

Together we can...

Choosing consensus

Together we can...	1
Our readers write...	2
On the path to consensus	3
Group conscience	5
Group conscience and the group process	6
Compromise, you say?	7
Personalities rather than principles	7
When the smoke cleared	8
Tradition Two:	
A personal perspective	8
Consensus: Love and service without borders	9
I'm a GSR. Why should I attend the regional assembly?	10
A few words from New York	11
Are all addicts equal?	12
More from our readers...	12
Picture this	13
H&I Slim	14
Calendar	15
NA World Services still looking...	17
WSO product update	18
Home Group	19

IN THIS ISSUE

"Narcotics Anonymous is a life-saving program. Our founders envisioned a worldwide fellowship of addicts when there was only one group and one meeting in the world. Our founders established a world service structure to help to carry the message to addicts everywhere, at a time when Narcotics Anonymous existed in only one country unified by a single language and culture. With an unshakable faith and belief in Narcotics Anonymous, born out of personal experiences of recovery, the creation of the World Service Conference followed in 1976. Those members—dreaming of a better day for addicts everywhere—embarked on a mission to bring together those few NA groups, which existed at that time, into a unified fellowship. Knowing from personal experience that the old lie, "once an addict, always an addict," was dead, that *we do recover*, our predecessors labored to ensure the continuation and growth of NA everywhere."

"Much of the time spent at the conference is focused on building consensus on important agenda issues from the fellowship and world services. Consensus-building requires hearing all points of view, mutual respect, and finding the common ground that every participant can support, even when the eventual decision is not exactly as every participant may desire. Adequate discussion takes time and may occur in the conference meeting as a whole, in panels, or in small groups. Regardless of how these discussions occur, they require commitment from each participant to focus on the issues at hand. Only after adequate discussion and consensus-building has occurred, does the conference enter a business session in order to formalize its decisions." (*A Temporary Working Guide to Our World Service Structure*, May 2000, pages 6,7)

The above paragraphs capture the spirit of how we are taking steps to create consensus-based decision-making. We have faced many challenges and obstacles over the years, but inspired and fueled by our primary purpose, we pushed forward. These are exciting times for the NA Fellowship with many of our predecessors' dreams being fulfilled.

We hope you enjoy reading this issue from our members as they share their thoughts and experiences with group conscience and how they attempt to embrace the ideal of consensus. ♦



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Our readers write...

Carrying the message of hope

I feel that I must add my own experience to that of the addict who objected to the preparation of a list of phone numbers for newcomers. (See *The NA Way Magazine*, July 2001, Volume 18, Number 3, "Are we carrying the message, or the addict?" pages 18-19.)

I was introduced to recovery in prison. Our meetings were infrequent—one a week, plus an extra one per month in which members from the outside participated.

When I got out, my sponsor told me to immediately find a meeting. Not really understanding how our program works, I did not do this. Needless to say, within a few days the fear and anxiety levels were so strong that I took his advice.

I found one within walking distance of my home. I went, introduced myself, and stayed (in the back) for the meeting. When it was over, before I could slink out the door, someone came up to me, shook my hand, and asked me to "keep coming back." Another person did the same thing, and then another, with one of them giving me a list of phone numbers.

I didn't use those numbers right away. After all, I had been away as a guest of the governor for five years and didn't know any of the people on the list. My self-esteem was not at a point where I could call a complete stranger and ask for anything. However, the good feeling, the feeling of being cared for, the feeling that I mattered was enough to sustain me until the next meeting.

Eventually I got to know the people whose names were on that list, and I did begin to call them. One of them I asked to be my sponsor, and we started to work the steps.

I've been coming back now for over ten years, but I have not forgotten the good feeling I got when I received that list at my first recovery meeting on the outside. I believe it is a good custom that does carry our message of hope for recovery, and today I sign all lists presented to me—and, as they suggested at that first outside meeting, I keep coming back.

John F, Pennsylvania

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."



On the path to consensus

by Nancy Schenck, Editor

Honesty, open-mindedness, and willingness are not just the fundamental principles upon which we base our program of recovery in Narcotics Anonymous. These essential elements are also vital to the process of developing consensus. In conjunction with these ideals, we must also have adequate information if we are to understand whatever issues are at hand. It is so important to truly *understand* what we need to make a decision about.

Over time, we have learned from our mistakes. Through a thorough inventory process along with a maturing membership, we are developing in a direction that—while still evolving—seems to be working to bring more information and more understanding to our members.

We experienced this process of “seek first to understand” at the World Service Meeting held in Vienna, Virginia, USA, on 31 August–2 September 2001. While the WSM has never been a decision-making meeting like the World Service Conference, this particular venue offered the perfect opportunity for us to highlight some of the components of meeting facilitation that can be used in our efforts to build consensus.

The meeting incorporated several new facilitation techniques into the agenda in an effort to help us get through the work and allow participants to participate effectively. This was a trial run and part of the basis for what is being used at the worldwide workshops. We found these techniques, especially the use of “buzz groups,” to be particularly useful at this meeting because they allowed not only for the presentations, but also for more time to hold question-and-answer sessions and discussions.

While there was some apprehension from conference participants when the meeting began, it was soon dispelled when the first workshop started. The overall theme of the weekend was communication, and it seemed to be a success judging from the upbeat, social, and chatty mood of the participants.

The relaxed yet enthusiastic atmosphere prevailed from the very beginning. The workshops included: separate presentations and updates on World Services, the Worldwide Workshops, and the Human Resource Panel; sessions on court cards, sponsorship, and literature development; question-and-answer sessions; and a world services open forum. Board members, delegates, World Service Office staff, and other participants engaged in thoughtful, spirited discussions throughout the weekend. During all the workshops and meetings that were held, participants continually asked compelling questions and held an active dialogue with the board.

The workshops were set up with “rounds of ten”—meeting jargon that translates to ten chairs around a table—which set the stage for the buzz groups.

