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*Whatever the topic, whoever the messenger,
 the most important communication for me to
 hear is honest communication—and then to
 see it put into action.*

Anonymous

Integrity and effectiveness

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The Eighth Concept tells us that “Our service structure depends on the integrity and effectiveness of our communications.” We could add that almost everything in Narcotics Anonymous depends on the integrity and effectiveness of our communications—our personal recovery, our reputation with the public, our unity as a fellowship, having the resources to carry the message, and, yes, how much we trust our trusted servants.

We strive to be forthright, honest, and clear in our communications, yet we need to balance these qualities with perceptiveness and sensitivity.

Being forthright is often a challenge, especially when we know that what we have to say is going to be painful to hear. Though it's tempting to want to soft-pedal bad news, or precede it with a lot of justifying and rationalizing, doing so has the same effect as making excuses when we're making amends.

Honesty is one of NA's most fundamental principles. We begin to practice it right from the beginning of our recovery when we admit our powerlessness and unmanageability. We get more skilled at being honest as we communicate with a sponsor and a Higher Power.

Being clear in our communications is complex. We can't include every single detail, or our message will get lost. However, we can't be so concerned with brevity that we leave out important details. It's important to communicate in definite, specific, and concrete terms, especially in a fellowship as diverse and multilingual as ours.

Perceptiveness and sensitivity are crucial. If we're going to communicate effectively, we must know something about our listeners. What do they care about? What do they want to know? What do they need to know? We need to be sensitive to their perspective, even though it may not be the same as ours. Sensitivity helps us know when it's better to keep our opinion to ourselves.

Most important of all, communication in Narcotics Anonymous must be a dialogue, not a monologue. We need to listen as much as we speak. Every service board and committee, every group, and every member has a stake in NA's stability and growth, and we need all their voices to be complete. ❖



**THE
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The NOT Classifieds

*Just so you know,
this is
NOT classified information . . .*

The WSO has several vacant positions and opportunities for employment. We are currently accepting resumes, so please send yours in if you're interested in becoming a special worker.

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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.

The NA Way Magazine, published in English, French, German, Portuguese, and Spanish, belongs to the members of Narcotics Anonymous. Its mission, therefore, is to provide each member with recovery and service information, as well as recovery-related entertainment, which speaks to current issues and events relevant to each of our members worldwide. In keeping with this mission, the editorial staff is dedicated to providing a magazine which is open to articles and features written by members from around the world, as well as current service and convention information. Foremost, the journal is dedicated to the celebration of our message of recovery—"that an addict, any addict, can stop using drugs, lose the desire to use, and find a new way to live."



Focused on improving communication

by Cindy Tooredman, Editor

Did you know that NA World Services has a “top ten” list? Not of hit songs, of course (or even “hit” recovery literature), but of goals, ideals to strive for. It’s actually called the Fellowship Development Plan, and one of the ten goals is “to improve world services’ written and face-to-face communication with the fellowship.”

Toward that end, the World Board formed the Communications Task Force in 1998 and gave it two goals: to evaluate the effectiveness of communication between NAWS and the rest of the fellowship, and to report its findings and make recommendations on improving communication.

The CTF wanted to avoid past mistakes such as making sweeping changes based on nothing more than anecdotal evidence. Recognizing that it had to find a way to hear from members at the group level—who may or may not be involved in service—the CTF conducted a series of eight focus groups around the fellowship, making sure the members invited to participate represented as broad a cross-section of the fellowship as could be managed. The “focus” of the focus groups was twofold: to find out how aware participants were of the functions and activities of world services and to ask participants to evaluate the effectiveness of world services’ communications.

According to Jeff Baker, formerly the primary staff person to the CTF, one of the overriding messages of the focus groups was that most NA members simply do not know about the services available to them through NAWS. “We kept bringing out all these publications and products that they had never seen before,” Jeff said. He added that those attending the focus groups seemed pleased to learn about the various products and services.

Overall, those attending the focus groups found them valuable—at least to their local NA communities. Doug P, who attended the focus group held in Calgary, Alberta, Canada, said he expected that the value of the focus groups to NAWS would be evident when the CTF made its report, but they appeared to be valuable to the Chinook area, which includes Calgary. “There was a great deal of excitement prior to the event. It was well attended and everyone had a lot of questions,” he added. He, like Jeff Baker, was struck by “the general lack of knowledge about what goes on in NAWS and what part we as trusted servants play in the scheme of things outside our home groups and areas.” To illustrate, he added, “NA World Services and the conference seem so far away to our areas, and they seem even further away, almost mythical, to the average home group member.”

From Philadelphia

Thank you for asking me to participate in the focus group that was held here in Philadelphia. I found the focus group to be very interesting and more informative than I anticipated. The focus group was a catalyst for me to continue in other areas of service. It was encouraging to feel like I was contributing to the improvement of the fellowship and that NAWS cared enough to get our input. For instance, when we started talking about what new literature we'd like to see, I suggested a pamphlet, and my suggestion was well received by the World Board members. That made me feel a part of once again.

*Sheila B,
Greater Philadelphia Region*

Chas, who attended the focus group held in Philadelphia, noted that the "discussion helped dispel some of the negative attitudes toward world services," and that other attendees appreciated being assured that "their opinions were valued and listened to [by world services] whenever and however given." He added, "It touched me as a regional delegate because I realized how opinions of the member who is not intimately involved in service become filtered through the service structure, ultimately condensed or lost completely."

By the time you read this, the CTF will have prepared its final report, which basically will be a "problem profile." It will describe the main problems with communications in NA as identified by the focus groups and by a similar survey of regional delegates, which was conducted at WSC 2000.

One significant problem expressed by the focus groups is that most members at the group level don't know what world services does, that is, they don't know about the specific services that are available to every NA member and group. The awareness level had nothing to do with how far the focus group was from the WSO. Several members at the focus group held in Mumbai, India, had some awareness of the services available through NAWS, yet most of the members at the focus group held in Woodland Hills, California (virtually in the shadow of the WSO), were largely unaware of the functions and activities of NAWS.

There is room for improvement in all areas of communication. While *The NA Way* is probably the periodical members are most aware of, the lack of awareness about other periodicals and their specific audiences is a major problem. The lack of awareness about the general functions, products, and services available from NAWS was also identified as a major problem. Information about the world convention is still not as available as it should be. Both fellowship awareness of and interest in the major periodical that facilitates participation in the World Service Conference, the *Conference Agenda Report*, are low. For members at the group level, the *CAR* is filled with

information that is too complex, uninteresting, or seemingly irrelevant to a group's primary purpose—to carry the message to the addict who still suffers.

Many of the other problems identified by focus group participants were related to members not knowing that they *can* get services from NAWS or not knowing *how* to get those services. (Participants weren't sure if they should make a phone call, or to whom, or in which department. Very few participants knew about the NAWS website, let alone that they could download and print many of the periodicals, find meeting and convention information, etc.) They didn't know they could contact the WSO prior to traveling and get contact or meeting information for their destination. They didn't know that registering their group with the WSO would get them placed on mailing lists and help them become better informed about new products (or even old products).

Many participants in the focus groups were amazed to see the array of periodicals: *The NA Way* (available to any member who requests it), the *Meeting by Mail* (for isolated members), *Reaching Out* (for incarcerated members), *NAWS News* (sent automatically to WSC participants, RSCs, and ASCs and also available on the website).

Efforts to meet the goal of improving communication are continuing with the "Communication Standards Project," which is intended to establish communication standards that will solve or at least diminish the problems outlined in the CTF Final Report. Watch future issues of *The NA Way* for more about this.

If you would like a copy of the complete CTF Final Report, please contact NAWS through the website or the WSO.





When I was new,
I had to bring my
toddler to meetings
because I only
had child care one
night a week. I chose to
attend as many
meetings as possible,
even if it meant
bringing my child.
Some people frowned,
but I was so desperate
for recovery that
I had to do it any way I
could. When one
woman shared that she
loved it when people
brought children to
meetings because she
saw children who had a
chance, I knew she
would make a good
sponsor. Now, many
years later, I feel the
same way: I love it when
people bring children to
meetings.

Ellen L, California

Carrying the message— one addict at a time

I can carry my message to you, another addict, and I can then sit back and say that I've done enough work for my Twelfth-Step effort. Yet I have to ask myself, apart from carrying it *to* you, am I doing anything to get that message *across* to you? As I share my message of hope and freedom, how well am I actually communicating what I'm trying to say? I know that whenever words are being passed, half of the responsibility is on the listener. But am I doing the best that I can with my half of the responsibility? With what I have to offer, am I willing to make the effort to give it? What are the best ways for me to communicate the miracle of my recovery through NA? What is the very best way? I'd like to offer you what, as of today, are some answers that I've found to these questions.

