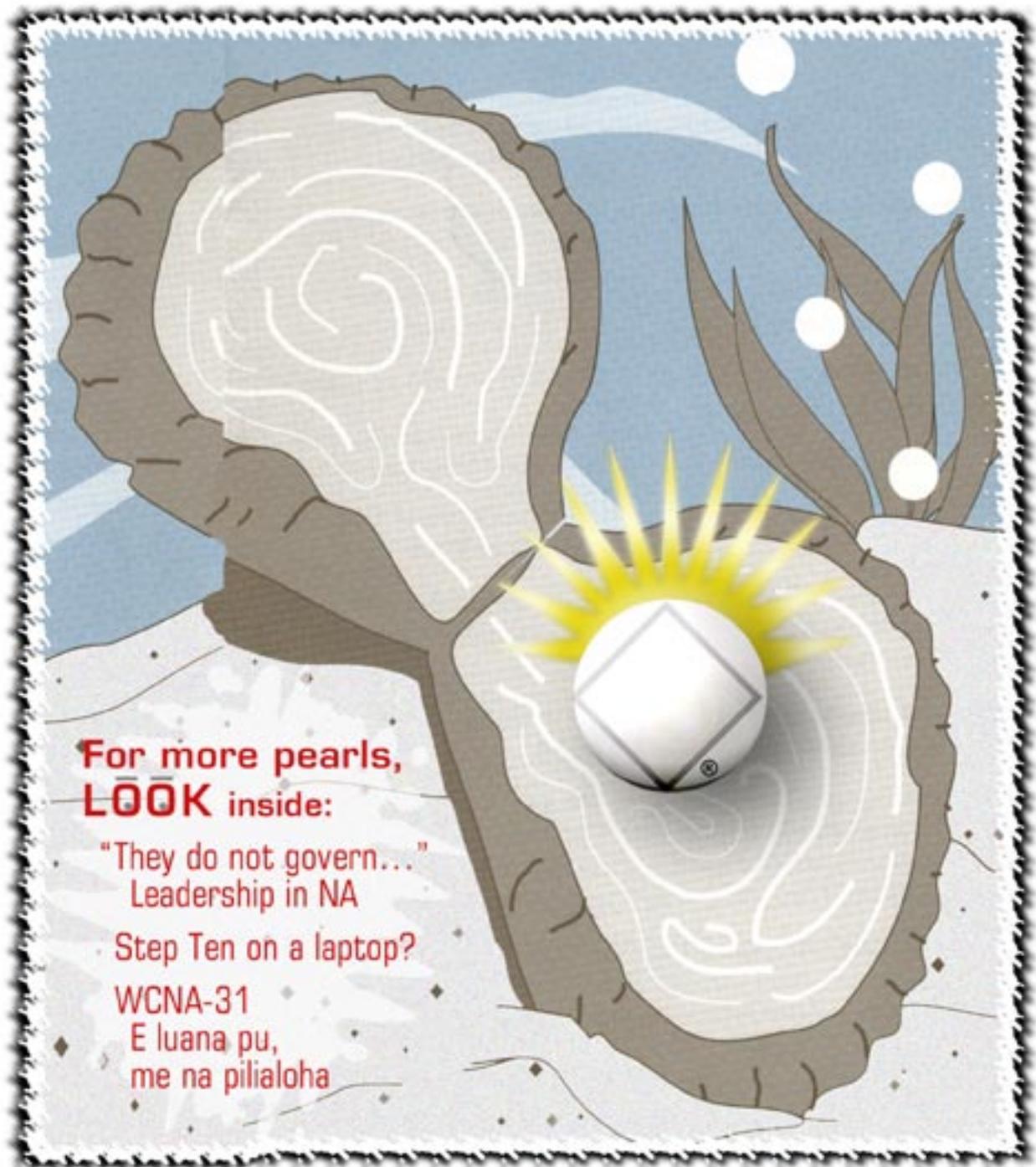


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MAGAZINE

THE INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF NARCOTICS ANONYMOUS



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Cover art adapted from the July 1996 cover of *The NA Way Magazine*.

*The NA Way Magazine* welcomes letters from all readers. Letters to the editor can respond to any article that has appeared in *The NA Way*, or can simply be a viewpoint about an issue of concern in the NA Fellowship. Letters should be no more than 250 words, and we reserve the right to edit. All letters must include a signature, valid address, and phone number. First name and last initial will be used as the signature line unless the writer requests anonymity.

The *NA Way Magazine*, published in English, French, German, Portuguese, and Spanish, belongs to the members of Narcotics Anonymous. Its mission, therefore, is to provide each member with recovery and service information, as well as recovery-related entertainment, which speaks to current issues and events relevant to each of our members worldwide. In keeping with this mission, the editorial staff is dedicated to providing a magazine which is open to articles and features written by members from around the world, as well as providing current service and convention information. Foremost, the journal is dedicated to the celebration of our message of recovery—"that an addict, any addict, can stop using drugs, lose the desire to use, and find a new way to live."



# Acceptable, responsible, and productive members

As a result of being a member of Narcotics Anonymous, I have received many gifts above and beyond the promised "recovery from active addiction" that our literature describes. I am more honest, hopeful, courageous, humble, responsible, patient, loving, and serene than I was when I was using. I also have been married for twenty-two years to another member of our fellowship; I have a thirteen-year-old daughter; I had a loving relationship with my parents until their deaths; I have not been arrested for thirty-three years; I have a good-paying job; I pay my taxes early; and I vote in every election.

All in all, most people would say that I am a responsible and productive member of society. Every now and then I get reminded that, although I am proud to be a recovering addict, society may not view me in this way. In early recovery, I used to give blood on a regular basis. Then one day I was given a questionnaire, and one of the questions was "Have you ever used drugs intravenously?" Being honest, I marked "yes," and I was informed that they had no need for my blood. Even though, by the grace of God, I am HIV-negative and do not have hepatitis C, they still do not want my blood—but I still offer it every couple of years, just in case.

More recently, I applied for a volunteer position. The application process included an intensive investigation of my background and a polygraph test regarding any matters of concern to my background screeners. It turned out that the fact that I have been clean for twenty-five years did not overcome the fact that I had three felony arrests when I was seventeen years old.

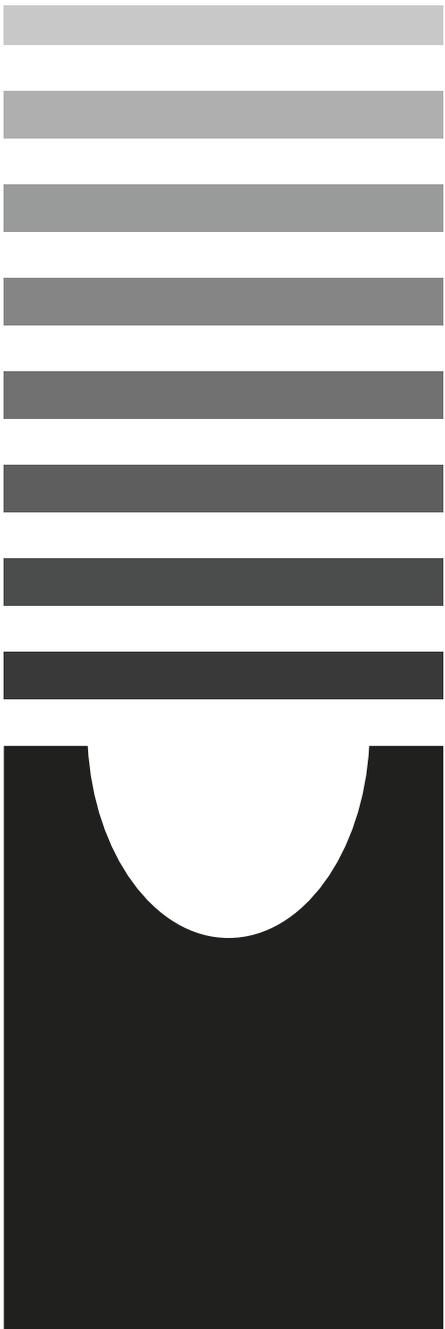
When the people who wanted me for the volunteer position tried to help me overcome this obstacle, they asked me how many times I had smoked marijuana, used LSD, snorted methamphetamine, etc. As I answered each question honestly, I could feel that they did not want someone with my background volunteering for their organization. I was disappointed, hurt, and acutely aware that the tired old lie "once an addict, always an addict" is not dead in the minds of many in society.

These experiences have made me appreciate the love and acceptance NA offers me. It gives me membership that is mine as long as I have the desire to stay clean. It gives me a place to be of service, so I can keep what I have by giving it away. And finally, it gives me the confidence that, some day, if it be God's will, I will be able to donate blood again and be a volunteer, even though I was arrested when I was seventeen years old.

The end of this story is that I allowed myself to feel sad for a couple days and to feel a pang of hurt when my friends talked about their training in this volunteer organization, but I have used the Serenity Prayer to show me the way back to peace of mind.

While I cannot make that organization accept me as a volunteer, I can still volunteer in other ways to help the same people. I have had a surge of energy, and the skills I learned in the service structure of NA are being put to work to help another group that is suffering. I may always bump into walls, reminding me that my rights of membership in society have been limited because of my addiction, but this same addiction has opened the doors to NA membership and all the blessings I have received here.

*Anonymous*



## Leadership in NA

**Editor's Note:** This is an excerpt from an article printed in the February 1985 *NA Way*. As you can see, the discussion of leadership is not all that new and has been going on for many years!

...The phrase "we have no leaders" is simply incorrect. An older member once challenged that statement in this way: "Who," he asked, "are but trusted servants according to Tradition Two?" Leadership in NA is a living, vital need. Tradition Two simply speaks to leadership style. Our leaders serve, they don't govern.

Another lesson we learned, sometimes the hard way, is that to be a good leader in NA, one must be an equally good follower. The group will welcome the leadership of a member who is well informed and open to the opinions of others. A leader needs to be well read in all conference-approved literature and to keep channels of communication open with available "elder statesmen" in the fellowship. We found, when we had no local NA elder statesmen, that those old AA fossils often had some pearls of wisdom for us too. Today the NA experience is abundant around the country, so the phone has also been a valuable tool.

A good leader, as a good follower, will respect group conscience. In our town, some have tried to dominate service committee meetings with passionate, power-driven speeches, and usually only succeed in intimidating and dividing the group. Others have tried to speak from a well-reasoned, well-informed, dispassionate vantage point, and then accept the democratic decision of group conscience on the matter. The tone of those meetings feels a lot healthier to me.

