From the editor

We’re celebrating 60 years of NA: where we’ve been, where we are, and where we’re going! We have a present-day fellowship development feature, a classic history piece (with a printable poster on page 10), and a retrospective sampling of WCNA articles.

Many of you are reading this at WCNA 35 in the Pennsylvania Convention Center of Philadelphia. Maybe you’re reading The NA Way on your smartphone, tablet, or desktop; where you also have eLit like the Basic Text, It Works: How and Why, and Sponsorship. We can find meetings using the NA Meeting Search app and share our service experience and resources online.

We’ll soon commemorate the 30th anniversary of our first book, with a special edition Basic Text. An electronic version of our newest book, Living Clean, is being developed, and a Traditions book is in the works. What a contrast to the early days of our fellowship! Yet, our message and primary purpose—and our members’ passion—remain the same.

De J, Editor

There is a kind of inevitability to the story of our growth—a kind of deliberate destiny that has become beautifully manifest in each and every addict today who is clean by virtue of this program—and by virtue of the efforts of the many members who came before us…. May we never take for granted the gift that we have been freely given in the program of Narcotics Anonymous.

Miracles Happen, Afterward

Electronic subscribers can click here for exclusive NA history content.

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The NA Way Magazine welcomes letters from all readers. Letters to the editor can respond to any article that has appeared in The NA Way, or can simply be a viewpoint about an issue of concern in the NA Fellowship. Letters should be no more than 250 words, and we reserve the right to edit. All letters must include a signature, valid address, and phone number. First name and last initial will be used as the signature line unless the writer requests anonymity.
Fellowship development:

Our First Tradition at work

Our hearts swell when we hear of NA being started in new places around the world, but FD is an essential, ongoing effort for all NA communities, whether they are brand new, growing, or have been around for many, many years. Fellowship development benefits NA as a whole by fostering our common welfare and unity, supporting Fellowship growth, and helping NA groups and communities to fulfill our primary purpose of carrying the NA message. In the broadest sense, fellowship development is providing services to develop and strengthen NA members, groups, service bodies, and NA communities.

Fellowship development is local members attending new or struggling meetings or working together to learn about and practice NA principles in their service efforts. Service bodies that train and mentor their trusted servants and that collaborate to support and grow their NA communities are providing fellowship development. Still other FD endeavors establish NA where it has not existed before, which includes members, groups, and service bodies learning and working together, blazing a new recovery path. FD also entails working with local members on public relations efforts to establish relationships with professionals, government agencies, and the greater community to help addicts find recovery in Narcotics Anonymous.

In order to provide FD services, some area service committees have an FD or outreach subcommittee that helps support new and struggling groups in their area. In other places, neighboring groups or areas may combine efforts to help develop or strengthen their NA communities. Regional service committees, zones, and NA World Services can also approach fellowship development in broader geographic areas or in communities that are not connected to existing NA service bodies and communities. These efforts help establish NA in new places or support emerging NA communities. The purpose of fellowship development is to cultivate and strengthen NA so that our program is a respected and viable option for those seeking recovery.

Regardless of the specific fellowship development effort, as in all of our NA services, it helps to start with a base of spiritual principles—mixed with a healthy dose of planning and preparation. Principles such as self-support, autonomy, unity, goodwill, open-mindedness, trust, and humility are essential to fellowship development. Trusted servants can strive to find the balance between carrying the message and respecting individuals’ and groups’ autonomy. When we embark on FD without preconceived ideas about members and groups that may not seem as “developed” as our own, we are likely to have a more fruitful experience.

For example, we want to approach members with goodwill and with a lack of judgment. Groups and service bodies operate in a variety of ways and it is not the job of those performing fellowship development services to manage the groups or committees they
are trying to support. Instead, we can offer tools that help our members and trusted servants find their own solutions. Members, groups, and developing NA communities are encouraged to recognize their ability to support themselves and the ways their contributions manifest NA’s principle of self-support. Empowering members and groups with the necessary service materials and support is an important foundation of strong fellowship development efforts. Our ability to respectfully support groups and members gives them a better chance to more effectively carry NA’s message to suffering addicts.

Before launching a fellowship development project, it is also important to develop a plan and prioritize ideas that can be supported by available resources. Rather than assuming we know what is needed, we assess the situation by engaging local members in discussions to identify their challenges and hopes. Planning Basics can help to frame and implement a thorough plan.

Participating in something bigger than ourselves reminds us that each NA member, group, service body, and community is part of a greater whole. Through fellowship development, we enhance our own personal recovery and we contribute to the growth and development of our worldwide fellowship, supporting our vision that Narcotics Anonymous has universal recognition and respect as a viable program of recovery.

Fellowship development isn’t just something that happens in “other” countries. Fellowship development opportunities are everywhere in NA, and our members and service bodies continually work to fulfill our primary purpose. In this and future issues of The NA Way, we’ll share the FD experiences (like those listed below) of NA communities around the world and around the corner.

- NA communities strengthen their relationships with statewide healthcare, addiction treatment, and criminal justice agencies;
- Area and regional service committees organize their meetings to include regular service training for local members;
- Multiple NA communities and service bodies collaborate to establish, develop, and strengthen new and emerging NA communities;
- NA members support geographically remote or struggling meetings;
- Neighboring service bodies identify duplication of services and collaborate to more effectively use their resources and broaden their efforts;
- Home groups regularly assess and improve their meeting’s atmosphere of recovery;
- Service bodies explore and implement innovative ways to interact with local NA members and groups.

This is just a sampling of the ways NA communities are contributing to NA’s fellowship development. Please tell us about your NA community’s FD experiences, ideas, and successes so that we can share them with the rest of the fellowship here in The NA Way Magazine. Write to us at naway@na.org.

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Pre-WCNA PR in the Mid-Atlantic Region

Recently I had an opportunity to meet with treatment professionals in my state’s department of corrections and department of drug and alcohol programs. This was a collaborative effort. NA World Services, as part of pre-WCNA public relations efforts, invited me, as RDA for the Mid-Atlantic Region, to attend. I was nervous about these meetings, as I have had the perception that as an addict and member of Narcotics Anonymous, I would be pre-judged by any government agency. Many of us have not had good relations with or have had bad experiences with any form of government. I also did not see how we could work together to move forward with our primary purpose.