Early in my recovery, I believed that the best way for me to carry our message was by speaking at meetings. I thought I was a good speaker. Heck, I thought I was a *great* speaker. Certainly, a lot of people told me so. I was asked to speak often, and I never said no. Over one particular 18-month stretch, I probably *averaged* between two and three speaking commitments each week. I told others, and myself, that speaking was my "niche" in service to the fellowship.

But was that effective communication? Was that the best I could do to carry our message? At the time, I undoubtedly would have said yes. After listening to *me*, people certainly didn't forget what they heard anytime soon. I've had members who never met me personally remember and repeat my words back to me many years after hearing me speak. After all, it needed just the work of *one* addict to carry our message to *many*, all at the same time! What could be more effective than that?

Well, today I will tell you that, while it may have been *popular*, it was not a very *effective* means of communicating our message. I've come to realize that when I'm speaking to large numbers of people (more than two or three or maybe six at the most), it is *one-way* communication. Truly getting my personal experience, strength, and hope understood by another addict requires *two-way* communication.

When people heard me speak, what they couldn't make sense of, they either ignored or (perhaps to their chagrin) misunderstood, but tried to put into practice anyway. Anyone who has sat down with me, one-to-one, has been able to stop me and ask questions when something I say doesn't make sense. When hearing me speak, people often made two assumptions: 1) that simply because I was the addict given that responsibility, it meant my words were worth just a wee bit more than the average NA member's, and 2) that I would certainly never tell a lie as part of my message. Unfortunately, both of those assumptions were wrong. Sharing individually, addicts have been much more able to spot my lies and bring them to my attention immediately.

Another advantage of one-to-one sharing is that when I am speaking, I have only 20 or 30 or 40 minutes to carry the message of my experience, forcing me into using a “shorthand” style of communicating. To save time, I can describe my active addiction in just thirteen words: Desire for the drugs became action, action became habit, and habit became necessity. Don’t you think there’d be more therapeutic value in a one-on-one conversation that allowed for a little bit more depth?

What about writing for publication—books, pamphlets, newsletters—as a way to carry our message?

Words on a page certainly do carry our message, but, like a speaker, only so far. Any curiosity we have about the message we’re given can rarely be satisfied. You can’t question the words or the authors. Have you ever wanted to ask why some parts of our Basic Text are the way they are? Just for example, why was Chapter Ten titled “More Will Be Revealed”? Wouldn’t you like to ask an NA member of the time why, out of limitless possibilities, did *that* seem so important an “extra” chapter (not based on a White Booklet heading) needed to be written? However, since writing is one-way, we have no one to ask. (Unless we can find an oldtimer who’s “old” enough.)

Another problem with the one-way communication of writing our message is that it is subject to misinterpretation.

The smiles that
welcomed me made
me feel I had walked
into the right place.

Tata M, Philippines

(An example of this involves just a moment’s mention of some “old school” NA; I hope you don’t mind.) Back “in the day,” the words “speaking at a meeting” meant something distinctly different from “sharing at a meeting.” Basically, “speaking” was what one addict did at the beginning of the meeting, while facing the crowd, and “sharing” is what all the rest of us “in the crowd” did during the discussion that went on until the end of the meeting. When reading our written message today, most addicts aren’t aware such a difference ever existed. They don’t realize that when most of our literature was written, it was expected that anyone reading it would be making such a distinction.

Now, in our literature, the phrase “speaking at an NA meeting” is used in a passage that goes on to say we “should” identify as addicts in an NA meeting. In my travels, I’ve heard some members insist that that sentence means any participation in an NA meeting, even plain old sharing in the discussion, requires identifying oneself as an addict. The message that was written, because it is *one-way* communication, isn’t clear in its meaning.

Certainly, speaking and writing to carry a message have their place. If I didn’t believe that, I wouldn’t be writing this and hoping it will be published, and I would have sworn off “speaking” forever. (I haven’t, but I have cut back substantially.) Yet speaking and writing, while good, are not the best way for me to pass on what I have. If I want the best chance of getting any message I might have *across* to another addict, if I want the best chance of truly receiving the message that another addict has for me, then I need to be *exchanging* information one-on-one.

When I am willing to apply that “one-to-one” to carrying our message, I find that I can truly reach across to the other addict and feel a connection of spirit that isn’t possible for me when speaking or writing for publication. When I’m sharing on an individual basis, the common ground of our experience is so much more immediate, and therefore so much more powerful for the both of us.

When I share with another addict one-on-one, I find that my words have

a hidden worth far greater than any merit that my being a “speaker” might give them. My message increases in value because I’m showing another addict that I’ve willingly put aside pursuit of my own “playtime” to help that person. That individual attention gives my message more meaning than words ever could. Personal one-to-one writing (emails and especially letters) also has this same strength.

Sometimes it gets frustrating, passing on my experience, strength, and hope, one addict at a time. It takes patience to cultivate such intimacy with another addict. And it feels so slow. Especially because, hey, I *know* how to face dozens, or even hundreds, of addicts and “give ’em the truth” about recovery in Narcotics Anonymous. But I’ve found that the “each one, teach one” stuff, which my sponsor is constantly pounding into me like I’m a cheap nail, lets me know that I’ve touched another addict with the miracle of my life.

Now, whether one-to-one or one-to-many, there is one other effort that I’ve found to be very important in helping me communicate my message of recovery.

To communicate most effectively, I use “me,” instead of “we,” when I share or speak. I’ve found that when I talk of my *personal* hope or strength or experience, instead of making sweeping statements about all addicts and everybody’s recovery, I can be more truthful, more insightful, more passionate, more compassionate, more confident, and more convincing. I can expound with unrivaled authority about myself.

But I certainly don’t have such authority to talk of “us,” unless I’m quoting some of that message which we have written. And being egotistical enough to *pretend* that I have that authority quickly loses me the respect of most any addict who is listening.

So, what is the best way for me to communicate the miracle and the joy that is my new life in Narcotics Anonymous?

Start a long-term, give-and-take, one-on-one sharing relationship with another addict.

Today,

Anonymous



An Overview of the 25th World Service Conference

by Cindy Tooredman, Editor

Looking back on NA's history and building community were the twin themes of the 25th World Service Conference, which was held 30 April to 6 May 2000 in Woodland Hills, California.

Looking back

One of the most significant activities connected to WSC 2000 actually took place before the opening session. Conference participants and other members crowded into the ballroom of the hotel where the conference was held to hear the recollections of 17 of NA's earliest members.

The workshop was structured very much like a recovery meeting, beginning with "readings" and continuing with personal sharing by the workshop's participants. The participants read from the "NA literature" that was used at NA meetings in the 1950s. The meeting chairperson announced that the workshop participants collectively had more than 520 years clean, which prompted a cheer from those attending. The workshop speaker with the least amount of clean time had 22 years and the speaker with the most had 44 years.

Bob B, whose story, "I Found the Only NA Meeting in the World," is in the Basic Text, was the first speaker. He was followed by others who also found the only NA meeting in the world that was being held in the early 1960s: Gordon B, Gene H, Steve B, Mary Jane A, George M, and Sylvia M all spoke about the meeting on Moorpark Street in North Hollywood.

Other speakers found NA in the late 1960s and early 1970s when it was a little bigger, with several meetings in Southern California and two in Northern California: Jack W, Ed M, Mel H, Grant M, Richard M, and Chuck G.

Bob R and Charlotte G both reminisced about attending an NA meeting or two in 1955 or 1956, but neither remembered exactly which year it was. Bob remarked wryly that if he had known how important NA was going to be in his life, he would have made an effort to remember the date.

Two of the speakers had moved to other areas and were instrumental in starting NA in the Pacific Northwest—Floyd C in Washington and James D in British Columbia.

All had known Jimmy K and spoke of his dedication to NA and to helping other addicts.

Those attending the workshop to hear the speakers were riveted by the accounts of hard-to-find meetings, the lengths to which the speakers had gone just to meet and stay clean another day,

and some very dramatic Twelfth-Step calls (two of the speakers had first heard of NA at H&I meetings in prison from two other speakers who had carried the message to those institutions). The workshop speakers expressed gratitude to those who had come after them for providing the "lifeblood" of NA. Newer members were impressed with the speakers' continued dedication to NA. "To me, the most amazing part of the history workshop is that there were people on that panel who are still of service to NA. There's an RD, a meeting secretary; they're still here and still of service," said Tony G, a local member who has chaired the local hospitality committee for the WSC for two years.



