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A simple way

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IN THIS ISSUE

The following text on Tradition One is excerpted from *The Voice of NA*, Volume 2, February 1968. *The Voice of NA* was our fellowship's first newsletter. In its first issue, the editor wrote, "We hope this newsletter will enlarge on one of our basic beliefs—that the best hope for any addict is the practice of personal freedom in abstinence and the maintenance of a simple spiritual program."

Maintenance of recovery is based on a spiritual foundation whose main aspect is service to others. Haphazard methods can bring no lasting results. Lack of a unified group purpose for our common welfare could soon end in individual effort with self-seeking reward as its goal...

What are we willing to give or give up that will have meaning in life or living? Our pride of self in accomplishment? Our bias that says, "I'm different?" Our closed mind that says, "Mine is the right and only way?" Are we willing to give others the right to their voice and opinion and see if experience proves them, one way or the other? Are we willing to try new ideas wholeheartedly? Are we willing to apply to others and the group the same tolerance and patience we show ourselves when we fall short of our personal ideals? Are we willing to do in concerted effort what we cannot do alone? When things do not go well, even when we have tried well, do we scatter to lick our wounds and nurse our grudges, or can we pick up the pieces and, with more understanding, build in a better way?

We are neither saints nor geniuses but if we pool the talents, great and small, that we all do possess, we can change the course of our history and the lives of many we have yet to meet.



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From the editor

This has been an exciting and historic year for Narcotics Anonymous as we celebrate 50 years of carrying our simple, yet powerful message of recovery to hundreds of thousands of members worldwide.

I am so grateful to be clean and to have the privilege of serving as editor of your magazine. NA has given me a new life and has helped me to become a productive member of society—changing the hopeless person I was when I first arrived. I know this will probably sound clichéd, but no matter how long we are clean, one thing we learn is that change is constant and not always the awful thing we fear.

And speaking of change—over the next few issues, *The NA Way* will start to incorporate some changes to the magazine's format. The editorial board met in March 2003 and discussed several options to improve how we communicate with you regarding the availability of the magazine, how the magazine can best highlight the more controversial issues that sometimes confront our fellowship, and how to better solicit articles from members.

To address the magazine's availability, we have added a line to the information box on the lower left side of page 2 regarding how to request a free subscription to the magazine.

In response to the controversial issues, the Editorial Board agreed to review articles focused on controversial issues associated with NA recovery in a substantial way, as long as it does not conflict with NA principles. The Editorial Board also has to be in consensus in order to print the article.

And finally, in an effort to generate more articles from members, the board moved to change the theme-based policy to one that will, hopefully, allow more creative input from the fellowship. Instead of the usual theme for each issue, we compiled a list of questions to generate ideas or input. So if you are interested in writing, you can select a question to use as a starting point or feel free to come up with one on your own. You may even want to consider interviewing a fellow member as was done on page 8 of this issue. Whatever you decide, send us your thoughts.

Here are the questions the Editorial Board selected:

- ❖ What is your favorite recovery quote and why?
- ❖ What is your favorite spiritual principle and why?
- ❖ What does working the steps mean to you?
- ❖ Online meetings?
- ❖ How do you handle disruptions at your home group?
- ❖ What is your experience with children at meetings?
- ❖ How do you know it is God's will?
- ❖ Does being productive and responsible mean being boring?
- ❖ How do you develop healthy intimate relationships?
- ❖ What does it mean to be responsible and productive in NA and in society?

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 providing 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."

- ❖ How does your gratitude speak?
- ❖ How do you continue to make amends? Are you ever finished making amends?
- ❖ Are there any other requirements for membership?
- ❖ Rigidity: How did you learn to lighten up?

In addition to the above changes, we plan to add a new column titled "**Did you know?**" starting in January, which will highlight facts about the NA Fellowship. If you have any fun or interesting facts about your local NA community or general information about NA, send it in.

As always, *The NA Way Magazine* welcomes all articles, essays, and/or letters, regardless of topic. This is your magazine, and it is a team effort. We cannot do it alone!

Nancy S, *Editor*



Finding hope

Hello friends! My name is Repe, and I am an addict.

I got a strong urge to write to you because I found faith and hope from an earlier issue of *The NA Way* (October 2002). I am currently serving time in prison in Finland.* I committed all of my crimes before I cleaned up. I drove my life down to the ground by drug abuse, and my only choice was between treatment and prison. Had I not chosen treatment, I do not think I would be writing this letter to you.

When I was released from prison in 2000, I started looking for professional help to get rid of drugs. I did not yet understand that I would have to change my whole life in order to stay clean and have a life worth living. I went to a rehab center, where I found out about Narcotics Anonymous. The center offered the possibility of attending NA groups, and I took the opportunity, hanging on for my life.

I sensed from the start that this was the way for me to go. This sense was strengthened by information offered to me at the rehab clinic. After attending the first group, I no longer felt that I was alone. There were lots of others dealing with the same issues I had. It was a relief to hear and see people who had survived and returned to society.

I spent a month in rehab and moved on to a treatment center where NA was an integral part of the program. At first, I attended the groups five to six times a week to get some understanding of what the fellowship was all about. Thinking about it now, it took about four months until I began to understand what NA was and why people went there.

Of course, I did not yet imagine or believe that I would be attending NA for the rest of my life or that my whole life would be built around NA. A member with long-term recovery advised me to attend the groups regardless of how I felt. I was also advised to talk about how I felt when I did not know what else to talk about. So I started talking about my feelings, thoughts, troubles, my life, my joys, my sorrows, faith, and everything that was on my mind. I have done very well until today because of this suggestion.

Over time, I started getting to know the people and services the local group offered. NA literature has become an important part of my recovery—especially here in prison. As my treatment at the rehab clinic came to an end, I moved into my new home, and the help I got through NA became very tangible. I remember feeling lonely, hopeless, and completely incapable of living a clean life in society.

Following suggestions, I made a decision to attend NA meetings even when I was feeling depressed and downcast. As I entered the group meeting, I felt something like a giant wave go through my body, washing away my thoughts of loneliness and hopelessness. These thoughts were replaced by an overwhelming sensation of belonging that lasted for the rest of the night. It was the first experience of my new life with NA and with a power greater than myself. I remember everything about that night like it happened yesterday, and I enjoy reliving it.

My life started settling down, and I got a job. While life was moving ahead (as it is still doing), I started evaluating myself in the way suggested by the program. I did not

* It is a great honor to have my story published in *The NA Way Magazine*. I was in prison when I wrote this but I am now pardoned as of 13 June 2003.

set the program aside to “wait” until I needed it. I stay focused on the program daily and try to find answers to my problems in it.

I met my sponsor early in my recovery, and we have a great relationship. At one point, I was going to leave the relationship to find a new sponsor, when he was not behaving the way I wanted him to! After our disagreement (which only occurred in my mind), we got closer and our relationship got even deeper. I think the same rules apply between friends and with an addict and his sponsor: A friend/sponsor listens, supports, offers suggestions, encourages, mourns, and shares his opinions, as well as the victories and defeats of life.

You can reveal your true self to a friend/sponsor exactly as you are without fear of rejection or condemnation. Healthy relationships are important, which is easy to forget in the busyness of everyday life.

I was understandably scared when I entered prison after 2½ years clean. I used to deliver drugs into that prison, trying to avoid getting checked by the guards and personnel. I stepped through the doors of the feared central prison in Helsinki with very conflicting thoughts and emotions.

My first hopes were to hook up with a group quickly and get transferred to a more peaceful prison. A couple of weeks later I was transferred to such a prison, where I am now writing this letter.

I have faced my addiction here in its most brutal manifestation with no form of consolation. That has been hard to swallow whole, and on many occasions I have looked in the mirror, asking myself whether I am really like this. I have had to forgive myself and ask for God’s direction. This is how life moves me, and recovery will not take me anywhere if I do not choose to work it.

Today I am capable of facing my fears. My thoughts are with my new friends who do not take drugs and who have found a new way of life. “As long as I follow this way, I have nothing to fear.”

Thank you, NA.

Reijo S, Helsinki, Finland

Our readers write

Dear *NA Way*,

I read the article titled “The Internal Solution” in the July issue. I have heard its message countless times, usually from a newcomer or from someone with an ax to grind against God or the very idea of a Higher Power. I was surprised and disappointed that *The NA Way Magazine* would devote an entire page to a letter that, essentially, is encouraging us to “take the power back.”