I was pleasantly surprised by the welcome I received from both agencies. It seems that I was guilty of pre-judging more so than the people I was afraid would judge me. The people we met with had quite a bit of respect for and belief in the viability of our program of recovery. These treatment professionals expressed the same goal that we have: getting addicts to meetings so they can lose the desire to use and find a new way of life.

My other concern was that working with these agencies would be an endorsement of them. They were both very interested in keeping within our Traditions and not overstepping any boundaries. I realize now that these agencies endorsing the program of Narcotics Anonymous does not equate to Narcotics Anonymous endorsing them. I am really looking forward to being able to reach more addicts with the help of people who share the desire to help addicts find recovery.

Kathy M, Regional Delegate Alternate, Mid-Atlantic Region, USA

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NA World Services
NA Meeting Search App

Find NA meetings anywhere in the world!
App also includes daily Just for Today meditation.

Android

iTunes

This does not constitute an endorsement of or affiliation with these vendors.
A collaborative PR effort

19 July 2013: Morning PR presentation. The event is a collaboration of the Eastern Nebraska and South Western Iowa Areas, the Nebraska Region, and the Plains States Zone. This event arose from an area PR meeting discussion about how we could bridge the gap between NA and a local community that has declined our services for years. We decided to pool our resources for a combined PR effort when we would be hosting an upcoming Plains State Zonal Forum.

We created a flyer to be used within and outside of the Fellowship. We sent the flyer and an invitation letter and agenda to law enforcement, corrections, and drug court officials in a nine-county radius of the Omaha/Council Bluffs metro area. We also sent the materials to all of our current PR contacts including health/mental health care facilities and treatment and detox facilities in that area. We sent the invitations the first week of June 2013 (most were sent electronically), preceded by a phone call in most cases, and we will follow up with another email and phone call around the first of July. This will help us determine how many attendees to expect so that we can better plan for the event. We currently have space for about 150 people, but can expand that if needed.

More will be revealed!

Mark B, Regional Delegate, Nebraska Region, USA

Integrity, trust, and respect

Being of service in NA by interfacing with the criminal justice system in the state of California has been priceless. I currently serve on an NA task group that has been active for close to four years. Before us, other trusted servants laid a foundation so we could be successful. Because of our clear guidelines and consistent service, long-standing rules for volunteer access have improved. California Department of Corrections staff have been trained about what NA does and how it helps.

Communicating, training, and demonstrating patience and humility in selfless service have helped more addicts get cleared to serve in correctional facilities, which means more H&I meetings have been started and regularly attended. The still-suffering addict has more opportunities to get clean because NA volunteers in our state show up to carry the message—and they show up again for the next meeting.

In the course of our efforts, the State of California has astounded our task group by doing things we have not seen in all of our years of service. For example, all prisons in the state participated in the 2011 Unity Day call-in so that inmate addicts could listen to the closing speaker at our World Convention. Many of those inmates’ lives were changed, as was evident from the written and personal communication we had with them after the event.

Building these relationships with integrity has helped to develop trust and respect for NA, and has opened many doors for better relations not just state level, but also at federal and county levels. And all of these efforts and positive relationships help us with our primary purpose: to carry the message to the addict who still suffers.

Jerome P.
Northern California H&I PR, USA

It is our collective service efforts that help other addicts find recovery. NA has been growing since the 1950s because of members working together to further NA’s primary purpose. Many of us are familiar with the group’s power to carry the message of recovery to addicts coming to our meetings, and we use groups of members in service the same way. We can see our First Tradition at work when members put their individual wants and needs aside for NA’s common good. Working together to make NA more visible and viable in our local communities not only helps addicts find our program, but is a powerful way of practicing the unity described in the First Tradition.

Public Relations Handbook, Chapter 12—Fellowship Development
New England Region FD Committee

When recovering addicts come together in service, great things happen. The New England Region formed a fellowship development committee that is a marriage of three ideas. While an ad hoc committee was considering a way to rotate our RSC meetings amongst our member areas, we also found a solution to the demands on our regional delegate team.

First, we devised a rotation plan that takes us to each of our 13 areas (including our two island-based areas) at least once during each two-year cycle. The rotation cycle mirrors that of the World Service Conference, so we incorporated pre-WSC CAR workshops and a post-WSC summary meeting.

Second, our RD team often facilitates discussion and training workshops in our member areas, so we proposed that each regional meeting weekend include such sessions, facilitated by the Fellowship Development Committee. Workshops can be on an established set of topics (like NA’s Issue Discussion Topics, service pamphlet topics, etc.) or the hosting area can request a topic specific to their interests or concerns. (Areas and groups can also request training sessions to be held at times other than the regional weekend.)

Finally, in addition to others who may want to be involved in FD service, we invited our past regional delegates to be founding members of the FD Committee. This will help us to carry out the rotating workshops and additional training requests. In addition, we see this as a great way to continue to engage past delegates and to continue benefiting from their years of experience. It’s a win-win-win situation!

Jaime V. Regional Delegate, New England Region, USA

Asia Pacific Forum FD

NA World Services provides support with literature and session materials for many FD efforts around the world. There were quite a few APF FD trips in the past year including the following.

India (Kolkata) members traveled to Sikkim, where harsh penalties for convicted addicts make it difficult to rejoin society or get any kind of a job, making recovery seem like not much of a worthwhile option.

The India Regional Convention in Darjeeling had huge workshop attendance, in part because they called their workshops “interactive sessions.” Similarly, at the Chennai Convention, some imaginative topics included “Women in NA.”

APF members assisted at a NAWS presentation/workshop in Bali, Indonesia, in October 2012.

Iran members held local FD workshops within Iran and also traveled to Afghanistan to hold workshops and assist in organizing local services and area meetings.

Japan members are continuing to visit Korea. Bahrain members held a workshop in Qatar. NERF (Northeast Regional Forum) members visited remote parts of the northeastern Indian states, Silchar and Mizoram. And there are already requests for APF FD assistance in the coming months in Indonesia and Siberia.

Your Recovery Journey in The NAW Way Magazine

We want your stories, ideas, opinions, experiences, artwork, photos, graphic designs—and whatever other media you use to share yourself and your recovery journey.