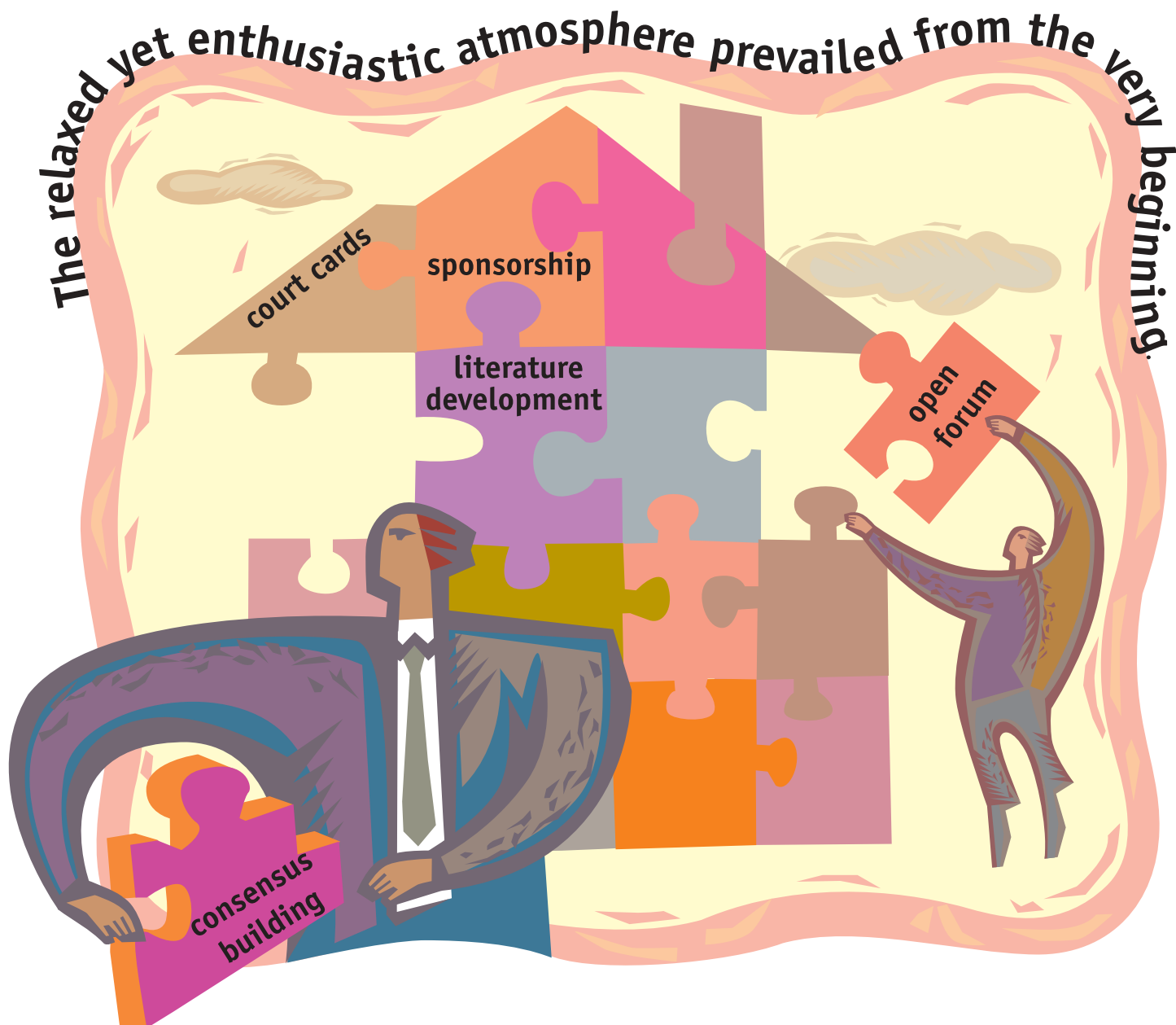
These buzz groups consisted of the attending delegates who were encouraged to “shake things up a bit” and sit with delegates they didn’t know or who were *not* from around their region or area. This helped to ensure that different views and beliefs would be shared and heard, even with the heavy “North American-centric” attendance.

The setup created a sense of unity, especially since there were no signs of separation visible with board members being equally spread out among the tables. The animated expressions of the participants indicated their interest—they seemed to be truly enjoying themselves. The members of each group enjoyed a lot of laughter and fun together, in addition to the information they exchanged. With such willingness and helpful cooperation being practiced by the attendees, the 2001 World Service Meeting seemed to truly embody the partnership Narcotics Anonymous World Services has been seeking.

The World Unity Day Celebration was the perfect cap to this weekend of cooperation and teamwork. NA members throughout Latin America, Europe, and some Asia-Pacific countries, including a new NA community in Pakistan, joined members from the USA and Canada to participate in the live hook-up of the speaker meeting. It seemed that with each "hello" from all of these locations, which were heard over the speaker system, members at the actual Unity Day banquet and meeting got teary-eyed. Since it was important to be quiet while members checked in over the phone, participants at the WSM

greeted each one with the silent form of applause used in American Sign Language. It proved to be great fun and a moving show of camaraderie.

We know from all the comments we have received about this meeting that the participants felt it was a positive learning experience. We hope to make unity-building events like these even better in the future so that our vision and ultimate goal of consensus-based decision-making can and will be realized.





"There is often a vast difference between group conscience and group opinion, as dictated by powerful personalities or popularity. Some of our most painful growing experiences have come as a result of decisions made in the name of group conscience. True spiritual principles are never in conflict; they complement each other. The spiritual conscience of a group will never contradict any of our Traditions."

(Basic Text, page 61)

Group conscience

We have three regular members in my home group. Supposedly, we should not have any problems agreeing about something. However, each time that we have a group conscience meeting, it turns into a tense and endless discussion. Maybe this happens because many times we place personalities before principles.

I think that herein lies the essence of what group conscience should be.

When I look back, I realize that the first group conscience meeting I attended was my very first Narcotics Anonymous meeting. The message I received during that meeting was a welcome message. I was told that I could recover if I had the desire, and the people at the meeting could help me if I allowed them. There was no need to come up with a proposal or to make any decisions. There was an unspoken consensus about offering me help. The group conscience in that group simply flowed, and that made me decide to come back. I have been clean ever since.

Speaking from that point of view, each NA meeting should be a group conscience meeting. But in NA, we also have to make specific decisions about certain matters to improve the way in which we carry the message to the addict who still suffers.

There is an unresolved discussion in my area about who should participate in the area service committee's decision-making process. We have an undefined conflict over the Seventh Concept of complete participation. Although the majority of groups (if not all of them) allow their trusted servants to vote on the group's decisions, with the same process occurring at the ASC meetings when area representatives attend the regional assembly, there always seems to be a motion submitted that does not allow the regional trusted servants to have individual voting rights. Once there was an instance when the trusted servants of my area started a real ruckus over this topic during the regional assembly. It seems that again we have a case of placing personalities before principles.

On the other hand, at my regional service committee, there is rarely a need to call for a formal vote to make decisions. Generally, agreements are achieved without any difficulties if there is a good information base, an adequate means of support for the ideas, and a good aptitude to respond to any given observations. When we do not bother to do the minimum required work, discussions can become quite frustrating and, worse than that, they can become useless. Also, a good level of leadership is needed to direct the group's conscience. When leadership is weak, group conscience does not flow.

I cannot say that in any of our old regional service conferences or in today's assemblies that we have actually had any full-fledged battles, complete with threats of violence and chairs flying all over the place, but at times we have been close to that scenario.

On the other hand, I have also participated in some assemblies that have seemed more like conventions because of the spirit of fellowship and camaraderie that prevailed during discussions. The deciding factor is whether or not we put into practice the principles of our spiritual program when we are dealing with service matters. During our assemblies we always try to develop consensus when we make decisions, and we understand that consensus does not necessarily imply unanimity. We can have contrasting opinions and positions that do not generate ultimatums. Only when demands take control do we call for a vote.

At the Latin American Zonal Forum we have a similar procedure. We try to avoid a vote because we understand that consensus (as simple as being more or less in agreement, without radical opposition) is the way to reflect our attachment to the spiritual principles of our program, and we try to carry that commitment to our meetings.

We all have the right to disagree and to state our opposing points of view, as long as we do not do so in an unpleasant way, and we always maintain mutual respect and consider other people's needs. If we concentrate on our service efforts and not on the people who are doing the work, everything will work well.

Fernando M, Peru



Group conscience and the group process

Q: There are several places in our literature that speak to the idea that group conscience is a spiritual process and a means by which we invite a loving God to influence our decisions. Is group conscience a spiritual process at your home group or your area or your region?

A: *In my home group we definitely use group conscience as a spiritual tool when we make collective decisions. We seldom use voting to make a decision or select members for service positions—never, if we can help it. I'm the secretary of my home group and I chair our business meetings. The difference between group conscience and voting is that you can feel which direction the group is going. Arguing ceases to exist, and God's presence is more evident. I also do service in the Swedish Region, and most of the time the group conscience is clear to us all, even if debate has been fierce. Sometimes, before the actual group conscience occurs, we actually sense the development of a common will for the RSC. God is in the room, and even if you were against whatever the topic of discussion was from the beginning, you can more easily let go and start working for our common good and for the good of NA under those circumstances.*

Mikael L, Sweden

A: Sometimes yes; more often no. Here are some of the reasons why we don't invite a loving God to influence our collective decisions:

- ❖ Lack of participants' knowledge about spiritual principles and the spiritual process.
- ❖ Personal agendas.
- ❖ Few are willing to serve the fellowship in our rural area. Some people are simply unable to travel the great distances they must travel if they are to participate.
- ❖ Different concepts of a loving Higher Power.