Where does one begin to discuss the foolishness I believe is contained on that page? I will begin with the notion of prayer.

Many may think that the purpose of prayer is to move the hand of God, but in reality, prayer is more for *our* benefit than God’s. True prayer focuses our attention and makes us willing to receive the things our Higher Power is trying to make available to us throughout our day.

Lack of serenity is the human condition—especially in the case of us addicts! God does not withdraw it from us; we do that on our own.

When I was out there in my active addiction, I prayed and asked God to help me to stop using drugs. By doing that, I moved into a place where I could accept my Higher Power’s intervention (in the form of the police) and go with the deliverance instead of fighting against it like I always did before. If the solution had been in me, I would have stopped by myself. But, alas, I needed help—and I still do.

The Serenity Prayer is an excellent reminder to me that living clean requires balance in my expectations. There are countless things that I cannot change. There are a few things that I can change, and it requires wisdom to keep the two categories separate.

Today I realize that the only thing I can change is myself. However, I find my attention constantly drawn to things I have no control over. Again, it is the human condition.

By the way, I believe that knowledge does not equal wisdom. Knowledge is an inventory, while wisdom is the use of it. Many knowledgeable people never do anything with their knowledge because they lack wisdom. And wisdom does not necessarily come from experience. Experience, by itself, does not mean anything. How else can you explain the addict who, year after year, exposes himself to violence, bankruptcy, disease, and whatever else is out there, just to get high? He has experience, right? Oh yeah, but he lacks wisdom.

So why not ask for help? Or does my fellow addict think, like I did before my last relapse, “maybe I made too big a deal out of this addiction thing... I can handle it?”

Beware, I say, it is a trap!

Bobby O’N, California, USA

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.



Working steps should be fun?

When I heard this at an NA meeting recently, it occurred to me that when I struggle with a step, I am still on the previous step. It feels good to have the understanding that my powerlessness and unmanageability are strengths for the life I live today. It first came when, after I got into recovery, someone offered me a drug. I realized that they had no idea the destruction they were trying to give me. Now I know that they may mean well, but they just do not know—or have to know.

My understanding of unmanageability is more recent. When I first got clean, my life was out of control. Then, over time, as things were going more *my* way, manageability seemed to be mine. Naturally, my life did not stay that way!

Soon no area of my life was manageable. It was maybe worse in some ways than when I got clean years before. With a rededication to the tools, a step-living sponsor, a step-working guide, service inside of NA, a daily prayer-life whether the day was good or not, meetings and a home group where my mask comes off, and telephone contact, manageability is coming from my spiritual life now and not from outside issues.

The Second Step is what I am experiencing as I seek this greater power, which for me includes the tools mentioned above. My feelings about my recovery can belie my true progress. As my sponsor reminds me, if I am making new mistakes, I am growing and taking necessary risks.

The Third Step offers the spiritual freedom that attracted me to NA in the first place, with a surrender to the God I understand. If I leave behind what I do not understand (why God did this or why God did not do this), I can work this step and my relationship with my Higher Power can grow and deepen.

The Fourth Step gets lots of bad press. When we fear our Higher Power, the words seem to say, "We took a fearful, immoral inventory." For this addict, I have an HP who forgives me, and when I cannot believe or feel it, I look to my support in NA for that love and acceptance. Never alone, never again.

For me, with the Fifth Step comes the challenge of admitting to all three entities the nature of my wrongs. I can share in a meeting, and I told another person of my wrongs, but admitting it to my HP and myself takes power out of self-pity, self-loathing, and self-will.

In the Sixth Step, when the pain is enough, it is time to let go. Step Seven gives my loving HP authority to work in my life. By offering up the essence of who I think or believe I am, something new can begin.

Two parts in the Eighth Step are honesty and willingness. I can make a list of everyone I have harmed even when I am not ready to make amends to them all. When the joy of holding my hurt feelings against others and myself is gone, it is time to make that amends.

Step Nine gives me the ability to seek peace in my life. Indirect amends is one tool I use from my experience. The last people I harmed in my last using episode did not want anything to do with me, but today I can make amends to them by not using.

Feeling that I have done something wrong gives me a chance to practice Step Ten at any moment of the day. This includes the times when something does not feel right with me and I take action to not injure myself.

The Eleventh Step is the quiet time with the only one who is constantly in my corner. The creative spiritual freedom that I can include in this step is precious to me.

The Twelfth Step I practice best with honesty. When I am at an NA group business meeting or subcommittee meeting and the topic is “how do we present an image to the newcomer?” I remember that if we believe in our own recovery, then a lie is not necessary.

The therapeutic value of one addict helping another lies in our experience in recovery. Giving rides to meetings or other outside things are for me and not because I am a volunteer for NA. And last but not least, the privilege of practicing these principles in all my affairs has changed my view of my place in this world. It is often embarrassing for me to do the principled thing, but I prefer the results to my old behavior.

When I keep in mind that steps are a way to live a full life and that I am not trying to become socially accepted, just spiritually adjusted, I cannot imagine any other way to live.

Anonymous

The “other” fellowship

Why are people prejudiced against the “other” fellowship? Well, I am too, but I personally would not have found NA if I had not found AA. No one around me knew of NA’s existence when I got clean. On the contrary, professionals treated my withdrawal as an especially difficult, hopeless case because I had three addictions, and they thought that each of them had to be treated separately.

As an addict or alcoholic, I had the chance to get into a treatment center. As my admission process began, I was

told to give up my apartment. But when they found out about my third addiction, none of the treatment facilities would take me because I was also bulimic. Guess I should not have mentioned that!

I was told that at least I could go to AA, even though there would not be anything that would come close to what I needed, considering the nature of my symptoms. So I ended up homeless in AA.

There I learned how to proceed when I wanted to find an apartment and a job. I was unable to do that clean; you know, I was absolutely helpless without drugs! Of course, in AA I was told that the topic was alcohol, not drugs, but there were two people who knew of this little fellowship of NA, and after the meeting one night they asked me if I wanted to come along and peer in the door. They said it was better if we went in a group in case we did not like the meeting. This way we could leave without having to explain why we left.

We all met in a dark corner in a subway station and I was told not to be afraid. We had to wait for another really strange-looking, but harmless guy who knew where to find the meeting. It all felt like something illegal!

Back then, NA in our town consisted of three meetings. One of them was a women’s meeting that you could not find without the assistance of another woman who knew where it was located. Yes, we had a women’s meeting right from the start!

It was an adventure to find the rooms and to see the kinds of people who were sitting there. I still had the idea of “three addictions” ringing in my ears and thought that I would never be admitted to NA meetings because I had two “wrong” addictions. I guess it took about two years before I heard in the reading that “alcohol is a drug.” This relieved me a bit, but I still had this fear they would ban me from meetings because of the other addiction.

During my first Fifth Step, I was afraid my sponsor would let me go for having such a thing. Naturally, she did not. She explained to me that this program was about addiction and that I should pray to my Higher Power to take the “third addiction” away. I found out that it was a matter of attitude—about how I view it.

When I wrote my Tenth Step in the evenings, I was always considering the question of whether I was clean. I never wrote “yes” when I had acted out on one of the three. And then, one day, something happened. I still cannot tell you exactly what, but it was sort of a deep-down burning desire to be free, to take each addiction equally seriously and not to either act out on one or devalue it. You see, I had come to the point of seeing all of them as drugs that could kill me. And it worked.

*It was an
adventure in
those early
years. We had
a task, and we
had a vision.*

Today I am clean from “all three of them” by going to NA and AA. You could not exist back then without also going to AA. And I would not have had a chance to learn of NA if I had not been in AA. Of course, I heard things like “You know where you are going to end up if you take trips to other fellowships and forget that your main problem is alcohol,” and I heard it from the other side as well, not to mention the comments on Overeaters Anonymous. That fellowship was not taken seriously at all. I followed my instinct and stayed where I could identify best and where I got the most support, and this was in Narcotics Anonymous.

I belong to the third generation of NA in my area. I watched and participated in the building up of our service structure. I had no idea why I was doing all these things, but I finally belonged somewhere. I am deeply involved in the translation of literature into my native language. I witnessed how the Basic Text was finalized in my language and how areas and regions developed.

We drove through the whole country to meet other addicts because we were so small and so scattered. I was one of NA's pioneers here, and I am proud of that. Nothing was granted. Everything had to be built up. NA World Services came on a development trip to help us. It was an adventure in those early years. We had a task, and we had a vision.

