

Conference Projects

Our strategic planning process is organized around the two-year cycle from one World Service Conference to the next. The environmental scanning component of our planning factors more heavily into the second half of each cycle, as we begin to identify needs and frame goals and approaches to be presented at the conference for the coming cycle. The conference-related work for this fiscal year involved the continuation of projects decided at the 2010 World Service Conference, including the multicycle Service System and Living Clean Projects, along with some looking ahead to what may be needed in the coming cycle.

Service System

As we have outlined in previous issues of the annual report, the Service System Project was created to take an overall look at how to improve local services and address some of our long-standing challenges in service delivery. For this third cycle of the project, the World

Service Conference approved a plan with two main focuses: to conduct field testing and to further discuss some of the ideas in the SSP that need clarification.

We're calling this a "field test," not a formal "beta test," because we are limited by the nature of the test and our time frame. Several communities are providing feedback on their experiences implementing the ideas in the proposals, and we are encouraging anyone interested in trying out any aspect of the proposals to contact us and let us know how we can help. We started the field test in November 2012, and we hope to complete the process by the end of July 2013, which will allow time to include a summary in the 2014 *Conference Agenda Report*. Although our field test has some limitations and it's not possible to conduct a truly "scientific" test,

Conference Projects on the Web

Service System:

www.na.org/servicesystem

Traditions Book:

www.na.org/traditions

An Introduction to NA Meetings:

www.na.org/intro

Issue Discussion Topics:

www.na.org/idt



we have already learned a great deal and we expect the process will provide important information for us to move forward. For more information on field testing, including several resources/tools that have been developed, see the Field Testing Frame and Tools sections at www.na.org/servicesystem.

There are also some aspects of the proposals that still need to be clarified, such as how to adapt the system to meet the needs of particular communities (such as larger and smaller NA communities), how literature distribution and fund flow might operate in a revised system, the role of zones, WSC seating, etc. For more information on discussions slated for this cycle, see the “Ongoing Discussions Related to the Service System Proposals” document in the Related Materials section at www.na.org/servicesystem.

As always, we welcome questions or concerns from the Fellowship. Our hope is that any NA community trying aspects of the SSP proposals (such as GSUs, consensus-based decision-making, etc.) will share those experiences with us by emailing servicesystem@na.org. In order to put forth the best ideas for improving our services at WSC 2014, we need help translating the ideas in the proposals into actual practice on a local level. Updates about the project will be posted online as they are available at www.na.org/servicesystem.

The Traditions Book Project

WSC 2010 adopted a motion to create a project plan for a Twelve Traditions working guide, and a 2011 fellowshipwide literature survey indicated that this is an item that our members are very interested in: Over 80% of respondents said this was an item that was needed or very much needed.

Comments in the literature survey showed a wide variety of expectations about this topic. Some wanted something that could be applied personally, some wanted questions to be asked in a style similar to those in *The NA Step Working Guides*, some wanted to better understand the application to groups and service, etc. At the 2012 World Service Conference, we offered a plan for a two-cycle project so that we can have more of a dialog with the fellowship this cycle about the focus and approach of a Twelve Traditions working guide before any drafting begins.

The creation of a workgroup, actual drafting of the book, sending the material out for review, and ultimately publishing an approval draft would happen in the 2014–2016 cycle, pending approval at the 2014 conference, with the book being up for approval at the 2016 conference.

Our goal for this cycle is to gather fellowship input, source material, and ideas regarding a traditions book both online and through face-to-face workshops. The resources listed below will help in those efforts. By the end of the cycle, we would like to frame viable options for the book so that we can move forward with writing it in the 2014–2016 conference cycle. Find more information online at www.na.org/traditions.

An Introduction to NA Meetings Project

The service pamphlet *An Introduction to NA Meetings* was originally envisioned primarily as a public relations tool—something that NA trusted servants who interact with professionals could distribute to help those professionals prepare addicts for what they would experience when attending their first NA meetings. In practice, however, this pamphlet has been one that seems to fit less neatly



into the Board-approved Service Material category, in part because potential NA members are the intended audience for the piece.

For this reason, the 2012 World Service Conference adopted the *Introduction to NA Meetings* Project to make this pamphlet more readily accessible to those who find it most useful. Our two main goals with this project are to affirm that this piece is the best it can be and to publish an approval form in the 2014 *Conference Agenda Report* so that, as Fellowship-approved literature, it can be more widely available to those who will benefit most from it.

This piece has been available to the Fellowship in its current form since 2008 and seems to be quite useful to members and service committees in many places. It is available in English, Spanish, Portuguese, Italian, Norwegian, and Russian. We have not heard any suggestions for revision from the Fellowship up to this point, and the World Board reviewed the piece in preparation for releasing it for fellowship review and input and did not see a need for changes. For more about this project, visit the project page online at www.na.org/intro.

Fellowship Issue Discussions

Issue Discussion Topics (IDTs) offer an opportunity for a broad-based fellowship discussion on current recovery topics that affect our entire fellowship. These discussions help to make our communications more relevant and form an integral part of working toward achieving some of the objectives from our strategic plan.