At one of my first meetings, someone pointed his finger at me across the table and said I radiated “unspiritual vibes.” I told him to do something that’s unfit for publication. After the meeting, he came up to me and apologized. I could see in his eyes that his apology was sincere. That showed me that his inner strength was greater than mine. He had overcome his pride, and I still felt like breaking his nose. I learned that meetings were full of opportunities to grow, even when the “meeting” hadn’t yet begun. Ask me what I radiate today.

Daniel S. Germany

Should we change the Basic Text and Little White Booklet?

After was taken care of some procedural business, on Sunday, the first item on Monday’s agenda was Motion 1 from the *CAR*: “Shall the fellowship proceed with a comprehensive evaluation of revisions and additions to the entire Basic Text and the Little White Booklet?” The regional delegates¹ voted 58 to 28 in favor of this motion.

Through a series of straw polls at the conference and last year’s survey of the fellowship, the World Board tried to get a sense of whether the fellowship wanted new material in Book One of the Basic Text, new or different stories in Book Two, revisions, or all or none of these choices. So far, no clear consensus has emerged, which is why the conference agreed that the WB should present a plan for asking the fellowship what it thinks (by surveys or some other means) following the 2004 WSC. Since changing NA recovery literature or approving new recovery literature is so important to every NA member, it’s taken quite seriously. The Fellowship Intellectual Property Trust specifies that the fellowship as a whole must have the opportunity to review any proposed changes to NA literature in the *CAR*, and that the conference may not vote on any changes unless those changes have appeared in the *CAR*. When an actual motion comes before the conference, it must have the approval of two-thirds of the delegates to pass.

All members and groups are encouraged to participate when asked about changing the Basic Text and the Little White Booklet. We’ll keep you posted on new developments in *The NA Way* and on our website.

¹ Only regional delegates vote on old business (*CAR* motions). All conference participants (regional delegates and the World Board) vote on new business and in elections.

Material on sponsorship needed for future literature

The conference also directed the World Board to encourage area and regional literature committees to begin developing source material (original writing, input, ideas, etc.) about sponsorship and sending it in. The WB is supposed to review all the source material it collects, consider how it might be developed for publication as recovery literature, and report back to the conference in 2002.

Full funding for regional delegates approved

For many years, world service leadership and many conference delegates have been trying to find ways to increase participation in the WSC from outside the United States and Canada. Also, there are many regions with limited financial resources that have always struggled to fund a delegate to the WSC.

A temporary and partial solution to the funding problem was tried with the WSC Development Forum. Though the primary goal of the DF was to increase global participation in the WSC, part of the DF plan provided funds from the general conference budget to pay for delegates from certain regions to participate in the WSC. There was great excitement through the first few years of the DF’s existence when more than a dozen new regions from outside the US and Canada were seated. Conference participants began to feel that they were attending an event that was truly a *World Service Conference*. The increasingly global and diverse participation benefited both the funded regions and the conference “oldtimers.” The funded regions benefited from being linked in a tangible way to NA as a whole, and the other delegates benefited from a broadened perspective about the challenges NA faces in various places around the world.

Unfortunately, problems began to surface almost immediately. First, there were questions about how to choose

one region over another for funding. Then the issue of funding US regions with limited funds came up. There were criteria, of course, for making such decisions. However, it seemed that no matter how much the criteria were expanded, some deserving region(s) still couldn't qualify for funding.

The idea of "cost equalization" (having every region pay an equal amount to attend the conference) had been raised during the development of *A Guide to Service*;² though the specifics of the idea were impractical and therefore never adopted, the conference certainly liked the principle and kept looking for ways to balance the cost scales for all regions.

Finally, at WSC 2000, delegates approved a plan to fund one delegate from all seated regions from the general conference budget. It is understood that regions that have been able to fund their own delegates will shift the funds they've earmarked for that purpose to NAWS. Several "wealthy" regions stated that they would send additional funds beyond what it would cost to pay their own way in order to help other regions get to the conference.

In a related matter, the conference established criteria for seating new regions at the conference. In the past, regional identity had been asserted in pretty much the same way as individual membership in NA: "You're a region when you say you are." The newly adopted criteria require that a region seeking seating at the WSC should have functioned as a service body for at least three years, conform to established geographical boundaries unless some compelling reason contradicts this, and follow a specific process when seeking seating. For the complete list of criteria, see pages 24-26 of the 2000 *CAR*.

² *A Guide to Service* was eventually split into two pieces: *A Guide to Local Service in NA* and the sections on world service, which are currently part of the *Temporary Working Guide to Our World Service Structure*.

Issue discussion topics

Conference participants selected two "issue discussion" topics for the next conference cycle: "How can we continue to provide services to our fellowship and at the same time decrease our reliance on funds [generated] from events and conventions?" and "How can we create a bridge that builds and maintains a connection to service for home group members?"

For more on how you can participate in the issue discussion, please see the related article on page 10.

Historical Data Collection Project approved

After having begun the week with the history workshops, the conference approved the Historical Data Collection Project. This is to gather information about NA's history from longstanding members. The WB plans to gather the participating members in one location and record their discussions and recollections about NA's early days. The plan also includes one-on-one interviews and follow up with both the members who participated in the history workshop at WSC 2000 and the invited members who were unable to attend.

Two-year conference cycle begins

The conference decided that, following WSC 2000, it would meet to do business once every two years rather than annually. The conference had been planning to make this change for several years, and decided it was ready to go ahead this year.

The conference has grown rapidly over the past ten years, and the issues it deals with have become increasingly complex. These two facts have had a huge impact on the amount of work that can be done in a one-year conference cycle. The work assigned to NAWS by the WSC can't really begin until about a month after the close of WSC because

both trusted servants and staff have to regroup and decide how to allocate resources to get the work done. In addition, everything that needs to be included in the *CAR* has to be finished in time for its publication (in the past, it was published 90 days before the conference, but it will now be published in English 150 days before the conference and in other languages 120 days before the conference). This left only about seven months for conference leadership to work on whatever projects it had been assigned by the conference.

There are plans to hold a world service meeting sometime during this first two-year conference cycle so members of the WB can meet with regional delegates. This will provide an opportunity for the WB to report on its work and get input from the fellowship. ❖

I remember the day when, for the first time in my recovery, I sat quietly with G-d, listening, not just talking. That was the closest I had ever felt to G-d (up till then), and is still the most important communication in my recovery.

Karen B, Georgia

Let's give 'em something to talk about

For the past several years, conference participants have selected two topics for the fellowship as a whole to discuss during the following conference cycle. Conference participants have chosen topics based on what they believed the fellowship was most interested in discussing and what seemed to be the most pressing issues. For example, last year's topics were: "What is NA's definition of abstinence? How does this definition apply to members who need medication in recovery?" and "What action do we as a fellowship need to take to retain our experienced members with substantial clean time?"

Though the expected results of these fellowshipwide discussions have not been clearly stated in the past, most people would agree that the issue discussion topics chosen by the conference were intended to do more than simply give the fellowship something to talk about. In the past, the only "results" of the issue discussions were papers that regions could submit to be included in the *CAR*. In addition, some time on the WSC agenda was allotted so that regional delegates could share with one another the questions or concerns raised by members in their respective regions.

At WSC 2000, regional delegates let the WB know that they wanted something tangible to result from these fellowshipwide discussions (e.g., a new piece of literature, a bulletin, or something else that would capture the experience, strength, and hope generated by the discussion and help the fellowship deal with the issue in the future).

As stated previously, regions can submit papers on either or both of the issues to the *CAR*. Different regions have chosen different ways of generating these papers. Some regions hold one or more workshops on the issue discussion topics and then "report" the overall conscience of their region in a paper. Other times, one or more mem-

bers within a region will write a paper on the issue and submit it to the regional service committee, which may (or may not) then choose to forward the paper to the *CAR* as a "regional" paper.

It hasn't been clearly stated in the past that individual members, groups, and areas are encouraged to participate in this process. There's a variety of ways to do so. While only papers coming from a region can be published in the *CAR* or other conference publications (only conference participants have the ability to include material in these), there are other ways to "broadcast" your thoughts on the issue discussion topics.

Anybody is welcome to write an article for possible publication in *The NA Way*. While we can't guarantee publication, if we do print your article, approximately 28,000 subscribers will have the opportunity to read it. Also, you can ask that a copy of your submission to the magazine be given to the WB as input to be considered along with regional papers. Of course, if you just want to send input to the WB without also sending it to *The NA Way*, you're welcome to do so.

What's new at www.na.org?

Looking for an NA event? Want to see if your region's convention is listed? Want to list an NA event? No problem. Just go to the home page of our website, click on "NA events," and choose what you want to do. If you're adding or updating an event, the information you post will appear on the website within four business days. Also, if you meet the publication deadline (see page 19), your event will appear in the next issue of *The NA Way*; there's no need to do anything else.

