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OF
NARCOTICS ANONYMOUS

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From the editor

What fun it was to create the "word cloud" on the cover of this issue! We used a free program online and created it from articles in this issue. The program sizes each word based on the number of times it is repeated. Of course, "NA" is one of the largest words, but it was interesting and surprising to see how large some words are—and how small others appear. (This made me wonder what words might dominate our own personal word clouds: serenity, joy, love, balance, perseverance, acceptance?) Each word is randomly placed and the cloud seems ready to transition from one form to another at any moment. Our fellowship and recovery are like this, too, constantly changing and growing. But even as NA changes and grows, we always share common ground, a place of simplicity and familiarity we all understand that transcends all limits.

De Jenkins, Editor

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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, Farsi, 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."

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sexual identity, creed,
religion or lack of religion.
Anyone
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◆◆◆◆ **FEATURE**

Recovery without borders

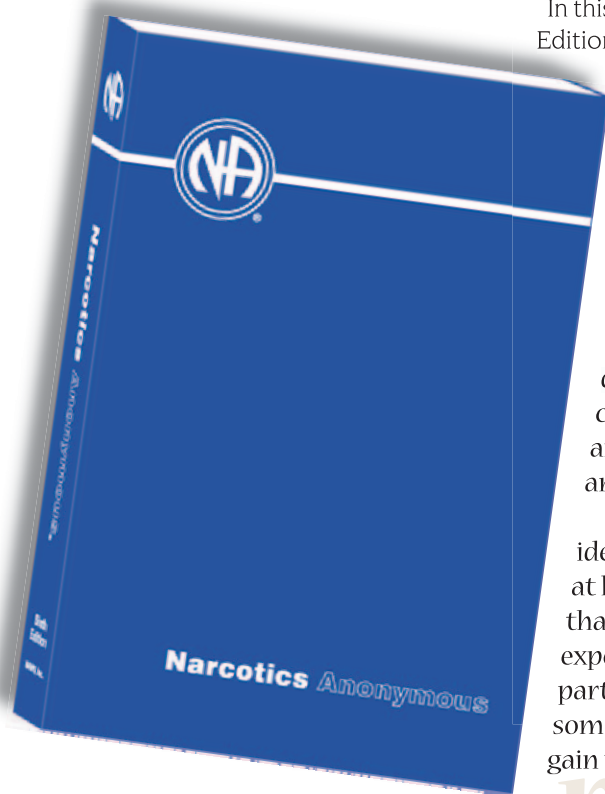
NA reaches us no matter where we are and who we are, and this is especially evident in the personal stories of our new Sixth Edition Basic Text. "Our Members Share," is now the name of this part of our book, where the stories are grouped in four sections. In "Beginnings," stories from some of our early members are included as they were originally published in previous editions of The Basic Text. This is followed by "Coming Home," accounts from members finding our fellowship or starting NA where they live. The "Regardless of ..." section consists of stories about finding acceptance in NA and creating a safe and a welcoming place for all recovering addicts. And, with a focus on "Life on Life's Terms," the final section of the book includes stories from members practicing NA principles in day-to-day life.

In this and future issues of *The NA Way Magazine*, we'll include excerpts from the Sixth Edition Basic Text—and from other NA literature as well. Celebrating the diversity of our NA Fellowship, this issue features excerpts from the introduction to "Our Members Share" and two stories from the "Regardless of ..." section:

Our First Tradition teaches us to look past our differences for our common welfare. The concept of unity described in this tradition is not the same thing as uniformity. Over time we find that those differences are precisely the things that enrich us. In the particulars of our stories the truth of our message comes through and we see how alike we really are. This can seem like a contradiction in NA: Our development as individuals and as a fellowship is about fostering our common bonds and common identity; at the same time, we cultivate and cherish the things that make each of us who we are. To stay strong and grow, we need both of these points of view.

You may not relate to everything you read here—just as you might not identify with everyone who shares in an NA meeting—but we hope that at least some of these voices will touch and inspire you. In NA we learn that as addicts we are not unique, but as people we are individuals, and our experience matters. Collectively we are so much more than the sum of our parts. Each of us, regardless of our clean time or where we came from, has something to contribute by sharing openly and honestly, and something to gain when we listen with an open heart...

Narcotics Anonymous,
"Introduction to Our Members Share"



The youngest person in the room, this addict still felt a connection right away and over time came to realize that recovery from addiction is a bond that transcends age.

Regardless of Age

It's an odd thing when older members tell me that I'm so lucky to get clean so young. Yes, I am very lucky, and so is every other member of Narcotics Anonymous. I prefer to think of myself as a part of a fellowship full of fortunate souls, rather than some kind of exceptionally lucky individual. I can get off track when I start thinking of myself as different from other NA members. The bottom line is that anyone may join us and feel just as much a part of the program as anyone else.

I'll always remember the time I was in a meeting with only one other member. There was a terrible blizzard out, but I happened to live very close to the meeting so I walked there anyway. The only other person there was fifty years older than me. I hadn't even entered the workforce yet, and he was already retired. I had heard him share before about feeling different because everyone else was so much younger than him. That night, we shared about our lives and our experiences. The details were different but the feelings and the spirit were the same. The point couldn't have been made clearer to me. We are a fellowship with a diverse range of experiences and one common identity: recovering addicts.

Narcotics Anonymous, "Regardless of..."

When NA first started in Japan, even members didn't believe a normal life could be possible for addicts, and especially women in recovery. As the fellowship matured, this member and others like her came to realize there is no model of the recovering addict.

What Makes Me Happy Now

As the fellowship in Japan grew, we translated more NA literature. Once we were able to read the message in our language, the program became much clearer. I was shocked to read that drugs were not the major problem for us, but that the problem is our obsessive thinking and compulsive behavior. When I read that I thought, *This is it! This is the life I have been living.*

The women in the fellowship were profoundly affected by the NA message. When anyone stops using, it means dealing with emotional pain on a daily basis, and women addicts in Japan often have abusive relationships in which physical abuse, on top of emotional and psychological pain, are part of life. Many women shared how drugs were a good thing for them, until their using became unmanageable. I didn't understand this until the new translation, *recover* means "to go back to the way you used to be." Survivors of abuse don't want to go back to the way they used to be. In recovery, they want to move on and grow. People who had nothing to start with were afraid that they really had nothing to recover. As we started to read the new translations, it clarified that women in Japan were sharing the same experience as members around the world.