A leader in NA is also a role model. Whether we face it or not, after some clean time, we become an influence on newer members. One challenge of responsible leadership is to become aware of that influence, and learn to "practice these principles in all our affairs," and carry ourselves as "ac-

ceptable, responsible, and productive members of society."

Finally, a good leader knows when to step back a pace and let someone else don the mantle of leadership. "Trusted servants" who jealously guard their turf, and won't yield the reins to the next generation of members, usually end up in some real trouble with this disease. Their plight is often described as the "bleeding deacon" role. I have felt those growing pains, and I wish them on no one. The elder statesman, on the other hand, will trust group conscience (even when it needs to learn from its own mistakes) and will recede into the background as a resource for the new people on the "front lines."

So I may not be what I could be or what I'm going to be, but thank God I'm not what I used to be. Narcotics Anonymous has given me an arena in which to work out some of those old character defects and learn how to cooperate with people. Many times I have sat in a staff meeting at work, or a committee meeting for some volunteer organization, and thanked my Higher Power for using NA to give me a chance at a new personality. I can be a member of society today without secretly feeling like an infiltrator. I have learned some basic principles of cooperating with others in this world from a ragtag band of rebels learning from each other at the same time. How we did that is beyond me. Beyond us all...

*RH, North Dakota, USA*

# Leadership

In the last *NA Way Magazine*, we shared some introductory thoughts about leadership. This article picks up on those ideas to discuss leadership in relation to service. We hope this essay inspires you to look at your own thoughts about leadership and service in NA and, further, to talk together about the subject.

## Many books have been written about the nature of leadership...

We have access to plenty of material in NA about leadership—from the Fourth Concept essay of our Twelve Concepts to the Second Tradition. In fact, even when we don't have the texts handy, plenty of us can quote them from memory. And if you feel there isn't enough information on leadership available in NA publications, just type L-E-A-D-E-R-S-H-I-P into any popular Internet search engine. You'll get back anywhere from 32,000,000 to 52,000,000 results!

We seem to know plenty about it. So why do we need to talk about it? Well, knowing about something and putting that knowledge to work are two different things. Many of us knew we were addicts, but still continued to use. Sitting around and talking about what we were going to do when we got clean one day didn't change our lives. Getting clean and then figuring out what we needed to do to stay clean did.

We have plenty of information on leadership. But we still have unfilled service positions all over the world. And even when we have a number of people willing to run for a position, many of us lack a clear sense of what, beyond willingness, we are looking for in our leaders—those "but trusted servants." Often, we just elect the person who seems like he or she loves NA the most or whom we all know and love. How much do we think about whether he or she is qualified and is prepared or trained for the job?

What qualifies a person to be an effective GSR, ASC subcommittee chair, RCM, RD, or World Board member? When we hear the word "qualification" it's easy to think merely of clean time, but it's no coincidence that "qualification" and "quality" come from the same root. What kind of qualities would we ultimately like to see in our trusted servants?

Our Third Concept essay reminds us, "Delegating authority can be a risky business unless we do so responsibly" (p. 7). What is it about certain people that makes us willing to delegate authority and makes us think of them as leaders? Developing answers to these questions is part of the responsibility the Third Concept talks about that takes the risk out of delegation.

Sponsorship is one aspect of leadership that we can all wrap our heads around. Our sponsors are leaders: We look to them for experience and advice. We don't ask someone to sponsor us simply because he or she meets a clean time requirement. Sometimes we wait days and months to find the right sponsor. Why don't we treat the service structure with the same love and concern?

We don't wish to forge new definitions here or change the ones we have, but we do hope that we can inspire the fellowship to talk about these ideas. Our Fourth Concept essay is an excellent place to begin when thinking about what "leadership qualities" means in the context of NA service. But as important as it is to come to a common understanding of the qualities of an NA leader, that's only a first step. So many of us

selfLessness  
intEgrity  
accountAbility  
spiritual Depth  
honEsty  
trustwoRthiness  
willingneSs  
Humility  
faIth  
oPen-mindednes

who possess some of these qualities have discovered and polished them in Narcotics Anonymous. And we did not do that alone. We had help. Often someone took us to our first service meeting, encouraged us to run for a position, and helped us find our way once we were elected. When we don't take responsibility to help others in this way, our groups and committees suffer.

Have you ever been to a great meeting only to return after the group has elected a new secretary to find the meeting in disarray? Often that's because the group didn't take the time to cultivate a leader—in this case the secretary—by teaching the secretary about what's important to the group. Or it could be that either the outgoing or incoming secretary was too much in charge. Our Basic Text cautions us "that if a group becomes an extension of the personality of a leader or member, it loses its effectiveness" (p. 61). And that's part of cultivating leadership as well—helping our leaders to grow into their roles as servants and understand the strength of humility.

Cultivating leadership is an active and ongoing process. Our Basic Text tells us that "two of our seemingly inherent enemies [are] apathy and procrastination" (p. 75). Just as these tendencies can be destructive in our personal recovery, they can be detrimental to NA's service structure. In other words, we shouldn't wait until elections at our home group (or area or regional service committee) to "draft" someone into a position. When we do that, sometimes the only thing we pay attention to is the clean time requirement, and we're willing to waive that if we really, really need someone for something.

In an immediate sense, we need to take the time to determine what we expect of members serving in particular positions, explain those expectations to members, and allow them to make a considered choice. That's a good start—certainly part of what it means to delegate authority responsibly—but these actions only address short-term solutions. We can do much, as individual members and together in our groups and committees, to change the culture of NA. The more thoughtfully we consider questions of leadership and cultivate leadership qualities in our members, the less it

will seem that filling service positions is a problem to be solved. Instead, finding members willing to serve whom we trust to lead us can be a logical extension of our day-to-day practices.

It is an honor and privilege to serve NA. Service to the fellowship is one of the ways we get to keep what we have. Each of us has gifts to offer the program, and over time many of us find the spots where those gifts can shine. For some, sponsorship is their niche, the place where they are most comfortable as leaders in the program; for others it might be serving as secretary of a meeting; still others may find themselves most effective serving on an area, regional, or world level. Regardless, most of us need others to help us find and develop those qualities within ourselves and to understand what it is to be a leader in the program. And all of us bear the responsibility of teaching others about the importance of service and helping them learn how to give their best to NA. Before we can take on that role, however, we must have an understanding of our own. We hope the questions below spark ideas and inspire conversations in your groups and committees. And we hope that happens soon, not just on the day of elections.

## What do we mean by "leadership" and "leadership qualities"?

The Second Tradition answers the question of what leadership consists of very simply for us. Our leaders are the trusted servants of Narcotics Anonymous—everyone from the members elected at the group as secretary, treasurer, coffee person, or GSR to the regional chairs and delegates to the World Board members. We all have the right to serve NA, and as our Fourth Concept essay reminds us, "NA's leaders are not only those we vote into office." Members who take responsibility to clean up a meeting space, motivate others to get involved, maintain the atmosphere of recovery in a home group, reach out to newcomers, and so on, these are our leaders as well. Acting as a power of example and serving selflessly, whether in an elected position

or not, is at the heart of NA leadership.

With that as a foundation, we can consider the additional leadership qualities that will make a member most effective in a particular position. What qualities are we looking for in an RD? A group secretary? An area treasurer?

"Qualities" mean more than just the stated requirements to serve in a position. Qualities also refer to experience, character, and abilities.

Here are some of the traits our literature says are leadership qualities:

- ◆ selflessness
- ◆ faith
- ◆ humility
- ◆ integrity
- ◆ honesty
- ◆ open-mindedness
- ◆ willingness
- ◆ accountability
- ◆ spiritual depth
- ◆ trustworthiness

## What other traits do you think are important?

Here are some of the abilities and experience our literature outlines as important in leadership:

- ◆ experience working the steps, which teaches us to depend on a Power greater than ourselves and to use this Power for our group purposes
- ◆ willingness to ask for help, advice, and direction on a regular basis
- ◆ the ability to compromise and disagree without being disagreeable
- ◆ the courage of conviction and to surrender
- ◆ the ability and willingness to report completely and truthfully
- ◆ willingness to expend time and energy to serve the fellowship, study background material, and consult with those who have greater experience
- ◆ the ability to know when it is best to step aside and allow others to take over communication and organizational skills

- ◆ the ability to see where today's actions will take us and to offer the guidance we need to prepare for the demands of tomorrow
- ◆ educational, business, personal, and service experiences

## What other abilities and experience are important?

Even if we have a vision of the qualities we are looking for, it can be hard to put that vision into action when electing trusted servants. An effective meeting secretary, for example, when the group secretary is also the person who acquires speakers for a group, knows other people in the fellowship who can carry the message, and goes to enough meetings to hear others and ask them to come to the meeting. How do we determine if the person we are considering as our meeting secretary has these qualities? Do we ask him or her? Do we make assumptions because we know the person? Do we ask other people what they think about our candidate? Have we made it clear to the group in advance that we want to see someone who has served as treasurer or coffee person at the meeting before we see him take on this commitment? Or is that unnecessary for our group?

Though the above is an example on the group level, the same concerns hold true at any level of service. We must determine the qualities we are looking for and then ask ourselves: How do we know or find out if a member has those qualities?

## What do we mean by cultivating leadership?

Thinking about and discussing the leadership qualities that are important for a given position and how to discover those qualities in members is a good start. But we can do more. We can also work to cultivate those qualities in members.

When we talk about "cultivating" leadership, we mean that these qualities are not inborn, they are developed over time. All of us are very familiar with

development. The process of recovery, in fact, is a process of development. Our sponsors, our friends in the program, the members of our home group, and others have been helping us to develop for years, working the steps with us and teaching us how to practice principles in all our affairs. This usually happens long before we get to the Twelfth Step, just as development of trusted servants happens long before we step into a new position.

Often it is not until the end of our term that we learn how to be truly effective in our service position. In our last few months as RCM we may finally realize that if we write the report for our ASC right after the regional meeting, we remember what happened better. At last we feel comfortable at the regional meeting and don't have to repeat what everyone else already said just to feel like we are participating. We really start to make the connection and learn the most about ourselves—and then it's time to go. Now what do we do?

Too often, the answer is, we walk away, leaving the new RCM to learn by himself. It's easy to blame a lack of preparation on the member who holds the service position. But we are all responsible for maintaining a "throw them in the water

and see if they can swim" approach to leadership and service. How do we help cultivate leadership in our NA communities? If we have experience in service, do we reach out and share our knowledge with those who are newer to their positions? Do we help others with writing reports, encourage them to find their voices, give them guidance in effective communication, and so on? What can we do as a group or service body, not just as individuals, to help cultivate leadership? Does our group, area, or region consistently elect alternates in addition to GSRs, RCMs, and RDs? If not, how can we better fill those positions? Do we know the difference between holding our trusted servants accountable and beating them up? Between encouraging them and turning a blind eye to their shortcomings?