The new International Meeting Search page is now up and running on the website. You can check it out by clicking on "NAWS International Meeting Search" from the home page. However, we know that much of the meeting information we have in our database is incorrect. We need your help to correct this so people can locate your meeting. We have the group registration and update forms posted on the website so you can conveniently enter or update your meeting information. In the near future, we will be sending a mailing to every group, area, and region in our database. It will include the information we currently have in our database and copies of the new forms. A letter will be included that asks each area and region to select someone to update their information directly on the website, if the service body chooses to do so. If not, we will continue to enter meeting information at the WSO, just as we always have. Whichever option you choose, we need your assistance to make meeting information accurate and reliable. In addition, we now have four-part registration and update forms so that registration and updates for groups, areas, regions, and world services can be done all at once. ♦

Current issue-discussion topics

How can we continue to provide services to our fellowship and at the same time decrease our reliance on funds [generated] from events and conventions?

How can we create a bridge that builds and maintains a connection to service for home group members?



There are no musts...

From time to time, people make statements at NA meetings with the force of a proclamation. Sometimes these statements even sound profound when we first hear them, but they simply aren't true.

A case in point: In my area, it's popular to include the following statement in meeting formats: "There are no musts in NA, but we do have one rule that applies to everyone: There are no drugs or paraphernalia allowed at our meetings. This is for the protection of our group."

I'm not arguing with the rule that disallows drugs and paraphernalia at meetings. It's the other part, the "no musts" part. As I found by reading our literature, there are many "musts" in Narcotics Anonymous (about 175 just in the Basic Text, *It Works: How and Why*, and *Just for Today*), especially if you want to stay clean. Unfortunately, the "no musts" statement has become accepted to the point where it is being routinely included in meeting formats. I believe this to be injurious to the newcomer (and everyone else). I also believe it to be contrary to Traditions Four and Five. It does reflect on NA as a whole and is hardly in keeping with our primary purpose.

As I went through our literature to find the musts, I was struck by what a beautifully crafted, God-given program we have, and, not having seen a list of "musts" anywhere else, I wanted to share a few of them with you.

From the Basic Text

- "We...must abstain from all drugs in order to recover." p. 18
- "We must separate what was done to us from what we did to others." p. 37
- "...our recovery must involve much more than simple abstinence." p. 53
- "Unity is a must in Narcotics Anonymous." p. 60
- "Staying clean must always come first." p. 82
- "In order to receive, we must be willing to give." p. 102

From *It Works: How and Why*

- "...we *can* learn to be honest and we must begin to try." p. 9
- "No matter how difficult our progress, we must persevere." p. 62
- "To work the Seventh Step, we must get out of the way so that God can do God's work." p. 69
- "...we must rely on faith." p. 71
- "We must avoid projections..." p. 77
- "We must let go of resentments..." p. 78
- "...we must make amends." p. 82
- "We must make use of what we've learned..." p. 113

From *Just for Today*

- "We must live the program everywhere we go, in everything we do." p. 5
- "...we must come to our own understanding of a Higher Power..." p.46
- "...we must also share this inventory with another human being." p. 76
- "We must trade in our old cynical doubts for new affirmations of hope." p. 115
- "...we must allow others to get close to us..." p. 348

As an addict who used for 27 years, and who now—through the grace of God and the help of Narcotics Anonymous—has been clean for more than twelve years, I am grateful our program has things we must do. Our "musts" point the way to recovery and offer hope to the still-suffering addict.

Bruce F. Massachusetts

My sponsor once asked me if I had ever actually felt the drops of water hitting my back when I took a shower. I was puzzled at first, but then I realized that he knew what it felt like to be so trapped in my own mind that it was like having a severed head.

Colin F, Australia

At my first meeting, I was touched, and then swept away by the warmth and humor in the room—smiling faces, bright eyes, relaxed bodies, and laughter. I found myself leaning forward, drawn to the speakers, liking them a lot. I went back to another meeting for the people. They were the message.

Anonymous

...and other persistent rumors

“It’s a selfish program”

I thought that when *It Works: How and Why* was published, I would at last be freed from having my ears assaulted by hearing, “This is a selfish program.” After all, it says quite clearly on page 117, “Narcotics Anonymous is not a selfish program.” I suppose the people who routinely claim that this is a selfish program haven’t read *It Works: How and Why*. Could that be a coincidence?

I have to be fair. People don’t usually invoke the “selfish program” statement in response to requests to do service or to carry the message. In fact, it’s just the opposite. They’ll go on a Twelfth-Step call because “they can only keep what they have by giving it away. See, it’s a selfish program.” I don’t dispute the fact that carrying the message practically guarantees that our own recovery will continue. I just hate it being the primary focus when we’re trying to help someone else. Equally repugnant to me (and made in the same spirit as “selfish program”) is the idea that certain people “have to” relapse so other people can stay clean. Does that mean that God likes some of us better, so He strikes certain people loaded to remind us that it’s still awful out there without us having to experience it firsthand? Now that’s a chilly understanding of God!

People who are spending lots of time on “self-improvement” also seem to have the opinion that their efforts are justified by the “selfishness” of the NA program. I’m not saying we should burn self-help books, and I’m definitely not against supplementing my recovery with any reasonable and available form of outside help. It’s just that those of us who “work on ourselves” a lot sometimes work ourselves into a state of self-

obsession, not to mention becoming colossal bores. We all know people who can only talk about themselves, which issues (or character defects) they’re working on, and how they feel right now and how they felt during every moment of the past 24 hours (including dreams accompanied by interpretative analysis).

Frankly, getting out of ourselves is what this program is all about. It’s ironic that the less we think about ourselves, the more we like ourselves. Face it. If you’re spending all your time trying to think yourself into positive self-esteem, you’re just going to wind up focusing on what’s wrong with you. If, instead, you spend all your time behaving as if you are interested in the world around you, acting as if self-esteem is a given, you will wind up *being* interested in the world around you and your self-esteem will grow—whether you think about it or not. You will become selfless instead of self-absorbed. You’ll never have to justify spending the evening on your Sixth Step with the need to work a “selfish program.” Instead of seeing people who relapse as some kind of cosmic lesson taught for your benefit, you will instead be moved by compassion for their families, sadness that, for whatever reason, they didn’t stay clean, and (don’t forget) hope that perhaps they will yet find recovery. I know that conventional wisdom claims there’s only one promise in NA (don’t get me started on that!), but NA isn’t making the above promises. I am. So take it as the experience, strength, and hope of one recovering addict. I hope it helps.

Barbara G, California

“We have no leaders”

Once upon a time in a faraway region (I can’t say where or when because I don’t want to embarrass anybody), someone with more than five years clean and quite a bit of experience in NA service said, “We have no leaders. That’s government!”

Speechless for nearly a minute, I tried—diplomatically—to clean up this mutilation of our Second Tradition. I said something like, “Well, maybe someone should check because I could have

it wrong, but I thought the Second Tradition said ‘our leaders are but trusted servants; they do not govern.’” I was trying not to humiliate the person who insisted that we have no leaders. I’d heard others assert that NA has no leaders before, but they’re usually pretty new and haven’t done any service beyond the group level.

Since it came up the way it did, I felt compelled to write to *The NA Way* to try to curb the spread of this weird misquote. Some misquotes are harmless, not to mention hilarious: “. . . our service centers may enjoy special workers.” However, “we have no leaders” is not a harmless misreading during the zone-out time at the beginning of a meeting; it’s potentially very harmful. I’m not entirely sure why some of us react so negatively to the idea of leadership. Maybe it’s because we don’t understand what it means.

Our Fourth Concept says, “Effective leadership is highly valued in Narcotics Anonymous. Leadership qualities should be carefully considered when selecting trusted servants.” There are two things this concept is saying to us that spring immediately to mind.

One, we need trusted servants who have leadership qualities. Two, we are the ones who get to select our trusted servants.

I have a feeling that the concept of leadership is confused with dictatorship. Even worse, it’s often seen as a “better than” description. I’ve listened to a lot of addicts complain about those “arrogant” people (trusted servants) who all look so “affluent” and “talk like English professors.” So many of us hear the phrase “leadership qualities,” and we think we don’t qualify. But leadership qualities aren’t based on wealth, or even a good education (though an education probably helps somewhat in that opportunities to develop leadership qualities seem to arise more often during the course of higher education). The leadership qualities that we need most in Narcotics Anonymous are those that make things happen—not through force or manipulation, but through consistent effort.