Two of those people who took me to my first NA meeting are dead today. One of them died from another disease and the other from drugs. The third member went out and is still using.

I celebrated my 15th NA anniversary this year, and I just have gotten married. For the latter, I did not need the advice of other addicts. This time, I had enough recovery and self-esteem through the program to know how to make the right decision and how to take the steps to succeed.

Thank you, NA!

Martina D, Frankfurt, Germany

NA in Istanbul, Turkey

Last September I was blessed with being able to go to a three-day gathering of NA members on an island outside Istanbul. I spent two weeks there with the fellowship. What a beautiful place to be!

I took a leap of faith, and after a couple of emails and a phone call, I went. I followed the directions I was given. When I got off the bus from the airport, the person who was supposed to meet me was not there, but my God and NA were. I called my NA contact, and she told me to have faith and to wait in the garden behind the bus station—someone would come to pick me up.

Off I went to the garden. It was beautiful and as long as a football field. I started getting nervous because I realized that the members coming to get me did not know what I look like, and I did not speak Turkish!

After waiting for a while, I looked for a phone to call again. A merchant in the store was helping me to call my NA con-

tact when someone came to the door. This person was staring at my NA hat and me. He said, "Stan?" and I said, "NA." We both smiled and hugged. God was there and I am with the fellowship now in Turkey.

My new friend did not speak English, but this is how NA works—one addict helping another. We did not need language; we had the recovery connection. Soon there were about eight members gathered and we had this fantastic meeting, drinking tea and talking about recovery.

We walked over to the meeting place, where everything was translated for me. It was unreal. I could feel the fellowship and unity working. Language was truly not an issue. Then we went to eat and had another meeting after the meeting. Let me tell you, I have eleven years clean, and it has been a very long time since I felt that connected.

I have been to NA conventions in three other countries and throughout the US, and by far I had the best experience in Istanbul.

The members helped me to find a room for the night, and the next day three members went with me to make sure I got a nice hotel at a fair price right in the historic part of town. All of this and I had not even gone to the gathering on the island yet!

To get to the gathering, we took a beautiful old-fashioned ferryboat ride for about two hours to this fantastic island. When we got there, it was like stepping back in time. There were maybe three automobiles on the whole island, and you had to take a horse and carriage to where you needed to go, or just walk. I was in paradise.

We stayed at a retreat facility, and it was a small, intimate convention where everybody was at every meeting, and the friendships and bonding I made there will last a lifetime.

To all of you who are thinking of traveling outside the US, I cannot say enough about NA in Turkey. The members there are so loving and caring, and they really want to meet members from other places and hear about different experiences in the fellowship.

The members here are planning to have a convention this fall in October. It will be the tenth anniversary of NA in

Turkey. I have been back two more times since my first trip. As a personal footnote, I have met and fallen in love with a beautiful member there, and I hope to be living there part time until next year.

Trust in God and do not let language barriers stop you from sharing and learning with other members in distant lands. You will grow in ways that you cannot imagine. I know I sure have!

Stan R, Maryland, USA

"So that no addict seeking recovery..."

Help NAWS keep your phonenumber information current.

Please notify NAWS at 818.773.9999 if changes are made to your area or regional phonenumber. This will help ensure that any addict seeking recovery can find help.

FSteam@na.org

The NA Way Magazine Editorial Board recognizes that it may be difficult for members to submit stories because they do not know what to write or what might be interesting to other members. So this question-and-answer interview format is offered in hopes of generating interest in article submissions. The editorial board strongly encourages any member to interview another member (your sponsor, your sponsee, a speaker at a convention, or, as in the example below, someone you would like to know more about). You can use some of the questions below and/or add your own questions. Feel free to answer the questions yourself and submit them to *The NA Way*. We sincerely hope you enjoy this interview.

I chose Kofi R (Michigan, Listening Is Sharing home group) to interview because I wanted to get to know him better. He was visiting my area and attended our annual campout at the Elora Gorge Conservation Area near Guelph, Ontario, Canada. This is the largest campout in our region and it is named Gorging on Recovery—a pun on the campground and what seems to occur at our campout. Kofi came early and had chosen the best spot to camp, at the rear of the lot near the top of the cliff overlooking the rapids below. I interviewed Kofi at his campsite on Saturday, 5 July. I hope you enjoy this as much as I enjoyed talking with Kofi. And thank you again, Kofi, for taking a risk and volunteering your thoughts.

Marc S, Ontario, Canada

The NA Way Magazine Editorial Board member

Marc S: What is your favorite recovery quote and why?

Kofi R: *Don't pick up the first one. That's what I always forgot to do. I always thought that I would spend \$20 or \$100 and that would be it. That was how I tried to stop or control my using before recovery. When I came to NA, they told me it was the first one, and that I didn't have to worry about the second or the fourth or more, if I didn't pick up the first one.*

M: What is your favorite spiritual principle and why?

K: *Surrender, because that's the one that opens my mind and leads to willingness.*

M: What does working the steps mean to you?

K: *It means living a principled life. It means that I am being guided by a set of conditions that will work for the betterment of everybody. It also means that it's not always about my way.*

M: What about the "work" part of working the steps?

K: *For me, it's applying spiritual principles to my life. It really is work. Talking the talk is easy, but employing the steps is work. It's a conscious effort to apply the principles within the steps.*

M: Any opinions about online meetings?

K: *Today they are not a necessity in my life. I am grateful to live in an area with lots of meetings; however, I do believe it can be very helpful in isolated areas.*

M: How do you handle disruptions at your home group?

K: *By trying to use what I know is the "NA way." I try to guide others, hopefully educate them, and then yield to group conscience.*

M: How do you know it's God's will?

K: *Because, for me, it feels good. It feels right. When I make a decision based on God's will, it does not linger. It does not produce consequences. God's will produces peace. That's where serenity comes from. When I surrender there is no argument in my head. What may linger are some unresolved feelings that can then be addressed in the same way through surrender and God's will. These unresolved feelings then go away. When I surrender sometimes the disease says, "You sucker. This won't work. These people will take advantage of you." When I continue to surrender and follow God's will, these thoughts go away.*

M: Do you think being productive and responsible means being boring?

K: *No. Being productive and responsible sometimes isn't exciting, but it's not boring. We are thrill seekers as addicts. Being productive is not as exciting as the chaos of addiction, but it's not boring. Most of the things that I like to do are attached to something I want to do. Responsibility involves doing the things I need to do, like cleaning up the wreckage of my past.*

M: And work?

K: *(Laughing) Yes. I love my work, and I get a great deal of satisfaction out of it. I make an honest living.*

M: How do you develop a healthy relationship with the opposite sex?

K: *By listening; surrender and trust in God's will are important in relationships. Listening is a higher form of surrender.*

M: What does it mean to be responsible and productive in NA and in society?

K: *It means trying to do the best that I can do in all that I can do. During my active addiction mediocrity was acceptable; now I have to strive for the best that I can do.*

M: How does your gratitude speak?

K: *By giving back what was so freely given to me. I show up regularly to be there for the newcomer. It helps me, too. In some ways I'm always a newcomer too. Being in recovery doesn't mean to get well and leave. It doesn't mean getting a life and then hoarding it.*

M: How do you continue to make amends? Are you ever finished making amends?

K: *No, I don't think I'll ever be finished. I continue on this journey, staying in the process of recovery. That's tough; everything is up for revision. As God presents things to me, I can make amends, but I need a program in my life to do that.*

M: Rigidity. How do you lighten up?

K: *I struggle with that. I have to talk to other people, people who have been there before me. I'm generally hard on others and myself. I value older members' experience.*



PI in Aotearoa, New Zealand

In September 1982, the first Narcotics Anonymous meeting was held in Mt. Eden, Auckland, New Zealand. There were two clean members, very little literature, and no sound knowledge of the traditions, but our enthusiasm to carry the message was high.

The biggest problem at the time was how we were going to get members, and how we were going to reach the still-suffering addict. Needless to say, it was a daunting task. Narcotics Anonymous had no credibility in New Zealand. In fact, most professionals who worked in the field had no idea about the Twelve Steps for addicts.

At the time I was working at a drug-dependency clinic, endeavoring to convince staff of the disease concept and the value the Twelve Steps of NA had for addicts to maintain abstinence and live quality lives.

