

# WORLD BOARD NEWS FLASH

## ISSUE DISCUSSION TOPIC

# ATMOSPHERE OF RECOVERY

*Have you ever thought about how we provide for addicts who relapse? Our oldtimers? Our trusted servants? What kind of impression would a visitor or a newcomer have of our homegroup? What is an atmosphere of recovery? How do we help members who interfere with an atmosphere of recovery? Most of us have not only thought about these things, we have personal experience of one kind or another with them. The World Board would like to know your experience with Atmosphere of Recovery subjects, and this News Flash will give you some ideas for ways to provide it.*

The purpose of issue discussions is several-fold. Experience has shown us that members find discussing these issues valuable, not only because such discussions encourage us to think more deeply about certain topics, but also because they help us build community within our groups and service bodies. In addition, when groups and members send in the results of their discussions, the World Board gets more insight into groups' and members' thoughts and experiences with these issues.

This topic is one of **two** selected at the 2002 World Service Conference for fellowshipwide discussion before the conference in 2004. We hope you will find the following questions a good launching point to begin discussion of the main topic. Don't forget...there are no rights or wrongs here, so have some fun!

### **Spiritual Principles**

- ❖ What do you consider an atmosphere of recovery? What spiritual principles need to be present to have an atmosphere of recovery?
- ❖ How does the concept of an atmosphere of recovery extend to a business or service meeting?

### **The NA Group**

- ❖ What attracts you to your home group?
- ❖ What do you do to nurture an atmosphere of recovery at your group meetings?
- ❖ What does your group do to nurture an atmosphere of recovery at group and business meetings?
- ❖ Do you think visitors and newcomers feel welcomed at your group? If so, how does your group create a welcoming atmosphere?
- ❖ How does your group communicate to its members what an atmosphere of recovery is?

### **Challenges and Solutions**

- ❖ How do we maintain an atmosphere of equality and inclusion in our groups?
- ❖ What disruptive behavior have you seen at meetings, and how has it been handled? At a business meeting? Talking directly to the member? Addressing difficulties during the meeting or afterward?
- ❖ How does your group help a member who has relapsed?
- ❖ How does your group welcome newcomers? Regular group members? Oldtimers?
- ❖ How do we carry the message of recovery through disruptive or disinterested members and/or other distractions?



# The Process

*Before we go any further, please remember there's no right or wrong way to discuss the topics, and there are no right or wrong answers!* While issue discussion topics are, as their name implies, designed to be discussed, it is up to you how to present the results of that discussion. You may choose to use the discussion as a way to generate ideas and get people thinking but determine that each individual who wishes can write something to send to the board. Or you may decide to have someone take notes of the discussion and write something as a group to send in. Just remember, as with our personal recovery, experience is more valuable than opinion not grounded in experience. The board is looking forward to receiving members', communities', and service committees' experience, strength, and hope on these topics.

We suggest that you strive to keep the discussion simple and loosely structured. It's a good idea to set aside 60 to 90 minutes for each topic. Other helpful hints to provide a friendly and more conducive atmosphere for discussion include eliminating physical barriers between people (like tables, etc.) and, if you have a large group, breaking into smaller groups of ten or so people. You probably want to ask one person to facilitate the group, while one person writes down important points. Prior to beginning these small group discussions, it is a good idea to set the ground rules for the discussions—give everyone respect, no cross talk, observe time limits, don't repeat what's already been said, etc. The facilitator should give everyone fair opportunity to speak (keeping time if necessary) and prevent domination by one person. Asking each person to address just one or two points he or she feels the strongest about can also help keep the discussion flowing well. Remember, the goal is to share ideas and experience, not engage in debate or argument.

## ***Here are some other suggestions to help get the most out of your discussions:***

- ❖ You may want to identify a local situation to use as a real life example for your discussion of the topic. The discussion could then focus on what worked and what didn't work.
- ❖ An ASC or RSC could plan a special workshop, using one or both discussions topics (note there are **two News Flashes** that address one specific issue each), before the regular committee meeting or plan a separate Topic Discussion Learning Day or workshop.
- ❖ The issue discussion question(s) could be used as topics at your local convention workshops.
- ❖ If desired, use some NA resource material, e.g., *It Works: How and Why, Twelve Concepts for NA Service, The Group Booklet, IP #2 The Group, IP #6 Recovery and Relapse, IP #9 Living the Program*, and/or any other informational bulletins and/or reports your area and region have available. You can notify the WSO and purchase (or request) some of these materials if you do not have access to them on a local level.

Enjoy the process and remember, together we can!

Please send your ideas to **World Board, c/o WSO, 19737 Nordhoff Place, Chatsworth, CA 91311**. You may also fax the information to 818.700.0700. Your region or regional delegate may also be interested in the discussion results. Please note that the deadline for returning input to the World Board is **1 September 2003**.