I don’t believe we’ve done very well with training our trusted servants on some of the basics. Say you’re chairing

an area phonline committee. You have a meeting once a month and you have 21 weekly phonline shifts to fill. Currently, you have two of those slots filled (by your sponsees because you made them do it) and your once-a-month meetings have become kaffeeklatsches. You make an announcement at every meeting you attend (four or five a week) that the area phonline has lots of open slots and you really need people to fill them. Then the meeting closes with the Serenity Prayer. You hang out for a while, but nobody approaches you about taking a phonline slot. You also report your problem each month to the ASC. You may even make flyers for all the GSRs to hand out at their meetings. It’s what the phonline chair before you did, right?

The problem is that getting people to do service is much harder than that. People need to feel a sense of responsibility. They need to know that their eight hours on the phone once a week is actually going to make some kind of difference. They need to be convinced that if they don’t do it, nobody else will. One of the problems with NA’s growth has been that too many people think there’s somebody else who can do the service work. There are a hundred people at my home group. Why should I go on an H&I commitment?

What I’ve seen work, and what I believe to be one of the most valuable leadership qualities anyone can have, is persistence. I remember when I was chairing a committee a long time ago (this wasn’t even in NA), and I got angry that nobody came to the once-a-month meetings, even though I diligently spent about 15 hours a month typing up minutes from the previous meeting and a reminder about the next, and then sent them to everybody on the committee. I even baked chocolate chip cookies to serve at the meeting.

I remember complaining to another committee chair, and I was amazed at what he told me. He said, “You have to phone them a few days before the meeting to remind them.” I went ballistic. “They’re grownups! They get an announcement in the mail. Why in the world do I have to spend an entire evening calling them, too?”

“Do you want them to show up at your meeting?” he said.

“Of course,” I said. “Haven’t you been listening to me?”

“Then you have to call them. Yes, it’s probably ridiculous. Yes, they should be more responsible. But they won’t unless you push them a little bit. Accept it, and be cheerful about it, or stop doing volunteer work,” said my new role model.

He was absolutely right, and the same thing works in Narcotics Anonymous. If you delegate a project to people on your committee, you have to phone them regularly to ask how it’s going and ask if they need help. You have to ask them to tell you (specifically) what’s been accomplished. You may have to remind them—multiple times—what they need to do next. You cannot do this by mail (e, snail, or voice). You have to get them on the phone or see them in person. You may have to make a dozen phone calls to get one person on the phone.

When you (the chair) talk to people on your committee, you remind them that they are responsible. You remind them that they make a difference, that their work is going to result in more addicts getting and staying clean. You remind them that if they don’t do it, nobody else will. You don’t even have to say these words (makes people feel guilty). If you just ask what they’ve done so far and offer to help, they’ll naturally feel a sense of responsibility and all the rest.

Chairing a committee doesn’t provide much in the way of warm, fuzzy feelings. There’s rarely any glory. It’s mostly a lot of phone calls and a lot of gentle persuasion. Even good ideas and new projects should come from within your committee ranks. Even better, from one of the “whiners” who isn’t on your committee—yet. One of the most successful projects my committee ever did resulted from a woman who complained about my “irresponsibility” in “neglecting such an important thing.” I told her that I would be delighted to do such a project, and said that, unfortunately, I didn’t know much about it. Would she chair the task force/subcommittee and teach me all about it?

Faster than you would believe, and more efficiently than ten people could have, she had that project up and run-

ning, complete with food donations from local restaurants and a way for young children to participate that would ensure them dragging their parents along (with their checkbooks). I realize that most of this isn't the way we measure success in NA, but you get the idea. The point is that this woman, whom I could have written off as an annoyance, was passionate about something. Her passion fueled her persistence. (I can only imagine how many phone calls she made!) She was cheerful, and she convinced people that they were needed, that they could make a difference, that if they didn't help, nobody else would. What an amazing leader!

Unfortunately, making announcements to large groups of people doesn't bring you volunteers (unless you're giving away really good food or currency in large denominations). You have to ask one person at a time to do one thing. I'm usually quite willing to do service, but if I'm at my Wednesday meeting, and the area H&I chair says he needs people to go on commitments on Tuesday nights, I probably won't walk up to him and volunteer after the meeting, even though I usually spend Tuesday nights watching garbage on TV and eating too much. But if he walks up to me after the meeting and asks me to go on an H&I commitment the following Tuesday, I'll say yes. I'd even agree to do it on the first Tuesday of the following month (though he'd have to call and remind me the week before).

We need more leaders in Narcotics Anonymous. We need to start acting like we really do appreciate effective leadership. If you know an effective leader, tell everybody about his or her accomplishments. That way, they'll get the recognition they deserve for all their hours on the phone, gently persuading people to do things. Also, when it's time to select trusted servants, everybody will know who has leadership qualities.

Anonymous

Playing nice in the sandbox

I've been involved in service to NA at every level for more than ten years. I do this out of an intense desire to give back what was so freely given to me. In my experience, most addicts who do service have basically the same motivation. We all love this fellowship and want to share it with as many suffering addicts as possible. You'd think that members of a fellowship which has unconditional love as a cornerstone would treat each other with the same love and respect that they afford newcomers. However, it never ceases to amaze me how unkind we can be to each other. I am guilty of this myself.

I have often witnessed people being downright mean to one another. In fact, I have had to make amends for behavior of this sort just recently at a regional service committee meeting. Rather than practice patience, use the skills that I've learned, and draw on the maturity that I've gained from working the steps, I chose instead to get defensive and erupt in a tirade of vitriol more akin to road rage than civilized discourse. As a result, the person whom I attacked had feelings of hurt and confusion, and newcomers to the RSC were frightened and did not want to return. I ended up looking like an asshole, and the committee as a whole had one more "issue" to distract us from accomplishing anything worthwhile.

There isn't an informational pamphlet on how to act like a civilized human being at a service meeting. We don't have guidelines on how to behave with decorum, but I do know how to behave better, and as part of my amends decided to share with *NA Way* readers some ideas that have worked for me and others in the past. Hopefully, you will be able to benefit from my experience, strength, and hope, and I just might remember to act in a more civilized fashion next time. Rather than let my "inner child" run wild and throw a tantrum, I can get in touch with my

"inner adult" and try to help the situation instead of making it worse.

When someone is acting like a jerk, I either lash back or get tongue-tied and paralyzed. Neither response is effective. There are better ways to deal with unacceptable behavior than to escalate the conflict or let the abuse continue. The first thing to do is to keep my cool. I have to suppress reactions of anger, hurt, or panic and think about the other person. People usually aren't trying to hurt me. He might just be inconsiderate, or not able to express himself well. He might have problems at home or just be having a bad day. Trying to sit in his chair can help me be more tolerant.

It's important for me not to jump to the conclusion that someone intended to abuse me. Instead, I need to give her the benefit of the doubt. Before going off the deep end, I need to breathe, focus on keeping my tone pleasant, and try to get to the heart of the matter. The other person may not even realize how her actions are affecting me. If someone is yelling and screaming, I might calmly ask, "Is there a reason that you are raising your voice?"

Before speaking, I should ask myself if it will help or if it will hurt. *It Works: How and Why*, in the chapter on the Tenth Tradition, page 199, asks us to consider, "As an individual, am I dwelling in the problem or seeking the solution? Do I share to draw the group together or to force the group into separate camps?... So long as we keep our common welfare and our primary purpose in focus, we will avoid the kind of controversy that distracts us from recovery." If a remark won't help, but has the potential to make things worse, I should keep it to myself. Asking myself questions like these gives me time to formulate an effective response instead of reacting immediately. In the heat of controversy, we often forget our primary purpose and focus only on winning. It is more important to be helpful than right.

When receiving criticism, my first impulse is usually to deny or defend myself. The problem is that then I get drawn into the argument and focus on the negatives. A better response is to simply ask, "How do you mean?" This allows me time to compose myself, forces

my “attacker” to be more specific and practical in his criticism, and reveals the underlying issue that needs to be addressed. Sometimes people just want to be heard.

One of my pet peeves is people who blather on and on about nothing in particular. It seems the longer I serve, the less patience I have with this type of behavior. When someone is talking on and on and on without pausing, it doesn't help to provide a witty insult, but it is also frustrating to everyone else being held hostage by the soliloquy. I don't have to wait for an opening that may never come. Instead, I can interrupt by saying the individual's name. That forces him to stop so I can quickly continue. Then I can summarize what he's been saying so I don't seem rude, finish with a wrap-up sentence, and end with a firm downward inflection in my voice. “Frank,³ we understand that you think the meeting lists are very expensive to print. Before we make our next batch, we'll get three quotes from different printers. You'll be responsible for providing one.”

