Public Relations Handbook

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Area Planning Tool

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Area Planning Tool

Purpose and benefits of planning

Why plan?

The one-sentence answer to that question is that planning helps us better carry the message to the addict who still suffers. Planning helps any service committee come together to determine where services are most needed and decide how best to move toward agreed-upon goals.

The aim of an area service committee (ASC) is to coordinate services on behalf of the groups served by that area. In essence, an area is the way in which all groups join together in an effort to further NA's primary purpose—to make our message of recovery available and accessible to everyone in their community.

When there is no planning, it's easy for areas to function in a vacuum. Often a service body will move forward in a status quo fashion—"this is the way we have always done it" may be the theme song. And with this theme song, areas may find that their committees do not work together with each other, with the group service representatives (GSRs), and with the administrative body.

This planning process is also beneficial for regions and zones. The focus here is on the area service committee, yet the planning steps can be applied to regional and zonal service settings. Whether the service body is an area, region, or zone, we encourage members to use the planning process.

Benefits of planning

> To fulfill our fellowship's primary purpose, the NA groups have joined together to create a structure which develops, coordinates, and maintains services on behalf of NA as a whole.
>
> First Concept

As addicts, we know how it feels when others make decisions for us. Many of us lived our lives by default in active addiction. Just as recovery allows us to become "acceptable, responsible, and productive" individuals, it also allows us to incorporate these qualities in our service efforts. Through planning, each member of the area service committee is better able to participate in responsible choice-making, and members' contributions are valued.

Planning helps us focus and coordinate service activities on behalf of the groups. We join together with the knowledge that our service efforts will help ensure that no addict seeking recovery need die from the horrors of addiction.

Who plans?

All trusted servants of an area service committee participate in planning; however, certain members need to be entrusted with the responsibility of setting the planning process into action. In many areas, this responsibility would fall to the administrative body of the area,

with the area chairperson typically facilitating the process. Some areas may choose to create an ad hoc committee whose membership is composed of various trusted servants along with the administrative body.

> *For* each responsibility assigned to the service structure, a single point of decision and accountability should be clearly defined.
>
> Fifth Concept

Why the administrative body? Those trusted servants are elected by the area and are accountable to the area as a whole. The area chairperson facilitates the discussion during the ASC meetings and, often together with other members of the administrative body, is responsible for setting the agenda of the area meeting. Of course, there may be instances when an area body may choose a different member to facilitate the process, but for continuity and accountability, we suggest using the area chairperson. Your regional delegate or another experienced member not currently serving at the area may also be used, which allows the area chairperson to participate in these discussions.

> **Remember...**
>
> *The planning process will benefit from a facilitator who is familiar with the planning steps, able to engage members, and able to keep the body focused on the task at hand.*

Preparation

Once an area service committee decides to proceed with planning for its services, adequate time should be allocated. Trusted servants of the area, including the GSRs, should be given time to inform groups and members of the area about the planning process and scheduled meeting date(s). Providing an opportunity for everyone who desires to be involved in the process is an important aspect of planning. The process may benefit from the participation of experienced members who are not currently of service to the area and of new members.

> ***There are seven planning steps: gathering information, listing the issues, developing goals, prioritizing goals, creating approaches, prioritizing approaches, and developing an action plan. Each step is necessary to the overall development and creation of the plan.***

There are things that need to be considered *before* members can actually sit down and plan. A few simple, straightforward actions can help the planning sessions to be productive and fulfilling for all members involved.

- **Meeting space** — Is the size of the meeting room adequate? Does the meeting room provide for the creation of small groups during brainstorming sessions? Is the meeting space easily accessible—in a central location for most members of the area?
- **Communication** — Is there enough time to give adequate notice of the upcoming planning meeting? Have the days, times, and locations of planning sessions been communicated to members of the area?

- **Commitment** — The seven action steps to this planning process may occur in one meeting or over a course of two or three meetings. We want to inform the members of the number and dates of the planning meetings to help ensure that members participating in the process remain consistent throughout the planning.
- **Planning materials** — Each table will benefit from having paper and pens. As thoughts and ideas arise, we want to be able to write them down. The facilitator needs large paper or post-it pads and markers to record the information from the discussions so every member can read what is recorded.
- **Refreshments** — Has the area committee discussed providing coffee, tea, water, or snacks for the planning sessions? In this discussion, we may want to consider the volunteer commitment and the importance of creating a welcoming, hospitable atmosphere. Sometimes service bodies do not realize that providing refreshments helps to promote a sense of community.

The seven planning steps

Key topics

❶ **Gathering information**

❷ **Listing the issues**

❸ **Developing goals (identify "what," not "how")**

❹ **Prioritizing goals**

❺ **Creating approaches (actions to reach goals)**

❻ **Prioritizing approaches (a second look)**

❼ **Developing an action plan**

1 Gathering information – step one

This can be accomplished through an area inventory, or through some other, more informal process. What's important is that the planning process begins with trusted servants identifying what services are working, where improvement is needed, and whether services are absent. It's essential for this step to address both how the area is functioning internally and how the area is interacting with the larger community—how this information is gathered is less important. The following four topics can help ensure that the area looks at itself, as well as outside of itself:

- How well has the area done this year in serving the groups, and how can it better serve them in the coming year?
- How well has the area committee served the larger community, and how can it improve?
- How well has the area functioned in the past year? Do area subcommittees and trusted servants understand the work assigned to them?
- How well has the ASC supported and collaborated with NA's regional and world services? How can the area provide better support for these services?

Remember...

A key to this step is for the area to begin thinking about itself from a new perspective. For example, members may not regularly consider what the groups want from the area, and what might be lacking in those relationships. If groups don't participate at the area meeting, for instance, the area can use this step to think about ways to give those groups attention and support. In addition, this step can help the area to think about its relationships in the community, and whether or not NA is seen as a reliable and credible program of recovery. All of these relationships—both with each other in the area and with those outside of NA—help in the work of carrying NA's message to suffering addicts.

Every service committee or organization develops patterns of behavior over time. This is an opportunity for a frank discussion about what behaviors at the area meeting and with its subcommittees are working and what can be improved. Do new GSRs know what is expected of them? Is the area meeting welcoming and effective? Does the area understand and take responsibility for its subcommittees and the work they have been asked to do on the area's behalf?

Reviewing the area's relationships with regional and world services is also important to this step. Members may begin to recognize support that's been available but never used. Regional trusted servants, for example, may have experience that could help improve services and strengthen subcommittees.

This step allows the area to think about itself in a new way; looking closely at our relationships with those outside of NA, as well as the ties that bind us inside NA, helps to ensure a thorough planning process.

There is a sample area inventory in the addenda to this document. An area could consider sending an inventory such as this one to the groups, compile the information, and then proceed with step two. Or an area may want to begin gathering information in the area service meeting and move right on to step two. Some areas routinely take an inventory and will use that inventory for this step. There is no wrong way to begin this planning process.

2 Listing the issues – step two

Through the information-gathering process, the ASC has accumulated a wealth of information. The area now begins the process of identifying issues in order to resolve service areas that do not function well and improve services.

This step is usually best accomplished by using small groups with six to ten members in each group. In small groups, members can freely share ideas and brainstorm solutions. A time should be set, say, thirty to sixty minutes, to review the information that has been gathered and then to create a list of issues in each small group.

Facilitation tip

While the small groups are brainstorming issues, the facilitator can review the gathered information and create an initial list of broad categories. Broad topics might include *training and mentoring, relationships with the community, financial issues, cooperation among subcommittees, etc.* The facilitator then brings the entire group back together and asks members from the small groups to share the issues they developed during brainstorming. The facilitator lists each specific issue under the broad categories (for example, lack of informed GSRs can go under training and mentoring; meetings being asked to leave facilities can go under relationships with the community). If there are issues that fall outside of the already-created categories, the group can create a new category. There will likely be overlapping issues listed under the broad categories. **The goal of this step is for the group to identify the broad categories with a list of specific examples for each category.**

3 Developing goals (identify "what," not "how") – step three

Now begins the process of creating goals to address the broad categories and specific issues listed underneath. For example, if "training and monitoring" was listed as a broad category with several specific issues listed underneath, the goals might be *regularly scheduled learning days, overlapping terms for all trusted servants, GSR orientation,* and *area support is available to train group-level trusted servants.* Goals are clear, concise, and result-oriented statements that are achievable. The key is for the goal to be an outcome or a result. The body can again use small groups to create goals for the broad category that contains the identified issues.

Facilitation tip

Be sure to remind the group that setting goals does not include discussing how to achieve the goal. The task is simply to identify the outcome. Also remind the group that some goals can be met quickly, some will take a year to achieve, while others may span over a longer period. After the small groups have created goals, the facilitator can write out each identified goal with the issue it attempts to address listed underneath.

4 Prioritizing goals – step four

Now the entire group looks over the list of goals and prioritizes the list. When considering which goal is a priority, it may be wise to consider the area's human and financial resources, as well as which goals seem most urgent to complete. Every member has a set number of goal choices (for example, each member will choose his or her top five priorities) and makes a mark (check, star, dot, etc.) next to each goal that is considered a priority. When all participants have made their choices, the facilitator will count and mark which goals have received the most choices. The goals with the highest number of marks become the priority issues for the area.

Remember...

If the planning process does not take place during the actual area service committee meeting, the planning group presents the plan to the ASC for full adoption.

5 Creating approaches (actions to reach goals) – step five

What is an approach? An approach describes how to reach a specific goal—what steps an area has to take to achieve its identified and prioritized goals. The plan to reach a goal takes into consideration all current area efforts, the information that was gathered from the groups and area inventory sessions, and new ideas. In the interest of simplicity, members may want to limit the number of steps to achieve each goal to two or three.

In creating approaches, the group may recognize that the area already has some existing approaches for some of the identified goals. Areas often have steps to reach their goals, yet frequently haven't discussed these during service meetings or through any area planning process. If a current strategy is working, then include that under existing approaches.

Facilitation tip

Remember that this is often where we get stuck! We can agree on what needs to be done but argue about how it should be accomplished. Following are two options for how to proceed with developing approaches: **1)** The first option is for the planning body to break into small groups to develop approaches. In this option, each small group is responsible for developing ways to reach one goal and then reports their approach to all members present. Members of the large group can offer their ideas to the small group as each group shares their ideas.
2) Another option is for the area administrative body or area subcommittee to develop approaches to be presented at the ASC meeting. Asking a particular subcommittee to create approaches for identified goals, particularly if the identified goal pertains to that committee, can be a useful option, just as it may make the most sense to ask the administrative body to develop approaches that pertain to how the area operates.

6 Prioritizing approaches (a second look) – step six

The planning body now needs to consider prioritizing the approaches for each goal. Members review each goal and the identified steps, keeping human and financial area resources in mind. Are there enough willing members to achieve this approach? Will the area be able to continue providing existing services while adding this approach to achieve a stated goal? While considering the area's resources, members also think about whether this is the best approach to reach a goal and address whether this is a critical issue for area service provision.

This reprioritization process is deliberate and decisive. Members simply rank the developed approaches, clearly identifying their priorities using a number ordering system of 1, 2, and 3. Even though this may be difficult, a numbering system sets firm parameters, and these can be very helpful.

Remember...

An area should remain focused on its goals and the actions to achieve these goals, rather than be thrown off course with "new ideas" that could come up during a year. Sometimes unanticipated, seemingly urgent issues may surface during a year. For example, six months into the area plan, a GSR might make a motion to have an area convention. A plan gives an area a way to evaluate these issues or concerns more responsibly by reviewing them against the area's prioritized goals. A question to ask may be: *Does this idea, opportunity, or request fit within the goals and priorities an area has identified for*

a year? Answering this question helps an area service committee remain focused on its prioritized goals rather than be sidetracked by new ideas that may be raised.

7 Developing an action plan – step seven

The action plan is usually developed by the area administrative body or area planning ad hoc committee in a meeting that occurs outside of the usual area meeting. These trusted servants set time aside between meetings to develop the action plan.

This is the step preceding implementation. An action plan is created for each approach. In this phase, the administrative body (or ad hoc committee) identifies:

1. tasks that need to be done,
2. time frames for accomplishing the tasks,
3. trusted servants who are responsible for completing the tasks,
4. resources that are needed, and
5. a completion date.

The trusted servants on the ASC's administrative body are usually asked to complete this step because they, in particular the chairperson, represent the single point of accountability for the area service committee.

Remember...

An action plan helps members remain focused on the goal, on the approach, and on the completion date; in short, it is easier for members to be accountable. Everyone involved knows what needs to be done, who is doing the work, and when to anticipate each step's completion.

Communicating progress at each area meeting helps in monitoring the process. Even though a plan covers the year ahead, we do not want each step to take a year. Also, communication helps with troubleshooting—an area may see obstacles and be able to resolve them through discussion as they arise. For example, resources, human or financial, may not be adequate to complete an action step. Providing the area body with this information and discussing solutions guide members to make the necessary adjustments.

Maintaining the plan

Implementing and monitoring the plan

With the planning process completed and the area's plans and goals approved, the area body is ready to put the plan into action—goals, approaches, and action plans.

Goals and plans are usually given to area subcommittees for completion. For example, if a goal involves contacting community medical professionals, more than likely that goal and action plan would be forwarded to the public information committee. In areas where no specific

subcommittee structure exists, the area committee may create workgroups or ad hoc committees to complete the task. Each workgroup needs a clear purpose to help the area achieve its goals. However, not every goal requires a workgroup or permanent subcommittee.

Work plans

Once the goals with the action plans have been delegated to committees and workgroups, the members of these groups create their work plans. A work plan is more specific than an action plan. Members within each committee or workgroup accept responsibility for certain aspects of the action plan.

Work plans consider human and financial resources. Will it take a member sixteen hours to complete a task, or sixty hours? How much money will it take, and when will money most likely be needed? These two resource areas are included in a progress report to the area.

A work plan will also be more specific with time frames. If thirty-day milestones have been projected in an action plan, a work plan may show forty-five days to reach identified points because the committee members have identified more details and challenges than were considered when the action plan was developed.

Record keeping and reporting

Accurate record keeping and reporting can help an area improve its annual planning process. A committee reports its progress to the ASC on a regular basis, usually at every service meeting. This information captures an accurate picture of the time and money that are involved in accomplishing any area goal, and helps set the stage for more realistic planning in subsequent planning cycles.

Planning cycle

Each year an area committee should update its plan using the following steps:

- Review plan from last year and assess progress and remaining priorities
- Gather new information on members' needs, area's operational performance, etc.
- Review longer (two- to three-year) goals and establish new priorities and approaches for the upcoming year

Ideally, the decisions that an area committee makes during its planning process drive the focus of the work and use of area resources for the upcoming year. As a result, an area may consider setting its annual planning session as follows:

- as soon as the new ASC administrative body is elected
- prior to the development of the area budget
- prior to the development of goals from area subcommittees

Adaptations

Each area will need to determine how many meetings it needs to accomplish the planning process. We identified steps based on the notion that an area meets monthly, and this planning would be in addition to the business meeting. For example, if an area usually meets for two hours, they may choose to add a couple of hours to each business meeting over a

two- to three-month period. Other areas may choose to shorten their business meetings or to have the planning meeting separate from the area meeting and devote a full day to planning. Once the initial plan is created and approved by the area service committee, yearly updates should only take an hour or two.

Time frames are contingent upon the size of an area and the number of members involved in the planning. Of course, regions and zones may opt to meet over a weekend and target one full day for planning. This is fluid and flexible. Remember, as our Basic Text tells us, "If it's not practical, it's not spiritual."

Area planning outline

All members of a service body bear substantial responsibility for that body's decisions and should be allowed to fully participate in its decision-making processes.

Seventh Concept

I. Purposes and benefits of planning

- Improve efforts to fulfill NA's primary purpose
- Involve diverse member interests and perspectives
- Build stronger consensus
- Provide clear priorities for use of resources
- Achieve greater consistency in direction over the short and long term
- Improve accountability for attaining goals

II. Preparing to plan

- Who should be involved
  - GSRs
  - area administrative body
  - committee chairs
  - interested area members
- Logistics for planning session
  - identify specific time for planning sessions
  - allow adequate time for information to be passed to members and groups
  - identify facility to meet planning needs
  - create productive environment for planning sessions

III. The seven planning steps

- Step one: Gathering information
  - types of information to be gathered
    - the needs and challenges of members and local groups
    - the effectiveness of current area services, activities, procedures, subcommittees, and operations
    - the quality of relationships with the public/community including perceptions of NA and the local area service structure
  - tools to help gather information
    - sample area inventory tool that follows this outline
    - area planning tool A: sample group questionnaire
    - area planning tool B: sample questionnaire for evaluating issues in the community
    - consensus of points raised during an area service meeting
  - review information gathered and issues to be addressed
    - distribute information and planning session agenda prior to planning meeting
    - review NAWS Vision Statement and purpose for an area service committee
- Step two: Listing the issues
  - discuss information gathered
  - develop categorized, prioritized list of issues
- Step three: Developing goals
  - define what makes a good goal (including the fact that goals can take more than a year to reach); provide examples
  - create goals for each key area (service and/or operational)
- Step four: Prioritizing goals
  - discuss importance of prioritizing – area's human and financial support
  - decide method for prioritizing goals
  - set priorities
- Step five: Creating approaches
  - define what makes a good approach; provide examples
  - integrate current area services and activities with new ideas
  - develop approaches for each goal (begin with priority goals)
- Step six: Prioritizing approaches
  - discuss importance of approaches and need to prioritize these
  - set priorities
- Step seven: Developing an action plan
  - explain the need for these plans
  - reach agreement as to who develops
  - develop an action plan

IV. Implementing and monitoring the plan

- Implementing the plan
  - use the area subcommittees (or workgroups) to effectively implement the plan
  - develop committee tasks and work plans, keeping in mind ASC budget and human resources
- Monitoring the plan
  - schedule committee reporting to ASC — how often and for what purpose
  - use area meetings to discuss progress and address issues
  - keep groups and members informed
  - develop ways to consider new area ideas once the plan is developed and adopted

V. Planning cycle

- Annual review of adopted plan
  - assess progress with goals and plan
  - gather new information from members
  - review multiyear goals — update approaches
- Scheduling the planning session
  - upon election of the new ASC body
  - prior to the development of the area budget and subcommittee goals

Area Inventory

An area may want to send this inventory or a similar set of questions to the groups. Members or groups can answer each question with a number from one to five, using a scale such as:

①	②	③	④	⑤
Not at all	**Needs improvement**	**Adequate**	**Outstanding**	**Excellent**

When the numbers are totaled for each question, the area can see what most needs improvement (1) and what is going quite well already (5).

How well has the area served local groups this year?

- How well does the area communicate with local groups? _____
- How well does the area respond to the needs of local groups? _____
- How well is the area managing its donations and area treasury? _____
- How effectively does the area demonstrate responsibility and accountability? _____
- How fully does the area train and support members who serve on the area service committee? _____
- How well does the area service committee foster an atmosphere of courtesy and mutual respect? _____
- How completely does the area provide opportunities for communication about committee concerns to the local members and groups? _____
- How well is a sense of unity fostered within the area service body? _____
- How positively is a sense of unity shown within local groups? _____
- What is the area's experience with trusted servants? _____
- How well has the area fostered the willingness of the local fellowship to volunteer for service positions? _____
- How well does the area practice continuity and rotation? _____
- How well does the area function in maintaining a full complement of trusted servants, with no open commitments? _____
- How fully does the area create an environment where the conscience of the body guides the decisions and direction of the area? _____

How well has the area done this year in making NA's message more widely known in the larger community?