Find more information at www.naway.org and email us your submissions at naway@na.org.
What keeps me going to meetings

I have always gone to a heap of meetings. I enjoy them. I love the identification with my own kind, the humor and the sadness. I get strength and courage from hearing the stories of other addicts—listening to them and observing them going through hardships and staying clean. This helps me survive the challenges that life throws at me, and by connecting with others, I am more able to connect with myself. Addicts have a disease with many faces, including those of forgetfulness and self-centeredness. I can get so into my own head that I could completely forget that I am an addict—a sure-fire way for my past to become my future.

I need constant reinforcement—reminders that I can’t do any drugs, alcohol included. As a part of my life, I sometimes mingle with drinkers at events. Once, at a neighborhood holiday party, I started to drink from the wrong glass. Because I attend meetings regularly, I remembered that you can’t bust (relapse) by mistake. While my head said, “Drink it, Sue,” the choice was clear. In one direction lay the path of relapse and addiction; in the other, recovery. The decision was easy to make—the drink easy to walk away from.

When I know I am going to go through something challenging, like major surgery, I increase my meeting attendance. This gives me enough credit in my bank to help me survive being given narcotics after an operation. I have been able to say to the nurse, “Actually, you know, the pain is much better today. I don’t think I need any more pain medication.” Let me tell you, those words don’t come from my brain; it only knows “more”! In my addiction, I looked forward to surgery because I liked anesthetics—total nothingness. Now I care if I wake up—and I care if I relapse!

Apart from needing constant reinforcement and reminders that I can’t do any drugs, I also need to get away from self. I can get so into my head that it feels like I have a giant pumpkin on my shoulders instead of a head. Just by listening to someone else share, the pumpkin starts to shrink until I become myself again. I become part of the human race again—a much better place for me than locked in my mind with my heart back in the deep freeze.

In cleantime I have developed a taste for traveling. I have attended NA meetings all around the world. I love connecting with other addicts when I travel because it gives me a special insider’s view of other cultures. And this is so much better than being just a tourist.

Though I’ve been around a fair while now, I still attend meetings about three times a week, sometimes more. I know I go a little off quite quickly without them. I become angry and less tolerant, and I lose perspective. The only times I haven’t gone regularly are when I have been somewhere without meetings. Literature and tapes have had to do then, but I love getting back, particularly to my home group and the other meetings I regularly attend.
I have had low points in recovery. Life on life’s terms means we have to face difficult and challenging periods as well as the good times. Because of meetings, I have stayed in the game in which so much is possible as long as I am clean and working my program.

Sue H, Sydney, Australia

Köszönjük!

My name is Feri and I’m an addict from Hungary. More than twelve years ago when I came to the program, the Hungarian NA community was very young and small. We had few meetings in only two cities and we had no translated literature. Now NA is growing in Hungary, with many meetings in eight cities—and this year we have the approved Hungarian Basic Text.

When I held the new Hungarian Basic Text in my hands I was happy and grateful. Thank you, NA! Hugs from Hungary.

Feri S, Pecs, Hungary

Matters affecting NA as a whole

Do you know what I need to remember? Sometimes I forget that we are all addicts. Sometimes I forget that not all of us work the steps all the time. Sometimes I forget that not all of us at a meeting are necessarily clean. Sometimes I forget that cleanness does not equal recovery. Sometimes I forget that we should know better. Sometimes I forget that addicts act like addicts!

We had a few incidents over the weekend during our area convention. A purse was pilfered, and a cell phone stolen. A car was “keyed” in the parking lot, ruining the paint, and a hot-dog tailgate party was started there as well. Some members saved too many seats during the main meeting and acted rudely when asked by the convention committee not to do so. And then some addict thought it was a good idea to set off a fireworks display in the hotel parking lot, which is located next to an airport—federal airspace.

With over 2,000 addicts attending the convention throughout the weekend, I believe we behaved pretty darn well, overall.

Here, however, is the problem: The guy who had his car keyed told me, “I’m never coming back.” The trusted servants who were yelled at by the members who were trying to save seats do not want to be of service any longer because they feel hurt and betrayed. The girl whose phone was stolen understood her responsibility, and she will be back, but the hotel still does not know whether our convention committee will be charged a $500 fine for the fireworks show, and the local police see us as a bunch of hooligans. They would rather not see us return to their city ever again.

We tried to explain that it was just one person who committed this stupid act, but the police and hotel did not want to listen. We all were balled up into one big lump of stupid, careless addicts who—in the eyes of those outside our fellowship—will never find recovery.

When we gather together in a group, we take these chances, but should we go back into the basements and shadows like before? No, we have made the choice to stand up and present ourselves in a manner that is attractive rather than promotional, and sometimes that attraction can be derailed by one of us in a crowd of 2,000.

On Monday night, after sleeping all day, I finally had a chance to hit an NA meeting. The meeting was in a church. This group has several meetings there, and other NA functions are held there as well. A school also holds classes in the church building. The group secretary reported that smokers would have to dispose of their cigarette butts in the cans provided, or NA would lose its right to use the facility.

I went down to the smoking area only to find butts all over the ground. Who knows if the butts were even from us? The bottom line is that once we begin to meet at a place, we need to ensure that these facilities are cleaned; otherwise we run the risk of losing the facility.

So what can I do? I can remember that addicts sometimes act like addicts—and I, as a responsible member of our society, can do my best to keep things right. I can pick up cigarette butts, even if they are not mine. I can act in a manner that honors other members, and Narcotics Anonymous, wherever I go and with whomever I meet.

I, for one, am grateful for the opportunity to serve the area and the fellowship I love. When we act contrary to what is right, it hurts me deeply and makes me want to strike out and hurt those who hurt me, but I need to remember…

Kevin L, California, USA

The NA Way Magazine, April 2004

Now Recruiting
NA Way Roving Reporters

If you plan to attend WCNA 35 in Philadelphia, we have just the right service opportunity for you. Help us staff the NA Way table, register attendees for e-subscriptions, and gather stories and reports from our members there.

Interested?
naway@na.org

Electronic subscribers can click here for additional content.
Friends in serenity

Hello NA friends. My name is Saulius. I did this tattoo for my friend. It is the Serenity Prayer in Lithuanian. My friend and I have been best friends since childhood and are now in NA together. I hope you will enjoy this picture. Thanks and good luck. Keep coming back! it works if you work it!

