

Anonymity, yours and mine

This article was written by two members of the World Service Board of Trustees in October 1983. It represents their individual views at the time of writing and was generated in response to a specific need.

We, like many of you in the fellowship, have become increasingly concerned with the Eleventh and Twelfth Tradition violations which have been cropping up with increasing and alarming regularity.

We are a program of attraction, not promotion, and as we have grown more and more public ourselves, attracting more and more public figures, it is critical for their recovery and our own that we honor our traditions concerning anonymity. Unfortunately, public figures sell newspapers, magazines and obtain viewers for television programs. Members of the press can be quite unscrupulous in pursuing information regarding these people. We would caution the fellowship in these dealings with the media, lest violations of the traditions result.

We, the WSB, and our other NA service organizations, have no control over the media. In our dealings with them, we need to be careful of setting ourselves up as an authority regarding the fellowship or acting as a spokesperson for Narcotics Anonymous. A good rule of thumb is "when in doubt, don't say anything."

We need to be aware that each and every member of Narcotics Anonymous deserves recovery without notoriety. We need to continue to reach the addict who still suffers, which requires that we scrupulously maintain our Eleventh and Twelfth Traditions.

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As I see NA six months later

This article was written by Chuck S., a member of the World Service Board of Trustees, in November 1983. It represents his views at the time of writing.

For many years Narcotics Anonymous was served by a few devoted and dedicated persons. We have progressed in growth at a tremendous rate which has been almost overwhelming at times.

Today, we have "trusted servants" on the World Service Board of Trustees and the World Service Office Board of Directors working hard towards the continuing effort of meeting the needs of the fellowship as a whole. The WSO is becoming more efficient and more expedient with regards to handling inquiries, mailing packets, etc.

There is not, and never has been, any "hidden power" in the Fellowship of Narcotics Anonymous. As experience has shown us, those persons who look for anything along these lines fizzle out like a shooting star: a burst of multicolors which then

vanish from the sky. It is the person who continuously carries the message to the addict who still suffers, wherever and whenever, who is the one with any so-called "hidden power."

It is with much gratitude that I have lived long enough to see my dream come true: "That no addict need die who truly wants to recover." This is because the message is now worldwide.

While there is still much to be done, the sense of urgency has finally vanished. I feel and see that you the fellowship will now more logically and reasonably continue to build and support the services necessary, and to increase our efficiency in a more business-like manner, rather than an emotional frenzy which has been prevalent over the past few years.

There is a great need for more literature to inform our fellowship, our H&I groups, new groups in general, public information guidelines, etc., as there always will be in any new growth. Everything is subject to change and there is no decision reached thus far that cannot be changed for the improvement and betterment of the fellowship as a whole.

My heartfelt thanks to those in the past and those in the future who have and will devote their time and energies to the growth of Narcotics Anonymous.

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Questions regarding tradition violations, Part One

This article was written by Sally E., a member of the World Service Board of Trustees, in November 1983. It represents her views at the time of writing.

Questions regarding tradition violations arise most frequently over the use of literature and speakers from other Twelve Step fellowships. A rereading of our Sixth Tradition and the following words of experience may be helpful in resolving these problems before they start.

Tradition Six: "An NA group ought never endorse, finance, or lend the NA name to any related facility or outside enterprise, lest problems of money, property or prestige divert us from our primary purpose."

Narcotics Anonymous, as we know it today, evolved out of a group called AA for addicts, which met in the San Fernando Valley. In 1953, the General Service Office of Alcoholics Anonymous informed this group that they were in violation of the traditions of AA and that AA was for alcoholics. This group formed the first meeting of Narcotics Anonymous and since then we have grown from one small meeting in Southern California to a worldwide fellowship.

We are deeply grateful to AA for granting us permission to adapt their Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions to our program. We have gained much from AA and wish to maintain a spirit of "cooperation, but not affiliation" with AA.

The World Service Board of Trustees of NA has consistently held that, at NA meetings, the use of literature other than NA approved literature constitutes a violation of the traditions. Further, that speakers need to talk about the NA steps, the NA

traditions, and NA recovery. We need to keep in mind the confusion that can result for the newcomer attending an NA meeting, hearing about how to recover in another Twelve Step fellowship. Any member may attend another Twelve Step fellowship as part of his or her personal program, but when speaking in Narcotics Anonymous he or she needs to be able to talk about their NA experience. We are a separate fellowship in our own right. Under the guidance of a Higher Power, we are growing, we are getting better; we have our own literature and our own experience of recovery. We need to have pride in ourselves as such. It is essential that we adhere to our traditions including Tradition Six; our survival is dependent upon our standing on our own and not affiliating with another Twelve Step program.

There is much available in the nature of self-help literature, literature from other Twelve Step programs, and inspirational reading which can be helpful to the individual personally, and can be incorporated into that person's recovery. However, there is a vast difference between reading and benefitting from a variety of sources, and bringing them into an NA meeting for others to read or listen to.

The use of literature other than NA approved literature constitutes a violation of the traditions. Speakers for NA meetings, conventions, functions, etc., need to talk about the NA steps, the NA traditions and NA recovery in order to avoid confusion and not be in violation of our traditions.

If you are concerned about a violation of traditions in your group, area, or region, we suggest that you approach the individual, or individuals involved, with a positive and friendly attitude. Every effort should be made to discuss and resolve possible violations at the time and place they appear to be generated.

In a future article, we will provide guidance on the correct procedure to follow when a suspected violation cannot be avoided or stopped by direct and immediate discussion.

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Tradition Three

This article was written by Dutch H., a member of the World Service Board of Trustees, in early 1984. It represents his views at the time of writing.

Tradition interpretation is probably not something the average member gives much thought to. However, to ensure the continuation and growth of Narcotics Anonymous, effort must be made by groups and individual members to understand and practice the traditions. The NA program is still in maintenance of the traditions to ensure our survival.

Implementation of the traditions affects every individual seeking recovery. It is therefore very important for the newcomer to understand that all one needs is a desire to stop using drugs, as they come to their first meeting. After they have accepted this fact and begin to practice it, they can consider themselves members of Narcotics Anonymous. At their first meetings they will meet people from all walks of life who were as hopelessly addicted to drugs as they were.

Confusion can easily be caused in a newcomer's thinking and understanding of the NA program, if the group is not properly versed in the Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions themselves. The group's responsibility is to provide the necessary atmosphere

for recovery. Stable meetings with a single purpose coupled with an understanding of NA traditions and led by people who are recovering addicts are the best ways to fulfill that responsibility.

Care must be shown so as not to dilute the understanding of the traditions by trying to have NA be all things to all people. We can be grateful to AA as the grandfather of all Twelve Step programs and we can provide guidance to those from other programs such as OA, GA, and others. But NA is not a warehouse for members of other programs. People from these other programs can certainly learn from NA as we learned from AA, but their participation should not include involvement in the decisions made by an NA group, nor should those individuals serve as officers of groups or special service committees.

It must be remembered that Tradition Three speaks of a desire to stop using, which for NA has a parenthetical phrase immediately following which would correctly say, "drugs and narcotics." The phrase should not be interpreted as including other problems such as gambling, overeating, or other such matters.

If NA meetings were diverted from the purpose of carrying the message of recovery from drugs or narcotics, to that of carrying the message of recovery from overeating or other matters, newcomers who were addicts and had a desire to stop using might not feel that NA was for them and might never return. If we follow the traditions carefully, there will always be a place for the still-suffering addict to find a meeting and find recovery.

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Tradition Two

This article was written by Sydney R., a member of the World Service Board of Trustees, in August 1984. It represents her views at the time of writing.

Our Second Tradition tells us that "For our group purpose there is but one ultimate authority—a loving God as He may express Himself in our group conscience. Our leaders are but trusted servants, they do not govern."

This is the only tradition in which a specific reference is made to God, and the key to understanding this tradition is in understanding the relationship of our trusted servants and our group conscience to our ultimate authority.

As addicts, with our natural propensity to fulfill our egos first, to lead rather than to follow, to always have the right answers and the last say, we must constantly work to remember that we are only messengers of God's will as it is expressed in our group conscience; we are not the message. We must constantly search our motives to determine whether what we express is for the good of the fellowship as a whole, and not for the gratification of our individual egos or "special interests" within a group, area, region, or committee. Without that awareness, and the willingness to sublimate our own desires to the expression of our ultimate authority, a loving God, the fellowship splinters and divides against itself.

There's a direct relationship between this concept of a group conscience being the expression of the will of a loving God and how trusted servants perceive and perform their duties. Trusted servants should convey and carry the group conscience and not their own wills. The groups they represent must place their faith in their trusted servants and believe that the people they choose to serve are guided by the principle of this tradition. When trusted servants

fail in their purpose to carry forth the group conscience and try to govern on self-will, the strength of this tradition is weakened.

The principle of this tradition also applies in reverse. When the group fails to support its trusted servants to carry out their duties, Tradition Two is similarly undermined. We easily understand the accountability that trusted servants have to the fellowship; it is equally important to understand the concept of the fellowship's accountability to its trusted servants. A trusted servant must be given the respect and authority to exercise the group will in accordance with his or her understanding of the group conscience.

I would like to share an example to illustrate the difference between "group conscience" and "group will" and how easy it is to confuse and violate this tradition when our ultimate authority is not recognized as an integral part of it.

The activities committee of a certain area raised a great deal of money through one of its functions. With what they believed were good intentions, the members of this committee took a "group conscience" to send a portion of the money raised directly to the WSC, bypassing both the area and region they directly served.

Their rationale was that their region had not donated funds to the WSC with any regularity and in fact had barely been able to maintain a prudent reserve to carry out its own business. The committee, frustrated by this state of affairs, justified its decision by asserting that they were the only body who contributed rather than depleted donations, and that in this way they could make certain "their" donation would be filtered up.

At the next area business meeting, the committee confidently presented its financial report and plans for distribution, certain they would be met with praise. Instead, they were confronted by immediate dissension. The area responded by telling the committee it had not only acted autonomously, but had overstepped its authority, lacking the faith to allow either the area or regional representatives to carry out their responsibilities as trusted servants. The meeting ended in chaos and conflict, with hurt and resentments on both sides.

At the next activities committee meeting, after much discussion between individual members, it was finally agreed to conform to the guidelines of the area and unconditionally turn over all donations in the accepted fund flow manner. Although they didn't realize it at the time, the group opinion of the committee had turned and was surrendered to the ultimate authority, a loving God as He was expressed in a group conscience.

A few months later, that conscience was reflected in the group purpose of the region which, contrary to the committee's fears and far beyond their faith,

made a large contribution to the WSC. Had the committee acted according to its self-righteous opinion and desire to govern rather than to serve, disguised as "group conscience," the donation still would have been sent to the WSC, but the discord and distrust it would have created would not have been worth the contribution. When group conscience was truly expressed, by allowing God to work through the committee, trust and unity were re-established within the area and regional membership.

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Resolving tradition violations, Part Two

This article was written by Sally E., a member of the World Service Board of Trustees, in July 1984. It represents her views at the time of writing.

Most of us would acknowledge that tradition violations occur with regularity throughout our fellowship. Sometimes they result from a lack of understanding of the traditions on the part of the individual or individuals involved. At other times, they are a result of the misguided philosophy of the "end justifies the means." Sometimes they occur out of a misinterpretation of the principles of autonomy and group conscience. Occasionally self-will is the issue, expressed as "we are going to do it my way or no way."

Communications and open discussion of the issues are two important ways to avoid tradition violations. But remembering that NA is a spiritual fellowship based on principles can resolve many difficulties before they become violations.

The trustees receive letters almost every day on one tradition question or another. In this article you will find examples of the most frequently addressed issues, along with some advice on how such matters should be handled.

One letter we received concerned a meeting held in a recovery house and primarily attended by NA members who were once residents of that recovery house, as well as individuals currently residing in the house. The former residents were grateful for having been introduced to NA by that recovery house and for the caring and sharing they experienced while there. The recovery house regularly held fund-raising functions for their facility and these were announced at the NA meetings as a matter of course. In-house residents, as well as new members coming to the meeting, had difficulty distinguishing between what were NA announcements and what were the recovery

house announcements. When someone informed the meeting that when these announcements were made at a meeting it constituted a violation of Tradition Six, the response was immediate anger that someone would attempt to interfere with their autonomy. Many felt that the member was nitpicking and should work their own program instead of judging and finding fault with them.

In another area, several members began attending prayer and meditation groups held at a local church. These members gained much from this and began to tell other NA members about it. Soon many NA members in the area were involved in the prayer and meditation groups. Some members then began distributing flyers at NA meetings about the prayer and meditation meetings and workshops. New members sometimes wondered if NA itself was a prayer and meditation group. When informed that this was a violation of the Twelve Traditions, the response was that they were merely practicing the Eleventh Step and encouraging others to do so. They stated that the members in their area wanted these flyers and they would continue to provide them.

In another letter the trustees learned of celebrations of a birthday that were announced in NA meetings, even though the person celebrating his birthday was going to do so at a meeting of another Twelve Step fellowship. When informed that this constituted a violation of Tradition Six, the member in question stated that it was his birthday and he could celebrate it wherever he wanted to.

In another situation, a large speaker meeting in a rapidly growing area almost always had a speaker from another Twelve Step fellowship. The secretary indicated this was imperative as the area contained mostly newcomers who needed to learn how to work the Twelve Steps and practice the principles of the program. He, therefore, felt it imperative to choose those individuals who had time and experience in working the steps. The fact that these individuals were not NA members was not important he said; other Twelve Step fellowships have the same steps and traditions and the steps and traditions are what is important. He felt that maybe later, when more NA members had more time, they could start using them as speakers, but not right now.

These are very common violations of the Twelve Traditions. Many of us, when we first came to Narcotics Anonymous, wanted a "do it my way program." We agreed with some of the steps and thought they were useful, others we thought were the pits. Many of us decided that we would apply and use some of the program and disregard the parts we felt were really hard or conflicted with our "comfortable" recovery. Through experiences of many years, sometimes through painful relapses, it has been found that having a "my way" program does not work. As individuals we had to learn to follow directions in working the steps. The same is true of the traditions.

The traditions exist in order to keep the fellowship true to the purpose of recovery and so that the philosophy of NA will not change. Adherence to them ensures the growth and continuation of our fellowship. We must apply them to the problems our fellowship encounters as they are written, rather than how we think they ought to read. If we do, we are able to assist others to recover in NA, and our fellowship grows in an atmosphere of love and acceptance. When the Twelve Traditions are not followed, as they are written, our experience has been disunity, chaos, and controversy. In that atmosphere, the recovery of newcomers and older members is imperiled.

The handling of a tradition violation is often a very sensitive matter and requires a great deal of tact and diplomacy; skills a recovering addict is often short of. Most of us have been wrong so often in our lives that it feels good to be right for a change. The tendency is to rush into the discussion, hurl an accusation or two, point a finger, say "you're violating our traditions" and demand change. This type of attitude is self-defeating. We need to be protective of our traditions, but we need to balance that with tact and diplomacy. Actually the growth and development of tact and diplomacy are manifestations of having worked the steps.

A key point we need to keep in mind as we resolve a violation of traditions is that no one in recovery sets out to intentionally harm the fellowship. We want to see our fellowship grow. We do not consciously choose disunity in our recovery any more than we consciously chose to live miserably during our active addiction. Once we realize this, we can approach the

individual or individuals involved from a humanitarian perspective in a spirit of helpfulness and cooperation. We should not make the situation a confrontation from the "I'm right and you're wrong" point of view. Many of us have learned that being right does not always equate with being happy or solving a problem.

The first step would be to approach the individual on a one-to-one basis. Take time to think of alternative solutions that are within the traditions before approaching the individual. For example, in the case of the secretary who is using speakers from other Twelve Step fellowships, explain how this violates Tradition Six. Acknowledge that it is difficult to find NA members with long clean time who live out of the area but are willing to travel to share at that meeting.

In the case of the recovery house, suggest that the house place a bulletin board outside the meeting room and post announcements of its fund-raising activities there.

Suggest to the members of the prayer and meditation group that they use word of mouth on a one-to-one basis to share with other members about the prayer and meditation group. Or use a bulletin board outside the meeting room.

Suggest and encourage the NA member celebrating his birthday in another Twelve Step fellowship to celebrate it in NA too. Tell him how much you would like that, and how helpful it is for newcomers to see someone commemorate recovery birthdays in NA. It gives the newcomer to our program hope and inspiration. If he wants to celebrate his birthday in another program also, that celebration should be discussed only in that program. NA and other Twelve Step fellowships are separate and activities or meeting events in one should not become part of the other.

One way to help with these matters and keep within our traditions is to provide the individuals with copies of articles written on the traditions. These articles appear in each issue of the *Newsline* and previously published articles are available from the World Service Office upon request. Allow the individual time to think about it and talk to other members before broaching the subject again. Always treat the individual with respect and dignity.

If there is no positive response even after exercising all of the tact, diplomacy and helpful suggestions you have been able to muster up, the next step should be taken at the next business meeting of the group. Present the situation, along with the alternatives, and ask that the meeting adhere to the traditions. At each point in the dialogue request or suggest change; don't demand. If the meeting continues to violate the traditions, take the matter to the area service committee.

A letter written to the ASC should be prepared. It should provide accurate, unbiased facts along with alternative solutions. Request that the area write to the meeting, asking them to adhere to the traditions. If the problem is not solved in this way, the matter should be presented to the regional service committee. If the situation goes beyond the meeting level, controversy, disunity and chaos are sure to result.

Education is most helpful in promoting an understanding of the Twelve Traditions. Tradition workshops and "Learning Days" sponsored by an area or region go a long way towards developing unity and understanding of our traditions, thus preventing or cutting down on violations. A couple of examples of how tradition violations have been handled within one area and region are included here also. The first was initially handled ineptly and the second very appropriately.

The region is a very large one and contains a lot of members with long term clean time. Several years ago, a well established area in the region, which also happened to be the most active, had a step study meeting which was using literature other than NA approved literature. The meeting had been doing this for some time when other members began to protest. Personalities got involved, accusations flew, lines were drawn and people were firmly planted on one side or the other. The meeting refused to relinquish this practice and in an area business meeting the area service committee voted to let the meeting continue this practice. At that point the region demanded the meeting comply with traditions and refused to recognize the area ASR at meetings of the region. The region also passed a motion to take the meeting out of the regional directory at the next printing. The area again debated the issue and decided to withdraw from the region and began to

make plans to print their own directories. The regional and area committees were so engrossed in the controversy that little thought seemed to be centered on the still-suffering addict.

It was decided by the region to take the matter to the board of trustees. The board of trustees made the determination that only NA approved literature could be read in meetings. However, if members of that meeting on a "word of mouth" basis wanted to meet informally before the meeting to read whatever they wanted to, that would certainly not constitute a violation of the traditions. Some members began to meet a half hour before the meeting to read other literature, and at the official meeting only NA approved literature was read. After a time the practice of reading the other material before meetings ceased voluntarily.

Another meeting in a well established area was the largest meeting in the region, drawing several hundred people each week. It was a half speaker and half participation meeting, and had the reputation of having very good NA speakers. Having all these people at one place at one time, it seemed to some entrepreneurs a golden opportunity. Some individuals began to sell things to members after the meeting. Soon they were making announcements towards the end of the meeting and setting up tables with gold jewelry, Hawaiian print shirts and a whole lot of other things for sale. Some members watched in horror as their favorite meeting turned into a flea market. An approach to the individuals involved brought no response. At the next business meeting, the issue was brought up and the group conscience chose adherence to the traditions. Group conscience was that the NA meeting rented the hall for a meeting and not to provide individuals with a place to peddle their goods. If members wanted to sell things they could do so outside the meeting hall, but no announcements would be made and no tables provided.

If we can just keep in mind that the Twelve Traditions are not a matter of having it your way or having it may way; it's having it our way through adherence to our Twelve Traditions. Our program works.

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Tradition Two

This article was written by Sally E., a member of the World Service Board of Trustees, in November 1984. It represents her views at the time of writing.

Two of the most perplexing controversies experienced throughout the fellowship are finding workable and comfortable interpretations of when a group conscience is appropriate and how much latitude a trusted servant should be allowed to exercise.

This article will hopefully provide some insight on these issues. Experience gained over the years can best be conveyed by using real examples and discussing the reasoning behind each action. The approach will be used to discuss the issues we are concerned about. Actions taken at the World Service Conference provide the basis for many of the controversies concerning group conscience and action by trusted servants.

Each year, for instance, the WSC Policy Committee has proposed revisions to the service structure. Nearly every page of these proposals is the subject of different regional group conscience votes which are frequently conflicting with one another. One region may send its RSR with instructions to amend a paragraph in a certain way, and another RSR arrives with different instructions for the same paragraph. Near unanimous endorsement may be found among the conference participants for one or the other, and these are easily adopted. However, it obviously changes the document that all of the other regions considered and gave a group conscience on. If the fellowship group conscience concept is carried to its fullest extent, as many demand, then the revised language should be sent back to the full fellowship and final approval made in another year. However, at the next conference, a new paragraph could certainly

be changed and the process repeated year after year.

Sometimes this is done, but more frequently the conference participants adopt the item without sending it out to the full fellowship again. Usually the majority of the conference participants leave feeling they have properly exercised their responsibilities as trusted servants on such issues. Many times this has been accepted by the fellowship without comment.

For example, a proposal was made by one region at the conference in 1982 that a fellowship magazine be created by the conference. This proposal had not been sent to the fellowship for consideration. The conference approved it, appointed a committee, and within a few months they began selling subscriptions and publishing issues. It was not until two years after the original action by the conference that the fellowship was afforded the opportunity to consider the issue, and then only on the matter of conflicting operational policies proposed by different service committees. One of the proposals was adopted, but it was amended prior to its adoption. Here again is the question of whether or not the Conference-adopted version, as amended, should then have been sent out to the fellowship for a vote at the conference the following year.

There was opposition to the original proposal; in fact, it was nearly defeated. But even many of those in opposition to the original approval felt that approval of the magazine would represent a proper exercise of the authorities of trusted servants at the world level. In the action to amend and then adopt the amended policy two years later it was also the consensus of the conference participants that such action was within the scope of their responsibilities and authorities.

The world level trusted servants (WSC, WSB and WSO) have not received any written complaints concerning these major decisions on the magazine.

In a matter affecting the voting right of the WSO office manager as a conference participant (the manager had been a voting participant of the conference since 1979), it was proposed at the 1984 World Service Conference to remove the manager's vote and transfer it to the president of the World Service Board of Directors of the WSO. No advance

notice was given to the fellowship that this issue would be presented. It was adopted by a unanimous vote of all conference participants and again the world level trusted servants (WSC, WSB and WSO) have not received a written complaint.

On the most persistently discussed issue at the conference, the voting rights of non-RSRs, it has been sent to the fellowship in advance of the conference in two separate years. Additionally, the matter was raised at two other conference meetings without advance notice. In all four instances, the vote of the conference was to keep all voting participants as they are currently detailed in the service structure.

Following each of the four conferences that this issue was voted on, the World Service Board of Trustees received letters from a few individuals, a few area committees and one or two regions declaring either that the action was a violation of traditions or that all of the acts of the conference are void because more than just the RSRs voted.