- How well is the area communicating with those in the community who interact with addicts? _____

- How completely does the area respond to the needs of the larger community? _____

  _____

- How well is the area using human and financial resources to carry NA's message of recovery in an efficient and effective way? _____
- How fully trained and supported are the trusted servants who interact with members of the community? _____
- How well has the area built cooperative relationships with those in the larger community? _____
- How easily can those in the larger community reach an NA member who is in a position to respond to their questions or requests? _____

How well has the area cooperated and collaborated with the region and NA World Services this year?

- How effectively does the area communicate with the region and with NA World Services? _____
- How well does the area respond to requests from the region and from NA World Services? How fully does the area share its needs and concerns with the region and NA World Services? _____
- How reliably does the area forward funds to the region and/or NA World Services?__

  _____

- How effectively does the area use resources (such as written materials or experience from other trusted servants) that are available through the region and/or NA World Services? _____
- How fully has the area formed a cooperative relationship with the region and NA World Services? _____
- How well is the area creating a sense of unity with the region and NA World Services?

  _____

  _____

Is there any particular area of service and/or area function that you perceive is outstanding? Please identify: _____

_____

_____

Is there any particular area of service and/or area function that you perceive would need improvement? Please identify: _____

_____

_____

Sample Planning Session Agenda

Focus on task — 20 minutes

- Review planning session purpose, format, and anticipated outcomes.
- Review NA Vision Statement, ASC purpose statement, traditions, and concepts.
- Briefly discuss the future of the area and the effect the area can have on the members, groups, and community at large.

Develop issues — 45 minutes

- Review, clarify, and discuss the information from the area inventory.
- Create broad categories—list issues.

Set goals — 45 minutes

- Set goals for each issue identified.
- Prioritize goals.

Develop approaches — 45 minutes

- For each goal, review and evaluate current area services and activities.
- Brainstorm new items.
- Create and write down approaches for each goal.
- Prioritize strategies under each goal.

Take next steps — 30 minutes

- Discuss what steps need to be taken to document information and approve the area plan.
- Identify next steps to: 1) prepare for plan implementation, including determining subcommittees and workgroups needed, 2) assign goals to subcommittees and workgroups, and 3) develop work plans.

As the title of this page indicates, this is simply a *sample* agenda, and the times next to each step are approximate. The amount of time for each step will vary with the number of members involved in the planning process, the depth of the information gathered from the area inventory, and the number of issues that are identified.

As we mentioned earlier in this document, these tasks may need to be carried out over two area meetings, and in some instances the area planning sessions may need to be extended to three sessions.

Regardless, we suggest that breaks—opportunities for members to stand, use the bathroom, get something to drink, etc.—be built into the process. A twenty-minute break for every 90 to 120 minutes of work is a good guideline.

Another Option for Step Two Listing Issues:

1. Everyone gets three 5x8 cards and a marker; they are asked to write one issue per card
2. The facilitator asks randomly for the first card; the card is placed on the wall.
3. Other "like-minded" cards are also placed on the wall in a vertical line.
4. Cards will have varying levels of detail; the facilitator identifies one of the cards as the title card for that list, and also creates a sort of outline from the other cards based on subtopic and level of detail.
5. Some cards may need to move to a new category, as the group deems necessary; others may need to be put into a parking lot.
6. This process continues until all cards are on the wall. The result is five to eight general topics with various subtopic and detail cards below.
7. Participants are asked to prioritize the category title cards using dots; the result is a prioritized list of issues (title cards) along with supportive outline.

Goal-Setting Worksheet

Broad category: Training and mentoring		
Issue	**Goal**	**Priority Rating**
Lack of informed GSRs	Regularly scheduled & innovative learning days	

Broad category: Relationships with the community		
Issue	**Goal**	**Priority Rating**
Meetings being asked to leave facilities	Strong relationships with local meeting facilities	

Goal and Approaches (Steps) to Reach Goal

GOAL: Strong relationships with local meeting facilities

Existing area practices, services, activities related to the goal	Overall Priority Ranking
1. Pay rent and check in with facility manager	
New ideas (approaches/strategies)	
1. Create open exchange with facility manager	
2. Invite facility representatives to attend open NA meeting	

Make additional copies as needed

Resource for

chapter two
Core Public Relations Principles

contents

Tradition scenarios 1

Tradition Scenarios

Before trusted servants begin public relations efforts, they may want to take some time to discuss the scenarios below. These are examples of the kinds of public relations situations that could require putting NA's Twelve Traditions into practice. This document is created so that committee members can improve their skills in applying NA's traditions through practice and role-playing. Keep in mind that these scenarios are simply examples; we encourage committees to discuss the traditions in the context of their own service situations.

Setup: Provide each participant with a copy of this document, and be sure each table has a copy of the *Public Relations Handbook*, *It Works: How and Why*, and the Basic Text. Pens and note paper can also be distributed to each table.

Resources: The tradition essays in *It Works: How and Why*, and the information contained in Chapter Two of the *Public Relations Handbook*, can be used as resources.

Facilitator: Ask each table to read the first scenario and discuss, amongst themselves, the example and the questions following the example. (10 minutes) Once each group has discussed the scenario, ask each table to report the key point of their discussion. Lead the group in a discussion that identifies a common understanding of the tradition illustrated in the example. (15 minutes) This process can be repeated for all tradition scenarios.

Note: When a committee decides to use their own service situations to discuss the traditions, the facilitator can invite the group to help create scenarios. Committee members can begin by identifying common service issues and the accompanying tradition. This identification of service issues can happen at a brief meeting before the discussion or by using email.

Real-life service examples help us discuss principles in a meaningful way. Some of the issues raised may pertain to the work of a specific committee and some may be more general public relations issues in the community. The discussions about all these issues, regardless of the identified committee, should be shared with the area. This action will help all involved gain a better understanding of our traditions.

Cooperation

A group has been holding meetings in the same facility for several years. Recently, group members have neglected to properly maintain the facility, allowing members to discard cigarettes on the property, leave coffee cups around the meeting room, and ride their motorcycles close to the entrance of the facility. The group shares the building with members of the public, and the facility manager is upset by complaints about NA from other occupants.

In a cooperative spirit, how could group members work with the property manager to restore a good relationship? How can the group discuss ways to cooperate with the property manager to restore the relationship between NA and this member of the public? For example, could the group clean up the entire property and then consistently maintain the cleanliness of the meeting space? What steps could the group take to amend the damage caused?

Affiliation

A group member sees a copy of a church bulletin and becomes alarmed because an NA group that meets in the facility is listed in the bulletin. The member brings this matter to the group's business meeting to discuss traditions that may have been violated. Members believe that a few traditions could be violated, including affiliation.

During the group's discussion, members are asked to consider if this listing is affiliating with the church, or if it is providing information to those who receive the bulletin. Are there additional organizations that meet at the facility listed in the church bulletin? How can we help to make members in our community aware that this is *not* affiliation or endorsement?

Endorsement

A public information committee would like to print the area's NA meeting schedule in a local newspaper to inform the community about NA meetings. Many members in the area service committee voice concerns that if the meeting schedule is published in that particular newspaper, it may be perceived that the newspaper is endorsing NA.

How can a local committee better inform the public that NA meetings are an available resource for addicts to recover? How do we help make our members aware that providing information relates to our primary purpose and is not affiliation or endorsement?

Self-Support

A local public information committee is offered a free exhibit booth at a health fair being hosted by a hospital. Many community providers (such as treatment centers, health screening tables, and social service agencies of the city) will be present; however, NA is the only organization being offered a free booth. The teenage son of the hospital's CEO is a member of NA, and the table is being offered free to NA because the CEO is so grateful.

How can the committee participate in the health fair and still remain self-supporting?

Anonymity

A local television station is producing a series on addiction and one of its featured segments is "Narcotics Anonymous—A Community Resource." In this segment, an NA member is featured as spokesperson for NA in the community and the interview is conducted showing the member's full face. The member who was interviewed has no problem with breaking his anonymity.

How can the committee work with the member and the television station to maintain personal anonymity?

Resources for

chapter three

Effective Services

contents

Service delivery evaluation form 1
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Service Delivery Evaluation Form

As an area or region implements an action plan that springs from its inventory and area planning, it may want to evaluate the progress being made toward the goals. Here is a sample tool that an area or region can use to do that type of assessment.

Reporting period:

Project_____ **Committee** _____

Chair_____ **Vice-chair**_____

Status of the identified project (Goal)

Check one "Status" box for each item in the action plan and explain, if necessary, in the "Explanation" box.

Action	Status (4)			Explanation
	C	I	W	
❶				
❷				
❸				
❹				

C = completed; **I** = in progress/to be completed by (enter date in "Explanation" box); **W** = will not be met by end of term (requires explanation)

Additional accomplishments and activities

Identify other major activities and accomplishments regarding the project over this past reporting cycle. This is where a committee could list activities that have taken place, including the completion of one or more actions.

👍
👍
👍
👍

Project issues – Challenges encountered

Indicate below any needs or challenges you've encountered in attempting to complete your project, along with recommendations. Also indicate if any decision or action is required. Attach additional sheet if more space is needed.

Item #	Implementation need or challenge	Recommendation	Action needed

Project outcomes

Indicate below any outcomes of the project. Include planned and unplanned outcomes.

Outcome:

Outcome:

Outcome:

Outcome:

Final thoughts

Include any unaddressed issues or items of importance.

Chair _____

Signature Date

Service Delivery Evaluation Form Sample

Report date _____ **Committee** _____

Chair_____ **Vice-chair**_____

Status of the identified project: Meeting directories updated and accurate

Action plan

Action #1: Recruit members from area service who are willing to visit meetings in the schedule *(for meetings whose GSR does not attend the area service meeting)*. Status ▮

Action #2: Ask GSRs who attend the area service meeting to read their group's entry in the meeting schedule, make changes if needed, and initial. Status ▮

Action #3: Proofread meeting directories. Status ▮

Action #4: Develop schedule to review meeting directories on a regular, ongoing basis. Status ▮

Additional accomplishments

❶ New members from the area joined the schedule committee for this project.

❷ Attended more recovery meetings and interacted with more members while updating the schedule.

Project issues – Challenges encountered

Action #1

Challenge: projected that we would visit all meetings in the area within 30 days
Recommendation: change timeline to complete visiting meetings to 60 days
Action needed: support from ASC

Action #3

We found that we needed more than one person to proof the directory

Action #4

Challenge: develop schedule to review meeting directories
Recommendation: change to annual review rather than biannual
Action needed: consensus from ASC body

Project outcomes

Outcome: GSRs have updated their meetings and initialed (completed within 30 days).

Outcome: Meeting directories have been proofread.

Resources for

chapter four
Preparation and Training for Interacting with the Public

contents

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Suggestions for How to Write Effective PR Letters

When your committee decides to send information to professionals within your community (treatment directors, physicians, employment assistance directors, etc.), a sample letter from this handbook may be useful. In the event that a committee doesn't find one of these sample letters relevant, we have highlighted the following suggestions to consider when composing your own letter:

- Prior to initiating contact, inform your ASC and RSC, as well as any subcommittees or NA groups that might be affected by an influx of telephone calls or potential members. This kind of communication is important to making these service efforts more successful.
- Use the individual's full name and title; for example, Mr. Joseph Green, Executive Director.
- Use first-class postage.

Creating the letter

- Be brief and to the point. Professionals receive large quantities of correspondence and are more apt to read a short letter.
- One model for letter writing is for the first paragraph to introduce the material you plan to outline in the letter; the body of the letter is to provide all relevant information; and the concluding paragraph is to recap the information provided in the body of the letter.
- Opening of the letter: For example, an introductory paragraph might read: *We are writing to inform you about NA in your community. This letter will provide you with ___. We hope you find the following information and enclosed materials helpful.*
- Body of the letter: When considering what information to include in the body of the letter, the following questions may be helpful:
  1. What information will be most valuable to the reader?
  2. What do you want the reader to know about NA? For example, if the reader already knows about NA and refers addicts to NA meetings, then contact numbers and information about upcoming events might be a good way to maintain an ongoing relationship. If the reader is unfamiliar with NA, then local meeting information, a brief history of NA in that community or as a worldwide organization, and member demographics can be useful. Enclosing a *Membership Survey* and the *Information about NA* pamphlet can support the information provided in the letter.
  3. If the area wants the professional to consider scheduling an NA presentation at their facility or attending an NA event, the letter can explain the benefits of the interaction and ask them how, when, and where this would best work for them.

Following up

- If the area does not receive a response within a month, a follow-up telephone call, email, or letter may be appropriate. Professionals are often very busy, so follow-up is usually necessary for initiating a relationship.

Clearly written letters that provide helpful information about NA can help build strong, ongoing relationships with those in the community who interact with addicts. These relationships are an important part of our efforts to reach addicts.

Information about NA Form Letter

Date

Feel free to modify this sample letter as needed.

Individual Contact Name
Organization
Address
City, State Zip code

Dear ____:

We are writing in an effort to increase your awareness of Narcotics Anonymous. Since your organization may interact with people with drug dependence, we believe it is important for you to be aware of Narcotics Anonymous as a community resource. Please feel free to refer people with drug problems to our meetings or pass information about our program to those who may benefit from it. We hope you find the following information and enclosed materials helpful.

NA is a member-driven, international organization in which no dues or fees are charged for membership. All we ask is for a potential member to have a desire to stop using drugs. Members recover from the disease of addiction by application of the principles contained in the Twelve Steps. Our program is based on a set of spiritual principles, and we have no affiliation with any organized religion.

Narcotics Anonymous is a twelve-step approach to recovery with the primary purpose of helping any individual stop using drugs. NA's program focuses on an addict's recovery from the disease of addiction, rather than any specific drug. Through our group meetings and the therapeutic value of one addict helping another, addicts learn how to live drug-free and productive lives.

Enclosed you will find Narcotics Anonymous literature, a meeting schedule, a product catalog, and local contact information. We are willing to provide your organization with a presentation to help better acquaint you with NA. Please contact us if you would like a presentation, or have any questions or concerns.

Thank you for your time, and we look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,

Contact Name
Area/Regional Information

Print this sample letter on your service body's letterhead or include your complete return address and contact information.

Public Relations Presentation

The content and order of this session may vary depending on the event. We encourage service committees to consider any individual circumstances that would require modification. This is simply an outline and should be used for ideas. You will need to adapt this presentation to the needs of your local community and the audience of your presentation.

Goals of presentation

- Introduce NA and explain the nature of the NA program.
- Raise professional awareness of NA as a viable community recovery and ongoing peer support resource for relief from drug addiction.
- Provide NA contact information and gather contact information from all present.

On tables are PR resource packets, which include *Membership Survey, Information about NA*, local meeting list, business cards, etc., session evaluation surveys, and hard copies (note sheets) of any PowerPoint slides to be shown.

Before the session begins

Prior to the event

- As a committee, you will want to discuss and determine who is best suited to facilitate and/or present at the event.
  - Match talent to task, and/or presenters with the audience. Rehearse, rehearse, and rehearse! (We encourage you to read Chapter Four of the *Public Relations Handbook.*)
  - Consider any issues that may arise with the need to maintain personal anonymity.
- In your planning, make sure you have the materials that will be needed such as recovery literature and IPs, name tags, sign-in sheets, etc.

Once onsite

- Consider the setup of the room
  - Are there any sight barriers or hearing or lighting challenges to consider?
  - Are there any other distractions that might need to be addressed?
- Set up a literature table for handouts, IPs, or resource materials. Inform the audience where these materials are located.
- Provide a box/basket for attendees to leave their business cards.
- Be sure to be fully prepared to start the session **on time.**

Leader provides presentation setup

10 minutes

Begin the presentation covering the following points:

Introductions

- The lead presenter introduces all of the presenters for the session.
- Introduce audience members or allow them to introduce themselves. Be sure to acknowledge any participants who helped to make the event possible, anyone representing the venue, and any dignitaries who are in the audience.

Logistical issues

- Ask the audience to turn off the ringers on their cell phones.
- Explain where the bathrooms are, when the breaks will occur, what refreshments are available, etc.
- Inquire as to any special needs of any of the participants.

Setup

- Offer a brief outline of the agenda, why the presentation is taking place, and what to expect from it. Let the audience know that there will be time for audience participation and questions at the end.
- It is typical to ask at the beginning of the presentation: "How many are familiar with NA?" and "How many have had no exposure to or knowledge of NA?" This response may require you to adapt your presentation somewhat.

Leader begins the presentation

20 minutes maximum

Begin the presentation with an explanation of our name.

- **Origin of our name – Why "narcotics?"**
  - Terminology commonly used for all illegal substances at the time of our inception in 1953.
  - NA is not a drug-specific program, but has universal appeal to all who have the disease of addiction.
- **Historical background**
  - Adapted from AA; regular NA meetings started in Los Angeles, CA, in 1953.
  - Explosive growth coincided with publishing of the book *Narcotics Anonymous* in 1983.
  - In 2007, over 43,900 meetings in over 127 countries, speaking 65 languages.
- **What is NA? – A vital resource**
  - Therapeutic value of one addict helping another – peer support network.
  - Process for change through the Twelve Steps.

- The NA meeting – primary vehicle for delivering the NA message of recovery; peer support system and an environment within which people can help one another stop using drugs and learn to live drug-free.
- Meetings promote atmosphere of recovery from drug dependence.
- Members share personal experiences with addiction and recovery.
- Experienced older members support newer members.
- NA meetings and services are self-supporting by members' contributions (no fees or membership dues).
- Guidelines on how to conduct an NA meeting are available.
- A range of NA literature available in many languages on display here – (name)

Is NA culturally adaptable?

- Long-term NA communities: Indian subcontinent, Japan, Western Europe, Latin America, Middle East, Iran.
- New growth: Asia-Pacific, Eastern Europe, Africa.
- NA literature published in over thirty languages.
- If you know that your audience has ideas or opinions about challenges to adaptability and growth in your community, address your response to those ideas here.

NA Membership Survey

- Survey handout – provide background on how/where survey is conducted.
- This survey has been carried out biennially since 1996.
- Gender: male 55%, female 45%.
- 61% rated "Importance of first NA meeting" very high or high.
- Influence to attend first NA meeting: Highest four were (1) treatment providers, (2) justice/corrections, (3) another NA member, (4) family. This shows the importance of our working with these organizations and families.
- Meeting attendance: members surveyed averaged 3.5 meetings per week.

Cooperating with professionals

- NA can assist with welcoming your clients to meetings.
- Presentations to professionals and clients.
- Printed material, audiovisual, helplines, websites.
- Subscription to NA publications (*The NA Way Magazine*), and literature useful for clients' introduction to NA.
- No charge or fee for your clients to attend NA recovery meetings or for NA presentations.