In general, I feel it is a lack of spiritual guidance within our region's groups and areas. There are so many addicts staying clean without working the steps or not using our literature. I also believe that weak sponsorship produces addicts who have little or no knowledge of the steps, traditions, or concepts. Like all of us, they are keeping what they have by giving it away, but what they are giving away is a poor working knowledge of our fundamental principles.

This, in turn, generates a diluted message, the solvent being ego—sort of "look at me, I am staying clean, and I do not work at changing anything by working steps." Many times the steps or traditions are not even mentioned in meetings. It's more about instant oatmeal, instant cameras, instant access to this or that based on exposure to only the first three steps, and disregard for or apathy toward the remaining nine.

Rocky A, Wyoming

A: *In the business meetings that I have attended, I know of only one meeting that takes the time to try for a consensus. When I served as regional H&I chairperson, I always did my best to steer our group conscience in this direction. All the other meetings I am aware of express their group conscience with a vote that's counted after a debate.*

Michael P, New York

Compromise, you say?

Compromise when you are right? That is a big order.

Let's check out our old friend, the all-knowing *Random House College Dictionary*. It says, along with a bunch of other definitions, what both words mean:

Right:

In conformity with fact or reason.

Compromise:

A settlement of differences by mutual adjustment or modification of opposing claims.

I believe that I am thinking right when my mind and my gut are in accord. This happens when I am centered upon God, not self. In meetings, most of us have the same basic goals at heart: to make our groups a better place for the addicts yet to arrive, and to make a better place for ourselves right now. Not that I want to admit to conformity—it just seems to work out like that.

Now I also know that some resolutions are harder to come by because of the diversity of personalities that abounds in the program. I will talk about that part later on. Please bear with me on this next part, as it does have a purpose.

In my earlier days in NA, I seemed to run my life based on the ideas that I came here with. They involved such things as being suspicious of everything and everyone, conflict with myself and others, and maybe not being right all the time but certainly never admitting being wrong.

These defects don't seem to plague me today as much as before, but believe you me, it took a lot of work to understand that I didn't have to be right all the time just to salve an ego bruised from years of using.

I really had to challenge my head to try not to bring these defects into making decisions. Compromise came as I worked hard to be objective and to keep an open mind regarding discussion on whatever I believed to be right. Oftentimes I compromised when I found that others were more right than I was.

After taking a few good lumps, in and out of NA, I finally realized that it was a "God thing" all the way—not just some of

the time, but all of the time. This was *not* a "compromise" for me; it was a flat-out surrender! By asking myself what God would want to have happen, I usually came up with an answer that was acceptable to me—and, surprisingly, to the group as well.

So this brings me to the "fact" part of the definition.

Fact is, the path has already been mapped out. If we, as members, read the map exactly the way it is drawn, without any "spin jive" on it, that map will lead us to decisions that really work.

People who had the same problems we might be experiencing now wrote guidelines for us a long time ago. That was done to hold our fellowship together and to save us some time and pain in making decisions that may affect us at the present—an absolutely brilliant concept. It is called the Twelve Traditions. We also have the Twelve Concepts to help us. If we follow them, we very seldom go wrong.

Now there are also folks in the program—and in the world in general—who believe that in order to get something done, they must use the bulldog approach to force their opinion on the group. Sometimes other approaches are brought forward. Having time in the program is a good one, while being popular or seeming to know much more than others also carries weight. Just listen to what is happening and check in with your self before being impulsive or making an ego- or baggage-based vote.

It takes a few years around the program to understand that we don't have to be "all that." Being humble involves the ability to tell the truth about yourself and have the backbone to speak up and take a stand, even if it is an unpopular one. It is a good thing to be able to call the shots the way you see them. Stay the course.

I have found in the many years that I have been here that the good decisions will stand the test of time, and the "iffy" decisions seem to wash out because they just don't apply (some do get by for a bit, but they go soon enough, too).

Lastly, we must try to remember that God is in charge here, not you or me. God, in his purest form, will make it happen, as long as we can get our ego out of the way.

Thanks for listening.

Hamilton M, California

Personalities rather than principles

My name is Bijay and I'm an addict from Nepal. The NA movement started in Nepal around January 1997, when we were only a few recovering addicts trying to stay clean. We started three meetings during the week. Initially, only a few guys would come to the meetings. Sometimes only one of us would show up, and we would stay at the meeting place hoping that someone else would come. After a year or so, some of the guys went back to using, and several newcomers started to attend. The group grew slowly but steadily.

We were all excited, and we helped other recovering addicts to start new meetings in other cities besides Katmandu. We were euphoric about what was happening!

Then the problem started—two of the addicts who had made contributions to the growth of the NA movement in Nepal started having differences of opinion about group matters. Maybe their egos got between them. As a result, the group started splitting into two parts. The newcomers and the oldtimers started taking sides. There was no neutral ground; you had to take sides. In every meeting we started fighting with each other, not only in business meetings but also in our recovery meetings. Each side blamed the other for the problems. The newcomers who used to come to the meetings to share and get comfort were confused by seeing us fight; some of them stopped coming to the meetings altogether.

This went on for a couple of months, but finally everyone realized what was happening to the group. We had a huge business meeting. The group was divided, so we started another group by mutual understanding. Things settled a bit, but even this didn't help much. One group never went to the other group's meeting, even if it was convenient for them, and we had problems with translations and other service work. Everybody started looking for the solutions. Some even asked for suggestions from the World Service Office, and everybody reached the conclusion

that we should develop an area service committee.

We finally formed an ASC. It's only been a few months since it started. Things are still not perfect, but it is a lot better than before. The oldtimers who had ego problems realized their mistakes and asked for forgiveness from the group, and slowly things have started getting better. We translated a few IPs and did some H&I work.

We still fight with each other in business meetings, but the motive is different—now we fight for the group. We are still on shaky ground, but we can see the bright future if we try to set the personalities aside and think about the principles.

I am not ashamed to share that one of the oldtimers who started the problem is me! I just regret that I didn't realize my mistake earlier so that it wouldn't have had such a negative effect on the newcomers who came to the meeting seeking help and left without finding it. I ask my Higher Power for forgiveness.

Bijay P, India

When the smoke cleared

It isn't often we take the time and patience our literature suggests to reach a true group conscience, but when I get the chance to see it happen, it's truly a special and uplifting experience.

Back in the early 1990s, before we knew about second-hand smoke, most meeting rooms in my area were split into smoking and no-smoking sides. Members chose where they wanted to sit, and it seemed like a nonissue at the time.

However, my home group was held in a smallish room with poor ventilation, so someone proposed we turn it into a no-smoking meeting. Allowing the Ninth Tradition to guide us, we tabled the motion for the next business meeting so that any group member who wanted to participate in this decision could.

Many did. The room was full when the motion came up. Almost everyone joined in the discussion, and no one was rushed. People were really listening to each other, and no voices were raised. What we were hearing was that most nonsmokers were

concerned about inconveniencing the smokers and wanted to keep the existing two-side system. On the other hand, most smokers felt bad about making the non-smokers physically uncomfortable and wanted to change the meeting to a non-smoking one.