Sometimes things get out of hand. It's especially tempting to join in when an argument is raging full force, but it doesn't help to shout over the fray. That just adds to the cacophony and increases the confusion. A better idea is to just put up my hand, making the sign for “stop” or a “T” for “time out.” Then I calmly say something like “We're here to find solutions, not fault. It doesn't matter where we've been. What matters is where we are and where we're going. Can we speak one at a time, please?”

After things have gotten out of hand, it is often a good idea to discuss what is appropriate and inappropriate behavior and come to a consensus on what specific behaviors are not tolerated by the group. Then when someone exhibits that behavior, we can remind him about the agreement. For example: If someone is yelling, we can ask, “I thought we all agreed not to yell. You agreed to that too, didn't you?” This usually disarms the transgressor, who may not have even realized that his voice was gaining momentum.

³ A hypothetical situation. The name “Frank” does not represent any specific member of NA.

Sometimes there are bona fide bullies who come to service meetings. They just insist on being consistently rude. They seem to have no real agenda other than puffing out their chests and getting their own way. To them, silence is acceptance. They'll just keep on barreling along and won't hold themselves accountable unless someone else does. With people like this, someone has to literally stand up and come down hard on them. You can't be vulnerable with these people. It doesn't help to say things like “When you yell like that, I feel threatened....” That's exactly what they want. Instead, you have to confront them directly. “You're out of line.... Calm down.... You need to speak with respect.... You can't get away with that here.” Yelling at them isn't required. It is actually much more effective to speak softly but firmly. It can be frightening to stand up to a bully, but it is amazing how quickly they melt when someone does. The group always seems to rally around the individual who confronts them.

These are some things that I need to keep in mind when dealing with difficult people at service meetings, but the best thing I can do is avoid being one of them. I need to leave my emotional baggage at the door and get on with the work at hand. It doesn't matter if I've got problems at home, or I just quit smoking, or my mother didn't breast-feed me. I have no right to take it out on the people who are volunteering to do the work that fulfills our primary purpose—to carry the message to the addict who still suffers. Those are things I can discuss at a meeting or with my sponsor. The service meetings I attend will be much more effective if I can act with a little more professionalism. My fellow trusted servants and the addicts yet to recover deserve no less.

Jeff S, Minnesota

Eye contact is paramount in any communication for me. I remember my first meeting; everyone was smiling and hugging. I felt out of place until someone looked at me. Behind the smiles, I saw their struggle, their strength, their pain, and their joy. I saw myself. They say that eyes are windows to the soul, and I believe that. They always speak the truth. They convey volumes of feelings, personal history, and dreams—more than any words ever could.

Jim E, New York

The intimate conversations I have with my sponsor have given me the benefit of listening to what I need to hear, not necessarily what I want to hear.

Fernando M, Ecuador



CALENDAR

We encourage you to publicize your event by having it published on our website and in *The NA Way Magazine*. You can inform the WSO about your event by fax, phone, or regular post, or through our website. We encourage using the website because you can check to see if we already have a listing on your convention and, if not, you can enter your own convention information. It is then reviewed, formatted, and added to the online convention calendar on our website in approximately four days. Just go to www.na.org, click on "NA Events," and follow the instructions.

Convention announcements entered through the website and those received by other means are also given to *The NA Way*. *The NA Way* is published four times a year in January, April, July, and October. Each issue goes into production long before its distribution date, so we need a minimum of three months' notice to ensure your event will be published in the magazine—that's three months before our publication dates. For instance, if you want your event published in the October issue, we need to know by 1 July.

AUSTRALIA

New South Wales: 29 Sept. - 1 Oct. 2000; "Give It Away" - Sydney Combined Areas Convention; University of New South Wales, Gate 9, High Street, Kensington, Sydney; event info: + 61.2.9972.0455 or + 61.8.235.770 or + 612.9972.9143

2) 26-28 Jan. 2001; Byron Bay Convention 2001; Byron Bay Beach Club Resort, Bayshore Drive, Sunrise Beach, Byron Bay; hotel: + 61.2.6685.8000; event info: Far North Coast Area, Box 495 Byron Bay, NSW 2481, Australia

BAHAMAS

Nassau: 2-5 Nov. 2000; Bahamas Area Celebration XIII; Marriott Resort Crystal Palace, Cable Beach, PO Box N-8306, Nassau, Bahamas; hotel: 242.327.6200; event info: 242.322.2516 or 242.326.0224

BRAZIL

Paraná: 2-5 Nov. 2000; 11th Brazil Regional Convention; Foz do Iguaçu, Brazil Region; web: www.na.org.br/crna

CANADA

British Columbia: 27-29 Oct. 2000; 23rd Pacific Northwest Convention of NA; Vancouver; PNWCNA-23, 3495 Cambie Street #220, Vancouver, BC, Canada V5Z 4R3; email: dwc89@home.com

2) 2-4 Mar. 2001; 4th Circle of Sisters NA Women's Convention "Anything is Possible"; Coast Plaza Suite Hotel at Stanley Park, Vancouver; hotel: 800.663.1144; event info: 604.254.1962; British Columbia Region, PO Box 1695, Station A, Vancouver, BC, Canada V6C 2P7

Ontario: 26-28 Jan. 2001; 2nd Toronto Area Convention; Westin Harbour Castle Hotel, Toronto; hotel: 800.WESTIN1; event info: 416.236.8956; TACNA II Programming, Box 5700, Depot A, Toronto, Ontario, Canada M5W 1N8

2) 18-20 May 2001; 14th Ontario Regional Convention; Ottawa; *save the date, more will be revealed*

Quebec: 6-8 Oct. 2000; Quebec Regional Convention XIII; St-Hyacinthe; event info: QRCNA, CP 56505, Montreal, Quebec, Canada H1W 3Z3; email: crqna@moncourrier.com

2) 13-15 Apr. 2001; 9th Canadian Convention; Hotel Plaza Quebec, Ste-Foy; hotel: 800.567.5276; event info: Le Nordet RSC, CSR Le Nordet, CP 1412, Terminus Quebec, Quebec, Canada G1K 7G7

DENMARK

Aalborg: 13-15 Oct. 2000; Nordjylland Area Convention "Together We Can V"; Tornhojskolen, Aalborg; event info: Postbox 1212, 9100 Aalborg, Denmark; web: <http://noskna.tsx.org>

GREECE

Peloponnesse: 30 Sept. - 1 Oct. 2000; Athens Area hosts the 4th Hellenic Convention and Conference; Costa Perla Hotel, Ermioni-Argolida; hotel: + 30.1.3240282; event info: + 30.1.6108458 or + 30.9.37956533 or + 30.9.37087163 or + 30.1.2636665; registration: + 30.1.7565408

MEXICO

Baja California: 20-22 Oct. 2000; "One Promise, Many Gifts"; Grand Hotel, Tijuana; hotel: in Mexico, call: 91.800.0266007; in the US, call: 800.472.6385; committee: 858.277.6438 or + 52.66.800986 or + 52.66.802370

Sonora: 4-5 Nov. 2000; 4th Anniversary of NA in Agua Prieta; registration: Pacifico-Norte, 2 calle 1 y ave 10 # 1001 Agua Prieta, Sonora, Mexico; email: ged1004@prodigy.net

NORWAY

Oslo: 13-15 Oct. 2000; OØKNA-IV 4th East Area Convention; Nordseter Skole, Oslo; event info: + 47.22323132

PERU

Lima: 12 Nov. 2000; 15th Anniversary Meeting "The Miracle Continues"; La Punta, Auditorio del Colegio, Clara Cogorno de Cogorno, Malecón de La Punta s/n, La Punta, Callao; event info: + 51.1.9957841; write: Peru Region, Casilla Postal N°18-0523, Lima 18

SPAIN

Malaga Province: 11-13 May 2001; Spain Regional Convention; Hotel Don Miguel, Marbella; event info in Spanish: + 34.95.2114147; event info in English: + 34.95.746278; Spain Region, APDO correos NA ESPANA 22-129, 08080 Barcelona, Spain

UNITED STATES

Alabama: 6-8 Oct. 2000; Alabama/Northwest Florida Region's "Surrender 2000" Spiritual Retreat; Cheaha State Park; accommodations: 800.ALAPARK; event info: 205.933.5078; registration: 205.982.5290

2) 24-26 Nov. 2000; 7th Greater Birmingham Area Convention "Keep Coming Back and You Too Could Bud into Something Beautiful"; The Wynfrey Hotel, Birmingham; hotel: 800.996.3739; event info: 205.785.0309 or 205.424.3623; registration: 205.786.6997; GBACNA-VII, PO Box 321324, Birmingham, AL 35212

3) 12-14 Jan. 2001; Central Alabama Area Convention "Free at Last IV"; Madison Holiday Inn, Montgomery; event info: PO Box 230572, Montgomery, AL 36123