- **Benefits to the client** *(specific for treatment, healthcare, and correctional audiences)*
  - NA assists with transition back into the community. Members can meet clients at meetings or provide rides to meetings. Often members will invite newer members to social gatherings such as dances or invite them out for refreshments following a meeting.
  - NA can support clients while they are still in treatment. If clients have phone privileges, they can contact NA members and begin building their peer support network.
  - NA provides a (peer based) support network and social community. Members maintain their support network through sponsorship, meeting attendance, and using a telephone network of recovering friends. This extends to the social community as members join together for movies, theatre, sports events, etc.
  - NA provides drug-free role model reinforcement. Often clients have had minimal exposure to drug-free living. Members of NA provide that role model in their work and home environment.
  - NA provides offers drug-free social environment through conventions, dances, picnics.
- **Benefits to the professional** *(specific for treatment and healthcare audiences)*
  - Research states: improves retention of clients in treatment (*Each community will need to decide which researchers to identify for the audience. NAWS offers studies conducted by J. F. Kelly, R. Stout, W. Zywaik [2006] and K. Humphries [2005] as two possible choices for you.)*
  - Immediate access for clients.
  - Valuable adjunct to treatment.
- **How to contact NA**
  - Local contact information including phone numbers, websites, or any other relevant information.
  - NA World Services, PO Box 9999, Van Nuys, CA 91409; website: www.na.org; phone: 818.773.9999; FAX: 818.700.0700.

Wrap up

15 minutes

- Ask if there are any questions or comments.
- If this is an audience that is familiar with NA and one that interacts with addicts in a professional capacity, you will want to make this portion as interactive as possible. The more you can derive from this type of audience and create a genuine exchange, the more effective the interaction will be.

At the end of the presentation

- Point out the literature table, encourage the participants to take what they need, and to leave their business card.

- Thank the audience for their attention, thank the dignitaries and the venue representatives again, and thank the other presenters.
- Let the audience know that you will be available for additional questions after the presentation is over, and where you will be. (Prearrange this with the venue, and find out where the venue representatives want you to be, if it is different from the hall where the presentation takes place.)
- Ask the audience to fill out the session evaluation survey if you have decided it is valuable, to determine the effectiveness of the presentation and any further questions that could be covered in subsequent presentations.

After the presentation

Onsite

- Collect the surveys, sign-in sheet, and business cards.
- Be sure the room is left in order; collect any unused or discarded session material.

After the event

- Write thank-you notes to all who attended.
- At regularly scheduled intervals, follow up with all who attended.

Presentation Evaluation Form

This is a sample evaluation form to be used following a presentation. You may even consider using this evaluation tool during rehearsals. Many professionals are asked to evaluate and critique presentations regularly. Your committee may consider this form on a presentation-by-presentation basis. We suggest that this form only be used when it is important for you to receive comments from the presentation. Using this evaluation form at all presentations can become counterproductive.

Presentation Evaluation Survey

To help us with future sessions, please take a few minutes to complete this survey and return it to the presenters who participated in the session. Circle a number on the scale for each question and offer any comments. Thank you.

1. How useful did you find this presentation?

1	2	3	4	5
Outstanding				**Inadequate**

Comments _____

2. How effective was the presentation with helping to increase your knowledge about Narcotics Anonymous?

1	2	3	4	5
Outstanding				**Inadequate**

Comments _____

3. How effective were the facilitators at presenting the material?

1	2	3	4	5
Outstanding				**Inadequate**

Comments _____

4. How effective was the resource material you received during the session?

1	2	3	4	5
Outstanding				**Inadequate**

Comments _____

5. What aspect of the session did you enjoy the most?

Comments _____

6. What aspect of the session needed the most improvement?

Comments _____

7. Were there any other topics that you would have liked this presentation to cover?

Comments _____

8. Do you know of another professional who would benefit from receiving this information?

Name _____

Contact information _____

Email address _____

Frequently Asked Questions
General Public

This resource can be used when interacting with the general public in the local community (such as at a community meeting, local event, or local conference). These frequently asked questions are meant to help trusted servants provide clear, consistent, and informative responses. In an effort to gain an understanding of the information here, trusted servants can discuss and rehearse the questions and answers below.

Trusted servants can consider the following points when preparing for interactions with the public:

- Responding to questions in your own words often works best – the responses listed below can be used as a guide.
- Short, simple, direct responses work best. Audience members or those who stop by an exhibit booth usually have limited time and will appreciate a brief response.
- When we use NA specific language such as "home group", please explain the meaning for the audience.
- Try to keep responses focused on the questions asked. Remember, the goal is to inform members of the public about Narcotics Anonymous – personal disclosure is usually not appropriate or helpful. (For example, sharing about the step you are working, how many members you sponsor, and your service commitments is not necessarily relevant.)

What follows are possible answers to questions frequently asked by the public:

Q&A 1

What is the difference between AA and NA?

AA helped start NA in 1953 by giving NA's founding members permission to adapt their traditions and steps. The primary difference between the two programs is that AA's focus is alcohol and alcoholism, whereas NA's focus is recovery from addiction. In NA we believe that use of drugs, including alcohol, is but a symptom of the disease of addiction.

Q&A 2

How can I find NA meetings in my neighborhood or in various countries around the world?

The easiest way to find NA meetings is by visiting NA World Services website, www.na.org. Since our members provide the data for the meeting locator, we cannot guarantee the information is completely accurate (some meetings may have changed locations, for example). Contacting local area and regional helplines or websites (also listed at www.na.org) will often provide more accurate meeting information. (Have a local meeting directory with you during the presentation.)

Q&A 3

Are most of your members heroin addicts?

When NA first started, it is possible that the majority of our members used heroin. Today, as indicated in our *Membership Survey*, our members use a variety of drugs, including alcohol. Interestingly, 89% of those surveyed list alcohol as one of the drugs used on a regular basis. This survey also provides information about employment status, occupation, gender, and age. Our basic tenet about addiction is that it is a disease and not related to a specific substance.

Q&A 4

What support does NA have for adolescents?

Adolescents are welcome at all NA meetings. If there are meetings in a local NA community specifically designated for young people, the meeting schedule will identify those meetings as such. Although any NA member is welcome at any NA meeting, specially designated youth meetings can help younger addicts find their peers.

Q&A 5

It was briefly mentioned that NA has a variety of recovery literature. What kinds of literature and recovery materials do you have, and how can I obtain these?

NA has five book-length pieces:

- *Narcotics Anonymous*, Basic Text
- *It Works: How and Why*, which contains essays about the Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions
- *Just for Today: Daily Meditations for Recovering Addicts*
- *Sponsorship*
- *The NA Step Working Guides*, a companion piece to *It Works: How and Why*.

We also have a host of informational pamphlets, booklets, and a quarterly journal called *The NA Way Magazine*. All of our literature and recovery materials can be obtained directly from www.na.org or by contacting the local NA area or region.

Q&A 6

How can we schedule an NA presentation?

At the end of this presentation, please provide us with your contact information and we will arrange for a presentation with you.

Q&A 7

Is someone who is still using drugs welcome to attend NA meetings?

Yes, they are more than welcome to attend meetings. Many of our members actually came to meetings while still using drugs and are now drug-free and recovering today. Often, if a member is still using, he or she will be asked to refrain from speaking during a meeting. Instead, these addicts are encouraged to speak with members during break or before or after the meeting.

Q&A 8

What resources do you have for single parents? Are children welcome at meetings?

Most groups welcome children who are behaved and under the supervision of a parent. Sometimes a group will offer babysitting services for its members. Contact the local NA helpline for additional information or look for meetings in the local NA meeting directory that indicate childcare or that the group is children-friendly.

Q&A 9

I referred someone to NA who was taking medication, and NA members said they were not clean. Would you explain what you mean?

NA is a program of complete abstinence, and members refer to time (days, weeks, months, years) without using drugs as "cleantime."

Since Narcotics Anonymous is an abstinence-based recovery program, persons who are taking drug replacement medication are not considered drug-free. These persons are encouraged and welcome to attend NA meetings; however, they are asked to listen rather than speak at meetings, and it is suggested they talk to members on a break, or before or after a meeting. Meetings that follow this format do so to preserve the atmosphere of recovery.

For members who have a need to take prescribed medication for medical or mental health issues, we suggest reading the booklet *In Times of Illness*. This piece provides helpful, experience-based information regarding medication and illness, and outlines the idea that the decision to take medication is left to the member, physician, and sponsor. This pamphlet was written to help members who have achieved total abstinence from drugs and are faced with a need to take medication.

Unfortunately, our members often voice their own opinions about the use of medication even though NA has no opinion. Although this may be a disconcerting issue for professionals, it can be equally as confusing to many members. Typically, members of NA make a distinction between drug replacement medication and medication that a person needs to take once they are completely abstinent from drugs.

Q&A 10

What happens at an NA meeting?

An NA meeting is where two or more addicts gather for the purpose of recovery from the disease of addiction. Members offer each other peer support by sharing experiences about how they manage life situations without returning to using drugs. Some meetings have speakers who share their experience with getting and staying clean, while others have structured formats that focus on NA literature (our Basic Text, informational pamphlets, or our *Just for Today* daily meditation book). All meetings focus on recovery and supporting each other in recovery.

Here are some other things that can occur at an NA meeting:

- During the course of a meeting, a basket is passed for our members to contribute money to support the cost of the meeting facility and other NA

services. One of our traditions speaks to our self-support through our own contributions.

- Meetings often open and close with the Serenity Prayer or some quote from NA literature. [In some communities this may require some explanation. The word "prayer" could be troublesome.]
- Some meetings also provide keytags to recognize days, months, and years of continuous abstinence from drugs.

Q&A 11

Is NA connected with any religious organizations?

No. The NA program is based on a set of spiritual principles that are not associated with a particular religion. Although our steps call for finding and believing in a "power greater than oneself," this is a personal decision for each and every member to make. Members choose their own "power greater than themselves." Members' beliefs range from nature to organized religion, from no belief that a power exists, to belief in the power of inanimate objects such as rocks. Members are free to choose a belief that works for them personally, and there is no opposition to anyone's choice within the fellowship. We perceive this to be a strength of our program – the unconditional freedom members have with choosing their own personal belief – and in NA meetings one can hear members state that this was an attractive and safe aspect of the fellowship. NA doesn't oppose or endorse any religion. Experience of our members has shown that the spiritual principles work for all members, from the devoutly religious to the atheist and agnostic.

Area/Region Roundtable Packet

This packet contains resources for holding an area or regional roundtable. A roundtable simply means an interactive session where all participants engage in a dialogue. Below is a list of suggested audiences to invite to a roundtable meeting, with ideas as to why each audience may be relevant to an area or region's service efforts. Also included here are suggestions for how to plan a roundtable, as well as a sample roundtable format and invitation letter that can be modified as your community sees fit.

In your planning for a roundtable, it is suggested that Chapter Four of the *Public Relations Handbook* be read. In that chapter are helpful planning tips including choosing a day and time that are convenient for the audience, informing the invited professionals that their peers will also be in attendance along with any dignitaries, etc.

Whom to invite to an area roundtable

The following list outlines various audiences an area or region may want to invite to a local roundtable meeting. These professionals have probably had experience with Narcotics Anonymous and could offer trusted servants input and ideas about their interactions with NA. The purpose of a roundtable is to exchange ideas about building cooperative relationships rather than to simply present information. Areas or regions may choose to hold this kind of roundtable discussion in an effort to make NA more attractive, strengthen relationships with those who work with addicts, and ultimately increase the number of addicts referred to NA.

❶ **Treatment center professionals:** These professionals can work in residential as well as outpatient treatment settings. The service body will need to discuss and decide which professionals are most relevant to their service efforts. For instance, does it make more sense to invite the treatment center's executive director or the counselors and case managers? Does the service body want a mix of executives, clinical directors, and counselors?

❷ **Clergy:** Many NA meetings are held in churches, synagogues, or mosques. Since we already have relationships with these professionals, it makes sense to proactively strengthen these relationships. A service body may decide that this group of professionals should make up the first roundtable discussion. A discussion with the clergy has the potential to strengthen the stability of NA meetings.

❸ **Healthcare professionals:** This group may include professionals from local hospitals or medical clinics, as well as local physicians. Additionally, healthcare professionals such as nurses, paramedics, physician's assistants, or social workers who work in a clinical or hospital setting may be audiences for separate roundtables.

❹ **Education professionals:** Secondary school guidance counselors and healthcare professionals and university or college healthcare professionals can be invited to a roundtable meeting to help make NA a more visible and reliable resource.

❺ **Service professionals:** This group may include police, fire, and emergency medical technicians often interact with addicts in crisis situations.

❻ **Government service professionals:** Those who work in the public assistance field and child and family services, can be invited to a roundtable meeting.

❼ **Criminal justice:** This may include local police, parole and probation officers, and personnel of the judicial system such as social workers and substance abuse counselors.

The above list is not exhaustive. As the service body plans its roundtable, trusted servants may identify additional professional groups that are relevant to its area's goals. In smaller NA communities, trusted servants may host a roundtable with professionals from several of the audiences listed above. Asking for and receiving information from professionals in the local community can help us to reach more addicts.

How to plan for an area roundtable

Once an area has decided it wants to host a roundtable and has agreed on the audience, there are additional tasks that need to be accomplished. Preparation and practice are key components of a successful and meaningful roundtable.

Planning tasks

1. Identify trusted servants who are willing to participate in the planning of the roundtable and the roundtable itself.
2. Planning group tasks:
   a. First, identify an ideal date and the facility in which the roundtable will be held. The service body will want to give itself about ninety days to plan the roundtable. Consider the most convenient day and time for the professionals who will be invited as well as for the trusted servants involved.
   b. Identify key professionals and invite those professionals to participate in the roundtable. See the sample invitation letter included in this packet as a possible model.
   c. A roundtable meeting usually consists of eight-to-twelve invited participants. It's best to invite three to five additional participants to the roundtable. For example, if the area hopes to host a roundtable meeting of eight professionals, the planning group should invite at least twelve. Professionals may decline an invitation because of a conflict with the date, an unexpected illness or pressing need, or simply an unwillingness to participate.
   d. The planning group may choose a coordinator to be responsible for reporting updates about the progress of the roundtable to the committee. The coordinator can also help the planning group maintain its focus and reach identified objectives during the planning process.
   e. The planning group identifies a facilitator for the roundtable and develops questions to ask (see the questions contained in the sample format as a possible model). The planning coordinator would also report this information to the area.
   f. The planning group can prepare for the event by holding rehearsals in which trusted servants involved in the roundtable have a chance to discuss the expected issues and prepare a common understanding of a response to those issues. It might be helpful to run through a mock roundtable.

Sample roundtable format

Participants and facilitator

A roundtable meeting will be conducted with invited professionals and a varied mix of trusted servants. If possible, the area should choose a facilitator who is comfortable interacting with both NA members and members of the professional community. This might be a member who is also a professional, or a professional who is not a member but is knowledgeable about Narcotics Anonymous. Because having frank discussions about NA is one of the goals of a roundtable, the area will want to avoid creating a situation where the facilitator seems to be biased or contentious.

Clarify purpose and process

The facilitator will begin the discussion by clarifying the purpose of the roundtable. Often the general purpose will be to build cooperative relationships between Narcotics Anonymous and the professional community. A roundtable will help achieve this purpose through discussing and identifying what professionals need from NA, in order to facilitate this improved cooperative relationship.

The area may want to record the discussion or take typed or written notes of the discussion. If recording the discussion, be sure to ask permission from all participants.

The roundtable discussion

The area can work with the facilitator to decide how the discussion will be structured. Listed below are three roundtable format options; in your community a chosen format may be a combination of approaches. A format is created to maximize the opportunity with professionals in a roundtable setting.

- One approach is to allow the facilitator to ask members of the professional community to discuss questions while NA participants listen. NA members can then enter into a dialogue after the professional participants have discussed the given questions.
- Another option is to have the entire roundtable discussion structured as a fluid dialogue between professional participants and NA members. The danger of this format is that the participation of NA members will limit the input given by professional participants.
- One of the more common formats is to have a general presentation and to frame a small-group discussion around how to build better cooperative relationships. The small groups are a mix of invited professionals and trusted servants. The questions for the roundtable and the focus are geared to the audience that has been invited.

Regardless of the format, trusted servants need to remember that listening to the input provided will most benefit the discussion. A defensive or aggressive attitude will usually defeat the purpose of a roundtable discussion. It may be advantageous to clarify any misperceptions or misunderstandings about NA held by the professionals. This action will help us to achieve a more productive discussion. It is only through listening to the audience's perspective of dealing with NA that we can come up with ideas on how to work better together.

The following questions are examples of the kinds of topics that can instigate a meaningful dialogue in a roundtable discussion. The area can use or modify these questions in any way it sees fit. Again, remember to adapt the questions to suit the audience. You will need to have a specific focus and not try to cover too many questions in one session.

NA's image

1. How is Narcotics Anonymous perceived in your particular field?
2. Do you know about any misconceptions regarding the NA program and/or its name?
3. How can NA improve the way it is perceived in your field?

Awareness of NA

1. What can NA do to become a better-known resource for addicts who desire recovery?
2. What materials have you seen or read regarding NA?
3. What types of materials would give you and your clients a better understanding of NA?

NA as a resource

1. What are we doing that is helpful?
2. What do you perceive as the shortcomings of the local NA community?
3. How do you think we can improve?
4. How can we build better cooperative relationships with you?

Ongoing relationships

1. What is the most effective tool to continue our communication with you?
2. What specific information could NA provide to make us more accessible?

Following up

Following up with those who attended the roundtable discussion will be crucial to making the roundtable a success. Be sure to send formal thank-you letters to all participants, and follow up with whatever commitments or promises were made during the course of the roundtable discussion.

Sample Invitation Letter for Roundtable

Feel free to modify this sample letter as needed.

Date

Invitee's Name and Title
Organization's Name
Address
City, State Zip

Dear Mr. Jones:

Narcotics Anonymous is a member-driven, international, multilingual, multi-cultural organization with a twelve-step approach to recovery from drug addiction. No dues or fees are charged for membership. NA's program focuses on an addict's recovery from the disease of addiction rather than any specific drug. In 2007, there were over 43,900 Narcotics Anonymous meetings in 127 countries worldwide. *(Note to local committees: Please add a sentence that informs the reader about the size of the local fellowship and the number of NA meetings.)*

We are cordially inviting you to attend a public relations roundtable discussion hosted by the XYZ Area of Narcotics Anonymous. We anticipate that this meeting will bring together various professionals from the community. We want to engage with professionals in a facilitated discussion to help us build cooperative relationships with your organization, and we hope that you will be able to participate.

We are inviting professionals to this event in a desire to build cooperative relationships, to inform professionals about NA in the local community, and to learn from you how we can better work together. This discussion will be a mutual exchange of experiences and information. Our desire is that NA becomes a viable and credible community resource for you. We would like your help in achieving our goal. Attached is information that provides an overview of the Narcotics Anonymous program and a tentative agenda for the roundtable discussion. The session will take place [*day and date*] from [*provide time*] until *[provide time*], at [*place, street, and city address*]. Directions to the facility are enclosed.

Please contact us regarding your availability to participate in the roundtable, and with any questions you may have. I can best be reached at [*provide a contact phone number and email address that is answered by one person throughout the roundtable planning process*]. Or, you may contact [*provide name and email address*].

Thank you for your interest in Narcotics Anonymous.

Susan Smith
Public Information Chairperson
XYZ Area of NA

Enclosure

When a committee is sending this letter, additional pertinent information, such as refreshments, lunch, and other attendees, may be mentioned. Print this sample letter on your service body's letterhead or include your complete return address.