It all equaled out to a roomful of open-mindedness and compassion, and I am proud to have been part of such a spiritual experience!

Phil O, New York

Tradition Two: A personal perspective

Many addicts believe that the Twelve Traditions and the spiritual principles embodied in each are for application in NA service only, whether at the group, area, region, or world level. But this belief seems limiting in scope and practice. I may very well miss the real point if I tell myself things that keep me from utilizing these well-founded truths in my day-to-day living.

I am so grateful to have a sponsor who believes in "working" the traditions, as well as the steps. After I worked the steps with my sponsor this last time, he suggested I begin on Tradition One by putting it into an "I" statement, in the first person. Then he showed me how to apply the tradition to each of the steps and to pull out common principles and concepts.

Once I began this work, a whole new perspective opened up for me. I went through all Twelve Traditions this way, applying each one from a first-person perspective to each of the Twelve Steps, and the foundation of my program grew immensely. I continue having new insights when I consider the workings of the traditions in my own life.

For this edition of *The NA Way*, I'd like to share my experience of personalizing the Second Tradition. When I saw that the theme of this edition of the magazine was "Consensus and Group Conscience," I wanted to convey what I've learned about these things from the Second Tradition and how I've applied them, from a personal perspective.

For me, the single most helpful aspect of understanding Tradition Two has been the definition of "conscience." My conscience can be defined as the awareness of my behavior and its effects on others and me. When I act in a way that is contrary to my values, I experience a "guilty conscience" and feel disunity with others and within myself, a "coming away" of sorts from my Higher Power.

On the other hand, when I act in accordance with my beliefs and apply the spiritual principles, I feel harmony and connection within myself and with others. This is a perspective that is applicable in every area of my life, not just in NA-related service work.

It is vital for me to check myself spiritually before choosing a path I may be facing, be it a new opportunity of some kind or simply some manifestation of life on its own terms. There is always some choice to make.

The Second Tradition has helped me recognize that the expression of my God in my conscience is to put my God in my behavior. This isn't always easy, and I have had calamitous results from ignoring my conscience over the years. Yet when I have paid attention to my conscience and put my God in the forefront of my choices, I have experienced many of the gifts we hear about in our program.

Taking this personal awareness of conscience and its expression in my life to a business meeting of NA has proven extremely valuable over the last few years. When I put my God in my behavior in the decision-making process, it seems to go well more often than not. Rarely do I come away feeling like I've been run over by a semi truck.

Consistent practice of this is difficult. I have not reached an exalted state of consciousness from cultivating this awareness, that's for sure! But the opportunity exists to apply this in the realm of NA service, and my overall service experience is much more gratifying when I do so. I feel unity and connection with others and with myself, and there are no lingering doubts when all is said and done, whether a loving God has been expressed in our conscience or not.

Shane C, California



Consensus: Love and service without borders

(Ed. note: This article is reprinted, in part, from NA Europa, No. 15, June 2001.)

When I was writing the minutes of the small group discussions held at the European Delegates Meeting in Athens, Greece, I was heartened by how strongly most delegates supported the concept of consensus. It was agreed that consensus is an achievable and important goal, and that the aim of achieving consensus should always be an issue for discussion in the small groups. There were several practical suggestions on how to promote the practice of consensus. It was agreed that the small-group discussions themselves were integral to laying the basis for consensus. But, most important for me, was to share with other delegates the growing realization that, like our program, the benefits of consensus lie in the journey and the process as much as in the destination.

The EDM is a multinational, multicultural forum where recovering addicts come together as trusted servants to advance NA's primary purpose. We come together as addicts whose conscience has been awakened by working the Twelve Steps of Narcotics Anonymous to carry NA's message of recovery beyond the borders—the borders we find on maps and in our hearts. We share a vision of a time when every addict in the world has the chance to experience our message in his or her native language and culture. We can do this a day at a time, if we put our common welfare first.

It is difficult to put "our common welfare first" if, like most addicts, you come from a culture that has little concept of what "common welfare" is. Popular culture encourages competition. If we carry this unchecked into our service meetings, then we will consider other participants as opponents and characterize their actions, motives, and/or intent in the negative.

NA is a "we" thing, and we need to remind each other constantly that goodwill is the foundation of NA service. We aspire to high ideals, but often we don't treat each other very well in our service meetings. My sponsor always reminded me that many times addicts will start a crusade to save "the fellowship" and will completely ignore the essential spiritual principles without which that "fellowship" does not exist.

"We must always remember that as individual members, groups, and service committees, we are not and should never be in competition with each other. We work separately and together to help the newcomer and for our common good." (Basic Text, pg. xvi)

As trusted servants in Narcotics Anonymous, we are looked to as addicts whose conscience has been awakened by working the Twelve Steps. One delegate said, "I not only have to bring my region's conscience to the EDM, but also to bring my own conscious contact with the NA program of recovery." Another member said, "If my region doesn't agree with the consensus that is developing, do I close my mind to the discussion or do I listen respectfully and maybe learn something that might help my region?"

Consensus requires a commitment to authentic participation. This is about a conscious commitment to listening and speaking in a particular way:

**"Faith is our reliance
on a loving Higher
Power put into
action. The
application of this
spiritual principle lets
us surrender to the
group conscience
with hope instead
of fear."**

It Works: How and Why, pg. 141

1. When I speak I will do it in a way that gives you the best chance at understanding exactly what I believe and why I believe it. I am speaking so that you will understand me, not to convince you.
2. When I listen, my sole intention is to hear you in order to understand you. I will have to let your words mean what they mean to you, not what they might mean to me. I will not listen in order to refute, but to understand.
3. I promise, up front, that I will not withdraw from the conversation, no matter how difficult it might become. I won't go away.
4. It will be okay for us to disagree, to argue, and to challenge, but not until our achievement of the first three points is accomplished.

This approach to building consensus places great emphasis on clarity of communication. It recognizes the inequalities that are produced by language and translation. We all must take responsibility for improving the quality of communication. It ensures that everyone is heard respectfully and not just has a "say."

We need to actively try to empathize with the underlying message and the messenger. At the same time, we need to listen to ourselves: Are we receiving or have we slipped away, turned off, tuned out? This creates a real equality and ensures that the discussion is not dominated by a few delegates with strong opinions and access to English. It lays the basis for respectful conversation among equals that strengthens the bonds that bind us together.

Consensus here means that if there is one voice opposed, it is not the job of others to persuade. By listening respectfully, in the spirit of NA, we attempt to achieve a collective understanding. If things become heated or stalled, we stop the discussion and return to the process later. This allows time to reflect and take counsel, and it strengthens unity.

Francis M, Ireland

I'm a GSR. Why should I attend the regional assembly*?

The short answer to this question is that you should attend the assembly because it's part of your job as Group Service Representative. It is part of the commitment you made when you were elected GSR.

But we all know this answer isn't good enough.

Here is the longer answer, and maybe a better one. Attending a regional assembly allows a GSR to keep his or her group connected with discussions being carried on in the service structure.

The decisions made at the World Service Conference are voted on by the members of your group. Your GSR comes to the assembly with those decisions. If your home group's GSR does not attend the assembly, the voice of your group is not heard.

GSRs attending the regional assembly also vote in the elections for all the regional committee's positions. If your GSR does not attend the assembly, your group has no say in who will be serving at the regional level.

Our Second Concept says that "the final responsibility and authority for NA service rests with the NA groups."

The service structure is truly upside down. The members of the groups are the decision makers and are at the top of the service structure. The world level of service is at the bottom of the service structure. The World Service Conference is directed by the votes at your home group.

