

**PROPOSED
HANDBOOK
FOR
NARCOTICS ANONYMOUS
NEWSLETTERS**



**WORLD SERVICE CONFERENCE
LITERATURE COMMITTEE 1983**

(This is not Conference Approved Literature)



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October 24, 1983

Dear fellow members,

The attached draft, entitled Proposed Handbook for Narcotics Anonymous Newsletters is not N.A. World Service Conference approved literature. This material is only for consideration by the WSC-Literature Sub-committee. It has been distributed to you for the purpose of soliciting input to help the WSC-Lit. Committee improve the quality of this piece of work. This draft is not approval literature and has not been distributed to the fellowship as a whole. It is not to be used in N.A. meetings, and should be duplicated in small quantities only. Again, it is made available at this time for the sole purpose of generating input to the World Literature Committee.

This draft will be reviewed and discussed at the 9th World Literature Conference which will be held in Jamison, Pennsylvania, November 6th-11th, 1983. Please address all inquiries and input to:

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In loving service,



Ginni Swanson, Chairperson
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PURPOSE OF THE NEWSLETTER HANDBOOKS:

The purpose of a newsletter handbook is to provide the NA fellowship with ~~suggested~~ guidelines that work. Our guidelines are meant to be suggested only and are a result of the experience of our group conscience. We realize that God as we understand him will constantly disclose more to us as we grow together to help carry the NA message.

WHAT IS A NEWSLETTER:

A newsletter is a meeting in print, and an effective vehicle to carry the message of recovery. We need always remember our ^{First} ~~Self~~ Tradition that we have but one primary purpose, and that is to carry the message to the addict that still suffers.

Tied in with our primary purpose a newsletter is a most important tool to build N.A. unity through communication. We communicate to share our experience, strength and hope with our groups, areas, and regions. On a local level we keep our groups informed of important activities by printing, events, meetings, sub-committee reports, area, regional and world news. The better our communication, the more strength and support N.A. activities and events will get and the stronger our unity will be.

Simply put, N.A. newsletters communicate in two areas: the printing of N.A. news and personal stories of recovery.

HOW TO FORM A NEWSLETTER COMMITTEE:

A newsletter committee should be formed once an area has decided it wants a newsletter. In order to meet production deadlines it has been found that regular monthly meeting dates and times should be established. Some newsletter committees meet weekly and others only once a month; this should be determined by the newsletter committee.

Getting talented and interested members on the committee will be an ongoing process. The first members will be few, but as the committee grows so will the newsletter.

Officers should be elected by group conscience at the first committee meeting. The officers should consist of a Chairman, Secretary or Typist, and Distribution Manager. All other work on the newsletter should be performed through group conscience of the committee members.

SUGGESTED TOPICS FOR NEWSLETTERS:

The following are suggested topics found in current N.A. Newsletters.

Anniversaries	Meetings needing support	Poems
Announcements	New Meetings	Letters
Sub-Committee Reports	Conventions	Cartoons
Group News	Fellowship Activities	Material from text
Area News	Workshops	(Material from other
Regional News	Personal Recovery Stories	N.A. newsletters
World News	Slogans and Cliches	and publications)

These are just a few topics. By encouraging your readers to send in their stories and thoughts on recovery you will increase the bulk of your written material and your readers involvement. Newsletters are for everyone!

EDITING

The traditions should serve as the basic guidelines in the editing of your newsletter. We should be conscious of the spiritual principles in our traditions, such as, we have no opinions or outside issues, N.A. has no leaders, carry the message, and a Loving God as the ultimate authority

It has been found that using a group conscience of committee members is the most effective policy on editing.

There are some other guidelines that will be helpful. Language is important-avoid tasteless four letter words as many hospitals, jails and institutions will not allow filth. We want to spread the message, not the disease. The initials N.A. are appropriate. The name Narcotics Anonymous suggests program approval and it is not. Preserve anonymity. Proof read for grammar and spelling accuracy of information in announcements, etc., is important.

Remember that editing need not eliminate input which is possibly controversial, however articles geared toward unity are more constructive.

DISTRIBUTING AND FINANCING

The most important aspect of distribution is that the newsletter reach the readers on time on a regular basis. In other words, we should be dependable.

Since much of the distribution depends on how a newsletter is financed there are several different successful methods of distribution.

Distribution by subscription. For Newsletter Committees that are entirely self-supporting the subscription method is the best. The cost (printing, mailing, operating expenses) of getting the newsletter to the individual subscriber are figured out for a year and a yearly subscription rate is applied. This way a committee can set a predictable budget and meet foreseen expenses. A subscription list should include: name, address, amount paid, and date enrolled.

The subscription method, however, is limited to the amount of subscribers. Other areas have found that by financial backing from their group ASC and RSC more members can receive the benefits of a newsletter.

Bringing the newsletters to the monthly ASC or RSC meeting and hand delivering them to the GSRs' or ASRs' to distribute to the groups cuts out the costs of mailing. For members outside of the existing area who wish to receive the newsletter a separate subscription list and rates should be made for them.

Distribution is vital. Without members knowing about the newsletter, it will die from lack of support.

PRODUCTION (GENERAL FORMAT, METHOD OF PRINTING, LAYOUT)

Affordability must be considered before establishing the general format (physical appearance) of your newsletter. The three paper sizes used are 8½ x 11, 8½ x 14 and 11 x 17. There are three basic formats that can be used. Format #1 is a one or two page (front or front and back) 8½ x 11 or 8½ x 14 sheet. Using this same format for multiple pages, a corner or side staple must be used to keep pages together. Format #2 is an 11 x 17 sheet folded in half to 8½ x 11 to allow four page access. Format #3 is a magazine style which is best suited for a newsletter with a large number of pages (12 or more). It is the most expensive format. All three paper sizes can be used for this format. Folding, collating and stapling are required. The format of your newsletter may change as the amount of input increases. It is helpful to communicate with other newsletters to find out what growing pains they have experienced.

There are various forms of reproducing a newsletter. Among these are mimeograph, copying (xerox) and offset printing. The way you reproduce your newsletter will depend on your newsletter's budget or what equipment you have available for use. For those who have mimeograph machines available, it is a slow process, but is a feasible way for members of the committee to actually produce the newsletter. The same applies to copying. Offset printing is probably the most expensive form of reproducing a newsletter. Clear, typewritten copy can be taken to a printer for reproduction. A lot of printers also have phototypesetting capabilities, that allows you to have your typeset in a typestyle of your choosing. Although this is more expensive, it creates a more attractive newsletter. A way of cutting down expense when a commercial printer is used, is to fold and/or collate the newsletter yourself.

The appropriate page layout is required for easier and smoother reading. A shorter copy line reads easier and is more appealing to the reader than a copy line that extends the full length of the page. For example, two equal columns measuring 3½ inches each with a ½ inch separating the two columns is easier to read than one column measuring 7½ inches across the entire page. If the newsletter is going to be produced by members and not by a printer, a type writer with a good ribbon is needed. Information for the newsletter is typed out in equal columns and then measured to make sure all copy fits. The columns are then cut into sections and passed onto the mechanical (white board). One coat of rubber cement on the back of the columns works best.