4) 9-11 Feb. 2001; 5th North Alabama Area Convention "Out of the Darkness into the Light"; Holiday Inn, Decatur; hotel: 256.355.3150; event info: 256.383.3512 or 256.464.9595 or 256.880.9219; NAACC, PO Box 3432, Florence, AL 35630

5) 23-25 Mar. 2001; Greater Mobile Area Convention "The Message Is Hope"; Adam's Mark Riverview Plaza Hotel, Mobile; hotel: 800.444.2326; event info: 334.476.8386; Greater Mobile Area, PO Box 9622, Mobile, AL 36691-9622

Alaska: 6-8 Oct. 2000; Alaska Regional Convention "It's a New Day; Live It the NA Way"; Anchorage Hilton, Anchorage; hotel: 800.245.2527; event info: 907.245.2332 or 907.333.3462

California: 6-8 Oct. 2000; San Francisco Area "Rainbow Convention 2000"; Ramada Plaza Hotel, 8th and Market Streets, San Francisco; hotel: 800.227.4747; registration: 415.621.3975; event info: 415.826.1006

2) 6-8 Oct. 2000; San Gabriel Valley Area Spiritual Retreat; Camp Seely, Lake Arrowhead; registration: 626.584.0454; event info: 626.357.2848

3) 7 Oct. 2000; Mountain Area "Motown Getdown"; Golden Oaks Senior Center, Running Springs; event info: 909.867.2312 or 909.338.9843 or 909.867.3710

4) 24-26 Nov. 2000; 21st Southern California Regional Convention; Sheraton Suites, Pomona; hotel: 909.622.2220; conv. chair: 818.768.1292; entertainment: 323.256.2006; programming: 626.339.5941

5) 19-21 Jan. 2001; 6th San Fernando Valley Area Convention "The Ties That Bind Us Together"; Burbank Airport Hilton, Burbank; hotel: 800.HILTONS; event info: 626.334.5858; registration: 818.891.9210; SFVASC, PO Box 4143, Panorama City, CA 91412

Colorado: 20-22 Oct. 2000; 14th Colorado Regional Convention; Grand Junction; web: www.nacolorado.org/CRCNA/index.html

Connecticut: 31 Dec. 2000 - 1 Jan. 2001; Central Connecticut Area New Year's Eve Party; Meriden; *save the date, more will be revealed*

2) 5-7 Jan. 2001; 16th Connecticut Regional Convention "Happy, Joyous, & Free"; Sheraton Stamford Hotel, Stamford; hotel: 800.625.5718; event info: 860.242.7411 or 860.233.5584; conv. chair: 203.234.8563; CRSC, 100 Main Street #8056, Middletown, CT 06457

Florida: 29 Sept. 2000 - 1 Oct. 2000; Uncoast Area Convention "Life Is Good"; Plaza Resort & Spa, Daytona Beach; hotel: 800.874.7420; event info: 904.462.7918

2) 16-19 Nov. 2000; Palm Coast Area Convention "Serenity in the Sun XIX"; Sheraton West Palm Beach Hotel, W Palm Beach; hotel: 800.325.3535; registration: 561.845.1294; event info: 561.863.4295; Palm Coast Area Recovery Weekend, PO Box 3151, W Palm Beach, FL 33402

3) 17-19 Nov. 2000; New Path Group "Rainbow Weekend IV - Dare to Dream"; Clarion Hotel, Hollywood Beach; hotel: 800.329.9019; registration: 954.525.7256 or 954.760.4130; New Path Group, PO Box 2152, Fort Lauderdale, FL 33303

Georgia: 12-14 Jan. 2001; North East Georgia Area Convention "Spirituality Is the Key III"; Holiday Inn, Athens; hotel: 800.465.4329; event info: 706.353.0728 or 770.736.9409; NEGASC, Box 907804, Gainesville, GA 30503

2) 22-25 Feb. 2001; 20th Georgia Regional Convention; Westin Hotel, Atlanta; hotel: 800.228.3000; event info: 770.474.7797 or 770.884.5587; registration: 404.766.7288; speaker tape submission deadline is 31 Oct. 2000; GRCNA-20, PO Box 689, Stockbridge, GA 30281

Hawaii: 26-29 Oct. 2000; 9th Hawaii Regional Convention; Kauai Beach Resort, Lihue, Kauai; hotel: 808.245.1955; event info: 808.828.1131

Illinois: 17-19 Nov. 2000; 4th Greater Illinois Regional Convention; Jumer's Castle Lodge, Urbana; hotel: 217.384.8800; conv. chair: 217.344.4847; alternative accommodations: 217.698.0891; GIRCNA-IV, Box 1123, Champaign, IL 61824-1123

Kansas: 6-8 Oct. 2000; NA Roundup "New Frontiers"; web: www.angelfire.com/ia/naroundup/index.html

2) 30 Mar. 2001 - 1 Apr. 2001; 18th Mid-America Regional Convention; Ramada Inn, Hutchinson; speaker tape info: 316.665.1028; speaker tape submission deadline is 10 Nov. 2000

Louisiana: 25-27 May 2001; Louisiana Regional Convention "2001 Recovery Odyssey"; Hampton Inn, Alexandria; hotel: 318.445.6996; event info: 318.449.1778; LRCNA, Box 8334, Alexandria, LA 71306

Maryland: 24-26 Nov. 2000; 8th Free State Regional Convention; Baltimore; event info: NA Service Center, 217 N Warwick Ave., Baltimore, MD, 21216

Massachusetts: 10-12 Nov. 2000; 3rd South Shore Area Convention "Spirit of Recovery"; Sheraton Inn, Plymouth; hotel: 508.747.4900; event info: 508.230.3533 or 508.587.1606; programming: 508.584.6088; South Shore Area, Box 2265, Abington, MA 02351

2) 2-4 Mar. 2001; 9th New England Regional Convention "A Message of Hope"; Sea Crest Resort and Convention Center, North Falmouth; hotel: 800.225.3110; conv. chair: 508.279.2079; registration: 781.335.8365; speaker tape information: 617.413.4715; speaker tape submission deadline is 15 Nov. 2000; NERC-IX, Box 107, Weymouth, MA 02188-0004

Michigan: 27-29 Oct. 2000; Western Wayne County Area Convention; DoubleTree Hotel, Detroit Metro Airport, Detroit; hotel: 800.222.8733 mention NA; event info: 734.421.8624

2) 10-12 Nov. 2000; Kalamazoo Area Convention "Recovery Is a Journey, Not a Destination"; Clarion Hotel, Kalamazoo; hotel: 800.CLARION; event info: 616.388.3562 or 616.628.5342 or 616.344.1705; KACNA, Box 50822, Kalamazoo, MI 49005

Minnesota: 6-8 Apr. 2001; New Directions Area hosts Minnesota's 8th Annual Convention; Cragun's Resort, Brainerd; hotel: 218.825.2700; event info: 320.693.6438; New Directions Area, Box 576, Litchfield, MN 55355

Mississippi: 13-15 Oct. 2000; 18th Mississippi Regional Convention; Ramada Convention Center, Tupelo; hotel: 662.844.4111; event info: 662.665.0134; registration: 662.423.3328

2) 17-19 Nov. 2000; 18th Gulf Coast Area Convention "Surrender by the Seashore"; Seashore Methodist Assembly Retreat Center, Biloxi; event info: Box 446, Gulfport, MS 39502

Missouri: 30 Dec. 2000 - 1 Jan. 2001; United Kansas City Area Convention "Freedom to Change VII"; Holiday Inn at Sports Complex, Kansas City; hotel: 816.353.5300; event info: 816.822.7421 or 816.531.6160 or 785.838.4942 or 785.838.4942; speaker tape submission deadline is 1 Nov. 2000; UKCA, Box 45855, Kansas City, MO 64171

Nebraska: 29 Sept. 2000 - 1 Oct. 2000; Nebraska Regional Convention "Embrace the Journey"; Holiday Lodge, Fremont; hotel: 800.743.7666; event info: 402.727.1110 or 402.727.6713

2) 4-6 May 2001; Eastern Nebraska Area "Close Encounters of the Clean Kind"; Omaha; speaker tape info: 402.551.2896; speaker tape submission deadline is 31 Dec. 2000; ENNA, PO Box 3937, Omaha, NE 68102

New Jersey: 3-5 Nov. 2000; Northeast New Jersey Area "In The Spirit of Unity VI; Stepping Out of the Shadows"; Sheraton Hotel, Newark Airport, Newark; hotel: 907.690.5500 or 800.325.3535; event info: 973.522.1833 or 908.587.2062; NENJAC, Box 409, Roselle, NJ 07203