Saulius L, Vilnius, Lithuania

Final words

At the end of each Asia Pacific Forum meeting, each participant shares about his or her personal and collective service and recovery experiences of the previous four days. These beautiful thoughts are then included in their minutes in a section called APF Body Final Words. From their most recent meeting:

Happy, hope, strength, unity, new feelings, courage, experience, knowledge, love, gratitude, value, humbled, educated, indebted, empowered, welcomed, friendships, beautiful people, looking forward, thankful, facing fears, safe, belonging, spiritual, free, love and gratitude, love and gratitude, love and gratitude.

Not the convention type

Hi, my name is Cansile. I am a recovering addict. I have over six years clean. Narcotics Anonymous was four years old in Turkey when I first came to the meeting rooms in Nisantasi, Istanbul, and finally started to stay clean after 27 years of active addiction. We were just a few people in recovery during those days, and we kept coming back.

Having a convention was a dream of our little NA community. It looked like a revolutionary thing! There we were: a small group of addicts in a small, crazy country, trying our best to live in recovery. A twelve-step program did not make sense to our society. We were lonely.

I was out of Istanbul at the time when friends from my home group called and asked me for some input for the convention. I felt so proud to be “a part of.”

The convention committee went into action. Once the date was set, I made a decision to go to Istanbul and join in the convention atmosphere. This was about seven months before the actual convention date.

Even though I experienced some difficult financial troubles during that time, I let go and turned it over to my Higher Power’s care. I started to trust and follow the process. Somehow, miraculously, I came to Istanbul at the end of September, and I started staying one night here and one night there until 17 October, the day our convention started.

I thought before that I was not a convention type, but after the first day I realized that I liked it more and more, especially being around a lot of recovering addicts, sharing, hugging, and talking.

So many things come to my mind as I am writing this now—all the details and energy it took us to do all the footwork, which finally brought us all together.

I know the committee worked long, hard hours, and they tried to run the whole convention correctly, following our Traditions and spiritual principles. Even though I was far away much of the time, they did not let me feel lonely or left out or like other loner NA members who live outside of Istanbul. We finally found ourselves with a sense of unity and the spirit of NA. I cannot tell you how much it meant for us to have the company of members from around the world.

Just for today, Turkey is planning for the second convention to take place in October 2004 in Fethiye. Thank God I am still in Istanbul, in my hometown with my home group, having surrendered to my new way of life. I am a grateful addict, happy in recovery. Thanks, NA!

Cansile, Istanbul, Turkey

The NA Way Magazine, April 2004

Editor’s Note: The Turkey Region will hold its eleventh convention in October 2013, celebrating the twentieth anniversary of NA in Turkey!

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For the first time in man’s entire history, a simple way has been proving itself in the lives of many addicts. It is available to us all. This is a simple spiritual—not religious—program, known as Narcotics Anonymous.

...we formed, in July of 1953, what we now know as Narcotics Anonymous.

Narcotics Anonymous, We Do Recover,
Available in 129 countries, 23 more than in 30,000 to nearly 62,000—and NA is now available in 129 countries, 23 more than in 2003!

Editor’s Note: Although written ten years ago as we celebrated NA’s 50th anniversary, this article still carries a strong message about our history and our future. Just ten years later, we have more than doubled the number of weekly NA meetings held worldwide—from 30,000 to nearly 62,000—and NA is now available in 129 countries, 23 more than in 2003!

NA at 50:
A legacy of hope; a future of promise

Today, in the year 2003, many of us cannot imagine life without Narcotics Anonymous. Those of us who are now recovering in NA have inherited the legacy of dreams our founding members left in our keep. We are witnesses to the miracles the simple solution of NA offers. Over the years we have all experienced, in one form or another, the truth of the early statement: "We cannot change the nature of the addict or addiction. We can help to change the old lie ‘Once an addict, always an addict,’ by striving to make recovery more available.”

From that first recovery meeting held in 1953 at the Salvation Army Dad’s Club in Sun Valley, California, USA, we as a fellowship have made great strides in carrying our message and making recovery more available. Even back then, the power of the therapeutic value of one addict helping another was evident, and there was hope to harness even more of that power through literature. Think about what it must have been like in those early years, trying to understand our steps and traditions with no books, not even a pamphlet to read and to give to newcomers, and no tools to guide us.

The first NA publication, "Narcotics Anonymous,” was printed around 1956. It was an eight-page information pamphlet containing "20 Questions," a synopsis of the NA program, the Twelve Steps, and the addresses of groups in Studio City and San Diego, California. This led to the creation of the original Little White Book in 1962, which began the legacy of literature development as we have come to know it today.

Those early years were not without struggle and turmoil. As NA began to grow beyond California, it was scattered, loosely structured, and members often did not have a clue as to what was going on with groups outside of their own. It soon became apparent to those early members that in order to have unity within the fellowship, some sort of structure was needed.

In 1975, The NA Tree was written, and the first World Service Conference was held in November 1976. That unity led to the publication of our Basic Text in 1983, which had dramatic effects on our fellowship. Almost 30 years after NA first began, we finally had a common voice that spoke for and to us all. The Basic Text helped to bring a sense of unity, legitimacy, and singleness of purpose to a fellowship that sometimes seemed dysfunctional and much too loosely organized.

It was not only literature that brought a sense of unity to our fellowship. Seeing addicts join together to celebrate recovery at conventions can be an awesome experience for many.

In 1971, the first world convention was held, though it was called a conference in the invitation letter. It was held in California with just a handful of attendees—nothing compared to some area and regional conventions we have today with thousands in attendance. And yet, seeing just those few addicts together sharing their experience, strength, and hope was enough for them to keep coming back. How fortunate for us!

Jimmy K, one of our founding members, summed up those early years of NA at a speech he gave during the 20th anniversary dinner for NA in 1973. He said: "...you know, we’re funny people, the more we try to do things together, the more we fight each other and the more..."
we tear each other apart—tear down the very thing we try to build. And that’s been the history, up until a few short years ago, of Narcotics Anonymous. We tore down as fast as we built. That’s the kind of people we are, and we must recognize that to recover. All of us must know the nature of the illness, the nature of the addict, and the nature of recovery. All these things are necessary to grow, and to live, and to change."