Resources for

chapter five
Media

contents

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Suggested Flyer Guidelines

A random viewing of an NA flyer may be the first exposure a potential member or nonmember has to Narcotics Anonymous. If we keep that in mind, we are more likely to present an attractive and effective flyer. Trusted servants can consider the following ideas when preparing a flyer for an NA event or an event open to the public:

- Remember to include all pertinent information about the time, date, and location of the event.
- State the purpose of the event as briefly and as clearly as possible.
- Add information about refreshments, wheelchair accessibility, etc.
- Prior to distribution, have the committee or trusted servants review the flyer for accuracy of information and typographical errors.
- Distribute the flyers where they will have the best chance of getting into the hands of the audience you want to reach.
- Be careful not to include potentially offensive or off-putting material. One person's idea of a joke may be offensive to someone else. Avoiding controversial images, slogans, and comments can help ensure the flyer is not considered offensive. For public events, avoid NA slang or jokes that only NA members would understand. Also, to avoid potential legal conflict, be careful not to include any copyrighted materials such as song lyrics, professional cartoons, etc.
- When it comes to public events, it helps to use language that will attract that audience. If NA is participating in an event with another organization (such as county fairs, health fairs, etc.), using the words "in cooperation with" on the flyer will help make clear that there is no implied endorsement or affiliation with the other organization.
- If trusted servants are planning to leave flyers at professional offices, hospitals, etc., be sure to get permission from a person who is authorized to give such permission. This kind of communication can help to ensure that NA flyers are not merely thrown away.
- Proofread, proofread, and proofread!

These suggestions are offered in the sprit of our primary purpose. Creating flyers that portray NA in a positive light can only help us continue to present NA as an attractive choice for still-suffering addicts.

Posters, Billboards, Bus Benches, and Transit Signs

Many NA service committees choose to inform the public with posters, billboards, bus benches, or transit signs. With these types of ongoing messages there are considerations for the area service committee and for the groups, including maintaining consistent phoneline volunteers, updated meeting lists, and a possible influx of new members to groups.

General planning tips

- Coordination among the area subcommittees who are responsible for the phoneline volunteers and meeting list will be important.
- Budgetary considerations and area resources should be considered. Often these PR efforts may affect the overall area budget and should be thoroughly discussed at the area service committee meeting.
- Once an ASC approves a plan of action, GSRs should prepare their groups for a possible influx of new members.
- Any phoneline service provider, like an answering service, should be informed of the PR effort so they, too, can prepare for any increased call volume.

Content consideration

- All signage should include our full name, Narcotics Anonymous.
- The message should be simple, direct, and easy to understand while being attractive, tasteful, and in keeping with NA's positive message of recovery. Example: Recovery from drug addiction happens at NA meetings.
- To increase visibility in the layout and with the artwork, consideration should be given to maintaining a simple, effective design.

Poster tips

- The committee will want to research places for distribution, develop a plan for distribution, and receive permission from the organizations where posters will be hung.
- Hanging posters is usually a team effort. Two trusted servants work together, and this is an opportunity for a newer member to be paired up with an experienced member.
- It will be helpful to plan for any follow-up actions that the committee will take, such as mailings of information packets to professionals and community organizations.
- Poster visibility is a key factor with distribution. Keep in mind that placing posters in high-traffic areas will allow for maximum exposure.
- Refrain from placing posters on public telephones, trees, public restrooms, etc. Many communities have ordinances concerning this type of activity. Check with the local authorities regarding such ordinances.

Suggested signage placement

- police stations/courthouses
- health clinics/hospital emergency rooms
- welfare offices
- colleges and schools
- libraries/post offices
- youth facilities (YMCA, boys & girls clubs)
- stores (grocery, drugstores)
- civic auditoriums
- churches/places of worship
- laundromats
- factories

Sample posters/signs

IF YOU WANT TO USE DRUGS,
THAT'S YOUR BUSINESS!

IF YOU WANT TO STOP,
THAT'S OURS!

NARCOTICS ANONYMOUS
CAN HELP!

CALL THE NA HELP LINE:

Place helpline number here

Drug Problem?

We Can Help!

CALL

Narcotics Anonymous

Tel:_____

NARCOTICS ANONYMOUS

HELP  LINE

24 HOURS 7 DAYS

Place helpline number here

IF YOU WANT TO STOP USING WE CAN HELP

Introductory and Thank-You letters for PSA placement

Feel free to modify this sample letter as needed.

Date

First and Last Name, Position Title
Organization Name
Address
City, State Zip Code

Dear Public Services Director [use the person's name and title, when this information is known]:

We are writing to request that you air Narcotics Anonymous public service announcements. We have identified your radio station as one which may have a segment of your audience that would benefit from the information provided in those announcements.

NA is a multilingual, multicultural self-help organization. In 2007, there were more than 43,900 meetings in 127 countries speaking more than 65 languages. During our fifty-plus years as an organization, NA has developed, and translated into various languages, literature that helps guide addicts through their recovery and drug-free life.

NA is a member-driven organization that holds recovery meetings within your station's area on a regular basis. There are no dues or fees for membership. We believe that drug addiction is a grave concern, and we are here to help people to recover.

Community awareness of the services we provide is the primary purpose of this correspondence. We hope you will help us by airing our thirty (30) second public service announcements. We will be happy to provide you with proof of our status as a nonprofit organization upon request. [This only applies if you have some legal status.] We can be reached through our regional/area service telephone number: _____, or through our helpline number: _____. In either case, please leave a message for our public relations coordinator, _____.

Thank you for your assistance.

Sincerely,

Contact name
Committee
Phone number

Print this sample letter on your service body's letterhead or include your complete return address and contact information.

Date

Feel free to modify this sample letter as needed.

First and Last Name, Position Title
Organization Name
Address
City, State Zip Code

Dear _____:

On behalf of the _____ Committee of Narcotics Anonymous, we wish to thank you for airing our public service announcements on _____ (name of station). We appreciate your willingness to help us carry the message that Narcotics Anonymous is available to help the still-suffering addicts in this area.

If you have any questions or desire additional information about Narcotics Anonymous, please feel free to contact us. We look forward to a continuing relationship with your community-minded organization.

Sincerely yours,

Your name

Subcommittee and/or area/regional committee name

Contact information

Print this sample letter on your service body's letterhead or include your complete return address and contact information.

Radio PSA Scripts

Radio PSA #1

Organization: Narcotics Anonymous
(_____ Area Service Committee)
0000 Every Street
Anytown, State 69696
000.000.0000

Contact: John Doe
Public Service Director
000.000.0000

Reading time – **10 seconds**

Voice/Over 1

Freedom from active addiction happens in NA meetings. It is possible to stop using drugs.

Voice/Over 2

Call Narcotics Anonymous. We can help.

(insert area/region name & phoneline number)

Radio PSA #2

Organization: Narcotics Anonymous
(_____ Area Service Committee)
0000 Every Street
Anytown, State 69696
000.000.0000

Contact: John Doe
Public Service Director
000.000.0000

Reading time – **10 seconds**

Voice/Over 1

It is possible to stop using drugs.

Voice/Over 2

Call Narcotics Anonymous. We can help.

(insert area/region name & phoneline number)

Radio PSA #3

Organization: Narcotics Anonymous
(_____ Area Service Committee)
0000 Every Street
Anytown, State 69696
000.000.0000

Contact: John Doe
Public Service Director
000.000.0000

Reading time – **20 seconds**

Voice/Over 1

I wanted to stop using drugs. I reached out and found Narcotics Anonymous.

Voice/Over 2

With the support of recovering addicts, I realized I could stop using drugs.

Voice/Over 3

Recovery from drug addiction happens at NA meetings.

Voice/Over 4

Call Narcotics Anonymous. We can help.

(insert area/region name & phoneline number)

TV PSA Scripts

TV PSA #1: Basic Text

30-second PSA

Title: Basic Text

- "I was searching for a way to stop using drugs. I reached out and found Narcotics Anonymous ...
- ... I went to my first NA meeting and didn't know what to expect ..."
- "Supported by recovering addicts, I realized ...
- ...that I was not alone; I heard them talk about feelings—feelings that I was afraid to talk about ...
- ...and recovery from drug addiction—something I was afraid to dream about."
- "It is possible to stop using drugs."
- "Call Narcotics Anonymous ...
- ... We can help."

TV PSA #2: Man in Phone Booth

30-second PSA

Title: Man in Phone Booth

- "I remember feeling scared and desperate. I didn't know which way to turn. I was sick and there was no one who wanted to see me anymore. I remember a former friend telling me about Narcotics Anonymous. I picked up the heavy telephone handle, took a chance, and called Narcotics Anonymous."
- "If you want to stop using drugs, contact Narcotics Anonymous."

Frequently Asked Questions
Media

This resource can be used when interacting with the media in general. These frequently asked questions are meant to help trusted servants provide clear, consistent, and informative responses. In an effort to gain an understanding of the information here, trusted servants can discuss and rehearse the questions and answers below.

When responding to questions, it is often best to paraphrase our literature, using your own words and referring to the appropriate piece of literature to provide support for your response. We illustrate specific literature to help persons better understand our program of recovery. In that same light, when we use NA-specific terminology such as "home group," it may be helpful to explain the meaning for the audience.

What follows are possible answers to questions frequently asked by the media, which includes print, television, and radio reporters:

Q&A 1

What was your drug using like?

My using was similar to what's described in our Basic Text, *Narcotics Anonymous*. In essence, I used drugs every day and only thought about getting more drugs and the money to pay for the drugs. What we have found most important in recovery is that we identify with each other in meetings, focus on recovery from addiction, and do not compare our use of drugs. Many addicts had the same feelings while using drugs, and this is a source of identification for members.

Q&A 2

Are all addicts alike? Do you all do the same things when using drugs? Do you all live in poor, run-down housing when using drugs?

Our fellowship is made up of people from a variety of backgrounds and who have had different experiences in their using. What we all share is a feeling of degradation and isolation when using drugs. Some addicts come court-referred, while others come voluntarily; some addicts are homeless, while others come earning large salaries. NA is for anyone with a desire to stop using drugs.

Q&A 3

What is an NA meeting like?

An NA meeting is where two or more addicts gather for the purpose of recovery from the disease of addiction. Members offer each other peer support by sharing experiences about how they manage life situations without returning to using drugs. Some meetings have speakers who share their experience with getting and staying clean, while others have structured formats that focus on NA literature (our Basic Text, informational pamphlets, or our *Just for Today* daily meditation book). All meetings focus on recovery and supporting each other in recovery.

Here are some other things that can occur at an NA meeting:

- During the course of a meeting, a basket is passed for our members to contribute money to support the cost of the meeting facility and other NA services such as literature distribution. One of our traditions speaks to our self-support through our own contributions.
- Meetings often open and close with the Serenity Prayer or some other NA prayer.
- Some meetings also provide keytags to recognize days, months, and years of continuous abstinence from drugs.

Q&A 4

Are most of your members heroin addicts?

It is possible that when NA first started, the majority of our members used heroin. Today, as indicated in our *Membership Survey*, our members use a variety of drugs, including alcohol. Interestingly, 89% of those surveyed list alcohol as one of the drugs used on a regular basis. This survey also provides information about employment status, occupation, gender, and age. Our basic tenet about addiction is that it is a disease, and not related to a particular substance.

Q&A 5

What is the "amend step"?

Recovering addicts are encouraged to work the Twelve Steps with a sponsor. The Twelve Steps help addicts learn how to incorporate spiritual principles into their daily lives. One of these steps, frequently referred to as the "amend step," asks members to correct the harm they've caused and work to change their behavior.

Q&A 6

How does a sponsor work?

As explained in our book and informational pamphlet, *Sponsorship*, this is a relationship between two members of NA—a more experienced member helping a newer member learn how to live life without the use of drugs and how to incorporate the principles of the Twelve Steps.

Q&A 7

What do you mean by "clean and not sober"?

By referring to our recovery time as "cleantime" and identifying ourselves as "addicts," we are able to keep NA's message focused on recovery from addiction and not the drugs we used.

Q&A 8

How many NA members have been incarcerated? How many NA members have been convicted of sex-related crimes?

We do not collect that type of data.

Q&A 9

What's your opinion on the current administration's drug policy?

Narcotics Anonymous has no opinion on the current administration's drug policy as this is outside our scope. We offer no opinion on any outside issues, including drug policy, so as not to divert us from our primary focus – one addict helping another to recover from the disease of addiction.

Q&A 10

What's your opinion on methadone?

It may be useful to have Bulletin # 29 available, or provide NAWS website link at www.na.org. In general, we cannot assess anyone's desire to abstain from drugs, and NA has no opinion on drug replacement therapies used by professionals in the management of addiction.

NA is a program of total abstinence. This provides the foundation for recovery from drug use and for further personal growth. Narcotics Anonymous has only one membership requirement: a desire to stop using drugs. Drug addicts who are participating in drug replacement therapies are welcome in NA meetings.

Most meetings ask that people under the influence of any mind- or mood-altering substances listen (rather than speak) during the meeting, and speak to members on an individual basis before and after the meeting. Meetings that follow this practice do so to preserve an atmosphere of recovery in the meeting. Additional information may be found in the *Public Relations Handbook*, page 67.

Q&A 11

Can we come to your convention and take photographs?

Typically, no. We're an anonymous fellowship and we do not permit photographs of NA members. However, you may contact the convention information committee to make arrangements to photograph our event or to cover this event for an article with a photo in a way that maintains personal anonymity. We ask that you attend our event escorted by a designated member of the convention committee. Our desire is to allow members to feel comfortable while attending this celebration of recovery without fear or distraction of outside photographers.

Q&A 12

Has a certain celebrity been attending meetings?

In the spirit of anonymity, we are not at liberty to confirm whether someone has been attending meetings or if they are a member of Narcotics Anonymous.

Q&A 13

Are there NA meetings around the world?

As of 2007, Narcotics Anonymous exists in 127 countries, speaks 65 languages, and has over 43,900 weekly meetings worldwide.

Q&A 14

What treatment centers do you work with?

Narcotics Anonymous is not affiliated with any outside enterprises. We do not operate any treatment centers, sober living homes, rehabilitation, or detox facilities. We do, however, work cooperatively with these establishments to let them know that Narcotics Anonymous is a community resource for their clients.

Q&A 15

Where do you get your funds? Are you federally or state-funded?

Narcotics Anonymous is self-supporting through its own member voluntary contributions.

Q&A 16

Is there a spokesperson I can contact?

Narcotics Anonymous does not have a spokesperson. However, if you have any further questions you may contact NA World Services to speak with the public relations manager. Phone: 818.773.9999; or visit our website: www.na.org. Locally, you can contact NA at _____.

Q&A 17

Can we come to your meeting and film a documentary on NA meetings?

No, this would not be in harmony with our traditions. You may attend an "open" meeting (meaning open to the public) to gain an understanding of an NA meeting. However, filming is prohibited.

Q&A 18

Can I take a picture of you for our article?

In the spirit of anonymity, I would not be comfortable having a full-face photograph taken.

Resources for

chapter six
Criminal Justice

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Criminal Justice Encouragement Letter

An encouragement letter can be used to respond to inquiries from inmates about Narcotics Anonymous. A standardized letter can allow committees to respond to these requests in a more timely manner.

Feel free to modify this sample letter as needed.

Date

First and Last Name
Address
City, State Zip code

Dear ____:

Thank you for contacting us; we truly enjoy hearing from incarcerated addicts. In response to your letter, we are writing to provide you with general information about recovery in Narcotics Anonymous, including:

- information about the NA Fellowship
- starting meetings in a correctional institution
- finding a sponsor
- finding NA meetings upon release

While this letter may give you more information than you requested, we hope you find the enclosed recovery material helpful, and we encourage you to share these publications with others addicts.

The NA Fellowship

Narcotics Anonymous is an international, multilingual, multicultural fellowship of men and women who are recovering from the disease of addiction. People from all walks of life, ages, races, religious perspectives, occupations, and lifestyles meet regularly in NA meetings every day, all over the world, to help each other remain drug-free. Reading NA literature, attending NA meetings, and talking with other recovering addicts is helpful in achieving a drug-free, productive, and rewarding life.

Even though our members used a variety of drugs, in Narcotics Anonymous we speak of recovery from the disease of addiction, rather than specific drugs. We believe that drugs are a symptom of our disease, and recovery from the disease of addiction is through application of the principles contained in the Twelve Steps. Continuous abstinence from mind- and mood-altering drugs is necessary to maintain ongoing recovery. Many of our members have relapsed, yet have returned to NA meetings and begun their recovery again. In essence, there is no reason to give up on oneself; addicts in NA meetings welcome members back and are ready to help them in their recovery.

In case you are wondering, there are countless members who have found freedom from active addiction while incarcerated. In fact, there are institutional NA meetings celebrating twenty years of helping incarcerated addicts recover. We have the *Reaching Out* publication where incarcerated members share their experience with staying drug-free and recovering while incarcerated. These stories from incarcerated members offer hope to others and let incarcerated addicts know that they are not alone.

Starting an NA meeting

Note: Prior to responding to inmates, the area should have had a discussion about the approach to institutional meetings. The planning would center on whether to pursue having a meeting within the institution or recognizing that this is a facility that the area cannot support at this time. If support cannot be offered, the *Institutional Group Guide* could be included with this letter. A sample response follows.

We have enclosed the *Institutional Group Guide* to help you start an NA meeting in your facility. Our committee discussed whether we could support an NA meeting in your facility; however, at this time, we do not have the trusted servants to fulfill that kind of commitment. We are available to help with your literature needs, provide you with a group starter kit, and make suggestions for meeting formats.

Sponsorship

A sponsor is an experienced NA member who shares about the recovery process through working the Twelve Steps and about handling everyday life situations without returning to drug use. Choosing a sponsor is a personal decision that each member makes for themselves. As you will read in the enclosed literature, members typically find their NA sponsor by attending NA meetings. However, we are aware that addicts in a correctional setting often find it difficult to find a sponsor. Utilizing a recovery peer within the institution whose recovery you admire may be an alternative for you. *[If your committee has a sponsorship or correspondence program, please include it in this letter.]*

NA meetings in the community

If you are nearing your release date, you may want to begin planning for that day. A question you may ask yourself that may help you prepare is, "How will I remain drug-free on the day I that I am released?" As you answer that question for yourself, please consider contacting the area helpline *[provide number]*, if you have phone privileges. The helpline could connect you to another addict to talk to. The experience of members seems to be that release day can be scary, overwhelming, and exciting. The feeling of freedom following confinement speaks to addicts in various ways. Some addicts want to celebrate freedom with using drugs. Being able to talk with a recovering addict on the helpline may give you additional support.

The enclosed meeting schedule will help you plan what meeting to attend the day you are released. It has been the experience of many members that making a meeting on their first day out is instrumental in helping them remain drug-free. Planning to attend as many meetings as possible upon release will give you the opportunity to meet other recovering members, gaining their support for your recovery. Many of us needed to meet recovering

addicts, as we had no friends who didn't use drugs and our family members were not that supportive, either. Considering all these issues prior to your release will help you to be more successful in your recovery.

We look forward to seeing you in NA meetings in the community. We have enclosed the pamphlet *Staying Clean on the Outside* to give you additional support with your release preparation.

NA literature

Enclosed are the publications we can supply at this time. We hope you find the recovery information helpful, and we encourage you to share these publications with other addicts seeking recovery who may be incarcerated with you.

In closing, we thank you again for writing to us. Many thousands of addicts have found recovery from addiction in Narcotics Anonymous, and we believe that you can, too. Please accept our very best wishes, and feel free to contact us again if we can be of any further assistance.

In fellowship,

Service Committee Name

Enclosures

Print this sample letter on your service body's letterhead or include your complete return address and contact information.