Narcotics Anonymous, "Regardless of..."



Acceptance... and a few other principles

One of the more interesting things about recovery for me of late is the ability I have to see the process beginning to take effect in my own life. It's no surprise to me that when I first arrived in the rooms I felt very little acceptance of myself. The truth be told, I was practicing behaviors that were unacceptable and destructive to both myself and others. It is true, I did a great many of these things to support my addiction; nonetheless, these behaviors defined me in my own eyes, in the eyes of my family and friends, and in the eyes of the community. It was only through the steady application of the steps and of those suggestions that we all hear in the rooms that I was able to begin to change the way I looked at myself. It's hard to believe that the simple actions of getting a sponsor, picking a home group, and regularly attending that group could have such a profound way of changing the way I see myself and others. In following these simple actions, I began to practice the principles of recovery without even realizing it.

In selecting a sponsor, I began exercising the principle of willingness. I had to admit that things had gone terribly wrong and I had to be willing to follow the direction of someone other than myself. I had to become open and willing to change. In choosing a home group, I was working the principle of commitment and also agreeing to participate in the life of that group by attending business meetings, doing service, etc.

I have to be truthful. In the beginning, I didn't recognize any of these other benefits; they were just the actions I took to stay clean. As time passed, I began to realize that these new behaviors were having a direct effect on my inner dialogue and the way I saw myself. That inner landscape that for so long had been full of negativity and bitterness began to change to one of more readily accepting myself and others. What were once the actions I took just to stay clean were also becoming the language I used to redefine myself. When I struggle today with the situations of my life, that inner voice is not so quick to offer criticism; in fact, it's more likely to offer me words of comfort and hope. This new inner language for me includes words like honesty, open-mindedness, willingness, compassion, empathy, perseverance, commitment, consistency, dignity, hope, and freedom. This language is neither new nor mine, but it is to be found at the heart of the Twelve Steps of Narcotics Anonymous, in the principles and ethical behaviors embodied in these steps.

This is not to say that I still don't suffer setbacks or failures; I most certainly do, and I can still lose my equilibrium and act out in inappropriate ways with anger, sarcasm, and even self-pity. The difference is that today I know the quicker I get back to defining my life by the principles of Narcotics Anonymous, the quicker my balance will return. I realize today that I am indeed a very fortunate man who—with a great deal of support and encouragement offered to me from the people of Narcotics Anonymous—has found a new way to live.

Kevin V, Ontario, Canada

Recovery-based service

Of course, we all serve for different reasons. In the beginning I got into service because someone else volunteered me. Someone thought it would be good for me to be a meeting greeter, and I learned to hug strangers. At six months clean I was the secretary of very small meeting. Again, someone believed in me. I felt like maybe I had a chance at this. I still really had no idea what service really meant for me or the fellowship. At two years clean, I was cleared to go into the county jail (my sponsor signed me up), and that commitment is where I found out that service could keep me clean. I had a commitment there for fifteen years, and there were nights when I was

Sometimes it's all in the way we hear something. Like that old saying, "you collect more bees with honey."

dying with the pain of living life on life's terms in my heart, mind, my whole being. That jail commitment taught me about gratitude, and the gratitude brought my focus back to the other spiritual principles that kept me coming back: empathy, compassion, truth with others, listening, and joy.

I also learned, by others' example, how I didn't want to behave in service. I watched them manipulate, drive themselves crazy with control (mostly lack of it); watched committees pretty much run by one person, not because there weren't others to help, but because they couldn't let go of the reins. I witnessed others' defects cause them much pain as they struggled in their personal recovery through service. I learned about recovery-based service, not service-based recovery.

I've learned in NA that we build people up; let them know they're needed, that they have something to offer. We praise their assets and encourage them to see the good in themselves and their usefulness to the fellowship. We welcome their

opinions and ideas, remembering that the unity of our fellowship sustains itself by being inclusive, rather than exclusive. One way to maintain this attitude at all levels of service is continue to be part of our fellowship at the meeting level. All the knowledge I gained about service, I learned from addicts in my home group. I let people know how I'm actually doing in life when I share my self, not just data about service. How can I possibly be an example and mentor – not just someone who gives back information from other sources – if I'm not present and participating in my recovery meetings and staying current with my friends in recovery?

The people I most admire in service have certain qualities that appeal to me. Other qualities may appeal to you, but I admire vulnerability, honest sharing about the difficult stuff, people who

actually say they don't know or have the answer, but will find out. People who have humor and don't take themselves too seriously; who accept others' mistakes with no judgment. People who will talk to me directly and not behind others' backs. People who have good listening skills and are willing to think "out of the box." Addicts with qualities of humility, compassion, humor, love, curiosity, spontaneity, joy of life, and maybe most importantly, the ability to say the difficult stuff lovingly. Sometimes it's all in the way we hear something. Like that old saying, "you collect more bees with honey." I love NA and being in loving service to NA. Doesn't mean that it isn't work or it isn't challenging, but the joy and gratitude of living clean guided by these spiritual principles gives me a purpose and a means to grow along spiritual lines that I would not have imagined for myself in my wildest dreams.

Anonymous, Hawaii, USA

The jarring experience

By the grace of God I came to know about Narcotics Anonymous when I was in a rehab clinic. Through the NA members who used to come there for meetings once a week, I was introduced to former drug addicts who welcomed me with open arms. This was in 1995. I was in rehab for a month, after which I continued my associations with NA for almost three months. I attended regular meetings and made up my mind never to relapse.