The fact is, we are always developing our leaders. Even when we say nothing, we are teaching our trusted servants about leadership. We may be sending a message that we don't really care about what they do. Or worse, we could be telling them that effective leadership consists of staying out of trouble. Often our leaders hear nothing from us until they make mistakes. Do we let our trusted servants know when we think they are



Art featured in April 1985 issue of *The NA Way Magazine*.

acting as effective leaders? Do we speak up if we see a potential problem instead of waiting until after it happens? Do we talk about the work we do?

## The challenge

We don't want to seem glib in listing a host of questions and things to think about in this article. This is a difficult area for us as a fellowship, and we know that. It takes thinking and sharing to understand how our spiritual principles really work in the context of leadership.

It's easy to fall back on a belief that, because "there is but one ultimate authority," we need not speak our mind in a business meeting, for example. Yet part of being responsible is sharing our ideas, thoughts, and concerns out loud. Group conscience is born of discussion and even debate.

It can feel uncomfortable to practice "principles before personalities," not just in putting aside our dislike for a member, but in truly embracing the principle of "anonymity" and holding our friends to the same standards we would hold others to.

Perhaps most centrally, in working a personal program, many of us focus so closely on personal responsibility, it's difficult to broaden our perspective beyond simply acting as an example. Certainly, that is a very important thing to do, and we don't want to minimize the effect of asking "What can I do?" But as recovering addicts, we are part of something much bigger than ourselves. We are responsible to help others navigate the system that is our service structure and, further, to help them polish their best qualities and learn how to be the kind of leaders who will help them and help NA. Together we can.

As addicts, we are masters of handling crisis and seem to thrive in such situations. Our Basic Text reminds us, "By nature, we are strong-willed, self-centered people, who are thrust together in NA. We are mismanagers and not one of us is capable of consistently making good decisions" (p. 60). But recovery affords us the opportunity to transcend that nature. Working our personal programs, we can learn to be God-centered and service-oriented. Working together, we

can make better decisions than we do as individuals. In short, we need not be doomed by our addictive natures. Together, we can improve our service structure today and work for a future in which "every addict in the world has the chance to experience our message in his or her own language and culture."

It is difficult for us to plan for the future and do work today that yields no instant gratification. In essence, we are planting trees that we will never sit under. We are developing leaders whom we may never serve with, in an NA that may be radically different from what it is today. At one point in our history, the idea that we were a "worldwide fellowship" meant that we had meetings in Southern and Northern California. Thank God for change. However, change does not always come easy, and we are not done yet. As long as addicts are dying before they get the chance to experience our message, we have work to do, and we cannot do it alone...all of the steps in NA teach us that.



***Cultivating Leadership in NA is one of the projects selected at the 2004 World Service Conference. Our work on this project depends on your involvement. We will continue to talk about this important topic and expect to have a deeper discussion about leadership in future issues of The NA Way Magazine and NAWS News. These discussions will include material on the Twelve Traditions and the Twelve Concepts in relation to leadership. Please check [www.na.org/conference](http://www.na.org/conference) for the latest information on this and other world service projects. Send us your thoughts and discussion results. We look forward to hearing from you and continuing this discussion.***

***But as recovering addicts, we are part of something much bigger than ourselves. We are responsible to help others navigate the system that is our service structure and, further, to help them polish their best qualities...***

# Today I live!

This is a little letter about my life. I am calling it "Today I live!"

If I had the chance to live my life again, then I would brood less about yesterday or tomorrow and live for the moment, today. I would travel more, laugh and love more, and certainly I would also cry more. I would run barefoot on the lawn in the morning dew, risk more, and plan less. I would eat chocolate cake whenever I felt like it, wear my Sunday clothes on Monday, and be grateful for this very moment.

But did I not get the chance to live my life anew? I do not have to live in fear of everything that happens anymore. I am not living in the dirt anymore. I do not have to hurt or prostitute myself or let people offend me or beat me up. I do not have to destroy my body and my soul with drugs or by treating myself like an enemy instead of a friend. I do not wake up in the morning—or after an overdose—feeling sadly surprised that I am still alive.

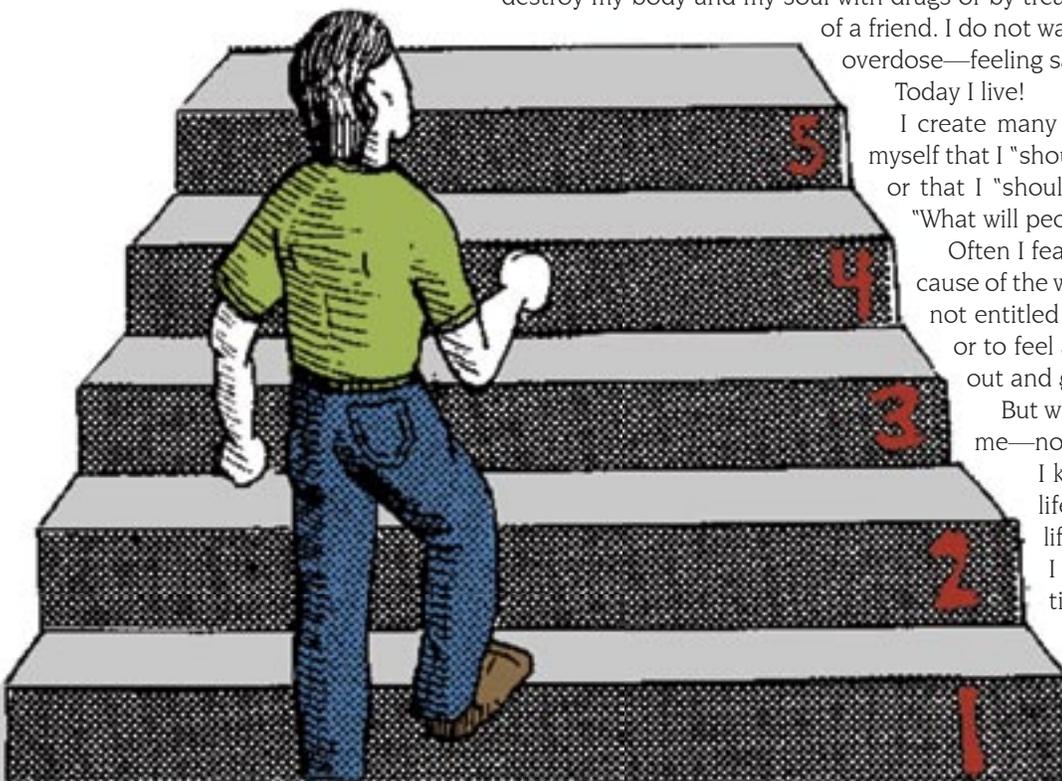
Today I live!

I create many of my own limitations by telling myself that I "should do" all of those serious things, or that I "should not do this," or asking myself, "What will people think if I do that?"

Often I fear that people will not love me because of the way I am. Sometimes I still feel I am not entitled to freedom, or to laugh out loud, or to feel all of my wild feelings, or to reach out and grasp life in both my hands.

But who keeps me from doing that? Just me—no one else!

I know today that God's will for my life is that I live and have a good life. The only limitation to whatever I want to do in my life is the question, "Will it hurt other people or me?" If not, I ask, "Is it possible?" Then I ask, "Do I want to do it?" If all the answers are positive, then my final decision is "Go ahead—live!"



*Sigrid B, Karlsruhe, Germany*

Art featured in March 1992 issue of *The NA Way Magazine*.

## Step Ten in the computer age

My name is Michael, a recovering addict with five years, three months, and twenty-five days clean as I write this letter. I would like to share my experience with my fellow NA members around the world about how I have been practicing Step Ten.

After I came back from a steps retreat hosted by four areas surrounding São Paulo, Brazil, I started recording my Tenth Step. I do not know if it is common to do so in other places, but here in Brazil it is not. There are a few of us who do this, and I have to say that there are more and more of my fellow addicts here who are starting to practice the Tenth Step in this way.

The idea is simple. Instead of writing Step Ten on paper, some of us record it on a tape recorder, and others—like me—record it straight onto a computer. Of course, this may sound odd to the more conservative members in NA, but for us who like to simplify things, it has been a special experience.

Recording Step Ten has several advantages compared to writing it on paper. For instance, it is easier and more dynamic to speak than to write, and what can be said in ten minutes might take at least five sheets of paper to write down. Having a tape recorder in

the pocket makes it possible to work this step during a trip. Finally, in recording the voice, more than just facts and feelings can be noted. There is more richness than just words on paper by hearing the sensations, like anxiety, tiredness, stress, serenity, or peacefulness.

One of the things that attracts me to recording onto the computer is the idea of security. How many of us cannot write down some events, fearing our sons, daughters, parents, or wives might read what we have written? With Step Ten recorded on the computer, I can use a password to open the file. This gives me total freedom to be searching and fearless and really enjoy the fruits of working this wonderful step, something I do not believe I can get from a written Step Ten.

Another good thing I like about using the computer is the practicality it offers. For example, with just one click I can review how I was feeling on a specific day of a specific month of a specific year, and I can analyze some characteristics that were conveyed in my voice at that time.

Naturally, I do not believe that everyone has to work the Tenth Step in this way, but for a number of us here in Brazil, it has been an incredible experience. Maybe some of you will want to try this idea and see how it works for you.

Thank you for letting me share my experience here with you.

*Michael A, São Paulo, Brazil*



Art featured in April 1989 issue of *The NA Way Magazine*.

## I've moved

Hello, NA Way crew,  
Just a quick email to let you know the joys of recovery have now given me the opportunity to move to a bigger apartment. Could you please redirect future issues of *The NA Way Magazine* to my new address? Thank you very much. I do appreciate having the magazine delivered directly to me. It always makes me feel that I am a part of something very special when I see that *The NA Way* has landed on my NA doormat!

*Stephan M, Manchester, England*



## A desert miracle

Hello,

I just received the literature I requested, and I immediately started reading the Basic Text. Thank you so much! From the bottom of my heart, I appreciate it.

Things are okay out here in Iraq. A couple of other addicted soldiers and I made a small meeting on our FOB (Forward Operating Base). I just celebrated three years clean out here. I do not need any coins or cakes; just my fellow addicts and my recovery are good enough for me.

I am forever grateful for NA and every addict because we know what it is like to live, die (spiritually), and be reborn.

Thanks again for the literature. I will keep coming back!