The World Service Conference Administrative Committee in recent years has properly compiled with the requirements to send to the fellowship all of the material proposed by the committees for adoption at the conference. However, as these items are reviewed around the fellowship, some regions approve instructions that their RSR is expected to carry to the conference for a vote that did not go out for a fellowship-wide group conscience. There seems to be four ways that the fellowship is currently handling this circumstance:

1. The RSR attends the conference with instructions to vote as they have been instructed, based on the group conscience of the region, and only on those things that have gone out to their members for review and for which a group conscience has been taken.
2. The RSR attends the conference with instructions to vote as they have been instructed, based on group conscience of the region for those items that they were given advance notice of and they are authorized to use their best judgment on other issues that may arise for which the region could not have obtained a group conscience.
3. Other regions look at the enormous amount of material sent out for their consideration and decide that spending time discussing and then voting on every item by each group is not only a waste of time, but this is what the RSR was elected as a trusted servant to handle.
4. An interesting variation of the first two options arise when the region instructs the RSR to introduce a certain item originated within their region for the conference to adopt.

Different RSRs have responded to these situations with varying degrees of consternation. At one conference, an RSR who had been specifically instructed insisted on taking the time of the conference to voice his objection to issues his region had not been advised of and insisted his vote be recorded as abstaining. Others with greater latitude were able to act on the variety of items as they were proposed or amended. The RSR with strict instructions was, in reality, unable to fully represent the membership that sent him because of the instructions limiting his participation. It has frequently been observed that regions using this approach could save the money of sending the RSR and simply send in their votes by mail.

The conflict between action by trusted servants and group conscience desires, is not limited to actions when the conference is meeting each year.

Last year, for example, the WSC received a directive from one region regarding how the WSC should utilize the paper for the reports being distributed. The region had elected to inform the WSC that the group conscience of the region felt that the WSC should comply with their instructions. However, the officers of the conference, while exercising their duties as trusted servants, should have been relied upon to use their prudent judgment in this matter. Further, if the WSC trusted servants had blatantly disregarded common sense on this matter, the RSR of the region should simply have, on his own, sent a letter bringing the matter to the attention of the conference officers. The region should not have been bothered with such a trivial matter on which to develop a regional group conscience.

Another example of this conflict will be helpful in understanding how confusing the issue can get. One regional service committee, acting within what they

thought was their authority as trusted servants, decided the region needed an office to serve the needs of their growing membership. A subcommittee was selected and after some consideration they rented a place and began operation of that office. There were some loud and angry opinions voiced that the committee did not have authority to open the office and had violated traditions by not asking permission from the fellowship. In subsequent weeks, the desired regional group conscience was obtained supporting the decision. Some months later financial difficulties arose and the rent payments could not be met. The regional service committee met and concluded that they had been wrong for not having asked the fellowship if they could open an office and reasoned that the fellowship should be polled to get authority to close the office. This was eventually done, but not before additional months of rent had been accrued.

On an issue that is currently evolving, errors in grammar, use of tense, a suspected tradition violation and offensive language was discovered in three stories while proofreading was being done for publication of the Third Edition of the Basic Text. The WSC Literature Committee requested a determination and recommendation from the board of trustees on each problem. The board by unanimous vote recommended the WSC Literature Committee make the appropriate grammar and punctuation changes and that the suspected tradition violation was not in fact a violation. The phrase "I urinated on Stalin's tomb" in the opinion of the WSB, was offensive and it was our recommendation that the phrase be removed. The phrase is a slang expression and is commonly used in the country the story originated in to denote contempt for everyone and everything. Its removal did not alter the meaning or message of the sentence of which it was part.

Many in the fellowship will see this recommendation as the board of trustees simply performing their duties as trusted servants; others may see this as a violation of group conscience. At all levels of service, trusted servants have the same concerns with decisions they make because sometimes controversy erupts and calls go out for a group conscience. In other areas of the fellowship, the membership often does not want to be involved

and feel the trusted servants should in fact make many of these decisions and not bother them with every little thing that comes up. A commonly expressed feeling of those in service is simply, "damned if I do and damned if I don't."

The *Temporary Working Guide to Our Service Structure* allows for all the approaches we use. However, as long as one approach is held as superior and all others are held as violating the traditions, the situation becomes one of right and wrong, inferior and superior. "My way, my group's way, or my region's way is the only way and everyone else is in violation of Tradition Two" is divisive and an incorrect approach to a loving fellowship.

There are times when individuals or groups of individuals on the using side of the vote of an issue strive to keep the issue on the front burner in the fellowship by claiming violation of group conscience. The WSB, WSC and WSO each year receive a few letters accusing one, two or all three branches of world level service of violating Tradition Two, on one issue or another. This occurs, despite the fact that no group conscience was taken on the issues of their concern, and the person writing the letter is assuming what the group conscience of the fellowship would be, if in fact it were taken.

A reasonable solution to the controversy revolving around Tradition Two lies in understanding and applying all the traditions and guidance from our service structure. All levels of service need to operate within guidelines approved by their membership. It is neither feasible nor desirable that every decision made by trusted servants or committees be referred for group conscience, at the area, region or world level. If that was the desired course of action, groups would be spending all of their time making decisions, and there would be little need for trusted servants and little time to work on recovery or carrying the message of recovery to others.

As addicts, most of us enter the program of Narcotics Anonymous with distrust and paranoia. As we progress in our recovery we should begin to develop trust in each other and ourselves and less and less feel that the world is out to get us. Some of

that distrust and paranoia is evident when we find ourselves insisting that Tradition Two demands that everyone participate in every single decision made by every committee from all levels of service. If we still have the viewpoint that we must tell WSC how to use paper, or we must be there to approve or disapprove the removal of inconsequential but offensive slang from a story, or that an office should not be closed until a group conscience is obtained even though it is losing money, then we have not progressed in our recovery over the paranoia and distrust we came in with.

If we have the attitude that NA will go down the tubes if the entire fellowship is not involved in one decision or another or if wrong decisions will be made unless we are involved in it, we are missing some important elements of our recovery. This attitude also reflects a lack of faith and confidence in our acceptance of a Higher Power. Narcotics Anonymous exists as much, if not more, because of a Higher Power, higher than the collective efforts of all the most enlightened trusted servants combined. We are going to make mistakes, of that there is no doubt. But as long as we are willing to make mistakes, be forgiven for them, and do so with a loving heart, our fellowship will survive a lot of mistakes by trusted

servants. Of course, there will arise some situations when a trusted servant is not being responsible to the members who selected them. If this situation does occur, then those members can direct the trusted servant to change whatever was done and if that fails, they have the final option of removing that person. There should be no service board or committee that does not have provisions for removal of a trusted servant who is not responsible to the fellowship. However, removal must be sparingly used and only as a last resort.

We must, as members of the fellowship, always communicate with our trusted servants, asking them for reports and information and sharing our opinions but we should give them trust and support to do their jobs. We need not constantly peer over their shoulders on every issue or they will not serve us well. If our paranoia and distrust overtakes our judgment, we frequently find ourselves concluding that mistakes will be made which we could prevent. But without the experience that trusted servants gain from doing their work, they will not grow in recovery and our fellowship will be hurt and so will the addict who is still out on the streets using.

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Nonaddict trustees

This article was written by Mike B., a member of the World Service Board of Trustees, in January 1985. It represents his views at the time of writing.

The service structure of Narcotics Anonymous allows for one-third of the members of the World Service Board of Trustees to be nonaddicts.

Nonaddicts are chosen as trustees because of special expertise they may provide the fellowship. Experts in the fields of law, journalism, medicine, business administration, religion, prison administration, counselling, broadcasting, writing, nursing, the judiciary, and other professions who are also knowledgeable and appreciative of the Twelve Step spiritual recovery program of Narcotics Anonymous are potential nonaddict trustees. Those of you who have participated in the growth of Narcotics Anonymous which occurs annually at the World Service Conference would agree with the need for additional expert assistance in some of the problem areas we have encountered, such as tax law, administrative procedures, and parliamentary procedures. Committees would benefit from medical opinion, journalistic experience, prison experts, and so on. Some of this expertise is available within the fellowship, but more is needed. Nonaddict trustees are not chosen as spokespersons for Narcotics Anonymous, nor are they trailblazers for NA. They must work within the Twelve Traditions, even though they are nonaddicts. They provide advice and their counsel can be solicited by anyone in the fellowship. They can recognize needs within the fellowship and bring their ideas to open forum discussion at the trustees' meetings and at the World Service Conference. They can strengthen NA and support its growth without starting meetings themselves, but indirectly by mentioning Narcotics Anonymous in press releases, at medical meetings, or in medical, nursing, and legal journals and symposiums. This

work can be done in conjunction with Narcotics Anonymous by participating in the workings of the World Service Conference, at various workshops, and on committees.

When they meet with other professionals and share their conviction that addiction need not be fatal and that Narcotics Anonymous offers a proven recovery program for addicts, they provide information which may not be known to these professionals. This is "carrying the message" and is done within the spirit of the Eleventh Tradition, which speaks of growth through attraction rather than promotion.

The positions of nonaddict trustees are not honorary positions. There is a lot of homework and a lot of travel and real dedication is required.

How can nonaddicts become trustees? Their names must be placed in nomination at the World Service Conference by a member of the conference, such as the RSRs, the trustees, or other voting participants. The candidates must be present to speak to the conference of their qualifications and to accept the position if elected. If you know a nonaddict who has special gifts or expertise to offer the fellowship, present his or her credentials to your local GSR or ASR so that your RSR can nominate that individual at the World Service Conference. It is essential that they be interested, and they must be willing to attend the World Service Conference at their own expense. If nominated and elected, airfare home will be reimbursed if funds are available. Trustees should attend four regular meetings of the World Service Board of Trustees per year. One is held at the time of the World Service Conference, which is held annually in late April; one is traditionally held at the World Convention over Labor Day weekend at various locations [this meeting is no longer at the convention], and two others which are held in November and February at the World Service Office in Van Nuys, California. Reimbursement for travel to these meetings will be provided if funds are available.

Currently, I am one of two nonaddict members of the World Service Board of Trustees. I am a physician, but that doesn't mean we cannot have other physicians. Generally, however, it would be good to have some balance of representation from other professions.

Please don't think that nonaddicts have a natural handle on honesty or are free of anger, guilt, and resentment. Association with addicts does not come by natural inclination. Predictable unconscious factors are usually involved. There is a greater chance than not that the nonaddict trustee or nonaddict trustee-elect is a co-addict (parent, child, spouse or close friend of an addict), thus affected with some emotional and spiritual deficits characteristic of the disease of co-addiction. Unless co-addiction is recognized and dealt with in a recovery program such as NarAnon, the co-addict trustee can do serious damage to himself or herself, to individual members of the NA Fellowship, or to the fellowship as a whole. Narcotics Anonymous does not need "enablers," persons serving with all sincerity but actually serving sick needs which have been unrecognized. These remarks should not be taken to mean that NarAnon is a prerequisite or mandatory for nonaddict trustees, but objectivity is enhanced by NarAnon attendance for the nonaddicts working with Narcotics Anonymous. Speaking for myself, I was late (considering the number of years I spent treating

addicts) in recognizing the impact of co-addiction in my life. I had long been addicted to addicts, but I did not know why. The NarAnon recovery program helped me to "see." Some new awareness comes to me regularly by working the NarAnon program, just as it does for addicts in working the recovery program of Narcotics Anonymous.

When I awoke to realize how deeply I was involved in helping addicts—me, a co-addict—my first inclination was to stop because I might be more dangerous than helpful. Further reflection suggested to me that I should stick around, because what better way to force a recovery program for me and a greater in-depth understanding of the relationship between co-addiction and addiction? If co-addiction places us in the role of the helper, then let us learn to help in a loving and spiritual way. Jimmy K., one of NA's first recovering addicts, pencilled in the cover of my Basic Text, "recovery is not only the area of the addict—we all need to strip away the illusions from the past."

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Tradition Six—an opinion

This article was written by John F., a member of the World Service Board of Trustees, in January 1985. It represents his views at the time of writing.

As Narcotics Anonymous continues its maturing process, the Twelve Traditions assume larger and larger dimensions in the life of our fellowship. They become important for the individual member, the autonomous group, the entire service structure. As we vigilantly continue to pursue our primary purpose—to carry the message to the addict who still suffers—we must seek to understand the spiritual guidelines that bind us together.

An understanding of the traditions of Narcotics Anonymous is a requirement for genuine service to our fellowship. The traditions are the point from which our success has sprung, in bringing our program of recovery to tens of thousands of addicts. The traditions cannot be taken lightly. They are not merely "suggested" nor are they so hopelessly complex as to be unworkable. Our Basic Text reminds us: "The Twelve Traditions of Narcotics Anonymous are not negotiable."

And while it is impossible to say if one tradition is any more important than another (as it is similarly impossible to single out any one step as the most important to recovery), the tradition chosen as the basis of this discussion is one whose significance looms large on the NA horizon—Tradition Six. I believe that the obligations that Tradition Six place on all NA members, groups, trusted servants, and service units are imperative to the continued well-being of Narcotics Anonymous.

What is Tradition Six? To begin with, it's the one which says, "An NA group ought never endorse, finance, or lend the NA name to any related facility or outside enterprise, lest problems of money, property, or prestige divert us from our primary purpose."

Tradition Six comes immediately after Tradition Five, which states, "Each group has but one primary purpose, to carry the message to the addict who still suffers."

The purpose of Tradition Six then would seem to be to enumerate the things that must be done to ensure the furtherance of NA's primary purpose. It lists what we must do to preserve and protect the NA program of recovery.

There would be no Narcotics Anonymous if Tradition Six were a source of casual or continual violation. If there were no Tradition Six, NA might be destroyed from within, or it might be destroyed from without, but it would most surely be destroyed.

What, therefore, does Tradition Six mean? Tradition Six says first of all that we must never endorse or finance nor lend the NA name to a related facility or outside enterprise. By "endorsement" is meant to be an official expression of approval. By "finance" is meant to give money in the name of NA. "To lend" means just that—to allow another group, organization, or entity to use the NA name for its own purposes, however praiseworthy and however close to our own aims. The terms "money, property, and prestige" speak for themselves and warn us of the different ways we can be sidetracked from our primary purpose.

Possible violations of this tradition are being constantly brought to the attention of the board of trustees. Questions are always being asked. It is clear to many NA members that to preserve the integrity of our program, Tradition Six must be rigorously adhered to.

Just in the past three months I have been asked to answer questions such as the following: "Can EST literature be read at NA meetings?" "Can the rehabilitation center my group meets at tell people it is an NA-approved facility?" "Can we make announcements at meetings about Hare Krishna?" "About OA?" "About the halfway house a lot of our members live at?" "About the AA young peoples' dance?"

AA as in *Alcoholics Anonymous*? Yes, AA—there, I've let the cat out of the bag.

Alcoholics Anonymous—the issue that causes more emotion and more confusion among NA members than any other. I believe the time has come for NA to discuss and resolve the issue of its relation to the AA Fellowship. I believe that this discussion and resolution should occur within the context of our Tradition Six.

For many, the answer to this issue is very simple; unfortunately, a lot of NA members do not agree on just what the simple answer is. To clarify a discussion of the situation, I would like to create two hypothetical NA members—each representing the two most prevalent positions on the issue.

Member #1 believes that the AA issue doesn't even need to be discussed. For him, AA is an outside organization to which he doesn't belong. This member hates the mere mention of AA at Narcotics Anonymous meetings and feels people who are so attached to AA should stay there, since they obviously have no respect for the NA traditions.

Member #2 went to AA before there was NA in his area. He sees the AA program as being the parent of NA and entitled to a status in the NA program that no other organization has. Since everybody he knows goes to both NA and AA, he doesn't understand how talking about AA at NA meetings could possibly be a violation of Tradition Six. He ridicules Member #1 for being an "NA purist."

While perhaps lacking somewhat in tact and sensitivity, Member #1 is, of course, essentially correct in his interpretation of the traditions. While Member #2 has a point of view which comes from his love of the AA program of recovery, it is essentially in violation of the NA traditions and therefore an error which really can't be negotiated.

Accordingly, this article is not directed at Member #1. It's offered to Member #2 as an honest attempt to explain the rationale and importance of Tradition Six. It is also offered to every NA member who has been puzzled, angered, or confused by the AA issue.

As a beginning to this discussion, I would like to acknowledge as a historical fact that Narcotics Anonymous is deeply indebted to Alcoholics Anonymous. NA was founded in July 1953, by addicts who had learned the tools of their recovery from addiction in the AA program. NA freely admits

its debt in its literature. It says in our White Book that "in NA we follow a program adapted from Alcoholics Anonymous. We are deeply grateful to the AA Fellowship for pointing the way for us to a new way of life."

But, from the origin of our fellowship, NA members have always known that it was something different to be in NA than to be an AA member—even if (as many people apparently do) a person belongs to both fellowships.

When I was preparing this article, I began to wonder if there was perhaps some new way I could approach a discussion of Tradition Six in order to more clearly and lovingly explain its spirit and importance. I realize that it's a difficult thing to ask some NA members to leave their membership in the much-loved AA program outside the NA meeting door. But I knew that I had to find a way of making them realize just how important this was to NA unity.

But not only did I want to convince these members who couldn't distinguish between the NA and AA programs; I also wanted to impart some of the frustration many NA members feel. After all our efforts to explain Tradition Six, we go to our home group and still hear people identifying themselves as "cross addicted alcoholics" while expressing their gratitude to the AA (but not the NA) program for their "sobriety" (not recovery). Then during the meeting break the latest AA dance is announced. I felt that they needed to know how much we love NA and how Tradition Six violations tear us up.

So, what could I say differently this time? I had an inspiration and found an answer—an answer at least to the issue of a new perspective. The answer has to do with history.

I wonder how many realize that both NA and AA have complex roots and that both of these fellowships grew and changed to their present shapes? That AA, for instance, didn't just happen, and like NA has its origins in another, "parent" organization? And that the genius of the AA founders lay in their ability to synthesize material already there.

I bet that not too many people know the details behind some of the above statements. Most people (even AA members) seem to believe that Bill Wilson and Dr. Bob Smith—the founders of Alcoholics

Anonymous—were inspired by absolutely new ideas which had no relation with anything that had ever happened before.

This belief, however, is not true and if they were still alive would be contradicted by Bill and Bob themselves. In his book, *AA Comes of Age*, Bill Wilson explained where some of the ideas came from. He discussed, for instance, the medical theories of William D. Silkworth and the pragmatic philosophy of William James as providing a context for the AA program.

Wilson also extensively discusses the relation of the early AA groups to a Protestant evangelical religious movement called the Oxford Group—with its precepts of confidence, confession, conversion, and continuance—so crucial that for the first two years of AA existence (1935-1937), in order to join AA a person had to join the Oxford Group.

Bill Wilson makes no bones about AA's debt to the Moral Rearmament movement and to other sources. He acknowledges, for instance, that when he wrote the Twelve Steps that "most of the basic ideas had come from the Oxford Group, William James, and Dr. Silkworth."

In 1955, at its General Convention, AA received a special visitor. They were addressed by an Oxford Group clergyman, a nonalcoholic named Samuel Shoemaker, who was instrumental in starting many early AA groups. Bill Wilson expresses his gratitude for Sam Shoemaker in the following passage from *AA Comes of Age*:

"It was from Sam Shoemaker that Dr. Bob and I, in the beginning, had absorbed most of the principles that were afterward embodied in the Twelve Steps of Alcoholics Anonymous. AA got its ideas of self-examination, acknowledgement of character defects, restitution for harm done, and working with others straight from the Oxford Groups and directly from Sam Shoemaker, their former leader in America, and from nowhere else. He will always be found in our annals as the one whose inspired example and teaching did most to show us how to create the spiritual climate in which we alcoholics may survive and then proceed to grow. AA owes a debt to friends in the days of AA's infancy."

In 1937 a remarkable event occurred. Despite the great love and dependence early AA had for the Oxford Group, the two split. As Bill Wilson later wrote, "we most reluctantly parted company with these great friends."

What happened? The answer is plain: AA recognized that in order to survive as a fellowship it had to assert its independence, it had to concentrate on its primary purpose, it had to be affiliated with no other group, it could neither endorse nor lend its name to anything or anyone—not even its beloved parents. In other words, Alcoholics Anonymous decided to follow the traditions.

My purpose in telling you this is not to diminish the respect that we all have for AA, but to ask you to see the parallels in the situation: Here were two groups working closely together, possessing similar methods and aims, having members belonging to both, with one group functioning as the "parent" of the other, and with many members sentimentally attached to the original group although the benefits derived from the "child" group were their true reason for joining.

The point, I hope is clear: Some NA members who also belong to and love AA are probably in the same position as some early AA members who belonged to and loved the Oxford Group. Where does one group end and the other begin?

The experience of AA and the Oxford Group speaks directly to the issue. The answer for AA was found in the development of the spirit of Tradition Six. With that principle in mind, the early AA members could continue to belong to the Oxford Group if they wished (and many did), but they had to realize that their Oxford Group membership was separate from their AA membership and the Oxford Group had to stay outside the AA meeting door.

NA sees both the wisdom and the irony of being guided by AA's experience with the Oxford Group. We believe in this principle so much that we are willing (as AA was willing) to apply it to our parent organization. Narcotics Anonymous cannot endorse, lend, nor join its name to Alcoholics Anonymous. AA should be mentioned at NA meetings as frequently as the Oxford Group is mentioned at AA meetings.

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Tradition Seven

This article was written by Bob B., a member of the World Service Board of Trustees, in May 1985. It represents his views at the time of writing.

"Every NA group ought to be fully self-supporting, declining outside contributions." Not only is there an obligation but a duty of every recovering addict to support both through effort and monies the things that will help NA grow.

It is sad that in our efforts to recover we take great reversals of attitudes and actions, from high-rolling, grandiose, free-spending people to tight, selfish individuals with great rationalization and justification for our actions.

With this pious and noble attitude, we point at others or say "let George do it, he is more qualified and has more money."

We forget that every one of us had to support our own habits by whatever means we could find. If we could give just a small percentage of the monies or efforts we spent for drugs, how well we would be able to carry the message of recovery to those many unfortunate addicts who have not yet found NA.

Just think for a moment how much could be accomplished if every addict in NA would pledge one cent a day to one service arm of NA. Greater numbers of people would hear the message of NA and be given a chance of recovery.

It seems that in our recovery, memory returns very slowly. We forget where we came from, the way it was, and how we obtained the message of recovery. It was freely given, but there was work and money involved that came from somewhere.

There is work being performed by people who feel that sense of responsibility to their fellows. Phone calls cost money, the printed material that is given away for free costs money, the rent must be paid at a central location so we may be located by those seeking recovery. When the phone rings we want someone to be at the other end; they must be paid. The postage for the letters you write and responses to those letters also cost money.

Remember the work you don't see being done is usually being accomplished by a mere few who ask very little in return. Those few cannot do it alone, without the help of all members in the fellowship in some small part, contributing towards their recovery and the recovery of those to come.

The survival of NA depends on us all. That little something we don't give might be the difference between one addict dying or surviving. That addict could be you.

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Tradition Seven—another look

This article was written by Tom M., a member of the World Service Board of Trustees, in November 1985. It represents his views at the time of writing.

This is a program of attraction rather than promotion. One of my first attractions to this program was when I heard "you are a member when you say you are," and that it didn't cost anything to join.

When they passed around the basket I was skeptical; then someone reassured me that I didn't have to put anything in, and if I needed some, I could even take some out. Well, I never did take any out but it was a long time before I ever put anything in.