Unfortunately, I relapsed after three months, and did so on and off until 14 March 1996. Once again I went back to NA and started attending meetings, not only in Bahrain but all over the Gulf. The Twelve Steps were my only answer to the addiction I was in. Through the steps, living just for today, and by the grace of God, I was clean and living a fuller and happier life than ever before.

But once again, I relapsed in 2003, and this was the cause of my downfall. I lost everything that I built and made new drug cases, which has put me behind bars at the moment. My sentence will end in 2009, and I am waiting to be sentenced in yet another case. Now that I am in prison, I am fully involved in the NA way. I participate in NA here and we would like to have *The NA Way Magazine* sent to us here in the prison. Truly yours,

Salahiddin A, Bahrain

This is not the only thing

I am a recovering addict of Bangladesh. I got clean when I found the group of NA in my country. I don't count my recovering age. I count that I am clean only in this moment, only in this minute, only in this hour, and only in this day. Surrendering, I accept many things. I make this journey one day at a time.

When I feel distressed, I think, "This is not the only thing; joy is coming." And when I feel joy, I tell myself it is just one feeling, and distress will also come. I am not very much excited when I feel joy or distress. Of course, I have these and other emotions. I am not a robot, but I am not excited when I feel them.

My recovery life is blissful for me. Drugs knocked me down and showed me a gaudy side of life. This painful experience taught me what is different between good and bad, peace and unhappiness, honesty and dishonesty, beauty and ugliness, light and darkness. Now I know who my enemy is. My enemy is me.

Today I do not invite trouble. Today I admit I am powerless over drugs and my life is unmanageable. Now I believe there is a power greater than myself who can restore me to sanity. Now I am getting out of my life's driver's seat. I learned these things by following the NA program; that's why NA is my religion. For me, religion means to have hope, and hope makes action possible. The NA program gives me the hope I need to live sanely in the world.

Antu B, Dhaka, Bangladesh

Recovery – a treasure and a gift

I came to the Fellowship of Narcotics Anonymous in October 1999. After being clean for three months, I relapsed for a year and a half. On 14 July 2001 I was admitted to hospital with final-stage cirrhosis of the liver. I took my First Step of total surrender and acceptance of the program on 15 July 2001. I treasure each day of my recovery like a precious diamond, because I know to stay clean for even one day is really difficult. So, I wish to inform all NA members in India and around the world about the precious gift of recovery, and to say that this precious gift can be nurtured every day and treasured like a diamond.

Craig P, Mumbai, India

My first message to *The NA Way*

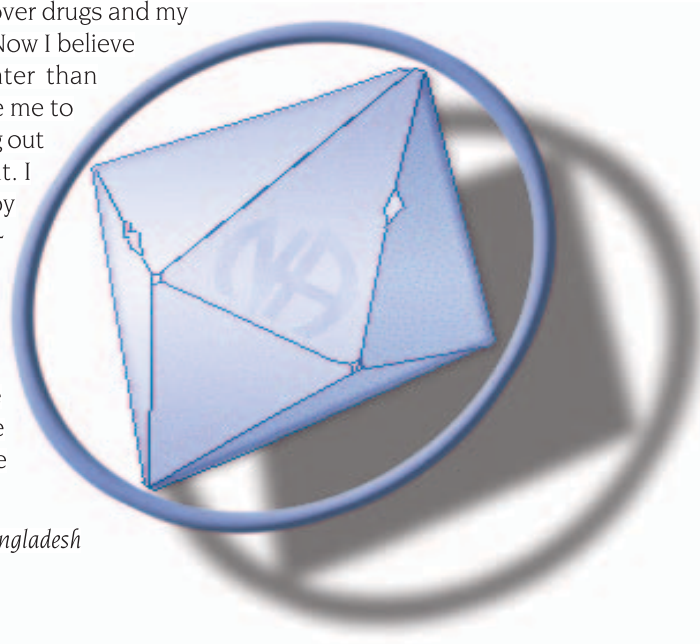
I am sending this message to *The NA Way* readers and NA fellows around the world following about thirty-eight years of addiction and suffering from different nasty problems in my own country and abroad. I lived in the UK for about six years and over there, too, I continued with my addiction, making for a terrible life in London.

Over all those years I dealt with different causes and effects, visiting many prisons during my addiction. Over one year ago, I heard about NA through friends and relatives. I went to a recovery center and noticed a meeting there. I felt there must be something going on there in that NA meeting. They seemed to be talking like they actually knew what they were on about, and I was right about that.

After a short while I was out of the treatment program and I went to my first NA meeting "on the outside." At first I was somehow frightened of the person welcoming me. I thought he was a policeman or something, but he was nothing like it. I noticed people being nice to each other and behaving warmly and politely.

This is the first time I am sending a message to *The NA Way*, and I will share more in the future. Many thanks for reading this message from Iran.

Khosro S, Tehran, Iran



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.).

Brief an die Redaktion

(Letter to the editor)

Dear Editor,

My name is Gabriela and I am an addict! I am writing to say how superb I feel *The NA Way* is. I have been able to read *The NA Way* during my entire cleantime (more than eight years) from the very beginning, and I have again and again read wonderful stories that moved me, like the one about a mute person who found an interpreter in a meeting. I have also been moved by articles about the handling of medication, because in my meeting many friends are taking psychotropics and it has happened that they were even "advertising" them, a thing that causes me a stomach ache since I am clean of medication even though I have a chronic disease. This afternoon I could not make it to the meeting, so I read *The NA Way* and got my dose of recovery. These articles are helping me to be clear, and consequently, I am able to better carry our message. Thank you!

I have some idea of how much effort it takes to produce this magazine, and it always comes free of cost across the ocean—absolutely cool! Maybe I will soon have Internet access, and then I could have an e-subscription. That would be great. I believe I should advertise it even more in the meetings.

Gabriela S, Reutlingen, Germany

The Tubingen Group

For some time now, we have had a German/English meeting in Tubingen, with translations. My English has enormously improved by it and we are able to reach friends who would otherwise be without a meeting. We have loved/hated our meeting room for years! It is icy cold during winter and stuffy and hot in summer, but full of love and recovery during our meetings every Sunday. The Tübingen Group has been in existence twelve years. The core group is always very small with approximately four to six people. Unfortunately, not many newcomers are staying, but as usual, HP is helping us to overcome.