Luckily, my ultimate human boss at the time, a well-respected psychiatrist, had associations in another twelve-step fellowship and sang the virtues of the steps as the best and cheapest long-term psychotherapy one could get! He had known me in my active addiction and saw the changes.

So this is where Public Information for Aotearoa began—with just a few simple flyers, and the one and only NA meeting written on the bottom.

I remember being sent a newspaper clipping of the Baltimore convention with headlines about thousands of recovering addicts invading the city and proudly displaying it in the dispensary as some proof that there was a much larger fellowship beyond New Zealand. Addicts *were* staying clean.

Staff started to encourage their clients to talk to me and attend an NA meeting. Many did with reluctance and fear that they would lose their cuddly rugs! Many came for the wrong reasons. Some kept coming back and some came back years later. These days there are a number of those addicts clean in the rooms and grateful that they were strongly encouraged to attend NA.

At the end of 1982, during one of our first group business meetings, the discussion centered on two issues: first, who was eligible to attend (since at that time, with so little strength, we attracted all kinds of people who were not addicts), and second, the lack of the money we needed to carry our message. We needed a phone. Somehow we acquired one along with an answering machine and delegated the service to our newest member! She was the only person available during the day.

We then decided we needed to distribute flyers to doctors and social services. Our lack of knowledge of the traditions and financial resources did not deter us. We photocopied literature and flyers and set to work. Anyone who joined the group was enlisted to do PI by distributing flyers. We also started getting people to attend from another fellowship. PI was happening. It was working.

The Australians invited us to form an area and become part of their region in 1985. A member in Christchurch somehow contacted those he knew around New Zealand and arranged for us all to meet in Wellington. To our amazement, there were 16 meetings already underway around the country. Admittedly, some only had one member, but it did not matter. We no longer felt alone.

Australia sent a member to us as their representative and to help educate us about the benefits of a service structure. By the end of the weekend, we had voted to form one area for the whole of New Zealand and elected trusted servants. Of course, just about anyone who was clean now had a service position in the area!

Our commitment to get together was such that we agreed to meet weekly in Wellington. For some, this meant traveling by car, train, and/or ferry for hours.

By 1988 the area had close to 60 meetings, and it was decided with some trepidation to form a New Zealand region, splitting into three areas. For a while we had an active regional PI chairperson. The region coordinated a booth at a professional event held in Auckland. NA World Services sent a PI representative and held learning days to train those of us who would be staffing the booth.

In January 1990, it is recorded in the Northern Area minutes that there was a decision to print a quarterly PI newsletter, called *It's No Secret*. However, I cannot recall ever seeing this magazine published. Perhaps it was a secret!

Later in 1990, we were asked to hold a booth at another event. More than 120 PI kits were distributed there. By 1991 we had given some 73 presentations. We were elated. NA was finally being recognized.

Areas took up more responsibility after we had a national gathering in 1998 to review where we, as a region, were heading. PI was listed as a top priority. Northern Area printed hundreds of PI postcards that, at the time, seemed to be at an exceedingly large cost. There was a large mailing to all social service agencies, and we placed the cards in central cafes as well.

By now we had active subcommittees. PI presentations were happening regularly, meeting lists were printed and mailed out to agencies every eight weeks, and NA was hosting booths at most of the communities' annual festivals.

In 1999 we heard of a music festival, a mini-Woodstock of sorts, and felt it was important to attend. Some 25,000 people were expected to attend the four-day event. Could we achieve such a goal? We had never undertaken such a big affair before. It would mean staying onsite and finding funds for literature we did

not have. How much would we require?

Several emails to world services reassured us that the most important thing was to have meeting lists and phone contact, if nothing else. Fund-raising began. Socks were sold to the local fellowship with the wording *No Mean Feat* to assist with our literature purchase.

The music event committee fully supported us being there. Yes, we could do it! Pamphlets and postcards could be distributed. We could have a booth twelve hours a day and offer two meetings daily at the campsite.

What an amazing experience we had. Over the course of each day, we would put postcards in strategic places around the acres of land. It did not matter how many we put up, for by the end of the day the postcards had all disappeared. What a way to carry the message!

It was a valuable lesson for us. We were reminded, once again, that anything is possible. There were other spin-offs: Members who had strayed from the fellowship reunited with NA after finding us at the booth and visitors from overseas found a meeting to keep them safe.

This experience inspired us to do more booths at outdoor events. We now had banners and a system that worked. Today we have a calendar of events that we book into each year.

Our biggest event is New Zealand's "Pacifica Festival," where 75-90,000 people attend to support the Polynesian culture. We also have booths at our Big Gay Out festival, ever mindful of the presence and support of our minority groups.

One of our other initiatives supported by our local council was to get two community boards made with our phonenumber. These are moved around to 32 different sites throughout the year. PI continues in New Zealand, even though energy and commitment waxes and wanes depending on the PI chairperson and the committee that supports them.

Another significant event in 2000 was the introduction of the national free calling number (0800.NA.TODAY) for New Zealand. This was a big undertaking and financial commitment for our fellowship. It took months of debate to decide whether this was a good use of our resources. More postcards with this new information, as well as local PI

phonelines, were printed for distribution throughout the areas. The phone company data since then accurately reflects how great was this need.

This is just a small bit of New Zealand PI history. There is so much more we can and will do so that any addict seeking recovery can find us.

Janet C, Auckland, New Zealand

The snowball effect of a PI project

In early 1999 it was suggested to our local PI subcommittee that we could possibly do presentations at our local high schools. The committee thought it was a good idea, and elected an Outreach Coordinator to get the ball rolling.

We tried a mail campaign to the schools, but we got little response. Next we tried contacting the health teachers and counselors by phone, explaining what a PI presentation would and would not consist of. One school was willing to give us a chance. After the first day of presentations, we were invited back for the next semester, and our schools project was underway.

Four years later we have been in approximately 15 high schools and have been invited back to each one regularly. In order to fulfill our primary purpose, we also donated a Basic Text to each school library.

We were also invited to do a presentation for the local PTA (Parent Teacher Association) and invited to this county's fifth largest attended fair.

We have noticed more teens showing up at meetings, as well as two teen meetings starting in our area.

We would like to hope that this is the result of that first school presentation four years ago. In the spirit of unity, we are helping other areas start up a schools project of their own.

Does your area have one?

*Markus O,
Pierce County Area PI Subcommittee,
Washington, USA*



Seventh Tradition

"Every NA group ought to be fully self-supporting, declining outside contributions."

Traditions were written only for the groups, right? Or were they written for the whole NA community?

For a long time, I have been trying to interpret this tradition. I believe that without realizing it, we violate this tradition time and again. Maybe my thoughts on this matter will upset some members, or maybe it will help to uncover this topic a bit more. I would like to know the opinions of my fellow members in regard to this topic so I can know that I am not so wrong and that I am not alone.

It Works: How and Why, page 178, states: "But what if the money we collect from passing the hat still isn't sufficient to meet our needs? What if we sold some T-shirts or jewelry to raise some cash or held a dinner and asked for a donation at the door?" It continues on page 179: "By and large, our groups have found that the simplest, straightest path to full self-support is through the voluntary contributions of their own members. For this reason we discourage groups from engaging in fundraising activities. If a group is unable to provide for its own needs from the contributions of its members, perhaps group members will want to consider increasing their contributions." I believe the traditions were created for the groups and should be protected and respected by the groups.

Our Eleventh Concept states: "When all levels of our service structure receive direct financial support from the groups, the bonds of mutual responsibility are strengthened between them. Additionally, by freeing our service boards and committees from the need to engage in fundraising activities, we make it possible for those service units to devote their full energies to the fulfillment of NA's primary purpose." (*Twelve Concepts for NA Service*, page 26)

Our service manual also addresses the topic of the activities subcommittee. What is its main purpose? To organize events (open meetings, public meetings, service forums, etc.) in order to carry our primary purpose and to give freely what has been given to us? To organize parties or conventions so we can gather, have fun, and dance? Or to do all these things in order to raise funds?

Our service manual explains that funds collected from activities are not designed to replace our spiritual obligation—to self-support through our Seventh Tradition. Therefore, I believe that the function of the activities subcommittee is not necessarily about the subcommittee devoting all of its efforts to raising funds.

Why do we charge relatives, friends, or guests to enter an open convention or tell them they can contribute when we pass the basket at our meetings or events? Is that not the same as receiving outside contributions?

