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NA History Workshop 6/5/99

Introduction

The history of NA is a rich history. We are the only fellowship of our kind in the whole world that has the stability of being an ongoing, growing entity. Our membership is surpassed only by one other fellowship; the one we evolved from, Alcoholics Anonymous.

In the earlier part of this century, there was an amendment to our constitution that began an era known as prohibition. This era banned alcohol, and gave way to the rise of the use of mind- altering substances. The prevalence of narcotics use was hyped up, and the public went into a kind of hysteria, prompting the US Government to open a "treatment" hospital as part of the Lexington Federal Prison in Lexington Kentucky. Anyone could go there, either voluntarily, or as part of a judge's order. This treatment facility was not anything near what we know as a treatment center today. The truth is that doctors there didn't really know what to do with the addicts that showed up looking for help.

It was in this hospital that a meeting was started for addicts, using the twelve steps of AA. A fellow by the name of Houston, who found recovery in AA, helped start this meeting after having contact with a person released from this facility. He contacted Dr. Victor Vogel, the principle doctor behind the hospital, and convinced him that the twelve steps could work for addicts too. Their first meeting was held on Feb. 16, 1947, and they continued to have weekly meetings for over twenty years, well into the late sixties. They called themselves NARCO at times, and Addicts Anonymous at other times.

One of the "graduates" of the Lexington Hospital, an addict by the name of Danny Carlsen, had returned to the hospital in 1947 for the seventh time, when he started attending NARCO groups, and began to find a ray of hope in arresting his disease. He spent six months at Lexington that trip, then returned to New York City, where he took the idea of twelve step meetings for addicts to a Major Dorothy Berry, a Major in the Salvation Army, who was particularly interested in helping addicts. It is not known if he knew her before he went to Lexington, or if they met after his release.

In 1948, they, with a Mrs. Rae Lopez, started a group in the New York Prison system known as Narcotics Anonymous. These meetings didn't last long, and disappeared shortly after they started.

Simultaneously, in 1948, the Federal Prison system opened another treatment program in Fort Worth, Texas, and started using the same model as was being used in Lexington. The steps in use at that point had the word "drugs" in place of "alcohol".

Dan Carlsen relapsed again, and returned to Lexington for the eighth time. It was during this stay that he was finally able to surrender and he was able to stay clean from 1949 until his death. He returned to New York, got the Salvation Army to give him a meeting space, and also got a YMCA to give him a meeting space for a Wednesday night Narcotics Anonymous meeting. Dan Carlsen helped addicts until he died, in 1956.

Other notable figures from that time were Father Dan Egan, the "Junkie Priest", who was mentioned in a book by John D. Harris. Father Dan helped in the Wednesday night NA meetings, and Winzell Brown, who wrote a book called "Monkey on my back," in which there is a chapter called, "Narcotics Anonymous", and mentions the meeting at the Salvation Army soup kitchen.

Coinciding with the East Coast addiction and recovery movement was an unrelated effort going on in California. The most successful of these was probably the Habit Forming Drug groups, headed up by a lady named Betty Thom. They were convinced that the Twelve Steps were the way to recover.

So from 1950 to 1953, we know that various meetings were popping up in different parts of the

country. In New York and Chicago, the Salvation Army. In Virginia; Lexington, Kentucky; Texas; and California these individual groups were named Addicts Anonymous, Narcotics Anonymous, Narco group, HFD, and NOTROL. They were oriented to 12-Step recovery from the disease of addiction. Most of them were independent of each other. The only ties we can see are, first off, they weren't fellowships, they were individual groups, and they were either started by people that came through the Salvation Army system or they were tied to folks that had gone through Lexington Kentucky Public Health Service Hospital.

The fellowship we know today as Narcotics Anonymous started in California in 1953.

Jimmy K and NA

I'm not going to pretend that I ever met, or corresponded with Jimmy Kinnon, but I have read extensively about him, his way of doing things, and his vision for the fellowship of Narcotics Anonymous.

In the late spring of 1953 the Los Angeles Police Department, through Captain Hamilton, contacted a member of A.A. who was involved in A.A.'s Institutional committee. He asked about starting a recovery group for addicts. The L.A.P.D. sent a number of people to these first meetings. The person asked was not an addict and soon found that he didn't understand them. He didn't understand why the attendees were falling asleep. He asked them if he was that boring and they told him that they were just "on the nod." Since he knew nothing of being on the nod, he knew that he had done as much as he knew how to do and was ready to quit. After the third meeting he asked other members of A.A. for help. Sy M. had been at the first two meetings, Jimmy K. attended the third.

As in many gatherings of people to help addicts, there was a difference of opinion between Jimmy and Sy from the beginning of their involvement. Sy wanted to open the meetings up to people with all types of problems, Jimmy didn't. Jimmy suggested seeking guidance from A.A. As far as we can tell, these first three members were not as involved with illegal drugs as the addicts whom they would be carrying the message to.

This group continued to meet for about another month.

Jimmy and others used to go down to skid row, and meet addicts there who couldn't identify with the alcoholic in AA Jimmy believed in the steps, and was three years clean when he and some others began to have preliminary discussions about a fellowship for addicts. Around July of 1953, they actually started getting serious about it, and on August 17th, 1953, the first formation meeting for the NA as we now know it was held.

There are copies of the original handwritten minutes available.

The first participants were Doris Carnahan, Frank Carnahan, James Kinnon, Guilda Krause, Paul Rosenbluth, and Steve Ryan. In the minutes from the first meeting, they decided on their name, which was to be San Fernando Valley Alcoholics Anonymous and Narcotics Anonymous. From Jimmy's own words, at the 20th anniversary of NA dinner in Los Angeles, he was opposed to this:

"The first big order of business we had when we got together was the name. I was the first Chairman of what we then called ah - nothing. AANA, that's what it was called and I said "You simply can't do that ". You made me your chairman, we're gonna have to find another name, we can't call Ourselves AANA or NAAA. And the committee who voted me the Chairman immediately vetoed what I said . Right , that's a good way to start. They vetoed everything I said the first night, so I thought I was off to a pretty good start. I wasn't going to get away with any horse shit from these people. They were going to find out what was right to do . And so the first order of business was to contact Alcoholics Anonymous to find out if we could use their name; and found out that you couldn't do it. So I got the satisfaction, at least, of being right on the first thing that they vetoed."

So they came to be known as Narcotics Anonymous. Jimmy was elected Chairman, Doris was elected Secretary, Frank and Guilda were elected to a six month term on a rotating committee for leadership, and Steve and Paul were Elected to a three months rotating committee for leadership, with Jimmy as alternate.