Gabriela S, Reutlingen, Germany



Recovery may be a *journey*, but there is *one* hot vacation destination for recovering addicts in 2009...

BARCELONA

You Are Invited...

Please join us for the 33rd World Convention of Narcotics Anonymous, Amor sin fronteras, in the breath-taking city of Barcelona, Spain. Barcelona is one of the most beautiful cities in the world, and we cannot think of a better home for WCNA 33. We know that NA members from every corner of the world are excited about this NA World Convention, making it, quite possibly one of the most diverse conventions ever.

In order to give you plenty of time to plan your trip to Barcelona, we are starting sales earlier than ever before.

Why Pre-Register?

- * Limited onsite registration *new!*
- * Helps NAWS plan a better WCNA
- * Get event tickets before they sell out
 - * Better seats at ticketed events
- * One-of-a-kind pre-reg merchandise

Registration for a World Convention Includes...

- * Early access to merchandise
- * Daily events like dances & non-ticketed music events
- * Assured access to main meetings (based on convention attendance)*

*If we reach capacity at CCIB, access to main meetings will be restricted to those with registration badges.

You can register for the convention, book a hotel, and make airline reservations now at www.na.org/wcna.

Journey to a place without borders...

Experience the **Love** that is Barcelona,

the **Diversity** that is NA,

the **Feeling** of it **coming together** in

one place, one time,

like never before...



WCNA 33

Amor sin fronteras

LOVE WITHOUT BORDERS

BARCELONA, SPAIN | 20-23 AUGUST 2009

Register now to guarantee that you'll be in Barcelona in August 2009...

www.na.org/wcna



WCNA 33 Amor sin fronteras

LOVE WITHOUT BORDERS

BARCELONA, SPAIN | 20-23 AUGUST 2009

Imagine ... strolling along a cobblestone street, wandering through boutiques and elaborate architecture. You sip an espresso, snack on tapas, and shop a little; journey with friends through a museum while others people-watch at the sidewalk cafe. You check your watch and realize passing hours seemed like minutes, and it's time to catch the Metro just a few steps away. Grab one more coffee and you're on the underground train before you know it. The train is filled with others wearing convention badges and you make a few new friends on your way. A few minutes later, you're walking through the Diagonal Mar, gazing at the sea, wandering into the convention center for the main meeting... The meeting went by too quickly: tears, laughter, unity. Across the street you enjoy paella the way it was meant to be made and go with friends to dance, sing, and savor the sweet sounds of the Mediterranean, of Europe, of the world, of recovery. To laugh together, to love together; recovery has no bounds. In the early morning hours you hug new and old friends good-night, return to your hotel, settle into your room and think, "I never knew it could be this good."

Love without Borders – Amor sin fronteras.



More than a thousand people are pre-registered for WCNA 33. Hundreds of rooms are reserved, and the post-WCNA cruise is breaking sales records. Don't miss out on this experience. There are hotel rooms for every taste and budget.

We published the WCNA 33 brochure in October *NA Way Magazine*, but we're not distributing traditional flyers in a separate mailing. Instead, we're spending that money on new and exciting ways to get the message out about WCNA 33, but if you need more information in your hands, email us at events@na.org. Most people who pre-register or inquire about the world convention seem to go online (over 95 percent, in fact), but we've translated and published the brochure for members in Spain, and we can do that for others if there is need. Like many other aspects of WCNA 33, we are doing things a little differently, and we'll be interested to see how it goes and what you think. We'd love your feedback, but so far the eblasts and info in *The NA Way* seem to be working.

For those interested, we will offer alternative merchandise at WCNA 33. As in the past, we plan to provide limited space for areas and regions to sell merchandise. This will likely be Saturday afternoon, 22 August 2009. For more information, email johnny@na.org.

Why pre-register for WCNA 33?

WCNA registration prices are set to cover direct expenses, not specifically to generate income for NA World Services. While the cost of registration may seem high, putting on such a major event is very expensive and the costs can't be compared to those of a typical area or regional convention. Compared to other conventions in Barcelona, the WCNA registration cost is considered "symbolic" by professionals in the city who are helping NAWS with WCNA 33. Our convention could cost more than €1.5 million to produce! Registration fees alone don't cover even the basic costs of a world convention such as facility rentals, translation services, non-ticketed events, audio/video equipment, labor, and countless other expenses. Merchandise and ticket sales help offset some of costs, but if we relied on registration alone, the convention would always lose money because the costs are simply too high compared to what our members are used to paying.

Where is your money going?

It's still too early to tell (because we're right in the middle of planning WCNA 33), but the general breakdown of where your registration money goes is:

- 45% = Facility Expenses
- 16% = Registration Events
(like dances and coffee houses)
- 12% = Planning and Implementation
- 15% = Program
- 12% = Audio and Video for Meetings and Registration Events

And the most important question... What's in it for me?

Based on NA's principles of individual responsibility and self-support, we strongly encourage all attending WCNA to pre-register. Beyond the satisfaction of knowing you're doing your part to support WCNA, there are many things your registration badge gives you. While the details of WCNA 33 are still in the works, your convention registration badge usually gives you admission to the WCNA Festival, and the coffee houses and dances. Even if you can't afford event tickets, you'll have something entertaining to do every night if you are registered. Beyond supporting WCNA and being entertained, at WCNA 32 pre-registrants were allowed early access to the merchandise room and we will do something similar for WCNA 33. We may be required to limit access to main meetings to those with registration badges because of the space limitations. Your registration badge guarantees you a seat in the main meetings. Imagine...for the cost of registration you get to do your part (and feel good about it), look good in the merchandise you buy before everyone else, be entertained, and have the once-in-a-lifetime, recovery-jolting experience that is WCNA 33!



Don't procrastinate!
If you're planning on going to WCNA 33 pre-register now at www.na.org/wcna.