Why do we organize a dinner or a dance and then very happily say that it was very successful, when the biggest percentage of the funds raised came from our relatives and friends? Is this really "self-supporting through our own contributions?"

The commitment to become independent and self-supporting is not a commitment to raise large amounts of money in order to manage spectacular events. The groups and the NA community as a whole determine that the basic funds will be used

to accomplish our primary purpose—to carry the message to the addict who still suffers.

I see how our contributions are not obtained in the way that they should be: The baskets are poor but the funds raised in open conventions, dances, and raffles have become the way we support ourselves. Most importantly, groups, areas, and regions set their priorities only noticing their own needs, and cling tightly to money so that it can be spent on our own projects. We forget that our role also consists of providing the necessary funds for all levels of service so areas, subcommittees, regions, etc., will not be distracted from their purpose, which is to serve the fellowship as a whole, not to endlessly raise funds due to our lack of commitment.

"The group's decision to become fully self-supporting, declining outside contributions, reflects the group's sense of responsibility for itself. In recovery, we discard the illusion that the rest of the world is responsible to take care of us; rather, we take due pride in caring for ourselves. Individually, we demonstrate our maturity by accepting the weight of our own burdens; collectively, we demonstrate our maturity by accepting responsibility for our group, neither seeking nor accepting outside contributions." (*It Works: How and Why*, page 182)

I do not want to forget to mention God, because our program is spiritual. On page 183 of *It Works* is the clue that will give us some light regarding what the attitude of our community should be in relation to this topic:

"In understanding the principles underlying the Seventh Tradition, practical simplicity walks hand in hand with our faith in a Higher Power. So long as we take our direction from that Power, our needs are met. Likewise, the decision to decline outside contributions, meeting the group's needs from the group's own resources, is based firmly in faith. So long as our group remains devoted to fulfilling its primary purpose, its needs are met."

As long as we follow this path, we have nothing to fear.

Nestor F, Buenos Aires, Argentina

Confronting the pink elephant

It is so obvious that we must be in denial! There is a large pink elephant in our NA living room, and we do not seem to want to acknowledge it.

We say all the right things: that diversity is our strength; that here we learn to identify, not compare; that one addict, regardless of personal background, lifestyle, culture, etc., can best understand and help another; and that our personal recovery absolutely depends on NA unity. So why, then, are so many of our meetings overwhelmingly Black, White, or Hispanic? Why are many of our conventions not diverse? Why is it that areas tend to split along racial lines? Why have a bunch of Spanish-speaking groups here in New York, even though distant from each other geographically, formed their own area? And what is it in all of us that accepts this self-segregation without a challenge?

There is a myth that housing patterns strongly influence attendance at any group. To some extent, that may be true. But many members travel to get to meetings. Some of us even go great distances to be around people who "look like us," and some of us go far from the few "mixed" groups that manage to survive here. Let's face it; darn few of those who filled the St. Mark's Place NA clubhouse lived within walking distance. So we are mobile! However, that is not why the elephant exists. The real issue is, how do we choose the particular meeting that we travel to? Could it be complacency?

Some would argue (or rationalize) that self-segregated groups are a type of special interest group, like men's, women's, gay and lesbian groups, etc. People want to be comfortable—well, okay. But choosing a meeting just because others look like us or share like us overvalues superficial similarities and devalues our common themes, such as that we are all alike, even though we are one of a kind.

If you make both "mixed" and "other" meetings, please read no further. I am addressing those who only make a certain kind of meeting. Special interest groups

were created to supplement, not replace, what we get from "mixed" meetings.

As someone who is often a minority of one at meetings I choose to attend, here is what I have found: Empathy overcomes closed-mindedness when we allow it to, but we have to be in the same room for it to happen. If enough of us would make just one meeting a week outside our comfort zone, we would be in the solution. Just by our going where members do not talk or dress like us, by staying open, and by coming back, that elephant would be gone!

We would soon see "a little bit of ourselves in every addict and a little bit of them in us." Sure, we might not feel entirely comfortable the first few times—perhaps we would even be made to feel uncomfortable—but after a while, through contact, we will find we have all the most important things in common. If we stay separated, we will not see.

Make some meetings in other parts of the country where the NA community is small, and you may find what I have found: that these members have no choice but to interact. And harmony happens. Bonding occurs.

The readings warn us that internal as well as external forces could destroy us. Are we being hypocrites when we say one thing and do another? And does that not undermine our credibility with the newcomer?

Hey NA, do we really trust the process?

Phil O, New York, USA



H&I Slim

For those of you who haven't had the pleasure of meeting him, H&I Slim is "the ultimate H&I kinda guy." He hangs out in hospitals and jails all over the world. You might say he's always in the know and always on the go. Got a question about H&I? Need some help? Write H&I Slim in care of the WSO.

Dear H&I Slim,

Hello, Slim. I am an addict who had some clean time, relapsed, and now am in prison, stuck with a long-term sentence. Of course, having had some clean time and doing what I did, I want to get back into recovery. There are a couple of NA meetings here—one is an H&I meeting and the other is independent of H&I, with addicts on the inside facilitating the meeting.

I want to get straight to the point and not waste time, paper, or words. AA continues to donate Big Books to the AA meetings and to individuals. I have been here for a year, and I still do not have a copy of our book, the Basic Text. I have asked the H&I people and I have written to the area, the region, and the world.

At least world services sent me some literature and suggested that perhaps someone on the outside, a friend or family member, could purchase a book for me. That is all well and good, but I do not have anyone out there.

I understand that world sends literature around the world, but still. ... And the area and region—well, with all the addicts I see in meetings, just in my little area, it would seem like NA could donate more books to individuals who need them, and in my case, an addict in prison who does not have anyone on the outside.

Slim, why is it I cannot get a copy of the Basic Text, *Narcotics Anonymous*, donated to me?

Thank you,
Incarcerated addict in need

(I will keep the state, area, and region anonymous, but if you read this and your area or region does not help, please think about it.)

Dear Friend,

I want to thank you for writing to Narcotics Anonymous World Services and addressing your question to me. I also want to thank you for your honesty. This is a sensitive issue for me, because if I had my druthers (or the money) when addicts in need requested a book, they would receive one. I understand that it is only a dream of mine and not realistic—at least at this point in NA's growth.

You mentioned that the World Service Office did not send you a book, but that they did send some literature. As you know, the World Service Office distributes literature to the fellowship worldwide. When an incarcerated addict requests a copy of the Basic Text, there are times a book is not or cannot be sent. However, as you have mentioned, some NA literature was sent to you. If a book cannot be sent, a copy of *An Introductory Guide to Narcotics Anonymous*, the White Booklet, and *Behind the Walls* always will be sent in its place.

NA World Services is committed to sending free NA literature to incarcerated addicts whenever possible and will continue to do so.

Most local service committees also provide some literature to institutionalized addicts whenever they can. Sometimes an area and/or region has problems funding not only H&I but other basic services as well, simply because funds are not available. In other areas and regions, it seems that funding is available for other services, but funding for basic services is a priority that is secondary to events and activities.

I know for myself, as well as many, many others, that having fun is a good thing for an addict who has been so serious about everything. Nonetheless, we try to teach that this is a "we" program, and that if I am willing to spend serious money for events, merchandising, and the like, I should also be willing to distribute some of my financial resources to support basic services like H&I and literature distribution. I will continue to encourage our members and service committees to devote more of their funds to H&I service.

With all of that said, I still understand your frustrations over not being able to receive a book. On the other hand, there is some good reading material in the literature that you more than likely received.

In the introductory guide, there is Chapter Four from the Basic Text, and a lot of what is in the Basic Text can be found in the White Booklet. The remainder of the text in the introductory guide and the sharing in *Behind the Walls* are as spiritually fulfilling as the Basic Text.

So, my friend, I encourage you to use the material you have to its fullest until the time comes when you will receive a copy of the Basic Text, *Narcotics Anonymous* and have additional resource material. Continue to attend the meetings that are available, and with your exposure to NA on the outside, you can be a role model for other addicts there at the prison. Most of all, you can continue in your personal recovery process. I know in my heart you will receive a book some day.

In loving service,
H&I Slim

Primary Purpose

"There are many ways of doing things in Narcotics Anonymous. And just as all of us have our own individual personalities, so will your group develop its own identity, its own way of doing things, and its own special knack for carrying the NA message. That's the way it should be. In NA we encourage unity, not uniformity."