When I realized that we were self-supporting from our own contributions, that we paid for our coffee and paid rent for the meeting room, I figured it would only be fair to pitch in. So I'd throw a quarter in the basket, figuring that would cover my share. Oftentimes, I would contribute nothing. I didn't have much money, and I wasn't going to give what I had.

I knew someone had to be covering the main bill at the WSO, the phone, literature and the WSC. It just somehow didn't feel like it should be my responsibility.

As I grew and became more involved in the program, and as I started to make more money, I worked my way up to putting in a dollar when I felt I could afford it. Eventually, after I had been clean a long time, I made a commitment to put in a dollar whether I felt I could afford it or not.

In my region when we first decided to open up a phone line and hire a 24-hour answering service, a bunch of us members made a commitment to see that the phonelines stayed open. We were willing to put up the money each month if the rest of the fellowship didn't contribute enough. It was the first

major thing we had done as a region. For years before that, certain members had been the main NA contacts. For some reason, we never did have to come up with the money, and the bill got paid every month through our contributions.

We did pretty much the same thing with our central office. Quite a few of our members put up pledges that could be called upon if there was not enough money coming in from the basket. But the money came in and the pledges were not needed.

We, like so many other regions, were experiencing such tremendous growth that we barely had the resources within our fellowship to keep up with its demands. We had to look at what our expenses were, and how much money was actually being donated by the groups. It was plain that the groups weren't donating enough money for us to be self-supporting. Our expenses for literature were skyrocketing. Our hospital and institution committee had become active as never before, and its need for literature was never ending, yet its primary purpose to carry the message to the addict who is locked up couldn't be ignored. Our public information committee was also getting more and more requests from the public, and that meant more money.

At the world level, it's astronomical. They literally cannot keep up with the demand. This year alone [1985] the World Service Conference passed a budget of over \$150,000—up from \$60,000 last year [1984].

What I am trying to get at is that it seems as though it is through our fund-raisers that we meet our financial needs. Time and time again at our local ASC meetings we see that it's been the fund-raisers that have pulled us through.

My concern for our future and the concern of many other members I have talked to is this: Where are we headed with these fund-raisers? We frequently become dependent upon them as the means by which we are self-supporting.

We are a worldwide spiritual fellowship. We take great pride in our Seventh Tradition, that we pay our own way and decline the offer of outside contributions. It has given us a sense of integrity about ourselves and protects us from outside influence. Yet through many of these fund-raisers, a

lot of money is generated from people outside of our membership.

Some of this might be unavoidable, yet the trend towards reliance on these fund-raisers as the means by which we support a lot of our service structure can lead us down a perilous path. The primary object of these functions is to carry the message to the addict who is still suffering and to enhance the quality of our own program through unity, love and service.

Last year it was mentioned that if each member in the fellowship donated \$2.00 a year to the WSC, that it would finance its budget. Just locally in my region we estimate that if each one of our members would contribute \$4.00 a month to our area service committee, it would support our local services. It is not mentioned enough at meetings about what our Seventh Tradition really is or what our needs are. I

put \$2.00 in the basket at each meeting, not that I've got the bucks, but because someone told me that that's what it basically takes for each member to contribute for this fellowship to be self-supporting. Now, I wouldn't have come up with that on my own, because I'm basically cheap when it comes to people passing around collection plates. It's an old idea that I've had to get rid of.

Interestingly enough, my God as I understand Him has always provided me with that \$2.00 at each meeting, whereas before, when I wasn't even aware of our needs, I never seemed to have it. For myself and many other addicts, there is nothing more fulfilling than being involved with putting on a function for this fellowship that is geared towards carrying the message and financially breaking even.

(Reprinted from *Newsline* Vol. 2, No. 5.)

Some thoughts regarding our relationship to Alcoholics Anonymous

This article was generated by the World Service Board of Trustees in November 1985 in response to the needs of the fellowship. It represents the views of the board of trustees at the time of writing.

The question of just how Narcotics Anonymous relates to all other fellowships and organizations is one which generates a good deal of controversy within our fellowship. In spite of the fact that we have a stated policy of "cooperation, not affiliation" with outside organizations, much confusion remains. The most sensitive issue of this nature involves our relationship to the Fellowship of Alcoholics Anonymous. A constant stream of letters is received by the World Service Board of Trustees asking a variety of questions about this relationship. The time has come for another *Newsline* article to shed some light on this important subject.

Narcotics Anonymous is modeled after, though not identical to, Alcoholics Anonymous. Nearly every NA community in existence has leaned to some degree on AA in the NA group's formative stages. Our relationship with that fellowship over the years has been very real and dynamic. Our fellowship itself sprang from the turmoil within AA over what to do with the addicts knocking on their door. So we will look at those roots for some perspective on our current relationship to AA.

Bill W., one of AA's co-founders, often said that one of AA's greatest strengths is its single-minded focus on one thing and one thing only. By limiting its primary purpose to carrying the message to alcoholics and avoiding all other activities, AA is able to do that one thing supremely well. The atmosphere of identification is preserved by that purity of focus, and alcoholics get help.

From very early on, AA was confronted by a perplexing problem: "What do we do with drug addicts? We want to keep our focus on alcohol so the alcoholic hears the message, but these addicts come in here talking about drugs, inadvertently weakening our atmosphere of identification." The steps were written, the Big Book was written--what were they supposed to do, rewrite it all? Allow the atmosphere of identification to get blurry so that no one got a clear sense of belonging? Kick these dying people back out into the streets? The problem must have been a tremendous one for them.

When they finally studied the problem carefully and took a stand in their literature, the solution they outlined possessed their characteristic common sense and wisdom. They said that while they cannot accept addicts who are not alcoholics as members, they freely offer their steps and traditions for adaptation by any groups who wish to use them. They pledged their support in a spirit of "cooperation, not affiliation." This farsighted solution to a difficult problem paved the way for the development of the Narcotics Anonymous Fellowship.

But still the problem that they wished to avoid would have to be addressed by any group who tried to adapt those principles to drug addicts. How do you achieve the atmosphere of identification so necessary for surrender and recovery if you let all different kinds of addicts in? Can someone with a heroin problem relate to someone with an alcohol or marijuana or Valium problem? How will you ever achieve the unity that the First Tradition says is necessary for recovery? Our fellowship inherited a tough dilemma.

For some perspective on how we have handled that dilemma, one more look at AA history will be helpful. Another thing Bill W. used to frequently write and speak about was what he called the "tenstrike" of AA--the wording of the Third and Eleventh Steps. The whole area of spirituality vs. religion was every bit as perplexing for them in those days as this unity issue has been for us. Bill liked to recount that the simple addition of the words "as we understood Him" after the word "God" laid to rest that controversy in one chop. An issue that had the potential to divide

and destroy AA was converted into the cornerstone of the program by that simple turn of phrase.

As the founders of Narcotics Anonymous adapted our steps, they came up with a "tenstrike" of perhaps equal importance. Rather than converting the First Step in the most natural, logical way ("we admitted that we were powerless over drugs..."), they made a radical change in that step. They wrote, "We admitted that we were powerless over our addiction..." Drugs are a varied group of substances, the use of any of which is but a symptom of our disease. When addicts gather and focus on drugs, they are usually focusing on their differences, because each of us used a different drug or combination of drugs. The one thing that we all share is the disease of addiction. It was a masterful stroke. With that single turn of phrase the foundation of the Narcotics Anonymous Fellowship was laid.

Our First Step gives us one thing to focus on, so we can do that one thing supremely well. We carry the message to the addict who still suffers. As a bonus, this wording of Step One also takes the focus of our powerlessness off the symptom and places it on the disease itself. The phrase "powerless over a drug" does not go far enough for most of us in ongoing recovery--the desire to use has been removed--but "powerless over our addiction" is as relevant to the oldtimer as it is to the newcomer. Our addiction begins to resurface and cause problems in our thoughts and feelings whenever we become complacent in our program of recovery. This process has nothing to do with "drug of choice." We guard against the recurrence of our drug use by reapplying our spiritual principles before our disease takes us that far. So our First Step applies regardless of drug of choice, and regardless of length of clean time. With this "tenstrike" as its foundation, NA has begun to flourish as a major worldwide movement, clearly appropriate to contemporary addiction problems. And we've only just begun.

As any given NA community matures in its understanding of its own principles (particularly Step One), an interesting fact emerges. The AA perspective, with its alcohol oriented language,

and the NA approach, with its clear need to shift the focus off the specific drug, don't mix very well. When we try to mix them, we find that we have the same problem as AA had with us all along! When our members identify as "addicts and alcoholics" or talk about "sobriety" and living "clean and sober" the clarity of the NA message is blurred. The implication in this language is that there are two diseases; that one drug is separate from the pack, so that a separate set of terms is needed when discussing it. At first glance this seems minor, but our experience clearly shows that the full impact of the NA message is crippled by this subtle semantic confusion.

It has become clear that our common identification, our unity, and our full surrender as addicts depends on a clear understanding of our most basic fundamentals: We are powerless over a disease that gets progressively worse when we use any drug. It does not matter what drug was at the center for us when we got here. Any drug we use will release our disease all over again. We recover from this disease by applying our Twelve Steps. Our steps are uniquely worded to carry this message clearly, so the rest of our language of recovery must be consistent with those steps. Ironically, we cannot mix these fundamental principles with those of our parent fellowship without crippling our own message.

Does this mean that AA's approach is inferior to ours, and based on denial or half measures? Of course not! A casual, cursory glance at their success in delivering recovery to alcoholics over the years makes it abundantly clear: Theirs is a top notch program. Their literature, their service structure, the quality of their members' recovery, their sheer numbers, the respect they enjoy from society, these things speak for themselves. Our members ought not embarrass us by adopting a "we're better than them" posture. That can only be counterproductive.

The simple fact is that both fellowships have a Sixth Tradition for a reason: to keep them from being diverted from their primary purpose. Because of the inherent need of a Twelve Step fellowship to focus on "one thing and one thing only so that it can do that one thing supremely

well," each Twelve Step fellowship must stand alone, unaffiliated with everything else. It is in our nature to be separate, to feel separate, and use a separate set of recovery terms, because we each have a separate, unique primary purpose. The focus of AA is on the alcoholic, and we ought to respect their perfect right to adhere to their own traditions and protect their focus. If we cannot use language consistent with that, we ought not go to their meetings and undermine that atmosphere. In the same way, NA members ought to respect our own primary purpose and identify ourselves at NA meetings simply as addicts, and share in a way that keeps our fundamentals clear.

As a fellowship, we must continue to strive to move forward by not stubbornly clinging to one radical extreme or the other. Our members who have been unintentionally blurring the NA message by using drug-specific language such as "sobriety," "alcoholic," "clean and sober," "dope fiend," etc., could help by identifying simply and clearly as addicts, and using the words "clean," "clean time," and "recovery" which imply no particular substance. And we all could help by referring to only our own literature at meetings, thereby avoiding any implied endorsement or affiliation. Our principles stand on their own. For the sake of our development as a fellowship and the personal recovery of our members, "our approach to

the problem of addiction" must shine through clearly in what we say and do at meetings.

Our members who have used these sound arguments to rationalize an anti-AA stand, thereby alienating many badly needed stable members, would do well to re-evaluate and reconsider the effects of that kind of behavior. Narcotics Anonymous is a spiritual fellowship. Love, tolerance, patience and cooperation are essential if we are to live up to that.

Let's pull together our energies into our personal spiritual development through our own Twelve Steps. Let's carry our own message clearly. There's a lot of work to be done, and we need each other if we are to do it effectively. Let's get on with it in a spirit of NA unity.

(Reprinted from *Newsline* Vol. 2, No. 6.)

The relationship of Narcotics Anonymous to NarAnon and Families Anonymous

This article was generated by the World Service Board of Trustees in August 1987 in response to the needs of the fellowship. It represents the views of the board at the time of writing.

The World Service Board of Trustees has received many inquiries during the past few years which have asked specific questions about how to go about cooperating without affiliating when it comes to NarAnon and Families Anonymous. The need to address this issue arose from a confusion between the letter of our Twelve Traditions, and the spirit of love, understanding, and caring which we all feel as individuals.

It has become clear to us that the phrase "cooperation not affiliation" is no longer suitable for Narcotics Anonymous. Undoubtedly this attitude and these words have served us over many years, but it appears that the growth and development of our fellowship demands a revised expression. In consulting the dictionary, "cooperation" means "the act of working together to a common end or the association of a number of people together in an enterprise, the benefits of which are shared." This definition can present a problem in addressing our relationship with any other organization, including NarAnon and Families Anonymous. Strictly speaking, the object or goal of our fellowship is *not* the same as any other fellowship. In this respect, it is impossible to cooperate without also endorsing or affiliating.

The World Service Board of Trustees believes that a policy, or attitude, or phrase which serves our purpose best and guides our fellowship well is "a policy of non-affiliation." This clearly conveys the fact that we do not associate with, connect with, or adopt

any other organization or purpose. Traditions Six and Ten refer to these issues, and there can never be any formal relationship between Narcotics Anonymous and any other fellowship or organization.

As individuals, we have tremendous respect for these other fellowships and support the need for them. As grateful recovering addicts, we carry intense and genuine love and understanding in our hearts.

Adherence to our Twelve Traditions does not preclude or negate these feelings. We must remember, however, that Narcotics Anonymous, NarAnon, and Families Anonymous are separate fellowships, each with their own purpose. These organizations are not enmeshed with each other nor are they interdependent.

We believe that by reflecting back upon our own paths, we can find the way to convey this respect, love, and support, without endorsing or affiliating with other fellowships. Our family members and loved ones were often instrumental in allowing us to face the consequences of our addiction by not helping us! We now have the opportunity to support them by not interfering and also by simply pursuing our own purpose as guided by the spiritual principles of Narcotics Anonymous. While we all may have our own way of supporting our loved ones, NA can only remain true to our primary purpose and the guidance provided in Traditions Six and Ten. Consistent fellowship action which is guided by these principles is the kindest and most loving path for us to follow, both for ourselves and our family members and loved ones. This helps these other fellowships to address their own needs in a sensible, appropriate, and non-dependent manner.

Our relationship as a fellowship with NarAnon and Families Anonymous, as with treatment centers, clubhouses, or any other organization or enterprise, can then be simply and clearly defined as one of providing information. We provide—and will continue to provide—information about what we do, where we do it, where our meetings and conventions are held, etc., to anyone who asks for it. At the same time, we avoid any type of affiliation or special treatment for any people or organization outside of Narcotics Anonymous.

The World Service Board of Trustees believes that many of the practices in which we have engaged as a fellowship run counter to our traditions. The intent of these actions was usually sound, and it has taken many years of experience and study to evaluate them with respect to our Twelve Traditions. These include listing Families Anonymous and NarAnon meetings in NA directories, on flyers for NA conventions, or in NA registration forms, and the practice of obtaining meeting places for these other fellowships at conventions or other NA activities. Additionally,

utilizing speakers from the NarAnon and Families Anonymous Fellowships is a practice which does not adhere to our traditions. However, we encourage phonerline workers to use common sense and good judgment in making known to family members that NA is for the drug addict and that family members may find family oriented recovery fellowships to be beneficial.

(Reprinted from *Newsline* Vol.4, No.6.)

Open and closed NA meetings

This article was generated by the World Service Board of Trustees in August 1987 in response to the needs of the fellowship. It represents the views of the board at the time of writing.

The purpose of the World Service Board of Trustees in addressing open and closed NA meetings is to help NA members understand precisely what NA meetings can offer to both addicts and nonaddicts, and how different types of NA meetings have different purposes. Awareness of this need for guidance has been sparked by letters and communication from the fellowship at large. This communication has revealed the need of the fellowship to know what Narcotics Anonymous is and how we carry our message.

The population at large is gaining an increased awareness of our fellowship and an increased interest in our meetings. Input which the board of trustees has received highlights examples of confusion which can exist when interested nonaddicts or people who are uncertain of their status, attend NA meetings. This confusion can be magnified when these individuals participate in our meetings.

Our message of recovery in meetings can be clouded or diluted if anyone other than an NA member participates. In our meetings, confusion can be created when people such as parents, spouses, therapists, members of other fellowships, or other people who are not NA members share and speak at NA meetings.

We always encourage respect, tact, and diplomacy when confronted with circumstances where nonaddicts attend regular NA meetings. Most of these occasions do not present continuing problems for our groups. However, with continued growth and increased awareness about NA, all of us must look ahead. It is our belief that, by gaining clarity about open and closed NA meetings, our members can be

guided well in how we all carry the message of recovery from drug addiction to addicts, as well as to all others who are interested.

For these reasons and in the interest of Narcotics Anonymous, the World Service Board of Trustees recommends the following guidelines and definitions:

1. A Narcotics Anonymous meeting, whether it is open or closed, is an addict sanctuary. It is the one place where a drug addict can go and hear about and participate in recovery from the disease of drug addiction. As much as we might sometimes like, we cannot be all things to all people.
2. An open meeting is an NA meeting which may be attended by anyone interested in recovery from addiction. However, verbal participation is limited to NA members only. An open meeting in Narcotics Anonymous serves several functions. It allows people from outside of the fellowship (for instance, judges, probation officers, professionals, family members) to observe what Narcotics Anonymous is and how it functions. It provides a place for anyone to gain information regarding the disease of drug addiction and how to find recovery. This can be very helpful to those individuals who are striving to reach a decision regarding their personal status as an addict. An open meeting in Narcotics Anonymous is one method our groups use to achieve their primary purpose of carrying the message to the addict who still suffers.
3. A closed meeting in Narcotics Anonymous is only for those individuals who are there because of their own drug addiction problem. These meetings do not generally exclude people who are undecided about identifying as an addict; however, participation is still limited to drug addicts only. A closed Narcotics Anonymous meeting provides the freedom which is necessary for a more personal and intimate sharing by Narcotics Anonymous members.
4. Our service structure provides the only appropriate avenues for nonaddict participation in Narcotics Anonymous. In addition to recognizing the need and value of nonaddict trustees (*Temporary Working Guide to the Service*

Structure) and nonaddict special workers (Tradition Eight), the fellowship has approved material (*A Guide to Public Information*) which provides for public information community meetings. These meetings are the vehicle for service committee efforts which are aimed at communicating information about our fellowship to the general public. These are not regular NA meetings and are the preferred approach to informing the general public about Narcotics

Anonymous. This approach avoids confusion, presents no threat to anonymity, does not affect the NA message in regular meetings, and allows us to satisfy our recovery and service needs while at the same time meet the needs of nonaddicts who are interested in NA.

(Reprinted from The NA Way Magazine, December 1987.)

AIDS

This article was generated by the World Service Board of Trustees in August 1988 in response to the needs of the fellowship. It represents the thoughts of the World Service Board of Trustees at the time of writing.

Many NA members are at high risk for AIDS. We encourage NA members to become educated about this subject. However, providing information about AIDS, or any other disease except addiction, is not within the scope of Narcotics Anonymous.

If your group, area, region or convention committee is planning meetings around specific topics, do establish some boundaries. We believe it is important to remain with some general guidelines, as with any learning day or workshop.

1. Use workshops as a forum for discussion of how this issue can be dealt with working within the principles of Narcotics Anonymous, relating the topic to the principles.
2. We share our experience, strength and hope. Those asked to lead the workshop should have personal experience on related topics.
3. We are not professionals, so don't give medical facts, treatment approaches, legal facts or specific information.
4. We are not affiliated with any other organization, and do not provide non-NA handouts.
5. Every NA member is welcome to participate in any workshop. We try to give as many members as possible the opportunity to share.

As long as we maintain our awareness about the Twelve Traditions, we may openly talk about those issues which affect our recovery and are relevant to us.

Note: Contact the World Service Office for more detailed information on any learning days and workshops.

What is addiction?

At the 1988 World Service Conference, the following motion was passed: To request WSB to take on as a project the task of defining "addiction" as it relates to NA. The stated intent was to define addiction as drug addiction, and to clarify whether or not the word "drugs," as we use it, includes caffeine, nicotine and sugar. What follows is an essay developed during the 1988-89 conference year by the World Service Board of Trustees in response to that request.

The task of defining addiction has challenged physicians, judges, clergy, addicts, their families and the general public throughout history. There are as many potential definitions as there are groups with an interest in defining addiction. Some definitions would emphasize physiological dependence, some psychological dependence; some would focus on family dynamics, some on behavioral problems, and still others on morality. This list could be expanded at length, and NA could come up with its own definition and add it to the list. Fortunately, Tradition Ten steers us away from such public debates. Clearly, debating such issues is not NA's task. Our task is to carry the message of recovery to the addict who still suffers.

Still, defining addiction for ourselves is certainly important to the process of recovery. After all, in our First Step we admit powerlessness over it. That admission is the foundation upon which our recovery is built. So the question, "What is addiction?" is relevant indeed; the fellowship has a responsibility to consider it carefully.

It can be answered, at least in part, and we will attempt to do that here. But there is much about this question that we will not be able to answer in concrete terms. In those cases we will try to explain our position, and state why the issue does not lend itself to a clear definition.

This discussion will not include a restatement of our fellowship's broadest understanding of what addiction is. That may be found in the Basic Text, especially in the chapter "Who is an Addict?" Instead we will focus on a few difficult issues that the World Service Board of Trustees has been asked to consider.

IS ADDICTION A DISEASE?

In many ways this is one of those questions about addiction that defies an answer. There is a vigorous public debate over the question of whether or not addiction is a disease. As we grow and find ourselves more squarely in the public eye, we must learn to measure our written statements carefully, and not take dogmatic stands we are not in the position to back up.

On the other hand, we are certainly not arguing here that NA literature should quit referring to addiction as a disease. It is our fellowship's collective experience and understanding that addiction is in fact a disease. We have no reason to challenge that perception now. It has served us well.

Our experience with addiction is this: When we accept that it is a disease over which we are powerless, such surrender provides a basis for recovery through the Twelve Steps. The numbers of NA members living in freedom from active addiction bear our position out pretty well.

So even though we as a fellowship are not in a position to argue what is or is not a disease in the strictest medical sense, we are fully confident that our use of the word "disease" in describing our condition is appropriate. Whether it is appropriate in a medical sense or in a metaphorical sense is not important. We'll leave that debate to others. It is only important for us that we realize we are powerless over our addiction, and that in Narcotics Anonymous we have the tools to treat it effectively.

And really, that's the key point: Professional people in fields like medicine, religion, psychiatry, law and law enforcement define addiction in terms that are appropriate to their areas of concern. So do we. Narcotics Anonymous defines addiction for the purpose of providing recovery from it. We treat addiction as a disease, because that makes sense to us and it works. We have no need to press the issue any farther than that.

DOES "ADDICTION" MEAN ONLY DRUG ADDICTION? WHAT ABOUT OTHER KINDS OF ADDICTION?

It must be stated clearly that by the word "addiction" we do in fact mean "drug addiction." Our Third Tradition says, *"The only requirement for membership is a desire to stop using."* Clearly we mean "...a desire to stop using drugs."

As a fellowship we place much importance on the fact that we have shifted the focus of our steps off any specific drug and onto the addiction itself. We have done that by wording Step One "powerless over our addiction" rather than "powerless over drugs" or "powerless over narcotics." It is clear to most of us that any wording of Step One which named specific drugs—or drugs at all, for that matter—would have stated the principle with much less power for our purposes than our current wording does.