Surviving in Iraq by God's grace,  
*SPC Jacob F, US Army*

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**Mail/Fax Convention Registration Form from 1 December 2004 through 29 July 2005.**

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\*Pre-Registration \_\_\_\_\_ @ \$65 = \_\_\_\_\_

Special Coffee Mug \_\_\_\_\_ @ \$10 = \_\_\_\_\_

Commemorative T-Shirt \_\_\_\_\_ @ \$18 = \_\_\_\_\_

S \_\_\_\_\_ M \_\_\_\_\_ L \_\_\_\_\_ XL \_\_\_\_\_ XXL \_\_\_\_\_ XXXL \_\_\_\_\_

Men's Embroidered Silk Hawaiian Shirt \_\_\_\_\_ @ \$79 = \_\_\_\_\_

S \_\_\_\_\_ M \_\_\_\_\_ L \_\_\_\_\_ XL \_\_\_\_\_ XXL \_\_\_\_\_ XXXL \_\_\_\_\_

Women's Emb. Silk Hawaiian Shirt \_\_\_\_\_ @ \$79 = \_\_\_\_\_

S \_\_\_\_\_ M \_\_\_\_\_ L \_\_\_\_\_ XL \_\_\_\_\_

WCNA Beach Kit \_\_\_\_\_ @ \$39 = \_\_\_\_\_

Includes: Commemorative Beach Bag & Large Plush Beach Towel, Flip-Flops, and After Tanning Body Lotion

Total Part 1 \$ \_\_\_\_\_

**PART 2**

Late Registration (1 June thru 29 July 2005)

\*Late Registration \_\_\_\_\_ @ \$70 = \_\_\_\_\_

Total Part 2 \$ \_\_\_\_\_

\*Includes admission to Kick-Off Hawaiian Festival to be held Thursday in the late afternoon prior to the Opening Meeting.

**PART 3**

Event tickets may be purchased until 29 July 2005 or while supplies last. Purchase includes round-trip shuttle transportation if needed.

QUANTITY PRICE TOTAL

Thursday Hawaiian Luau & Dinner **SOLD OUT**

Held on a private beach after the Main Meeting

Friday Jazz/Blues Luncheon \_\_\_\_\_ @ \$35 = \_\_\_\_\_

Friday Comedy Show \_\_\_\_\_ @ \$30 = \_\_\_\_\_

Saturday Unity Banquet \_\_\_\_\_ @ \$45 = \_\_\_\_\_

Saturday Concert \_\_\_\_\_ @ \$65 = \_\_\_\_\_

Sunday Evening Mahalo Cruise **SOLD OUT**

Includes dinner and meeting from 8-11 PM

Newcomer Donation = \_\_\_\_\_

Total Part 3 \$ \_\_\_\_\_

**PART 4**

Amount and Method of Payment

ADD Part 1 or 2 \$ \_\_\_\_\_ + Part 3 \$ \_\_\_\_\_

= GRAND TOTAL \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Method of Payment:  Check/Money Order (US Dollars)

AMEX  VISA  MC  Discover  Diners Club

Credit Card # \_\_\_\_\_

Cardholder Name \_\_\_\_\_

Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Exp. Date \_\_\_\_\_

**Absolutely no cancellations, exchanges, or refunds after 29 July 2005 for registration or events.**

Convention starts at 12:00 PM on Thursday, 1 September and ends at 2:00 PM on Sunday, 4 September 2005, with the exception of the Sunday Evening Mahalo Cruise.

Make checks/money orders payable to WCNA-31 and mail to: WCNA-31, c/o NAWs, PO Box 9999, Van Nuys, CA 91409.

Fax credit card registration to 818.700.0700. For more information call 818.773.9999 ext. 771.

**WCNA-31**

Updated 2 February 2005



**ONE  
FELLOWSHIP  
MANY  
FRIENDS**

register online at [www.na.org](http://www.na.org)

**1-4 SEPTEMBER 2005  
HONOLULU, HAWAII**

**WCNA-31 WILL BE HELD AT THE HAWAII CONVENTION CENTER AND THE HILTON HAWAIIAN VILLAGE RESORT.**

**HOTEL:** All rates are in US dollars and include a small rebate to pay for facility and shuttle costs. Wheelchair access shuttles also available.

- Hilton Hawaiian Village Resort & Spa SOLD OUT**
- Ala Moana SOLD OUT**
- Doubletree Alana Waikiki SOLD OUT**
- Holiday Inn Waikiki SOLD OUT**
- Hawaii Prince SOLD OUT**

**6. Marriott Renaissance Ilikai**  
Oceanfront next to the Hilton and 6 blocks to Convention Ctr.

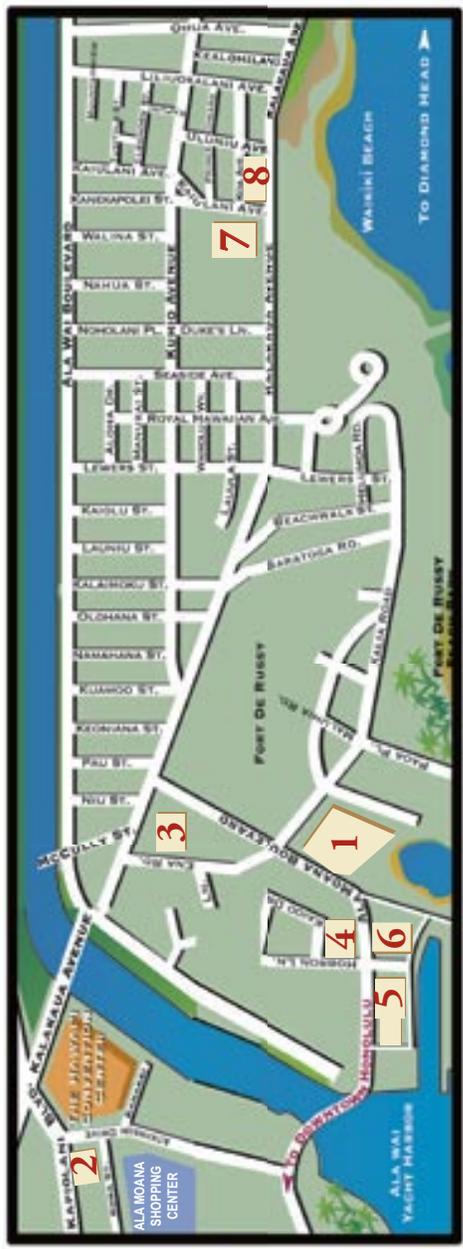
Room Type	Single/Double	Triple	Quad
Standard	150	180	180
City View with Kitchen	170	190	190
Ocean View with Kitchen	180	210	210
Deluxe Ocean View	180	210	210

**7. Sheraton Princess Kaiulani Hotel**  
9 blocks from the Convention Ctr., with restaurants, shopping and steps away from Waikiki Beach.

City View	135	165	195
Ocean View	155	185	215

**8. Hyatt Regency Waikiki**  
10 blocks from the Convention Ctr. located in the heart of Waikiki overlooking the beach.

Standard	168	198	228
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**TRAVEL**

**INFORMATION** **SPECIAL AIRFARES** are available on MOST major airlines through **Montrose Travel**.

**NOW AVAILABLE ONLINE!**

- Get a 5% – 40% discount on airline tickets
- Get a 5% discount on Pre-& Post-Convention Packages (air and outer islands)
- Get a 5% discount on post-convention Hawaiian Islands cruise

**For best offers go to [www.na.org](http://www.na.org) and follow the links!**

Or call (800) 301.9673

It's Faster at [www.na.org](http://www.na.org)... It's Better at [www.na.org](http://www.na.org)... Register Online at [www.na.org](http://www.na.org)

**Hotel Reservation Form – Mail/Fax**  
Convention rates may not be available after 29 July 2005. Online reservations generate immediate confirmation. Mail/fax reservations receive confirmation within 15–30 days. PLEASE PRINT CLEARLY

**PART 1**  
First, Last Name \_\_\_\_\_  
Address \_\_\_\_\_  
City \_\_\_\_\_ Zip/Postal Code \_\_\_\_\_  
Province/State/Country \_\_\_\_\_  
Telephone \_\_\_\_\_  
Fax \_\_\_\_\_  
Email Address \_\_\_\_\_  
Additional Guests \_\_\_\_\_

**PART 2** – Rooms are assigned when form is received. If 1st choice is not available, next available choice will be assigned.

**IF MORE THAN ONE ROOM IS REQUIRED, PLEASE PHOTOCOPY THIS FORM.**

**Hotel Choices:** 1st \_\_\_\_\_  
2nd \_\_\_\_\_ 3rd \_\_\_\_\_  
Arrival Date \_\_\_\_\_ Departure Date \_\_\_\_\_

**Special Request:**  Smoking Room  ADA Equipped  
**Room Type:**  Economy  Standard  Garden  Ocean  
**Bed Type:**  (Single) 1 Bed / 1 or 2 Persons  
 (Double) 2 Beds / 2 Persons  (Triple) 2 Beds / 3 Persons  
 (Quad) 2 Beds / 4 Persons  1 Bedroom Suite  
 If my bed type is sold out, please place me in a single-bedded room to keep me in one of my choice hotels.

**PART 3** – \$200.00 deposit in US dollars or credit card guarantee is required for each room. Deposits are forfeited on cancellations after 29 July 2005. My signature below confirms that I read and understand this policy.

Signature Required \_\_\_\_\_  
**Method of Payment:**  Check/Money Order (US Dollars)  
 AMEX  VISA  MC  Discover  
Credit Card # \_\_\_\_\_  
Cardholder Name \_\_\_\_\_  
Signature \_\_\_\_\_  
Exp. Date \_\_\_\_\_ Billing Zip Code \_\_\_\_\_  
Make checks/money orders payable to and mail to:

**WCNA/Conference Direct**  
17206 Lancaster Highway, Suite 508, Charlotte, NC 28277  
**Fax reservation line: (803) 753.9079**

# Learning the difference

I am András. I am an addict, and four months clean. This is also how long I have been going to NA meetings. I am still in a treatment center—my third one, as a matter of fact.

I guess the critical point in my recovery time is approaching, as it was usually after about four or five months in treatment that I gave up both times before. Mind you, the other places were not using any twelve-step programs; however, this one is, and I like that. I also like that now I am able to tell the difference between a rehabilitation center and the NA Fellowship.

***“We are not responsible for our disease, but we are responsible for our recovery.”***

*Basic Text, p. 20*

It occurs quite often that I cannot keep my attention for long at the center’s group-meeting sessions, but whenever I go to an NA meeting I can fully concentrate on what is being said.