Want to be a conventions speaker or help evaluate convention speakers?

The cleantime requirements are five years for workshop speakers and speaker evaluators, and ten years for main speakers. Send your CD or electronic audio file along with the contact information listed above by email or post to:

wcna@na.org
NA World Services
WCNA 33 Speakers
Box 9999
Van Nuys, CA 91409 USA

We've posted information on the website at the World Convention page (<http://www.na.org/WCNA/>) and we will also email updates directly to you as soon as they're available if you subscribe online to the convention newsletter, WCNA Updates, at <http://portaltools.na.org/PortalTools/subscriptions/Login.cfm>.

Project updates

In Times of Illness

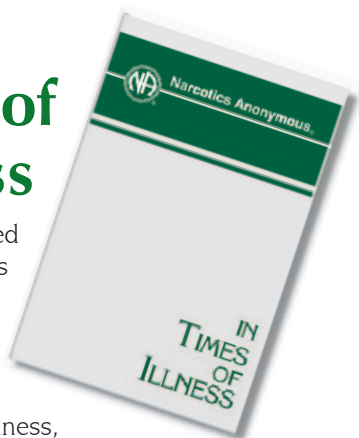
One of the project plans adopted at the 2008 WSC called for revisions to the booklet *In Times of Illness*. This one-cycle project includes an overall assessment and revision of the booklet, and the addition of material to address long-term illness, current issues with medication, and mental health issues in recovery.

The workgroup reviewed input from NAWS medication workshops and then focused on revisions and updates to the piece. These changes will be reflected in several new sections within the booklet. The World Board anticipates releasing the draft in early March 2009 for a ninety-day fellowship review-and-input period.

Service System

This project is scheduled to span two conference cycles and will focus on creation of a vision statement for all NA service efforts, and on framing discussions and options regarding local service delivery. It will be essential to engage the fellowship in a meaningful discussion that might lead to a reframing of our service efforts and, ultimately, the creation of tools that will help deliver services more effectively—either a revision or rewriting of *A Guide to Local Services* and/or the production of other tools.

Our strategic plan explains that this project will “be rooted in an analysis of the success factors that work across our service structure, as well as allow for flexibility in meeting unique local needs.” You can help in that effort right away by sending us your best practices in your local NA community. What are you doing on a local level that is helping improve service delivery, build communication and cooperation, and more successfully carry the message to the addict who still suffers? Please write to the World Board (worldboard@na.org) and let us know.



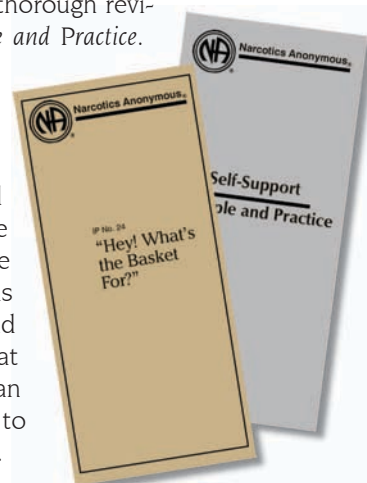
“Living Clean The Journey Continues”

The October issue of *The NA Way Magazine* included an overview of this project to develop a book of collected experience about our members’ growth in recovery. To begin gathering input, the workgroup developed a series of questions for members to respond to. These questions are available in the last issue of *The NA Way* and on our website at <http://www.naws.org/survey/index.php?sid=69453&lang=en>. To create this book, we need you and your experiences in recovery, so please share this information with others and take some time, yourself, to share the challenges and miracles of your recovery.

Self-Support

This project is anticipated to be completed during this conference cycle. Its charge includes replacing and/or revising the two informational pamphlets, *Self-Support: Principle and Practice* and “Hey! What’s the Basket For?”. One of the two pieces the workgroup is putting together is a shorter, more graphically oriented piece aimed at the group, explaining the “hows” and “whys” of group contributions. The other piece is a more philosophical piece aimed to members, a thorough revision to *Self-Support: Principle and Practice*.

These pieces will go out for a ninety-day review sometime around March, and they will be included in the *Conference Agenda Report*. The World Board is hopeful that the shorter, more graphical piece will ultimately be designated as Conference-approved instead of Fellowship-approved, so that local language communities can make any necessary revisions to the piece as they translate it.

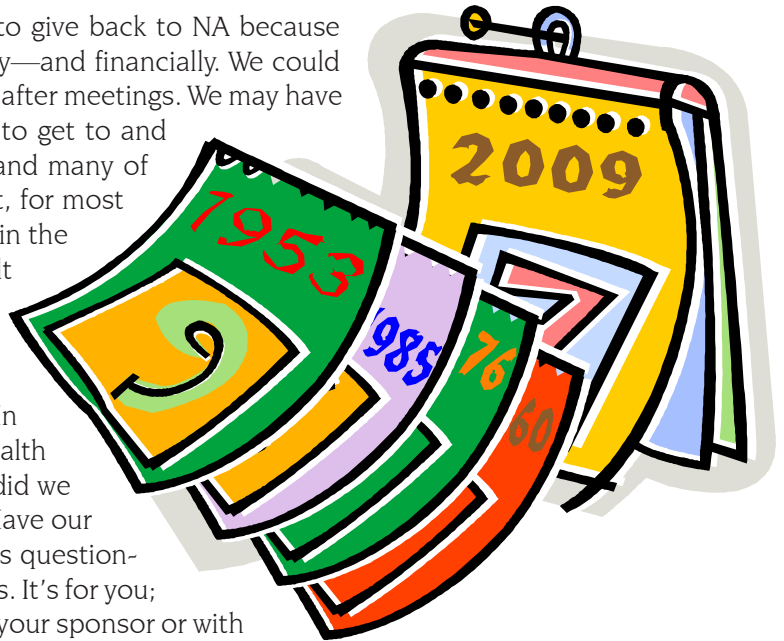


Our freedom, our responsibility

When we first got clean, most of us had little to give back to NA because we were broken mentally, spiritually, physically—and financially. We could barely pay our rent, let alone go out for coffee after meetings. We may have relied on public transport or a not-so-reliable vehicle to get to and from meetings. Over time, we've grown and changed and many of us have achieved a more stable financial existence. Yet, for most of us, one thing remains the same: the amount we put in the basket at our meetings. When our lives improve as a result of our recovery, we often find that we could afford to give more, but often we don't.