Criminal Justice Professional Letter

This letter can be used when responding to standard informational inquiries about Narcotics Anonymous from criminal justice professionals. This is not meant to be a response to those professionals seeking a meeting in their facility. A standardized letter can allow committees to respond to these requests in a more timely manner.

Feel free to modify this sample letter as needed.

Date

First and Last Name
Position Title
Organization
Address line 1
City, State Zip code

Dear ____:

We appreciate your interest in Narcotics Anonymous as a program of recovery from drug addiction. NA was founded in 1953 and, with the publishing of our Basic Text in 1983, grew from 2,000 NA groups to over 43,900 weekly meetings in more than 127 countries around the globe speaking over 65 languages[1].

NA meetings all have a common purpose: recovery from the disease of addiction. In meetings, members speak of their experiences managing life situations without returning to drug use, and discuss recovery principles contained in the Twelve Steps. People of diverse backgrounds, ages, races, religious perspectives, occupations, and lifestyles attend NA meetings. The personal identification which occurs during meetings provides a powerful message of hope.

Incarcerated addicts throughout the world have been recovering from the disease of addiction for over twenty years within institutions. Many of these incarcerated addicts are housed in long-term correctional facilities. Equally, many of our members who found recovery while incarcerated (or involved with drug courts) remain drug-free and active in NA meetings all over the world. Within these meetings, addicts found hope from others recovering – hope to live drug-free, productive, and rewarding lives.

Note: Provide a paragraph with information about the area, including how long meetings have been in the community, number of meetings, experience with criminal justice, and phoneline number with meeting schedule.

NA literature is available in thirty-five languages, including English, Spanish, Farsi, French, German, Portuguese, and Japanese. We also produce audio CDs, literature in Braille,

[1] As of February 2007.

informational pamphlets, and CD-ROMs. NA has five book-length publications. To receive any of these publications or a product catalog, please write to NA World Services at PO Box 9999, Van Nuys, CA 91409, or visit NAWS' website at www.na.org.

We hope that you find this information useful in your efforts to help addicts find recovery. If you have any further questions or comments, please feel free to contact us.

Sincerely,

Service Committee Name
Contact information

Possible enclosures: *Behind the Walls, Staying Clean on the Outside, Reaching Out*

Print this sample letter on your service body's letterhead or include your complete return address and contact information.

Frequently Asked Questions Criminal Justice Professionals

This resource can be used when interacting with **professionals from the criminal justice** system, including **drug court professionals**. These frequently asked questions are meant to help trusted servants educate criminal justice professionals about what NA has to offer to their clients. The Twelve Traditions and the abilities and experiences of the local area service committee will ultimately guide an area's relationship with any professional.

Trusted servants can consider the following points when preparing for interactions with professionals:

- Responding to questions in your own words often works best—the responses listed below can be used as a guide.
- Short, simple, direct responses work best. Audience members or those who stop by an exhibit booth usually have limited time and will appreciate a brief response.
- If NA specific language such as home group is used, please explain the meaning to the audience.
- Try to keep responses focused on the questions asked. Remember, the goal is to inform members of the public about Narcotics Anonymous—personal disclosure is usually not appropriate or helpful (for example, sharing about the step you are working, how many members you sponsor, and your service commitments is not necessarily relevant).

What follows are possible answers to questions frequently asked in a criminal justice setting:

Q&A 1

How can I arrange for NA members to coordinate a meeting in my facility?

The Hospitals and Institutions Committee is usually responsible for facility meeting commitments, and I will provide you with their contact information. Often the H&I committee will arrange with you a date on which to provide the facility staff with a presentation and discuss the various ways a meeting could be started in your facility. Depending on the availability of trusted servants and prior facility commitments, the H&I committee members may be able to bring a panel meeting into your facility. If they cannot provide this service at this time, they will discuss with you how to start a self-sustaining meeting within your facility.

Q&A 2

How does NA help parolees upon their release?

NA helps parolees by helping them to feel welcome at meetings, informing them about group commitments which are usually helpful in building a support system of recovery peers, offering information about sponsorship (where an experienced addict helps the newer member), and introducing the new member (parolee) to experienced recovery members. Often new members are invited after a meeting for

coffee, and members can be asked to pick up the new member who is without transportation.

Addicts who are reentering society and are already involved in NA may have arranged for transportation upon release with another member. Our experience demonstrates the importance of attending an NA meeting on the day of release for achieving a drug-free life. Those who are reentering and have no recovering friends to meet them can make contact with NA by calling the local NA helpline. Provide the number and inform audience as to whether the community has a list of members who are willing to transport addicts to meetings.

Q&A 3

Can NA members pick up parolees at the gate?

NA does not pick up parolees as a practice, but sponsors or recovering friends of released inmates may choose to pick them up.

Q&A 4

How can our facility receive a donation of literature? We're a rather large facility with a comprehensive drug programming and we want NA to be a part of the services we offer.

Facilities can contact NA World Services for a free sample literature packet, as well as free subscriptions to our publications, *Reaching Out* and *The NA Way Magazine*. Some local NA communities include free NA literature for institutions in their budget, and may also be able to help in that way. [Inform audience of community's practice with literature.]

Our literature is for sale directly from NA World Services at www.na.org. We also encourage professionals to keep in mind that friends or relatives of addicts can purchase NA literature from NA World Services and have that literature sent directly to the inmate.

Q&A 5

We would like to start our own NA group. How do we do so?

An NA meeting starter kit and *Institutional Group Guide* are available from NA World Services (www.na.org) or [provide local RSO or ASO, if applicable].

Q&A 6

We've had experience with members from NA over the years, and those experiences have been inconsistent. How can we be sure NA will consistently serve the needs of the inmates here?

Today, we have NA members who are willing to meet with staff at your facility and discuss what you would like from NA and what we can realistically provide. We will also provide you with local contact information for any issues that may arise with your facility. Sometimes, in our enthusiasm to help, we may have overextended ourselves by offering services that we were not able to follow up with. Please keep in mind that we are a volunteer organization and are continually striving to improve the ways in which we provide services. We are also happy to help start meetings in

your facility that can eventually be self-sustaining. Following this presentation, we can discuss your particular needs and arrange for a local NA member to contact your facility.

Note for local service committees: Inconsistencies sometimes happen even though we strive to keep our commitments. Often an inconsistency can be attributed to supplying the facility with only one contact person. It is suggested that a facility be given area information and multiple contact persons to focus on building a relationship with facility personnel.

Q&A 7

Does NA provide housing/shelter or help incarcerated addicts to find jobs?

NA does not provide housing, shelter, or employment opportunities. Our primary purpose is to help addicts recover from drug addiction, and our traditions (the principles that guide our service efforts) caution us against affiliating ourselves with specific recovery homes or places of employment. At meetings, individual NA members may have suggestions about how to find housing or employment, but those members are speaking from their own experience, not on behalf of NA as a whole.

Drug court personnel who work with drug court referrals may have different questions about NA and the services they can expect. The following questions may be helpful in those interactions.

Q&A 1

How can we work with NA? How can we build a relationship with NA?

A presentation about NA may be the best way to learn about our program of recovery and begin an ongoing relationship. Although NA's Twelve Traditions (the principles that guide our service efforts) limit us from affiliating with outside organizations, we are eager to build a relationship based on the goals we share.

Q&A 2

Can we have meetings here at the courthouse?

Depending on the area's capabilities, you can arrange for a panel or a meeting to be held at the courthouse. A panel is a regularly scheduled presentation that NA members conduct at a facility like the courthouse. An NA meeting is self-sustaining and run by NA members. We are happy to talk with you about which type of meeting might work best.

Q&A 3

Does NA sign court cards?

Many NA meetings sign court cards. This is a choice made by the members of that particular home group, or the area as a whole. If a meeting has made a decision not to sign court cards, this is usually listed in the local meeting directory. You can encourage your clients to check with an NA member before the meeting to be sure the group signs court cards.

Q&A 4

For those groups that do sign court cards, will you guarantee that my parolees/probationers will be attending the meeting, and will be staying through the entire meeting?

Attendance at our meetings is free and voluntary. We cannot guarantee that any person will attend a meeting or remain for its entirety. NA maintains no attendance records. We are a program for addicts who want to recover.

Q&A 5

Can sponsors and/or other NA members testify in court to verify the work that my clients are doing?

As indicated in NA's informational pamphlet, *Sponsorship*, sponsorship is a relationship between two members of NA – a more experienced member helping a newer member. Attending court on behalf of a "sponsee" would be an individual decision on the part of a sponsor (or any NA member). NA's traditions (the principles that guide our services) speak to maintaining personal anonymity, neutrality, and having no opinion on outside issues.

Q&A 6

Can I read my clients' step work, and will the sponsor verify that my clients are doing the work that they say they are doing?

Because NA is not affiliated with the courts and because our primary purpose is to help others lead drug-free lives, we would not verify step work with the court. Verifying or sharing step work in that way has the potential to jeopardize the trust that is essential to the sponsorship relationship. However, a client may choose to share their step work with you, and that decision is entirely theirs.

Understanding the criminal justice system and the people who work within that system can only help to build strong, long-lasting relationships. Criminal justice professionals have a variety of relationships with treatment centers and recovery homes that may or may not be different from the type of relationship they can have with NA. It is up to us to clearly communicate the kind of relationships we can have, given our primary purpose and traditions. This kind of communication can only help to build strong relationships and offset any possible misunderstandings.

Criminal Justice Tracking Form

Date _____ Area name _____

H&I contact person _____

H&I contact phone number _____

New meetings and presentations:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

Current projects:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

Current issues that need help:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

Number of H&I meetings per week _____

Number of panel coordinators _____ Number of panel leaders _____

Open panel slots:

Coordinator slots _____ Leader slots _____

Learning day/workshop schedule:

1. _____
2. _____

Cooperation with area committees and the ASC:

1. _____
2. _____

General Comments:

_____

_____

_____

Welcoming New Members
Newcomer Workshops

Often NA groups experience an influx of new members. These addicts may be court-ordered clients via the judicial system, referrals from treatment centers, or part of a natural growth process within an area. Increased numbers of members attending a meeting may place constraints on groups, such as coffee costs rising, more involved facility setup and cleanup, or increases in literature and keytag expenses.

Group members may have found that, in spite of their best efforts, these newer members' needs are not being met and, with NA's primary purpose in mind, the group has decided to create a plan that will help these new (and potential) members to feel welcome. This plan may include creating a structured format for newcomers. If that is the direction of an area, here are various formats that may be considered:

❶ **Create weekly newcomer meetings.** These meetings would function like any NA meeting; however, they would be identified in the meeting schedule as a "newcomer meeting." The focus of the meeting would be geared to helping new members understand the NA program. The meeting format may contain information that provides meeting basics and etiquette for newer members, such as keytags being given to group members celebrating lengths of cleantime, cakes being served at a particular meeting to celebrate annual recovery dates, donation basket being passed with everyone encouraged to contribute, etc. Some communities use the IPs or Basic Text as a focus for the meeting.

❷ **Create an ongoing, regularly scheduled workshop** (e.g., once a month) geared to the needs of newer members. The workshop could be in a panel format. Trusted servants from the area may accept the commitment for a year, or panel members may be trusted servants of an area subcommittee. These panels provide a forum for new members to ask for information about NA and our language (e.g., What does "clean" mean? Why do you pass a basket? etc.), and to share information about the NA program such as meeting attendance and the concept of sponsorship. These workshops could be held in a meeting facility prior to a regularly scheduled NA meeting, at a treatment center that has clients completing treatment, or perhaps at a courthouse that has a drug court program.

❸ **Add a brief new member orientation** before the start of regularly scheduled meetings. This would become part of a meeting format and may address:

- when attendance slips will be signed,
- overview of meeting format,
- purpose of keytags, and
- purpose of the basket that is passed.

This is not an exhaustive list, and your area may want to include additional items for the brief orientation.

We highlighted three ways to help new members feel welcome in a meeting environment, yet there could be any combination of avenues to help with an influx of members.

Area considerations

In whatever manner an area chooses to proceed, there are several spiritual principles that can help you in your efforts. Practicing the principles of cooperation, unity, communication, and attraction will help an area to better carry the message of recovery to those who want recovery in NA.

Groups can help inform members by announcing the workshops and/or orientations at their meetings. The area could plan to fund literature for these efforts, and trusted servants from various groups can sign up as greeters, speakers, or panel members. In fact, all area groups can rotate the responsibility of providing for the new member orientations. The area may choose to have a newcomer workshop coordinator who assists the groups with planning and maintaining these meetings. These are a few ideas on how an area could welcome new members. Through area brainstorming and planning, an area will find what works best for them.

Planning tips

- Some newcomers may not be able to focus for long periods of time. Simple, short sharing from members can be helpful in holding their attention.
- Explaining that NA's philosophy focuses on the disease of addiction rather than any specific drug and that we are inclusive, regardless of drugs used, can be helpful for newcomers.
- This can be an opportunity to explain sponsorship, various meeting formats listed in schedules, what keytags mean, and why the basket is passed during a meeting.
- Meeting greeters (with meeting lists) can set the welcome tone.

H&I Request for Panel Meeting Letter

Date

Feel free to modify this sample letter as needed.

First and Last Name
Title
Institution
Address
City, State Zip code

Dear (*first name*):

We received your recent letter and thank you for your interest in Narcotics Anonymous. As you may be aware, Narcotics Anonymous is a member-driven international organization whose focus is recovery from the disease of addiction. Member volunteers provide our services. In our area, the Hospitals and Institutions Committee provides meetings for incarcerated addicts. We are currently reviewing our obligations to other institutions, jails, and treatment centers to determine whether we have the ability to provide a meeting for your inmates. *(Provide name)* from our committee will be contacting you within the month to request a meeting with you to help us determine how we can effectively cooperate.

We wanted to take this opportunity to provide you with recovery literature targeted toward the incarcerated addict. NA has a quarterly publication called *Reaching Out* that can be ordered from the World Service Office. The format for this publication is similar to an NA meeting, with articles from inmates who are willing to write about their experience, strength, and hope, and it is free. Additionally, the booklet *Behind the Walls* has excerpts from members, and *Staying Clean on the Outside* is an informational pamphlet geared to those addicts who are reentering society. We hope that you find these materials helpful for the incarcerated addicts.

We look forward to meeting with you and serving your institution.

Warm regards,

Contact person
H&I Secretary
Email address

Enclosures

Panel Leader Report to Area Chairperson

Date _____ Report month _____

Name of H&I chairperson _____

Name of panel leader _____

Facility where panel is held _____

	Number of panel members	Number of meeting attendees
1st week		
2nd week		
3rd week		
4th week		
5th week		

Are there any cooperation issues with NA and the facility? What are they? _____

_____

_____

Are you having any difficulties getting NA members to volunteer for the panel?

Yes ____ No ____

If yes, what seem to be the challenges? _____

_____

Area H&I Chairperson Report Form for ASC

Date _____

H&I chairperson _____

Contact information:
Phone _____ Email _____

Number of H&I Meetings _____ Number of panel meetings that need support _____

New requests for H&I meetings _____

_____

Current projects and activities _____

_____

_____

Current situations and challenges _____

_____

_____

What can the ASC and GRSs do to assist the H&I committee? _____

_____

_____

What can the H&I committee do to better serve the ASC? _____

_____

_____

New Meeting Within an Institution

Date

Feel free to modify this sample letter as needed.

First and Last Name
Institution
Address
City, State Zip code

Dear _____:

Thank you for your recent letter about starting an NA meeting at your facility. We are gratified to learn of efforts from correctional staff. We are sending you a group starter packet, which includes a variety of NA literature, as well as the *Institutional Group Guide* that will help you with starting a new NA group.

There are a few considerations with starting a new group; these are usually taken into account prior to the initial meeting. One consideration is the format. Some meetings use recovery literature, others choose a recovery-related topic, while others may be speaker-and-discussion. The format sets the tone and focus of a meeting. Within the format, meeting guidelines, such as acknowledging NA recovery birthdays and time constraints, usually five minutes for each member to speak, are outlined. These meeting protocol items are usually announced at the beginning of the meeting. The *Institutional Group Guide* has additional information about meetings and formats. Since formats evolve and change with the group and its members, we suggest that you review your format annually to ensure that the meeting is functioning in a manner that meets the needs of the members.

Sometimes, starting a new NA meeting can be challenging, and we suggest patience and consistency in your efforts. Enclosed please find the name and address of the NA service committee contact for this geographical area. Our committee is aware of the support services needed for institutional NA groups and members, such as sponsorship for inmates, correspondence with inmates, and working the steps with inmates.

In closing, we are happy that you have contacted Narcotics Anonymous and that we could be of assistance. Even though we cannot provide you with a panel of NA members for your institution at this time, we will be contacting you in the very near future. We would like to meet with you and offer you a presentation about NA's program of recovery.

Warm regards,

Contact person
Service position
Email address

Enclosures

Recovery Literature for Institutional Groups

Date

Feel free to modify this sample letter as needed.

First and Last Name
Inmate number
Address
City, State Zip code

Dear _____:

Thank you for your recent communication expressing interest in obtaining recovery literature for a Narcotics Anonymous group within your facility. We understand that you would like this material for your group's meeting. We are enclosing *(name the books)* and suggest that these be kept with the group materials so that all members in the meeting can share the literature. Additionally, we have enclosed the booklet *Behind the Walls* and informational pamphlets *Sponsorship, Welcome to NA,* and *Staying Clean on the Outside.* Please feel free to share these with other members of the group. Often, recovery literature can help members identify with other addicts, gain a sense of belonging to a larger group of members, and connect with members from around the world with the experiences that are described in our literature.

We are always excited to learn of members participating in NA groups "behind the walls," and we wish your group the best of luck. We enclosed a literature order from. Sometimes, there are provisions within an institution's budget or from inmates to order literature. We look forward to hearing from you soon.

Warm regards,

Contact person
H&I Secretary
Area service address

Enclosures

Literature for Public Relations with Criminal Justice

Whether presenting to professionals, providing a panel, or bringing a meeting to drug courts or jails, it is useful to bring literature that will help the audience to understand Narcotics Anonymous and explain who we are. Some suggested informational pamphlets and booklets for criminal justice public relations are:

- NA White Booklet
- *Behind the Walls*
- *The Group Booklet*
- *In Times of Illness*
- IP No. 7 *Am I an Addict?*
- IP No. 11 *Sponsorship, Revised*
- IP No. 17 *For Those in Treatment* (for drug courts)
- IP No. 22 *Welcome to NA*
- IP No. 23 *Staying Clean on the Outside*

Our Basic Text is always helpful, and bringing it, along with a copy of *It Works: How and Why, The NA Step Working Guides*, and *Just for Today*, will help with your presentation, roundtable, panel, or meeting.

It might be helpful to also bring some copies of *The NA Way Magazine* and *Reaching Out* with you, and explain how to obtain a subscription.

Sample
Professional Referral Letter

Date

Feel free to modify this sample letter as needed.

First and Last Name
Title
Address
City, State Zip code

Dear _____:

On behalf of the _____ area/regional service committee of Narcotics Anonymous, I am writing to thank you for all of the positive feedback that you have provided concerning our program of recovery as well as our participation in the _____ *(event)*. Responses like yours help us to ensure that our representation at such events is helping to carry the message that Narcotics Anonymous is a viable referral option for those in your field.

We are requesting that you put that positive feedback in the form of a letter. We wish to use that letter, and others like it, as a form of referral that will help open doors for us with other professionals like you. We feel that these professionals may be able to better understand the Narcotics Anonymous program when the information is presented with your support.

