

delegates sharing with delegates

March 2016

Greetings from the Delegates Sharing Workgroup. This (virtual) workgroup was formed to foster WSC unity by creating a session for regional delegates and alternates to talk about issues they find important and to exchange experiences. The workgroup is also helping to plan the pre-WSC Unity Day.

RDs and ADs offered information in a survey to help plan the WSC sessions—and also shared ideas that will be helpful before the WSC. So we're sharing your ideas and tips here and in upcoming mailings. This one focuses on "Conference season" and early WSC preparations.

**your ideas,
your experiences**

The WSC is about the big picture: understanding all of NA. Somehow our separate regional perceptions and voices need to meld into one. This involves RDs and ADs considering the conscience of all regions, not just their own.

We're well aware that some of us only carry votes from our regions, but when we enter new business we are, in fact, delegated the trust to make decisions together with other

delegates to benefit our Fellowship as a whole. We are all a vital part of making that happen. We recognize this can be a frightening task, but relax—you are not alone. We are doing this together; sometimes loudly, sometimes with passion or indifference, but in the end we are and have to be united for the Fellowship as a part of our worldwide conscience.



having a voice...

Everyone wants to be heard at the Conference. One delegate fears not having a voice at the WSC if he is not clear in expressing his thoughts and questions. Another alternate delegate remembers the great feeling of a majority of voices coming together in agreement at the 2014 WSC when minor changes were made to a set of motions. **And the Conference has its challenges, too.** "During small group discussions, they didn't allow me to give any input," lamented another AD. She felt left out and not a part of the process. Some more vocal and persistent members seem to use the WSC to forward personal agendas and they try to turn the Conference into a political battlefield. As long as we (the participants) allow this behavior, we are not able to move forward. As one of our peers suggested, learn from the assertive ones, **stand up, speak up, participate, show up**, and don't let this slip through. Bring your program with you, and try not to get caught up in the emotional drama that can happen.

...in a language other than english

For many delegates, the greatest communication challenge is not what is said, but in what language it is spoken. Think about this. As someone speaks, **the listener must first hear the words in English** and then hear them in his own language—either through an interpreter or by interpreting those words and meanings into his own language. After that, he must process how this affects his understanding of a topic, a vote, a comment he wants to make, or information he'll want to report back to his region. It is a **delicate and demanding process**, which is why we are constantly reminded to "slow down and back up" so that everyone can keep up with what is being said.

If you are a non-English speaker, find someone who has WSC experience and a good grasp of English. Translating **while understanding takes a lot of energy**, so be prepared to use that energy. Quite often, points are easier to understand when shared in a social situation, so try to spend time talking to other delegates on the breaks.

Also, **be thoughtful of members for whom English is not their first language.** Not only do they have to absorb everything that is being said, but they need to translate as they are going as well. That is a lot of extra work! And remember to factor in that they may also be helping other non-English members to understand as well.

participating

Although the World Service Conference officially opens on Sunday, 24 April, spending time together on the 23rd is a great way to get to know each other. In addition to tours and lunch at the World Service Office, we'll gather along with local members in workshops that afternoon, and for a recovery meeting and social events that night.

Business is business, but we know that coming together as fellow NA members helps us build strong bonds and move through the Conference week in unity. So, we'll also have the Delegates Sharing session during the Conference week to learn more about one another, refresh our spirits, and renew our connections.

NA service bodies worldwide work together in a spirit of unity and cooperation to support the groups in carrying our message of recovery.

A Vision for NA Service

being there

The WSC is a magnificent event—and highly demanding in many ways. Worldwide delegates work together for the common good of NA, so there are naturally a lot of dynamics in play. There are very assertive members; others are shy, and some are overwhelmed, especially those new to the Conference. We need to take care of each other. We've been doing this for years and we're always getting better. Some of us who have been to the WSC suggest:

- ◆ If it's all too much, share it with others. Ground yourself, eat well, and get adequate sleep.
- ◆ Be considerate to members at their first WSC. There is a lot of pressure and it can be very stressful.
- ◆ Make it easier for others by explaining your points clearly and concisely; and make it inviting for them to ask questions.
- ◆ Be present, accessible, responsive, and maintain excellent communication.
- ◆ Consider pairing up with a member who has been there before.
- ◆ Practice patience and tolerance. Focus only on the Conference and NA-related items.
- ◆ Mentorship is always important. It's natural to be with your RD or AD, but also try to spend time with others to exchange ideas and thoughts and to learn from each other.

And when the 2016 World Service Conference comes to a close, what will we take home to our regions besides statistics and facts? One delegate says, "... once you get the opportunity to experience the WSC, your whole view...changes." And we'll also take home:

Tools for communicating about the unity of our worldwide Fellowship, like videos from regions all over the world.

Ideas, processes, and information to motivate and encourage our members and services.

Inspiration from stories of NA's development, growth, and successes in overcoming struggles.

Understanding that what we do makes a difference, that NA is bigger than our own recovery and our own service bodies; that we are a living example of our Vision for NA Service.

going home

Hope that we have devoted time to discuss how we overcome disunity and work together to build and attain unity.

Plus...

abundance, acceptance, accountability, autonomy, awakening, awareness, balance, beauty, belief, caring, change, clarity, commitment, compassion, concern, confidence, conscience, empathy, encouragement, enlightenment, enthusiasm, experience, faith, fellowship, fidelity, flexibility, friendship, freedom, generosity, goodwill, grace, gratitude, harmony, healing, honesty, mercy, open-mindedness, patience, perseverance, powerlessness, principles, prudence, purpose, respect, responsibility, self-acceptance, self-respect, selflessness, sensitivity, serenity, spirituality, strength, surrender, survival, thoughtfulness, tolerance, trust, truth, unconditional love, unity, vigilance, vision... **and wisdom.**