I am the kind of guy who was never able to accept either the world or myself. I was cynical and unwilling to face my past. Over the past few weeks, I feel that I am just starting to emerge from a severe state of self-pity. I am becoming aware of small but valuable things around me that give me a sense of joy and keep me in the program.

For example, I do not wake up sick in the mornings. Instead, I wake up relaxed, balanced, and with a desire to act positively. At night, I go to bed with the thought that I made it through another day clean. I am grateful for these things, and no drug on earth could give me the same feeling.

It is said that the Twelve Steps are a simple program for complicated people. It is exactly this simplicity that I find makes it even more difficult for me, as I tend to complicate things in my head and am often unable to see things around me for what they are.

I like to think of myself as someone very special, and often very different from others. I see myself as someone with a lot of experience who hit rock bottom harder than others, who is going through different things, and someone who can always see right through any situation.

A plain example of this is my First Step.

When I first met NA and read through the steps, I was convinced that I had already taken the First Step with my past. I admitted. I was powerless. I was unmanageable. However, after three months, I started to realize that I only admitted that I was powerless over *drugs* and that *drugs* were the cause of all my troubles.

Today I know that my drug use was a

very small part of my addiction. It was certainly the most visible part of it, but my addiction is about a lot more than mere drug use. My addiction manifests itself in many situations in my everyday life.

My disease is in charge when I am driven by self-will; when I am in self-pity; when I am unwilling to let go of my ideas; when I am being self-righteous. It is my disease working when I complicate and rationalize simple things and start making excuses.

With the help of this program, I realized that all these behaviors are just my reactions to my disease. After I managed to admit and accept this fact, I do not fight with myself as much. I am powerless over my addiction and, alone, I will continue to stay unmanageable no matter what I do.

I am not alone in NA because my fellow addicts see me as I am on the inside. This is something I have never been able to do by myself. I believe that, as long as I stay in the program, accept it, and try to follow it to the best of my ability, I have a chance to stay clean.

*András S, Komló, Hungary*

# Do we really have a choice?

My name is Corby, and I am an addict. I felt the need to write this article after attending several meetings in my area where I have copped a slight resentment.

My first NA meeting was 6 June 1983. I finally found a place where I belonged and fit in. Although I could not relate with using some of the specific drugs shared about in the meetings, I could relate to the feelings and behaviors. I did what you did and felt the same. I remember coming home to my parents with a feeling of excitement and hope that I too could stay clean one day at a time.

I started on my path of recovery from the disease of addiction. I got a sponsor and called him regularly. I went to 180 meetings in ninety days. I came early for meetings and went to coffee afterward. I got involved in service, found the God of my understanding, and worked the steps. I started sponsoring other men. I shared in meetings, and I got a job. At five-plus years clean I was sponsoring twelve guys. I produced the meeting lists for our area, spoke at H&I meetings, was on the activities subcommittee, was area secretary, called my sponsor, worked my steps, and prayed daily.

I was injured at work several months after my five-year anniversary. I strained all the muscles in my back and was in excruciating pain. I told the doctor who examined me that I was a recovering addict, and I called my sponsor before I saw the doctor.

I was prescribed pain pills and muscle relaxers. For the first four or five days, I took the pills as prescribed and even waited an extra hour or two before taking the next dose. I shared in meetings that I was taking prescribed medication. I talked with my sponsor and prayed daily—sometimes hourly!

On the fifth or sixth day of taking these medications, I took two instead of the prescribed one. I had been doing everything right. So my question is, do we really have a choice?

I can only speak from my own experience, and I know that I did not have a

choice the day I took two instead of one. I had no rationale for that action. I was in recovery.

I have looked at it honestly, and I am sure that I did not have a choice. Once I took the two instead of one, I was in the grip of my disease.

I no longer cared about anything else. I used for a month or so and was still attending meetings loaded. The denial was strong. Once I copped to having relapsed, I got clean and started the process of recovery again.

I stayed clean for six years this particular time around, and I did all the things that are suggested, or, as my sponsor called them, the "musts." I was injured at work again, this time tearing the ligaments in my ankle. It took me several years of using to admit that I had relapsed once again.

I have been clean this time around since 16 May 2002, and I am doing all the right things once again. I have a great sponsor and wonderful home group, I sponsor a few guys, I took a meeting into jail for H&I, I have a network of NA friends, I work the steps, and I pray daily. My hope is that I will never relapse again for the rest of my life, just for today.

I believe it took relapsing several times to bring me to a place of complete surrender. Before I got clean this time around, I was diagnosed with HIV as a result of my relapse. I am so grateful to have this secondary disease because I would not be where I am today if I did not contract it. You see, the only reason I have HIV is because I relapsed. Relapse has been a part of the process of recovery for this addict.

My resentment is that it seems as if members who have never experienced a relapse believe that every one of us who has relapsed did it by our own choice. I know this to be untrue. My feelings are hurt when I feel judged or condemned for doing something that an addict does.

If you are reading this and have never relapsed, God has blessed you! You obviously reached a place many of us have not reached yet—that of complete surrender. I believe I finally have found it after being in and out of this program for twenty-one years.

I have an illness and need to be treated as such. I know I would never say to a cancer survivor, "I know you had chemotherapy and radiation. You changed your diet and started exercising. You found a God of your understanding, went to your support groups, and helped others. You

took vitamins, and you went into remission...and then, after five years, you chose to get cancer again!"

It is hard to empathize with something that is not your experience. My hope and prayer is that not one of us has to relapse to find out.

*Corby P, Nevada, USA*

## Recipe for recovery\*

Hello, I am a newcomer from Kamloops, Canada. My clean date is 26 April 2004. In October 2004, I attended the Pacific Northwest Convention XXVII. Since it was Halloween weekend, we had a costume dance. I decided to dress up as a chef and "cook up" some NA-style recovery. Here is my winning recipe:

**Ingredients:** (a/n = as needed; t/t = to taste)

1 concept of Higher Power

90 meetings

1 home group

t/t phone numbers

t/t NA literature

a/n meetings

1 pinch of sharing

1 part service

1 sponsor

12 steps (thoroughly worked)

a/n give it all away

1. Preheat one addict until on fire for recovery. (Must stop using for this to be effective.)
2. Mix fire with one concept of Higher Power.
3. Add ninety meetings in ninety days.
4. Fold in home group membership.
5. And now the tricky part: Use phone numbers, read literature, keep attending meetings regularly, share honestly, do service work, find a sponsor, and sift all these ingredients until willingness develops.
6. When you have willingness, add twelve steps done with sponsor (be sure to work all steps thoroughly to avoid relapse) and practice principles daily.
7. Check fire and stoke regularly; e.g., conventions, conferences, fellowship activities, etc.
8. If you like the results—give it away. (Suggest sponsoring another addict(s).)
9. Repeat steps five through eight as needed.
10. Live life on life's terms!

**Serving suggestion:** Do not add any sexual attachments for at least one year.

**\*Warning:** Recovery goes flat quickly with complacency.

*Dan McG, British Columbia, Canada*



# We carry the message of hope again

Who would have thought that we could organize an activity this big two years in a row?

Members of Narcotics Anonymous from the Anchor Area, Georgian Heartland Area, Golden Triangle Area, Hamilton Area, and Toronto Area united together during Drug Awareness Week to let 14,000 students and 900 teachers from the York Region Catholic School Board know "that an addict, any addict, can stop using drugs, lose the desire to use, and find a new way to live."

The public information subcommittee of the Anchor Area organized forty speakers to share in ten schools about their recovery in NA. Another thirty-five members did service at a Narcotics Anonymous information booth at twelve schools that participated in health fairs as part of Drug Awareness Week from 9 to 25 November 2004.

We gave away 1,200 buttons with the helpline phone number and web page listed. Yes, this is attraction! Narcotics Anonymous does have a public relations policy: We do recover, and we share our recovery the NA way.

Thank you to all who volunteered to do service on behalf of NA. The gratitude of these recovering addicts echoed through those schools we attended louder than the words spoken.

Thank you to members of the PI subcommittee who attended Drug Awareness Week committee meetings six times during the year, who took time from their lives to give back the extra that was required to make NA a true resource in this community!

The chairperson of the York Region Catholic School Board Drug Awareness Committee commented that "Drug Awareness Week was a great success as a direct result of participation by the members of Narcotics Anonymous."

Other agencies that were involved in Drug Awareness Week and also heard the message of Narcotics Anonymous included York Regional Police, Addiction Services for York Region, Canadian Mental Health Association, York Region Health Services, Mothers Against Drunk Driving-Canada, and Nar-Anon.

NA members who participated in the event are encouraged to share their experiences and feelings about doing this service, and to share about the bond created among all those addicts they met for the first time.

It is with great hope and faith that many more recovering addicts will come forth to do this service. We have been asked and have booked several dates into 2005 for Narcotics Anonymous to share recovery and stories with students.

On behalf of the Anchor Area Service Committee of Narcotics Anonymous, thank you for the service you performed. Our participation in Drug Awareness Week has been an astounding success.

*Mark C, Public Information Chairperson,  
Anchor Area Service Committee, Ontario, Canada*

# Primary Purpose

*"There are many ways of doing things in Narcotics Anonymous. And just as all of us have our own individual personalities, so will your group develop its own identity, its own way of doing things, and its own special knack for carrying the NA message. That's the way it should be. In NA we encourage unity, not uniformity."*

*The Group Booklet, p. 1*

This is a column for you, about you, and by you. We invite you to share any challenges your group may have faced, how your group reached a solution, or its "special knack" that keeps you coming back!

## What we say...

Dear fellow NA members,

Hello and greetings from Northwest Arkansas. I have been clean for thirteen years and have been a member of NA since the days of heavy metal, which still rules!

I am having a problem feeling at home in the local groups, partly because there is not much unity in our groups here. One issue in particular is that it has become the norm in this area to cross-talk during the readings. At the end of each line of the readings, the group adds additional comment.

I feel that our readings and the important message that they deliver are being mocked. Other addicts who have been around long enough to know better have been shunned when they expressed their opinions. Most of them do not come around much any more. The underlying issue is that the new members appear to not respect the experience of those who have been in the fellowship for many years, dismissing that experience as personal opinion.

One local group was divided and nearly destroyed over this particular issue about five years ago. Apparently nothing was learned from that experience, because here we go again—with newcomers chanting during readings and keytag distribution and oldtimers not much in attendance because of all the nonsense.

The reason I am sharing this with the rest of the fellowship is because I am finding it easier and easier to stay home as meeting time approaches. I do not want to become one of those addicts who do not come around any longer, yet I am tired of coming home from a meeting feeling like I *need* a meeting.