So, as has been mentioned before, this movement was setting a different course than those that had tried this previously. They were planning the creation of a fellowship, not just meetings.

A total of seven meetings were held, and they planned the first NA meeting for October 5th, 1953. A total of 17 people attended, and here is the text from the announcement about the first meeting:

"NARCOTICS ANONYMOUS – OUR PURPOSE"

"This is an informal group of drug addicts, banded together to help one another to renew their strength

in remaining free of drug addiction. Our precepts are patterned after those of Alcoholics Anonymous

to whom all credit is given, precedence is acknowledged. We claim no originality but since we believe

that the causes of alcoholism and addiction are basically the same, we will to apply to our lives the

truths and principles which have benefited so many otherwise helpless individuals. We believe that in

so doing we may regain and maintain our health and sanity. Which shall be the purpose of this group to

endeavor to foster a means of rehabilitation to the addict, and to carry the message of hope for the

future to those who have become enslaved by the use of habit-forming drugs"

STARTING MONDAY NIGHT OCT. 5, 1953

EACH MONDAY NIGHT THEREAFTER AT 5:30 P.M.

CORNER OF CANTARA & CLYBOURN, SUN VALLEY, CALIF.

DIRECTLY BEHIND SUNLAND LUMBER COMPANY"

A publication of the Lexington Public Health Hospital had text similar to this as their "Purpose Statement". Apparently, this newsletter had subscribers in every state, and the founding members acquired one, and used their purpose statement as NA's.

Our first Recovery Meeting happened in a place called the Dad's Club, on the corner of Cantara and Clybourn. It is rumored that the first format was an "Architects of Adversity" meeting, or 5th and 10th step meeting. They held weekly meetings in that location for about a year, then moved to another location.

Ironically though, while we started as a service committee in a sense, by the end of 1953, everybody who had been elected in this committee had resigned, including Jimmy Kinnon. They all had their different feelings but the meeting continued.

Here are Jimmy's words describing the first meetings:

"It was very hard to find a place to meet; after we got together and agreed what we were going to do. You couldn't find a hall to meet in. Nobody would allow us in. They didn't trust us in any way, shape, or form. And it's pretty sad when you go from one place to another after you've got something real good going and nobody will let you use their hall. You know! Eventually we did find a Salvation Army hall and they allowed us to use it for five dollars a month. You know, that's pretty good, but there were no facilities there. There was one little restroom with a hand basin and a bowl in there, and that was it. There was no kitchen, so we had to go out and buy a little electric stove and some coffee pots, some cups - which I still have at home. I found them just this week; I've had them all these years. We used to give them to each other because this week you might meet at my place - which is the second picture up there - and next week we might meet at your place. So you took the cups with you so everybody would have a cup to get their coffee in. You know, not many of us had more than a couple of cups in our houses then; in fact, not many of us were working. But that's the way it was. I still have those things."

"I got news for you, the Sunland Lumber Company is now defunct, but we're still living. The Salvation Army hall is still there - there are 2 pictures if it up on the top line - it is now a Spanish church. Some of the other pictures up there are where we had some of our "Rabbit Meetings". We called them "Rabbit Meetings" then because we never knew where we were going to meet. If there were 5 or 6 of us at a meeting tonight we decided then whose apartment or whose house we'd have the meeting in next week. And you would take the cups and sugar bowls and the format with you, you know, and then we'd meet at your place next week.

It wasn't that we who were getting into the program then were so afraid of the law but the newcomers were scared to death. I made a sign and we put it outside of the front door of the church there (about twice the size of this - three times the size of that) that said NA Meeting tonight at 8:30. And then we opened the door for business and we'd get about a dozen alcoholics in there who came to help us. And then a car would pull down around the corner slowly and they'd look at the sign and then they'd split. Nobody trusted nobody - you know they thought it was staked out. They wouldn't believe us when we told them there was no surveillance. And we weren't just too sure in the beginning ourselves."

As Jimmy described, the first meetings were not attended by many newcomers, as they were afraid of being arrested. At that time, there were laws in effect that would criminalize addicts merely by association. The Rockefeller Laws, as they were called, made it illegal for two or more addicts to be in one place at any time. The founders' solution was to go have a face to face discussion with the police department, and here, in Jimmy's words, is what happened:

"Because as a group we decided we were going to get right with the law at least and we went down to the Narcotics Division. And we told them, we didn't ask them, we told them we were going to have a meeting of addicts. And they raised their eyebrows a little

bit when we first mentioned it. But there were 5 of us down there. A Miller, I forget if he was a Lieutenant or a Captain then, he listened and he said: "It's about time something like this happened, I've been trying to help addicts for years and with no success; I can't help anybody". And so he called in a lieutenant to listen in on our conversation and see what he thought. And he was a hard-nosed, old style, hope-to-die cop who knew for sure (who knew for sure) that none of us could recover, you know. And he listened and Miller was saying: "I like that idea", "I'll go along with that idea", "I buy what you have to say", "I'll do everything I can to help you". All the way down the line he was all for us. He kept his word, by the way. And he said to this lieutenant "what do you think?" (lieutenant): "Ain't gonna work, once a Junkie always a Junkie, you know that, God Damn it. There's never any of them gonna get any better. I don't care what you say, I don't care what these people say, it ain't gonna work." So he looked back at us and I didn't know what the Hell to say, you know I'm only one of the group. I looked at Doris and she didn't know what to say. And Frank didn't know what to say. And old Pat, who was sitting back there with his mouth shut all this time and never opened his mouth says: "Lieutenant, my name is so-and-so, I was born and raised in such-and-such a place, I got arrested the first time for such-and-such a thing, and I was sentenced such-and -such a time for so many years; and starting there I want you to go back and check my record all the way through. I've been in every God Damned Federal Pen., except Danamora, in the country. I'm the last of the Petermen, and I haven't had a bit of Junk for 18 years. I haven't been in Jail for 18 years; and this program works for me. Now you look it up and prove it to yourself because I was never out of jail from the time I was a kid until the time I found this program." And the guy didn't know what to say. Pat said: "Now I mean it, check it out."

Whether the guy ever checked it out, I don't know; but I know that the police department and the Narcotics Division kept their word to us. And they never staked us out, they never busted us in any way, shape, or form - never roused us coming or going to meetings. And so, we in turn kept our word, we policed ourselves and we followed the Traditions as best we knew how. And this is what has made us basically begin to grow in the past 12 years."

December 16, 1953, Jimmy Kinnon, Doris and Frank Carnahan all resign from the founding committee.

