for their wild strength and beauty on the same genial influences of nature, as they stretch out their thousand branches and myriad leaves to catch the light, and air, and dew, and showers of heaven. . . . Who ever knew two human faces alike? or two voices with precisely the same



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cadence? or two human forms identical in every particular? Is it, then, a thing of astonishment that in the mental and moral world there should be differences of thought, and judgment, and feelings? 'One star differed from another star in glory,' but amid all the varied glories of the 'heavens' there is no want of 'unity.'" Anon

"Only in love are unity and duality not in conflict." Rabindranath Tagore

"The human race is a herd. Here we are, unique, eternal aspects of consciousness with an infinity of potential, and we have allowed ourselves to become an unthinking, unquestioning blob of conformity and uniformity. A herd. Once we concede to the herd mentality, we can be controlled and directed by a tiny few. And we are." David Icke

"We have the universe to roam in in imagination. It is our virtue to be infinitely varied. The worst tyranny is uniformity." George William Russell

"Welcome those who are weak in faith, but not for the purpose of quarrelling over opinions. Some believe in eating anything, while the weak eat only vegetables. Those who eat must not despise those who abstain, and those who abstain must not pass judgment on those who eat; for God has welcomed them. Who are you to pass judgment on servants of another? It is before their own lord that they stand or fall. And they will be upheld, for the Lord is able to make them stand. Some judge one day to be better than another, while others judge all days to be alike. Let all be fully convinced in their own minds. Those who observe the day, observe it in honor of the Lord. Also those who eat, eat in honor of the Lord, since they give thanks to God; while those who abstain, abstain in honor of the Lord and give thanks to God...Why do you pass judgment on your brother or sister? . . .each of us will be accountable to God." Romans 14:1-6, 10

"Unity not uniformity must be our aim. We attain unity only through variety. Differences must be integrated not annihilated not absorbed." Mary Parker Follett (An American social worker, management consultant and pioneer in the fields of organizational theory and organizational behavior.)

"Great minds discuss ideas; average minds discuss events; small minds discuss people." Eleanor Roosevelt

"Individuality or Unity? I saw there's room for both." Brian Celio

"Yet God is so one that He admits of distinction, and so admits of distinction that He still remains unity." John Hales

"Seeking diversity automatically leads us to excellence, just as focusing on excellence inevitably leads us to diversity." William C. Steere

"At bottom everyone knows well enough that he or she is a unique being, only once on this earth; and by no extraordinary chance will such a marvelously picturesque piece of diversity in unity ever be put together a second time." Friedrich Nietzsche

"Be who you are and say what you feel, because those who mind don't matter, and those who matter don't mind." Bernard M. Baruch

"To be yourself in a world that is constantly trying to make you something else is the greatest accomplishment." Ralph Waldo Emerson

"Whenever you find yourself on the side of the majority, it is time to pause and reflect." Mark Twain



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“The most courageous act is still to think for yourself. Aloud.” Coco Chanel

“The most important kind of freedom is to be what you really are. You trade in your reality for a role. You trade in your sense for an act. You give up your ability to feel, and in exchange, put on a mask. There can't be any large-scale revolution until there's a personal revolution, on an individual level. It's got to happen inside first.” Jim Morrison

“I think the reward for conformity is that everyone likes you except yourself.” Rita Mae Brown

“The individual has always had to struggle to keep from being overwhelmed by the tribe. If you try it, you will be lonely often, and sometimes frightened. But no price is too high to pay for the privilege of owning yourself.” Friedrich Nietzsche

“I will not let anyone walk through my mind with their dirty feet.” Mahatma Gandhi

“Why are trying so hard to fit in, when you're born to stand out” Oliver James

“I like it when a flower or a little tuft of grass grows through a crack in the concrete. It's so fuckin' heroic.” George Carlin

“But society has now fairly got the better of individuality; and the danger which threatens human nature is not the excess, but the deficiency, of personal impulses and preferences.” John Stuart Mill

“Resistance to the organized mass can be effected only by the man who is as well organized in his individuality as the mass itself.” Carl Jung

“The work of the individual still remains the spark that moves mankind forward.” Igor Sikorsky

“Whatever crushes individuality is despotism, by whatever name it may be called and whether it professes to be enforcing the will of God or the injunctions of men.” John Stuart Mill

“And just because God attains and wins and finds this uniqueness, all our lives win in our union with him the individuality which is essential to their true meaning.” Josiah Royce

“So, to relinquish our identity by following the crowd is to deny the world of our potentially unique contribution.” Chuck Galozzi

“Every society honors its live conformists and its dead troublemakers.” Mignon McLaughlin

Perhaps open-mindedness, that is the willingness to give up on preconceived notions and self-assurance, to have an open-heart, that is the willingness to accept other persons just as they are, to have in humility the knowledge that nothing outside of oneself can take away one's god-given core, are at least essential to unity. Perhaps unity is like honoring the wild flowers, clouds, and wind from we know not where.

