

Introduction

How many times have we heard of service commitments struggling to be filled? This is a continued theme at all levels of NA service. Whatever the reason for this dilemma it does not have to stay like this. The reasoning behind this pamphlet is to dispel the misconceptions about NA service through simple information.

What is service?

Our literature says that our primary purpose in Narcotics Anonymous is to carry the message to the addict who still suffers. We do this by being of service. Service comes in many forms and can be undertaken by anyone.

Why do service?

This is easy to answer as we only keep what we have by giving it away. Our greatest tool for carrying out our primary purpose is the NA group, and without individuals doing service the NA group would not survive. In our Basic Text it says that ‘our survival is directly related to the survival of the group and the fellowship’.

We have also found that service is an integral part of personal recovery in NA and allows us to receive the full benefits that this program has to offer. Again our literature says that ‘the therapeutic value of one addict helping another is without parallel’.

Should I get involved?

Absolutely! We encourage you to choose a Home Group and become involved immediately. All Groups welcome new members. Many of us have found that our Home Group is the beginning of our path of service to NA.

Forms of service within the Group.

There are many different forms of service within the group, including ‘making coffee, cleaning up, setting up for a meeting, opening a door, chairing a meeting and passing out literature, and attending the Groups Business Meeting once a month’. Some of these are elected positions and some are not, but they are all equally important. Anyone can get involved, if they choose to from the first day of their recovery.

Who do you think did all of these things at your first meeting?

“It Works How and Why” says,

‘Our groups work as well as they do because they keep it simple...’ Yet for all its emphasis on keeping things simple, Tradition Nine is not an excuse for disorganized service work; instead, it recognizes that our fellowship does require a certain degree of organization to fulfill its primary purpose. Rather than recommend that NA groups themselves become organized, the Ninth Tradition suggests that groups organize separate boards and committees to serve their needs’.

Our first concept states:

‘To fulfill our fellowships primary purpose the NA groups have joined together to create a structure which develops, coordinates and maintains services on behalf of NA as a whole’.

Just as one addict can help another addict through their shared experience, one group of addicts can help another group of addicts. Because of this groups generally come together geographically to form an Area Service Committee (ASC).

This connects the groups to NA as a whole and forms unity, always remembering that the Group is at the top of the service chain. Because it is unfeasible for each member of each group to attend Area (ASC), a Group Service Representative (GSR) is elected by the groups to regularly attend Area on their behalf. At the local Area a Group can get its literature and be plugged into the needs and requirements of the local area, and also the Area can be plugged into the needs and requirements of the Groups.

Become a GSR for your Home Group

These GSRs form the foundation of our service structure. GSRs provide constant, active influence over the discussions being carried on within the service structure. They do this by participating in Area Service Committee meetings, attending forums and assemblies at both the area and regional levels, and joining in the work of an ASC subcommittee. If we are vigilant in choosing stable, qualified leaders at this level of service, the remainder of the structure will almost certainly be sound. From this strong foundation, a service structure can be built that will nourish, inform, and support the groups in the same way that the groups nourish and support the structure.

Forms of service at Area (ASC)

Join an Area Sub-Committee

- **Activities-** Plans coordinates and hosts Recovery Celebrations for all NA members.
- **Literature-** Acquires and distributes NA approved literature and merchandise to Groups.
- **Public Relations-** Takes H&I meetings in to Jails, Juvenile Detentions and Treatment Centers. Mans our Areas 24 hour Phoneline. Produces our Area Meeting Schedules. Distributes NA Literature in our communities where future members can find it. Provides Fellowship Development and Out Reach services to struggling Groups and communities.

All the above activities and more are essential in fulfilling our primary purpose in NA, and yet how do they work? Who runs them? How are they funded and how do they operate?

Groups on their own would not be able to do this without being diverted from carrying the message to the addicts who still suffer at their meetings.

How do people find out about NA?

The Area coordinates vital services by creating Sub-Committees, it carries the NA message through the community, it lets people know that NA exists: doctors, parents, prisoners, police, both addicts and people who regularly come into contact with them. One can always find out about service at the local Area Service Committee (ASC).

