

## **Introduction**

How many times have we heard of service commitments struggling to be filled? This is a continuing theme at all levels of NA service. Whatever the reason for this dilemma, it does not have to stay like this. The reasoning behind this pamphlet is to dispel the misconceptions about NA service through simple information.

**“Service...where the Steps meet the Traditions and Concepts on the road of recovery”**

## **What does "Being of Service" mean in NA?**

Our literature says that our primary purpose in Narcotics Anonymous is to “*Carry the message to the addict who still suffers.*” We do this by being of service. Service comes in many forms and can be undertaken by anyone. Often NA members will share about “being of service” in our regular meetings. When we are new, it’s easy to wonder “exactly what does that mean.” Though some NA service centers (such as the World Service Office) have special workers who are paid, the majority of tasks completed for NA are completed by individual members who volunteer their time. Meetings don’t just happen; we have to make them happen.

## **Why should I get involved in NA service?**

This is easy to answer as “*We only keep what we have by giving it away.*” Our greatest tool for carrying out our primary purpose is the NA group, and without individuals doing service, the NA group would not survive. In our Basic Text it says that “*Our survival is directly related to the survival of the group and the Fellowship.*” We have also found that service is an integral part of personal recovery in NA and allows us to receive the full benefits that this program has to offer.

Our literature also says that “*The therapeutic value of one addict helping another is without parallel.*” You’ve probably heard NA members share about being involved in service is that they feel good about it. One of the things we learn in our recovery is that the core of our disease is self-obsession. Another thing we learn is that providing selfless service to NA. We often hear members share about the posi-

tive feelings they have as a result of volunteering their time to be of service to NA. Ultimately, being of service to NA is one way many of our members choose to demonstrate their gratitude for all that NA has given to them.

## **Getting started with a Home Group**

One of the best ways to get started in NA service is to decide which group you would most like to give back to. A lot of members will call this their “home group”. This is a meeting you plan to attend regularly where you get to know some of the people and let them get to know you. Choosing a home group is very important if you want to stay clean. We strongly suggest you choose a home group early on. Some of the ways NA members will be of service to their home group are:

- Showing up early to help set up the meeting
- Greet members as they arrive to the meeting
- Making coffee
- Volunteering to chair the meeting
- Staying after the meeting to help clean up
- It is also suggested that you attend your home group’s business meeting.
- Anyone can get involved, if they choose to from the first day of their recovery.

**Who do you think did all of these things at your first meeting?**

## **What is a Business meeting?**

Most NA groups have a monthly meeting that is called a business meeting. Some groups also call this their group conscience meeting. This monthly meeting is a time for home group members to discuss anything that is important for being able to fulfill the primary purpose of any NA group...*“To carry the message to the addict who still suffers”*. Discussions during the business meeting may include such things as making sure there is a good supply of NA books and other literature on hand for regular meetings. It is also a time for groups to discuss how well their home group is carrying the message of recovery to the still suffering addict. This may include discussion of the group’s meeting format, any regular distractions/problems that need to be addressed, which group members will be taking

on specific tasks, and what needs to be done with the money we collected. It is suggested that each group elect people for certain service positions, such as Group Service Representative (GSR), who represents the group at the area meeting; Secretary, who chairs and records what happens at the business meeting and who may also keep track of supplies and literature; Treasurer, who keeps track of all of the group’s money and gives a report at the business meeting and who may also make sure the group has supplies and literature. Each of these positions has a co-position to help out and learn the position. Group conscience is also where group members decide who will chair the meetings, are the 12 Traditions and 12 Concepts of NA being followed, and if there is anything our area needs to do for our group? Since NA groups are the final authority on all issues relating to NA, this is also a time when members discuss the actions and activities of the Area Service Committee (ASC).

**We encourage you to choose a Home Group and become involved immediately!**

All groups welcome new members. Many of us have found that our home group is the beginning of our path of service to NA. “*It Works How and Why*” says, “*Our groups work as well as they do because they keep it simple...*” Yet for all its emphasis on keeping things simple, Tradition Nine is not an excuse for disorganized service work; instead, it recognizes that our fellowship does require a certain degree of organization to fulfill its primary purpose. Rather than recommend that NA groups themselves become organized, Tradition Nine suggests that groups organize separate boards and committees to serve their needs. Following is a description of our area and some of its duties.