Sometime in this period the Steps and Traditions were adopted to what we still use today. This was done by Jimmy K. This was to have a major effect on addicts all over the world. The changes were addition of the word "we" in all the steps and what has been called the ten-strike of N.A., changing the word alcohol to addiction in the first step. The changing of the word alcohol to addiction changed the approach from one of substance focus to one of behavior awareness.

The meetings moved around a lot and became known as the Rabbit Meetings. As with the earlier attempts, it was very word of mouth, almost a secret where the next meeting would be. A coffee pot and depression glass cups were carried from meeting to meeting. Meetings were held in members homes. Addicts would cruise the meeting

places and check for surveillance. The prevailing sentiment was fear for most addicts who weren't already members of AA.

The need for a message in print was identified and the work began. By late 1954 this was completed. Those involved disagreed on its content but the work was printed with a yellow cover and thus the first literature for N.A. was available.

There are some interesting things in this original 1954 literature. First off it has 20 questions. "Do you lose time from work due to using? Is using making your home life unhappy? Do you fix because you are shy with other people?" They really cut to the bone here. Some of the other chapter titles are "What can I do about it?" and "What is the Narcotics Anonymous Program?" The 12 Steps are in here and it talks about being powerless over addiction and the word "we" is in every one of the other 12 Steps. The "Just for Today Prayer" is here, from 1954.

Here is the original text of the Just For Today Prayer:

Tell yourself:

JUST FOR TODAY my thoughts will be on my recovery, living and enjoying life without the

use of narcotics.

JUST FOR TODAY I will have faith in someone in Narcotics Anonymous who believes in me

and wants to help me to recovery.

JUST FOR TODAY I will have a program. I will try to follow it to the best of my ability.

JUST FOR TODAY, through Narcotics Anonymous, I will try to get a better perspective on my life.

JUST FOR TODAY I will be unafraid. My thoughts will be on my new associations, people who are not using and who have found a new way of life. So long as I follow that way of life, even for today, I have nothing to fear.

There are some interesting differences from the "Just For Today" reading that we have in our meetings today- first of all, the use of the word "Narcotics" in place of the word "drugs". All drugs were known as "narcotics" at that time, and this seemed to fit their purpose. Another difference that is prominent is the last stanza, where it says, "So long as I follow that way of life, even for today, I have nothing to fear." When it was changed to what we have now as the Just For Today, I am not sure.

Two addresses were shown on the back of the pamphlet. They were:

NARCOTICS ANONYMOUS

P.O. Box 1043

Studio City, Calif.

NARCOTICS ANONYMOUS

P.O. Box 13023

So. Eastern Station

San Diego, Calif.

There are few surviving copies of this booklet. The practice was to just send one to the printer. The printer would typeset and print. Rubber stamps were used a lot. The San Diego address could have been a rubber stamp on a booklet that was actually copied in the 60's.

From 1954 to 1959 there was basically one regular meeting and rabbit meetings. The one regular meeting took place at a Doctor Shrier's detox center. They nicknamed it "Shrier's Dryer" where people could go and dry out. Now Jimmy actually had a real problem with this particular meeting because you see they would go to the meeting and they would raise hands. All the alcoholics would raise their hands and then all the addicts would raise their hands. If there were more alcoholics it was an AA meeting and if there were more addicts it was an NA meeting. Jimmy was really big on the Traditions and he had a real problem with the way that meeting was different each week depending on who was there. But you have to also consider that the community of people that were attending was very small and had to hang very close together. A lot of the meetings that also took place were in people's breakfast rooms and kitchens and so forth and they pretty much just kept each other going one day at a time.

The other fellowships that I was talking about like in New York and so forth, we also know that they started waning sometime after 1956. Danny Carlson died in 1956. There wasn't anyone in New York to pick up the ball and continue the meeting he had started. So the best we can tell somewhere after 1956, the New York Narcotics Anonymous just sort of faded away.

In 1959, NA was dwindling because of the fact that you couldn't know if you were going to an AA meeting or a NA meeting like Shrier's Dryer on any given night because some of the people had gone out. It was harder to find new people, and various personalities were starting to have some conflicts. NA dwindled and in 1959 for about four months there were no Narcotics Anonymous meetings of any kind. It broke Jimmy's heart and in late 1959 we're not sure whether December, '59 or March, 1960, Jimmy K. determined that this couldn't be allowed to happen. Jimmy, Sylvia Wexler, and Penny Kennedy restarted Narcotics Anonymous and the vow they made was that they would follow the

Traditions more closely. They felt that the reason it had faded away, the reason there had been personality conflicts was because there had been big shots and big mamas, I guess Betty Thom (who was the person behind Habit Forming Drug groups) was the big mama and Si Malos (who was the person behind Addicts Anonymous in Southern California) might have been the big shot. The only way that they could survive as a fellowship is if they scrupulously followed the 12 Traditions, particularly the anonymity part.

Here is how Jimmy describes this:

"For awhile after we formed -- A lot of things happened that I'm not going into tonight ---- but due to some things that happened and due to the nature of the addict, the nature of our illness, some people were put in a position where they became the leaders again, the Great White Father. You know, we can't have a Great White Father or a Big Momma, you know, it doesn't work in this organization. And NA died once more, and the friends of ours in AA helped to pick us up, and said "Don't let it bother you". These were the real friends we had in the beginning; members of AA who believed in us, members of AA had themselves a dual problem at that time and recognized that -- they came and helped us get started again. But again and again this happened in this organization. One person would try to dominate the whole movement. And every time it happened we began to die."

By now, you've probably noticed that Jimmy Kinnon's name keeps popping up in the history of NA. Jimmy was a driving force behind our organization, and cared deeply about addicts. He believed in the twelve traditions and in the spirit of anonymity. He never wanted to be given any credit for the creation of NA as we know it, but his unflagging commitment to Narcotics Anonymous helped ensure our survival. For most of us, it is hard to believe not being able to go to an NA meeting, but for those first members, this was a reality. Jimmy believed the steps could help addicts, and set about proving it. Fawn M., a close friend of Jimmy's, described him this way: "There was something very magical about the way Jimmy carried the message- when people got close to him, their natural inclination was to recover."

Here is Jimmy's vision for NA, in his words:

"You know that I've said many times, a long time ago, that a man without a dream is only half a man, and a fellowship without a vision is a farce. And I still believe that and know damn well that we can find fulfillment in living a day at a time here. And a day at a time our vision and our Fellowship can become a greater reality. They're the things that I'm still interested in. Two years ago at the convention, when I had just regained my voice, I said then that as long as I live I would use what voice and what strength I have to further the efforts of Narcotics Anonymous and that other beautiful fellowship I belong to, Alcoholics Anonymous; and I intend to do that. But it's going to take all of me, and it's going to take all of you, and all the people that you're going to talk to, and all of the people you're going to carry the message to, to make this a greater reality."