Just as groups come together to form Areas, Areas come together to form a Region. In the Washington N. Idaho Region at the moment there are twenty Areas, each of which elects a Regional Committee Member (RCM) to represent them at the Regional Service Committee (RSC) meeting.

Region in turn has its own Sub-Committees, and indeed its own representatives, the Regional Delegates (RD’s) who carry its conscience through the World Services Conference (WSC meets every 2 years), which is like an ASC for the World’s Regions. It is in this way that each individual addict or Group, if they so choose, is connected to NA as a whole.

Much further detailed information can be found in;

“The Guide to Local Services”

Free download at www.na.org

Personal stories

But ultimately, just like the therapeutic value of one addict helping another, there is no better way to explain the benefits of service than personal experiences of addicts themselves:

- Service work has taught me how to keep commitments, be responsible, work with others, be selfless, and most of all has helped me stay clean. For me it is the key piece in my program. I LOVE service work. I serve on many different levels, from home group to regional. No position is too big or too small. I need to make sure that the message is available for the suffering addict. Cashmere WA
- I will probably never know who put up the Phonline poster that got me to my first meeting or who the voice on the end of the Phonline belonged to, but I can show my gratitude by doing service that gets the message to more addicts like me. Anonymous
- Service helps me with my college work, gives me reason to keep coming back to meetings and give something back to NA. It has helped me look at myself and overcome fear, prejudices and resentments - inside and outside of NA. Seeing old timers still around gives me hope that NA works, NA needs people to stick around in order to grow or newcomers and old timers won't get any help. Service gives me confidence, assertiveness and makes me feel good - although sometimes the rewards come sooner rather than later! Service in small groups can be difficult but if you ask for help these difficulties can be overcome. Anonymous
- When I first arrived in NA I didn't feel part of the fellowship, didn't work the program and couldn't stay clean. Simply by stacking chairs or washing up at the end of the meeting I felt more involved. I began to feel like an NA member and not a fly on the wall. Anonymous
- I should do service everyday of my recovery because NA does me the ultimate service of keeping me alive everyday. Anonymous

***This is a Central Washington Area
NA
Locally-developed Resource
Not to be confused with
NA approved literature.
2010***

- Service has enhanced my recovery in ways I never imagined. It has given me a sense of belonging in Narcotics Anonymous and helped me build meaningful relationships. In my early recovery, I found the ability to stay clean for N.A and my service position when I wasn't sure I could stay clean for myself. Service reaffirmed my commitment to stay clean and gave me the ability to see beyond myself to the worldwide fellowship of Narcotics Anonymous. When I tried to squeeze one or two meetings a week into my busy schedule, I had a hard time staying clean. When I truly surrendered and became apart of the program through service I stayed clean. When I had a hard time finding a higher power, service in N.A worked for me. I owe my life and recovery to N.A today and there are a lot of still suffering addicts in the world. Chelan WA
- When I got to NA giving to others was as foreign an idea as living life without drugs! So I had to learn how to give back to NA just like I had to learn to live life clean. Lucky for me finding this willingness came from gratitude and not the pain that was required to get me clean. But it was still a process. I had trouble finding a meeting to call home so I was given the idea to start a new meeting and did at 11 months clean. It felt like I made a difference and was helping people stay and get clean. I had a Home Group. Now many years later I have been given the opportunity to serve the NA fellowship as a whole through the PR committee. Looking back as my commitment to service increased so did the quality of the rest of my life, jobs, friends, family and most importantly my recovery. I also had to work steps with my sponsor. (Big hint :) Wenatchee WA

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Central Washington Area Of Narcotics Anonymous



Being of Service

To CWANA

***We keep what we have
by giving it away...***

ENHANCE YOUR RECOVERY
ASC - 1st Sunday of every Month
Ellensburg Adult Activity Center
506 S. Pine St. Ellensburg, WA

9:00 am- Public Relations Subcommittee

10:30 Phonline Orientation

11:00 am- Activities Subcommittee

12:00 pm- Literature Subcommittee

12:30 pm- New GSR Orientation

1:00 pm- Area Service Committee

***"Service...where the steps meet the
traditions on the road of recovery."***

***24 hr Phonline
1-877-664-0398***