In Steps Four, Five, and Ten, we assess where we've been, where we are, and what we want to do differently. In the same way, perhaps an assessment of our financial health and practices will offer a new perspective. How much did we spend eating out when we first got clean versus now? Have our entertainment and transportation costs increased? This questionnaire isn't something we're asking you to send back to us. It's for you; maybe a singular exercise or something to discuss with your sponsor or with those you're close to in recovery. Regardless of the way it's used or the results it garners, our hope is that it stimulates thought and action.

In a few decades NA has grown from a small number of meetings to a worldwide fellowship of more than 53,000 weekly meetings in over 130 countries. NA's services have stimulated that growth—literature, translations, PR and H&I, phonelines.... But our fellowship's needs exceed resources at all levels of the service structure. Just like the price of a loaf of bread or a gallon of fuel, the costs of our basic services have steadily risen over the years. When we contribute financially, we are not just paying our own way, we are also paying to help carry the message to the addict who has yet to hear about NA. The money we put in the basket (or hat, bag, cup, etc.) reaches addicts where we live and around the globe.



My expenses...	When I got clean	Now
Housing costs (rent, house payment)		
A gallon of fuel or public transport ticket		
Post (mail) a letter		
Concerts, movies, plays		
A tattoo		
Music (8-track or cassette, album, CD, MP3)		
A pack of cigarettes		
A manicure/pedicure or haircut		
A cup of coffee		
Food like a loaf of bread or a dozen eggs		
Clothing, shoes, or jewelry		
Dinner before/after a meeting		

Fellowship Issue Discussions 2008-2010

IDTs

This conference cycle's Issue Discussion Topics (IDTs) are based on the theme, "Our Freedom, Our Responsibility." These fellowshipwide discussions give us the opportunity to talk together about important issues affecting NA. Sometimes our discussions focus on sharing solutions or best practices, other times they simply raise awareness, and some of them provide ideas that help create tools for the fellowship (like the Building Strong Home Groups worksheet developed during the 2006-2008 conference cycle), service pamphlets, and leadership modules. These discussions also impact the projects undertaken by the World Service Conference.

The Topics

Along with Our Freedom, Our Responsibility, the other two discussion topics are Building Communication and Leadership. We all need to recognize our ownership and responsibility for the success of NA in carrying our message and achieving our vision. By improving and diversifying our communications at every level, we can broaden awareness in the fellowship about what is happening in the NA service system. And by encouraging greater personal and collective responsibility for that service system, we can begin to develop an atmosphere of leadership among our trusted servants, as well as an increased desire to support the work done on behalf of NA groups worldwide.

Sessions Profiles

To help members facilitate workshops on these topics, we have developed fellowship issue discussion session profiles with step-by-step outlines. Links to the session profiles, information about the IDTs, and topic-oriented on-line discussion boards are all available at <http://www.na.org/IDT/IDT.htm>. Thanks to many NA communities that have held IDT workshops, we have already updated the discussion questions for Building Communication and Our Freedom, Our Responsibility. We will continue to use fellowship input to improve the session profiles and/or refocus these discussions during this conference cycle, so be sure to forward your input to us, check back often, and watch *The NA Way Magazine* for updates.

Session outlines and handouts for the IDTs, including *Leadership*, are posted at www.na.org/IDT/IDT.htm, where you can also access the IDT discussion boards.

OUR FREEDOM, OUR RESPONSIBILITY

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

H&I miracles in South Africa

South Africa is enjoying a surge of interest in hospitals and institutions service. Inspired initially by some charismatic and committed members visiting from the United States, our H&I crew in Gauteng has grown to nearly one hundred members! We have some prison meetings on a Friday morning where sixteen members arrive to attend just two meetings in a medium security prison north of Johannesburg. Better yet, service members seldom outnumber inmates.

Every Friday morning we gather for breakfast and then head off for two sections of the Leeuwkop (Lion's Head) prison to enjoy some intense recovery behind the walls. Having built up experience in the H&I crews, we plan to start three new meetings on the inside in January: a juvenile facility, a women's prison, and the maximum security facility.

We are a small NA community here and you might wonder how we provide the resources for so many meetings in a single area. Well, here's miracle number one. Some time ago the Sarpsborg Area in Norway, who had heard of us through *The NA Way Magazine*, asked if they could contribute their surplus English Basic Texts as they had received the Norwegian translations. That donation inspired us and, chatting over coffee, we conceived of a "pay-it-forward" project. Seven boxes circulate in meetings and members contribute literature for the H&I effort. The project has been so successful that our literature committee was able to borrow nearly 100 Basic Texts from H&I stock while we waited for a consignment to arrive from world services. We have developed an H&I policy here that if an incarcerated addict asks for a Basic Text from which to work the steps ... they get one; and we have managed to sustain this practice without running low on stock!

Now Norway has its Norwegian translated "green and gold" (*It Works: How and Why*), so they are sending another literature consignment to us. Seems that we just have to have the right intention and the abundance follows.