This man made it his life's work to help NA grow in whatever capacity he could. For that reason, he is an important part of our history- not THE founder, but one of the FOUNDERS. Not the man who started NA, but a man who believed in NA so strongly that nothing would or could stop him from helping make the recovery we have today a reality.

So, in early 1960, NA restarted. The meeting that was held at Shrier's dryer was moved. Jimmy wanted to get away from the old influence and they moved to what was then a Unity church on Moorpark Street, in Van Nuys. That is the location of what later became known as the only NA meeting in the world and favorite story of a lot of us (I found the only NA meeting in the World). There were also rabbit meetings that took place at people's houses but in 1960 there was one basic meeting of Narcotics Anonymous.

Also in 1960, Jimmy K. apparently listed Narcotics Anonymous in the local phone book and we call that the first answering service that was ever established for Narcotics Anonymous.

In 1962, our first Little White Book appeared. This is the Little White Booklet that has evolved into the Little White Book today.

In 1963 the first H & I meeting was held. It was held at Tahachapi State Penitentiary. Bob B. happened to be one of the people they were bringing the meeting to, he was in Tahachapi at the time. He got the message and it sunk in this time, he got out in '63 and he started attending meetings from mid-1963 on and that's where he dates his clean time. I mention Bob because he is also a person who has poured his life into NA, and he is still a member- He lives in Los Angeles, and I had the opportunity to meet, and talk to him recently. And guess what- he gives out his phone number just like any other addict. It was neat though, to meet someone who has more years clean in Narcotics Anonymous than I have been alive.

In 1963 a letter was written from the Mother Group to the other meetings being held. The request was for all groups to send representatives. Soon after, in order to insure unity of purpose, the general membership in California established a Board of Trustees. A literature subcommittee was established as part of the service arm of the Board of Trustees. The main purpose was to see that N.A. doesn't die again. Remember, in 1960 Jimmy said they'd stick to the traditions! The role of our Trustees being the guardians of the Traditions comes from this early era: The early experience that if we didn't stick to the Traditions we'd disappear. [there still isn't a clear idea of who was on this Board. It looks like a group of 4 to 6 and it may have included Dr. Q. a psychiatrist, and a probation social worker named Dorothy G., who were not addicts.] I have some copies of Jimmy's handwritten notes in which the formation and guidelines for the trustees is written about.

The Salvation Army also is back in the picture in 1962. They started something in Cleveland that they called Narcotics Anonymous. I always get a kick out of this. This original Cleveland, Ohio Narcotics Anonymous from 1963 had 13 Steps. Here they are:

Salvation Army Thirteen Steps

Admit that the use of narcotics made my life seem more tolerable, but the drug had become an undesirable power over my life.

Came to realize that to face life without drugs I must develop an inner strength.

Made a decision to face the suffering of withdrawal.

Learn to accept my fears without drugs.

Find someone who has progressed this far and who is able to assist me.

Admit to him the nature and depth of my addiction.

Realize the seriousness of my shortcomings as I know them and accept the responsibility of facing them.

Admit before a group of NA members these same shortcomings and explain how I am trying to overcome them.

List from my own understanding all the persons I have hurt.

Take a daily inventory of my actions and admit to myself those which are contrary to good conscience.

Realize that to maintain freedom from drugs I must share it with others and the experience from which I have benefited.

Determine a purpose in my life and try with all the spiritual and physical power within me to move towards its fulfillment.

God Help Me.

They eventually went over to the New York Salvation Army Steps- which were the twelve steps, and used drugs in place of alcohol, and did not have "we" at the beginning of each step. I have a Xeroxed copy of a pamphlet they produced, called "Our Way of Life."

Literature

At this point, I thought it would be neat to tell you who wrote what, and when they wrote it. Jimmy was a constant writer, as were other members such as Penny K, and Sylvia W.

"Who Is An Addict?" was written by Jimmy Kinnon in 1960

"What Is The NA Program?" was written by Jimmy Kinnon and Sylvia Wexler in 1960.

"Why are we Here?" was written by Sylvia Wexler in 1960

"How It Works." – the paragraphs before and after the Step were written by Jimmy K. Again the

Steps having the word addiction and the word We in each and every Step and the Traditions using the word addict all dated from 1953.

"What Can I Do?" was written by Jimmy Kinnon in 1960.

"Recovery and Relapse" was Jimmy Kinnon's story and he wrote that in 1960.

"We Do Recover" was written by Jimmy Kinnon in 1961.

Phil P wrote "1/3 of My Life" in 1962.

"I Can't Do Anymore Time" was written by Penny Kennedy in 1962.

Gene H wrote "The Vicious Circle" in 1962.

"Something Meaningful" was written by Bob B in 1962

Bob happens to be the only person whose story is in two different places under two different names written at two different times in his life. His story is also in the Basic Text, "I Found The Only NA Meeting In The World

There's another story that was in the '62 book that you don't see today. It's called "One Woman's Story" and was written by Betty Gruber. They took the story out in 1976 because she went back out.

In 1963, Jimmy K. wrote Another Look, which is an IP still on the rack today.

In 1976 Greg P wrote "I was Different."

In 1976 Betty K wrote "Fearful Mother."

In 1976 Bill B. Wrote "Fat Addict."

Our Gratitude Prayer was written by Jimmy K in 1972.

Jimmy K designed our symbol on a napkin while in the hospital with Tuberculosis in 1968.

Greg P. Wrote, The Triangle of Self-Obsession.

Greg P. wrote the NA Tree, the first service Guide.

Greg P. wrote the second half of the Twelve Traditions.

Greg P. also wrote the chapter in the Basic Text, The Twelve Traditions, everything after the first part, the traditions.

In 1968, NA's first newsletter, "The Voice" appears.

Further Growth

During 67-68, the Parent General Service Organization formed. Began in Bill B.'s barber shop. Much like a Regional Service Committee. Board of Trustees met with GSR's each month. This was a representative service committee.

In 1969 a two page Service Structure Ideal approved. Later this same year the Parent GSO completed their own bylaws. New Board of Trustees had 4 members for life. {these were Jimmy, Bill B, Bob B. and Jack W.} There was also the commitment to elect additional Trustees. So we had the beginnings of the first committee that has continued until today.

