



What Is An NA Group?

When two or more addicts come together to help each other stay clean, they may form a Narcotics Anonymous group. Here are the six points based on our traditions which describe an NA group:

1. All members of a group are drug addicts, and all drug addicts are eligible for membership.
2. As a group, they are self-supporting.
3. As a group, their single goal is to help drug addicts recover through application of the Twelve Steps of Narcotics Anonymous.
4. As a group, they have no affiliation outside Narcotics Anonymous.
5. As a group, they express no opinion on outside issues.
6. As a group, their public relations policy is based on attraction rather than promotion.

In stating the six points that differentiate an NA group from other kinds of groups, we place greater emphasis on drug addiction than almost anywhere else in our service literature. This is because Narcotics Anonymous groups cannot be all things to all people and still provide the initial identification drugs addicts need to find their way to recovery. By clarifying our groups' sole membership requirement and primary purpose in this way, once and for all, we free ourselves to focus on freedom from the disease of addiction in the bulk of our service literature, certain that our groups are providing adequate

grounds for identification to those seeking recovery.

The primary purpose of an NA group is to carry the message of recovery to the addict who still suffers. The group provides each member with the opportunity to share and hear the experience of other addicts who are learning to live a better life without the use of drugs. The group is the primary vehicle by which our identity is carried. It provides a setting in which a newcomer can identify with recovering addicts and find an atmosphere of recovery.

What Kind Of Meeting Format Can We Use?

Groups use a variety of formats to enhance the atmosphere of recovery in their meetings. Most meetings last an hour or an hour and a half. Some groups have a single format for their meetings. Other groups have a schedule of rotating formats: one week a step study, the next week a speaker meeting, and so forth. Still others divide their large meetings into several sessions after the meeting has opened; each with its own format. Here are a few basic descriptions of some of the meeting formats that, with variations, seem to be among the most common. For reference, we've also included a sample meeting format at the end of this chapter.

- Participation meetings
- Topic discussion meetings
- Study meetings
- Speaker meetings
- Newcomer meetings
- Question-and-answer meetings.



Contra Costa Area Of Narcotics Anonymous

SECRETARY ORIENTATION BROCHURE

"When we ask members to serve, we don't set them apart as being somehow better than the rest of us, Leadership in NA is a service, not a class of membership. For this reason, we call our leaders *trusted servants*"

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About the Role of the Secretary

The secretary (sometimes called the chairperson) arranges the affairs of the group, often by asking other group members to help out. One of the first jobs for a new secretary is registering the group's current mailing address and meeting information with the area service committee secretary and the World Service Office. When a new group secretary or GSR takes office or there is a change in the group's mailing address or the time or location of a group meeting, both the area committee and World Service Office should be informed. Other things a group secretary is responsible for may include:

- Opening the meeting room well before the meeting is scheduled to begin, setting up chairs and tables (if necessary), and cleaning and locking the room after the meeting is over.
- Arranging a table with NA books and pamphlets, local meeting lists, NA activity flyers, service bulletins, The NA Way Magazine, and NA newsletters.
- Making tea or coffee.
- Buying refreshments and other supplies.
- Selecting meeting leaders and speakers.
- Keeping a list of group members' recovery anniversaries, if the group wishes.
- Organizing group business meetings.
- And doing whatever else needs to be done.

Many groups break down all these jobs separately: someone to open and close the room, another person responsible for refreshments, a third to take care of the literature table, and so forth. Groups that host more than one meeting will often have a different person responsible for all these jobs at each of their meetings.

Rotation and Continuity

Rotation is the practice many groups have of electing new people to service positions at set intervals rather than having the same person serve in the same position year after year. Rotation offers very definite benefits for the groups who practice it. By providing diversity in leadership, it helps a group stay fresh and energetic. It provides assurance that no one individual exercises so much influence that the group becomes a mere extension of his or her personality. The practice of rotation also reinforces the NA emphasis on service rather than the servant, consistent with our belief in the value of spiritual anonymity-what's important is the job being done, not the particular person doing it.

Some groups allow their members to serve more than one term in any given position so that the group can take advantage of the trusted servant's experience. Once group officers have completed their terms, rotation allows them to step aside for a time or accept responsibilities elsewhere in the NA service structure, giving other members the chance to serve the group.

The impact of rotation on the stability of the group is balanced by the continuing presence of its long-term group members. Those who have served in the past as group officers and continue to maintain an active role in the life of the group can provide much-needed continuity and maturity of perspective to a growing group's discussions. They can serve as the group's memory, ensuring that the group never has to "reinvent the wheel." They can also lend a hand to new officers and temporarily pitch in to relieve overloaded trusted servants.

What Is A Group Business Meeting?

The purpose of the group business meeting is fairly self-explanatory: to conduct the business of the group in such a way that the group remains effective in carrying the recovery message. Some groups hold business meetings on a regular basis; others only call them when something specific comes up that needs the group's attention. Some of the questions a typical group business meeting addresses are:

- Is the group effective in carrying the NA message?
- Are newcomers and visitors made welcome?
- Do solutions for problems at recent meetings need to be sought?
- Is the meeting format providing sufficient direction?
- Is attendance steady or growing?
- Are there good relations between the group and the facility in which the meeting is held? Between the group and the community?
- Are the group's funds being used wisely?
- Is there enough money being donated at meetings to meet the group's needs and also provide contributions to the rest of the service structure?
- Are literature and refreshment supplies holding up?
- Is there a service vacancy in the group?
- Has the area, the region, or world services asked the group for advice, support, or direction?

All material taken from
[A Guide To Local Services](#)