And change we have. Through the growth of our service structure and literature development, we have created tools to help us carry the NA message around the world. As NA’s growth has exploded, we are now faced with challenges which only ten years ago would have been unimaginable. With our expansion into countries struggling through religious wars, social and racial discrimination, and economic displacement, we are confronted with situations that test many of our program’s core principles. And yet the Twelve Traditions empower us to work together as one. Where else can members of so many different faiths and cultures come together to discuss spiritual principles and hug each other afterwards?

The longer each of us stays clean and in recovery, the more we become a power of example, and society has started to take a serious look at what the fellowship of NA has to offer. This is due in part to the efforts of our Public Information and Hospitals & Institutions work of carrying our message even further.

No longer forced to operate under the cloak of shadows and darkness, addicts today can freely attend any of the 30,000-plus NA meetings held in over 106 countries. In many places, laws have been changed or created that specifically address how addicts are treated. Treatment facilities operate in large metropolitan hubs and smaller cities on a global scale, as well as some of the most remote areas around the world. While the stigma of being an addict still follows many of us, society is slowly coming to accept that the lie is dead—we, as recovering addicts, do become productive and responsible members of society.

Part of our vision statement states that NA will have universal recognition and respect as a viable program of recovery. We have made tremendous progress but still have a long way to go. Part of that has to be learning how to carry our message with respect for both our diversity and our unity.

Where do we go from here?

We have been given such a remarkable gift in Narcotics Anonymous. By staying clean just for today we have the freedom to live a life many of us never thought possible. But the Fellowship of NA today is not some living, breathing entity that can maintain itself into eternity.

No. Narcotics Anonymous depends on you and you and you. It is the "we" that makes this fellowship so special. Together we can, but we must each offer our own contributions. The continuation of NA into the near and distant future depends upon the footwork each one of us does.

When was the last time you reached out to a newcomer and offered to take him out for coffee after a meeting?

Did you hurry over to that homeless woman, who was not dressed like you, as she slipped quietly out of the meeting? Did you hug her and offer to give her your phone number?

How many Twelfth Step calls have you been on in the last month? What about over the last year? Do you know what a Twelfth Step call is?

What are you doing to encourage diversity in your local NA community? Do you go to the same meetings every week or do you try different ones in different areas of your town?

Are we truly embracing the "regardless of" principle? Or are we getting too comfortable in our established meeting routines, so that newcomers feel as if they interrupted some special meeting instead of feeling like they just came home?

Are we becoming the inclusive fellowship we have been talking about? Does our literature speak to all of our members, or just to newcomers?

Jimmy K went on in his 1973 speech to say: "We’re growing faster now than we ever did before....There are more opportunities for each and every one of us to find our place in Narcotics Anony-

mous and carry the message of recovery to addicts all over the world now. But it’s going to take everything all of us got, it takes everything we’ve got to stay in this program. This is a blood-and-guts program.... If you’re an addict, you’ve got a lot of guts to begin with or you wouldn’t be here; so let’s put them to good use. Let’s take this thing that we’ve got and make something better, even than it is, out of it. You know that I’ve said many times, a long time ago, that a man without a dream is only half a man, and a fellowship without a vision is a farce. And I still believe that and know damn well that we can find fulfillment in living a day at a time here. And a day at a time, our vision and our fellowship can become a greater reality. This is a program of life and living. I’ve been serious long enough, and I hope for the rest of the night we all have a hell of a lot of fun, because that’s what living’s all about!"

The reality of recovery is our legacy. By staying clean and practicing the principles of the NA program, we are given the ability to share our message of hope with another person, and that person with another person, and so on and so on.

The power embodied in the simple principle of one addict helping another can bring our vision to fruition so that "Every addict in the world has the chance to experience our message in his or her own language and culture and find the opportunity for a new way of life."

The NA Way Magazine, July 2003
The first world convention
La Mirada, California, USA—1971

By 1970 we had probably ten to twelve meetings in the Los Angeles area—and that, plus a couple of meetings in Northern California, was all there was to NA, pretty much. The year following that was when Narcotics Anonymous had its first convention. We called it a world convention—the world as we knew it.… Around 200 people showed up—a pretty good-sized first convention. Most people stayed at friends’ houses. It was only a two-day event, Saturday and Sunday morning. We had a meeting Saturday night. I gave a little history of NA, up to then, and then I introduced Jimmy K (one of the NA Fellowship’s founders). There was another meeting Sunday morning, and then we all drove home.

BB, California, USA
The NA Way Magazine, December 1988

WCNA 15
Unified and Staying Alive
Washington, DC, USA—1985

One more time, we gathered together as a fellowship to share our worldwide message of recovery. The lie is indeed dead; addicts are recovering in droves.… In the last couple of years, more of the non-US NA Fellowship has been showing up at the world convention. In Chicago last year at the banquet roll call, four continents were represented.… And this year… England had a large group… [and there were members from] Canada, Ireland, Germany, the Bahamas, Australia, New Zealand, and Israel.… …the bid for the 1986 WCNA went to London, England. This is the first time the convention will be held outside of the United States. Enthusiasm for this decision was very high in DC. As we listened throughout the weekend to addicts share from the heart in all sorts of accents, we truly began to feel that worldwide community spirit. Addiction does not care about borders or languages or oceans or barriers of any kind. And today in Narcotics Anonymous it has become clear—recovery does care…. those barriers are being dismantled or overcome, one by one.

RH, Editor
The NA Way Magazine, October 1985

WCNA 18
Once a Dream, Now a Reality
Anaheim, California, USA—1988

Critical Mass

We sent an NA Way staff member into the crowds of NA’s eighteenth World Convention in September 1988 with a hand-held recorder. His job was to capture the spirit of the event and pass it along to you. If you were there, here’s a walk through the memories. If not, we’ve brought a little piece of it to you here.

I’ve never seen anything like this! The Saturday night banquet is over and we’re starting the big speaker meeting at NA’s eighteenth world convention—and the hall is just absolutely packed. We’re talking pretty close to a stadium-sized room at the Anaheim, California, Convention Center—a hundred thousand square feet of floor space, enough chairs for almost 7,000 people, and another couple thousand recovering addicts standing in the back…. They’ve begun the roll call. People from thirteen countries outside the US are here. They’re calling out “California!” now, and it looks like three-quarters of the hall is standing, a sort of happy howling, just about lifting the roof off this place.