In Northern California the group had retyped the Big Book of A.A. and was about to use this as our book substituting the word drugs for alcohol. The Ad Center in S.F. had three different pieces of literature one called THIS IS N.A. that was a direct plagiarism of A.A.'s WHAT IS A.A.

The fellowship was experiencing a new type of challenge. Our continued growth in both numbers and geography made it difficult for the Board of Trustees to coordinate a unified "world" effort and frequent geographical conflicts. To address this need, a decision was made by the Board of Trustees and the general membership to establish a central office. This central office was to function as a clearinghouse, rather than a legislative body. As a result, the Parent Service Committee of Narcotics Anonymous was created.

By 1970, there were 20 meetings in the world. One page Steps, Traditions, and Third paragraph of We Do Recover was the standard group readings.

1970-1971: The name, Parent Service Committee of Narcotics Anonymous, was changed to Narcotics Anonymous Central Office Committee.

The Board of Trustees authorized a central office on July 23, 1971:

There was also a call to gather for a conference of all existing meetings in the fellowship to be held November 5-7. Sylvia M. was the main speaker. Trustees pitched in \$25 each. Groups were to send their representatives to discuss the opening of a service office and other matters of concern. The BOT had expanded and was meeting regularly. This first conference became known as the first world convention of N.A. It has been held every year since.

The opening of an office was the major item of discussion. It was agreed that this should happen and that the groups would support it financially. This never happened. Donations to the Office were received from Ca., Ne., Co., Id., and Ga.

November 6, 1971: At a business meeting during the world convention, the general membership voted to elect a Narcotics Anonymous business manager with a "formal" office. Various problems followed the establishment of a business manager and

business office--primarily money. There were inadequate resources to pay the manager and he was unable to serve without pay.

There were approximately 150 to 200 members in attendance at a time when there were only about 40 known groups.

This year was the start of a very rapid growth period. The late sixties and early seventies set the stage as members of N.A. in California deepened their personal commitment to the Fellowship and intensified their efforts to the point where unprecedented results began to occur. It is this aspect of personal commitment that has preceded every positive event in N.A.'s history. The courage to change has always come after a period of difficulty during which pain and confusion seemed to win out. Finally, when enough members see the general need clearly, they take action.

Thus the foundation was set. In the early days, N.A. was mainly concerned with recovery from heroin addiction. As our 3rd tradition became more established, NA grew as never before. The only requirement for membership was the desire to stop using. Addiction was now an epidemic. As our message of recovery became more available so did the need for the message. The first office location was a yellow building near I-10 and Crenshaw at 2335 Crenshaw Boulevard. Bob B. lived in an apartment in the building and the storefront was WSO.

November 15, 1971: The financial statement for the general service office for January 15, 1971 through November 15, 1971, reported income received from groups in Georgia, Nevada, Colorado and Idaho, as well as California.

December 13, 1971: The Narcotics Anonymous Central Office Committee announced by letter the firm decision to open a "world central office" in January 1972. January 1972 the first GENERAL SERVICE OFFICE of N.A. was opened at 2335 Crenshaw Blvd in L.A. with Jimmy K. as office manager. This was to be the first of several locations over the next few years. Now there was a place to write, telephone and a central place for our fellowship's materials. The second World Convention was held at the Elks Club, Studio City, No. Hollywood.

1972 70 N.A. meetings worldwide. 3 foreign countries, 19 states. Germany - Australia - Bermuda - California - 57 Pennsylvania - 6 Minnesota - 3 New Jersey - 2 New York State - 2 Washington, D.C. 2

February 15, 1972: The Board of Trustees authorized by letter the publication in hardback of an N.A. book on recovery--not yet written.

AA tells Jimmy not to use adaptation of "I am Responsible" Prayer. Jimmy writes our N.A. Gratitude Prayer.

October 23, 1973 San Fernando Valley Area Service Committee forms. Jimmy speaks about a representative service structure. Jimmy reads N.A. Principles of Service from the 2 page Service Structure Ideal of four years previous.

1. Each N.A. Group has but one primary purpose: To carry this message to the addict who still suffers.
2. Every N.A. Group ought to be fully self-supporting.
3. N.A. should remain forever non-professional.
4. Although N.A. as such ought never be organized, but we may create service boards or committees directly responsible to those they serve.
5. Our leaders are but trusted servants, they do not govern.
6. We try to carry this message to addicts and to practice these principles in all our affairs.

The Service office relocated to Highland Ave. in Hollywood. The name was changed to The World Service Office of Narcotics Anonymous.

November 1974: Following moves to 1346 Highland Ave., Los Angeles; a room in the Suicide Prevention Center, Los Angeles

Northern California becomes a region. The first Area service committee was formed, on the 23rd of Oct., the San Fernando Valley Area Service Committee. The third Convention was held in San Jose. On August 18th the 20th anniversary Banquet was held at the Islander Restaurant on La Cienega Blvd.

Perhaps, the best record of the early Years of N.A. in California exists in recorded talks given by Jimmy Kinnon about the history of N.A. on several occasions, most significantly at the 20th and the 23rd (actually 22nd) Anniversary Celebrations of Narcotics Anonymous which were held in Southern California in 1973 and 1975.

1974 saw the beginnings of the writing of the N.A. Tree. This was the start of the development of a service structure for the fellowship. One trustee did most of the work. This allowed members to gain knowledge and a personal involvement with the processes of their Fellowship. It increased identification with, and commitment to, the general Fellowship. After careful consideration, the first N.A. service structure was approved in the form of a booklet entitled The N.A. TREE. It allowed for the World Service Board of Trustees and the World Service Office to continue to exist much as they had before. It added the representative body, the World Service Conference, without which the Fellowship had been unable to grow at a significant rate. All recovering addicts have to safeguard against their egos getting out of hand, and only

elected, formally correct service positions would allow members to get involved without the threat of egotism in their personal programs.

The WCNA-4 was held in Anaheim, Ca.

The first General Service Office was opened at 101 Santa Fe St. in L.A. This was much like a regional office of today. New printing Little White Book. Bootleg N.A. "White" booklets printed in Northern California. Covers were green or grey.

In 1975 the N.A. Tree was first approved and published. This was the first guide to our service structure.

WCNA-5 Santa Rosa, California

November 15, 1975: Following the move to Sun Valley, it was discovered that several boxes of records and other historical data had been lost.

January 7, 1976: At the California Service Conference, Arroyo Grande, CA, the first "N.A. Tree" was accepted for publication. In addition, the California Service conference authorized publication of a World Directory.

Elective positions of service became available in the middle seventies with the advent of the World Service Conference. As commitment and identification among members deepened, relapse became less commonplace in N.A. Basic issues became the subject of heated debate. The learning from these discussions deepened the growing knowledge and wisdom of the Fellowship.