The Group Booklet, pg. 1

This is a column for you, about you, and by you. We invite you to share any challenges your group may have faced, how your group reached a solution, and/or its "special knack" that keeps you coming back!

Dear NA World Services:

The questions listed below have been causing great disharmony inside my NA group. Can you please help us so that we can get back to focusing on carrying out our group's primary purpose? Thank you.

- ❖ Can members of your family give you your medallion during your NA anniversary/birthday celebration? If not, why not?
- ❖ Our NA text study meeting is in dire need of books. Although we have a large gathering, we are barely making rent in our meeting space. We serve 99 percent newcomers at this study. My question is, can we expect the area to buy books for us? What is the policy in this situation?
- ❖ My group printed T-shirts announcing our group's anniversary, and we put the name of the clubhouse where the celebration will take place on the T-shirts. Is this violating any of our traditions? Please explain the policy on this.

Also, we have been hanging the T-shirt up during our group meetings as a way of letting people know that we have them for sale. One member yanked the shirt down, stating that it was against the Fifth or Sixth Tradition (I forget which one). Is this a violation? Please explain.

We are having a lot of arguments over these situations, and we need your answers as soon as possible.

ML and the LGH Group of NA

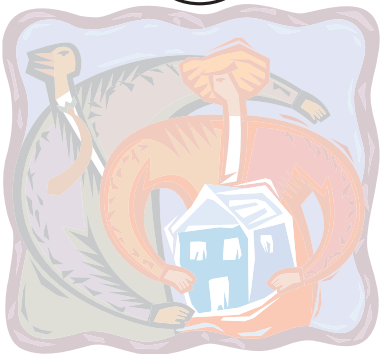
Dear ML and members of the LGH Group of NA:

- 1) There is no one answer to this question that applies to *all* NA meetings. Each NA group normally establishes its own policy about anniversary/birthday celebrations. Some NA groups allow a family member (who is not an NA member) to give a medallion and some do not. Some groups allow the person presenting the medallion to say a few words and other groups do not.

One factor to consider is whether the meeting is an open meeting or a closed meeting. Closed NA meetings are for addicts only and usually do not permit non-NA members to attend or participate in their meetings in any way. Open meetings allow anyone interested in recovery from addiction to attend and ask questions about NA. Some open meetings allow nonaddicts to give the celebrating member a medallion, but this is not always the case.

Your group will need to establish your own policy at your business meeting. For more information about open and closed NA meetings, see NAWS Bulletin #15 at www.na.org/bulletins-main.htm.

- 2) You can ask the Area Service Committee to donate some books to your group but you should not expect it. Some ASC's have a policy that allows for helping groups in need for a limited time period or with a limited amount of money, but many ASC's



use all of their money to provide services that benefit all of the groups in the area, so none of it is available to assist individual groups with literature or rent expenses.

The best remedy for the situation you described is to encourage all addicts attending the meeting to donate according to the Seventh Tradition so the group can then purchase a book every month or so.

- 3) Your group's T-shirts should not have the name of the clubhouse or any other organization on them. Tradition Six clearly guides us not to affiliate with other organizations or endorse them in any way. The clubhouse is an outside enterprise and should not be on the T-shirt. For more information about Tradition Six in this regard, see the Basic Text, page 67.

Since the mistake has already been made and the T-shirts are already printed, it is not worth fighting over now. Everyone can learn from this experience and not repeat it next time.

Because the T-shirt has an endorsement of a clubhouse on it, you should not hang it up in meetings. If your group wants to announce their availability, that is fine—but again, this should be a decision made in the group business meeting.

It sounds like the members of your group can benefit from studying our literature—particularly *The Group Booklet*, *It Works: How and Why* (traditions section), and *A Guide to Local Services in Narcotics Anonymous*. In addition, Concept Six in *Twelve Concepts for NA Service* has an excellent discussion of how we use group conscience in our decision making in NA. The other bulletins at www.na.org/bulletins-main.htm may be especially helpful to everyone there.

We hope this information is helpful, and we send our best wishes. Please let us know if we can help any further.

In fellowship,
NA World Services
Fellowship Services Department

Help Wanted!

The WSO is always on the lookout for qualified and skilled applicants for various positions, so send in your resume or contact **Roberta@na.org** if you are interested in becoming a special worker.

Picture this

NA communities are invited to send photographs of their meeting places. We especially welcome photos that include meeting formats, recovery literature, posters, dirty coffee cups, and anything else that makes the meeting place look "lived in." Sorry, we cannot use photos that identify NA members. Please tell us about your meeting, its name, the location and city, how long it has been in existence, and what your format consists of (speaker, participation, etc.).



The Step by Step Group (Grupo Paso a Paso) meets on Sunday at 8:30 pm in Cadiz, Spain. Our format is primarily a literature study; however, sometimes it is necessary to adjust the format, especially if there is a large number of newcomers.



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 date. For instance, if you want your event published in the October issue, we need to know by 1 July.

Bahamas

Nassau: 31 Oct-2 Nov; BASCNA Celebration XV; Holiday Inn at Junkanoo Beach, Nassau; hotel rsvns: 242.356.0000

Bermuda

Devonshire: 26-28 Mar 2004; Serenity in Paradise IV; Our Primary Purpose; Sonesta Beach Resort, Devonshire; hotel rsvns: 441.238.8122; event info: 441.295.5300; write: Bermuda Islands Area, Box DV 690, Devonshire, Bermuda, www.bermudana.org

Brazil

Parana: 5-7 Dec; Uma Jornada Emocionante; Casa de Retiros Nossa Senhora do Mossungue, Curitiba; hotel rsvns: +041.334.2352; event info: +041.334.5541

Canada

Ontario: 7-9 Nov; The Adventure XI (L'Aventure XI); Ameri-Cana Resort, Niagara Falls; hotel rsvns: 800.263.3508; event info: ccnaxi@msn.com; <http://cana-acna.org/new/convention.html>

Quebec: 10-12 Oct; 16th Annual Quebec Regional Convention; Auberge des Seigneurs, Saint-Hyacinthe (near Montreal); hotel rsvns: 450.774.3810; event info: 514.326.2153; event info: 514.253.0513

2) 21-23 Nov; Congrès au Coeur du Rétablissement 10; Reviens ça marche; Hotel du Roy à Trois-Rivières, Trois-Rivières; hotel rsvns: 800.463.4620; event info: 819.374.9506, 819.697.2718

Colombia

Antioquia: 10-13 Oct; XII Convención Regional de NA de Colombia; CSA Sur de Antioquia, Medellín; hotel rsvns: +57.4.2511665; event info: +57.1.2252095, +57.03.310.2311666, +57.4.2312016; write: Colombia/Bogotá, OSR Colombia, Calle 48 # 48-14 Of. 806 Edificio Nuevo Mundo-Medellín or OSA Bogotá, Calle 63 # 11-27 Local 211-Bogotá DC; www.na-colombia.org

France

Paris: 10-12 Oct; Annual Bilingual Convention; Together 20 Years! Eurosites Plaine Saint-Denis, Paris; <http://www.nafrance.org>

Greece

Halkidiki: 10-12 Oct; ECCNA 20; Let Your Spirit Fly; Kassandra Halkidiki (Palini Beach Hotel), Halkidiki; hotel rsvns: +0030.237.4022100; event info: +30.210.9849366, +30.944.521894; write: ECCNA 20/Greece, Box 75064, Post Code 17610, Kalithea, Athens, Greece; <http://www.eccna2003.com>

Guatemala

Sacatepequez: 16-19 Oct; Convención Regional II; Llama de la Vida; Palacio de San Juan Del Obispo, Antigua Guatemala

India

Karnataka: 4-6 Feb 2004; India Regional Convention IV; Living Free; Best Club, Bangalore; event info: +98.441.58323, nabangalore@hotmail.com

Indonesia

Java: 24-26 Oct; Hand in Hand, Together We Can; Taman Mini, Jakarta; event info: +62.816.66.7997; http://www.na-bali.org/english/events/eng_jak_conv

Mexico

Baja California: 17-19 Oct; Convención Baja California NA XI: Recuperación Es Libertad, (Recovery Is Freedom); Grand Hotel, Tijuana; hotel rsvns: USA: 866.472.6385 and Mex: +01.800.026607; event info: 858.277.6438, +01.664.688.33.61, 626.331.2027; write: Baja Costa Area, CBCNA, PMB 80, Box 439056, San Diego, CA 92143-9056