Every two years, NA holds a World Service Conference. People representing all the regions in the world attend the WSC and discuss the pros and cons of issues that can affect the fellowship for years to come before casting their votes. For example, when any changes are made to our Basic Text or new literature comes out, it must be approved by the conference. In other words, our groups must approve it.

A *Conference Agenda Report* is produced before each meeting of the WSC and distributed to all the regions. The CAR has the motions that will be voted on at the next World Service Conference.

A regional assembly will be held to take the votes of all the groups in the region. The regional assembly can be where the region's group conscience develops, but it takes GSRs of all the groups to voice the diverse views and opinions of the fellowship in a given region on any given issue. The more input received, the better prepared a regional delegate is to represent the region at the WSC.

In our regional assemblies, we are trying to move to consensus-based voting. A consensus is an opinion or position reached by a group as a whole. If we can't come to consensus on an issue, then we need to discuss it further until we can come to consensus.

At my home group we ask any prospective new GSR, "Will you attend the regional assembly?" If the answer is no, then we elect someone else who is willing. As a member of my home group, that is where my vote is carried. If my GSR doesn't attend the assembly, then my vote is lost.

Mike M, Colorado

* For more information on regional assemblies, check out *A Guide to Local Services in Narcotics Anonymous*, pg. 96.



A few words from New York

As chair of the Greater New York Regional Service Committee, I thought it would be appropriate to share a few words about the recent tragedy in New York, Washington, and Pennsylvania, specifically on how the attack affected NA in the New York region, and then a few thoughts on dealing with tragedy and loss in recovery.

Of course, no words can express my feelings regarding the scope of such devastation. An estimated 5,000-plus people are believed to have lost their lives at the World Trade Center alone. How could anyone *not* have a member of a group or service committee who was not affected? Indeed, it seems like reports come in every day from our NA family about those who have lost loved ones or know people who have suffered such a loss.

At this time, the normally hyperbolic title of the *Greater* New York Region has never been truer. Like all New Yorkers, addicts in recovery offered up their homes, money, blood, you name it, to help further the disaster recovery efforts. They now had two recoveries in their lives.

Ground Zero falls into the Greater New York Region and within the New York City Area. Our regional committee met the weekend before 11 September, and the New York City Area met the following Sunday. I was able to attend the New York City Area Committee meeting and can report on how some of the groups around Ground Zero dealt with the problems resulting from the attack.

For example, no one who did not live or have business below 14th Street in Manhattan was allowed to go there during the first few days after the attack. Now this is a considerably large geographic area and it is home to most of the groups in the New York City Area, yet GSRs reported that they were able to make it to all of the facilities and hold their group meetings on time. The printing of area meeting lists needed to be postponed because the printer's office was near Ground Zero.

I attended the New York City Area to offer the aid and resources of the regional committee, and yet not one group reported a need for help—not with space, literature donations, or anything. Truly, the Fourth and Seventh Traditions were being practiced.

Our regional service office is also close to Ground Zero, less than two miles due north, and it was shut down for several days. But then we got up and running, and we were soon meeting customers' literature needs and hosting service committee meetings, including one for the planning of the next regional convention.

All things considered, addicts in recovery have met and are meeting the challenges of this terrible event. Of course, one hears many heartbreaking stories of loss as one attends meetings throughout the region. To me, one of the most heartbreaking is to hear of people who have relapsed in the wake of the attack.

I can only speak for myself and my own recovery, but I know these things to be true. I need to have all my faculties in a crisis. I want to be clear-headed and able to respond at 100 percent. Feelings not felt will always make themselves known.

Again, for myself, I vacillate between fear, confusion, sorrow, grief, tears, and anger, but I would not trade feeling these things for the temporary numbness drugs might bring, only to have them well up later at some inappropriate time, thus making my life unmanageable.

So, recovery continues to go on in the Greater New York Region.

David M, New York

Are all addicts equal?

Apparently not.

While my recent visit to the Florida Regional Convention was a positive experience overall, I felt compelled to write regarding one issue that is of great concern to me.

In chapter two of our Basic Text, "What Is the Narcotics Anonymous Program?" it states, "The newcomer is the most important person at any meeting." The second chapter also says "there are no dues or fees" and that "each of us has paid for the price of membership." However, what I witnessed at this convention was something different.

Specifically, at the main speaker meeting, which took place directly after the banquet, what I saw did not follow the philosophy mentioned in the above paragraph. In fact, what I saw also contradicted the principle that all addicts are equal.

The message I got at that banquet was this: that if you have money to spare, you will be treated differently—you will be considered "special." This surprised me, because generally the newcomer is treated well at FRCNA.

Here's what happened: The area toward the front of the room is usually the closest to the speaker. This would be a great area in which to seat lots of newcomers. Instead, those seats were occupied by people who had paid for the banquet dinner—in other words, if you had the money to pay for a banquet dinner, you were treated differently and extended privileges that others did not get.

While there is no question that conventions are a valuable source of funds for Narcotics Anonymous, I wonder if we are getting away from NA's basic and most important principles. Not only are newcomers less likely to have the additional funds to purchase a banquet dinner ticket, but many members of NA, even after some time, still do not have the extra cash to spend on a banquet.

Proof of this came during the clean-time countdown. Almost all of the people who had seats closest to the speaker had substantial clean time, while there were only a couple of people at the tables with clean time under one year.

What is the end result? Well, as I see it, if you have money, you can buy a front row seat to a speaker meeting. This places members of NA in a situation where they are different based on financial status.

If any special treatment should occur, the first few rows should be saved for the newcomer. After all, we know that sitting up front enhances one's ability to hear, listen, and absorb a message.

Finally, not only were many people excluded from being up front who might have needed to be there, but many addicts were kept from being in the room at all. Why? Because the tables took up a lot more space than did standard seating. Therefore, space that could have seated many more people was not available because the tables were there.

How does the addict who doesn't have the money end up feeling? Could he or she feel "less than" because, just as on the outside, they are not equal? Will it affect his or her self-esteem? Will they feel they do not belong? Will they hesitate from going to the next convention?

We must remember the power of "money, property, and prestige (to) divert us from our primary purpose." To me, it seems like that is exactly what is happening.

What will happen next? Will we be selling box seats at conventions? Will we sell choice seats at all recovery meetings?

I hope this letter gets printed in *The NA Way* and that, as a result, the tables can be removed after a banquet so that all addicts can be treated as equals. If this sounds too drastic, maybe the tables can be placed far enough back from the speaker's podium so that four or five rows of seats can be placed at the front of the room.

Anonymous, New York

More from our readers...

A special thanks

We here at NA Hole in the Wall Group would like to thank all of you at NA World Services for your support and tell you that we had a really good time this past Unity Day, 1 September 2001. The service was excellent, and we appreciate all who were involved who helped to make it happen. We had a great time and enjoyed being part of it with the rest of the groups gathered from around the world. We hope that we will be allowed to participate in next year's unity celebration, as this is something that we look forward to each year.

*NA Hole in the Wall Group,
Oregon State Penitentiary*

Dear NA Way,

As an addict who got (and stayed) clean at age 16, I appreciated reading my story on the pages of the October 2001 issue of *The NA Way*. Since the deadline was right around my due date—my son is going on four months old now and is a real little miracle of recovery—I was unable to submit an article, but I was grateful to see others saying much of what I would have written myself. What a powerful expression of the unity and anonymity of our fellowship!

I felt moved, however, to offer one additional piece of experience.