## **What is an NA Area?**

Areas serve the groups that are in particular geographic locations. There are thousands of areas of Narcotics Anonymous throughout our Worldwide Fellowship. Areas in particular geographic locations come together to form a Regional Service Committee (RSC); creating the majority of the current service structure in Narcotics Anonymous today.

## **What is the Area all about?**

The purpose of the area is to provide services for the groups that would be difficult for those groups to provide without taking away from the time and resources they need to focus on carrying the message of recovery to the addict who still

suffers. The area also has several subcommittees that have specific tasks. Each subcommittee has a Chair that is elected by the GSR's in attendance at the Area meetings when elections take place. The following is a brief description of each subcommittee:

- ◆ Hospitals & Institutions (H&I): Carries NA meetings into institutions such as treatment centers, jails, prisons and hospitals.
- ◆ Public Information (PI): Informs the public, professionals and schools that NA exists in the community and is a viable resource of recovery from the disease of addiction.
- ◆ Literature Sales: Keeps an inventory and supplies local groups with literature, key tags, medallions and other NA merchandise.
- ◆ Literature Development: Reviews new NA literature that is being proposed for distribution to the NA fellowship.
- ◆ Activities: Manages recovery events such as picnics, dances, game nights, canoe trips, speakathons etc.
- ◆ Outreach: Serves as the outstretched hand of an established NA community to isolated groups and addicts, particularly large rural areas, insuring that all addicts have the opportunity to attend NA meetings.

Some of these sub-committees meet separately on a regular basis; others meet during Area Service Committee (ASC) meeting. If you would like to help with any of these, it is suggested you attend the sub-committee's meeting. You could also attend the Area Service Committee meeting. Any addict may attend the area meeting or any of the sub-committee meetings. It is also important to know that the Area and subcommittees are accountable to the groups of this area.

### What does the Area look like?

The Area Service Committee (ASC) looks like a group business meeting. The elected members of the ASC are called "trusted servants" in NA. They have a Chairperson (also known as Facilitator), Vice-Chairperson (Co-Facilitator), Secretary, Co-Secretary, Treasurer and Co-Treasurer. One trusted servant position you will become familiar with as soon as you get a home group is Group Service Representative (GSR). This is an NA member that is elected to represent your home group at the ASC meeting. GSR's carry the conscience of their home group at the ASC. These GSR's

form the foundation of our service structure. GSRs provide constant, active influence over the discussions being carried on within the service structure. They do this by participating in Area Service Committee meetings, attending forums and assemblies at both the area and regional levels, and joining in the work of an ASC subcommittee. If we are vigilant in choosing stable, qualified leaders at this level of service, the remainder of the structure will almost certainly be sound. From this strong foundation, a service structure can be built that will nourish, inform, and support the groups in the same way that the groups nourish and support the structure. They are also responsible for reporting the actions and activities of the ASC back to the members of their home group. Areas also have a Regional Committee Member (RCM) and an alternate (RCMA) who represent their area at a Regional Service Conference (RSC). Their responsibilities include communicating area concerns to the RSC and informing their respective area of activities happening around the region to help foster unity. Clear, concise communication are essential to the survival of NA as a whole.

### Should I get involved?

**Absolutely!** We encourage you to choose a home group and become involved immediately. Many of us have found that our home group is the beginning of our path of service to NA. Many of us have also discussed being of service with our sponsor and found he or she is encouraging and may have some additional suggestions for our involvement. Being involved in NA service helps us to really feel like a part of something greater than ourselves. Most addicts with multiple years clean will tell you that they are or have been involved in service to NA in one form or another. Unity is the main principle of our First Tradition, and we welcome you to experience that unity through service to NA!



# Being of Service in Narcotics Anonymous



This is WRSC approved literature

This is NOT Fellowship approved literature

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