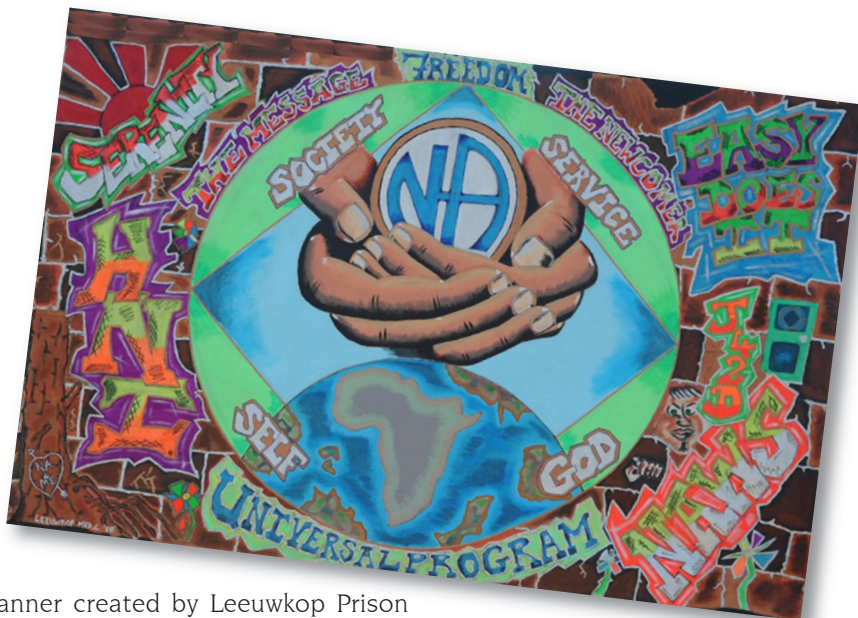
Here's miracle number 2.

We enjoyed our regional convention at the end of October in Ceres, nestled in the mountains an hour-and-a-half out of Cape Town, and a new tradition was born. Groups painted banners which were traded with groups from other areas, creating a kind of "sister city" vibe, NA style. The convention is obviously not accessible to members in the prison and they really wanted to participate, so they asked if they could make a contribution by painting and donating a banner for auction (now a very successful and established practice at our conventions). A few of the H&I crew got the necessary permission and took canvas and paints in to the prison on visiting day. The banner was painted with much love and laughter, and a good deal of intensity!

The auction at the convention raised R10 000 (about \$1,000 at today's appalling exchange rate). That was from the sale of many, many NA memorabilia items, tee shirts, mugs, badges, buttons, and bum bags from around the world. The Leeuwkop banner was also auctioned...and raised R20 000!

But wait, there's more! The addict who bought the banner had it framed and it was quietly presented to the prison group at the next meeting. That is the NA way.

Mark J, Johannesburg, South Africa



Banner created by Leeuwkop Prison (Gauteng, South Africa) NA members

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



Did you know?

The Fellowship of Narcotics Anonymous has come a long way since our beginnings in 1953. We have grown from that first meeting in Sun Valley, California, USA, to more than 53,000 weekly meetings in over 130 countries worldwide. Our history is rich with diversity, and we want to share the facts of that history with you—the little-known facts and tidbits of information others might not otherwise know. Share your interesting NA facts with us by email at naway@na.org, by fax at 818.770.0700, or by postal mail at *The NA Way Magazine*; Box 9999; Van Nuys, CA 91409 USA.

Did you know at NA World Services in Chatsworth, California, there were 43 employees in 1990, 44 in 1996, 46 in 2002, and 49 in 2007? There are also currently an additional 10 employees in the NAWS locations in Canada, Brussels, and Iran.

Did you know during 1997, Group Services answered about 275 written requests (including email) each month, and handled 20 telephone calls per day (double the daily calls fielded in 1996)?

Did you know each month during 2002, the Fellowship Services Team (formerly Group Services) fielded some 300 telephone calls and 80 miscellaneous requests? Five years later, these annual totals increased to more than 11,000 telephone inquiries, nearly 6,500 emails and letters, and almost 700 miscellaneous requests!

Did you know there were 336 pieces of translated recovery literature, including fifteen book-length pieces in 1997? Today, there are 573 translated items and works-in-progress, representing 71 languages.

Did you know H&I requests totaled 300 per month in 2002 and over 390 per month in 2007?

Did you know in 1988 there were just over 15,000 NA meetings per week in over forty countries and today we have approximately 53,000 weekly meetings in 130 countries?

Did you know all information above was gathered from annual reports published between 1996 and 2007, which are available online at <http://www.na.org/reports.htm>





CALENDAR

NA groups and service bodies can publicize events in *The NA Way Magazine* and in our online calendar at www.na.org. To submit event information for the online calendar and the magazine, just click on the "na events" link at www.na.org and follow the instructions. (If you don't have Internet access, fax your event info to: 818.700.0700, attn: NA Way; or mail it to: *The NA Way Magazine*; Box 9999; Van Nuys, CA 91409 USA.) Only multi-day events are printed in the magazine. Events remain on the online calendar until the week after the event. Please submit information according to the magazine publication schedule below.

Issue	Submit event info by	For events taking place during
January.....	5 October	second week of January through first week of April
April	5 January	second week of April through first week of July
July	5 April	second week of July through first week of October
October	5 July	second week of October through first week of January

Australia

New South Wales 27 Jan-1 Feb; Paradise; A&I Hall, Bangalow/Byron Bay; event info: 61413763793; write: Far North Coast-New South Wales-Australia; FNCNA Convention; Box 495; Byron Bay 2481-NSW; Australia

Canada

Quebec 13-15 Mar; Youth Convention 13; Hilton Montreal Airport, Montreal; event info: 514.916.5661; rsvns: 800.567.2411; speaker tape info: lvf_nan@hotmail.com, 450.575.4251; speaker tape deadline: 31 Jan 2009

Denmark

Esbjerg 6-8 Feb; Mere vil blive vist; Præstegårdsskolen, Esbjerg; registration: 20.78.43.09; rsvns: 20.78.43.09

Odense 3-5 Apr; Denmark Region Service Conference; Odense; event info: www.nadanmark.dk

France

Provence 5-8 Mar; First Southern France Area Bilingual Convention and EDM; La Baume à Aix en Provence, Aix en Provence; registration: 0033677195433; rsvns: 0033633429385; <http://sud.narcotiquesanonymes.org/>

India

Gujarat 22-24 Jan; Bombay Area Convention 14; Gujarat Tourism Toran Hotel, Saputara; www.nabombay.org/bacnaxiv/Web/bacnaxiv.htm

New Zealand

Bay of Plenty 13-15 Mar; Northern Area 20th In All Our Affairs; Waitapu Forest Camp, Rotorua; event info: 64.21.550.574, 64.21.215.9297; www.nzna.org

2) North Island 13-15 Feb; Hawke's Bay Fellowship Back 2 Basics Campout; Omatua Camp, Napier; write: Hawke's Bay Fellowship; Box 1084; Napier, New Zealand

Nicaragua

Managua 12-14 Mar; Convención Regional de Nicaragua 3; Hotel Ticomo Carretera Sur, Managua; event info: 8781523, 2505463; rsvns: 8873886; speaker tape deadline: 26 Feb; write: Región, Nicaragua, III Convención; Grupo Sólo por Hoy, Reparto San Antonio, de los semáforos de la Asamblea Nacional 3 Cuadras al sur, media abajo, 75 varas al lago.