Although I, too, felt like an inferior addict when others expressed their opinion that I hadn't suffered as much as they had, and though I certainly did not feel especially "lucky" to have gotten clean when I was young, as many others often claimed, I became aware of one vitally important truth over time and with help from my sponsor: *Those older addicts weren't talking to me.* They were expressing, indirectly, their own remorse and regret for decades of lost time and wasted chances. I learned to have compassion for their suffering and not take it as a statement about whether I belonged in the rooms.

Today, at age 30, I appreciate more than ever the freedom of being clean. I also respect my responsibilities as an "oldtimer," which includes celebrating the gifts of the program and being direct and honest in my communications.

With prayers and love for all addicts everywhere,

Elinor B, Virginia

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.).

These are pictures of the place where NA meetings are held in Shiraz, Iran. This particular building is part of the Institute of Welfare and Well-being, which provides services to the handicapped. There are four meetings a day. It is in a poor neighborhood and is not easily accessible, but the turnout is really amazing. At the moment, NA members are being pressured to give up this meeting location.

The three chairs in front are for the leader, the secretary, and the treasurer. The leader changes every day. The eight frames on the right-hand side of the wall are some of the NA "notes," and the other frame contains a prayer which, loosely translated, encourages "surrender to a Higher Power or God."

It would mean a lot for this picture to be published, as NA is not yet a completely accepted or widely understood concept in Iran. To be heard and understood by other addicts in other countries would be incredibly pleasing.

Thank you.

Shiraz, Iran



União Group in Campinas



Here is the entrance to the União Group in Campinas, São Paulo, Brazil. The group studies one step at a time from the book *Isto Resulta* (It Works, Portuguese).

Campinas, São Paulo, Brazil



H&I Slim

For those of you who haven't had the pleasure of meeting him, H&I Slim is "the ultimate H&I kinda guy." He hangs out in hospitals and jails all over the world. You might say he's always in the know and always on the go. Got a question about H&I? Need some help? Write H&I Slim in care of the WSO.

Dear H&I Slim,

I have had a number of calls from different area H&I chairpersons concerning addicts attending their subcommittee meetings asking to become panel leaders while on a methadone maintenance program. We have discussed this at length at our regional H&I subcommittee meeting. The results of those discussions always seem to end up the same—a hard line between interpretation of our literature and people's individual feelings about "the methadone issue."

The only information or input from world services is found in the bulletin titled "Regarding Methadone and Other Drug Replacement Programs." That information doesn't help us with the issue of a service committee making a judgment about who is clean. Do you have any other thoughts you could share?

H, Massachusetts

Dear H,

I understand the sensitivity surrounding this topic (see the October 2001 issue of *The NA Way Magazine*, where I shared similar thoughts).

Service committees, including subcommittees, make their own judgments and set their own guidelines. If subcommittee guidelines declare that a specifically determined amount of clean time is needed to participate in H&I panels, then a person on methadone maintenance would not qualify to take part in H&I service as a panel leader or panel member. Although you won't find specific information about methadone maintenance in the *Hospitals & Institutions Handbook*, if you look in the resource section and review the general information sections of area H&I guidelines samples one and three, it states in what I suspect (from conversations with past members of the WSC H&I Committee) was intended to be firm language, "Being clean for the purposes of this H&I subcommittee shall be defined as complete abstinence from all drugs."

The common practice for most H&I committees has been to thoughtfully inform members who are on methadone maintenance that it is best if they not serve as panel leaders and/or panel members. Keep in mind that in Trustee Bulletin #29, "Regarding Methadone and Other Drug Replacement Programs," methadone maintenance is considered a drug-replacement program, and the NA program is about recovery from the disease of addiction through complete abstinence. The bulletin goes on to caution addicts seeking recovery against the substitution of one drug for another. You will also find another thought about substituting one drug for

another in the Basic Text, Chapter Three, "Why Are We Here?": "We tried substituting one drug for another but this only prolonged our pain." (Pg. 14) That sentence seems to support the statement(s) in the bulletin and appears to clearly guide service committees in their decision-making process, without arbitrarily passing judgment about whether anyone is clean or not. Therefore it would be reasonable to say that someone on methadone maintenance isn't clean. However, they can and should have every right to be a member of NA if they have the desire to stop using drugs.

In any other scenario, if, while selecting trusted servants, a group or committee notes that a person is obviously "under the influence" or "impaired" and decides that it is in the best interest of the addict themselves, as well as the image of Narcotics Anonymous as a whole, to recommend that they not serve, it would certainly appear to be in everyone's best interest.

No H&I subcommittee should feel as if they are passing judgment when they don't allow addicts on a methadone maintenance program to serve as H&I panel leaders or panel members.

Thank you for all the H&I service you do.

*In loving service,
H&I Slim*



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, 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

New South Wales: 1-3 Feb; Australian Regional Convention; Hitchhikers Guide to Recovery; A & I Hall, Bangalow; event info: +02.66809685, +02.66809276

Victoria: 8-10 Feb; 1st Combined Victorian & Tasmanian Area Convention; St Hilda's College, Melbourne; hotel rsvns: +61.3.9248.8400; event info: +61.3.9592.2345; write: Victorian Area/Tasmanian Area, Box 2470V, Melbourne, Victoria 3001, Australia; <http://home.vicnet.net.au/~navic/>

Canada

Ontario: 1-3 Mar; Ontario Region; ORCNA XV; Regal Constellation Hotel, Toronto; hotel rsvns: 416.675.1500; write: Ontario Region, 2725 Jane St, Box 122, Toronto, Ontario, M3L 1S3 Canada; email: orcna_xv@hotmail.com

India

Khandala: 7-9 Feb; Bombay Area Convention IX; St. Xavier's Villa, Khandala, Maharastra; event info: bacna9@yahoo.com; www.geocities.com/bacna9

Israel

Eilat: 25-27 Apr; Israel Regional Convention; Never Alone; Dan Panorama Eilat, Eilat; hotel rsvns: +972.8.6389999; event info: +972.55.450111, +972.53.388887; www.naisrael.org.il

Portugal

Lisbon: 1-3 Feb; V Convention of the Lisbon Area; Av de Roma, Lisbon; event registration: +351 9660062555; event info: +351 919600627; www.VCNALX.org

Sweden

Uppsala: 25-27 Jan; NA Sweden 15 years! Freedom; Fyrishov, Uppsala; event info: +46706986753, +46736881903, +46707486859

Switzerland

Leysin: 15-17 Mar; Les liens qui nous unissent / The Bonds That Unite Us; event info: +0041.26.322.96.91; email: CSNA8@hotmail.com

United States

Alabama: 18-20 Jan; Central Alabama Area Convention; Free at Last V; Guest House Inn & Suites, Montgomery; hotel rsvns: 800.465.4329; event registration: 334.284.0375; event info: 334.284.2366; write: CAANACC, Box 230572, Montgomery, AL 36123-0572

2) 8-10 Feb; North Alabama Area; Out of the Darkness into the Light VI; Holiday Inn, Decatur; hotel rsvns: 256.355.3150; event info: 256.851.0525, 256.722.0898, 256.498.5031; write: NAACA, Box 18231, Huntsville, AL 35804

3) 15-17 Mar; Greater Mobile Area Convention V; Vision Without Limits; Adam's Mark Riverview Plaza Hotel, Mobile; hotel rsvns: 800.444.2326; event info: 334.456.3695, 334.473.9648, 334.476.0401; write: GMACNA V, Box 9622, Mobile, AL 36693

Arkansas: 8-10 Mar; Arkansas River Valley Area 9th Annual Hanging in the Fort Convention; Fifth Season's Inn, Fort Smith; hotel rsvns: 501.452.4880; event info: 501.484.0254, 501.494.7433, 501.785.0903; write: Arkansas River Valley Area, Box 5631, Ft Smith, AR