To that end, we have enclosed a self-addressed, stamped envelope. Please use it if you choose to help us in our efforts to carry our message of recovery from the disease of drug addiction. Although NA is currently helping addicts to recover in over 127 countries worldwide, the primary focus of this committee is the still-suffering addicts right here at home in our area/region. Thank you for your help.

Sincerely,

Name
Title
Subcommittee name
Contact information

Resource for

chapter seven
Treatment

contents

Frequently asked questions – Treatment professionals 1

Frequently Asked Questions Treatment Professionals

These questions and responses may help a committee when presenting to treatment professionals or when exhibiting at a professional event. Discussing these questions and answers before an event can help committee members provide reliable and consistent information about Narcotics Anonymous.

When preparing for such an event, be mindful that short answers seem to work best. Clear and concise answers help give the audience the information they desire, and trusted servants are better able to maintain a focus on sharing pertinent information. Responding directly to questions asked also helps members avoid venturing off into personal opinions. Pointing to recovery literature, or even holding it in your hand for the audience to see, is often better than directly quoting our literature for responses to questions posed by an audience. Additionally, if NA specific language such as "home group" is used, please explain the meaning for the audience.

Q&A 1

Does NA consider alcohol to be a drug?

Yes. A statement to that effect is part of our fellowship-approved literature, [refer audience members to the White Booklet] and is read at most meetings.

Q&A 2

What is the difference between AA and NA?

AA helped start NA in 1953 by giving NA's founding members permission to adapt their traditions and steps. The primary difference between the two programs is that AA's focus is alcohol and alcoholism, whereas NA's focus is recovery from addiction. In NA, we believe that the use of drugs, including alcohol, is but a symptom of the disease of addiction.

Q&A 3

Is help only available for narcotics addicts?

No. NA's focus is not on a particular class of substances, but is on recovery from the disease of addiction. It is possible that when NA first started, the majority of our members used heroin. It is also worth noting that when NA was founded, drugs such as marijuana were referred to as "narcotics" in the United States. Today, as indicated in our *Membership Survey*, our members use a variety of drugs, including alcohol. Interestingly, 89% of those surveyed list alcohol as one of the drugs used on a regular basis. This survey also provides information about employment status, occupation, gender, and age.

Q&A 4

Some of our clients have stated that they would not feel comfortable in meetings with a bunch of street addicts. Can you address this?

Yes. Our members come from all walks of life, races, ages, and lifestyles. They have diverse backgrounds, religious perspectives, and occupations. In any given NA

meeting there will be various demographics including street addicts along with professionals. NA does not focus on an addict's drug use or lifestyle. Our members are available to help anyone with a desire to stop using drugs.

Q&A 5

Is NA appropriate for prescription drug addicts?

NA's message is all-inclusive with respect to any mood-changing, mind-altering substance. Our membership includes people whose primary drugs of abuse were prescribed, and who have found recovery through NA. NA is appropriate for any individual who has a desire to stop using drugs.

Q&A 6

What is NA's opinion on methadone and other drug-replacement therapies for the treatment of opioid dependence)?

[It may be useful to have Bulletin #29 available, or provide NAWS website link at www.na.org]. In general, we cannot assess anyone's desire to abstain from drugs, and NA has no opinion on drug replacement therapies used by professionals in the management of addiction.

NA is a program of total abstinence; this has provided the foundation for recovery from drug use and for further personal growth. Narcotics Anonymous has only one membership requirement: a desire to stop using drugs. Drug addicts who are participating in drug replacement therapies are welcome in NA meetings.

It should be noted that most meetings ask that people under the influence of any mind- or mood-altering substances listen rather than speak during the meeting, and speak to members on an individual basis before and after the meeting. Meetings that follow this practice do so to preserve an atmosphere of recovery in the meeting. Additional information may be found in the *Public Relations Handbook*, page 67.

Q&A 7

Is NA a religious program?

No. The NA program is based on a set of spiritual principles that are not associated with a particular religion. Although our steps call for finding and believing in a "power greater than oneself," this is a personal decision for each and every member to make. Members choose their own "power greater than themselves." Members' beliefs range from nature to organized religion, from no belief that a power exists, to belief in the power of inanimate objects such as rocks. Members are free to choose a belief that works for them personally, and there is no opposition to anyone's choice within the fellowship. We perceive this to be a strength of our program – the unconditional freedom members have with choosing their own personal belief – and in NA meetings one can hear members state that this is an attractive and safe aspect of the fellowship. NA doesn't endorse or oppose any religion. Experience of our members has shown that the spiritual principles work for all members, from the devoutly religious to the atheist and agnostic.

Q&A 8

What is your position on treating the dually diagnosed? On medications prescribed for the treatment of mental illnesses?

NA's sole focus is recovery from drug addiction. We do have a booklet titled *In Times of Illness* that discusses the use of medications and the issues that arise for addicts in recovery.

Q&A 9

What is your opinion on the harm reduction philosophy?

NA is a program of total abstinence; this has provided the foundation for recovery from drug use and for further personal growth. Narcotics Anonymous has only one membership requirement: a desire to stop using drugs. Addicts taking advantage of such programs are more than welcome to attend NA meetings.

NA neither endorses nor opposes drug replacement strategies. NA does not claim to have the only workable approach to the problem of addiction, nor do we assert that all other approaches are flawed. We claim only that the Narcotics Anonymous approach has been proven very useful to hundreds of communities and tens of thousands of addicts around the world, and may be helpful in your community as well. NA's sole mission is to help people achieve total abstinence and recover from the disease of addiction.

Q&A 10

What are your criteria for calling someone an "addict"?

We don't have any criteria. It is for the individual to decide that they are an addict. This helps NA to be inclusive and nonjudgmental concerning anyone's level of drug usage. However, we do offer a pamphlet titled *Am I an Addict?* with questions designed to help people decide for themselves.

Q&A 11

Can we send our clients to your meetings with attendance cards, and have them signed there?

Many NA meetings sign attendance cards. This is a choice made by members of that particular home group, or the area as a whole. If a meeting has made a decision not to sign attendance cards, this is usually listed in the local meeting directory. You can encourage your clients to check with an NA member before the meeting to be sure the group signs attendance cards.

Q&A 12

Can someone from our facility call a client's sponsor to check on his/her progress?

That is up to the sponsor and the client. If the sponsor is willing to participate in this kind of communication, and has the permission of the "sponsee," such an arrangement might be possible. However, a sponsor is a volunteer who is not bound by any treatment center's regulations, and would be engaging in this

communication as a service to the person he or she is sponsoring, not the treatment center.

Q&A 13

Who can I contact if I am having a problem with a sponsor and the work he/she is doing with one or more of our clients?

As indicated in NA's informational pamphlet, *Sponsorship*, sponsorship is a relationship between two members of NA – a more experienced member helping a newer member. If a sponsor is causing difficulties in the treatment of a client, you can have the client obtain a different sponsor. If needed, the local NA service committee might be able to furnish you with a list of sponsors who are available to help your clients.

Q&A 14

In the past, we have tried to have NA meetings at our facility, but your people did not show up consistently. How do I know that things would be any different today?

Today, we have NA members who are willing to meet with staff at your facility and discuss what you would like from NA and what we can realistically provide. We will also provide you with local contact information for any issues that may arise with your facility. Sometimes, in our enthusiasm to help, we may have overextended ourselves by offering services that we are not able to follow up with. Please keep in mind that we are a volunteer organization, continually striving to improve the ways in which we provide services. We are also happy to help start meetings in your facility that can eventually be self-sustaining. [Presenters need to be prepared to tell professionals what commitment can realistically be made, such as weekly meetings or monthly meetings. It may be helpful to have that discussion prior to a presentation, recognizing the human and financial resources of the service body.] Following this presentation, we can discuss your particular needs and arrange for a local NA member to contact your facility.

Note for local service committees: Inconsistencies sometimes happen even though we strive to keep our commitments. Often an inconsistency can be attributed to supplying the facility with only one contact person. It is suggested that a facility be given area information and multiple contact persons to focus on building a relationship with facility personnel

Q&A 15

What will we need to provide in order to have a meeting at our facility?

All that is necessary is a meeting space. We will contact you to set up a time to meet with your designated staff to explain how often we may be able to bring a meeting to your facility, which format might work best for you, and the types and frequency of meetings that we are capable of providing. If we find that we are unable to provide consistent support, we may be able to provide literature and material for clients to run stand-alone NA meetings.

Q&A 16

I am not an addict, but before referring anyone to an NA meeting outside our facility, I would like to attend one. Is that a problem?

Not at all. As noted in the meeting directory, the legend illustrates which meetings are "open" meetings and which are "closed" meetings. Open meetings are open to anyone who has an interest in Narcotics Anonymous. You are welcome to attend any of those meetings.

Q&A 17

How do I know that my clients will be safe if I send them to an NA meeting? Isn't it possible that they might find a new connection, or be able to purchase drugs there?

If a person goes to an NA meeting seeking drugs or a connection, it is possible that they might find what they are looking for (although this is true almost anywhere). However, if a person goes to an NA meeting with a desire to stop using drugs and to learn how to live drug-free, there will be members in the meetings willing to help them.

Q&A 18

How do I know that my (female, adolescent, etc.) clients will be safe if I send them to an NA meeting?

Most meetings create a welcoming atmosphere by appointing certain members to act as meeting greeters. Meetings also have member volunteers who are responsible for helping to maintain an environment of recovery. There are common needs meetings, such as women's meetings, gay and lesbian meetings, and young people's meetings in some communities, where some newer members may feel more comfortable.

NA encourages members to support each other and often suggests that women seek other women in recovery, men seek support from men in their recovery efforts, and adolescents seek their peers to add recovery support. To help your clients, you may want to encourage clients to meet women like themselves or adolescents to seek other members who are approximately their age. Additionally, a staff person could have the client contact the NA helpline to speak with an addict of the same sex, perhaps even agreeing to meet the client at the meeting. In that way, the client would be introduced to other members of the group, gaining recovery support.

Q&A 19

What if I want to learn more about NA?

Please take these meeting lists and pamphlets. These particular pamphlets, *Information about NA, Membership Survey*, and *NA: A Resource in Your Community*, were designed to offer introductory material for professionals. If you need further assistance, please contact [name, trusted servant position, and phone number].

Q&A 20

How would I get NA literature for our facility?

Initially, you may want to contact the NA helpline in your community and request literature for your facility. And you are welcome to contact NA World Services by calling 818.773.9999, or visit the NAWS website at www.na.org.

Q&A 21

What material do you have for my _____-speaking clients?

[Indicate any local meetings in that language, if available.] NA literature is published in over thirty-five languages (February 2007). Here is a copy of our current product catalog which highlights all languages in which we have materials published.

Q&A 22

Do you have any literature targeted to specific demographic groups?

We have a pamphlet titled *Youth and Recovery*. Also, the personal stories in our Basic Text provide a wide range of experiences from our diverse fellowship. You may also be interested to know that we are in the process of developing more targeted literature for approval at our 2008 World Service Conference. [Be familiar with all NA-approved literature.]

Q&A 23

What sort of research demonstrates your efficacy?

The anonymous nature of our program has historically made scientific research difficult. However, we do take a survey of attendees at our biennial world convention that you may find interesting [have most recent *Membership Survey* on hand].

Q&A 24

Do you have meetings for treatment professionals, so that my staff members who are in recovery do not have to attend meetings with their clients?

Unfortunately, since our only requirement for membership is a desire to stop using, our fellowship has historically been reticent about holding meetings that exclude anyone. Your staff member can review a meeting schedule to determine if there is a local group geared toward professionals. Often treatment professionals become willing to travel a slight distance to a meeting to provide for their anonymity and meet the needs of their recovery program.

Q&A 25

What is the cost of attending NA?

There is no cost to attend meetings. However, most groups pass a donations basket during their meetings to pay expenses such as meeting facility rent and refreshments, and to help support NA services. In accordance with our principle of self-support, only NA members should put money in this basket. Members contribute to the welfare of the group and NA as a whole because it is one way that promotes a sense of responsibility for individuals. When many addicts were using drugs, they were irresponsible with all aspects of their lives—paying of bills, being responsible with their employers and families, etc. In recovery, addicts contribute to the welfare of the group through the donations basket. This is an action of responsibility for oneself and for the welfare of NA.

Resources for

chapter nine
Phonelines

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Phonelines Training Session

The content and order of this session may vary depending on the time available. We encourage service committees to consider any individual circumstances that would require changes. Times referenced for particular segments of the session may vary.

Goals of the session

- Discuss underlying public relations principles within our phoneline efforts.
- Orient and train volunteers about how to respond to various types of phoneline calls.
- Introduce NA members to local phoneline technologies and policies.

On tables are pens, note sheets, phonelines flowchart, and any local phoneline resources.

Before the session begins

Prior to the session

- Review Chapter Nine of the *Public Relations Handbook*.
- Prepare a sign-in sheet, asking for name and contact information, to be passed around the room during the session.

Once onsite

- Consider the setup of the room:
  - Are there any sight barriers, or hearing or lighting challenges to consider?
  - Are there any other distractions that might need to be addressed?
  - Do the size of the meeting and the seating plan allow for small group discussions?
- Set up a literature table for any additional phoneline handouts or resource materials.
- Be sure to be fully prepared to start the session **on time.**

Leader provides the setup of the session

5 minutes

Begin the session covering the following points:

Introductions

- The leader can introduce all of the presenters. Give a brief background of each presenter and their experience with phonelines.

Logistical issues

- Ask members to turn off ringers on their cell phones.
- Explain where the bathrooms are, when breaks will occur, what refreshments are available, etc.
- Inquire as to any special needs of any of the participants.
- Ask members to sign in with their name and contact information, and collect this list for updated information.

Setup

- Offer a brief outline of the session and what to expect, and state that any unanswered questions will be addressed at the end of the session.

Leader introduces core phoneline PR principles

10 — 15 minutes

Leader identifies core public relations principles. State the principles listed below. Choose one bullet point for each principle and offer an example or personal thought.

(Inform the participants that chapter two of the Public Relations Handbook *has essays on the principles of the traditions along with examples.)*

Cooperation

- One of our public relations goals is to build long-lasting relationships with other organizations.
- Compromising any of our traditions in an effort to build these relationships is never beneficial to individual members or NA as a whole. We maintain a consistent focus on our primary purpose with the public.
- By creating positive relationships with those outside of NA, and with our own members, we foster unity and harmony with each other and the community around us.
- We put the common welfare of NA first, and we remember that we are only autonomous as long as our actions do not affect NA as a whole.

Attraction

- What is likely to be attractive to the public and to professionals who interact with addicts is reliable communication, responsibility, commitment, and behavior that reflects recovery.
- We can demonstrate the reliability of NA by showing up and fulfilling our obligations, whether it is to return a telephone call for information about NA or to supply meeting directories at a public library.
- We can draw on the experiences of NA members to fulfill the commitments we make to professionals.

Leader poses questions for discussion by the group

5 — 10 minutes

The following questions for discussion by the group are intended to help members consider cooperation and attraction as they apply to our phoneline efforts. The group discusses one of the questions in this setting. The remaining questions may be a tool for the phoneline committee to discuss at one of their meetings.

- How is our phoneline used to cooperate with various outside organizations (such as the phoneline service provider, an organization we may use as a referral, other public organizations in the community, etc.)?
- What cooperative actions do we, as committees and groups, take to ensure a smoothly running phoneline?
- Why is it important that volunteers be consistent and reliable with their service, and how does that help NA's message of recovery remain attractive?
- How do we make phoneline service an attractive NA commitment?

Preparing volunteers

5 minutes

With the previous discussion as a foundation, leader covers the following points:

- Responsiveness is a key principle for phoneline service. This means that trusted servants should engage with callers in a sensitive, appropriate, and helpful manner.
- Leadership qualities such as integrity, the ability to listen, and sound judgment are essential in providing phoneline service.
- Phoneline volunteers often have to perform in higher-pressure situations, and they are likely to be the first contact that people have with NA.
- Avoid using NA jargon (such as "it works when you work it," "home group," "get a sponsor," etc.).
- Use NA literature to present an accurate and positive message of recovery and to clarify that the NA program is separate from treatment centers or other twelve-step programs.
- Do not make commitments on behalf of the area, region, or NA Fellowship. If a professional or member of the public contacts an NA phoneline, volunteers should provide as much information about NA as they can, solicit information from the public contact log, and follow up with the appropriate trusted servant such as a committee chairperson or the area's media contact person.

Training volunteers

15 minutes

Leader asks: "Who calls our phonelines?"

Responses should include:

- Addicts (both potential members and current NA members).
- Nonaddicts.
- Family members and loved ones.
- Professionals.
- Clergy.

Leader then asks participants to identify specific types of calls

- Requests for meeting information.
- Requests for general information about NA.
- Requests for public relations efforts (PI presentations, H&I meetings, etc.)
- Difficult calls from addicts who are:
  - under the influence of drugs.
  - prank calls.
  - calls from those who suffer from mental illness.

    > *One strategy is to continually bring the conversation back to how the caller can get to an NA meeting and end a problem call before the situation escalates.*

- Calls made by the public, including simple requests for information or calls made about problems created by the behavior of NA members.
- Crisis calls:
  - Volunteers should be very clear about where their responsibility ends. Phoneline volunteers are not counselors or crisis workers.
  - Threats to commit suicide, a drug overdose, or talk about being a victim of violence are all examples of crisis calls.
  - Refusing to refer such callers to qualified outside crisis agencies could have legal implications, depending on local laws.
- Meeting recommendations:
  - Volunteers can respect callers' requests and recommend a meeting where they are likely to find addicts with whom they may identify. We do not, however, automatically assume that because someone is of a certain age, gender, ethnicity, or sexual identity, they will want a meeting recommendation.
  - If there are no common needs meetings in an area but there are meetings where, for example, a larger population of young people regularly attends, then phoneline volunteers can suggest these meetings to a caller who is asking for a recommendation.
- Twelfth step calls:
  - A twelfth step call is usually a request for assistance to get to a meeting. We carry NA's message through twelfth step calls.
  - A twelfth step call can mean that two or more addicts provide a ride to an NA meeting or that volunteers simply talk with the caller, helping the potential member get to a meeting on their own.
  - When possible, members meet those requesting a ride to a meeting in a public place.

- Referrals:
  - We don't give referrals to one specific treatment center or detoxification unit. Instead, we can provide a list of any and all local treatment centers and not align or affiliate ourselves with one in particular, or we can inform members of generic treatment referral numbers, such as the National Treatment Referral Line in the United States.
  - If a caller has a local telephone directory, we can direct them to the services listed there. The same principle is true for suicide prevention numbers and other community service numbers.
  - Family members and loved ones of addicts frequently call our phonelines. Volunteers can provide numbers for Nar-Anon and Families Anonymous or other similar information. But remember that we don't recommend one program over another or offer our opinions about any of these programs.
- Review Phonelines Flowchart considering the above examples.
- Remind the participants that these points and additional points are contained in the "Phonelines" chapter of the *Public Relations Handbook*.

Local phoneline process, technology, and other issues

10 minutes

Leader discusses the details of the local phoneline system

This portion of the session will be developed by the local committee; the information presented will depend on the type of system used and local policy and procedure.

- Review local requirements (cleantime, meeting attendance, etc.).
  - Consider any forms or logs that the committee requires the volunteers to complete.
- Review current phoneline opportunities.
- Discuss the telephone system used by phoneline volunteers.