I offer to all of you who participate in this type of behavior these questions:

- Is what you are doing cross-talking?
- Does it muddle the message, divide the group, or confuse the newcomer?
- How does this affect our public image in open meetings?

If you are not sure, ask your sponsor. You do not have a sponsor? Then get one. A sponsor can help you think things through for yourself and maybe help you avoid being a follower when your home group wanders.

Thanks.

Larry O, Arkansas, USA





In the October 2004 *NA Way Magazine*, you will find a full section devoted to the topic of infrastructure, with suggestions as to how to facilitate a discussion of the topic. You will also find information on the other discussion topic for this WSC cycle, which is "Our Public Image." If you think about it, it does not require much of a stretch for one to see a relation between the issue you bring up today and "Our Public Image," particularly if it is an open meeting.

**(Editor's Note:** Fellowship Services also suggested that Larry submit his letter to *The NA Way Magazine* for consideration. As you can see, Larry followed this suggestion....)

NA World Services  
Fellowship Services

Hi Larry,

Thank you for writing to NA World Services. Other members have experienced the same frustration you describe when this kind of chant-response activity takes place during the readings. This phenomenon is not really new in NA and has existed in different modes and in different areas, regions, and countries for many years. This is not something that has really taken hold within our fellowship and become standard practice, but it remains somewhat of a curious, isolated occurrence.

There are a couple of ways in which you can address this issue.

The first way is through your home group steering committee or business meeting. Your group has control over its meeting format and is responsible for the conduct of the meeting. A clearly worded statement in the format should be able to educate members attending the meeting that the group conscience is against this type of ritualized chanting taking place while the readings are being done. You might add that, in some ways, the readings are the foundation of our meeting and set the tone for all that follows.

The second way you might address this issue is through your area service committee. One of the two issue discussion topics for this conference cycle is "Infrastructure." You might want to attend your next ASC and ask to be put on the agenda, or with the approval of your home group have your GSR ask to be put on the agenda, and initiate a discussion of infrastructure as it applies to the home groups in your area, and in the ASC as well.

It would be very appropriate for the topic of chanting, or cross-talking, or talking back during the readings to be part of this discussion.

The first definition of infrastructure given in *Webster's Collegiate Dictionary* is: "The underlying foundation or basic framework (as of a system or organization)." This might prove to be a good starting point to then expand the discussion to the relation of the group to the area, to the region, etc.

# Picture this

NA communities are invited to send photographs of their meeting places. We especially welcome photos that include meeting formats, recovery literature, posters, dirty coffee cups, and anything else that makes the meeting place look "lived in." Sorry, we cannot use photos that identify NA members. Please tell us about your meeting, its name, the location and city, how long it has been in existence, and what your format consists of (speaker, participation, etc.).

## Finding home

I love NA! My husband came into the rooms in 1990, and I arrived in 1996. The journey has been incredible. Through living the NA way, we have been blessed to have the opportunity to travel to many different venues across the world. Before each trip, we always look online to find NA meetings in or around the area to which we are traveling.

Before each trip, we always look online to find NA meetings in or around the area to which we are traveling.

We recently traveled to Cabo San Lucas, Mexico, and found three meetings in the general vicinity. We printed the addresses, and off to Mexico we went. We landed in San Jose del Cabo and jumped into a taxi—destination: our hotel. On the way, I saw what looked like an NA logo hanging in a storefront window. I glimpsed it out of the corner of my eye, and then it was gone. I mentioned it to

my husband, and we smiled at each other. Two days later—with the address we found on the Internet in our hands—we rented a car and started on our journey to find an NA meeting.

We searched for the address, even asking a local to join us in our search. We scoured the area for about an hour but could not find the meeting. It seemed that no one knew of this address. We decided to backtrack toward the airport to see if we could find that NA logo. Twenty minutes later, there it was, hanging in a storefront, just as I remembered it. I was so excited. It still amazes me how we recover all over the world.

As you can tell from the NA logos all over the front, the members of this "Just for Today" group are proud of our fellowship. So much for anonymity! We walked in, and we were home.

Although we did not speak the language, the chairperson (who spoke English) welcomed us. The meeting had just moved to that location four weeks earlier.

Certainly there are no coincidences—God was the director of this journey! The chairperson called another recovering addict to interpret the meeting for us, and it was business as usual.

Thank you, San Jose del Cabo, for carrying the message to us. We loved your meeting, and we are truly grateful to be a part of this wonderful fellowship we call NA.

*Rhonda and Nick C, New Jersey, USA*



# The most important thing

How do we assign a level of importance to those things that help other addicts and ourselves in recovery?

We generously share about not using, no matter what. We encourage every addict to "keep coming back." But what about the phrase "Work the steps or die"? Perhaps our own experience of getting a sponsor was the most important thing we did in our recovery. Regardless of the seemingly endless direction we can share, what is the most important thing for us in the NA program?

The NA Fellowship is soliciting ideas about structure. What better inventory the ways in ourselves, as a way to embrace the rich diversity without the fear of brand-uniqueness, this may broaden our fellowship; hence, more addicts stay to carry that message. By my and humbly working the program, "there is no model of the recovery."

It is here that our leadership NA standards and expectations on experience, strength, and hope; we do of what recovery is. For as many stay here, that many more may

I also believe there is no way to meetings, get a sponsor, and do I interpret the Third Tradition, ment for membership is a desire

My sponsor helped me in making amends. When I wrote my list, he asked me what was the most important thing on that list—in other words, which amends could I not do and still stay clean? My Higher Power-influenced answer to that question was "none." All of the amends I had listed were equally important.

So what is the most important thing we do in NA?



is in a phase of so- leadership and infra- time would there be to which we have helped to help others? If we sity of our members ing them as practicing the attractiveness of our will hear the message and staying around the fellowship my understanding of the idea that ing addict" has grown.

may diverge by imposing mistaken others. I was told we share our expe- not dictate to others the rulebook people as we may be helping to be turned away.

around the basics—quit using, go work the steps. Even then, how which says that "the only require- to stop using"?

*David C, West Virginia, USA*

# What is it about opinions?

I would like to first recognize and commend the staff of *The NA Way* for their commitment to facilitating the creative expression of viewpoints within our fellowship. The quality of the writing and graphic design in the magazine is impressive, and it keeps getting better.

As an NA member and *NA Way* reader for the past eleven years, I was quite surprised and concerned by the article published in the January 2005 issue titled "What Is It About Medication?" In this article, the heart of Narcotics Anonymous is described as "the belief that we are guided by a loving God made manifest in our group conscience."

I am confused. What Narcotics Anonymous Fellowship was Bruce W writing about?

The NA Fellowship I joined makes very clear that the heart of NA is sponsorship. Its message is unmistakably clear: "An addict, any addict, can stop using drugs, lose the desire to use, and find a new way to live." Its primary purpose is even easier to understand: "to carry this message to the addict who still suffers."

I am forever grateful to those who came before us: to those in AA who recognized that our needs as addicts were different from theirs, and to the NA pioneers whose hard-won experience gave us the steps and traditions of NA, our NA message, and the practical and effective concept of complete abstinence.

Now if this makes me an NA purist, then I humbly accept the label with honor.

I have to question the wisdom of having a section entitled "Opinion" in a publication dedicated to a fellowship that has "no opinion on outside issues." Furthermore, the NAWS website makes this confusing statement on its "Facts about NA" page:

*In Narcotics Anonymous, members are encouraged to comply with complete abstinence from all drugs including alcohol. It has been the experience of NA members that complete and continuous abstinence provides the best foundation*

*for recovery and personal growth. NA as a whole has no opinion on outside issues, including prescribed medications. Use of psychiatric medication and other medically indicated drugs prescribed by a physician and taken under medical supervision is not seen as compromising a person's recovery in NA.*

This last sentence is most definitely an opinion and contradicts the NA message as a whole. This statement has done much to fuel the medication controversy in the home group ambiguously mentioned in the January article. It must be removed before any more of the "dire consequences" implied by the author happen.

Even we NA purists know and agree with the statements found in the *In Times of Illness* booklet, which was specifically written and approved to address the use of pain medication, *not* antidepressants.

I will be the first to admit that I have no personal experience with psychotropic medications. Fortunately for me, I heard the message before the use of medications became popular as a treatment method. I do, however, have a great deal of experience with depression. I found the Twelve Steps of NA ineffective in treating my depression until I completely abstained from all mind- and mood-altering substances. Then, and only then, did the steps begin to work for

me. Through complete abstinence, I now have more than eleven years clean.

I also believe that those who are dependent on daily psychotropic medications and believe in their use as a form of treatment should be encouraged to start their own fellowship, much in the same way that the AA fellowship helped us to get started, instead of confusing and blurring the already proven NA message of complete abstinence.

The NA purists who continue to light my way have taught me that "it is not a sign of weakness to ask for guidance, nor is it a crime to be uninformed, but to choose the path of ignorance is unforgivable."

Believing in the use of psychotropic medications as a viable alternative to complete abstinence goes beyond ignorance, confusing and blurring our proven message to the addict who is still suffering.

In our meetings, it used to be said, "I care and share the NA way so that no addict seeking recovery need ever die without first hearing our message." Now what message are the newcomers hearing? That any addict can stop using—or take meds to get clean?

I pray that God continues to bless the purists who keep our message clear and free of outside opinion. Only He knows how many lives were saved through their uncompromised and incorruptible beliefs.

Kenny M, Pennsylvania, USA

***"Over time, being a sponsor can help us learn how to listen without judgment, accept without conditions, and love without expectations. In many ways, sponsorship teaches us how to develop and maintain healthy relationships."***

*Sponsorship, p. 69*



# CALENDAR

We encourage you to publicize your event by having it published on our website and in *The NA Way Magazine*. You can inform the WSO about your event by fax, phone, or regular post, or through our website. We encourage using the website because you can check to see if we already have a listing on your convention, and, if not, you can enter your own convention information. It is then reviewed, formatted, and added to the online convention calendar on our website in approximately four days. Just go to [www.na.org](http://www.na.org), click on "NA Events," and follow the instructions.

Convention announcements entered through the website and those received by other means are also given to *The NA Way*. *The NA Way* is published four times a year in January, April, July, and October. Each issue goes into production long before its distribution date, so we need a minimum of three months' notice to ensure your event will be published in the magazine—that's three months before our publication date. For instance, if you want your event published in the October issue, we need to know by 1 July.