Issue Discussion Topics are subjects that addicts in NA communities around the world focus on in discussions and workshops throughout the two-year conference cycle. This cycle's IDTs are linked to the 2012 World Service Conference theme, "Inspired by Our Primary Purpose," which comes from the introductory paragraph of *A Vision for NA Service*.

All of the efforts of
Narcotics Anonymous are inspired
by the primary purpose of our
groups. Upon this common ground
we stand committed.

We need your local involvement in these discussions so that you can provide us with your ideas and feedback. All three of the Issue Discussion Topics relate directly or indirectly to the Service System Project, and these are also issues that will be reflected in the traditions book, a project that will start later this year. We often say our diversity is our strength. These are issues that need to accurately reflect our diversity for both projects. There are three IDTs for the 2012–2014 conference cycle, described below.

IDT materials were released not long after our first meeting as a full board. We currently have received only minimal feedback, but we expect to gather more as the conference cycle progresses. Comments, input, and ideas are all welcome and can be sent to worldboard@na.org.



Collaboration

NA is a “we program,” and the idea of “together we can” extends beyond our personal recovery into the service we do. This IDT focuses on how we best collaborate within our areas, regions, and zones, as well as from service body to service body. Collaboration is simply working together toward a common goal. This is something we easily focus on at the NA meeting level, but often have a hard time putting into practice in our service efforts. Collaboration is also one of the five foundational principles of the Service System Proposals.

As we consider the ways we work with each other, it is easy to identify many experiences of collaboration: setting up the chairs for a meeting, planning for an annual picnic, and H&I service on a panel, just to name a few. Sometimes we become embroiled in passion and we place personalities before principles. By stepping back and collecting our thoughts, we see that together we can work through any issue. No single personality can dominate when members are linked talking together, planning together, and working together.

One member does not fulfill our primary purpose; NA members join together to help communities grow. We gain a sense of purpose, being part of a large international NA community. As we discuss collaboration, we want to consider questions like: How do we work together more effectively in our groups, areas, regions, zones, and at world services? What gets in our way?

If we are acting in goodwill—
doing the right thing for the right
reasons—we are sure to benefit. Each
of us has something to give ...

Living Clean: The Journey Continues

Our direction in service comes
from a God of our understanding,
whether we serve as individuals,
as a group, or as a service board
or committee. Whenever we come
together, we seek the presence
and guidance of this loving Higher
Power. This direction then guides us
through all our actions.

It Works: How and Why, Tradition Two

Group Conscience

The original title of this IDT was “Group Conscience, Delegation, and Accountability,” and this session still covers all of these principles. We’d like to encourage a fellowship-wide discussion about how these principles work together and complement one another. What decisions do we make on a group level and what do we delegate? How do we hold a service body accountable if we are delegating “the authority necessary to fulfill the responsibilities assigned to it,” as stated in the Third Concept? These are the sorts of questions this IDT asks us to consider.

This is clearly an issue where local practices differ greatly. We asked delegates attending the 2012 WSC how their regions reached a conscience about WSC matters. Only 60 of the 112 reports we received even attempted to answer this question. Most of these were evenly divided between a group tally, a regional assembly of some form, and an area tally.



The practical application of the principle of group conscience clearly varies in different NA communities. Identifying this as an IDT for the cycle will help us to gather the thoughts and best practices of members in many different communities and generate discussion that will help members understand that there may not be just a single right way to view this topic.

Supporting Our Vision

This topic is a carryover from the last conference cycle, when two of the three IDTs were Self-Support and A Vision for NA Service. This topic joins the two previous IDTs in the hopes of helping members see the vital connection between financial contributions and our fellowship's ability to support the primary purpose of the NA groups and further the NA vision.

Although we have made great strides toward achieving some of the elements of our vision, such as increasing the number of languages and cultures we are able to reach, we still have a long way to go to achieve the ideals established by the vision. It can seem overwhelming at times. Perhaps Jimmy K said it best in the quote below, which reminds each of us that every effort, regardless of how small, can make a difference.

You know, I said many times a long time ago that a man without a dream is only half a man, and a fellowship without a vision is a farce. I still believe that. I know damn well that we can find our fulfillment living a day at a time here; and, a day at a time, our vision and our fellowship can become a greater reality.

This is part of a dream come true; and a dream envisions great changes, but progress demands many small actions. A dream doesn't come true because of one group of people or one man or two men or three men, it comes true because a lot of people work at it, because a lot of people put an effort into it, because a lot of people buy the idea and carry it forward.

Jimmy K, NA Twentieth Anniversary Dinner

This IDT addresses what we can do to further the growth, health, and development of our fellowship and fulfill our primary purpose. It also raises an issue of perennial concern in NA, that of being self-supporting through our own contributions. The culture of contributions in NA, all too often, still simply consists of putting a single dollar in the basket, no matter how much the world has changed since NA first started. This is why we continue to attempt to raise awareness of the importance of the matter through these types of discussions.