Break: 15 minutes

Role-playing exercise

15 — 20 minutes

Leader facilitates an exercise designed to help volunteers get practical experience. Add some of the specific calls material to this session. This will help participants to be more involved in the training.

Role-playing – Phoneline volunteers

- Set up mock telephone calls using two chairs, positioned back-to-back. Simulate common phone calls (from the list above) received by the volunteers.
  - Ask volunteers to respond to various types of calls using this process.

- After each scenario, allow members to offer their thoughts on how the participants responded.
- Using the phoneline resources, offer your own thoughts on how the call should be handled.
- Once time has expired, ask participants what some of their real challenges have been. Talk about real issues and how to handle them, and then move on to questions and comments.

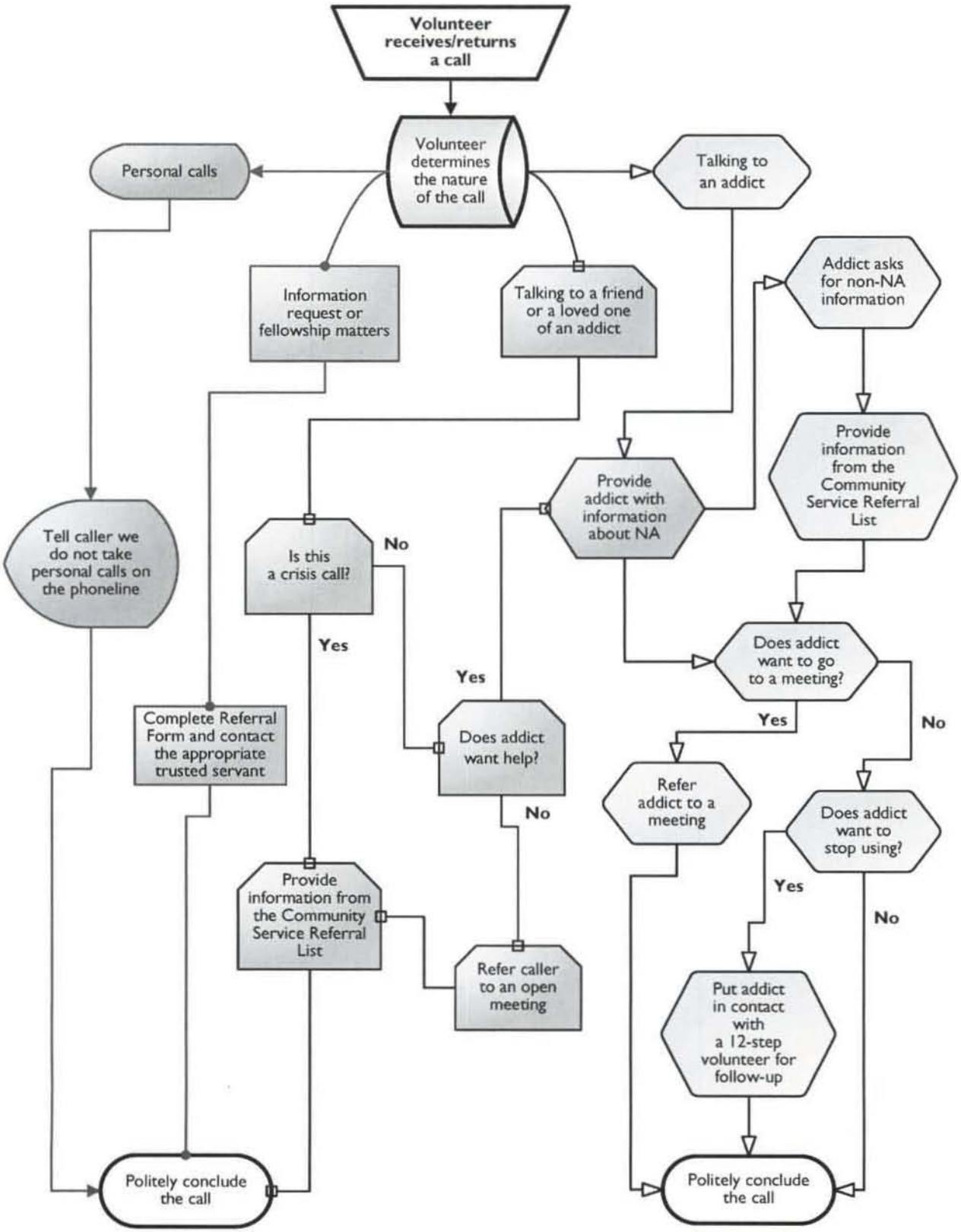
Questions and comments

10 minutes

Leader responds to questions from members

- Ask for questions or concerns.
- Remind members to complete the sign-in sheet.
- Thank everyone for attending.

Phoneline Flowchart



Frequently Asked Questions Phoneline Volunteers' Experience with Calls

This resource can be used by volunteers answering phoneline calls when interacting with addicts, loved ones, professionals, and the community at large. These frequently asked questions are meant to help trusted servants provide clear, consistent, and informative responses. When responding to a question using NA terminology, such as "leader", please explain to the listener what we mean by that language. In an effort to gain an understanding of the information here, trusted servants can discuss and rehearse the questions and answers below.

What follows are possible answers to questions frequently asked by phoneline callers.

Questions asked by potential members

Q&A 1

I've been using (smoking pot) for three years and I'm not sure if I am an addict. Can NA help?

We suggest attending an NA meeting and speaking with some of the members there. Because NA meetings are a safe place, newcomers are encouraged to ask questions. Also, read some of our literature, which is available at most NA meetings, and decide for yourself. The informational pamphlet *Am I an Addict?* may help you in your decision making.

Q&A 2

I am getting drug-tested by my parole officer; how long does cocaine stay in your system?

Narcotics Anonymous is a twelve-step fellowship for those who think they may have a problem with drugs. We are a self-help, recovery-oriented organization and employ no medical professionals. We do not give any medical advice or opinions, but we do help addicts find recovery through the NA program.

Q&A 3

What should I expect when I go to my first NA meeting? Do I have to talk?

Typically a leader or chairperson will conduct the meeting. There is usually time for participation in which members share about their experience, strength, and hope with staying clean. You do not have to speak during the meeting if you don't want to. We encourage you to get there a little early so that you can speak with some of the members and pick up some literature before the meeting starts.

Q&A 4

How much does NA cost? Are you counselors?

There are no fees or dues to be a member of NA. The only requirement for membership is the desire to stop using. We are not professional counselors; we are recovering addicts who share our experience to help each other stay clean.

Q&A 5

I am a nurse by profession and I want to get clean. Where can I find a nurses' meeting?

Some areas have common needs meetings while others do not. This area does/does not have a nurses' NA meeting. We can tell you, however, that recovering addicts from all types of professions attend our meetings.

Q&A 6

I'd like to go to an NA meeting but I don't have a car. Can you help?

Yes, we can try. Where do you live? Let me take your number down and see if I can find a ride for you. (Refer to area Twelfth-Step list)

Note: This may not be a service offered in some areas. If your area is interested in Twelve Step lists, you may refer to the *Public Relations Handbook,* Chapter Nine.

Q&A 7

I'm suicidal and I don't want to live anymore. What should I do?

We strongly suggest contacting the suicide prevention number, which is _____, or 911 to get immediate assistance.

Questions asked by loved ones

Q&A 1

My boyfriend is using drugs, stealing, and cheating. What can I do to help him? Will you call him?

Because Narcotics Anonymous is a self-help program, addicts must have the desire to stop using. Once he is ready to stop using drugs, please have him call us so we can direct him to an NA meeting in his area. In the meantime, you may want to call Nar-Anon or Families Anonymous. Although we are not affiliated with these organizations, we are happy to provide their telephone numbers.

Q&A 2

My son/daughter is using drugs and wants to stop taking drugs. Can I go with him/her to their first meeting?

You may attend an "open" NA meeting with your son/daughter. Open meetings welcome family members and the community at large. Closed meetings are for addicts only. Let me check our meeting list, so I can give you several choices of open meetings...

Q&A 3

Will you call me if my son/daughter does not show up to meetings regularly?

No, we are not able to do this. Because this is a self-help program, it is not our position to monitor an addict's willingness to attend meetings.

Questions asked by community members

Q&A 1

I heard that my old friend, Jane Smith, is in NA. Can I have her phone number?

We are not at liberty to give out contact information for individuals who may or may not be members.

Q&A 2

Drugs are being sold in my apartment complex. Can you come and arrest them?

Narcotics Anonymous is a twelve-step fellowship for those who think they may have a problem with drugs. We are a self-help, recovery-oriented organization and employ no law enforcement professionals.

Referral Form

For referring calls to the area or region

There are times when trusted servants within the area or at the regional service committee may be more experienced with answering certain phoneline requests. This is a sample referral form for the tracking of such calls. This form will allow us to follow the referral to ensure that the request is answered and the callers' needs are met.

Today's date _____ Time of call _____

Phoneline Volunteer _____

Caller's name _____

Name of agency or organization _____

Caller's telephone number _____ ext _____

Alternate telephone number _____ _____

Time & date when caller is available to be called back _____

Caller or agency's email address _____

Reason(s) for calling

____ Atmosphere of recovery issue

____ Predator issue

____ Request from media

____ Request for NA literature

____ Twelfth-Step call request

____ Request for meeting at facility

____ Request for NA booth

____ Leadership issue

____ Public image issue

____ Problem with meeting at facility

____ Request for NA presentation

____ Request for meeting directories

____ Request for activities schedule

____ Other (*describe in detail*): _____

_____

Referred request to: ☐ Area ☐ Region

Committee member's name and position: _____

Notes: _____

_____

Community Referral List

The following is a sample community referral list, to be used when the caller is asking for help that does not fall within our primary purpose and our traditions. We offer information in the spirit of cooperation. We can provide a list of numbers rather than any one specific number. We do not recommend one referral over another. We simply provide contact information as a courtesy. (In many parts of the United States and Canada, a community services helpline can be reached by dialing 211. If 211 service is available in your area, it may be the easiest and most complete referral that you can make.)

Child Abuse Hotline _____

County/City/State Emergency Services _____

Domestic Violence Services _____

Drug Crisis Hotline _____

Families Anonymous _____

Intervention Services _____

Local Homeless Shelter _____

Mental Health Helpline _____

Nar-Anon _____

Poison Control _____

Probation Department _____

Rape Crisis Center _____

Services for Runaways _____

Suicide Prevention Hotline _____

Additional community resources and numbers

_____ _____

_____ _____

Chapter 10
Resource Material

Resources for

chapter ten

Internet Technology

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Steps for Creating an Area Service Committee Website

1 **Area committee support:** The area has carefully considered the benefits of an area website, the human and financial resources have been identified and allocated, GSRs have informed their groups, and members have committed to joining the committee.

2 **Elect a webmaster and/or web committee:** Having a web committee can help with the gathering of information and can assure that the website does not lose continuity at the end of the webmaster's term, or if the webmaster resigns for any reason.

Agree on a password that is known by the webmaster and two other committee members. This kind of extra measure helps to keep the website in the hands of the committee, and not one individual.

3 **Create website operational guidelines:** Cover all areas that are necessary to be functional and to guide subsequent committees to continue the work that this area service committee initiated. Guidelines are meant to be helpful and fluid. These guidelines should be adaptable to the changes in the committee and the technology.

4 **Create webmaster guidelines:** Again, flexibility is important because of changing technologies and the differences in the skill levels of subsequent webmasters. The idea here is to make the webmaster aware of the ideas that the ASC wants to convey on the website, as well as the reasons behind the choice of the web provider, etc.

5 **Determine the focus of the web front page (audience, information, etc.):** This will help areas to use the language that is most attractive to the anticipated visitors to the site. Language that simply describes Narcotics Anonymous and clearly and succinctly describes our program of recovery and services offered in the area will assist any visitor. A website free of NA-specific language usually speaks to the broadest audience.

a. Determine what is necessary for the web front page and its design. Simplicity and clarity may be key aspects of the design. We want the visitor to be able to easily navigate the site to find the information that they seek. An additional consideration in design is NA's public image. Many areas may want to place identifying area artwork on their site; however, we may do well to consider who the audience is that we are trying to reach and that we anticipate visiting our site.

b. Decide on the content of the other website pages. Again, this will help areas to use language that will attract the audience for that page, and to keep the information brief and easy to navigate.

6 **Decide on a web provider:** As Chapter Ten in the *Public Relations Handbook* suggests, the concept of "free" may signal a need to check further. The price for "free" service can include links to sites that are not recovery-oriented.

7 **Website ownership:** Website domains should be owned and paid for by the service body. The area is accountable for the website; the area service committee ought to establish itself as the responsible entity for the website.

8 **Research the website server security:** Contact your website host and find out what steps have been taken to ensure that the prospective website and email accounts stay free from worms or other malware.

9 **Decide on what other sites you will be linking to:** If you are adding links to other service committee sites, be sure to find out how long they have been in existence and if their website has had any security issues in the past. This information is usually available through contact with their webmaster. You may want to consider linking to www.na.org, which can then link your readers to other NA sites.

10 **Bring the website design to the ASC for approval:** This will help to ensure that all the information the committee wants will be included on the site.

Sample Webpage

Any Area NA - Windows Internet Explorer

Q:\WB\Workplans\PR Handbook\PRHB Support Materials\Chapter 10 resources\Any Area NA.htm

Any Area NA

LOCAL MEETING SCHEDULE

Information for members:

- Events and Activities
- Area Service Committee Information

Am I an Addict? (Links to na.org)

What is the NA Program? (Links to na.org)

Information for Professionals and others interested in NA

Welcome to the

Any Area

of

Narcotics Anonymous!

Serving: Smallville, Anytown,

Basicton, & Nowheresville

Helpline: 555-555-5555

For NA in other areas, visit NA World Services.

Last updated: 16 February 2007

Local intranet

100%

Resources for

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Event Planning

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Sample Learning Day Format

Why should we have learning days?

> *...bring addicts together, so that the magic of empathy, honesty, caring, sharing and service can do their work."*
>
> Basic Text

The longer we stay clean, the more true the above statement becomes for us, and the more we can search to improve how we carry the message of recovery to the still-suffering addict. Learning days are a tool we can use to improve the ways we deliver services in our areas. Learning days are designed to help service committees share information, new materials, challenges, and rewards with each other and other members and groups.

Who would want to host a learning day event?

A learning day event can be very valuable for emerging areas that are seeking to connect with other service committees. They can be helpful for areas that need more resources and want to educate the local fellowship about service and the service structure. Learning days are also a good tool for those within the service structure who are currently helping to improve services, sharing information and new ideas, and attracting support for the committees within the local area or regional service body.

Who plans the event?

Usually, an area committee or ad hoc committee will plan a learning day. These members may receive support from the region with planning and hosting the event. For multiregional events and zonal events, participation would be sought from all of the regions involved.

Before beginning the work of planning and presenting a learning day event, it can be helpful to read the *Public Relations Handbook,* in particular Chapters One through Four (for some foundational PR principles) and Chapter Eleven, "Event Planning." Much of what you will need to help your learning day be successful is included in those chapters.

Once the planning committee is formed, the actual work begins. The following questions usually need to be addressed in this planning stage:

- Where and when will we hold the event?
- How long will we need to prepare for the event?
- How will we pay for it?
- Who will we want to be the presenters, and how much training will we want to provide for the presenters?
- What materials will we need to provide?

- Will we have a social event (dance, comedy show, speaker meeting) associated with the event?
- How will we publicize the event?

How do we pay for the event?

In keeping with Tradition Seven, the money to begin the project comes from the sponsoring areas, regions, or zones. A projected budget should be drawn up in the planning stage in order to determine a registration fee. The goal of the event is to be self-supporting, and it can be, if it is planned well. Your budget should include line items for printing, literature, insurance, postage, rent, phone calls, refreshments, speaker travel and lodging, and merchandise.

Whom should we invite?

Everyone! The more members who attend, the greater the chance for a successful event. Once the date and location have been secured, email area, regional, and zonal websites so the event can be posted. You may also want to mail pre-registration flyers to surrounding areas right up to the date of the event.

Attracting members to attend

When a committee decides to organize a learning day event, it's helpful to understand that the audience might not yet share your same passion for service in NA. This means that the audience may need some additional motivation to attend, since the focus will be learning about service. This does not mean that learning can't be fun, but in order to share in the fun (and information), the audience will first need to attend the event. The following questions can help trusted servants plan for ways to attract members to the event:

- What will attract members to the event?
- Should we offer refreshments? What types of refreshments? Could a "bring your favorite food dish" be considered for lunch or dinner?
- Are there any speakers we can bring in from other areas, regions, zones, or countries?
- Will we have a recovery meeting, dance, and/or other entertainment?
- Is the location convenient and comfortable?
- Are the dates convenient, and have we made sure that they don't conflict with any other local events?

If a committee takes the time to plan the event from the perspective of the intended audience members, it will improve the effectiveness of a learning day so that it carries the message the committee wants to convey.

Sample program for learning day

Saturday

8am — 9am

Reception (refreshments) and Registration

9 — 10:30am

Service: How We Carry the Message

The Spiritual Rewards of Service

11am — 12:30pm

Understanding the Twelve Traditions and Service

12:30 — 1:30pm

Lunch Break

1:30 — 3pm

Planning for Services – What Is Our #1 Service Priority?

3:30 — 5pm

Moving Forward with Our Service Efforts

5:30pm

Potluck Dinner

7pm

Recovery Meeting

This is only a *sample* program. Topics, programs, and formats may vary, and the only requirement is that the topics address the needs of the participants. Often an area or committee hosting the event will ask members, groups, and trusted servants for topics for the event. When we involve others in the planning of the event, we are more likely to have increased participation and enthusiasm. We have found that providing some information in each session to the participants, and then allowing them to discuss pre-planned questions about that topic, is a productive way for our members to learn. The more involved the participants are, the more they will take away from the discussions.

Multi-Regional Learning Weekends: A committee may anticipate a large turnout of members with a multi-regional learning event. In that situation, more than one workshop is usually offered during each time slot.

Sample Community Meetings Format

The purpose of a community meeting is to inform the public about Narcotics Anonymous. A community meeting differs from an open NA meeting in that we invite people outside of our fellowship to attend and address a particular focus that is relevant to our guests. Some examples of a community meeting might include:

- A meeting in a neighborhood where clergy, teachers from nearby schools, or members of a neighborhood association are invited to attend.
- A city- or county-wide meeting to inform healthcare workers, workers in government agencies, and other professionals about Narcotics Anonymous.

These meetings are hosted by Narcotics Anonymous members and are structured to share information about recovery with people who may be able to refer addicts to NA. In this way, we are expanding our ability to grow closer to our vision that no addict need die without having heard about recovery in NA.

Planning for a community meeting

First, we will want to consider how our public image will be affected by such an event. For that reason, it's important to be sure that we are well-prepared. Once a committee has identified the professional audience, the following points can help trusted servants successfully prepare for the event:

- Research the identified professional audience. Whenever possible, learn the names and positions of those who will attend. You can obtain this information through NA members or community resources.
- Consider scheduling the event at a time of day, and day of the week, that is most likely to work best for invited guests.
- Find a location that is easily accessible, centrally located, and, if possible, well-known in the community.
- Send a letter of invitation to the group of local professionals.
- Be sure to follow up by calling the professionals, reminding them of the meeting, and requesting that they send a representative.
- If you want to reach members of the entire community, a committee may want to have the meeting announced on radio, and in community calendars, newspapers, etc.
- Invite speakers and guest speakers in advance of the meeting date. It is a good idea to ask speakers sixty-to-ninety days in advance of the meeting.
- Offer refreshments and indicate in your announcements that refreshments will be provided.
- Bring NA literature that best suits the event and the audience that you intend to reach, including informational pamphlets and meeting lists.

