

The conscience of this group encourages and promotes a safe and secure environment for everyone, especially newcomers. We appeal to members to refrain from entering intimate relations with newcomers. Sexual harassment, harmful or inappropriate behaviour is not tolerated in this group. If you need support, approach a member of this group, your sponsor, or a member of NA that you trust.



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ROHE ORA HEALTHY BOUNDARIES

ENSURING SAFETY FOR EVERYONE IN NARCOTICS ANONYMOUS

GUIDELINES FOR DEALING WITH PREDATORY BEHAVIOUR
PREPARED BY THE AOTEAROA NEW ZEALAND REGIONAL
SERVICE COMMITTEE

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0800 NA TODAY (0800 628 632)

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WHAKAORA TE TANGATA I TE TUPUHI
Humans recovering from addiction.

He wāhi tō te katoa Everyone has a place in NA

Everyone is welcome here.

All Narcotics Anonymous (NA) members are expected to maintain a productive environment that is free from harassing or disruptive activity. No form of harassment will be tolerated, including harassment for the following reasons: race, colour, national origin, religion, disability, pregnancy, age, military status or gender. Special attention should be paid to the prohibition of sexual harassment.

This behaviour is displayed by all genders.

Everyone has a responsibility to keep the environment free of any form of harassment, and in particular sexual harassment. No one is to threaten or insinuate, either explicitly or implicitly, that a person's refusal or willingness to submit to sexual advances will affect an NA member's safety or freedom to attend meetings.

This issue happens across all genders, race or cultural identity, sexual orientation, age groups and religious beliefs. As we know, secrets and shame flourish in the dark so it's important to keep this issue out in the open.

Whakamāramatanga Defining predatory behaviour

- Unwanted physical contact or contact of any kind, including sexual flirtations, touching, advances or propositions
- Verbal harassment of a sexual nature, such as lewd comments, sexual jokes or references, and sharing sensitive and offensive personal information
- Demeaning, insulting, intimidating, or sexually suggestive comments about an individual
- The display of demeaning, insulting, intimidating, or sexually suggestive objects, pictures, or photographs

- Demeaning, insulting, intimidating, or sexually suggestive written, recorded, or electronically transmitted messages, such as email, and text messaging
- Attention either in person or via electronic means suggesting meeting up or offers of support to newcomers

Predatory behaviour doesn't only happen in mixed groups, it can happen everywhere – in common needs meetings, before and after the meeting, at social gatherings, and in everyday life entirely outside the context of NA meetings.

Zoom meetings can also be an avenue for targeting people with unwanted attention – by using the chat function for inappropriate suggestions or invitations to meet and/or communicate outside the meeting.

Āhuatanga noa Common situations

- An older member pressuring a younger member
- Younger members pressuring other younger members
- Anyone soliciting contact details or phone numbers covertly or indirectly
- Using hospitals and institutions (hēi) to pick up newcomers
- Younger members preying on older members
- Someone with substantial clean time picking up newcomers
- Seemingly casual Facebook or Instagram messages to catch up
- Any one-on-one invitation that is not wanted or sought out
- Hugs or touching that makes you feel uncomfortable
- Kissing or hugging someone you don't know – or who clearly doesn't want physical contact
- Sharing about intimate or inappropriate issues in meetings, things that can be sexually suggestive or not relevant to recovery

Mahia he mahi Taking action

Any person who believes that someone's actions or words constitute unwelcome harassment has a responsibility to report or complain about the situation as soon as possible. The report or complaint should be made to your sponsor, a member of your homegroup, or someone in recovery with clean time who you trust.

The behaviour is not your responsibility to hide or witness alone. We have a collective duty to protect each other and keep NA safe for all who need it. The person responsible for the behaviour needs to know they too are seen and can find help if they need it – but that this behaviour will not be tolerated in NA. Always ask for help with dealing with this behaviour.

You will always be listened to, if you decide to bring a grievance to your area or the region. Seek support from people you know and trust. As a final resort, you can put out a protection order on the person. The perpetrator has a right to take a grievance to the Regional Service Committee (RSC) or Area Service Committee (ASC) if targeted with a protection order and their rights will be respected.

Anything serious (criminal behaviour) needs to go straight to the Police. NA is not the law.

Tātou katoa Everyone is responsible

Anyone is capable of this behaviour. Talk to the person displaying the behaviour to help them to let go of any denial. Don't do it one on one, take support with you, ask people with good recovery and experience, strength and hope to deal with this in a loving way.

Choose a safe space for a conversation. Be gentle, loving and firm and choose your language carefully. For example; "I've become aware, this is unacceptable, it's not ok, how can we support you to change this?"

To the person receiving unwanted attention – this is not your secret to keep, you didn't cause it, ask for support from older cleaner members. You are encouraged to speak up for yourself. Ask other members to help you find the right words.

Take personal responsibility for your own safety – have a sponsor, read the literature, develop friendships with people you trust, join a homegroup, talk about how you feel and listen to others. It is ok if you initially feel you have to say yes or agree to something you feel uncomfortable with, you can change your mind at any time. What you didn't care about in the beginning becomes less tolerable over time.

You don't have to explain yourself – no is a complete sentence!

Rōpū kāinga Homegroups

Collectively take responsibility for keeping an eye on newcomers particularly. Approach newcomers and ask them how they can be supported. Have a group conscience and agree on an approach towards newcomers. Nominate a person to greet newcomers at the door. Create an email address for confidential feedback or support so people can report their experiences.

Add the statement below to your homegroup preambles. Why – because you are stating in every meeting that this behaviour is not tolerated and setting a standard. It keeps the issue top of mind every week.

STATEMENT FOR PREAMBLES, TO BE READ OUT AT MEETINGS

"The conscience of this group encourages and promotes a safe and secure environment for everyone, especially newcomers. We appeal to members to refrain from entering intimate relations with newcomers. Sexual harassment, harmful or inappropriate behaviour is not tolerated in this group. If you need support, approach a member of this group, your sponsor, or a member of NA that you trust."