## Australia

**Queensland:** 27-29 May; Greater Queensland Convention; The Journey Continues; Commerce Building, Gregory Terrace, Bowen Hills; event info: +61.415.805459, +61.402.994349; write: Box 1359, Fortitude Valley, Queensland, Australia 4006; [www.naoz.org.au/events](http://www.naoz.org.au/events)

## Bermuda

**Southampton:** 22-24 Apr; Serenity in Paradise Convention V; Wyndham Bermuda Resort and Spa Southampton Beach, Bermuda; hotel rsvns: 800.WYNDHAM; event info: 441.295.5300, 441.293.0999; write: Bermuda Islands Area, Box DV690, Devonshire, Bermuda DVBX; [www.bermudanaconvention.info](http://www.bermudanaconvention.info)

## Brazil

**Guarapari:** 2-5 June; Convenção Do Nucleo Nação II; event info: +55.21.99533471; write: [nicacia@superig.com.br](mailto:nicacia@superig.com.br); [www.na.org.br/calendar.htm](http://www.na.org.br/calendar.htm)

## Canada

**Alberta:** Al-Sask Region-Chinook Area Convention II; Best Western Village Park Inn, Calgary; hotel rsvns: 888.774.7716; event info: 403.815.8136; write: Chinook Area, Box 61134, Kensington RPO, Calgary, Alberta, Canada T2N 4S6; [www.chinookna.org](http://www.chinookna.org)

**Manitoba:** 10-12 Jun; Manitoba Area Convention; Robert A. Steen Community Center, Winnipeg; event info: 204.295.8439, 204.284.6373; speaker tape info: 204.479.3610; write: Manitoba Area, Box 25173, Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada R2V 4C8

**Nova Scotia:** 11-17 Jul; 16th Annual Pig Roast and Campout; Blomidon Provincial Park; event info: 902.765.3555; 902.678.0651; write: Annapolis Valley Area, Box 522, Kentville, Nova Scotia, Canada B4N 3X3

**Ontario:** 29 Apr-1 May; ORCNA XVIII; Crown Plaza Hotel, Ottawa; hotel rsvns: 800.227.6963; speaker tape submission deadline: 10/31/2004; write: Ottawa Area, Box 5939, Depot A, Toronto, Ontario, Canada M5W 1P3; <http://www.orcna.org/orcna/index.htm>

## Germany

**Bochum:** 13-15 May; Einfach Sauber; Deutschsprachige Convention XXII—German-speaking Regional Convention; Rudolf-Steiner-Schule Bochum, Bochum; event info: [dcna2005@narcotics-anonymous.de](mailto:dcna2005@narcotics-anonymous.de); [www.narcotics-anonymous.de](http://www.narcotics-anonymous.de)

## Ireland

**Dublin:** 20-24 Jul; European Convention Conference XXII (ECCNA-22); Saggart County Dublin/CityWest Hotel, Dublin; hotel rsvns: +003531.401.0500; event registration: +0035387.945.7832; event info: +0035386.368.3013; write: Irish Regional Service Committee, Friends Meeting House, 4/5 Eustace St, Dublin 2, Ireland; <http://www.eccna.org>

## Italy

**Rimini:** 29 Apr-1 May; XXII Italian Convention; Hotel Continental, Rimini; hotel rsvns: +39.0541.393743; Fax: +39.0541.393743; [www.na-italia.it](http://www.na-italia.it)

## Mexico

**Tijuana:** 28-30 Oct; Convención Baja California XIII; Grand Hotel, Tijuana; hotel rsvns: Mexico: +01.800.026607, USA: 866.472.6385; speaker tape info: 858.277.6438; event info: 818.765.5593, 925.753.5074; speaker tape submission deadline: 1 Oct; write: Region Baja-Son, PMB-80, Box 439056, San Diego, CA 92143-9056

## Norway

**Drammen:** 22-24 Apr; Help! I'm Clean; St. Hallvard videregående skole, Drammen; event info: +0047.95.91.54.61; write: Area East 2, Box 99, 3301 Hokksund, Norway

## Panama

**Panama City:** 30 Jun-3 Jul; CLANA; Freedom Without Borders; Latin American Hope; Hotel El Panama, Panama City; hotel rsvns: +011.507.215.9000; event info: +011.507.671.8060; [www.clana.org](http://www.clana.org)

## Peru

**Lima:** 20-22 May; XI Convención Regional Peruana XI; Lima; event info: +51.1.99706609

## Puerto Rico

**San Juan:** 22-24 Jul; Unidos Podemos XVI: La gratitud cambia la actitud; Hotel Caribe Hilton, San Juan; hotel rsvns: 787.721.0303; speaker tape info: 787.612.5147; event info: 787.365.5296; event registration: 787.593.6928; speaker tape submission deadline: 15 May; write: Region del Coquí; Comité de convenciones, Box 361305, San Juan, PR 00936-1305

## United Kingdom

**Birmingham:** 7-10 Jul; UKCNAXVIII; Celebrating 25 Years in the UK; Hilton Metropole Hotel, Birmingham; hotel rsvns: +0121.7804242; event info: +020.7730.0009; [www.ukna.org](http://www.ukna.org)

**Dorset:** 24-26 Jun; Dorset Area Convention; Step-On; Oakmead School, Bournemouth; [www.danac.org](http://www.danac.org)

## Scotland

**Glasgow:** 3-5 Jun; Practice These Principles; Quality Central Hotel, Glasgow; hotel rsvns: +01.41.221.9680; [www.nascotland.org](http://www.nascotland.org)

## United States

**Arizona:** 27-29 May; Arizona Regional Convention XIX; Acceptance, Faith, and Commitment; Prescott Resort and Conference Center, Prescott; hotel rsvns: 928.776.1666; event info: 520.579.0451, 928.759.3509; event registration: 928.713.8620; [www.azna.org](http://www.azna.org)

**California:** 27-29 May; San Diego Imperial Regional Convention XX; Town and Country Resort and Convention Center, San Diego; hotel rsvns: 800.772.8527; event info: 619.593.9838, 619.466.4562, 619.253.8026; <http://www.sandiegona.org>

**2)** 1-4 Jul; Ninth Annual Family Reunion Campout; Lake Siskiyou, Mt. Shasta; event info: 530.841.0767; speaker tape submission deadline: 23 May; write: Siskiyou ASC, Box 1301, Yreka, CA 96097

**3)** 1-4 Jul; CIRCNA VIII; The Message Is Clear, We Do Recover; Palm Springs Riviera Resort and Racquet Club, Palm Springs; hotel rsvns: 800.444.8311; event info: 909.303.6721; event registration: 760.364.2667; speaker tape info: 760.363.6740; write: California Inland Region, Box 2456, Cathedral City, CA 92235; [www.cirna.org/convention](http://www.cirna.org/convention)

**Florida:** 29 Apr-1 May; Recovery in Paradise XIII; A Spiritual Retreat; Knights Key Campground, Marathon; hotel rsvns: 800.348.2267; event info: 305.304.6994, 305.923.3207; write: Conch Republic Area, Box 4217, Key West, FL 33041

**2)** 20-22 May; DACNA VI; Serenity in the Sand; The Plaza Resort and Spa, Daytona Beach; hotel rsvns: 800.874.7420; event info: 386.774.5351; speaker tape info: 386.740.0095; event registration: 407.321.2177; write: Daytona Area, Box 247, Daytona Beach, FL 32115; [www.dacna6.org](http://www.dacna6.org)

**3)** 27-29 May; Celebration of Unity XXIII; Orlando Marriott Downtown, Orlando; hotel rsvns: 800.228.9290; event registration: 321.663.4621; event info: 407.843.6664; [www.orlandona.org](http://www.orlandona.org)

**Georgia:** 15-17 Jul; Piedmont Area Anniversary XXIII; Holiday Inn, Forsyth; hotel rsvns: 478.994.5691; event info: 478.787.4205; speaker tape info: 478.228.0030; speaker tape submission deadline: 1 Jun; write: Piedmont Area, Box 4362, Macon, GA

**2)** 28-31 Jul; MACNA XV; Sheraton Buckhead, Atlanta; hotel rsvns: 800.325.3535; event info: 404.294.1817, 404.343.0067, 770.478.3251; speaker tape submission deadline: 3 Apr; [www.midtownatlanta.com](http://www.midtownatlanta.com)

**Hawaii:** 22-24 Apr; 21st Annual Oahu Gathering; Boy Scout Camp, Mokuleia, North Shore; event info: 808.486.2441; write: Oahu Area Gathering, Box 2337, Honolulu, HI 96822-2337; [www.na-hawaii.org/Main\\_Pages/HI\\_Gatherings](http://www.na-hawaii.org/Main_Pages/HI_Gatherings)

**2)** 1-4 Sep; WCNA-31; Honolulu; write: NA World Services, 19737 Nordhoff Pl, Chatsworth, CA 91311; <http://www.na.org/nawsevents/event-reg.htm>

**Idaho:** 8-10 Apr; Southern Idaho Region Convention XVI; Sun Valley Lodge, Sun Valley; hotel rsvns: 800.786.8259; event info: 208.732.5706, 208.735.2243, 208.731.9244; write: Magic Valley Area, Box 261, Twin Falls, ID 83303-0261; [www.sirma.org](http://www.sirma.org)

**Illinois:** 1-3 Apr; Acceptance Leads to Recovery; Ramada Inn, South Beloit; hotel rsvns: 815.389.3481; write: Rock River Area, 5301 East State St, Ste 318, Rockford, IL 61108

**Kansas:** 1-3 Apr; Mid-America Regional Convention XXII; Holiday Inn, Salina; hotel rsvns: 785.823.1739; write: Mid-America Region, Box 8732, Wichita, KS 67202-8732

**Louisiana:** 27-29 May; LRCNA XXIII; Recovery: The Path to Freedom; New Orleans Hilton Riverside, New Orleans; hotel rsvns: 800.445.8667; event registration: 504.220.8585; speaker tape info: 504.621.8887; write: Louisiana Region, Box 8451, Metairie, LA 70011-8451; [www.lrcna.org](http://www.lrcna.org)

**Maine:** 15-17 Apr; Brothers in Spirit VI; Notre Dame Spiritual Center, Alfred; event registration: 207.651.0844; event info: 207.799.6681; write: Thursday Night Just for Today Group, Notre Dame Spiritual Center, Alfred, ME; <http://www.namaine.org>

**Maryland:** 15-17 Apr; Dreams Do Come True; Ocean City Convention Center, Ocean City; hotel rsvns: 301.839.4425; event registration: 301.839.4425; event info: 301.839.4425; speaker tape info: 301.839.4425; write: CPRCNA, Box 29, Greenbelt, MD 20768-0029; [www.cprcna19@cprcna.org](mailto:www.cprcna19@cprcna.org)