Arkansas/Texas: 22-24 Feb; 18th Annual Texarkana Area Convention; Ramada Inn, Texarkana; hotel rsvns: 903.794.3131; event info: 870.773.2287, 903.838.4343, 870.773.5084

California: 11-13 Jan; Tri-Area Convention II; We Have Found a Solution; Konocti Harbor Resort and Spa on Clear Lake, Kelseyville; hotel rsvns: 800.660.LAKE; event info: 530.514.1510; write: Host Lake/Mendocino Area, Tri-Area Convention II, Box 3, Chico, CA

2) 18-20 Jan; San Fernando Area Convention; Guide Me in My Recovery; Burbank Airport Hilton, Burbank; hotel rsvns: 818.843.6000; event info: 818.884.1288; event registration: 818.891.1733; write: San Fernando Area Box 1806, Burbank, CA 91501

3) 15-17 Feb; Central California Regional Convention X; Our Message Is Hope and the Promise Is Freedom; DoubleTree Inn, Bakersfield; hotel rsvns: 800.222.8733; event info: 805.937.5870, 661.250.2164; write: CCRCNA, Box 2170, Santa Maria, CA 93457-2170; www.ccrna.org

4) 15-17 Feb; Circle of Sisters Group; Fifth Annual Women's Convention; Hyatt San Jose, San Jose; hotel rsvns: 800.233.1234; event registration: 530.892.2986; event info: 925.946.9786; write: NCRSO, 875 Cotting Lane, Ste B, Vacaville, CA 95688; www.cos2002.org

5) 1-3 Mar; Bay Cities Area Convention III; Radisson Hotel LAX, Los Angeles; hotel rsvns: 310.670.9000; event info: 562.522.4405, 310.371.1923; write: BCACNA, Box 1291, Lomita, CA 90717; www.BayCitiesNA.com

6) 28-31 Mar; Northern California Convention XXIV; Hyatt Regency Sacramento at Capitol Park, Sacramento; hotel rsvns: 916.443.1234; event info: 415.652.2887; write: Northern California Region, 875 Cotting Ln, Vacaville, CA 95688; www.norcalna.org

7) 29-31 Mar; Eleventh Annual Southern California Regional Spring Gathering; Burbank Hilton Hotel, Burbank; hotel rsvns: 626.359.0084; event info: 562.983.5868, 562.491.0077

8) 3-6 Jul 2003; WCNA-30; 30th World Convention; 50th Anniversary of NA; San Diego Convention Center, San Diego; write: NA World Services, 19737 Nordhoff Pl, Chatsworth, CA 91311

Connecticut: 4-6 Jan; 17th Connecticut Regional Convention; Spiritual Journey; Westin Hotel, Stamford; hotel rsvns: 800.937.8461; event info: 860.267.8698, 860.346.3197; write: Connecticut Region, Box 1817, Meriden, CT 06450; www.ctna.org

Florida: 15-17 Feb; Orlando Area; Celebration of Unity XX; Ramada Resort and Conference Center, Orlando; hotel rsvns: 800.327.1363; www.orlandona.org

2) 19-21 Apr; Treasure Coast Convention; Radisson Beach Front Resort, Fort Pierce; hotel rsvns: 561.465.5544; event info: 561.260.4156, 561.692.2762, 561.781.7869; speaker tape submission deadline: 1 January; write: Recovery Weekend Treasure Coast ASC, Box 1672, Stuart, FL 34995

Georgia: 18-20 Jan; Spirituality Is the Key IV; Living the Dream; Holiday Inn, Athens; hotel rsvns: 800.HOLIDAY

2) 7-10 Feb; Georgia Regional Convention 21; Crowne Plaza Hotel, Macon; hotel rsvns: 912.746.1461; event info: 770.884.5587, 770.471.5847; event registration: 770.560.3642; write: GRCNA 21, Box 246, Molena, GA 30258; www.grcna.org

3) 4-7 Jul; WCNA-29; 29th World Convention of NA; Georgia World Congress Center, Atlanta; event info: 818.773.9999 ext. 200; write: NA World Services, 19737 Nordhoff Place, Chatsworth, CA 91311

Idaho: 19-21 Apr; Southern Idaho Regional Convention XIII; West Coast Hotel, Pocatello; hotel rsvns: 208.233.2200; event info: 800.527.5202; www.sirna.org

Illinois: 3-6 Jan; Chicago Regional Convention XIV; The Journey Continues; Hyatt Regency Chicago, Chicago; event info: 773.285.2280, 708.848.2211; event registration: 773.374.3536

2) 5-7 Apr; Rock River Convention XI; Blueprint for Success; Holiday Inn of Greater Beloit, South Beloit; hotel rsvns: 815.389.3481; event info: 815.637.2824; write: Rock River Area, Box 8544, Rockford, IL 61126

Indiana: 8-10 Mar; Indiana State Convention IX; On the Shore of a New Horizon; Radisson Hotel at Star Plaza, Merrillville; hotel rsvns: 219.769.6311; event info: 219.963.1460; event registration: 219.662.7571; email: indianapolisna.simplenet.com

Kentucky: 29-31 Mar; Kentuckiana Regional Convention XVI; Discovering New Horizons; Executive Inn, Paducah; hotel rsvns: 800.866.3636; event info: 270.362.8486, 270.534.4642; write: Kentuckiana Region, Box 230, Mayfield, KY 42066

Louisiana: 24-26 May; Louisiana Regional Convention; Hilton Lafayette and Towers, Lafayette; hotel rsvns: 337.235.6111; event info: 337.367.1781; write: LRCNA XX, Box 91112, Lafayette, LA 70509-1112; email: LRCNA20@hotmail.com

Maine: 22-24 Feb; Winter Unity Fest V; Notre Dame Spiritual Center, Alfred; event info: 207.761.1746; write: Southern Maine Area, Box 5309, Portland, ME 04101

Maryland: 12-14 Apr; Chesapeake & Potomac Regional Convention XVI; An Awakening of the Spirit; More Will Be Revealed, Ocean City; event info: 301.839.4425; write: CPRCNA XVI, Box 1848, Rockville, MD 20849; www.cprcna.org

Massachusetts: 15-17 Mar; South Shore Area Convention; In the Light of Recovery; Sheraton Inn Plymouth, Plymouth; hotel rsvns: 508.747.4900; event info: 508.587.1606; event registration: 781.963.3043

Michigan: 28-30 Mar; Detroit Area; DACNA X; Living the Dream; Detroit Marriott Hotel, Detroit; hotel rsvns: 800.228; event info: 313.865.5203; event registration: 734.955.1306; write: DACNA, Box 32603, Detroit, MI 48232

Minnesota: 12-14 Apr; MNNAC IX; Minnesota Regional Convention; Radisson Riverfront, St. Paul; hotel rsvns: 800.333.3333; event registration: 612.824.5955; event info: 651.776.6369; write: Minnesota Region, Area of Hope, c/o UMSO, 310 E 38th St, Minneapolis, MN 55409

Nebraska: 22-24 Feb; Close Encounters of the Clean Kind; Best Western Redick Hotel, Omaha; hotel rsvns: 888.342.1533; event info: 402.880.3161; event registration: 402.551.5199; write: Eastern Nebraska NA, Box 2927, Omaha, NE 68105; www.close-encounters-na.com

Nevada: 28-31 Mar; Southern Nevada Convention 16; Riviera Hotel and Casino, Las Vegas; hotel rsvns: 800.634.6753; event info: 702.768.4495, 702.227.6322; write: SNNA, Box 46376, Las Vegas, NV 89114-6376