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Now we’re in the cleantime countdown. A woman stood up with 27 years, the longest here. The bulge seems to be in the two- to five-year range…. It’s clear that 90% of the addicts attending have more than a year clean—and that’s just not been the case in years past. Now they’re counting down the days out there, and the excitement is rising. One guy near me held up his newborn daughter at the call for 15 days clean, to tumultuous cheers.

The NA Way Magazine, December 1988

WCNA 22
Imagine the Freedom
Toronto, Ontario, Canada—1992

This was my first world convention, and I didn’t know exactly what to expect. Obviously, I knew it would be bigger than a regular convention—I had never been to anything bigger than a regional convention before—but would it really be different? …There were apparently some 5,000 recovering addicts at the Unity Day celebration on Saturday evening, itself a new thing…. There was also something about the setting that felt different to me. The Metro Toronto Convention Centre is a very fine facility, almost entirely non-smoking. To be able to address oneself to recovery in a carcinogen-free environment is a true blessing…. But, on reflection, I don’t think it was primarily the place that made this convention the unique experience it was for me. I think it was the people…. They were people…from pretty much the four corners of the world….

WCNA 22 was a great experience for me. If this one was in any way typical of world conventions, I recommend going to them. Next year’s is in Chicago, so Windy City, here I come!

PB, Alberta, Canada

Originally published in Calgary Area’s Free Spirit newsletter.
Published in The NA Way Magazine July 1993

“Portugal!”

We are four Portuguese members, a little lost in this huge hall at the Toronto Metro Convention Centre. The convention ends tomorrow. After this dinner, the chairperson will call out each country present, followed by the cleantime countdown…. More than 5,000 addicts are seated tonight in this hall. Thousands of years of recovery. A whole experience capable of moving mountains! Portugal was represented at WCNA 22 with the largest delegation from a non-English-speaking country. Suddenly, we hear the voice in the speakers: “Portugal!” It isn’t just the four of us standing up. Four other souls seated next to us stand, too. They are immigrants to Canada, but Portuguese at heart. It was in Toronto that they found the rooms of NA, and it is there that they continue to return, where our Portuguese Basic Text is also useful.

JO, Portugal

The NA Way Magazine, February 1993

WCNA 21
The Gift
Sydney, Australia—1991

Almost a year and a half ago, I was sitting in a meeting and our GSR gave a report about where the 1991 NA World Convention was going to be held—Australia! I was amazed to think how large the Narcotics Anonymous Fellowship had grown…. Though I had no intention of going, I did know a few people who were, and I was excited for them. I knew “The Gift” truly would be just that:…. I was going home one day to cover for one of our regular phonenumber volunteers who was at the convention in Australia. As I arrived home, my husband was walking out the door—to stand in for a panel chairperson who was also at the convention. We both understood, as we later discussed, that even though we were not attending the convention, we had been given a way to participate—and an extra opportunity to share on the home front!

Angie G, California
The NA Way Magazine, December 1991
WCNA 27

Our Diversity Is Our Strength
San Jose, California, USA—1998

Planning for WCNA 27 begins

Our next world convention, WCNA 27, will be held 3-6 September 1998 in San Jose, California, USA. Just think, 1997 marks the first time in 26 years that there will be no World Convention of NA…. WCNA has gotten so large that the World Service Conference passed a motion three years ago to make the convention a biennial event.

We expect WCNA 27 to be one of the largest conventions in our history. NA members will virtually take over the Silicon Valley as we fill 14 hotels. The convention will take place at the San Jose Convention Center. The Saturday night meeting and Unity Day celebration will be held in the San Jose Arena, which has a seating capacity of 20,000 people.

The NA Way Magazine, October 1997

WCNA 28

Our Hope Is Life
Nuestra Esperanza de Vida
Cartagena, Colombia—2000

The only major complication during the convention was the coincidental visit by United States President Bill Clinton. Mike P [NAWS convention and events manager] explained…“I had spent weeks on the phone with the White House and the State Department. They had originally planned to close the Cartagena airport down during the president’s visit, and we had all those planes coming in and out of there during that time. Finally, this plan got worked out…but of course, the president ran two hours behind schedule, plus the Colombian president added two hours to the actual visit… So I called my contact at the White House and got connected to all these different offices, and finally got connected by cellular phone to someone in the president’s motorcade…”

The NA Way Magazine, January 2001

WCNA 29

Freedom to Live Our Dreams
Atlanta, Georgia, USA—2002

Saturday, 6 July 2002 was the hottest day of the year in Atlanta, with the temperature near 100 degrees Fahrenheit and the humidity soaring. Thousands of addicts were steadily converging on the CNN Center, and the lobby was beginning to look more and more like a giant can of sardines…. I honestly don’t think 30,000 normal people could have handled themselves as well as 30,000 addicts did on the hottest weekend of the summer at WCNA 29!

The NA Way Magazine, July 2003

WCNA 30

A Simple Way Has Been Proving Itself
San Diego, California, USA—2003

NA’s Fiftieth Anniversary

7 feet, 4 inches tall by 4 feet diameter equals the size of the “official” NA-50 birthday cake ◆ 22,000 members attended ◆ 12,394 room nights were filled in 22 hotels ◆ 18,400 members attended the Saturday Unity Day meeting and NA-50 anniversary celebration

The NA Way Magazine, January 2004

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WCNA 34
In the Spirit of Unity
San Diego, California, USA—2011

47 countries represented  ◆ 900 newcomer packages
◆ 6 people who spontaneously donated entire registration
   packets to the newcomer fund when the newcomer line grew
   in length  ◆ 800+ NA Way Magazine Roving Reporter interviews
◆ 1st time ALL California corrections facilities participated in
   Unity Day

The NA Way Magazine, January 2012

WCNA 35
The Journey Continues
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, USA—2013

More will be revealed in future issues of
The NA Way Magazine!

Send your WCNA stories to
naway@na.org.

The NA Way Magazine, October 2013

WCNA 31
One Fellowship, Many Friends
Honolulu, Hawaii, USA—2005

Did you know: For the first time in our history, WCNA includ-
ed a welcoming address from the governor of the hosting state,
Hawaii Governor Linda Lingle, who also issued a gubernatorial
proclamation declaring 1 September 2005 as the Aloha Kickoff
Festival of the 31st World Convention of Narcotics Anonymous?