Turkey

Istanbul: 17-19 Oct; First Turkish NA Convention; 10th Year Celebration, Freedom from Addiction; Villa Blanche Hotel, Istanbul; USA: 240.793.5215; event info: +90.216.362.4261; Turkish-speaking: +0533.641.0881; www.nalinks.org/turkiyena

Uruguay

Montevideo: 22-25 Jan 2004; VI Convención Latinoamericana de NA, Creciendo en Unidad y Foro Zonal Latinoamericano; NH Columbia Hotel, Montevideo; event info: +59.899.644433, +59.82.6221156; speaker tape submission deadline: 31 Oct

Venezuela

Estado Bolívar: 7-10 Nov; II Convención Regional de NA de Venezuela; Puerto Ordaz y San Félix; www.na-venezuela.org

United States

Alabama: 16-18 Jan 2004; Free at Last VII; Guesthouse Hotel & Suite Convention Center, Montgomery; hotel rsvns: 334.264.2231; write: Central Alabama, Box 230572, Montgomery, AL 36123-0572; www.alnwflrscna.org

Arizona: 31 Oct-2 Nov; Western Service Learning Days XVII; Our Primary Purpose; Best Western Grace Inn at Ahwatukee, Phoenix; hotel rsvns: 800.843.6010; event registration: 602.564.2823; speaker tape info: 602.282.8198; event info: 480.921.4303; <http://wsld.org>

Arkansas: 10-12 Oct; 10th Annual Cove Lake Campout; Let's Spend the Night Together; Cove Lake, Paris; event info: 479.478.6244; write: Arkansas River Valley Area, Box 10682, Fort Smith, AR 72903

2) 17-19 Oct; Arkansas Regional Unity Campout XII; Greers Ferry Lake, Shiloh Recreation Area, Greers Ferry; event info: 800.338.8750; write: Arkansas Region, PMB 216, 860 Highway 62 East, Mountain Home, AR 72653; http://arscna.org/act/act_.htm#ARUC

3) 27-29 Feb 2004; Texarkana Area Convention; Four Points Sheraton, Texarkana; hotel rsvns: 903.792.3222; event info: 903.791.1551, 870.773.2287, 870.772.1227; write: Texarkana Area, Box 6321, Texarkana, TX 75501

California: 3-5 Oct; Rainbow Convention VIII; Ramada Plaza Hotel, San Francisco; hotel rsvns: 415.626.8000; 415.431.4044; event info: 415.431.7596; write: San Francisco Area, 78 Gough St, San Francisco, CA 94102

2) 28-30 Nov; Southern California Regional Convention XXIV; A Part of...; Doubletree Hotel, Ontario; hotel rsvns: 800.222.8733; event info: 626.339.5441; event registration: 626.568.8892; speaker tape info: 909.599.9972; write: Southern California Region, 1935 S Myrtle Ave, Monrovia, CA 91016

3) 20-22 Feb 2004; Central California Regional Convention XII; Living in the Moment; Holiday Inn Select, Bakersfield; hotel rsvns: 661.323.1900; event info: 805.382.1922, 661.250.2164, 805.934.4228; write: Central California Region, Box 2170, Santa Maria, CA 93457-2170; <http://www.ccrna.org>

Colorado: 10-12 Oct; Colorado Regional Convention XVII; Never Alone, Never Again; Westminster; hotel rsvns: 800.937.8461; nacolorado-crcna.org

Connecticut: 2-4 Jan 2004; Connecticut Regional Convention IXX; Alone I Can't, Together We Can; Mystic Marriott, Groton; hotel rsvns: 860.446.2600; event info: 860.355.3378, 203.775.5439

Florida: 3-5 Oct; Daytona Area Convention V; Desert Inn Resort and Convention Center, Daytona Beach; hotel rsvns: 800.826.1711; event registration: 386.943.8565; event info: 386.804.1633, 386.789.9847; write: Daytona Area, Box 247, Daytona Beach, FL 32115; www.dacna5.org

2) 10-12 Oct; MidCoast Convention; Embassy Suites-Boca Raton, Boca Raton; hotel rsvns: 561.994.8200; www.midcoastarea.org

3) 17-19 Oct; Heartland Area Convention; Westgate Grenelefe Resort, Haines City; hotel rsvns: 888.792.1243; event info: 863.967.2099, 863.533.6295

4) 27-30 Nov; Serenity in the Sun XXII; Crowne Plaza Hotel, West Palm Beach; hotel rsvns: 800.227.6963; speaker tape info: 561.776.3881; write: Palm Coast Area, Recovery Weekend, Box 20984, West Palm Beach, FL 33416; www.palmcoastna.org

5) 22-25 Jan 2004; Annual Spiritual Retreat 2004; One Message, One Spirit; Gold Coast Christian Camp, Palm Beach; event info: 561.746.6096; write: Palm Coast Area, Box 20984, West Palm Beach, FL 33216-0984; www.palmcoastna.org

Hawaii: 23-26 Oct; 12th Annual Hawaii Regional Convention; E Pupukahi (We Are One); Royal Lahaina Resort, Kaanapali; hotel rsvns: 800.222.5642, 808.572.5100, 808.280.5060; write: Hawaii Region, Box 6160, Kahului, HI 96733-6160; <http://www.na-hawaii.org/HRSC/convention.htm>

Idaho: 24-26 Oct; Pacific Northwest Convention XXVI; Doubletree Riverside Hotel, Boise; hotel rsvns: 800.222.8733; write: Southern Idaho Region, Box 651, Wendell, ID 83355; <http://www.sirna.org/pnw26.htm>

Illinois: 31 Oct-2 Nov; Joliet Area Convention VI; Changing Attitudes in the City of Hope; Crystal Lake Holiday Inn, Crystal Lake; hotel rsvns: 800.465.4329; event info: 815.919.0324; write: Joliet Area, Box 336, Joliet, IL 60433

2) 1-4 Jan 2004; Chicago Region Convention XVI; The Journey Continues; Hyatt Regency Chicago Hotel, Chicago; hotel rsvns: 312.565.1234; event info: 312.287.1838; event registration: 708.848.2211; write: Chicago Region, c/o CSO, 212 S Marion, Ste 27, Oak Park, IL 60302; www.chicagona.org

Indiana: 21-23 Nov; Mini-Conference; Radisson Hotel Star Plaza, Gary; hotel rsvns: 219.769.6311; event info: 219.805.3858; speaker tape info: 219.306.1129; event registration: 219.938.6272; write: 12&12 in the AM Group, 1901 W 11th Ave, Gary, IN 46404

2) 7-8 Feb 2004; Yes, We Are a Vision of Hope II; Holiday Inn Select City Center (Downtown), Lafayette; hotel rsvns: 800.423.1137; event info: 765.420.0036, 765.423.1000; write: Back to the Basics NA Group, Box 943, Lafayette, IN 47902

Maine: 12-14 Dec; Multi-Regional Learning Event VIII (MRLE); Notre Dame Spiritual Center, Alfred; event info: 603.622.4464, 603.798.4329; write: Northern New England Region, Box 1274, Saco, ME 04072

Maryland: 28-30 Nov; Freestate Regional Convention XI; Baltimore Marriott Waterfront, Baltimore; hotel rsvns: 800.228.9290; event info: 443.857.0582; event registration: 410.388.1462; www.freestatena.org

Massachusetts: 2-4 Jan 2004; Boston Area Convention; Weathering the Storm II; The Journey Continues; Boston Marriott Copley Place, Boston; hotel rsvns: 800.228.9290; write: BACNA IX, 398 Columbus Ave, Ste 278, Boston, MA 02116

Michigan: 27-30 Nov; Metro Detroit Area Regional Convention V; Through Change Comes Freedom V; Holiday Inn, Detroit; hotel rsvns: 248.544.2010; event info: 248.691.2627, 313.867.6018, 734.955.1306; write: Metro Detroit Area Convention V, 220 W Nine Mile Rd, Ferndale, MI 48220

Minnesota: 31 Dec-1 Jan 2004; New Year's Eve Bash; Bethlehem Lutheran Church, Brainerd; event info: 218.821.8045; speaker tape submission deadline: 31 Oct; write: Lakes Area, 920 South 7th, Brainerd, MN 56401; http://webpages.charter.net/skip_per