Many of these interactions were informal and undirected. They grew out of the natural processes of recovery. Member meets members and further introductions expand the circle to include members from all over. Some items of discussion have universal interest and application value and many do not. Where members from all over agree on something, it is significant and it is from these types of agreement that formed the original material in the Basic Text.

1976 WCNA-6 was held in Ventura, California on the weekend of 11/12.

First World Service Conference held in Ventura Ca. 11/13. WSO moves to above a bail bond office on Van Nuys Blvd. and then to JK's home.

1976 200 meetings worldwide: California - 83, Arizona - 12 Georgia - 5, Minnesota - 11, Pennsylvania - 16, Texas - 11

The order form from the WSO in 1976 includes: - the White Book - a Spanish translation of the White Book - This is N.A. - the N.A. Tree - a group starter kit - monthly record form - complete group kit - Who what how and why - the Group - So you love an addict - We made a decision - Another look - Recovery and relapse - Como trabaja la programa

(How does the Program Work)- Power and principles - A friend indeed -sponsorship - Symbol of service - Sayings and slogans - Turning the wreckage into building blocks - Carrying the message -- not the illness - Relationships - the World Directory of meetings and contacts.

1976 "This is N.A." printed in Northern California. One chapter, "Came to Believe" is republished as IP #4. AA notifies Jimmy that the booklet is plagiarized from an AA pamphlet. IP #4 is pulled from circulation and Northern California stops printing the booklet.

1976 WSO incorporated.

WCNA - 7 was held at the Jack Tar Hotel in San Francisco, California. 1977 The attendance was around fifteen hundred with many of these coming in from large treatment centers.

Oct 21st 1977, Second WSC meets. Held in conjunction with convention. No representative showed from Northern California. Southern California RSR, present. 4 trustees 2 delegates. Conference was postponed till 3-26-78.

WSC-3 April 1st & 2nd 1978 at Los Angeles Valley College. First time separate from WCNA. Representatives from, South California, Midwest Regional Area, Northern California, Pennsylvania, Texas, Boulder Co., Victoria B.C., Minneapolis Area, Atlanta. GA 30 Trusted Servants in all. Boards of Trustees Elected - Voting Procedures - conference committees were established: Administrative - Policy - Finance - Literature - Institutions -Public Relations

1978 WCNA-8 Houston, Texas. The Eighth World Convention was held in Houston, Texas at the Shamrock Hilton. Less than three hundred attended, though many came from up and down the east coast where meetings of Narcotics Anonymous were sprouting up. Around a hundred members came from California. The World Convention was a great strain on the Houston N.A. community but it really helped the members who attended and took home the message that N.A. was real. Many new meetings were started.

1979 WSC 4 April 28th to April 29th at Los Angeles Valley College. RSR's present -- South California, Northern California Houston, New Jersey, Nebraska ----(Pages Missing from World Conference Report)

Any Trustee, RSR, ASR, Delegate, Spokesman from outside California , WSC Officers (Executive. Chair) and Subcommittees Chairs, were eligible to vote. Only qualifications for Administrative Committee was to be in attendance. Subcommittee Chairs could not be delegates. New WSC Guidelines accepted.

Information Pamphlets: "We made a Decision"--"Another Look" "4th Step Guide"--"So You Love an Addict". Blue version service Guide. (3rd edition tree). Quarterlies --1st W.S.C.L.C. in Wichita, KA was funded by WSC

WCNA-9 1979 The Ninth World Convention was held in Atlanta, Georgia at the Sheraton Hotel. 1979. While there were terrific difficulties, over two hundred meetings started in the six months following the Atlanta World Convention from Detroit to Miami.

The issue of the use of the big book at the tables of NA is a large issue. Many who have been around for awhile are very opposed to this change. Very large problem with many resentments generated. These carry forward until today.

The first World Literature Conference was held at Wichita, Kansas in a Community Room of the Chamber of Commerce. Material was gathered and chapter outlines were written by the twenty five attending members. By spring, a thousand copies of the Handbook for N.A. Literature Committees were printed for Committee use. The Handbook was approved by the 1980 WSC and added to the WSO inventory.

Work on the Basic Text grew out of the WSC and the general interest from the growing Fellowship. The new service structure allowed a "correct" way for members to get involved without risking relapse which sometimes follows excessive personal involvement with projects. The first World Literature Conference was held in Wichita, Kansas. It produced the Handbook for NA Literature Committees which was approved by the 1980 WSC. Input was collected and processed in open participatory Literature Conferences. The sites of these conferences were: Wichita, Kansas; Lincoln, Nebraska; Memphis, Tennessee; Santa Monica, California; Warren, Ohio; Miami, Florida; and Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. Monthly letters went to a list of participants which grew to include two thousand NA members. These members who wrote the Basic Text also founded thousands of meetings all over the Fellowship. They backed up the structure and the structure backed them up. The book was approved in 1982 in support of a motion to approve from the RSR from Las Vegas, Nevada. It was published as a hardback in 1983 and presented at the WSC.

WSC - 5 1980 ran from May 2nd to May 4th at the Los Angeles Valley College. ____ RSR's present from Southern California, Northern California, Hawaii, New Jersey, Oregon, Idaho, Nevada, Texas, Mid America, Wisconsin, South East, Florida, Tennessee, Virginia and Western Pennsylvania and Eastern Ohio. Decided to rewrite the service manual. These drafts are first separation of Board of Trustees and WSO Board of Directors. Service Manual has light blue cover. Literature Handbook proposed and approved by WSC. H&I cans approved to be passed around for second collection at meetings for H&I to collect and hold in a separate bank account. Any meeting carrying outside literature be dropped off every meeting list. Lincoln, Nebraska chosen as 2nd World Service Conference Literature Conference site.

Information Pamphlets: "Another Look" approved. -- 2nd WSCLC. to be held at Lincoln Nebraska on September 8th to 14th 1980.

WCNA-10 September, in Wichita, Kansas.

1980 September 8 - 14, Second World Literature Conference, Lincoln, Nebraska. Produced topic outline and cut and pasted input into the outline.

1980 - First Northern California convention held in Santa Rosa.

1981 February Third World Literature Conference held in Memphis, Tennessee. This nine day conference ran twenty four hours a day. It produced the Grey Review form mailed free of charge to every known group in the world. Funds for this raised strictly within N.A. Fellowship.

1981 April Fourth World Literature Conference in Santa Monica, California. Processed input to the Grey Book. The draft that is generated here never shows up again. Does anyone know where it is? Some say this was the best edit of the book.