The NA Way Magazine, January 2006

WCNA 32
Our Message Hope,
Our Promise Freedom
San Antonio, Texas, USA—2007

When I finally landed in San Antonio, I wanted to run to bag-
gage claim, but I was caught in a moment of gratitude when I saw
a banner in the airport: “Welcome WCNA-32!” Wow! We’re here!!

The NA Way Magazine, October 2007

WCNA 33
Amor sin Fronteras –
Love without Borders
Barcelona, Spain—2009

Ron H shared “live posts” via his mobile phone during work-
shops and speaker meetings throughout the convention. From
many, many pages of messages, we culled some of his own mus-
ings and what he heard from speakers at workshops and main
speaker meetings: Silvia: When I saw the banners for this convention
on the main streets of my home city, I was SOOO proud.

The NA Way Magazine, October 2009

Historical WCNA Merchandise
will be available for sale at WCNA 35

Mugs, travel mugs,
and specialty items like capp stackers.
Treat yourself or buy a gift for a friend
or sponsee/sponsor.
All sales are final and quantities
are limited to stock on-hand.
Traditions Book Project

We are still pressing on in the first phase of the Traditions Book Project, and we appreciate all of the continued enthusiasm the Fellowship is showing about working together on this new resource. Members continue to send in worksheets and essays, and NA communities around the world have held workshops using the session profile available on the project webpage at www.na.org/traditions.

The discussion board opened in April 2013 (http://disc.na.org/trads), and we have had members signing up and participating in discussions on the many ways we can apply our principles in NA service and in our day-to-day lives.

We are also considering possibilities for gathering more focused input on members’ experience with the Twelve Traditions as the cycle moves forward. We encourage everyone to visit the project webpage from time to time, as any new workshop materials we develop will be posted there (www.na.org/traditions). We will also provide notification about those materials through the NAWS Update email. To subscribe to NAWS Updates, visit www.na.org/subscribe. Thanks to all who have submitted ideas and materials so far, and to those participating in the discussion boards! We look forward to receiving your input and/or questions about the project at worldboard@na.org.

Service System Update

Where did it come from?

The Service System Project grew out of the need to find new solutions to some of our most persistent problems. We’ve all heard people complain about “area circus,” but why does service have such a bad rap sometimes? All too often our communication is poor, we don’t train trusted servants well and there are many open positions, we duplicate our services, and we argue over small details.

Of course, that’s not true everywhere. Some areas and regions keep their focus on our primary purpose and our vision. They make decisions collaboratively, and they plan their priorities and expenses. The Service System Proposals attempt to build on those success stories and offer a model for local services to implement planning and a focus on the groups.

Where are we headed?

Right now we are coming to the end of a period of field testing the specific ideas in the proposals, and we’ve already learned a lot. Perhaps most significantly, we have learned that what is true in our personal recovery is also true in service: Change takes time. Planning, budgeting, working on projects, making decisions by consensus, in some cases restructuring—these are big changes from the way many service bodies operate now. Communities need time to talk together about what a new system of service delivery might look like if applied where they live, and to phase in the elements of local service delivery rather than trying to change everything at once. Right now, we are talking about materials in the Conference Agenda Report and Conference Approval Track materials that reflect this approach—evolution, not revolution.

You can find more information about field testing and all of the other aspects of the project on the service system webpage (www.na.org/servicesystem) and in the latest issue of NAWS News: http://www.na.org/nawsnews.

Calling All Newsletter Editors and Committees

Does your area or region publish a newsletter?

Please let us know—and add us to your email/mailing list!

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The NA Way Magazine; PO Box 9999; Van Nuys, CA 91409

Share or seek newsletter experience on the discussion board:

http://disc.na.org/servdisc/forum.php

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Multi-day events and those occurring between publication dates are printed according to the schedule posted online. To enter events or to access event details, visit the online calendar at www.na.org/events. (If you don’t have Internet access, fax or mail your event info to 818.700.0700, attn: NA Way; or The NA Way; Box 9999; Van Nuys, CA 91409 USA.)

**Brazil**
Para 29 Aug-1 Sep; Belem Area Convention 5; Hotel Prive do Atalaia, Salinas Belem Para; Event Info: 55 091.9215 3371

Pernambuco 30 Aug-1 Sep; Asa Branca Area Enconpasso 2; Paudalho, Recife; donfilho@yahoo.com.br

**Canada**
Alberta 27-29 Sep; Canadian Convention 21; Four Points by Sheraton, Edmonton; registration@canadianconvention.com; www.canadianconvention.com

British Columbia 25-27 Oct; Pacific Northwest Convention 36; Coast Plaza Hotel & Suites, Vancouver; www.pnwcna36.com

Nova Scotia 15-21 Jul; Annapolis Valley Area Pig Roast & Campout 24; Blomidon Provincial Park, Blomidon; Event Info: 902 692 1031

Ontario 5-7 Jul; Georgian Heartland Area Campvention 5; Earl Rowe Provincial Park, Alliston; Event Info: 705 305 2192

**Denmark**
2-4 Aug; Area Midtjylland Convention & Camp 6; Audionicon, Skanderborg; www.nakonvent.dk

**Finland**
16-18 Aug; Finland Regional Convention 25; Conference Hotel Linnasmäki, Turku; www.nasuomi.org/25

**Germany**
2-4 Aug; Gruppe Peace of Mind Camping Convention Reif für die Insel; Campingplatz Rettbergsau Biebrich, Wiesbaden; www.na-mitte.de

**Hungary**
9-11 Aug; Hungarian Regional Convention; GYIK Event Centre, Sopron; www.na.info.hu/events.html

**Israel**
29-31 Aug; Israel Region 13th District Conference at the Dead Sea; Meridien Hotel Dead Sea, Ein Bokek; www.naisrael.org.il

**Japan**
5-7 Jul; Japan Regional Convention 9; Kyoto Pulse Plaza, Kyoto; Event Info: jrcna.kyoto@gmail.com; www.najapan.org/jrcna/index