If we would attempt to broaden our focus beyond drug addiction to include other types of addiction, we believe we would seriously undermine our atmosphere of identification. The balance we are striving for is a delicate one. On the one hand we must understand our First Step well enough to keep our sharing at meetings focused on the disease of addiction, not on specific drugs. That way our focus is broad enough to include all drug addicts. That's why we have tried to agree on terms that adequately describe our disease and our recovery and yet are not drug-specific. On the other hand we must keep our focus specific enough to provide clear identification for our new members.

WHAT ABOUT CAFFEINE, NICOTINE, AND SUGAR?

NA is a program of complete abstinence from all drugs. We state this clearly and unequivocally in our meetings and throughout our literature. At most of those meetings, however, coffee and cookies are served and members are smoking cigarettes. Caffeine and nicotine are being used. Some believe that sugar is a mood-altering drug. To many, this represents a grey area in our program. Some consider it a kind of hypocrisy.

To be quite frank, this problem does indeed represent a kind of grey area. It calls upon us again to rise to a higher level in our thinking about our program, not falling back on simplistic black-or-white

dogmatic arguments. There is no black or white here. If there were, we would either say that caffeine, nicotine and sugar are not mood- or mind-altering (a claim we would be hard pressed to back up) or that some mood- or mind-altering drugs are okay for us to use. Neither of those statements is acceptable for us to make.

This issue challenges each of us to use common sense rather than expecting the ultimate answer from the World Service Board of Trustees. We have no single statement which is adequate to address this perplexing issue, but we do have years of experience to draw from.

Since our inception as a fellowship, many of our members have been smoking cigarettes, drinking coffee and eating sugar. Of these members, those who work the steps and abide by the traditions recover. This cannot be said of members who, for example, smoke marijuana or drink alcohol or abuse prescription drugs.

So we as a fellowship do not address the issue of our members' use of caffeine, nicotine or sugar in any way. We leave those decisions to each individual member to work out. Our disease finds many avenues in which to express itself in ongoing recovery. These can be identified by working the steps, facing ourselves honestly, opening up completely with a sponsor, and relying on a Higher Power for the strength we lack. Whenever *anything* is producing unhappiness or dissatisfaction in our lives, we should use the Twelve Steps to address it.

AFTERWORD

This essay is intended to stimulate members' thinking and discussion about the nature of addiction. As members awaken spiritually and share with one another, the answers get woven into the fabric of the fellowship's conventional wisdom. Then just when our thinking begins to harden into dogma, another generation comes along to challenge us and keep our perspective fresh. Clear, simple truth withstands such tests.

We urge NA members to remain open-minded and flexible. It is important to look to our literature and our experienced members for guidance, but ultimately each member have the right to understand and apply this program in the way that works best for them.

Special interest meetings

The following is a report delivered to the World Service Conference at its annual meeting in April 1989 by the WSC Ad Hoc Committee on Special Interest Meetings. Formed the previous year, the committee was chaired by the vice chairperson of the World Service Board of Trustees. However, please note that this report is offered for informational purposes only, and does not necessarily reflect the position of the WSB itself.

World Service Board of Trustees

The WSC Ad Hoc Committee on Special Interest Meetings was formed by vote of the 1988 World Service Conference. It was moved by the RSR from Colorado and seconded by the RSR from New England "that the WSC chairperson appoint an ad hoc committee composed of RSRs, members of the WSB, and members of the WSC Policy Committee for the purpose of investigating the issue of special interest meetings in NA."

The intent of this motion, as stated in the WSC minutes, was "to help us as a fellowship come to grips with and perhaps [come to] a solution to the issue of special interest meetings. In addition this committee could provide some forum for the input of ideas around the issue."

The committee was composed of fourteen members: John Farrell, the vice chairperson of the World Service Board of Trustees, was appointed chairperson; and Debbie Churchwell, the RSR from Georgia, was appointed vice chairperson. Additional members were Becky Meyer (WSB member), Tim Banner (WSC Policy Committee member), Michael Jones (RSR, Connecticut), Janet Woolley (RSR, London, England), Mary Colangeil-Henning (RSR, Tri-State), Mitchell Soodak (RSR, Greater New York), Linda Cooley (RSR, Chesapeake-Potomac), Tony Dee (RSR, Southern California), Jay Venner (RSR,

Florida) and Ed Shepard (RSR, Oregon/Southern Idaho). Other members were Bob Hunter (WSC vice chairperson), Stuart Tooredman (WSO Board of Directors vice chairperson), and Pauli Berri from Germany. Leigh Roberts provided support services from the World Service Office.

The committee met by conference call a number of times: on July 26, 1988; October 20, 1988; February 8, 1989; April 14, 1989; and April 21, 1989. It also met during the WSC workshop held in Dallas, Texas, the weekend of November 11-13, 1988. In addition, the committee conducted an open forum for the receiving of input in Dallas on November 12.

PURPOSE OF THE COMMITTEE

The committee spent a great deal of its initial meeting on July 26, 1988, discussing what it was the conference wanted the committee to accomplish. As a result of this discussion, the committee set the following goals:

1. To provide a definition of special interest meetings;
2. To investigate—that is, "to observe or study by close examination and systematic inquiry" (*Webster's Ninth New Collegiate Dictionary*)—precisely what role special interest meetings play in the Narcotics Anonymous Fellowship;
3. To allow the fellowship opportunity to comment on this issue by means of conducting open forums; requesting input directly from groups and members via the *Newsline*, the *Fellowship Report*, and *The NA Way Magazine*; and by direct mailings to regions; and,
4. To provide a report which could be used by NA members as a basis for the discussion of the issue of special interest meetings.

DEFINITION OF SPECIAL INTEREST GROUPS

At the beginning of its deliberations the committee attempted to define what precisely a special interest meeting is and how that definition fits into existing NA guidelines on the subject. We were informed in this part of our task by both the *Temporary Working Guide to Our Service Structure* and the *Basic Text*.

The *Temporary Working Guide* told us that "an NA group is any meeting which meets regularly at a

specified place and time, providing that it follows the Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions' and that the "primary purpose of an NA group is to carry the message of recovery to the addict who still suffers by providing a setting for identification and a healthy atmosphere for recovery." (*Temporary Working Guide*, 1988 Edition, pages 1 & 2.)

The Basic Text further clarified our task in its discussion of Tradition Four by clearly stating that "a Narcotics Anonymous group is any group that meets regularly, at a specified place and time, for the purpose of recovery, provided that it follows the Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions of Narcotics Anonymous. There are two basic types of meetings; those open to the general public and those closed to the public (for addicts only). Meeting formats vary widely from group to group; some are participation meetings, some speakers, some are question and answer, and some focus on special problems discussion." (Basic Text, Fifth Edition, page 63.)

In some NA communities there are specialized groups consisting of men, women, gays, professionals, etc. These members host NA meetings where the focus is on recovery from drug addiction in Narcotics Anonymous.

TYPES OF SPECIAL INTEREST MEETING

The Ad Hoc Committee on Special Interest Groups wrote to each RSC chairperson and RSR requesting information concerning special interest meetings in their regions. Of the fifty-eight NA regions, twenty-four responded to this request. The regions responding were Arizona, Buckeye, Southern California, Chesapeake/Potomac, Chicagoland, Colorado, Florida, Germany, Greater Illinois, Hawaii, Indiana, Iowa, Lone Star, Michigan, Mid-America, Mid-Atlantic, New Jersey, Show-Me, Sierra Sage, Upper Rocky Mountain, Utah, Volunteer, and Washington/N. Idaho. Here are the results of our survey:

1. Of the twenty-four regions responding, twenty indicated that special interest meetings are held in their regions.
2. The twenty regions have reported a total of 184 special interest meetings. Some regions, however, reported that not all areas responded to

their request for information and that their data was therefore incomplete.

3. The regions reported a variety of types of special interest meetings. These types include: Men's, Women's, Gay and Lesbian, Young People/Youth meetings, one couples meeting, one Agnostic meeting, one illness and Recovery meeting, and one "Pills" meeting. It was also reported to the committee from other sources that in some regions of Narcotics Anonymous there are also meetings for Vietnam Veterans, people with AIDS, people who are HIV positive, and various types of professionals.
4. Of the regions that reported how long special interest meetings have been in existence within their regions, a number of the regions indicated that meetings had been occurring for over five years, and one region reported a group soon to celebrate it's tenth anniversary.
5. Although the committee was informed that some areas have a policy of excluding special interest meetings from their meetings schedules, no region reported written area or regional policies on this subject.

FINAL OBSERVATIONS

The Ad Hoc Committee on Special Interest Meetings understood from almost its beginning that resolving the issue of special interests in Narcotics Anonymous might be impossible, that the varying opinions on the subject seemed to be irreconcilable, and that we might not be able to offer a perspective that would be so fresh and profound that the entire membership of NA would immediately accept our conclusions. We did, however, feel that if we were able to make some objective observations on the subject—devoid of passion and emotionalism—we might be able to do some good. Here then are our conclusions:

Special Interest meetings have existed in Narcotics Anonymous for some time. There does not appear to be anything in the Twelve Traditions which inhibits groups from holding special interest meetings, provided that the group has no requirement for membership other than the desire to stop using. Special Interest meetings tend to survive and flourish

in local NA communities where there is a need and desire for such meetings and do not exist in NA communities where there is no need nor desire.

In Narcotics Anonymous, the World Service Conference does not have the authority to dictate policy to groups, and regional and area service committees do not have policy making authority over the decisions of their groups. The only authority present in the groups is a loving God expressed in a group's conscience.

The Ad Hoc Committee on Special Interest Meetings concluded that special interest meetings must be appropriate in some NA communities since they exist and flourish with little controversy in these communities. In NA communities where special interest meetings do not exist, and where the need for them is not apparent, there is no reason to create them. Groups, therefore, exercising their autonomy are best suited to decide whether there is any necessity to have special interest meetings.

Gender-specific language and use of the word "God" in NA literature

The following is a February 1992 response to a motion committed to the World Service Board of Trustees by the World Service Conference. It reflects the views of the board at the time of writing.

During WSC '91, the following motion was committed to the World Service Board of Trustees for its consideration: *That all subsequent literature that is to be revised and be produced to have non-gender-specific language and that all references to God be changed to "Higher Power" or "Power Greater than ourselves."*

This motion was addressed at our June 1991, August 1991, and February 1992 meetings, with our discussions focusing on the following main issues.

First, and simplest, is the change to non-gender-specific language. Our perception is that the various committees involved in literature projects are already very sensitive to this issue. Changes of the type suggested by this motion are already being considered in the literature development and review process.

More complicated is the question of changing all references to "God." Our fellowship embraces the devoutly religious as well as the atheist. We experience a profound spiritual awakening as a result

of actively applying the Twelve Steps in our lives. Most of us continue to experience change and growth in our spiritual orientation as we continue to live the program. We are faced with the dilemma of meaningfully addressing diverse and evolving personal spiritual orientations. This motion proposes replacing all references to God with the terms "Higher Power" or "Power Greater than ourselves." These substitutions would not resolve our dilemma since they still would not meet the needs of many members, particularly those who believe that the "Power greater than ourselves" in the Second Step is not equivalent to the "God, as we understood Him" in our Third Step. There have been numerous other alternatives suggested to the term "God." We feel that, prior to making a change which could profoundly impact our philosophy and interpretation of principles, significant discussion and agreement need to take place within the fellowship at large.

Both of these questions carry with them an additional consideration, since the word "God" and gender-specific language are used in our steps and traditions. We feel that any changes to our steps and traditions should not be considered in the same way we consider narrative portions of our literature. Once again, we feel that such changes and the possible ramifications of such changes need to have significant discussion and agreement prior to any implementation.

As a result of our discussions, it is the opinion of the World Service Board of Trustees that no formal action should be taken on this motion at this time. We do, however, believe that these topics should be widely discussed throughout the fellowship. We thank the conference for allowing us to serve.

Freedom from prejudice

The following is not a policy statement from the World Service Board of Trustees. Written in 1991, it is intended merely to stimulate thought and discussion on the topic of prejudice and how it affects Narcotics Anonymous.

WSB External Affairs Committee

"The only requirement for membership is a desire to stop using," isn't it? That's what our Third Tradition says. But in some NA groups, it almost seems as if a few more membership requirements have been added. Though it may not be said aloud, the impression you get from such groups is this: "You've got to come from same racial, or ethnic, or social, or economic, or educational, or sexual background as we do in order to be accepted here. It's not enough, just to have a desire to stop using."

In July, the World Service Conference held a workshop in Arlington, Virginia. One panel focused a portion of its discussion on the subject of prejudice in Narcotics Anonymous. Participants felt the discussion was long overdue, and that we as a fellowship should begin to further explore ways to "raise our consciousness" and, thus, to begin changing our attitudes and behavior. The purpose of this article is to begin raising our awareness of how we treat one another so that, ultimately, any addict seeking recovery, "regardless of age, race, sexual identity, creed, religion, or lack of religion," may find what they seek among us.

AWARENESS

We can't begin to change unless we're aware there is a need for change. As addicts, we reflect the society we come from. We bring our racism, classism, sexism, and all our other prejudices with us into recovery. We accept unacceptable behavior, in ourselves and in each other, because "that's the way it's always been." We all suffer, to greater or lesser

extents, from this kind of thinking; it's the way of the world we've been raised in.

What can we do? Well, to deny our bigotry only allows us to continue in old thinking and behavior. But when we admit we discriminate, we can begin to address that thinking and behavior with the tools of recovery.

In NA, we're told to "show up and tell the truth." When addicts hear other addicts share their pain and their fears, something wonderful happens. Open discussions in our meetings can be very important in helping us see how prejudice affects our ability to recover, and our ability to carry the message to others. Choosing "Freedom from Prejudice" as a discussion meeting topic, for example, can open the lid on the defects we try to hide from one another, and sometimes even from ourselves.

Sponsorship is another tool to be put to work. What would occur if we all took a mini-inventory of ourselves, an inventory focused on prejudice, its affect on our lives, and its impact on the life of our fellowship? And what would happen if every NA member talked with their sponsor about their fears of people from other backgrounds or lifestyles? Whenever we work the steps with open minds and hearts, healing begins to take place.

INTO ACTION

When we can accept that we are indeed bigoted, without making any excuses, then we're ready to take action. The miracle begins when we accept that, as individuals and as a fellowship, we frequently fall short of our own principles. Yes, this is who we are today—and yes, today, we need to change. Acceptance here does not mean, "Well, that's just the way things are." Acceptance means taking responsibility for ourselves, and seeking the courage to change.

At the Arlington workshop, individual members shared about their own experiences of prejudice—not only ways in which they had felt its cruel sting, but ways in which they had inflicted that sting on others. People talked about not being hugged because they were black; being shunned because of their use of essential, prescribed medication; avoiding members who have disabilities; being fearful of people from

different educational levels; avoiding anyone with different sexual preference from their own. Some of these things hampered their own recovery; some hampered their role in supporting the recovery of others; all of it made them hurt. They admitted it, and they asked all of us, as a fellowship, to help them change.

Yes, it's true: we come from a prejudiced society. That does not mean, however, that we must remain forever bound by prejudice. The NA program offers freedom, not only from drug addiction, but from the insidious defects of character that keep us from living full, healthy, happy lives. By working the steps, we can rise above our shortcomings. In doing so, we can set an example for one another, and for others in our communities, of what spiritual recovery is about.

How can you "show up and tell the truth" about prejudice in NA? You can:

1. Raise the topic at a discussion meeting.
2. Contact your regional convention committee, and ask them to hold a workshop on prejudice at the next convention.
3. Ask your area and regional service committees to consider whether prejudice affects any of their services.
4. Talk with your sponsor about how prejudice—yours and others—affects you and your recovery. Talk with those you sponsor, too.
5. If your group conducts an annual inventory, ask that "prejudice" be one of the subjects they examine.

Prejudice in NA hurts the whole fellowship, from the oldest oldtimer to the newest newcomer. We, as members of a fellowship based on spiritual principles, can not and must not settle for anything less than freedom from prejudice.

FREEDOM FROM PREJUDICE, PART TWO

While we may not have adequate time at this year's conference meeting [1992] to do more than allow for open discussion on this and other issues, the board of trustees hopes these points will stimulate dialogue and that discussions will continue throughout the year at fellowship forums. As a board, we are

committed to furthering these discussions to help us, as a fellowship, find solutions. Following are the proposed discussion points:

How can the conference and its participants effectively address the issue of prejudice within our fellowship and set a course toward freedom from prejudice?

Discuss the challenges facing a spiritual fellowship that exists within cultures and societies heavily weighted with prejudice.

As NA members, as sponsors, as members of home groups, as leaders in the conference, what can each of us do to contribute to the fulfillment of the words from our White Booklet, "Anyone may join us, regardless of age, race, sexual identity, creed, religion or lack of religion."

Unity, not uniformity, is vital to the growth of NA. As we recover, we emerge as beautiful, distinct, unique children of God. As a conference, how can we set the example by nurturing unity while encouraging the magnificent diversity manifest in Narcotics Anonymous worldwide?

How do we greet newcomers who may not meet "the image" we have of an addict in our particular NA community? We will not have to cultivate our "tolerance" if we can learn to apply the principles of acceptance, love, and compassion first.

What about PI and H&I efforts? Are our communities working to reach all kinds of addicts from all walks of life? Who isn't here?

How do we, as a fellowship and as individuals, deal with the inherent prejudices within our fellowship and within our own hearts?

Specifically, we need to encourage discussion of prejudice within NA as it has affected and is affecting the following: gay & lesbian addicts, hispanic addicts, asian addicts, women addicts, "older" addicts, black addicts, handicapped addicts, overweight addicts, addict professionals, language differences, religious differences, atheist/agnostic addicts, "anyone-different-from-us."

This is only a beginning, but it all starts with a first step, doesn't it?

The generation of funds (fundraising) and the Seventh Tradition in Narcotics Anonymous

This article was generated by the World Service Board of Trustees in December 1991 in response to the needs of the fellowship. It represents the views of the board at the time of its writing.

Questions about fundraising and how fundraising relates to the traditions, especially Tradition Seven, have been asked on numerous occasions in the past few years. As groups, areas, and regions grow, the perceived need for finances to help fulfill the Fifth Tradition may also grow. When the cost of ancillary services—such as helplines, meeting lists, and literature for use in H&I meetings, among others—is considered, many groups, areas, and regions find themselves in the position of needing or wanting more funds than are provided by members' donations to the "basket" at the group level. It is at these times that questions arise as to how to fund the services that help carry our message to the still-suffering addict. This article will attempt to answer some of these questions as well as offer some simple guidelines about raising funds. We will try to provide a brief historical perspective on fundraising in NA, look at some of the problems that may result from various efforts, and strive to show the relationship of Tradition Seven to this issue.

In looking at this topic, it is helpful to understand how fundraising started in our fellowship. Many early groups held a variety of activities such as dinners, picnics, and other social events to promote recovery, unity, and a sense of belonging. While these activities were not specifically intended to raise funds, a number of them turned out to be financially successful, allowing the host group to purchase additional literature or other supplies for their meetings. As the fellowship grew and the need or

want for additional services became greater, the purpose of some of these activities changed; instead of celebrating recovery, they were designed to raise funds.

As the fellowship continued to grow and more area and regional service committees were formed, the focus continued to change—in some instances, to make up for the perceived lack of funds being donated from the groups' Seventh Tradition collections. As time went on, more and more service committees began relying on this form of funding, reaching the point, at times, where the success or failure of an event such as a convention determined the area or region's ability to provide services and participate in the fund-flow. In other instances, groups, areas, and regions had such success with their social events that they began to put an extraordinary amount of time and effort into these activities, becoming invested in having a "successful" convention, dance, or campout.

A considerable number of problems arose from such practices. The accountability of service committees to their groups was affected as the committees began to rely upon these events instead of on contributions from the groups' Seventh Tradition collections for their funding. In some cases, the various service bodies began to get diverted from their original purpose by "money, property, and prestige." Some groups and service committees began to amass huge "prudent reserves," in some cases amounting to many thousands of dollars. For some groups and committees, this "prudent reserve" grew so large that the body holding it did not have to rely upon contributions for upwards of six months or more, despite the fact that in various fellowship service publications the recommended amount for a prudent reserve is one month's expenses. Merchandising efforts became a "business" in some cases, leading us away from the spiritual focus of our program. It became harder and harder to insure that donations to our fellowship came only from our members at various social events. And some members began to raise concerns that we could be perceived by those outside our program as a fellowship that is more involved with social functions and merchandising efforts than with helping addicts recover from the disease of addiction. As these

problems became apparent, members began to share their concerns and started questioning the need for such practices. Some of the questions focussed on the relationship between Tradition Seven and fundraising.

While this tradition specifically talks about self-support—declining donations from outside sources—some of the principles underlying the tradition, such as simplicity and faith, may prove to be of assistance in answering questions about funding our services. Our experience has shown that, as recovering addicts, all of our needs add up to the need for ongoing freedom from active addiction. To attain this freedom, we need the principles contained in the Twelve Steps and the Twelve Traditions of NA, recovery meetings where we can share our experience, strength, and hope, and other recovering addicts to help us apply these spiritual principles in our lives. These three things are simple; they do not require us to obtain college degrees or expend vast sums of money.

In our active addiction, most of us seemed to have one thing in common: self-centeredness. As we begin the recovery process, we learn that we "keep what we have by giving it away." We start to learn the value of being a contributing member of our fellowship and of society as a whole. We begin to learn the simple truth that if we want to keep attending NA meetings and help carry the message, we need to contribute our fair share financially as well as with our time and energy. Self-support, within the context of Tradition Seven, goes far beyond mere financial support. Along the way, we learn that contributing our fair share is one way in which we can express our gratitude for what has been freely given to us. Over time, we develop faith that as long we are doing what we're supposed to—practicing the principles of our program—the God of our understanding will take care of us and show us a new way to live.

When looking at the needs of the group, simplicity once again comes to mind. Our needs are simple: a place where we can hold our meetings, literature to help carry our message, and, in most cases, simple refreshments. We do not need spacious, luxurious meeting facilities, excessive quantities of literature, or refreshments of every type to attract addicts to our

meetings. The simplicity of our message and the effectiveness of our program is sufficient. We do not need large financial reserves if we have faith that the God of our understanding will take care of our needs. Our experience has shown that when a group's financial needs are not met, and that fact is communicated to the members, those needs are generally taken care of. The simplicity of our needs is reinforced by the simplicity of our primary purpose—to carry the message to the addict who still suffers. Our experience has shown that we must carry out this simple task to the very best of our ability, for it is the very essence of who we are and what we do in NA. We have discovered that if everything we do is done to fulfill that purpose, generally, we will find the funds necessary to do what we must.

Many groups and service committees have decided to avoid controversy by simply seeking to carry the message to the addict who still suffers. In this manner, they rely solely on attracting new members to their groups by striving to strengthen their personal recovery, working and living NA's Twelve Steps. As new members are attracted, groups grow, Seventh Tradition collections increase, and more money is available for group needs. Accordingly, excess funds are accumulated and passed on to the area, the region, and world services, as per our suggested fund-flow system. (For further information on this topic, please refer to IP No. 24, *"Hey! What's the Basket For?"*) As services are funded more efficiently, the NA message of recovery is carried farther and better than ever before. The result is that more addicts seek recovery through Narcotics Anonymous and more NA meetings begin. This approach is seen as practical and realistic by many members of our fellowship. These members have reported that frustration over lack of funds and the sense of urgency to raise money can be counterbalanced by the spiritual unity which results from this focus on our primary purpose.