Some time in the spring a meeting between Jimmy K. and Chuck S. takes place. There was two others at this meeting. The topic was the Basic Text. In short form the disagreement was something like this...

Chuck S. believed that the text was the needed to be printed and released as soon as possible, that the book would save a lot of lives and delay would only kill people.

Jimmy K. believed that the book would take additional work and would be printed when the work was finished...

This begins a new and major separation in the fellowship. Chuck S. began to make phone calls all over explaining that Jimmy K. had told him that "I'm the president of NA and the book won't be printed until I say it's ready". Chuck asked that groups withhold funds from WSO until the Conference time in May. Members involved in the work are very upset. Funds to the WSO decrease, Fellowship printed literature increases again.

Thus begins a bitter time in NA. No discussion seems to take place between sides and the problems get worse.

1981 WSC-6 May 1st to May 3rd at the Los Angeles Valley College. RSR's present from: Southern California, Northern California, Ohio, Illinois, Oregon, Mid America, Nevada, Texas, Mid Atlantic, Wisconsin, Florida, Georgia, Alabama, Tennessee, Victoria B.C. and Louisiana.

The procedure calling for the Conference Agenda report to be distributed 60 days prior to the World Service Conference was tabled to help the WSC get started.

Information Pamphlets: "We made a Decision" withdrawn.

1981 July Fifth World Literature Conference held in Warren, Ohio. Week long conference held in local school house. First chapters finalized.

1981 September WCNA-11 Miami, Florida

1981 September Sixth World Literature Conference held in Miami, Florida. Basic Text approved by the World Literature Committee to go out for approval.

1981 October - Mid-South Regional Service Conference mails out White Approval forms to every group in the world free of charge. Several members stay over to take Service Structure through five drafts published as review form in green cover. First half approved at next WSC.

1981 1100 meetings in world : Australia - 18 Canada - 26 England - 4 Germany - Guam - Ireland - Scotland -

1982 February Seventh World Literature Conference held in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania to prepare stories for review to be added to Basic Text already out for approval.

1982 WSC-7 approves Basic Text, Narcotics Anonymous for hardback publication.

1983 WSC-8 First Edition Basic Text passed out at Conference. Decision to replace office manager.

WSC-8 May 4, 1983 to May 8,,-1983 at the Santa Monica Retail Clerks Union Hall 1410 Second Street in Santa Monica, California. RSR's present: Alaska, Tri-State, Iowa, Alabama, NW Florida, Georgia, S. California, N. California, Mid-Coast, Ohio, Mid-America, Chesapeake-Potomac, S. Nevada, Upper Midwest, Carolinas, Greater Philadelphia, Mississippi, Mid-Atlantic, Mid-Coast, Louisiana, New Mexico, Wyoming, Texas, Colorado, N. Nevada, West Virginia, New York, Central Great Lakes, Pacific Northwest, and Tennessee (28 in all) Nine Trustees present

Amended 1982 Minutes to send to policy committee to set fixed terms for the World Service Board of Trustees.

Motion tabled calling for the World service conference resignation of all present Board members, office manager, and employees of WSO, Inc. and the conference immediately elect a new Board to reorganize the World Service Office.

Motion that only RSR's and State Representatives be voting participants; motion was referred to an Ad-Hoc Committee and was later defeated.

Motion for the World Service Office to take whatever steps necessary to hire a full-time office Manager.

Informational Pamphlets numbers One through Eleven passed as approved literature.

Motion that the literature review period be one year.

Motion that approval literature be sold by the World Service Office

MOTION that our book be completely returned to its original approved form before any more are printed. (motion carried)

H & I Handbook was approved.

Informational Pamphlets One through Eleven - Physician's Viewpoint dropped. Board of Trustees Guidelines Election of Trustees. Modification of the Literature review process.

JK resigns from Trustees and the conference decides to free him from the work at the office. A non-addict who has been serving the fellowship as it's WSC parliamentarian, Bob Stone, is hired to manage the office. A letter to JK expressing the WSC's views seems to never have been sent. A meeting between the WSO BOD chairman, JK and the new office manager takes place in early June. JK states that he will work with Bob Stone in any way. Shortly after, he finds that the locks have been changed at the office.

The publication of our Basic Text allowed for a revolution of immense importance to our young Fellowship. Suddenly there was money in World Services, a lot of money. This put pressure on those entrusted to serve us at the world level in two ways. There was more to do and more to do it with. Yet the scale was balanced by the problems of money, property and prestige that were no longer a matter of program rhetoric. An office that grossed less than ten thousand dollars the year before the literature movement begun in 1979, was now bearing the strain of millions of dollars. The strain alone created problems. They say there is a blessing in every difficulty and a curse in every blessing. Certainly our radical, accelerated growth resulted in some painful disillusionment and personalities pushed aside principles to get in on the action. The emptiness of these apparent victories is vivid in hindsight. Those who did not give way to the fear and justifications of the moment are still with us today. Others fell by the wayside. If you ever feel these strains, start talking about them with your sponsor and home group. The fresh air of discussion usually kills the fungus of self-will when it starts to make us believe we run the show!

Hiring people to replace the volunteer worker at strategic points set up potential for conflicts not foreseen or viewed as possible by the leadership of the times.

WSC-9 April 23- , 1984 at the Retail Clerks Union Hall, Santa Monica CA.

RSR's present Alabama, Northwest Florida, Alaska, Arizona Southern California, Central Great Lakes, Chesapeake Potomac Colorado, Florida, Mid America, Hawaii, Georgia, Greater Philadelphia, Washington, Louisiana, Mid Atlantic, Mid-Coast, Ireland, Mississippi, Maine, North Nevada.

To accept the proposed standing rules of WSC which defines 2/3 majority vote as 2/3 of all participating voting members.

WSO manager allowed to address conference make reports, answer questions, and discuss matters of his responsibility when requested by the conference. WSO goes into merchandising (tee-shirts, bumper stickers, tags, tokens, etc.)

NA Way limited to articles on recovery and upcoming-events.

Stories: I Can't do Anymore Time, Fat Addict, Early Services, I Felt Hopeless, I Kept Coming Back, It Won't Get Any Worse, My Gratitude Speaks, No Excuse for Loneliness, Relapse and Return, Sick and Tired at 18, The War is Over, and Up From Down Under.

Works In Progress: Staying Clean in Isolation, Revised White Booklet, Clean and Serene, Welcome to NA, The Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions of NA, It Works... How and Why, The Twelve Traditions, NA History,

Motion that IP "Am I An Addict?" be removed and sent back to WSCLC failed

Motion that the functions assigned to 1984 - 85 WSC select committee on the service structure, be reassigned to the WSC Policy committee. Failed.