2) 30 Dec. 2000 - 1 Jan. 2001; Bergen Area "2001: A Clean Odyssey New Year's Eve Convention"; Parsippany Hilton, Parsippany; hotel: 973.267.7373; event info: Bergen Area Convention Committee, PO Box 173, New Milford, NJ 07646

3) 23-25 Feb. 2001; Greater Newark Area Convention "Celebrating Recovery"; Hilton Gateway Center, Newark; hotel: 973.455.7997; event info: 973.623.8526; registration: 673.643.1343; PO Box 3412, Newark, NJ 07103

4) 16-18 Mar. 2001; 16th New Jersey Regional Convention; Newark Airport Sheraton, Newark; hotel: 800.325.3535, must mention RCC of NJ to receive discount hotel rates; event info: 609.259.0006

New York: 7 Oct. 2000; Bronx Area Groups Speaker Jam; Our Lady of Victory Church, Bronx; event info: 718.365.5133 or 212.369.8795 or 212.283.5052

2) 13-15 Oct. 2000; Western New York Regional Convention; Niagara Falls Convention Center, Niagara Falls; hotel: 800.HOLIDAY; event info: 716.895.5962; registration: 716.632.6508

3) 23-25 Feb. 2001; Rochester Area Convention "Recovery Is Possible"; Hyatt Regency, Rochester; hotel: 800.233.1234; registration: 716.482.5989; programming: 716.334.3255; conv. chair: 716.654.6743; Rochester Area, Box 30485, Rochester, NY 14603

North Carolina: 5-7 Jan. 2001; Western North Carolina Area "Spiritually High in the Land of the Sky XVI"; Ramada Plaza Hotel, Asheville; hotel: 800.678.2161; event info: 828.298.9385; Box 16238, Asheville, NC 28816

Ohio: 24-26 Nov. 2000; Greater Cincinnati Area Convention "Thanks for the Miracle X"; Hyatt Regency Downtown, Cincinnati; hotel: 513.579.1234; event info: 513.559.0961 or 513.741.4595 or 513.242.2242 or 513.821.7591 or 513.961.3261; Box 141300, Cincinnati, OH 45214-1300

Ohio: 31 Dec. 2000; Toledo Area New Year's Eve Party; Howland Community Church, Howland; event info: 330.638.4776

Oklahoma: 19-21 Jan. 2001; 11th Annual Winter Convention "2001: An NA Odyssey"; Super 8 Motel, Norman; rsvns: 800.800.8000; event info: 405.329.6862 or 405.447.5447

Oregon: 11-13 May 2001; 8th Pacific Cascade Regional Convention "The Message Is Hope"; Red Lion Hotel, Medford; hotel: 541.779.5811; event info: 541.773.3587; PCRCNA-8, PO Box 3931, Central Point, OR 97504

Pennsylvania: 3-5 Nov. 2000; Little Apple Area 19th Birthday Celebration "Choose Freedom"; Sheraton Inn Jetport, Allentown; hotel: 610.266.1000; registration: 610.351.4121; event info: 610.433.1985; LAABC, 606 South 5th Street, Allentown, PA 18103

2) 10-12 Nov. 2000; Tri-State Regional Convention "Start to Live XVIII"; Hilton Pittsburgh and Towers, Pittsburgh; hotel: 412.391.4600; registration: 412.521.7312; event info: 412.884.4192

3) 1-3 Nov. 2001; 2nd Inner City Area Convention; Philadelphia; conv. chair: 215.218.9171; event info: 215.991.9505 or 215.225.3884; Inner City Area, Box 50374, Philadelphia, PA 19132

South Carolina: 13-15 Oct. 2000; North Central Carolina Area Convention "This Is HOW We Do It III"; Quality Hotel & Conference Center, Spartanburg; hotel: 800.228.5151; conv. chair: 864.587.1257; registration: 864.542.9275; programming: 864.921.9002

2) 16-19 Nov. 2000; Serenity Festival XVIII; The Sea Mist Hotel, Myrtle Beach; hotel: 800.732.6478; registration: 843.224.4264; event info: 843.873.2349 or 910.675.1646

3) 16-18 Feb. 2001; Central Carolina Area Convention "Expect a Miracle"; Hilton Head Island Beach & Tennis Resort, Hilton Head Island; hotel: 800.475.2631; event info: 803.735.8088; Box 11513, Columbia, SC 29211

Tennessee: 22-26 Nov. 2000; 18th Volunteer Regional Convention; Knoxville Hilton Downtown, Knoxville; hotel: 865.523.2300; event info: 865.525.8030 or 423.639.3035

Texas: 20-22 Oct. 2000; Best Little Region Convention; Radisson, Amarillo; event info: 806.373.3303

2) 10-12 Nov. 2000; 69th Texas Unity Convention; event info: 972.245.8972

3) 2-4 Feb. 2001; Tejas Bluebonnet Regional Convention; Corpus Christi; event info: 361.528.2303; TBRCNA, PO Box 10054, Corpus Christi, TX 78460-0054

Utah: 27-29 Oct. 2000; Western Service Learning Days 14; Holiday Inn Downtown, Salt Lake City; hotel: 800.933.9678 or 801.359.8600; event info: 801.963.6368 or 801.531.1520

2) 23-25 Feb. 2001; 8th Northern Utah Area Convention; Ben Lomond Hotel, Ogden; hotel: 801.627.1900; event info: 801.644.6013; speaker tape information: 801.621.7114; speaker tape submission deadline is 8 Oct. 2000; Northern Utah Area, Box 242, Ogden, UT 84402

Virginia: 27-29 Oct. 2000; Tidewater Area Convention "Let the Healing Begin"; Radisson Hotel, Norfolk; hotel: 877.240.4005 or 757.627.5555; registration: 757.424.0065; conv chair: 252.335.7728

West Virginia: 27-29 Oct. 2000; Mountaineer Regional Convention "True Colors"; Cedar Lakes, Ripely; web: <http://www.newwave.net/~mrscna>

Wisconsin: 6-8 Oct. 2000; 17th Wisconsin State NA Convention; Ramada Conference Center, Wausau; hotel: 715.845.4341; event info: 715.421.3840; registration: 715.384.4043; exec. com. chair: 715.843.7509

2) 5-7 Jan. 2001; Greater Milwaukee Area Unity Convention VI; Milwaukee Hyatt Regency, Milwaukee; hotel: 800.233.1234, give code G/AGMU for special rate; hospitality: 414.871.2102; Greater Milwaukee Area, Box 511001, Milwaukee, WI 53203

Wyoming: 29 Sept. 2000 - 1 Oct. 2000; Western Wyoming Area hosts 9th Convention of Unity in Narcotics Anonymous; Jeffrey Center, Rawlins; event info: 307.875.7143

NA Way Magazine Themes and Deadlines

January 2001 – July 2001

January 2001 NA Way

Deadline: 1 October 2000 (manuscripts in to WSO)

Theme: Celebrating Our Recovery

- How does your area/region/country celebrate recovery? Conventions? Participation in World Unity Day?
- How do individual members celebrate recovery anniversaries in your NA community?
- How do you, as an individual, celebrate your recovery every day?
- NA's promise of freedom—celebrating it.
- How do celebrations of recovery transcend language and culture?
- Gratitude and celebration: When you do your Tenth Step at the end of the day, do you find things that are worth celebrating? What are they?
- Fear of celebrating: Do some members in your NA community seem to dislike NA events? What's your opinion on that?
- What do our celebrations of recovery say to the general public?

April 2001 NA Way

Deadline: 1 January 2001 (manuscripts in to WSO)

Theme: A Recovery Odyssey

- Why do people speak of recovery as a journey? How has your recovery been a journey?
- Infinite potential for recovery.
- Developing increasing faith, hope, and courage; deepening surrender.
- Changes and challenges.
- Fellow travelers on the journey: sponsors, sponsees, friends, other people who have taught you.
- Recovery as its own reward.
- Close encounters with a Higher Power.
- Loneliness—when you've gone where no one else in your NA community has gone before. Where do you find support, identification, motivation to continue spiritual growth?
- Journeys in service.

July 2001 NA Way

Deadline: 1 April 2001 (manuscripts in to WSO)

Theme: Carrying the Message

- Tradition Eleven—issues of attraction and promotion in carrying the message.
- Carrying the message, not the addict.
- Why is carrying the message our most important (primary) purpose?
- Personal service and general service; places to carry the message—recovery meetings, service meetings, PI, H&I.
- Hearing the message.
- How does NA unity help us carry the message?
- Sponsorship and selflessness, humility, accepting limitations.
- What does carrying the message have to do with our common welfare?

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