One of the things that has become evident over the past few years, however, is that large segments of the fellowship want activities and merchandise. If we don't assist in these efforts, members may end up conducting them on their own. Whenever this has occurred, the resulting problems have had considerable impact on all elements of NA, affecting

our fellowship's overall success in achieving its primary purpose. We strongly believe that fundraising activities which divert us from the spiritual nature of our program are inappropriate and should not be encouraged within the fellowship. Social activities designed to enhance recovery and further unity and members' sense of belonging, however, are not only acceptable but should be encouraged.

We believe that fundraising for the sake of fundraising is questionable, at best. There may be times, however, when a group or service committee finds itself in extraordinary financial constraints and begins to consider holding a fundraiser. At such times, we suggest that careful attention be given to the following questions: Are the funds collected from ordinary Seventh Tradition contributions enough to support the group or service committee's actual needs? Are *wants* supplanting *needs*? Is the need for the fundraiser of such a nature that not holding it will result in our primary purpose going unfulfilled? In addition to these questions, we recommend that all aspects of sponsoring a fundraising event be carefully considered.

When these events are held, members of the hosting group or service committee should examine the event with respect to all our traditions, lending their collective experience, strength, and hope to these examinations. One of the major points to consider is the motivation for holding such an event. An examination such as this helps keep us in tune with our principles. The following general concepts have arisen from the experience of our fellowship, and we present them here as starting points for your consideration:

1. Fundraising activities at an NA meeting are not usually appropriate because they may detract from our primary purpose and can present an inaccurate impression of the NA message, especially in the eyes of the newcomer or the nonaddict visitor.
2. In order to follow the guidance of our traditions, a fundraising event should be planned and held by and for Narcotics Anonymous members.
3. In order to conform to the ideals of the Seventh Tradition, donations from nonmembers should not be accepted.
4. Since there are often times when we sponsor activities where there is a fixed charge for full participation, the term "donation" should not be associated with these types of fees. In this way, we are not confusing contributions with assessed charges for activities.
5. It must be determined whether the local NA community is willing and large enough to support the event.
6. All aspects of the fundraising event should be consistent with our goal of encouraging recovery from addiction. We should avoid hosting events which might encourage gambling, appear to offer "something for nothing," or award prizes that are either not recovery-oriented or that otherwise may be seen as being inappropriate. For example, a raffle prize such as a car or a television might make someone's living circumstances more comfortable, but at the same time may not be directly related to his or her recovery, whereas a prize of NA literature or tickets to an NA workshop or convention would be recovery-oriented. It should also be noted that, in many USA states and in some other countries, raffles are illegal. It may also be helpful to consider whether raffles—and especially cash raffles or lotteries—appeal more to the spirit of self-interest than the spirit of voluntary support implicit in our Seventh Tradition.

All of the solutions we see to the problems addressed in this article involve communication. We believe that improved communication about the needs of our service bodies would result in increased support from NA groups and members. Improved communication would improve the accountability of the service structure to our groups and members. Finally, we believe that improved communication would help us maintain our focus on spiritual principles like faith and trust, leading us away from fear, distrust, and self-centeredness.

Direct contributions

At last year's World Service Conference [1991], a number of motions were referred for recommendation to the World Service Board of Trustees. Among them were two motions related to the direct funding of NA services by NA groups:

"That the WSC encourage funding all levels of service by direct group contributions."

"That the WSC create a translations fund which only groups and individuals can make direct donations to."

1. *The fund to be administered by the WSO.*
2. *Priorities for translations to be determined by the Translation Committee."*

We believe that there are valid reasons to actively encourage the discussion of direct group contributions within our fellowship. We believe that further discussions may show that a direct group contribution plan might stand a better chance than the "fund flow" plan of providing adequate funds to each level of our service structure, while at the same time maintaining group autonomy, reinforcing the responsibility and authority of the NA group in service matters, providing motivation for regular fellowshipwide communication and service accountability, and promoting NA unity. However, we do not believe that earmarking direct contributions for specific purposes—whether for H&I, PI, or translations—allows the service structure sufficient flexibility to effectively coordinate the responsibilities assigned to it.

The earliest editions of our fellowship's service manual recommended direct group contributions to each level of service. Those manuals suggested that, after a group had paid its bills and set aside a little extra money for emergency use, "excess funds should be diverted to help NA as a whole. A group can do this by contributing to the area or regional committees which serve the group or through

contributions directly to the World Service Office of Narcotics Anonymous."

It wasn't until 1982, when the World Service Conference approved a revision of the service manual sections on the group, area, and region, that groups were encouraged to donate all their excess funds to the area committee. Area committees were then to donate *their* excess funds to the region, and the region's excess was to flow on to the world. This is the "fund flow" plan for funding NA services.

Various problems have been noted over the years with the "fund flow" plan. First, the *funds* often *don't flow*; they are frequently used up at the area or regional levels, leaving little or nothing to fund regional or World Service Conference operations. At the regional level, this has led to increasing dependence on profits from fundraising activities such as conventions, dances, memorabilia sales, and NA literature markups, and decreasing reliance on group support. At the world level, this has produced a stagnant budget and periodic shortfalls at a time when global NA growth rates are skyrocketing.

Direct group contributions to all levels of service may provide a more stable financial base for our service structure. Each group would decide what proportion of its excess funds it would contribute to its area committee, its regional committee, and its World Service Conference. Each level of service would be guaranteed a source of income as stable as the NA Fellowship itself. With this stability, service committees might be able to reduce their reliance on fundraising activities for operating income, thereby increasing their ties directly to the NA groups they serve.

Certainly, if an area committee found in any given month that it had surplus funds, it would be encouraged to directly donate them to other levels of service. The same would apply to contributions of regional surpluses. However, if an area or regional committee experienced surpluses month after month, it would probably want to inform the groups it served of the situation so that those groups could adjust their contributions accordingly. This would maintain the integrity of the direct contribution system while making allowance for periodic cash flow fluctuations.

Direct group contributions would reinforce the autonomy of the NA group. Each group would determine for itself how much it would give to each element of the service structure, based on its own evaluation of how well those elements were meeting the group's needs and the needs of NA as a whole. Our groups have created a service structure to serve their collective needs in better carrying the message, and should have responsibility for and authority over that structure. A direct group contributions policy may put the groups in a better position to carry out their responsibilities and may provide them with a better opportunity to financially impact the service structure.

If the groups were funding each level of service directly, all service bodies would thereby be encouraged to communicate effectively and directly with the groups. This would allow groups the most flexibility in deciding where their money goes. If groups were not aware of the work or needs of a particular service body, the chances would be great that they would choose not to participate in funding that body. Direct funding would also provide a way for each level of service to determine the level of support they had from the groups. If funds were not coming in, service committees would be able to infer one of three things: either the groups didn't have the money available, the groups didn't understand or know about what services had been requested, or the groups didn't support the work that was being done. As you can see, direct funding would also give the groups a greater opportunity to make their voice heard in service matters.

This is not to suggest that groups earmark contributions for translations, PI, H&I, or any other special purposes. The groups have created the

service structure not only to deliver services on their behalf, but to *coordinate* those services. In delegating to the service structure the authority necessary to fulfill its responsibilities, the groups have also delegated the authority to coordinate the allocation of service resources at each level of service.

In studying the financial condition and means of funding employed by several other fellowships, it became obvious that we are not alone in facing a money crunch at all levels of service. Direct contributions are not a magic answer that will relieve us of all our financial concerns. Our responsibility as members to fund the services we request is an issue that needs broad discussion. If we truly believe that the solution to our financial difficulties rests with our membership, then it makes sense to put the responsibility and ability to impact finances directly in the hands of our groups.

These recommendations are provided for information purposes only; they are not intended as a mandate given by the World Service Board of Trustees to the fellowship. We are not suggesting that we implement a direct group contributions plan at this time, but that this idea be a part of the discussion that we must begin to have as a fellowship concerning the funding of our services. We believe that a direct contributions plan could play a part in helping us to provide greater financial stability through enhanced group autonomy, responsibility, and authority. It might also encourage better communications between the service structure and the groups, provide more direct means of service accountability, and better promote the NA unity upon which our personal recovery depends.

Participation and decision making at the World Service Conference

For more than ten years, Narcotics Anonymous members have debated the question of who should participate in the decision-making processes of our World Service Conference. Some believe all conference decisions should be made directly by the NA groups, and only by the groups. Others believe all conference members should fully participate in all phases of its decision-making processes, from discussion to voting.

As a fellowship, we have recognized no hard and fast participation rule to be applied throughout Narcotics Anonymous. In 1989, our World Service Conference overwhelmingly approved a motion which replaced restrictive language on local voting in the *Temporary Working Guide to our Service Structure* with words that allow for variation in local practice:

"GSRs are the only voting members at ASC meetings; ASRs are the only voting members at an RSC meeting..."

was replaced with,

"Although individual area and regional guidelines differ regarding which participants may vote..."

Regarding participation in the voting of the WSC, however, it's been a different story. From 1982 through 1987, various motions accompanied by heated debate were presented to limit WSC voting to RSRs. A 1982 motion, tabled until 1983, was opposed by fully two-thirds of the voting participants. Each of four motions related to conference voting made in 1984 were defeated by an average of 80% of all voting participants. The following year, when yet another voting rights motion was made, fully two-thirds of conference participants objected to even considering it. With that, many members believed the matter to have been settled. They were mistaken.

In 1987, another motion was made to restrict conference voting rights to RSRs. Tabled to the next year, the motion appeared in the 1988 *Conference Agenda Report*. A package of papers for and against the motion was widely distributed by the WSC Policy Committee, and the World Service Board of Trustees prepared its own statement on the

matter. Following fellowshipwide discussion of the issue, the conference defeated the motion, 27 participants (36%) voting in favor, 40 against (53%), and 9 abstaining (12%). A breakdown of the voting revealed tremendous disparity of opinion between RSRs and the other conference voting participants. RSRs were split fairly evenly on the motion, with 27 voting yes, 24 no, and 7 abstaining. However, the trustees, conference administrative officers, and committee chairpersons were in virtually unanimous opposition to the motion, 16 voting no and 2 abstaining. RSRs cast *all* the votes in favor of the motion; 40% of the no votes were cast by non-RSRs. Clearly, the issue had not by any means been definitively settled.

Three years later, the motion to restrict WSC voting rights to RSRs was revived. The conference participants had not been given the opportunity to discuss this issue for any significant length of time prior to voting on the motion. The motion was introduced at the very end of the last of seven long conference days. Voting on the 1991 motion showed an overall 12% increase in support of restricting conference voting rights over the 1988 vote, with 35 yes ballots (48%), 28 no (38%), and 10 abstentions (14%). RSRs voted 31 yes and 21 no with 5 abstentions, an increase of 10% in support of voting rights restrictions. Most significant, perhaps, was the marked shift in votes cast by conference administrative officers, committee chairs, and trustees. A quarter of these trusted servants voted in favor of the 1991 motion, while none had approved the 1988 proposal; less than half voted con, and almost a third abstained. Lack of adequate discussion might account for some of the shift in favor of voting restrictions, but certainly not all of it. The movement to limit conference voting rights to RSRs, decidedly *not* laid to rest with the 1988 WSC meeting, appeared to be gaining strength.

Clearly, the question of who should vote at the World Service Conference is still an open one, requiring further discussion. It is our hope that your NA community will discuss this issue thoroughly. Our board believes that the voting rights issue is by no means a simple one, but that there are many subjects which need to be considered in relation to it. This issue will be a topic at one of the WSB panel presentations at WSC'92. To the best of our ability, we have presented below some of the arguments we feel need to be addressed in considering the issue of voting rights, along with brief summaries of the opposing points of view on each subject. While these are not the only arguments, they demonstrate the polarity of opinions held by members within our fellowship. We hope you find these summaries useful in your community's discussions of voting rights as you prepare for the World Service Conference meeting this April in Dallas.

Group conscience

RSR-only: "Our Second Tradition says that God speaks to our service structure only through the conscience developed in our groups. The decisions registered at the World Service Conference should reflect only the gathered conscience of the groups as expressed by the votes of RSRs."

All WSC participants: "The World Service Conference develops a group conscience when its members gather to consult their consciences, seek God's guidance, and make decisions. That group conscience is developed from discussion among all members of the conference, and is expressed by the combined vote of all conference participants."

Authority of members, groups

RSR-only: "Unlike some organizations, our members and our groups bear the final authority in NA. Only those representing members and groups should vote at the conference. If trusted servants other than RSRs vote at the WSC, they dilute the authority of the NA groups."

All WSC participants: "Members and groups are responsible for our common welfare, and group autonomy should not affect NA as a whole. With full participation, the interests and authority of members and groups at the conference is spoken for by RSRs; specialized experience of other trusted servants is blended into the WSC mix; the result is a balanced conference decision-making process which best serves our primary purpose."

Leadership

RSR-only: "Our 'leaders' are only trusted servants, taking their guidance from the conscience of the groups. In giving conference officers, committees, and trustees direction for the fulfillment of their responsibilities, only RSRs should vote because only they speak for the groups."

All WSC participants: "We carefully select our WSC leaders to serve us. When the conference makes decisions, we want full access to the insight and specialized experience of conference officers, committee chairs, and trustees. We allow them to participate fully in all phases of the WSC decision-making process."

Direct representation

RSR-only: "Because NA service authority arises from NA members and NA groups, conference decisions must be made on a representative-only basis. Other trusted servants should not vote on WSC decisions because they do not represent the conscience of any NA groups."

All WSC participants: "If the WSC was NA's government, passing laws and levying taxes, we would want representative decision making at the conference. We would also want a better-proportioned breakdown for representation; today, a region with 60 groups has the same WSC power as a region with 600 groups. However, the conference's concern is not to pass laws and levy taxes, but to serve. A mix of representation and specialized experience produces the most balanced conference decisions for NA."

Accountability

RSR-only: "When committee chairs, trustees, and WSC officers vote in service decisions, they set their own terms for how accountable they are to be held. This is inappropriate. Officers, trustees, and committees should take their direction from decisions voted on by those representing the groups—the RSRs—establishing the degree to which those trusted servants will be held accountable for their duties."

All WSC participants: "Unless conference officers, committee chairs, and trustees take part in voting on WSC decisions, they cannot be held accountable for the consequences of those decisions because they are not co-responsible for them."

Inclusiveness, equality, anonymity

RSR-only: "All NA members take anonymous, equal part in the conference's decision-making processes by voting in their home groups. When RSRs vote at the conference, they express the collective group conscience of all NA communities equally. To allow other trusted servants a special vote violates the spiritual principle of anonymity, setting a few members up with rights not given most members."

All WSC participants: "Officers, committee chairs, and trustees should have the same rights as representative members of the WSC. To exclude them from full participation in the conference makes them less than equal members of the WSC, specially set apart from other members. This is inconsistent with the spirit of anonymity."

Balanced decisions, primary purpose

RSR-only: "Our primary purpose is served best by balanced decisions. Balanced service decisions can only be made by those who do not have a personal stake in the outcome. Conference decisions made by NA group representatives—RSRs—are balanced because they are objective."

All WSC participants: "Representatives, trustees, committees, and officers all have stakes in the decisions of the conference. All of them, however, serve first in the best interests of NA as a whole. The insight and experience of both RSRs and other trusted servants are necessary parts of balanced service discussions and balanced service decisions."

Nature of the WSC

RSR-only: "The World Service Conference exists to carry out the directions of the groups. RSRs bring NA group votes together at the conference. Discussion is necessary only to provide new information."

All WSC participants: "The conference exists to draw together the best information available on issues at hand. For good decisions to be made, everyone must have the ability to cast a vote based on the information presented in conference discussions, not solely on prior instructions."

Partial participation

RSR-only: "Trustees, WSC committee chairpersons, and conference officers should offer insight and information in the discussions that shape a group conscience, but only RSRs should vote in expressing a group conscience."

All WSC participants: "If it is important to include trustees, committee chairs, and WSC officers in discussions, then it is equally important to include them in the decisions arising from those discussions. Otherwise, WSC votes do not represent the full circle of the conference's group conscience, but only a piece of it."

"...Ought never be organized..."

RSR-only: "Responsibility, not authority, is delegated by the groups to the World Service Conference. Decision-making authority resides only with the groups. By restricting conference voting rights to RSRs only, we keep our groups directly involved in all our fellowship's decisions."

All WSC participants: "When groups do not delegate decision-making authority to the conference, they must become highly organized in order to assess WSC issues and make decisions. This distracts the groups from their primary purpose."

We hope the preceding examples of some of the differing viewpoints throughout our fellowship have assisted local communities in their discussion of this topic. Since there is representation on both sides of this issue within the World Service Board of Trustees, the WSB could develop a comprehensive paper after the WSC'92 discussion, presenting both pro and con viewpoints, if the conference believes such a paper would be helpful.

Questions and answers to the proposed Fellowship Intellectual Property Trust

Early in January 1992, the Michigan Region submitted a series of questions concerning the Fellowship Intellectual Property Trust being proposed by the World Service Board of Trustees for approval at the 1992 annual meeting of the World Service Conference. The following are our answers to those questions. We hope they prove useful to you in your review of the material. For additional explanatory notes, see pages 1-7 of the handbook itself.

WSB Internal Affairs Committee

BACKGROUND OF THE DOCUMENT

Why is this presented as an "approval form" and not a "draft"? This question might be rephrased, "Why has the fellowship not been given a review-and-input form of the trust documents before being presented with this approval form?"

When preparing for the World Service Conference, the fellowship is asked to consider three kinds of proposals: new recovery literature (such as the daily meditation book), new handbooks for use by local subcommittees (such as the *H&I Handbook*), and policy statements like this year's trust proposal. The fellowship has established review-and-input period guidelines only for new recovery literature.

This is not to say, however, that input on material relating to the intellectual property trust has not been sought from the fellowship. In September 1990, a paper entitled "The NA Literature Trust" was distributed to all RSRs and to anyone else requesting it. In reviewing actions approved over the years by the fellowship through its World Service Conference, that paper defined the basic elements of the proposed Fellowship Intellectual Property Trust. Fellowship response to that paper, extensive review by the entire world service community of early trust

drafts, and specific direction from last year's conference resulted in the current approval form of the Fellowship Intellectual Property Trust.

Why was this developed? The Fellowship Intellectual Property Trust was developed to clearly demonstrate, in a single document, the relationships existing between WSO, Inc. and the WSC in regards to NA's intellectual properties. Until now, the decisions made by the WSC—and subsequently by WSO, Inc.—concerning those properties had not been compiled in one place; everything was *there*, but to get all the details you had to dig through many years' worth of WSC minutes, board and committee guidelines, handbooks, and correspondence. The trust puts all those decisions together in one place so that its easy to understand the relationship between the fellowship, the conference, and the office with regard to intellectual property administration.

What was the intent of this piece? The intent of the trust is to provide assurance to our present and future membership that NA's properties are duly protected from misuse by anyone, including the assigned trustee. NA's properties belong to no one individual, board, or committee, but are held in trust for the Fellowship of Narcotics Anonymous as a whole.

Who asked for this? The World Service Conference asked for this when it adopted the following resolutions last year. (Also see operational rules, Article I, Section 1, "Background of the Trust," pages 14-15.)

"To reaffirm and ratify that the ownership of all of NA's intellectual and physical properties prepared in the past, and to be prepared into the future, is held by WSO, Inc., which holds such title in trust on behalf of the Fellowship of Narcotics Anonymous as a whole, in accordance with the decisions of the World Service Conference."

"To reaffirm that the World Service Office, Inc., is the exclusive publisher and distributor of all World Service Conference-approved literature, including all books, pamphlets, handbooks, and other intellectual and physical properties, as directed by the Fellowship of Narcotics Anonymous through the World Service Conference."

"The World Service Office Board of Directors is entrusted with the responsibility for protecting the

Fellowship's physical and intellectual properties, including the Basic Text, and at the [discretion of the] Board of Directors... shall take legal action to protect those rights against any and all persons who choose to infringe upon this literature trust."

PAGE 1

What are some other options that don't fit our relationship? "Trust" being one option, what are some others? Probably the most obvious option is to leave things as they are now, but that is not significantly different from what is being proposed in the trust. Another option is to allow the trust properties to become public domain, which would mean they would belong to the community at large, unprotected, and subject to appropriation by anyone in or outside of the fellowship. No matter what entity is assigned the responsibilities, it needs to be given the responsibility to protect the properties and the ability to administer them properly.

PAGE 2

Will the italicized text be edited out of the final document? Will the explanatory notes be cut? What exactly will remain in? *Nothing* in the explanatory notes--the text found on pages 1 through 7--is being proposed for approval. Those notes are included only to help members understand certain key features of the trust as they consider approving it. Only the instrument (pp. 8-13) and the operational rules (pp. 14-32) are being proposed for actual conference approval. However, if the fellowship *wants* the explanatory notes to remain in the trust handbook for distribution and information purposes, that would not be a problem.

PAGE 8

In Article I, Section 2 of the trust instrument, why doesn't it say "all conference-approved literature" instead of "all NA literature"? The terms are essentially synonymous. As it stands today, in order for an item to be described as "NA literature," it must receive conference approval.

In Section 3, what is a "perpetual charitable trust"? Define. *Perpetual* means "never ceasing; continuous; enduring; lasting; unlimited in respect of time." A *charitable trust* is defined as a "fiduciary

relationship with respect to property arising as a result of a manifestation of an intention to create it, and subjecting the person by whom the property is held to equitable duties to deal with the property for a charitable purpose." A *charitable purpose* is thought of as the "accomplishment of objectives which are beneficial to the community or area." And a *fiduciary relationship* is "one founded on trust or confidence reposed by one person in the integrity and fidelity of another."

What costs and incidental expenses are anticipated? The only anticipated costs are the normal filing fees incurred in registering the trust instrument, attorney's fees for registration and amplification of applicable copyright and trademark registrations, and the incidental costs associated with the modification of fellowship documents (including WSO bylaws and possibly the *Temporary Working Guide to our Service Structure*) to reflect the conditions described in the trust instrument and rules. Exact costs, while not known at this time, would not be considerable.

What does "below" mean here? The rest of the document? The word "below" used in Article I, Section 3 specifically refers to Section 4, which describes the purpose of the trust.

PAGE 9

In Article II of the trust instrument, define "settlor." (The dictionary defines it as "a person who makes a settlement of property.") This simply states that the WSC is the creator of both the property being placed in trust and of the trust itself, and therefore maintains equitable interest in the trust property.

In Article III of the trust instrument, why doesn't it say "all conference-approved literature" instead of "all NA literature"? *Same as Article I, Section 2.* The terms are essentially synonymous. As it stands today, in order for an item to be described as "NA literature," it must receive conference approval.

What is meant by "modify or delete property"? This refers to the WSC's ability to revise existing literature and/or remove an item from the classification of approved NA literature.

What about coffee cups, the Basic Journal, and other products other than intellectual property?

(Also see Article II of the trust rules, "Intellectual Properties Held in Trust," page 17.) Coffee cups, chips and medallions, desk, chairs, and computers are all *physical* properties of the WSO corporation. These physical properties are held in a fiduciary trust and are administered within the same *general* parameters, by virtue of provisions in WSO, Inc. bylaws, as the intellectual properties described here. However, any *trademarks* displayed on those properties are *specifically* subject to the rules of use described in the intellectual property trust.

