

ADDENDUM 10

LEARNING DAYS AND WORKSHOPS

A public information learning day or workshop can be the most valuable P.I. function the fellowship has. Learning days and workshops are held primarily to provide a forum in which experience in all aspects of P.I. work can be shared. The basic difference between a learning day and a workshop is that workshops focus on one particular issue or project and are usually part of a larger event such as a convention or unity day. Learning days are, for the most part, weekend-long events with a broad spectrum of topics covered in meetings held throughout each day.

LEARNING DAYS

Why should we have a learning day?

The purpose of a P.I. learning day is to provide a forum in which trusted servants involved in P.I. can share their challenges, innovations and solutions with one another. Many areas have the same concerns which are specific to public information work, such as attracting members to P.I. service, how to best present the program when speaking to non-addicts, how to educate the members in their respective areas about the importance of the Twelve Traditions and maintaining anonymity, and a variety of other important issues.

Learning days also provide an opportunity for area P.I. committees and individual members to give and receive information about the current direction of P.I. Any new materials being used by an area can be passed around to others at these events. Whatever a committee or an individual learns about carrying the message more effectively can be passed on.

Who plans the event?

Usually an area P.I. committee, with the support and coordination of the region, actually hosts the event. In some cases, the area P.I. committee will do all of the actual planning. Other times, a special ad hoc committee will be formed with members from both the area(s) and the region(s). In the case of a multi-regional event, participation should be sought from all the regions involved. Care should be taken to select members who are not responsible to maintain vital services, such as answering the local helpline or chairing recovery meetings, while the event is taking place.

Once the planning committee is formed or an area committee is selected to host the event, the actual work can get under way. Several decisions need to be made immediately, such as the dates of the event, what the program will include and how much it will cost.

Who pays for the event?

In keeping with our Seventh Tradition, the money to initiate this project will come from the sponsoring areas or regions. A projected budget should be drawn up as soon as possible to determine a registration fee. While small amounts of money may be raised through pre-registration, it is hoped that fundraising will not become the primary focus of the event. The goal is for the event to be self-supporting, which can be attained through careful planning. Your budget should include line items for printing, postage, rent, phone calls, and refreshments. You may also wish to consider adding line items for speaker travel and lodging and merchandise, keeping in mind the size of the event.

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When should we hold our learning days?

It is very important to plan the event well in advance to allow ample time for committee work assignments, site selection, program development, speaker selection, printing of materials, and announcement of the event. It is suggested that at least six months be allowed for a multi-regional learning day. For a regional learning day, three to six months is sufficient. For an area event, one to two months is appropriate.

Selecting the date the learning days will take place can be a make or break factor in the success of your event. It is important that the event does not conflict with other major N.A. events, such as your regional convention. Non-holiday weekends are considered a good choice.

Where should we hold our learning days?

Possible sites include hotels, college campuses, community centers, campgrounds, or any place that has sufficient meeting rooms and can accommodate your needs. Your committee will need to determine specific criteria including the number and size of meeting rooms, a registration area, facilities for preparing and serving refreshments, nearby lodging and restaurants, and space for an entertainment function, if one is to be included in your program.

Who should we invite?

Absolutely everyone! As with all successful events, the more members in attendance, the more enriching the experience will be for all. As soon as you have decided on dates for the event, the WSO P.I. coordinator should be notified so that your event can be announced in all of the fellowship's publications. At this time, the WSC P.I. Committee should also be notified. The WSC P.I. chairperson or your regional chairperson should be able to provide you with address lists for trusted servants in the surrounding areas so that they may also be invited. It is suggested that pre-registration flyers be mailed at intervals to surrounding areas and regions right up to the date of the event.

How much structure is required and under what circumstances?

When discussing the theme and program, the size and duration of the event will most likely become the deciding factors. For a multi-regional learning day, it is suggested that the event be held over the course of a weekend. Multi-regional learning days can be broad-based in focus and include meetings on several topics. The possibilities for a weekend-long event are virtually unlimited. Meetings can be held simultaneously in order to give those in attendance a choice of which topic they are most interested in, or you may choose to have one meeting at a time so that those in attendance can attend all of the discussions. Most weekend-long events include a recovery meeting along with some sort of entertainment.