**Malta**
21-22 Sep; Malta National Convention 7; Wvaldi Hotel, Saint Julian’s; www.namalta.org

**Mexico**
Tijuana 12-14 Jul; Baja Son Regional Assembly; Casa del Reencuentro, AC, Tijuana; wwwabajon-na.org

2) 11-13 Oct; Baja Coasta Area Convention; Grand Hotel Tijuana, Tijuana; speaker tape submission deadline: 30 Sep; write: Baja Coasta Area; Box 435113; San Ysidro, CA 92143; www.bajason-na.org

**Nepal**
8-10 Jul; Pokhara Area Convention 5; Santi Nagar Banquet, Pokhara; www.ppaacna5th.weebly.com

**Puerto Rico**
2-4 Aug; Del Coqui Region Unidos Podemos 24; Hotel Caribe Hilton, San Juan; Event Info: 787 362 0377

**Spain**
6-8 Sep; European Conference & Convention NA 29; Palacio de Congresos y Exposiciones, Marbella, Malaga; www.ecna29.org

**Switzerland**
5-7 Jul; Zürich-convention 2; Gemeinschaftszentrum Riesbach, Zurich; www.facebook.com/na.zuerich

**Turkey**
4-6 Oct; Turkish Area Convention 11; Barcelo Ankara Altinel, Ankara; www.na-turkiye.org

**United Kingdom**
9-11 Aug; Glasgow Area Convention 15; Crowne Plaza, Glasgow; Event Info: 0044780834793

2) 5-12 Aug; Devon Area Summer Holiday Campout 2; Knapp House, Bideford; NAsummerholiday@groupsites.com

3) 11-13 Oct; Merseyside Area 60 Years. A Basic Guide to Living Clean; Liverpool Holiday Inn, Liverpool; http://www.manaukna.co.uk/6.html

**United States**
Alaska 11-13 Oct; Alaska Regional Convention 29; Pike’s Waterfront Lodge, Fairbanks; www.akna.org/convention.htm

Arizona 20-22 Sep; Productive Members of Society Group Women’s Retreat 15; www.arizona-na.org

Arkansas 6-8 Sep; Vision of Hope Group Serene at Petit Jean 5; Petit Jean State Park, Morrilton; Event Info: 501.697.0797

California 9-11 Aug; Sacramento Fellowship Area TU Women’s Spiritual Retreat 5; Scott’s Flat Reservoir, Nevada City; Event Info: 916.812.8537

2) 30 Aug-1 Sep; Greater Mojave Area End of Summer Bash; Horsemare’s Center, Apple Valley; Event Info: www.gna-na.org

3) 20-22 Sep; Central Coast Serenity at the Beach Campout; Pismo Beach State Park, North Beach, Pismo Beach; www.serenityunderthestars.net

4) 27-29 Sep; Area de Habla Hispana del Sur de California Convention 8; DoubleTree Hotel, Orange; www.ahsncna.com

5) 25-27 Oct; Western Service Learning Days 27; LAX Hilton, Los Angeles; www.todayna.org/wsl

Colorado 4-6 Oct; Colorado Regional Convention 27; Keystone Conference Center, Keystone; www.naconlorado.org/crcna

Florida 23-25 Aug; South Florida Regional Convention 19; Waldorf Astoria Naples, Naples; www.sfrcna.com

Georgia 26-28 Jul; Piedmont Area Anniversary 31; Days Inn, Macon; http://sites.google.com/site/pascna/home

2) 1-4 Aug; Midtown Atlanta Area Convention 22; Westin Atlanta Airport, Atlanta; www.midtownatlantana.com

3) 18-20 Oct; West End Area Convention 27; Sheraton Gateway Hotel, Atlanta; Event Info: wallbrad60@yahoo.com

Hawaii 27-29 Sep; Maui Area Gathering; Camp Olowalu, Lahaina; www.na-hawaii.org/activities.htm

2) 24-27 Oct; Hawaii Regional Convention 21; Hilo Hawaiian Hotel, Hilo; www.na-hawaii.org/regional_convention.htm
New York 11-13 Oct; Western New York Regional Convention 18; Holiday Inn Grand Island Resort, Grand Island; www.nawny.org  
North Carolina 19-21 Jul; New Hope Area Convention 20; Sheraton Imperial, Durham; www.newhopeconvention.com  
2) 30 Aug-1 Sep; New Hope Area Convention Bus Trip to WCNA 35; Old K-Mart parking lot, Durham; www.newhopeconvention.com  
3) 27-29 Sep; Central Piedmont Area Convention 16; Concord Convention Center at Embassy Suites, Concord; www.crna.org/events/ 
Ohio 13-15 Sep; Kentucky Ohio Recovery Area Friendly Valley; Camp Oyo-Shawnee State Park, West Portsmouth; Event Info: 740.876.1876  
2) 20-22 Sep; Springfield Area Convention 2; Quality Inn & Conference Center, Springfield; www.sascna.org/index.php/events  
3) 11-13 Oct; Woman to Woman Convention; Clarion Inn & Conference Center, Hudson; www.wrascna.org  
Oklahoma 13-15 Sep; Sogna Group Shawnee Fall Convention; Shawnee; www.wasc.okna.org  
Pennsylvania 5-7 Jul; Butler Area Spiritual Retreat 22; Cooper’s Lake Campground, Slippery Rock; Event Info: butlerpana@gmail.com  
2) 2-4 Aug; Diamonds in the Rough Group Girl Talk, Women United; Greentree DoubleTree, Pittsburgh; Event Info: 412.867.0394  
3) 29 Aug-1 Sep; World Convention of NA 35, Philadelphia Convention Center, Philadelphia; www.na.org  

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**Arabic**

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**Danish**

*Til forældre og værger for unge i NA*  
Item No. DK-3127 Price US $0.28

**Finnish**

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to be available in September

The distinctive cover of this hand-numbered, limited edition features a bronze NA logo medallion in a field of deep red felvet, accented by tan leatherette. The cover opens to an onion skin page and an imaginative lenticular title page. Includes gold foil imprints, gilt page edges, two satin page-marker ribbons, and a handsome gift/display box. Our recovery journey continues with this special 30th Anniversary Basic Text.

Special Mugs

a Basic Text 30th anniversary and a Living Clean mugs will be available in September in limited quantities

eLit

Living Clean: The Journey Continues
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