Mississippi: 17-19 Oct; Mississippi Regional Convention XXI; When at the End of the Road; Ramada Inn, Greenville; hotel rsvns: 800.272.6232; event info: 662.335.4952, 662.334.9747, 662.332.6108

Missouri: 6-8 Feb 2004; Cabin Fever Prevention Convention; Lodge of the Four Seasons, Lake Ozark; hotel rsvns: 800.THE.LAKE; event info: 573.489.1694; event registration: 573.445.2044; speaker tape info: 573.874.0150; write: Mid-Missouri Area, Box 413, Columbia, MO 65205; email: midmissourina@mismissourina.org

New Jersey: 31 Oct-2 Nov; In the Spirit of Unity IX; Sheraton Airport Hotel, Newark; hotel rsvns: 973.690.5500; event info: 732.669.0129, 908.355.3200, 973.923.6643; write: Northeast New Jersey Area, Box 409, Roselle, NJ 07203

New York: 3-5 Oct; Western New York Regional Convention VIII; Holiday Inn Resort and Conference Center, Grand Island; hotel rsvns: 716.773.1111; event info: 716.894.5719, 716.570.6995; speaker tape info: 716.834.1871; write: Western New York Region, Box 151, Buffalo, NY 14207-0151

2) 21-23 Nov; ABCD Regional Convention; The Journey Begins Within and The Key Is Surrender!; Prime Hotel and Convention Center, Saratoga Springs; hotel rsvns: 888.999.4711; event info: 518.370.2120, 518.377.2299; write: ABCD Region, Box 647, Schenectady, NY 12303

3) 16-18 Jan 2004; NACNA I; A Gift Called Life; Hilton Huntington, Melville; hotel rsvns: 800.HILTONS; speaker tape info: 516.369.0062; event registration: 516.322.1061; event info: 516.328.1838; write: Nassau Area, Box 531, Hicksville, NY 11801

North Carolina: 27-29 Feb 2004; Freedom by the Sea III; Seatrial Resort, Golf and Conference Center, Sunset Beach; hotel rsvns: 800.624.6601; event info: 910.763.1343; speaker tape info: 910.343.1680; event registration: 910.675.1646; write: Freedom by the Sea, Box 561, Wilmington, NC 28401; email: egayfield@msn.com or neetg@bellsouth.com

Ohio: 28-30 Nov; Thanks for the Miracle XII; Embracing Reality; Kings Island Resort and Conference Center, Cincinnati; hotel rsvns: 800.727.3050; write: Greater Cincinnati Area, Box 19439, Cincinnati, OH 45219

2) 2-4 Jan 2004; Columbus Ohio Area Convention XV; Point of Freedom, We Believe in Miracles; Hyatt on Capital Square, Columbus; hotel rsvns: 800.233.1234; event info: 614.443.5184, 614.237.8360, 614.783.1549; write: Columbus Ohio Area XV, Box 32351, Columbus, OH 43232-0351

Oklahoma: 10-12 Oct; Shawnee Fall Convention; Ramada Inn, Shawnee; hotel rsvns: 405.275.4404; event info: 405.964.5218; speaker tape info: 405.447.7814; write: Shawnee Group, 1120 1/2 North Kickapoo, Shawnee, OK 74801

Pennsylvania: 21-23 Nov; Beehive Area Convention XIV; Courage to Change; Ramada Inn Hotel, Wilkes-Barre; write: Beehive Area, Box 291, Wilkes-Barre, PA 18702

2) 21-23 Nov; Tri State Regional Convention; Start to Live XXI; Seven Springs Mountain Resort, Champion; hotel rsvns: 800.452.2223; event info: 412.996.4422; write: Tri State Region, Box 337, Homestead, PA 15120; www.7springs.com

South Carolina: 10-12 Oct; This Is HOW We Do It Again I; Quality Hotel and Conference Center, Spartanburg; hotel rsvns: 864.503.0780; event info: 864.595.1209, 864.433.1861; speaker tape info: 864.591.1387; write: HOW Again Convention, Box 938, Duncan, SC 29334

2) 20-23 Nov; Serenity Festival XXI; Myrtle Beach Convention Center, Myrtle Beach; event registration: 910.602.3546; event info: 910.997.3395, 843.479.6070; write: Serenity Festival Planning Committee, Box 1198, Myrtle Beach, SC 29578-1198

3) 13-15 Feb 2004; Recovery at Work (RAW) III; Hilton Head Island Beach and Tennis Resort, Hilton Head Island; hotel rsvns: 800.475.2631; event registration: 803.240.5083; speaker tape info: 803.361.1008; write: Greater Columbia Area, Box 3957, Columbia, SC 29230

Tennessee: 3-5 Oct; NA Nashville History Conference; Nashville; event info: 615.258.3811, 615.371.5441, 615.855.6643; www.nanashville.org

2) 26-30 Nov; Volunteer Regional Convention XXI; Park Vista Hotel, Gatlinburg; hotel rsvns: 800.421.PARK; event info: 865-523-5606, 423.639.3035, 865.688.1198; write: Volunteer Region, Box 107, Afton, TN 37616

Texas: 3-5 Oct; 12th Annual Frolic in the Woods; Garner State Park, Concan; hotel rsvns: 512.389.8900; write: Esperanza Area, 2186 Jackson Keller, No 335, San Antonio, TX 78213; www.eanaonline.org

2) 7-9 Nov; Best Little Region Convention XVI; Recovery: An Active Change in Ideas and Attitudes; Ambassador Suites, Abilene; hotel rsvns: 915.698.1234; write: Best Little Region 16, Big Country Area, Box 1208, San Angelo, Texas 76902

Utah: 7-9 Nov; Utah Regional Convention V; Together We Can, United We Stand; Park City Marriott, Park City; hotel rsvns: 800.243.9003; event info: iowehp@cut.net

Vermont: 14-16 Nov; Champlain Valley Area Convention XIV; Miracles in the Mirror; Radisson Hotel, Burlington; hotel rsvns: 800.333.3333; event info: 802.660.3609; event registration: 518.566.0595; speaker tape info: 802.864.2623; write: Champlain Valley Area, Box 64714, Burlington, VT 05406; <http://www.together.net/~cvacna/cvacna.htm>

Virginia: 12-14 Mar 2004; Tidewater Area Convention IV; A Lifeboat in a Sea of Despair; Cavalier Hotel, Virginia Beach; hotel rsvns: 800.446.8199; event registration: 757.523.6612; event info: 757.686.5525; speaker tape submission deadline: 31 Oct; write: Tidewater Area, Box 1567, Norfolk, VA 23501

Washington: 27-29 Feb 2004; Circle of Sisters VII; Marriott Hotel, Seattle; hotel rsvns: 206.241.2000; event registration: 253.531.1588; event info: 253.538.5069; speaker tape info: 425.640.7368; write: Seattle ASC, Box 70404, Seattle, WA 98107

West Virginia: 31 Oct-2 Nov; True Colors XVII: Vision Without Limits; Cedar Lakes, Cedar Lakes/Ripley; hotel rsvns: 304.372.7860; event info: 304.768.1626, 304.325.9803; write: Mountaineer Region, Box 2381, Morgantown, WV 26502-2381; <http://www.mrscna.org/convention.html>

Wisconsin: 17-19 Oct; WSNAC XX; Marriott Hotel, Madison West, Madison; hotel rsvns: 608.831.2000; event registration: 608.257.1990; event info: 608.845.3428; speaker tape info: 608.877.2909; www.wsnac.org

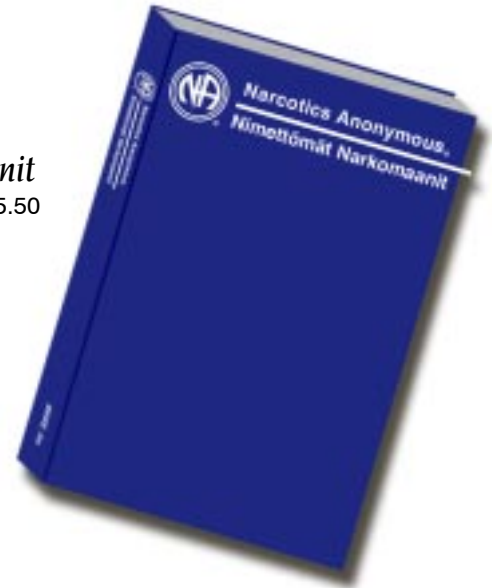
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