For regional or area learning days, a day-long event is suitable. In addition, it is wise to narrow the focus of the event to two or three topical issues in P.I. Consecutive meetings are the preferred format for a day-long event.

Many variations exist for the formats of the individual meetings. The style you choose for the meetings will depend on the availability of speakers, the issues that are of current interest in P.I., and of course, the size of your event. You may choose to have mock presentations, skits, examples of interviews, sharing sessions, visual aids presentations, speaking rehearsals or anything else your committee feels will stimulate discussion and a broader understanding of our Twelve Traditions as they apply to P.I. work. It is suggested

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that lecture type meetings be avoided and full audience participation be encouraged. If you plan to include speaker presentations, it is a good idea to allow plenty of time for those in attendance to ask questions and share experience. There is a tremendous amount of experience at the area level with issues such as open meetings, cooperation with the legal community, attraction to P.I., media relations and many others. It is important that we provide a forum at all learning days in which all members can share this valuable experience with each other.

Sample Program for a Multi-Regional Learning Day**Friday**

6:00 p.m. - Registration Begins (location)

8:00 p.m. - Kick-off meeting

Saturday

8:00 - 9:00 a.m. - Reception and Registration

9:00 - 10:30 a.m. - P.I. - Attraction Not Promotion

9:00 - 10:30 a.m. - P.I. Priority Setting

11:00 a.m. - 12:30 p.m. - Traditions and P.I.

11:00 a.m. - 12:30 p.m. Speaking to Non-Addicts

12:30 - 2:00 p.m. - Lunch Break

2:00 - 6:00 p.m. - Open Forum

6:00 - 8:00 p.m. - Dinner Break

8:00 p.m. - Recovery meeting followed by dance

Sunday

10:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m. - WSC P.I. Panel

12:30 - 2:00 p.m. - Closing Meeting

The preceding is only a sample. Topics will vary from time to time and place to place. The only requirement is that the topics address the needs of the participants involved. Samples include: Billboards & Bus Benches, Traditions and P.I., Rural P.I., Urban P.I., Starting a P.I. Committee, Cooperation with H&I, Cooperation with Surrounding P.I. Committees, Phonelines, PSAs, Posters, Speaking to Non-Addicts,

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Attraction to P.I., Anonymity, Letter Writing, Addicts with Additional Needs, Media Relations, Input for WSC P.I. Committee Projects, or anything else related to P.I.

WORKSHOPS

Workshops may be done as a single event, although they are usually part of a larger event, such as a convention or unity day, or as an adjunct to P.I. learning days. The focus of a workshop is usually limited to one topic.

Workshops emphasize the exchange of ideas, demonstration and application of techniques, and/or gathering input for a project. These may be conducted in a round table discussion or with a moderator to keep the discussions focused on the issue at hand. Generally speaking there are two types of workshops, those conducted to offer and exchange information and others for the sole purpose of gathering information from the fellowship for a specific project.

It is important to establish clearly defined goals. A successful workshop depends on how well prepared the event is. A particular goal should be decided upon and a plan outlined for accomplishing the task. As with learning days, those in attendance should be provided with an agenda of the event.

Input workshops are the means by which P.I. committees can determine their priorities. The fellowship should be invited to share what their needs are so that P.I. committees can develop projects based on the actual needs of a given area. The WSC P.I. Committee will, on occasion, host workshops to gather information from the fellowship on their current projects. A local WSC P.I. Committee member will be able to advise you of what is currently being developed.

Learning days and workshops are different from celebrations of recovery such as unity days and conventions. The goals are to educate the fellowship on how to inform the public, share experience, and set priorities for the future direction of public information work. When consistency of message, unity, and spiritual principles guide our actions, all will be well. The unity created, the experience gained, and the knowledge and ability shared are the true measure of success.