Article IV of the trust instrument refers to the trust operational rules (pp. 14-32). Are the rules separate from the trust and not filed with the attorney general? Because we are talking about "legal stuff," we need to use our terms in a very precise way here. The *trust* is a legal *arrangement*; it is not any of the documents associated with it. Both the trust *instrument* and the trust *operational rules* are meant to describe how the trust works—each, however, speaks to a different "audience." The trust instrument, describing the basic legal framework of the arrangement, is written to tell the government that we are settling our intellectual property affairs in a particular order recognizable to the courts. The operational rules serve as our fellowship's internal agreement about the details of the trust's actual administration. The trust instrument is like the articles of incorporation of the trust, and the rules like its bylaws. Of the two documents describing the trust, only the *instrument* must be filed with the attorney general. However, Article IV of the instrument links the operational rules to the trust in such a way that, once the instrument is filed, the rules also become legally binding on all parties of the trust.

PAGE 10

In Article V, Section 1, Item 6 of the trust instrument, what is meant by "take, keep control of, and preserve"? This means that the trustee (WSO, Inc.) has the duty to receive from the trustor (WSC) any intellectual properties that the WSC decides are to be included in the trust. The trustee must then properly register its possession of the property, preserve it in its original form, use it in the way described in the instrument and rules, and take

steps to insure that others do not misuse the intellectual properties.

In Item 7, what is meant by "make the trust property productive"? The trustee must make the trust property available in some useful form to all who would benefit from it, in accordance with the rules of the trust.

In Article V, Section 2 of the instrument, what is meant by "all other acts may be delegated"? What are some examples of acts delegated to others? The trustee may delegate *portions* of its duties—for instance, it may contract with an attorney to register copyrights for certain trust properties—given reasonable supervision by the trustee. However, the trustee may never transfer or delegate to another entity the *whole* of its administrative duties. The trustee may hire an attorney to represent its interests in a court of law; it may charge an employee with the responsibility to account for the income of trust properties; it may appoint someone to negotiate a business deal on its behalf. However, the trustee may *not* ask someone else to take over the role of trustee itself—at least not on its own authority. Only the trustor can reassign the rights and responsibilities of the trustee *in toto* to another party (see the rules, Article VI, pages 28-29).

Why has Article V, Section 3 of the instrument been included? It seems arbitrary. This section could really be labeled the trustee's "oath of office." It is a solemn pledge to be assumed by the trustee, acknowledging that wanton and willful neglect of its responsibilities will not be tolerated.

In Article V, Section 4 of the instrument, what are some examples of "powers conferred by statute"? Rather than provide an imprecise answer to this question, we have referred it to the WSO Intellectual property attorney. Michigan will be given the answer as soon as we receive it.

PAGE 11

In Article V, Section 4 of the instrument, can you name some examples for numbers 3, 4, 5, 8, 9, 11, 12, 13? While the "legalese" language found in these items is sure to be unfamiliar to most of our members, it is very common to these types of legal

documents. We will try to clarify the particular points as best we can.

3. How could "the form of business" be changed?

This item is phrased as if the trustee's corporation—the World Service Office—were being set up at the same time as the trust. Item 3 gives WSO, Inc. the authority to set up and incorporate a business enterprise so that it can fulfill the rights and responsibilities described in Article IV of the operational rules (print, warehouse, and distribute NA literature, etc.). It also gives WSO, Inc. the authority to modify the way the business is set up if such is found to be necessary for the fulfillment of its responsibilities as trustee.

4. What is meant by "manage and control"? This item gives the trustee (WSO, Inc.) the responsibility to properly register, protect, and regulate the use and licensing of the trust properties themselves—that is, the copyrights to NA literature and the registrations of our trademarks and service marks. It also gives the trustee the authority to put whatever proceeds or assets might come from the sale of literature (using trust copyrights) or NA memorabilia (using trust trademarks) to their most effective use.

5. How, to whom, and why would property be "encumbered, mortgaged, or pledged"? This is one of the standard clauses in trust instruments. It is usually intended to indicate that the trustee has been granted full authority to manage the trust property, especially for purposes of interaction with financial institutions. This power is very similar to a homeowner's ability to secure a mortgage on the equity in his or her house. It simply means that the trustee could use trust property (that is, copyrights and trademark registrations) as collateral in securing a loan, if that were held to be in the best interests of the trust. Only in a very severe situation should this power be invoked, and only as a final measure to save the trust itself.

5 and 6. Doesn't this put at risk the Basic Text and other properties? In an extreme case, giving the trustee the authority described in Item 5 creates the possibility that the text *could* be put at risk; the risk would occur, of course, only if the trustee actually pledged that particular copyright in securing a loan, something that would happen only if WSO,

Inc. had first done everything else possible to survive. The power to take out a lease described in Item 6, however, puts no trust property at risk.

8. Borrow money from whom? Why does this not say anything about excluding outside enterprises or being self-supporting? Item 8 allows the trustee to borrow money in the name of the trust, and to use the proceeds from sales of literature (using trust copyrights) or memorabilia (using trust trademarks) to repay the loan without allowing a claim to be made on the trust properties (the copyrights and trademarks) themselves. Most businesses avail themselves of credit-line services offered by financial institutions. WSO, Inc. has had a credit line of \$100,000 for several years now. It is the belief of the WSO board that this service is not an "outside contribution" since we not only repay the principal but also pay a fair price for its use. It is not thought much different from a manufacturer who extends thirty-day terms for payment on a printing bill.

9. This item simply authorizes the trustee to settle any legal actions taken against the trust should the trust itself be sued, and to release others from claims arising from disputes initiated by the trustee if such is deemed to be in the best interests of the trust.

11. Does this include writers? What does "administrative duties" mean? This item allows the trustee to hire or contract with people specifically to manage affairs related to the trust arrangement itself. Such "administrative duties" might require the assistance of attorneys to register copyrights and trademarks, accountants to keep track of the proceeds from the sale of literature and memorabilia, or administrative staff to compile necessary reports on trust activities, process trust-related correspondence, or evaluate requests to reprint literature protected by trust copyrights. Editorial staff could be used to draft or edit reports for these purposes, of course, but *this* item does not give the trustee specific authority to hire writers to help with the drafting or editing of literary projects being developed by one or another of the WSO boards or committees. The authority to spend money generated from the sale of copyrighted literature or memorabilia using trust trademarks to hire staff to provide "administrative, organizational, and logistical services to the World Service Conference" (writers

among them, should they be required) is detailed in Article IV, Section 7, Item 1 of the operational rules (p. 23).

12. This Item gives the trustee the authority to sign whatever legal documents it must sign in the course of carrying out its responsibilities.

13. This Item gives the trustee the authority to defend itself if it is sued and to file its own lawsuits against others, not only to protect the *trust property* but also to protect the *trustee* from liability, so long as its actions have been taken within the framework of its duties.

PAGES 11-12

What is the purpose of Article V, Section 5 of the instrument? Would it mean that new groups would not be able to get starter kits from the WSO? Would it mean they couldn't get literature if they couldn't afford it? This kind of provision is standard to trust instruments. Yes, this would allow WSO to provide new groups with starter kits, and yes, it would still be possible for the WSO to make arrangements to distribute literature in case of great need, should the office be directed to do so. (See the Trust Operational Rules, Article IV, Section 9—and specifically Item 2—on page 23.) The provision refers specifically to *financial* transactions only. This provision says that WSO, Inc. could *not* loan money to a member or group and could *not* guarantee a bank loan to a member or group. It may seem silly to say such a thing, since it is nearly impossible to imagine NA members or groups ever asking WSO, Inc. to lend them money or cosign for a new car. When we set up a charitable trust, however, the law requires that we spell out this particular aspect of the relationship between the trustee (WSO, Inc.) and the beneficiary (NA as a whole) in our trust instrument.

PAGE 12

In Article V, Section 6 of the trust instrument, define "indemnify." Is there any insurance policy? A different policy for the WSO board? What are some examples of "other persons"? Define "wrongfully consented to"; give possible examples. To indemnify means "to secure against hurt, loss, or damage." All this section does is provide that none of the mentioned persons will be

burned at the stake for making a simple error in judgment in the course of their duties, provided the error is made in good faith. The "other persons" referred to could include either those who are contracted to provide specific services for WSO, Inc. or who provide services on a voluntary basis at the behest of the corporation. If any of them are sued for something they've done in the performance of their duties, Article V, Section 6 of the trust instrument requires the trustor to protect them from personal harm.

Very recently, WSO, Inc. has extended its liability insurance coverage to provide this specific kind of protection for members of the WSO Board of Directors (including its officers), other volunteers on world service business, WSO employees, and those under specific contract to WSO, Inc. A single policy covers them all. Authorization for such insurance has been specified since 1987 in Article 8 of the WSO, Inc. bylaws.

Note that this section does *not* protect directors, officers, employees, or anyone else from any liability that may arise from wanton neglect of their responsibilities or from malicious acts. Nor does this section provide for protection against liability arising from "any act wrongfully consented to by the beneficiary or trustor." It may require a *lo-o-ong* stretch of the imagination, but picture this: What if the WSC were to direct WSO, Inc. to do something prohibited by the trust instrument, or if the fellowship at large were to pressure WSO, Inc. to do something illegal? Anyone associated with the trustee knowingly taking such actions would be held personally liable for the consequences of his or her actions, and would not be indemnified.

Why can an individual be sued by the trustee [WSO, Inc.], but an individual [associated with the] trustee can't be sued for their actions? Why does the trustee have more rights and protection than the beneficiary? It's true that both the trust instrument and the operational rules have provisions allowing the trustee, to file lawsuits in order to protect both itself and NA's literature and copyrights. (See instrument, Article V, Section 4, Item 13, page 11, and rules, Article IV, Section 11, pages 24-25.) The World Service Conference has stated, in no unclear terms, that WSO, Inc. is responsible to protect the

fellowship's literature and logos from anyone who threatens them, whoever those persons may be. The provisions referred to in the footnote simply restate the intent of our First and Fourth Traditions in the context of the entire fellowship's intellectual property rights: no individual NA member, no individual NA group has the right to take action benefitting themselves that would impair our common welfare or negatively impact NA as a whole in any serious way. If the fellowship were to forbid the trustee to protect NA's copyrighted literature from being altered or published at will by individual members or groups, the courts would interpret that as the fellowship's way of saying that they had abandoned their collective control of the copyrights to NA literature—to put it bluntly, we would lose our copyrights to the Basic Text and all other NA literature.

Let's clarify the matter of lawsuits and the indemnification provided to WSO directors, employees, and contractors. *Anyone can be sued!* Indemnification simply provides assurance that those who serve on our board of directors or who take employment at WSO will not be subject to personal financial ruin if they are sued for doing their job. They are given this kind of protection because it is conceivable that people put in such a position on our behalf may need it, and because our fellowship has refused to put them in that position without backing them up. This does *not* give them more rights than the beneficiary. Remember, the beneficiary is "the Fellowship of Narcotics Anonymous as a whole." In the normal course of trust activities, NA as a whole is not exposed to any liability at all; only the trustee is exposed to such liability. The only reason the beneficiary, as defined in this trust, is not provided indemnification from liability is because the beneficiary *has* no liability associated with the trust.

Why is Article V, Section 7 of the instrument there? Any public benefit or charitable organization applying for tax exemption must include such a provision in its organizing instrument.

PAGES 12-13

Regarding Article VII of the instrument, under what circumstances could "the trust purpose [be] fulfilled"? Under what circumstances could it "become impossible to fulfill"? This is a standard

provision in the articles of incorporation or bylaws of many nonprofit organizations. The trust purpose may be fulfilled either when addiction disappears or when a cure is found—granted, not a likely occurrence. On the other hand, it could conceivably come to be impossible for the trust purpose to be fulfilled if, for instance, legislation is enacted outlawing the association of known addicts.

PAGE 13

Regarding Article VIII of the instrument, why California and not Michigan? Because WSO, Inc., Trustee, is registered in the State of California, as it has been since it first opened its doors.

PAGE 17

Regarding Article II, Section 2 of the operational rules, does this include coffee cups, the Basic Journal, and other memorabilia products? What about "Reaching Out"? Trademarks and service marks, described in Section 3, are included among the trust properties. Use of these marks on coffee cups, the Basic Journal, or other memorabilia are subject to regulation by the trustee.

Reaching Out, specifically, is not currently copyrighted because the conference has not given any instructions to restrict its duplication. The only periodical copyrights specified as being held by the trust are the rights to *The NA Way Magazine*, described in Section 4.

Regarding Section 3, define "hybrid". How is permission obtained to use hybrid versions of the logo? How do areas, regions, groups, conventions, etc. get use of the logo? Must individual members obtain permission to use, develop, or wear the logo or hybrid versions? Hybrids of the NA logos are fairly common—for instance, the stylized NA initials with the "NA Tree" superimposed. Permission to use a hybrid should be sought in the same way as permission to use any of the logos themselves. To date, there has been a general understanding that elements of the fellowship were allowed to use the NA logos for NA purposes but not for personal gain. However, the only *written* policy currently extant concerning such use appears in a very simply worded motion passed by the World Service Conference in 1981. The motion reads, "The

name, Narcotics Anonymous, cannot be used on fliers for dances, conventions, etc. The symbol (the stylized NA initials) can be used on fliers."

(TWGSS'91, page 26.) A clearer written policy will be developed before long, stipulating in a more precise way how the logos can be used and under what conditions individuals, groups, and other elements of the fellowship could consider themselves to have already been given implicit permission to use them.

PAGES 17-18

Regarding Article II, Section 5 of the rules, does this mean that no literature will be originated outside the WSC Literature Committee? Is an individual, group, area, or region prohibited from writing literature? No. First, note that this section refers to *all* the world service boards and committees, not just the conference literature committee. Any material originating outside the world service community—in an individual's home, for instance, or in a group, area, or region—would have to be accompanied by a full copyright release before it could be incorporated into an NA literature project, as has always been the case.

Does this mean that no individual who may have a vast knowledge in a particular area of recovery and/or the fellowship may have his or her name printed? Though we do not print NA books or pamphlets showing the names of individual authors, that is not what this section refers to. This says that individuals who take any part, big or little, in helping create literature for NA must do for the fellowship's benefit, not their own. The copyrights will be registered in the trustee's name, protecting the entire fellowship's rights to the literature, *not* in the names of any individuals who may have had a part in the project. Creative members who wish to write and publish their own copyrighted recovery material under their own names are not prohibited from doing so.

If the trustor has constant control over literature from commencement to conclusion, does that include area or regional newsletters? No. This refers only to *trust* literary properties—materials created in the name of NA as a whole.

PAGE 19

Regarding Article III, Section 1 of the rules, does the way this is written exclude the creation of literature, etc., outside of the WSC/WSO—for instance, in groups or areas? No. This says only that the conference has sole authority with regard to literature created "for and on behalf of the NA Fellowship," referring to the *entire* fellowship.

Does this leave anything out (keytags, WCC cups, etc.)? No. What's being regulated is not the products (keytags, cups) themselves, but the NA trademarks and service marks used in *making* those products—*all* those products, no matter who their manufacturer may be.

Why is Article III, Section 2 included in the rules? Because our name and the use of the stylized NA initials (our two primary trademarks and service marks) and the White Booklet (the seed from which our Basic Text sprang) were created under the authority of the World Service Board of Trustees before the World Service Conference ever met. This section makes it clear that those items created prior to November 1976 are also subject to the trust, having been developed by the predecessor to the current trustor.

PAGES 19-20

Why is Article III, Section 3 included in the rules? The trustor itself, the World Service Conference, is responsible for developing literature and creating or revising trademarks and service marks. However, the conference is a decision-making body, not a working body. The conference usually farms out the actual work of developing literature to one or another of its boards or committees. This section precisely defines the relationship between the conference and those boards and committees, making it clear that the trustor itself has the final word on exactly how its trust responsibilities are carried out.

PAGE 20

Regarding Article III, Section 4, will there never be a time when groups will be able to revise the content or nature of trust properties? The groups have *always* had the ability to do so through the World Service Conference. Whether they will one

day be given more direct means, such as a group tally, is up to the conference.

It sounds like the Basic Text may be revised with only a ninety-day review period by WSC voting participants. Is this true? Yes. This reflects conference action taken in 1990, revising the WSC Literature Committee guidelines. The provision has appeared in the *Temporary Working Guide to our Service Structure* for the last two years. (See *TWGSS'90*, first item on page 19, "H," and top of page 39, item 10-A. Also see *TWGSS'91*, top third of page 19, "H," and top of page 23, item IV-A.)

PAGE 21

Regarding Article IV, Section 3 of the rules, define "fiduciary." A fairly thorough description of the fiduciary relationship appears on page 5 of the trust handbook in the explanatory notes. A shorter explanation appears on page 2 of this Q&A brief.

Are there possible pitfalls in Chapter Six, "The Twelve Traditions of Narcotics Anonymous," of our Basic Text due to bad grammar, vagueness, conflicting statements, etc.? In other words, can you foresee any situations where the trust or ownership of trust properties could be challenged by taking the traditions, WSC minutes, or the Temporary Working Guide out of context? There is always that possibility. However, no passage immediately springs to mind as presenting any obvious danger of that sort. On the contrary, three actions taken at WSC'91 put our fellowship's intellectual property affairs in very good order for the time being. For the text of those resolutions, see the either page 1 of this brief or the italicized paragraphs on page 15 of the handbook (Article I, Section 1 of the operational rules).

PAGE 22

Regarding Article IV, Section 4 of the rules, define "pecuniary." "Pecuniary profit" here means specifically "awards resulting from lawsuits."

Does this section conflict with the Trust Instrument, Article V, Section 4, Item 11 (p. 11)? No, this section does not conflict with the trustee's authority to hire people, granted in the instrument; it says specifically "that this provision shall *not* prevent payment to any such person of reasonable

compensation for services rendered to or for the trustee in furtherance of its purposes."

What are some examples of expenses? Members of the WSO Board of Directors are routinely compensated for their expenses associated with travel to and from board meetings—airfare, meals, and lodging. Another common expense is for phone calls used to conduct WSO board business.

Does this mean nonaddict authors for hire? Are more specific guidelines needed? While there is nothing in this section forbidding the hiring of nonaddict authors by the WSO, the WSC Literature Committee guidelines prohibit their use in the development of NA literature (Sec. 3-G). That seems to be sufficiently specific for our purposes.

PAGES 22-23

Regarding Article IV, Section 7, does Item 1 mean logos can be changed at any time? If what you mean by "logos" is the Narcotics Anonymous name, the design of the stylized NA initials, or the diamond in a circle, the answer is *no*. Changes in those trademarks and service marks can only be made by the World Service Conference.

Does Item 2 mean the trustee totally controls pricing of all literature? Yes—that is, WSO, Inc. controls the prices at which the office sells materials to others. This has been standard policy since the office's creation. WSO, Inc. does *not* control prices charged by local NA offices who buy their literature from WSO.

PAGE 24

Regarding Article IV, Section 10, define "review audit" and "certified process audit." The *review audit* occurs when a CPA comes into the office, reviews the accounts, prepares the annual financial statements, and certifies the integrity of the books with specific notes. This is the kind of audit currently conducted each year at the WSO and published in its annual report.

A *certified process audit* is more complicated, more time-consuming, and vastly more expensive. The accountants come in, review WSO financial policies, then track through every aspect of everything the office does that has to do with either incurring expense, paying out money, or receiving

payment. Once they've completed their job, they issue a comprehensive report and set of recommendations on WSO financial procedures along with the ordinary statements and certification. No certified process audit has yet been conducted at WSO.

Regarding Article IV, Section 11, Item 5, does this mean that WSO, Inc. can file a lawsuit without telling (or asking) the WSC if it thinks that it may jeopardize the success of that action? Yes. As we were putting the trust documents together, the only situation in which we imagined this occurring would be if one or more conference participants themselves were targets of a particular suit. Note also that the item says that prior notice cannot be withheld unless it "would demonstrably impair the trustee's ability to effectively protect the trust property." Should the conference ever suspect that notice had been withheld without due cause, the conference could—and should—require the office to demonstrate its case.

PAGE 26

Regarding Article V, Section 1, does this mean no copying of IPs? Yes.

Does this mean that no jewelry, clothing, or other items [displaying one of the registered NA trademarks] could be produced by individuals, groups, areas, regions, or convention committees? No, that's not what this means, at least not necessarily. Refer back in this brief to the question on page 6 regarding hybrid marks.

PAGES 26-27

Regarding Article V, Section 3, explain further the expenses of the inspection. Does this mean there needs to be a specific "concern" to justify a review? Does this mean that the fellowship can pour millions into the WSO via literature purchases and convention revenue, but must additionally spend its own money to review in detail how that money is spent? An exhaustive, on-site, hands-on inspection of the trust—that is, of WSO operations and records—could very well be very time-consuming, disrupting fellowship service activities, preventing the timely processing of fellowship literature orders, requiring key WSO directors to fly

into Los Angeles and key administrative staff to leave their duties so as to be available for questioning. Depending on the extent of the inspection, related expenses could range from the cost of flying in the designated members of the inspection team to those costs incurred in operational disruptions to the office.

Item 3 under "Conditions of Inspection" requires the RSC that requests the inspection to "detail its concerns and any particular areas of trust operations it wishes to inspect." Those concerns may be expressed in terms as generic as, "We have concerns that lead us to request a complete inspection of the trust." This provision was included solely to facilitate easy inspection of particular aspects of trust operations, should only limited areas be of special concern.

This section was developed to allow individual regions that are concerned about WSO operations the ability to inspect the trust for themselves. This provision goes far beyond the rights normally accorded the beneficiary under California charitable trust law. This section also specifies that the region requesting the inspection must pay the costs associated with such an inspection, so that the fellowship as a whole is not required to pick up the tab for satisfying one region's concerns. Of course, if more than one region were concerned about the trustee's activities, those regions could agree to combine their efforts and divide the costs equally, thus reducing the expense to any given region. And if there is truly widespread concern, the World Service Conference as trustor has the authority to order an inspection, on behalf of NA as a whole, at the trustee's expense. In fact, the conference has the ability to completely strip WSO, Inc. of its rights and responsibilities as fellowship intellectual property trustee should the need ever arise (see Article VI of the rules, pages 28-29).

GENERAL

Why is God not mentioned once in this document? The instrument and operational rules are, respectively, a legal document and a set of procedural guidelines. They focus on the strictly mechanical aspects of administering and safeguarding our fellowship's intellectual properties—that is, our message in print. They are designed to protect that deeply spiritual message, not to describe

It. We find the same phenomenon in the *Temporary Working Guide to our Service Structure*, where the word "God" appears only once—and that in an early narrative section, not in the actual guidelines themselves—and the phrase "Higher Power" not at all.

Why are groups and areas not mentioned? The trust details the mechanics of the relationship between the fellowship at large, the conference, and the World Service Office regarding our literature and trademarks. At this time, the groups and areas impact those things in our fellowship, via their regional service representatives, through the World Service Conference. Interactions between groups and areas and their RSRs are entirely up to local control, with practices varying widely from region to region. We felt it would be grossly inappropriate to try and "lay down the law," telling them how to handle their own autonomous interactions. Therefore, our description covers only the fellowship-at-large and the specific relations between the conference (with its RSRs) and WSO, Inc., leaving local matters in local hands.