New Jersey: 8-10 Mar; New Jersey Regional Convention XVII; Sheraton Newark Airport Hotel, Newark; hotel rsvns: 800.325.3535; event info: 732.895.1248, 732.236.9239, 856.401.0360; write: RCC of NJ, Box 134, Fords, NJ 08863; www.njrcna.org

New York: 8-10 Feb; Hope on the Slopes 2; Nevele Grande Resort & Country Club, Ellenville; hotel rsvns: 800.647.6000; write: Greater New York Region, 154 Christopher Street #1A, New York, NY 10014

2) 22-24 Feb; Rochester Area Convention VIII; Recovery Is Possible; Hyatt Regency Hotel, Rochester; hotel rsvns: 800.233.1234; event registration: 716.529.3893; write: Rochester Area, Box 30485, Rochester, NY 14603; email: goodwine@rochester.rr.com

3) 8-10 Mar; Bronx Area Convention; Hudson Valley Resort and Spa, Kerhonkson; hotel rsvns: 888.948.3766; event info: 718.792.3410, 718.863.3506, 718.329.5595; write: Bronx Area, 976 McLean Ave, Box 168, Yonkers, NY 10704; www.compusolv.net/bxacna

North Carolina: 4-6 Jan; Western North Carolina Area; Spirituality High in the Sky; Ramada Plaza Hotel, Asheville; hotel rsvns: 800.678.2161; event info: 828.298.5733, 828.258.9697, 828.777.7887; write: WNCANACC, Box 16238, Asheville, NC 28816

2) 1-3 Mar; Freedom by the Sea Convention; Hilton Wilmington Riverside, Wilmington; hotel rsvns: 910.763.5900; event info: 910.675.1646, 910.0792.1709, 910.762.0658; write: Freedom By The Sea Convention, Box 561, Wilmington NC 28402

3) 15-17 Mar; North Carolina Capital Area Family Reunion of NA XIV; North Raleigh Hilton, Raleigh; hotel rsvns: 800.HILTON; event registration: 919.834.2655, 919.833.2500, 919.832.5204; write: Capital Area, 607 Quarry St, Raleigh, NC 27601

4) 19-21 Apr; Bound for Freedom XVII; Adams Mark Hotel, Charlotte; hotel rsvns: 800.444.2326; event info: 704.563.1939, 704.827.0619, 704.597.9413; write: Greater Charlotte Area, Box 33306, Charlotte, NC 28202

Ohio: 4-6 Jan; Central Ohio Area Convention XIII; Columbus Marriott North Hotel, Columbus; hotel rsvns: 800.228.3429; event registration: 614.478.9193; event info: 614.235.5926

Oklahoma: 18-20 Jan; 12th Annual Norman Winter Convention; Reach for the Stars...Live the Program; Super 8 Motel, Norman; hotel rsvns: 800.800.8000; event info: 405.329.6862, 405.447.7814; write: Norman and OKC Metro Groups, Box 1455, Norman, OK 73070-1455

Oregon: 10-12 May; Pacific Cascade Regional Convention IX; Inn of the Seventh Mountain, Bend; hotel rsvns: 541.382.8711; www.centraloregonna.com

Pennsylvania: 8-10 Feb; Mid-Atlantic Regional Learning Conference XVIII; Lancaster Host, Lancaster; hotel rsvns: 717.299.5500; event registration: 610.473.7764; event info: 610.796.4018; write: MARLCNA XVIII, Box 714, Boyertown, PA 19512

2) 29-31 Mar; Greater Philadelphia Regional Convention; Valley Forge Radisson Hotel, Philadelphia; hotel rsvns: 888.267.1500; event info: 215.227.5936, 215.745.1312; speaker tape submission deadline: 2 February 2002

South Carolina: 11-13 Jan; USCANA 22; The Storm Is Over; Hyatt Regency Greenville, Greenville; hotel rsvns: 864.235.1234; event registration: 864.962.5043; event info: 864.876.4488

Tennessee: 23-24 Feb; Upper Cumberland Area 10th Anniversary Convention; The Expo Center, Cookeville; hotel rsvns: 931.528.2435; event info: 931.823.7979; speaker tape submission deadline: 15 January

Texas: 1-3 Feb; Tejas Bluebonnet Region; Share the Dream, Live the Miracle; Omni Austin Hotel Southpark, Austin; hotel rsvns: 512.448.2222; event info: 512.733.5274, 512.851.0337; write: TBRCCNA3, Box 142813, Austin, TX 78714-2813

2) 22-24 Feb; 74th Texas Unity Convention; Redwood Lodge, Lake Whitney; hotel rsvns: 254.694.3412; event info: 972.254.4115

3) 15-17 Mar; Rio Grande Region Convention XIII; Steps to the Miracle: The Pass to Freedom; Hilton Camino Real, El Paso; hotel rsvns: 800.769.4300; event registration: 915.822.2429; event info: 915.479.2431; write: RGRCA XIII, Box 23225, El Paso, TX 79923; www.riograndena.org

4) 28-31 Mar; Lone Star Regional Convention XVII; The Road to Miracles; Hyatt Regency at Dallas Reunion, Dallas; hotel rsvns: 800.233.1234; event registration: 800.747.8972; event info: 800.747.8972; write: Lone Star Region, 1510 Randolph, Ste 205, Carrollton, TX 75006; www.lsrna.com

Virginia: 11-13 Jan; Region of the Virginians; Convention XX; The Path to Freedom; Stratford Inn & Convention Center, Danville; hotel rsvns: 804.793.2500; event info: 804.799.1307; write: RVCNA, Box 537, Altavista, VA 24517

Washington: 16-17 Feb; Seattle Area Unity Day 2002; Seattle Center, Northwest Rooms, Seattle; write: Seattle Area, Box 70404, Seattle, WA 98107

2) 8-10 Mar; Clean and Free by the Sea XIX; Coming in from the Storm; Ocean Shores Convention Center, Ocean Shores; event info: 206.382.0534; write: Wash/N Idaho RSC, Box 31227, Seattle, WA 98103

Wisconsin: 25-27 Jan; Greater Milwaukee Unity Convention VII; Hyatt Regency Milwaukee Hotel, Milwaukee; hotel rsvns: 800.233.1234; event info: 414.289.9997; write: Milwaukee Area & Inner City Area of Milwaukee, Box 511001, Milwaukee, WI 53203

WSO PRODUCT UPDATE

Conference Agenda Report 2002

Item No. 9140 Price US \$7.00

Farsi IP 19

Self-Acceptance

خوشتن پذیری

Item No. FA-3119 Price US \$0.21

DISCONTINUED INVENTORY ITEMS

The World Board has decided to discontinue carrying various items in our inventory due to their being based on obsolete technology and/or low demand for these items from our fellowship.

All speaker tapes: Item Nos. 8100 thru 8175

¼" Radio PSAs: Item Nos. 8450 thru 8455

:60 Radio PSAs: Item Nos. 8455 thru 8465

2" TV PSAs: Item Nos. 8502, 8505, 8508, 8511, 8514, 8517, 8520, and 8523

TV PSAs 1-4 on VHS: Item Nos. 9112 and 9114

Statement of Ownership, Management, and Circulation

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Requested subscription—in-county	0	0
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Free distribution	125	150
Total distribution	30,047	31,057
Undistributed copies (office uses)	578	943
Total	30,625	32,000
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Home GROUP

AFTER 2 HOURS, THE AREA SERVICE COMMITTEE STILL CANNOT COME TO A CONSENSUS...