Preparing for a community meeting

When preparing for a community meeting, seeking help from other NA members and trusted servants can help make the event a success. Planning, setup, cleanup, and thank-you letters will all benefit from the support and ideas of other trusted servants. Other helpful ideas include:

- Remember the purpose, focus, and goal of the meeting.
- Review the *Public Relations Handbook*, including Chapters Four, "Interacting with Professionals" and Eleven, "Event Planning".
- Be aware of available resource tools, such as presentation formats and frequently asked questions.
- Prepare and train the trusted servants and guest speakers who will be presenting the information about Narcotics Anonymous.
- Talk about the inclusiveness of NA and emphasize that NA isn't concerned with what drugs people use.
- Provide statistics about our worldwide fellowship.
- Consider using PowerPoint presentations and visual aids with material presentation.
- Adhere to all of the Twelve Traditions — only respond to NA-related issues.
- Use quotes from NA literature to express NA's primary purpose.
- Dress appropriately for the audience (like you would for a job interview).

Sample community meeting format

(This can be tailored for your community meeting.)

Hello. I would like to welcome everyone to this informational meeting, offered to you by _____ *(group/area/region/zone)* of Narcotics Anonymous. My name is _____ *(first name only)*, and I am an addict.

Before we begin our presentation, I would like to tell you that refreshments will be available *(when and where)*, pamphlets and meeting lists are (handed out or available on the back tables), and the bathrooms are _____.

The purpose of this meeting is to inform the community about the Narcotics Anonymous program of recovery — a resource in your community for those who want to stop using drugs. There are no membership criteria and there are no dues or fees to become a member of NA.

NA is a spiritual, not religious, program. We are not interested in what drugs a person used or about a person's age, sex, religion, sexual orientation, or educational or financial attainments. We only care that they want to stop using drugs and about how we can help them to remain drug-free.

We are a twelve-step fellowship. Our recovery comes through attendance at NA meetings, asking an experienced member to be a sponsor (or mentor) to help us with our recovery, working and applying the Twelve Steps of Narcotics Anonymous, reading NA recovery literature, and helping others to stay clean. This has worked for us since 1953, and it continues to work for us today.

We have provided you with our *Membership Survey* and other pamphlets which document historic information about NA, how we have grown as a worldwide fellowship, and some demographics that were compiled from our world convention. *(Areas and regions may want to consider having literature stamped with the area or region's name, address, phone number, and website.)*

However, today's meeting is about NA in *this* community. And I would like to introduce you to (second presenter), who will inform you about how you can use NA as a local resource. (second presenter discusses local meetings, the helpline, H&I activities, current panels, literature, and any future activities that you are capable of offering and that your committee has the resources to provide).

Leave some time at the end of the presentation for a question-and-answer session. The presenter can ask the first question, such as "What can a newcomer expect at his or her first meeting?"

Event Planning Workshop

This resource is for service committees in their efforts to plan local events. Local events can include anything from area committee workshops to learning days to community events and professional roundtables. Trusted servants are encouraged to adapt this planning aid to fit the needs of the service committee and the proposed event. To further support your event planning efforts, members may want to use the *Public Relations Handbook* as a resource, particularly chapters three (Communication Strategies), four (Interacting with the Public), and eleven (Event Planning). All NA events are an opportunity to further our relationships with the public, and planning can help NA be seen as a positive, credible, and reliable option for addicts.

Goals of the event

Prior to conducting a workshop for specific aspects of an event, a committee can identify the goal or goals of the event. This may be done during an area service committee meeting or within the committee. One of the benefits of involving the group service representatives (GSRs) in the initial planning is that partnerships with them can contribute to the success of the event. These partnerships can help support the event by improving communication and participation with NA groups in the area. Once the goal or goals of the event have been identified, the planning group or committee can then use this tool (or some other planning process) to conduct a planning workshop for the scheduled event.

Sample event planning goals

Committees can either create their own goals or use the overarching goals listed below:

To plan an event that will present NA in a positive public light.

To incorporate planning and preparation as a regular committee task.

Event planning workshop setup

On the tables there will be large note pads, markers, traditions and concepts cards, paper, and pens. In the front of the room or on the walls, the goal or goals of the event are identified. Having the goals of the event available for everyone to see will help members remain focused in their planning.

Before the session begins, the facilitator (usually the committee chairperson) will explain the process and goals of the session, as well as any logistic information that is needed (snacks, breaks, bathroom location, length of session, etc.).

Planning categories, brainstorming, and prioritizing

The session will be divided into five event planning categories:

- human and financial resources
- venue
- communication

- program
- follow-up

For each category, the group brainstorms ideas while a recorder captures all suggestions for the group to see. Once all ideas are captured, the facilitator posts the lists on the wall for review. New ideas and questions are encouraged and can be added at this time. When all ideas are presented, the group prioritizes the list. Not all categories lend themselves to the prioritization process. The Area Planning Tool has suggestions for the facilitator and for prioritizing. Additionally, there are usually planning components, such as budget forecasting and start-up monies, that may need to go back to the area service committee for approval.

Category 1: Human and financial resources

Human resources

This category focuses the planning group on how to recruit members for the event. Recruiting members involves more than simply identifying members who may be willing to be of service at an event. The committee may want to first look at the availability of members from the area service committee, and then identify the qualities and experience needed for specific event functions. For example, the member who is providing follow-up may need to possess certain communication skills, both written and verbal, that may complement the audience. Follow-up with a professional treatment audience may greatly benefit from having a member involved who has some experience or education in the treatment field. The group can brainstorm ideas, and the recorder writes down all suggestions that pertain to the recruitment of NA members.

Financial resources

Members are encouraged to look at all budgetary issues including start-up costs, event operational costs (such as rent of the facility for the event), refreshment costs, costs associated with the event (such as mileage reimbursement for invited guests), announcement costs, and follow-up activity costs. Brainstorming for this category involves identifying each budget area with a list of specific items that fall in that area. For example, three budgetary areas that would include specific lists would be venue costs, projected refreshments costs, and program costs. Once all budget categories have their identified items, each list is prioritized and the budgetary items are presented to the area service committee. When this activity is completed, the budget created by the planning group will reflect the entire cost of the event, including start-up monies.

Category 2: Venue

The planning group is encouraged to look at all venue issues, keeping in mind the purpose and goal(s) of the event. Facility considerations may vary depending on whether the event is a community meeting, learning day, or professional roundtable. One of the initial venue selection considerations is choosing a place that is comfortable, so that the facility can accommodate the projected attendance and any event meetings and setup. Additional considerations are questions about the room layout, e.g.: Is there a need for a room that seats 100 people theatre-style or 100 people in small groups? Other venue selection items to consider may include kitchen facilities, parking, facility location (the

audience and purpose of the event help determine the location), audiovisual accommodations (such as sound, lights, and video), handicap accessibility, etc. One or more sites can be selected, with the final site selection depending on whether or not the bid is secured and meets the needs of the intended audience. For site selection, members prioritize their top two choices and usually make a recommendation to the area service committee for ratification prior to securing the site.

Category 3: Communication

This category focuses the event planning group on the question of who needs to be informed about the event and what are some effective ways to accomplish that task. There may be different communication strategies depending on who is to receive information and how the information might be most effectively communicated. For example, informing GSRs at the ASC meeting and creating flyers for the groups is one strategy, while writing invitation letters and following up with telephone calls to the invited professionals is a completely different strategy. The group may also want to consider that members who perform the tasks may need to have different skills. A member with graphic art skills may be appropriate for the creation of an event flyer and a member with writing skills may be appropriate for the creation of a letter to an identified audience. The lists created by the planning group or committee will most likely contain several communication strategies.

4: Program

An event program can begin with an overall program design, with the specifics filled in after the program's framework has been created. For the overall program, members can consider what they want to learn from invited guests and how to make the program more valuable to them. Questions can include: What would this public audience like from NA? What do we want NA members to come away with from this event? The program is thus designed to be valuable to both the attendees and NA.

With the overall program design completed, the planning group can begin work on program specifics. These specifics usually include presenters, facilitators, qualified members, reimbursement costs such as mileage and parking, etc. The group recorder writes down all ideas that are offered. In the prioritizing process, it may be helpful to consider "matching talent to task," meaning that the group identifies members whose skills and background are best suited to the event and audience. The group may also want to select alternates to the first choices, as there may be instances when someone becomes ill or a life situation forces a person to cancel.

5: Follow-up

Finally, the planning group is encouraged to look at everything that is needed for follow-up. Following up on an event may include addressing questions such as: If surveys were used at an event, who will be collating the information and developing an action plan? Which members will be responsible for follow-up activities, and how soon after the event should members follow up? What is the best time to follow up, and how should members contact invitees (phone call, thank-you letters, etc.)? Is the cost for follow-up activities included in the budget?

Workshop wrap-up

At the close of the planning group session, the facilitator thanks all of the members for their hard work. The group recorder will email or send a copy of the prioritized lists to all planning group members in a timely manner.

This format can be modified and adapted to meet a community's event planning needs. Some events, such as hosting a roundtable for professionals, may be more involved, while others, such as a committee workshop, may need less planning. However, the six categories listed above tend to apply to all events. Even after an area committee workshop, a follow-up activity with the facility manager to learn whether NA has left the facility in good order helps foster a strong relationship between NA and the public.

Sample Event Timeline

This sample timeline may be shorter for an event that doesn't include professionals and presenters. However, taking time to plan events and create a timeline is advisable for any NA event. This timeline describes what needs to be accomplished and when.

- **Four months prior to the event:** The planning group (usually an area committee) meets to work out all issues that may arise for the event as outlined in the above format. Items that need area ratification (such as the budget) have been taken to the area committee.
- **Three months prior to the event:** Flyers are designed along with any web announcements; letters of invitation are composed and sent (if a roundtable or community meeting); the venue is reserved and a meeting with venue manager is scheduled; presenters/speakers are contacted, as well as alternate presenters; program is drawn up.
- **Two months prior to the event:** Flyers are distributed; invited persons are contacted to secure their attendance at the event; the event program is printed and sent to presenters and alternates.
- **One month prior to the event:** Flyer distribution continues; follow-up calls are made to those who have not responded; food and refreshments are purchased; committee members meet with presenters and alternates to review the program, to prepare and train them, and to answer any questions.
- **Event.**
- **One month following the event:** Surveys from the event are reviewed; attendees are contacted for additional feedback and to determine if there are any presentations or there is any literature distribution that may have been generated by the event.

Resources for

chapter twelve
Fellowship Development

contents

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Fellowship Development

A broad range of potential fellowship development activities are discussed in Chapter Twelve of the *Public Relations Handbook*. Following are some resources that can be used and adapted to various fellowship development opportunities.

Fellowship development inquiries

Before beginning a fellowship development activity, you may find it helpful to ask a series of questions of your committee, and also to the group, service committee, or NA community that you hope to reach. These questions are presented as samples and may be modified to meet the needs of each fellowship development endeavor.

Fellowship development activity questions for an NA committee

Following are examples of questions that a committee could ask prior to initiating any fellowship development effort.

- What do we hope to accomplish with the assistance we are offering?
- How much do we know about the NA community we are preparing to contact?
- Do we know how they perceive their current situation? Have they asked us for the help?
- What are some of the challenges that we might face? Is there a history of conflict or turmoil with the identified fellowship development group? Are there geographic concerns? Are there language barriers? Are there cultural differences?
- When we consider our current service structure and trusted servant resources, what do we think is the ideal way to achieve our goal? Could a new sub-committee or ad hoc be formed? Would the fellowship development activity be better served by combining efforts with another service committee?
- What communication strategy and method (phone call, email, or land letter) would help us reach the identified group? Would the project be best served by sending a group of trusted servants? How can we best attract the identified members or group toward cooperation with this project?
- How would we evaluate the effectiveness of this project?
- Will we be able to continue our support for an extended period of time? What are the ways that we can continue that support? What is the projected period of time for which support will be needed (six months, a year, etc.)?

Questions for the identified community who needs assistance

These sample questions can be used as a guide by the committee that is reaching out to the identified fellowship development community. The committee could use all or some of these questions to gather information and to help in the planning process. If questions are to be included in a letter, these questions could be the basis of the letter.

- How many NA meetings do you have each week? What is the approximate size of the fellowship in your area?
- Do you have members with clean time? With service experience? What is the range of clean time? Service experience?
- How are your meetings attracting newcomers? And, if meetings do not attract newcomers, why? How do the groups support the atmosphere of recovery in the meetings?
- Have you formed an area service committee in your community? How do you provide services? Do you have any specific subcommittees for service provision such as hospitals & institutions, public information, etc.? What resources (trusted servants, members, and financial) do you have available to carry the message of recovery?
- Geographically, how far apart are your meetings from one another? Have you ever come together as a fellowship for an activity or event? Please describe any challenges that you may have with travel in your community.
- Have you considered that you might be better able to carry the NA message of recovery with some assistance from a neighboring service committee? Are you willing to consider partnering with our committee in an effort to better serve our NA communities?
- What do you see as the most effective way for us to help you? Learning day workshop? Help in the development of a service committee? Our attendance at your committee meetings? Your attendance at our committee meetings? Other ideas?
- Are you in communication with other NA members or service committees that are outside your immediate area? Have you teamed with other NA members or communities to provide services?
- Are you in contact with NA World Services?
- Do you have NA literature available for your groups? Would additional literature help your groups/members?
- Is there any other way that our committee might be of service to your members? Please explain.

These last three points are for communities whose primary language is not English.

- Do you have literature available in your language? Do you have literature available in English?
- Have you translated any literature? Do you need help with translating literature?
- Do you have any English-speaking members? Does English literature have any value for your community?

Post-trip follow-up questions

While it may not be appropriate in every situation, sometimes a committee may decide upon a fellowship development trip. If that is the case, following are examples of questions a committee may want to ask the community they visited. The responses may help a committee to improve its

fellowship development efforts. Ask the recipient community to provide as much detail as possible in their answers.

- What were you hoping would be achieved as a result of the fellowship development visit? How successful was the travel team in meeting those goals?
- How did your NA community respond to the visit?
- If your community desires a follow-up visit from us, what would be the goals of that trip?
- Were the recovery and service materials used during the visit helpful?
- Were the members and trusted servants who visited your community helpful? Well-informed? Were they good communicators?
- Do you have any other feedback that would help us to improve future visits?

Following are some questions the committee may want to ask itself to evaluate, plan, and improve their fellowship development service efforts. Consider the questions that seem applicable to the goals of the trip.

- What were our desired outcomes for this visit? Were these outcomes achieved? Where didn't we meet our goals for this trip? Why?
- Do we think that a follow-up visit is necessary? What do we believe we can accomplish with a follow-up visit?
- Were the materials we supplied useful? Is there anything else we could bring on future trips to enhance the visit?
- Did we remain within our budget for the trip?
- Were our trusted servants well-prepared? (Some of the areas to consider are expenses, travel arrangements, translations, and workshop planning and scheduling.)
- Did we experience any difficulties due to cultural or legal differences?
- Additional feedback and suggestions?

Letters

Fellowship development includes diverse service tasks such as reaching out to an individual, inviting groups to participate in the service committee, reconnecting with groups that are no longer participating in the service structure, and reaching out to an emerging NA community or service committee. Some of the challenges that you may find in your efforts to connect with members can include language barriers, cultural differences, racial issues, resentments, lack of understanding, and lack of willingness to be engaged. Yet the rewards of fellowship development service may be thought of as spiritual gifts. The isolated or perhaps struggling members connecting with more members in NA may be the spark that keeps their small groups alive and motivated

The committee may find that what works in one part of the world, or with one culture, may not work somewhere else. For these reasons, it is difficult to provide a comprehensive sample of a fellowship development letter that could be used and adapted by your committee for any and all fellowship development efforts. We offer some of the principles of fellowship development—unity, communication, and attraction—that can easily be part of any letter that you compose.

The following sample letter consists of a generic opening and a closing paragraph that you might consider using, along with suggestions for the main body of the letter, which is developed depending on the intended purpose. These are meant as starting points only and may be freely adapted as necessary.

Opening paragraph example

Date

Dear _____:

The _____ committee of Narcotics Anonymous sends our greetings and hope that this letter finds you healthy and enjoying your recovery. In the spirit of unity and our primary purpose, we are reaching out to you so that, together, we can better carry the message of recovery to the still-suffering addict. We want to help you to carry that message, and we hope that you will, in turn, help us in our efforts to fulfill our primary purpose.

Below are examples of what could be included in the body of the letter for identified fellowship development service efforts.

Area service committee to an isolated NA group:

From our area service committee's records of GSR attendance, we realize that it has been *(insert length of time)* since we have had members from the *(insert group's name)* group attend our area service committee meeting. We believe that all NA groups have a valuable contribution to make to our service efforts and hope to rekindle our relationship to better achieve our mutual goals.

We have recently been working on *(insert brief outline of a few current projects—Issue Discussion Topics, learning days for subcommittees, area convention, etc.)* and desire your group's experience and involvement in these service projects. These service efforts are helping us to attract new members and improve our service delivery. We are reaching out to you to see whether you want to join us in our service efforts and whether we can be of service to you in your efforts.

Area/Regional service committee to an emerging NA community:

We have recently become aware of the existence of NA meetings in your local area and are excited to make our initial contact with your NA community. We hope that this is the beginning of a mutually beneficial and supportive relationship.

We are the *(provide name of area/region)* covering *(insert geographical details)* and are made up of *(insert number of groups/areas)*. We have recently worked with members from *(insert brief details)* and found that the experience both excited and engaged our members. We want you to be aware of our committee; we can support each other in our efforts to carry the message of recovery to addicts. Additionally, we would like to learn whether you are providing services, how many meetings you have each week, and the size of your NA community.

Closing

We have enclosed a questionnaire with this letter. Our desire is that you complete the questionnaire and we begin to work together. We look forward to hearing from you and anticipate coming together with you in the near future. In the event that we do not hear from you, we will be contacting you again in approximately six weeks. With our combined service efforts, we certainly could reach more addicts.

In Loving Service,

(provide one contact person)
(address)
(email)

Български Nederlands Slovenèina Bahasa Melayu বাংলা Türkçe Manipuri 中文 Українскій Moldoveneasca English Suomalainen Bosanski Tungumál Português عربي 日本語 עברית Afrikaans Anglicized हिन्दी Lietuviškai Latviete Slovak hrvatski Français Svenska Polski فارسی MAGYAR Tagalog Norsk Русский Brasileiro Deutsch Ελληνικά اردو Español Italiano Swahili Bahasa Indonesia Dansk ภาษาไทย

NA World Services Vision Statement

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

Our vision is that one day:

- Every addict in the world has the chance to experience our message in his or her own language and culture and find the opportunity for a new way of life;
- NA communities worldwide and NA World Services work together in a spirit of unity and cooperation to carry our message of recovery;
- Narcotics Anonymous has universal recognition and respect as a viable program of recovery.

As our commonly held sense of the highest aspirations that set our course, our vision is our touchstone, our reference point, inspiring all that we do. Honesty, trust, and goodwill are the foundation of these ideals. In all our service efforts, we rely upon the guidance of a loving Higher Power.