Several addicts asked that the IP "A Guide to 4th Step Inventory" be removed from the list of approved literature because the word "homosexuality" appeared in the section on sex. They felt the pamphlet implied that homosexuality was a character defect. Others disagreed, saying the pamphlet instructed, "If you have strong feelings about any of the following, write about it." There was much heated debate over the need for NA to have its own 4th Step Guide (before 1982 approval, members had been using treatment center and AA guides) and whether the conference participants had the authority to remove literature that had been approved by the entire fellowship. Many felt the question had to go out for Group Conscience. In the end, the majority of voting WSC participants acted to remove the 4th Step Guide from the approved literature list.

Interestingly enough, a similar debate took place on the "missing words" from the 4th and 9th Traditions of the first edition Basic Text that had been restored after Fellowship uproar and incorporated into the 2nd Edition of our Basic Text. A motion was made to delete the words from the text making it similar to the first edition. On this issue, the WSC did not feel it had the power to act without the fellowship voting on the issue, so RSR's were instructed to go back and take a Group Conscience on the question and report the results by a set date. Even this "solution" to take a Fellowship-wide Conscience, violated established WSC Guidelines which required notifying the fellowship well in advance of the conference. The results of that poll removed the words in question. In 1991, a lawsuit was filed by the WSO against a member who was producing copies of the Basic Text with the original wording intact. The lawsuit was settled, and I have documents related to this.

Motion that IP "A Guide to 4th Step Inventory" be approved after the removal of words Homosexuality, Animal Sex, and Abortion, from page 5 and the words Asshole, Bitch, Whore, Bastard, from page 4. Failed.

Motion that IP "A Guide to 4th Step Inventory" be approved with adding the word Heterosexuality to page 5. Failed.

Motion that the procedural guidelines for the WSCLC be approved and replace the procedural guidelines for the creation and development of new literature.

Motion that the WSC International Affairs Committee be eliminated with its duties being carried on by the WSO. Failed.

Motion to hold Quarterly WSC Workshops and rotate to other areas.

IP "Another Look" - Approved -- IP "The Use of Medication in Recovery" - Was removed.

Priority list for WSCLC revised "A Guide to 4th Step Inventory"
"Just for Today", Daily Meditation Guide IP "To the Medical Profession"
Revised "Handbook for NA Literature Committees"
Revised "Recovery and Relapse"
Booklet "Resource Guide for the Trusted Servant"
Booklet or IP "The First Three Steps"
Revised "Am I An Addict?"
Revised "The Group"
"H & I and You" - to be sent out for approval.
Convention Guidelines adopted
Treasurer's Handbook adopted:
"Convention Committee" -

1. To establish a relationship with WCNA-15 to begin the transition of the new world convention guidelines.

2. To research and formulate corporate and legal guidelines so as to satisfy the needs of a world convention,

3. To redesign the intra-committee guidelines so as to satisfy the needs of our new world convention guidelines,

4. To assist the WCNA-16 in the management of the next world convention.

5. To assist and provide information to all conventions.

"Policy Committee" -

1. To draft a set of rules of order to be recommended for use at future WSC's
2. To draft guidelines for policy committee
3. To establish guidelines for new literature handbooks and establish guidelines and written materials generated by committees other than the literature committee
4. To gather input for and draft Chapter 3 of "A Guide to Service in NA"
5. To review existing procedures of the WSC
6. To produce input to the select committee on "A Guide to Service in NA".

"Financial Committee" -

1. Creation of committee guidelines
2. Further work regarding H & I accounting and fund flows in cooperation with the H & I cooperation
3. Development of report formats for use by World Service bodies
4. Consideration of any input submitted to us by components of the service structure regarding matters of finance

Motion to take the word "recovered" and replace it with "recovering" wherever it appears in print. This was passed at the 1985 WSC held in Van Nuys.

ROUGH AGENDA ITEMS:

"International Committee":

1. Representatives form the NA fellowship outside the USA.
2. Members with previous participation on any WSC Subcommittee.
3. A written request through the chairperson stating NA service experience and/or relevant experiences which would create an asset to the International Committee.

WSCLC: The White Book, The Group, WSO Order Form, Recovery and Relapse.

Hospitals & Institutions Committee:

A survey be sent out, revise H & I Handbook, mailings to institutions, probation and judicial services, to hold workshops, close working relations with any level H & I, bimonthly newsletter, to support H & I in financially undeveloped regions, to collect H & I

stories, to add to the Handbook, internal education programs, writing guidelines, financial guidelines, a literature review process for H & I literature, editorial guidelines for H & i newsletter.

"Public Information": PSA videos, radio PSA'S, PI packets

Our Fellowship has grown along similar lines in each community. Sometimes the meetings were started more than once by the same people. Their desire for recovery the N.A. way led them to give it one more try. One of our advantages today is in being able to find out how N.A. has gotten started in other communities. Not all their experience will apply to us, but we can get a feel for the way to get past the problems and into the solutions.

The founding members in each area have been sincere, willing and open to the needs of others. On the surface they may have appeared crazy, stubborn, self-willed and revolutionary. Still, we know that their desire for recovery and their love for other suffering addicts has to have been behind their every act. Even their mistakes worked out well when they were sincere and willing to admit fault. None were perfect, but the miracle of N.A. is the way we can rise out of our own ashes. They went to great lengths to find or latch on to even one more newcomer. Their personal services backed up the entire service effort in their area! The opportunity to see others recovering helped encourage them, but the real miracle was that they stayed clean. Their lives steadily, if shakily, got better. They established our basic unity of identity, concern and effort. One of their great strengths was the ability to get along with one another in favor of the Fellowship. This lesson was hard won. Many members today have paid this price. Most agreeing that it is a priceless reward.

It may sound like a lot of work, and in ways it is. This is what it takes for us to have our own Fellowship. It is also enormous fun and has a lot of real life excitement rather than alternatives. We get to spend our time with people who enjoy our company and frequently appear amused by our worst problems. But they have been there - and they have simple answers and suggestions that might work for us.

These clean addicts are constantly growing in number and are available in countries all over the world. We will continue to learn and to share the NA Way, carrying our message to every corner of the globe.

We in NA, today, are grateful to all those who have made our program and our recovery possible. Many people have loved us and wished us well when we were difficult and undeserving. Our life clean, gives us some idea of how hard it is to love us. The lessons we learn from helping others teaches us we have to give a lot to get a little. Fortunately, it is quantity we are giving and quality we are getting.

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