**2)** 27-29 May; BACNA VI; Coming to Believe; Baltimore Convention Center, Baltimore; hotel rsvns: 410.576.1000; event info: 410.483.3324, 410.523.0703, 410.467.0364; write: Baltimore Area Convention, Box 13473, Baltimore, MD 21203

**Michigan:** 1-4 Jul; Michigan Regional Convention; Four Points Sheraton Ann Arbor, Ann Arbor; hotel rsvns: 734.996.0600; write: Michigan Region, Box 3020, Ann Arbor, MI 48106-3020; <http://www.michigan-na.org/mrcna>

**Minnesota:** 1-3 Apr; MNNAC XII; Hyatt Regency Hotel, Minneapolis; hotel rsvns: 800.233.1234; write: MNRSC, c/o UMSO, Sabathani Center, Ste 115, 310 38th St, Minneapolis, MN 55409; <http://www.naminnesota.org/mnnac/mnnac.htm>

**Missouri:** 10-12 Jun; SMRCNA XX; Spiritual Confinement to Spiritual Freedom; Clarion Hotel, Springfield; hotel rsvns: 800.252.7466; event info: 417.626.8171; event registration: 417.782.1108, 417.234.4266; write: SMRCNA XX, Box 3391, Joplin, MO 64803-3391

**Montana:** 10-12 Jun; 17th Annual Montana Gathering; Boulder Hot Springs, Boulder Hot Springs; hotel rsvns: 406.442.4705; write: Montana Region, Box 36, Helena, MT 59624; [www.namontana.com](http://www.namontana.com)

**Nebraska:** 27-30 May; 25th Annual Run for Fun Campout; Alexandria Lakes, Alexandria; event info: 402.794.4876, 402.563.3263, 402.849.2620

**New Jersey:** 1-3 Apr; Capital Area Convention; Road to Recovery IX; Ramada Inn, Hightstown; hotel rsvns: 609.448.7000; event info: 609.392.7204; event registration: 609.394.7237; speaker tape info: 215.369.9224; [www.capitalareaofna.org/events.php](http://www.capitalareaofna.org/events.php)

**2)** 24-26 Jun; New Jersey Regional Convention XX; Two Decades of Recovery the NA Way; Hilton East Brunswick, East Brunswick; hotel rsvns: 732.828.2000; event registration: 732.895.9441; event info: 732.222.6495; speaker tape info: 732.316.1801; write: NJRCNA XX, Box 134, Fords, NJ 08863-0134; <http://www.njrcna.org>

**New York:** 27-29 May; Unity from the Heart II Convention; Holiday Inn Hotel and Conference Center, Syracuse; hotel rsvns: 800.465.4329; event info: 315.863.0123, 315.254.9994, 315.450.1696; write: HONYACNA II, Box 1075, Syracuse, NY 13201-1075

**2)** 10-12 Jun; Spiritual Awakening Campout VII; Binghamton; hotel rsvns: 607.724.5996; event registration: 607.723.0218, 607.772.6103

**North Carolina:** 22-24 Apr; Bound for Freedom XX; Hilton Charlotte and Towers Convention Center, Charlotte; hotel rsvns: 800.445.8667; event info: 704.891.0896, 704.449.3791, 704.536.1543; write: Greater Charlotte Area, Box 33306, Charlotte, NC 28233; [www.charlotte-na.org](http://www.charlotte-na.org)

**2)** 20-22 May; Looking Glass Bash Campout; Cove Creek Campground, Asheville; event info: 828.253.1381, 828.648.5402; write: Western North Carolina Area; Looking Glass Bash Campout Committee, 841 Haywood Rd, Asheville, NC 28806; <http://wncana.org>

**Oregon:** 20-22 May; Pacific Cascade Regional Convention XII; Riverside Inn and Josephine County Fairgrounds, Grants Pass; hotel rsvns: 800.334.4567; event registration: 541.956.2191; event info: 541.479.5941, 541.472.9136; write: Southern Oregon Siskiyou Area, Box 521, Grants Pass, OR 97528; [www.sosascna.com](http://www.sosascna.com)

**South Carolina:** 27-29 May; GAPNAC XII; Ramada Inn, Clemson; hotel rsvns: 864.654.7501; event info: 864.859.0960; event registration: 864.226.6696; write: GAPNAC, Box 1184, Clemson, SC 29633

**Tennessee:** 6-8 May; NA in May in Memphis; Meeman-Shelby Forest State Park, Millington; hotel rsvns: 800.471.5293; event info: 901.292.6022, 901.628.4762; write: West Tennessee Area, Box 111105, Memphis, TN 38111; [www.na-wt.org](http://www.na-wt.org); [www.geocities.com/nainmay](http://www.geocities.com/nainmay)

**Texas:** 27-29 May; Texas State Convention III; Holiday Inn-Waco, Waco; hotel rsvns: 800.465.4329; event info: 254.296.3322; [www.tscna.org](http://www.tscna.org)

**2)** 15-17 Jul; Fort Worth Area Convention V; La Quinta Inn Arlington Conference Center, Arlington; hotel rsvns: 800.531.5900; event info: 817.279.9108; speaker tape info: 817.465.1862; speaker tape submission deadline: 30 Apr; write: Fort Worth Area Service Office, 316 Bailey, Ste 107, Box 470033, Fort Worth, TX 76147-0033; [www.fortworth-areana.org](http://www.fortworth-areana.org)

**Utah:** 3-5 Jun; Celebration of Recovery; American Legion Hall, Vernal; hotel rsvns: 435.790.0982; speaker tape info: 435.790.0982; event info: 435.790.0982; write: Celebration of Recovery, Utah Region, 351 N Vernal Ave, Vernal, UT

**2)** 15-17 Jul; 22nd Annual Campvention; Lodgepole Campground, Heber City; event info: 801.830.4524; event registration: 801.787.0683; speaker tape info: 801.465.1455; write: Utah Region, Box 994, Springville, UT 84663; <http://www.utahna.info>

**Washington:** 29 Apr-1 May; 20th Annual Washington-Northern Idaho Regional Convention; SeaTac Hilton; Tacoma; event info: [annie40342@aol.com](mailto:annie40342@aol.com)

2) 19-21 Aug; Summer Sizzlers XVII; Red Lion Inn, Richland; hotel rsvns: 509.946.7611; write: Tri-Cities Area, Washington State, 2527 W Kennewick Ave, #230, Kennewick, WA 99336

**West Virginia:** 6-8 May; MRSCNA Spring Convention; Vision of Hope; Cedar Lakes Convention Center, Ripley; hotel rsvns: 304.372.7860; event info: 304.325.9803; write: Mountaineer Regional Service Committee, Box 2381, Morgantown, WV 26502-2381; www.mrscna.org

**Wisconsin:** 1-3 Apr; Little Girl Grows Up IV; Ramada Inn, Milwaukee; hotel rsvns: 414.764.5300; write: Little Girl Grows Up, 811 N 16th St, #123, Milwaukee, WI 53233

2) 6-8 May; Inner City Area Convention IV; We Sought through Prayer and Meditation; Best Western Milwaukee Airport Hotel, Milwaukee; hotel rsvns: 800.937.8376; event registration: 414.931.0147, 414.442.9169; event info: 414.350.8637; write: Inner City Area, Box 12452, Milwaukee, WI 53212

**Wyoming:** 6-8 May; URMRCNA VI; The Heart of NA Beats; Holiday Inn, Cheyenne; hotel rsvns: 800.HOLIDAY; event info: 307.638.1144; speaker tape info: 307.772.0705; event registration: 307.638.0987; write: Upper Rocky Mountain Region, Box 21, Cheyenne, WY 82003; www.wyo-braskana.org

## A service opportunity

Here is a bit of history: At the 1984 World Service Conference, a motion was carried "that each area be requested to hold a fundraiser for the benefit of WSC in July of each year and send the proceeds of such fundraiser to world services; the first to be during July 1984." What better way to be of service, make a contribution to our fellowship, and help ensure that "every addict in the world has the chance to experience our message in his or her own language and culture and find the opportunity for a new way of life..."? It is not too late for your area to start planning now for a July activity!

# WSO Product Update

## New Medallion Design

This new design wraps the existing text from the Gratitude Prayer around the center of the medallion and changes our current Roman numerals to Arabic numbers.

**Please check our website [www.na.org](http://www.na.org) for a release date of this new design.**

### Anglicized

IP No. 11: Sponsorship, Revised

*Sponsorship, Revised*

Item No. AN-3111 Price US \$0.21

### Bulgarian

IP No. 1: Who, What, How, and Why

*Кой, Какво, Как и Защо*

Item No. BG-3101 Price US \$0.21

### Group Reading Cards (6-card set)

Item No. BG-9130 Price US \$2.20

### Danish

IP No. 5: Another Look

*En anden synsvinkel*

Item No. DK-3105 Price US \$0.21

IP No. 6: Recovery and Relapse

*Bedring og tilbagefald*

Item No. DK-3106 Price US \$0.21

IP No. 8: Just for Today

*Bare i dag*

Item No. DK-3108 Price US \$0.21

IP No. 14: One Addict's Experience...

*En addicts erfaring med accept, tillid og forpligtelse*

Item No. DK-3114 Price US \$0.21

IP No. 19: Self-Acceptance

*Selvaccept*

Item No. DK-3119 Price US \$0.21

### Farsi

IP No. 8: Just for Today

*فقط برای امروز*

Item No. FA-3108 Price US \$0.21

### German

Just for Today

*Nur für heute*

Item No. GE-1112 Price US \$7.70

### Greek

IP No. 6: Recovery and Relapse

*Ανάρρωση και υποτροπή*

Item No. GR-3106 Price US \$0.21



# WSO Product Update

## Icelandic

### Keytags

Welcome through Multiple Years

Item No. IS-4100—4108

Price US \$0.37/each

## Italian

The NA Step Working Guides

*Le Guide per lavorare i Passi di*

*Narcotici Anonimi*

Item No. IT-1400 Price US \$7.30

An Introductory Guide to NA

*Guida introduttiva a*

*Narcotici Anonimi*

Item No. IT-1200 Price US \$1.70

## Lithuanian

IP No. 8: Just for Today

*Tik šiandien*

Item No. LT-3108 Price US \$0.21

IP No. 9: Living the Program

*Gyventi pagal Programą*

Item No. LT-3109 Price US \$0.21

## Portuguese

IP No. 11: Sponsorship, Revised

*O apadrinhamento, Revisto*

Item No. PO-3111 Price US \$0.21

## Spanish/Castilian

Just for Today, Revised

*Sólo por hoy, Revisado*

Item No. CS-1112 Price US \$7.70

# Home GROUP