How might things have been different if we had this trust in place during the Fourth Edition controversy? The illegal or "Baby Blue" text controversy? For those who don't recall, the Fourth Edition of our Basic Text was published in October 1987. In the course of transcription for the copy editing process, numerous whole lines of text had been dropped, resulting in great confusion. At WSC'88, the conference directed that the errors be corrected, resulting in the Fifth Edition.

The "Baby Blue" text controversy occurred late in 1990 and continued until the April 1991 WSC meeting. About a half dozen NA members and groups had taken it upon themselves to publish their own version of Book One of the Basic Text, taking portions of their copy from the Second Edition and other portions from the Third Edition, Revised. Their actions generated much divisiveness in NA in the United States. It was also feared that, if their unauthorized publication of copyrighted material went unchallenged, the fellowship's copyrights to the book would be jeopardized. One NA member identified as a key figure in the unauthorized publication was taken to civil court, where he agreed without a ruling from the judge to cease any activities

he may have been involved in, provided the World Service Office presented three questions related to the Basic Text for consideration at the World Service Conference. The conference responded to the questions by reaffirming WSO, Inc. as the fellowship's intellectual property trustee and sole publisher, directing the office board to take legal action, when necessary, to protect our literature and trademarks.

Had the Fellowship Intellectual Property Trust been in place in late 1987, it is unlikely it would have had any impact at all on the confusion related to publication of the error-ridden Fourth Edition. However, had it been in place in early 1990, we believe it is entirely possible that it could have had significant impact on the individuals who later published their own version of the text without authorization. Knowing that the fellowship had *clearly* expressed itself about the policies and procedures to be applied in matters related to NA literature and trademarks, they may well have decided to cancel their plans before they'd ever begun, thereby saving the fellowship much time, money, and anguish. And while some were in doubt in 1990-91 as to what legal action WSO, Inc. should take, the trust would surely have clarified for one and all the WSO board's responsibilities in appropriately responding to the unauthorized duplication of the fellowship's copyrighted materials.

What happens to the trust when and if the service structure changes? Article VII of the Trust Operational Rules describes clear procedures by which both the instrument and the rules can be revised to conform with any change in the service structure.

Will the approval of the Twelve Concepts for NA Service affect this document? No.

Can indigent groups continue to photocopy literature? No. To a certain degree, *any* unauthorized duplication of copyrighted NA literature puts those copyrights at risk, jeopardizing the common welfare of *all* the NA groups. Indigent groups needing literature should consult neighboring groups, their area or regional committee, or the World Service Office for assistance. Under no circumstances should they duplicate NA literature themselves.

Public relations and the traditions

The following is not a policy statement from the World Service Board of Trustees. It is intended merely to stimulate thought and discussion on the importance of our public relations and their effect on Narcotics Anonymous.

WSB External Affairs Committee

We know how important our relations with one another are in NA, because we need one another to continue recovering from addiction. But, even though our groups are autonomous, our fellowship needs more than just the support of our own members. Our community relations also contribute to the fellowship's growth and survival. And that's what this bulletin is about: the principles behind NA's public relations policy. First, we'll look at two reasons why our fellowship seeks good relations with the community. Then, we'll look at what NA's traditions say about our public relations activities.

Community relations—practical importance

It's a given in NA that, as recovering addicts, we have to share our recovery with others in order to stay clean. The same applies to our groups. Without newcomers, the most important people in our meetings are absent. Narcotics Anonymous maintains its vitality by fulfilling its primary purpose: carrying the message to the addict who still suffers.

What does that have to do with our public relations? Simple. NA cannot help addicts if they never hear of us, or if our reputation is such that addicts are advised to steer clear of us. True, NA will reach some addicts directly, good community relations or not. Our members will invite friends, family members, and coworkers who seek recovery to attend our meetings. Other addicts will hear of us at H&I presentations; if they need help, they'll know who to call.

The vast majority of still-suffering addicts, however, must be reached indirectly, through others in the community. Most addicts will only hear of us through media reports and announcements, through professional referral, or through direction given by members of the community-at-large—or they won't hear of us at all. To fulfill our primary purpose, we will need to seek good, cooperative relations with the community around us. We can't fulfill that purpose on our own.

Community relations—a spiritual path

In NA public information work, we acknowledge that we're "a part of," not "apart from" the community around us. We cannot play our part in fulfilling our fellowship's primary purpose on our own resources alone. And the actions we take to fulfill our primary purpose affect our community, not just our fellowship. Our group, our PI subcommittee, our ASC, our region, and our world services are but parts of a much greater endeavor—human society.

If humility means seeing oneself in proper spiritual perspective, then our community relations are a key indicator of our fellowship's spiritual condition. Public relations work offers us an opportunity, as a fellowship, to improve our spiritual condition. First, PI can help our fellowship remain teachable. As a spiritual society, as a recovery program, and as a social movement, Narcotics Anonymous can learn much from the society around us. Others have done many of the same kinds of things we seek to do. We can learn from them.

Humility also means recognizing our limitations. We don't have all the answers for every troubled person in our community; we don't even have all the answers for every drug addict in our community. In Narcotics Anonymous, one addict shares his experience, strength, and hope with another. Some of the problems related to addiction cannot be satisfactorily addressed that way, and require outside help.

NA is but one tool for addressing addiction, not the only tool. In many communities, a variety of organizations offer help to addicts seeking recovery. Some of them do so with great effectiveness. For whatever reason, some addicts might find recovery more readily through those programs than through

Narcotics Anonymous. We don't pretend to have cornered the recovery market. If others can offer help where we cannot, then more power to them.

Humility means recognizing the place we occupy in our community. We have a particular role to play, and a very useful one at that. Our role is different from others'. It's not necessarily better or worse than the role played by others who focus on addiction and recovery—it's just different. Our public relations, and our primary purpose, will best be served if we fill our place in the community with life and spirit, to the best of our ability.

Having considered some of the basic issues related to public information work, it's time to take a look at the specific guidance our Twelve Traditions provide for NA's relations with the community. We'll consider our public relations policy of "attraction rather than promotion." We'll look at what we're attracting people to, and whom we're trying to attract. We'll think about how NA relates to other organizations in the community. Finally, we'll touch briefly on the use of service centers in organizing and administering our public relations efforts.

Attraction

Our Eleventh Tradition tells us that "our public relations policy is based on attraction rather than promotion." One of the spiritual principles underlying that kind of public relations policy is humility. When we share our message in public, we state it simply and directly, rather than making overblown claims about Narcotics Anonymous. We have had what our members feel to be significant success, but we do not claim to have a program that will work for all addicts under all circumstances, or therapeutic views that should be universally adopted. All we say is that, if someone in the community has a drug problem, Narcotics Anonymous may be able to help. We've helped many addicts stop using, lose the desire to use, and find a healthy, productive place in society. We need claim nothing more than that to attract the still-suffering addict to our meetings, and to gain the goodwill of those in community who might refer addicts to us.

It should be emphasized, however, that "attraction rather than promotion" does not mean we do nothing

to make ourselves known in the community. It's not only alright, but encouraged, to get the word of NA's existence and usefulness out and about. We don't go about making wild, extravagant claims about ourselves, or downing the work of others. But we're not a secret society, either. Narcotics Anonymous believes in personal anonymity, not fellowship anonymity.

The Eleventh Tradition spells out only one public relations restriction in detail: "we need always maintain personal anonymity at the level of press, radio, and films." We discourage public media use of full-face pictures of NA members, or stories which identify NA members by name. We do this for two reasons. First, we must be able to assure newcomers that their identities as NA members will remain confidential. Second, we want to keep the public media focus on NA's credibility, not on the credibility of the person carrying the message.

The need to maintain personal anonymity in the public media does not prohibit the use of spokespersons. However, those spokespersons should appear not as NA members, but as special workers whose job is to speak for the organization, or as nonaddict friends of the fellowship. More will be said later of special workers, service centers, and their role in NA's public relations.

The Eleventh Tradition focuses on the need for personal anonymity only in the public media. At other levels, personal anonymity is a matter of personal choice. When we know someone with a drug problem, we may disclose to them our identity as recovering addicts and NA members if we think it might be helpful to do so. Likewise, members who make PI presentations at community events, sharing their personal recovery experience as well as general information about the NA program, have not compromised the Eleventh Tradition. So long as we maintain our personal anonymity in the public media, we are supporting the Eleventh Tradition.

Carrying the message

Why do we publicize the NA program? "Each group has but one primary purpose," our Fifth Tradition asserts, "to carry the message to the addict who still suffers." How can we judge the usefulness of a service project? By considering the extent to

which it will help our groups fulfill their primary purpose. PI's main job is to attract addicts to group meetings. As the Basic Text reminds us, "The group is the most powerful vehicle we have for carrying the message." (Basic Text, p. 65.)

But what message? It's important that public information subcommittee members be very clear on this matter, so that they do not convey inaccurate impressions of our fellowship to the community. Our Third Tradition says that "the only requirement for membership is a desire to stop using." In Narcotics Anonymous, it's clear that means "to stop using drugs"—not compulsive overeating or gambling or criminality or sex-seeking. The Basic Text goes even further: "The message is that an addict, any addict, can stop using drugs, lose the desire to use, and find a new way to live.... That is all we have to give." (Basic Text, 5th Ed., p. 65)

One thing more needs to be considered when we talk about the Third and Fifth Traditions and our community relations. Our fellowship's primary purpose is "to carry the message to the addict who still suffers"—and that means any addict still suffering. Our Third Tradition reinforces the utter lack of restrictions, save one, on membership. Many NA areas begin with groups started among addicts who come from the same social, economic, racial, ethnic, or cultural background. There's nothing wrong with that, provided NA grows to reach addicts of all backgrounds. It's important that our public information subcommittees take the time to carefully study their communities. That way, they'll discover the full range of the need for what Narcotics Anonymous has to offer. In the process, they'll also learn how to effectively publicize NA's solution to addiction throughout the community.

Relations with others

Our nonaddict friends have been instrumental in starting Narcotics Anonymous in many communities, and in helping NA grow. As we've already seen, Narcotics Anonymous really couldn't fulfill its primary purpose without the cooperation of others. We do, however, have certain traditions guiding our relations with other organizations, among them the Sixth, Seventh, and Tenth Traditions:

"An NA group ought never endorse, finance, or lend the NA name to any related facility or outside enterprise, lest problems of money, property, or prestige divert us from our primary purpose."

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

"Narcotics Anonymous has no opinion on outside issues; hence, the NA name ought never be drawn into public controversy."

We seek to provide helpful information about the NA program to others in our community. We seek to cooperate with others as much as we can, as members of the community. At the same time, we maintain a clear distinction between NA and other organizations. We neither endorse nor oppose the work of others. We do not provide funds for the work of others, and do not accept outside funding for our own activities. NA has a place in the community, and it's NA's responsibility to maintain that place.

An area's public relations efforts ought to be supported entirely by its members and groups through its area service committee. Local businesses, government agencies, or civic organizations may approve so heartily of what we do that they offer advertising funds to help us carry our message. Public information subcommittees are encouraged to decline that kind of support, well-intentioned as it is. Narcotics Anonymous needs to pay its own way.

However, it should be noted that self-support questions are not always black-and-white. A phoneline ad in the local paper, annotated "sponsored by John Doe Chevrolet," would clearly denote an outside contribution. However, most American TV and radio stations provide a certain amount of free public time to public-benefit organizations. Some transit companies offer reduced busbench rates to nonprofit endeavors. On the one hand, these could be considered "outside contributions." On the other hand, to decline them would be the same as to decline to drive on publicly-funded roads while on a Twelfth Step call. Each public information subcommittee will have to exercise its own best judgment in such cases.

There is one final matter to keep in mind when considering our relations with other organizations. In

order to maintain its focus, Narcotics Anonymous has established a tradition of neutrality on public issues. We do not take positions as an organization on anything outside our own specific sphere of activity. Narcotics Anonymous does not express opinions, either pro or con, on civil, social, medical, legal, or religious matters. We do not even take stands on secondary addiction-related issues, such as criminality, law enforcement, drug legalization or penalties, prostitution, HIV infection, or free needle programs. We believe our sole competence is in providing a place where suffering addicts can identify with others like themselves who've experienced substantial recovery from addiction. To remain free from the distraction of controversy, we focus our energy on what we do best, and only on that.

Community service centers

Public information work requires attention to detail, careful record-keeping, and consistent follow-up. Responsible administration of PI affairs can take a great deal of time—perhaps more time than subcommittee volunteers have available. To assist in the administration of PI services, some areas and regions have created service centers, staffed by special workers.

"Narcotics Anonymous should remain forever nonprofessional," our Eighth Tradition says, "but our service centers may employ special workers." We don't have paid counsellors at our group meetings.

Recovery is freely shared, addict to addict. Public information work, however, is not usually the kind of addict-to-addict personal sharing the first part of the Eighth Tradition refers to. Our goal is to provide consistent, responsible service, so that as many addicts as possible can find their way to our meetings. If your area needs additional help doing this, a service center might provide that help. For information on the nuts and bolts of opening and operating a community service center, contact the World Service Office.

Good community relations are vital to the fulfillment of NA's primary purpose. Without the help of others in our community, many addicts will never hear of Narcotics Anonymous. We have a responsibility to maintain our relations with the community, so that our message is carried as widely as possible, and so that, in turn, we serve our community as effectively as possible. For our fellowship's own well-being, we need to learn as much as we can from other organizations in our community, and to humbly acknowledge our place in the community. We in Narcotics Anonymous are "a part of" the larger community around us, not "apart from." The Twelve Traditions provide specific guidance for our public relations activities. But without the humble desire to serve our fellow addicts, we'll have no message to carry, and no fellowship to publicize.

A report on the NA literature trust

This article was generated jointly by the World Service Board of Trustees and the WSO Board of Directors in September 1989 in response to the needs of the fellowship. It represents the views of those two boards at the time of its writing.

The substance of NA's recovery message appears in its literature. There's a process that exists to allow that literature to be available to the NA Fellowship. Our adherence to this process assures the consistency of our message.

After a piece of literature is approved by our World Service Conference, it is copyrighted and published by NA's world service corporation, World Service Office, Inc. Once copyrighted, no one may publish NA literature—altered or unaltered—without the permission of WSO, Inc. Not only is this a legal condition, but it also reflects the instructions of the World Service Conference. This copyright protects our printed message, both in English and in translation, from distortion.

From time to time, questions about NA's literature copyrights are asked by members of the fellowship. Questions commonly asked include, What authority has the World Service Conference given to World Service Office, Inc., to protect our copyrights? How were the rights to NA's Basic Text initially transferred to WSO, Inc.? Why has the World Service Conference produced five editions of the Basic Text? Can NA members or groups reprint NA literature? This report serves to answer those questions.

WSO, INC.— NA'S LITERATURE TRUST

Narcotics Anonymous, as we know it today, began in 1953 in Southern California. For many years, the fellowship grew very slowly, and had little organization. In 1971, a membership business

meeting at our first world convention decided that the fellowship should open a World Service Office. This office would publish NA literature, and serve as an information clearinghouse for new groups. At a similar meeting held at our fourth world convention in 1974, officers were elected to a board of directors for this office; these officers were directed to incorporate the WSO. On January 25, 1977, the corporate charter and bylaws were filed with the State of California. The World Service Office became a legal entity.

During the 1982 meeting of the World Service Conference, participants discussed the office's place in the NA service structure. Participants found one article of WSO's bylaws particularly troubling. Though that article clearly stated that WSO, Inc. "operates under the guidelines of the Twelve Traditions," it also asserted that WSO was "fully independent of... the Narcotics Anonymous Society." A motion was passed which directed WSO to amend its bylaws by deleting language that made WSO completely independent from NA, and incorporating in its place the following language:

That the WSO, all members, directors, and officers shall be and are subject to, and will abide by, motions adopted at each WSC meeting and implement decisions reached by the WSC as they pertain to the operation of the WSO. [See Note #1 at the end of this bulletin.]

The 1982 World Service Conference participants also discussed the need to clarify WSO's role in the publication of NA literature. Another recommendation, approved as part of the motion already referred to, stated that "the WSO was legally created to be the publishing arm of Narcotics Anonymous as a means of accurately reproducing the message of recovery. It is appropriate and essential that all publications used by NA be [reproduced] under the direct control of WSO." When approving these and other recommendations affecting WSO's bylaws, the 1982 conference provided that "these changes [be held] in abeyance... [for] a period not to exceed one year. We, [the World Service Conference of Narcotics Anonymous], will at that time vote to reaffirm same."

At the 1983 World Service Conference, the chairperson of the WSO Board of Directors

presented participants with revised WSO bylaws. "We at the World Service Office board have voted on these changes," the board chairperson related in his report, "and we would like the approval of the World Service Conference." (See Note #2.) The WSO board chair then proceeded to read aloud every section of the 1982 bylaws which had been revised, referring participants to printed copies of the new bylaws. The conference offered no objection to the revised bylaws.

Section 15.02 of the 1983 bylaws directly addressed some of the 1982 conference's primary concerns:

15.02. *All members, Directors and officers of this corporation shall be, and are, subject to, and will abide by, the principals of the "Twelve Traditions" of Narcotics Anonymous Society as set forth in the pamphlet identified and entitled as "Narcotics Anonymous" and shall further abide by, motions adopted, at each WSC meeting and implement decisions reached by the WSC as they pertain to operation of WSO. It is herein specifically acknowledged that WSO acts as a fiduciary [see Note #3] in its dealings with WSC and the fellowship of Narcotics Anonymous and that the net proceeds resulting from the sale and distribution of any literature and/or other materials for WSC and the fellowship is received by WSO.*

On August 15, 1987, the World Service Office Board of Directors adopted new bylaws. Those new bylaws reflected the intent of 1983's section 15.02, while providing additional detail concerning protection of NA literature and trademarks.

Article 2. Objectives and Purposes.

...A specific purpose of the corporation shall be to hold in a fiduciary capacity the rights to, by license agreement from Alcoholics Anonymous General Service Office, the use, control, publication and management of the Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions as adapted by Narcotics Anonymous...

A specific purpose of the corporation shall be to hold in a fiduciary capacity the ownership rights to the control, use, printing, duplicating, sales, distribution, licensing for production, printing, duplicating, sales and use of all of the intellectual

properties, logos, trademarks, copyrighted materials, emblems or other intellectual and physical properties of Narcotics Anonymous, the spiritual fellowship of Narcotics Anonymous as a whole and such boards and committees of the World Service Conference as may be directed by the World Service Conference.

A specific purpose of the corporation shall be to control and manage the production, printing, manufacturing of the properties of the spiritual fellowship of Narcotics Anonymous and offer said properties for sale to the fellowship and general public...

A specific purpose of the corporation shall be to publish and distribute periodicals written or prepared by and for the fellowship of Narcotics Anonymous as the corporation may be directed to by the World Service Conference...

The WSO corporate bylaws adopted in 1987 continue in force as of this writing. In accordance with the direction of NA's World Service Conference, the World Service Office corporation holds the copyrights to all NA literature in a charitable trust (see Note #4) on behalf of the entire Fellowship of Narcotics Anonymous.

SUMMARY:

GENERAL TRUST FOR NA LITERATURE

In 1971, the NA Fellowship officially designated the World Service Office as its publishing house. In 1974, the fellowship directed the World Service Office to become a corporation. In 1982 and 1983, the World Service Office corporation's role as NA's literary trustee was clarified by the World Service Conference. The corporate bylaws of 1983 reflect the conference's specific intention. They state that "WSO acts as a *fiduciary*"—that is, someone who is given something, subject to the direction of the party who has given the thing—"in its dealings with WSC and the fellowship of Narcotics Anonymous." NA books, pamphlets, and service guides are developed and approved by the World Service Conference. Then, they are given to WSO, Inc., to be published for the fellowship, and to be legally protected on the fellowship's behalf from expropriation or distortion by unauthorized parties, subject to the direction of the World Service Conference.

BASIC TEXT TRUST

As for all NA literature, the copyright for our Basic Text is held in a charitable trust by World Service Office, Inc., which acts at the direction of the World Service Conference. After three years of work by the WSC Literature Committee, the text, formally titled *Narcotics Anonymous*, was approved by the World Service Conference in May 1982.

On September 15, 1982, the chairman of the World Service Conference Literature Committee executed the following document (see Note #5):

As of September 15, 1982, the World Literature Committee of Narcotics Anonymous, 890 Atlanta Road, Marietta, Ga., 30060, by authorization of [the] chairman thereof, release in full and turns over all release forms, copy wrights, and any and all material contained in pertinent to the Narcotics Anonymous Book and the stories of Narcotics Anonymous Members to be included in the Narcotics Anonymous Book, to the World Service Office of Narcotics Anonymous, Inc., Box 622, Sun Valley, Ca., 91352, ...to be used as directed by the World Service Conference of Narcotics Anonymous in session May 5 through May 9, 1982. [sic]

This document does two things. First, it satisfies the requirement of the United States Copyright Law for transfer of copyright. (See Note #6.) Second, it creates a charitable trust under California law (see Note #7), where the World Service Office is the "trustee," the WSC Literature Committee is the "trustor" or "grantor," and the members-at-large of the Fellowship of Narcotics Anonymous are the "beneficiaries."

This charitable trust, including both its trustee (WSO, Inc.) and its beneficiaries (the members of the NA Fellowship), is subject to the jurisdiction of the Superior Court of the State of California. (See Note #8.) The trust obligations of the WSO have been set forth at the World Service Conference that was held in Santa Monica in May 1982.

BASIC TEXT— FIRST THROUGH FIFTH EDITIONS

Approval form

In November 1981, the approval form of Chapters One through Ten of the Basic Text were released to the fellowship. In February 1982, the approval form of forty-seven personal stories intended for publication in the Basic Text were released to the fellowship. At the May 1982 meeting of NA's World Service Conference, the entire Basic Text was approved. (See Notes #9, #10.)

First Edition

Having no experience in publishing a full-length book, publication of the First Edition was a very difficult job for the World Service Office. In addition to major problems with the printer initially chosen to publish the book, conceptual problems arose. In the course of preparing the approval-form book for publication, it was noted that portions of the essays on Traditions Four and Nine made it appear that the NA service structure should not be considered a part of Narcotics Anonymous. The following are the two paragraphs in question; note especially the italicized text.

From the essay on Tradition Four: "Are we truly autonomous? What about our service committees, our offices, activities, hot-lines, and all the other things that go on in NA? *The answer is that these things are not NA.* They are services we utilize to help us in our recovery and to further the primary purpose of our groups. Narcotics Anonymous is a Fellowship of men and women, addicts meeting in groups and using a given set of spiritual principles to find freedom from addiction and a new way to live. *All else is not NA.* Those things we mentioned are the result of members caring enough to reach out and offer their help and experience so that our road might be easier. *Whether we choose to utilize these services is up to the group.*"

From the essay on Tradition Nine: "The Ninth Tradition goes on to define the nature of the things that we can do to help NA. It says that we may create service boards or committees to serve the needs of the Fellowship. *None of them has the*

power to rule, censor, decide, or dictate. They exist solely to serve the Fellowship, but they are not a part of Narcotics Anonymous. This is the nature of our service structure as it has evolved and been defined in the NA service manual."

After much discussion, the WSO Board of Directors and the World Service Board of Trustees agreed that the portions appearing above in italics should be removed from the book before publication of the First Edition. In response, the chairperson of the WSC Literature Committee attempted to revoke the earlier release of rights to the Basic Text. However, when the World Service Conference met in May 1983, no motion was made to uphold the literature chairperson's action. On the contrary, new WSO bylaws were accepted, clearly stating that NA literature should be held in a charitable trust by the corporation. The WSO-copyrighted First Edition was officially released on April 27, 1983 by the World Service Office, using the fictitious business name of CARENA Publishing Company.

Second Edition

Conference minutes of 1983 reflect that an amended motion was passed, directing "that our book be completely returned to its [original] approved form in subsequent printings." (See Notes #11, #12.) The Second Edition of the Basic Text was released on September 28, 1983, with the missing lines reinserted. The copyright holder was again listed as CARENA Publishing Co., a fictitious business name of World Service Office, Inc.

Third Edition

One year after the conference directed WSO to reinsert the missing lines, the WSC decided that the issue should ultimately be settled directly by the membership of Narcotics Anonymous. In 1984, regional service representatives were asked to poll their groups on the following question: Should the wording of the essays on the Fourth and Ninth Traditions be as reflected in both the original approval form and the Second Edition, or as reflected in the First Edition? Their responses were to be mailed to the conference chairperson within sixty days of the end of the conference, and prior to the printing of any more books by the World Service Office. A change from the language of the Second

Edition was to require a two-thirds vote. The results were to be published in the *Newsline*. (See Note #13.)

The question was submitted to the fellowship in a seven-page document which included the proposed changes, plus the reasons both for making the change and for keeping the text as approved. The response was thirty-six votes in favor of changing the text, and eight against changing the text. Therefore, at the next printing—the Third Edition—the words originally deleted in the First Edition were again deleted, this time in response to a direct vote of the fellowship. The Third Edition was formally released on October 20, 1984.

Editing ordered which ultimately resulted in Fourth Edition

On May 3, 1985, the WSC approved a motion "that the WSO be instructed to have the Basic Text professionally edited to ensure consistent and correct use of capitalization, verb tenses, gender, singular/plural endings, and other grammatical errors and that the edited text be returned to the Literature Review Committee [at the time, a division of the WSC Literature Committee] for acceptance and approval prior to printing and distribution." (See Note #14.)

One RSR suggested that, once the edit was completed, the text should be sent out for a fellowshipwide review prior to publication. The conference engaged in heated discussion of this suggestion. However, because the required editing would affect only matters of grammar, not conceptual issues, the discussion ended with the WSC strongly in favor of allowing publication of the edited text after review only by the Literature Review Committee. (See Note #15.)

Work on the editing project was begun late in 1985, but was not completed before the 1986 annual meeting of the World Service Conference.

Third Edition, Revised

At the 1986 WSC meeting, a substantially revised version of NA's Little White Booklet, developed by the World Service Board of Trustees, was approved by the conference. (See Note #16.) The motion to approve the revised White Booklet stated specifically that the Basic Text should also be revised to reflect

the changes in the White Booklet. The revised text, known as the Third Edition, Revised, was released in November 1986.

Fourth Edition

While the Third Edition, Revised, was being put into production, the edit mandated by the WSC in 1985 continued. The editor, working from a typescript of the Third Edition, completed his work in mid-1986. On July 30, 1986, the WSC Literature Committee chairperson mailed the edited version to members of the Literature Review Committee. The edit was approved by the Literature Review Committee at its October 1986 meeting in Charlotte, North Carolina.

The original 1985 motion which mandated the editing of the Basic Text required only that the Literature Review Committee approve the edit prior to publication of the Fourth Edition. The conference had not asked the WSC Literature Committee to return the edited book to the World Service Conference, nor had the WSC directed the committee to send the edited text out for fellowshipwide review prior to publication.

However, in the November 1986 *Fellowship Report*, the committee chairperson wrote, "During the course of their review, the Literature Review Committee came across six sentences which are... inconsistent with the *Newly Revised White Book*," approved by the WSC in April 1986. Those six sentences were not found in the portions of the Basic Text drawn directly from the White Booklet. However, they conflicted with the conceptual spirit behind the changes that had been made in the booklet.

Literature Review Committee minutes relate that the committee "was in favor of making these additional changes, however, the Literature Review Committee decided to request a broader group conscience by referring the matter to the World Service Office Board of Directors and the Board of Trustees. The Literature Review Committee had decided that if the Board of Directors and the Board of Trustees were also unanimously in agreement, the Fourth Edition would then be printed."

Following discussions with the directors and trustees, a decision was made to defer publication of the Fourth Edition until the World Service Conference could consider the additional changes necessary to

bring the text in line with the revised White Booklet. On April 28, 1987, in his report at the World Service Conference annual meeting, the WSC Literature Committee chairperson stated that, "pending Conference action on the white book consistency motion... the World Service Office will be able to proceed with the printing of the Fourth Edition." (See Note #17.) On April 29, the World Service Conference voted to make the five suggested changes in Book One of the Basic Text, but did not approve the sixth change, which would have altered one of the personal stories in Book Two. (See Note #18.)

The edited Basic Text, incorporating the 1986 revision of the Little White Booklet and the five changes authorized in 1987 by the World Service Conference, was published as the Fourth Edition on October 27, 1987, two and a half years after the original motion to edit the Basic Text was passed by the World Service Conference.

Fifth Edition

The edited Fourth Edition text differed significantly from both the Third Edition and the Third Edition, Revised. This was due partly to the editing (which was intentional), and partly to a series of WSO production errors (which were unintentional). When the typescript of the Third Edition, from which the Fourth Edition editor worked, was created, the transcriptionist skipped a number of lines of text at a time, in twenty-five separate locations throughout the book. At no time prior to publication of the Fourth Edition was the editor's typescript proofread against the published Third Edition text; hence, the original transcription errors went unchecked.

Early in the winter of 1988, the World Service Office and the WSC Literature Committee began hearing complaints about the differences between the Third Edition, Revised, and the Fourth Edition. Early in April 1988, the entire WSO staff was diverted from its routine work to conduct three separate rounds of line-by-line comparisons between the Third Edition, the Fourth Edition editor's typescript, and the published Fourth Edition. The findings of the WSO staff were reported in full to the World Service Conference. Following a meeting of the conference as a committee of the whole to discuss a variety of

possible remedies, the WSC approved a motion to reinsert the missing lines from the Third Edition back into the Basic Text. In the meantime, "the Fourth Edition, with current errors, [was to] continue to be sold as Conference-approved literature until such time as the corrected Fifth Edition [was] ready." The conference passed an amendment to the motion which specified that the resulting Fifth Edition could not be revised any further for five years. (See Note #19.)

In the course of considering the motion which created the Fifth Edition, an amendment was proposed which would have specified that "this motion would be acted upon following a special ballot sent to RSCs.... The RSCs would be requested to reply in 30-60 days.... *Intent:* To collect a Fellowship-wide group conscience and unify this Fellowship [behind the] WSC decision." So great was the desire to put the Fourth Edition controversy in the past, the conference voted not to even consider this amendment. (See Note #20.)

Immediately following the passage of the motion creating the Fifth Edition, the conference considered—and defeated—two additional motions. Both were very similar in language, the major difference being that the second stated its intent. The motions sought to direct the World Service Office to publish the Third Edition, Revised, rather than the corrected Fourth Edition (or, as it was known, the Fifth Edition).

The second motion read: "That the World Service Conference direct the World Service Office to immediately cease the publication and sale of the fourth edition of our Basic Text, Narcotics Anonymous, and immediately begin publication and sale of the third edition revised of our Basic Text, Narcotics Anonymous. *Intent:* To prevent the sale of unapproved literature by the WSO. The editing of our Basic Text and subsequent approval by the LRC so far exceeded any reasonable interpretation of the authority granted by the motion to edit the Basic Text as to require that the fourth edition be treated as new literature, and as such, be subject to the standard review and approval process." Both motions were defeated by overwhelming majorities. (See Note #21.)

SUMMARY:

THE BASIC TEXT CHARITABLE TRUST

In 1982, trust rights to the Basic Text were given unconditionally to World Service Office, Inc., to be held by the corporation in a charitable trust on behalf of the NA Fellowship, subject to the direction of the World Service Conference. Though a challenge to that trust was raised by the WSC Literature Committee chairperson early in 1983, that challenge was not placed on the agenda of the 1983 meeting of the World Service Conference, and fell moot. Successive editions have been created as the direct result of action taken by the World Service Conference to revise the original version. Those editions have also been copyrighted by the World Service Office corporation, and the Basic Text continues to be held in a charitable trust by the corporation on behalf of the members of the NA Fellowship.

CAN NA MEMBERS OR GROUPS REPRINT NA LITERATURE?

The most commonly asked question is whether members or groups of members of the fellowship at large have the right to translate, edit, and reprint the Basic Text or other NA literature on their own. The answer is "no." First of all, NA literature—including the Basic Text—is the copyrighted property of World Service Office, Inc. Under United States copyright law, only the World Service Office has the right to reproduce, translate, or prepare new versions of NA literature. (See Note #22.) Because of the international copyright protection afforded by the Berne Copyright Convention, the World Service Office has the same rights in eighty other countries around the world. (See Note #23.)

The World Service Office corporation holds these copyrights in trust on behalf of the NA Fellowship, subject to the direction of the World Service Conference. To date, the World Service Conference has not directed the World Service Office to grant permission either to individual members or groups of members of the fellowship at large who request to reproduce the text. (See Note #24.) In fact, the most recent directive from the World Service Conference has been that the World Service Office was to *prosecute* a party which had infringed the

fellowship's rights. In 1989, a trustee from Philadelphia "requested that the Conference give general consent to the WSO Executive Director and its Board of Directors to proceed with the legal matter relating to the illegal production of NA materials or any extralegal matter relating to the situation, as they see fit. [The request was] approved by unanimous consent." (See Note #25.) While the consent given by the conference in this instance related to one particular case at hand, it also established a precedent for the kind of principles to be applied in similar cases.

If the members of the fellowship feel that their rights are being violated by the "trustee" WSO, they have the right to request that the protector of charitable trusts in California, the California Attorney General, investigate and, if appropriate, file an action to prevent the misuse of trust property. They cannot resort to simply taking the property and using it themselves. In fact, WSO has an affirmative duty to take steps that will stop actions that will result in a loss to the trust. (See Note #26.)

Therefore, under United States copyright law, only the World Service Office has the right to reproduce the Basic Text or prepare new versions of the Basic Text. (See Note #27.) The fact that the copyrights may be held in trust does not affect the legal right and responsibility of WSO to enforce the copyrights on behalf of the fellowship.

NOTES

1 Minutes, WSC'82, pp. 59-64. The published minutes of the 1982 meeting of the World Service Conference do not bear printed page numbers. For the purpose of these references, page numbers in the WSC'82 minutes have been counted from the first page of recorded proceedings. That page bears the legend, "Wednesday evening, May 5, 1982," at the top. In counting page numbers, blank pages within the body of the published minutes were also counted.

2 From a transcript of WSC'83 proceedings.

3 *Fiduciary*, as defined in the 1971 edition of the *Oxford English Dictionary* (Unabridged Version): "In Rom. Law *fiducia* denoted the transfer of a right to a person subject to the obligation to transfer it again at some future time or on some condition being fulfilled. Adj.

"1b. Of or pertaining to a trustee; pertaining to or of the nature of a trusteeship.

"2a. Of a thing: In trust of a person; held or given in trust.

"2b. Of or pertaining to something held in trust.

"Cf. *fiducial*, f. *fiducia* trust, confidence.

"1. *Theol.* Of or pertaining to, or of the nature of, trust or reliance."

4 *Restatement of Trusts*, 2d, Sec.s 348, 349.

5 This document is on file at the WSO and bears a notary's seal adjacent to the signature.

6 17 U.S. Code, Sec. 204[a].

7 California Probate Code, Sec. 15200 (b) and/or (e).

8 California Probate Code, Sec. 17003, 17004.

9 Record of the approval of the first ten chapters of the Basic Text appears in the minutes of WSC'82, pp. 65-67. The stories were approved separately.

10 Record of the approval of various personal stories for publication in the Basic Text appears on page 4 of the corrections to the minutes of WSC'82, published as an addendum to the minutes of WSC'83.

- 11 Minutes, WSC'83, pp. 14-15. The amended motion carried, 24 in favor, 15 against, 5 abstaining.
- 12 A later motion gave "a [vote] of confidence to WSO and WSB by approving the basic text with changes suggested by WSB and carried out by WSO as NA approved literature." The motion carried, 23 in favor, 0 against, 9 abstaining. (Minutes, WSC'83, p. 36.) According to the maker, this motion was made to insure that the First Edition would be considered conference-approved literature and, thus, appropriate for use in NA meetings.
- 13 Revised minutes, WSC'84, pp. 32 and 33.
- 14 Minutes, WSC'85, p. 36. The motion carried, 47 in favor, 1 against, 3 abstaining.
- 15 From a transcript of WSC'85 proceedings.
- 16 Minutes, WSC'86, pp. 12-17, and pp. 37-38.
- 17 Report of the WSC Literature Committee to the 1987 World Service Conference, April 28, 1987, page 6.
- 18 Minutes, WSC'87, pp. 20-21. The motion to make the five proposed changes in Book One carried, 64 in favor, 4 against, 5 abstaining. The motion to make the single change in Book Two was defeated for lack of a two-thirds majority, with 34 in favor, 25 against, 12 abstaining.
- 19 Minutes, WSC'88, pp. 17-20. On a roll call vote, the amended motion carried, 56 in favor, 12 against, 8 abstaining.
- 20 Minutes, WSC'88, p. 19. The motion to object to consideration was carried, 49 in favor, 18 against, 7 abstentions.
- 21 Minutes, WSC'88, p. 20. The first motion was defeated, 4 in favor, 51 against, 8 abstaining; the second was defeated, 5 in favor, 60 against, 6 abstaining.
- 22 17 U.S. Code, Sec. 106.
- 23 The Berne Convention (Paris Text, July 24, 1971), Article 5, Paragraph 1, reads, "Authors shall enjoy, in respect of works for which they are protected under this Convention, in countries of the Union other than

the country of origin, the rights which their respective laws do now or may hereafter grant to their nationals, as well as the rights specially granted by this Convention."

24 It is true that, in the past, the World Service Conference has given assent to license agreements between the WSO and the boards of four national service offices, allowing those national offices to reprint White Booklets and information pamphlets for distribution only in their own countries. Those agreements were made to make NA literature more readily available in Europe and the South Pacific at a time when the WSO was less prepared to distribute literature to those parts of the world than it is now. Those license agreements are not currently in force, were never signed, and only certain sections have ever been implemented.

However, it is important to note that those agreements were made with *national* service offices *outside* the United States—not with individuals or groups of members, *nor* with any American service board—to provide for the distribution of NA literature in territory the WSO itself could not serve at the time the agreements were made.

25 Minutes, WSC'89, p. 25.

26 California Probate Code, Sec.s 16010, 16011 (Deering 1990).

27 17 U.S. Code, Sec. 106.

HIV and AIDS in NA

This article was generated by the World Service Board of Trustees in April 1993 in response to the needs of the fellowship. It represents the views of the board at the time of writing.

Any life-threatening disease causes us to work our program rigorously, whether we're afflicted by it ourselves or are supporting members who suffer from it. HIV and AIDS have become a reality in the NA recovering community. The paradox of this disease, like the disease of addiction itself, is the need to belong while already feeling separated. The strain of having to deal with a potentially fatal disease striking so many addicts, compounded by the disease of addiction itself, can be overwhelming. It is no surprise that, at times like these, we often ask ourselves if continued recovery is worth it. At our potentially weakest moment, we need more than ever the strength found in our fellowship.

HIV and AIDS affect us all in NA. Fear of the virus can allow the defects of self-centeredness, denial, rationalization, and the urge to run to assert themselves. The spiritual principles that made recovery possible and that strengthen our groups must continue to guide us during these times.

HIV and AIDS in NA are considered by some as an outside issue—a subject not to be discussed for fear of diluting our message of recovery from drug addiction. That point of view has not been stated in any world-level publication, but it has been implied through silence. Our lack of direction coupled with ignorance of the virus and an often inflexible interpretation of the traditions has caused many groups and committees to label HIV and AIDS as outside issues. While there are many issues around HIV and AIDS that may well

be outside issues, the experience of recovering addicts with HIV is not.

Committees responsible for conventions, learning days, workshops, etc., have often been directed not to include HIV/AIDS as a topic. Our reasoning for this was based on our lack of experience and our fear. Instead, we have been guided toward having topics on life threatening diseases in general. This was sometimes done out of concern that participants of a topic meeting on AIDS might choose to discuss the medical treatment or the political ramifications of the disease. While some of those fears might have some basis in reality, open-mindedness keeps us focused on our shared experience, strength, and hope.

There are a range of HIV and AIDS-related issues that are outside issues; for example, offering medical information, educating using addicts about needle-cleaning or endorsing the availability of clean needles, supporting or opposing AIDS quarantine proposals, encouraging specific methods of safer sex, or commenting on the merits of the "Just say no" campaign in limiting the spread of AIDS. NA's involvement in any of these activities would undoubtedly draw the NA name into public controversy. And that would surely compromise our ability to carry the message of recovery from addiction.

However, there is more to HIV and AIDS in NA than outside issues. This virus has put strains on our relationships. Despair is closer to some of us than others, and our *Just for Today* prayers become much more relevant. Anybody who has ever gained a practical understanding of "living in the present" has some incredible experience, strength, and hope to share with all of us. Although we all live with the life-threatening disease of addiction, those of us with HIV and AIDS sometimes have a heightened awareness of living just for today. We may all gain from sharing and being open toward an understanding of new aspects of powerlessness and surrender.

While in active addiction, we all faced a life-threatening disease. In recovery, NA members have historically continued to face other such diseases, but never to the extent being encountered today. Some of our groups in urban areas

are experiencing a very high percentage of members with HIV or AIDS.

When first faced with these overpowering numbers, some of our groups made mistakes. Fear and ignorance separated groups and members from open-mindedness and the ability to care for all their members. Much worse than that was the isolation felt by members living with the virus. Recovery in this fellowship can be tough enough when we are accepted. When we are rejected, recovery may seem impossible.

The only requirement for membership, according to our Third Tradition, is the desire to stop using drugs. Nothing more, nothing less. It seems simple enough to remember, but fear and ignorance can be strong influences. Groups which began experiencing large numbers of members who were HIV positive learned that when there is an "us" and "them", someone is being treated differently, and our groups suffer. These groups learned that a group's survival depends upon autonomy, anonymity, unity, and our Fifth Tradition. A group's primary purpose must remain constant: to carry the message of recovery to addicts who still suffer. Having learned from these mistakes, these groups may understand this tradition better than most because the meeting topics, though often reflecting our struggle with HIV and AIDS, are centered on recovery from addiction.

"Anonymity is the spiritual foundation of all our traditions." We may need to remind ourselves to use caution in relating some of our experience. Some members may feel they need to share about their illness only with their sponsor or a close friend, while others choose to discuss their experience with HIV or AIDS openly at meetings. Ideally, a meeting is a haven where we can all feel and be safe to share. Regardless of how we share—whether one-on-one or in a meeting—it is important that we do share.

Some of us with HIV or AIDS come to NA with weakened immune systems. At times, we may not be able to get to meetings or might be too ill to go out at all. We may be dealing with the necessity of taking medications. Some of our literature,

such as *In Times of Illness* and the Tenth Chapter of our Basic Text, give us experiences with having to deal with doctors and medication in our recovery. For those who are hospitalized or bedridden at home, we have publications like *The NA Way Magazine* and *Meeting by Mail*.

If we believe that one addict sharing with another is without parallel, then we need to understand that this concept applies not only in times of joy but also in times of sorrow and grieving. In our consideration of the HIV/AIDS issue, let us be honest, open-minded, supportive, and nurturing. Let us unite to learn, unite in our prayers, and unite in the spirit of love so that our ignorance may be replaced with open-mindedness and the willingness to learn.

Freedom from prejudice, Part 3

This article was generated by the World Service Board of Trustees in April 1993 in response to the needs of the fellowship. It represents the views of the board at the time of writing.

More frequently than ever, the World Service Board of Trustees is being asked to comment on the issue of prejudice within NA. It would be easy for us to write a paper which simply says: Prejudice is wrong. Cut it out! However, we believe that there is no imposed solution. Only we, as individual members of Narcotics Anonymous, can resolve this problem. It presents each of us with the challenge to practice more fully those principles which make our recovery possible—the spiritual principles found in our Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions. Each of us is responsible for carrying the NA message without regard to age, race, sexual identity, creed, religion, or lack of religion.

Most of us have felt the pain of prejudice at different times during our lives. Even so, we often delude ourselves into believing that we are personally free from all prejudice. This type of denial allows us to pass judgement on the quality of another member's recovery or sponsor, tune out when certain members share, or avoid particular people or groups of people. We may make snide or "humorous" remarks about someone's race, sexual preference, age, gender, body shape, culture, or spiritual beliefs. We may avoid members who are physically ill or are taking prescribed medication. Whether subtle or blatant, all forms of prejudice harm our unity and prevent us from fulfilling our primary purpose.

We do not and cannot recover alone. Some members can remember being unwelcome in other fellowships. Some of us recall sitting alone with a White Booklet waiting for another addict to show up at a meeting so that we could have our own NA group. Another addict, *any addict*, was exceedingly welcome. As we have become prosperous, laden with choices of where to recover and with whom, we have allowed the defect of prejudice to assert itself

and, more sadly, to live in our hearts.

While it is possible for us to walk through the doors of NA with the defects of character which promote attitudes of hostility toward others, over time these defects make recovery difficult if not impossible. As a defect, prejudice shares some of the same characteristics as our disease. It is based in fear, self-centeredness, suspicion, and intolerance. These qualities represent our disease rather than the spiritual process of recovery in NA. Our program is carried from one addict to another without regard to anything but the desire to recover from our disease.

Although the spirit of Narcotics Anonymous is without concrete definition, it seems to encompass tolerance, acceptance, love, gratitude, and giving. If we can achieve and maintain this spirit, we will flourish. Our literature states that there are three things essential to our recovery. One of these is open-mindedness. We can have no reservations about maintaining the character defect of prejudice which separates, divides, isolates and can eventually destroy us as a fellowship. We cannot be fooled by the subtleness of our disease that closes our minds and causes us to think of one addict as different from another. We must surrender to this aspect of our disease and allow a loving God to heal us as a fellowship, allowing us to continue to focus our efforts on our primary purpose.

Our message says that any addict seeking recovery can stop using drugs, lose the desire to use, and find a new way of life. Ours is a message of hope and freedom. Let this message be our common bond. It is to this NA way of recovery that we direct our attention and effort toward the changes that need to occur within ourselves to produce the miracles of recovery.

We need to look at our diversity as the strength that allows each of us to truly say "any addict seeking recovery." Because we see this diversity as a wealth of color, race, gender, culture, and belief, we wholeheartedly welcome all addicts. It is not enough to tolerate; we welcome with open arms. It is not enough to accept; we give. We do not need to fear each other; we love. With these principles, we may stop the destruction of our disease, have our intolerance, fear, and self-centeredness removed, and do together that which we cannot do alone.