Spain

Barcelona 20-23 Aug; World Convention 33; Centre Convencions Internacional, Barcelona; event info: 818.773.9999; www.na.org/WCNA32/index.htm

Thailand

Bangkok 27-1 Feb; Thailand Regional Convention 2; Ambassador Hotel, Bangkok 10110; www.na-thailand.org

United States

Alabama 6-8 Feb; North Alabama Area Convention 13; Holiday Inn, Decatur; rsvns: 256.355.3150; registration: 256.497.7585; www.alnwflrscna.org

2) 20-22 Mar; Greater Mobile Area Convention 12; Renaissance Riverview Hotel, Mobile; rsvns: 251.438.4000; event info: 251.680.9070; registration: 251.767.7576

California 27 Feb-1 Mar; NA World Services Worldwide Workshop; Oakland Marriott City Center, Oakland; event info: 818.773.9999 x116, elaine@na.org; www.na.org/nawsevents/event-reg.htm#NAWS_Workshops; rsvns: 800.991.7249

2) 6-8 Mar; Circle of Sisters 12; Warner Center Marriott, Woodland Hills; event info: 213.216.8462; rsvns: 800.228.9290; www.circleofsisters.org

3) 9-12 Apr; Northern California Convention 31; San Jose Convention Center, San Jose; registration: 707.293.6977, nccnaregistration@norcalna.org; www.norcalna.org/nccna.php

Florida 12-15 Mar; Florida Region Service Symposium 3; Crowne Plaza Hotel and Conference Center, Tampa; event info: 954.448.9602, 863.683.8224; rsvns: 813.623.6363; www.floridarso.org or www.naflorida.org

Georgia 12-15 Feb; Georgia Regional Convention 28; Westin Atlanta Perimeter North Hotel, Atlanta; event info: 478.233.3225; registration: 404.452.1731; rsvns: 888.733.7666; www.grcna.org

2) 10-12 Apr; Coastal Area 25th Anniversary; Travel Lodge Hotel, Brunswick; event info: 912.656.3762, 706.429.2029

Idaho 20-22 Mar; Southern Idaho Regional Convention; Holiday Inn, Boise; rsvns: 800.465.4329; event info: 208.965.5950, 408.910.1505; www.sirna.org

Illinois 3-5 Apr; Rock River Area Convention 18; Cliffbreakers Riverside Resort, Rockford; event info: 815.654.2894, conv.info@rragsna.org; registration: conv.reg@rragsna.org; rsvns: 815.282.3033; www.convention.rragsna.org

Indiana 13-15 Mar; Indiana State Convention 16; Radisson Hotel Star Plaza, Merrillville; rsvns: 219.769.6311; www.NAIndiana.org

2) 10-12 Apr; Kentuckiana Regional Convention 23; Executive Inn, Evansville; event info: 812.568.7429, krcnaxiii@yahoo.com; registration: 812.453.5719; rsvns: 877.424.0888

Massachusetts 23-24 Jan; Powerful Vehicle Group Twin Jam 3; Holiday Inn Holiday, Holyoke; event info: 413.533.0329, 413.536.5157; rsvns: 413.534.3311

2) 13-15 Mar; New England Regional Convention 13; Marriot Hotel, Newton; event info: 401.228.5997; rsvns: 617.969.1000

3) 9-12 Apr; Detroit Area Convention 17; Hyatt Regency, Dearborn; event info: 313.320.2349; registration: 313.580.6883; rsvns: 313.593.1239

Missouri 6-8 Feb; Mid-Missouri Area Cabin Fever Prevention Convention; Tan-Tar-A Resort, Osage Beach; event info: 573.489.1694; registration: 573.673.8570; rsvns: 800.826.8272; www.cabinfeverconvention.org

Nebraska 27 Jan-1 Feb; Eastern Nebraska Close Encounters of the Clean Kind Convention; Regency Lodge, Omaha; event info: 402.612.8370; registration: 402.320.0948; rsvns: 800.617.8310; www.eastern-nebraska-na.org

Nevada 10-12 Apr; Southern Nevada Area Convention 23; Riviera Hotel and Casino, Las Vegas; event info: 702.461.6294, 702.349.3573; rsvns: 800.634.3420; www.snana.org

New Jersey 14-15 Feb; Ocean Area Valentine's Day Speaker Jammin' Dance; Holy Cross Lutheran Church, Tom's River; write: Ocean Area; Box 326; Toms River, NJ 08754-0326

2) 13-15 Mar; Capital Area Convention 12; Clarion Hotel, Cherry Hill; event info: 609.943.8399; registration: 609.433.0726; rsvns: 856.428.2300

New Mexico 26-29 Mar; Rio Grande Regional Convention 20; Marriott Uptown, Albuquerque; event info: 505.400.0577; rsvns: 505.881.6800; www.riograndena.org

New York 13-15 Feb; Metro Area de Habla Hispana Convention 4; Crowne Plaza Hotel, White Plains; event info: 917.375.0149; registration: 347.613.3275; rsvns: 914.682.0050; www.metroareadehablahispana.com

2) 27 Jan-1 Feb; Rochester Area Convention 15; Rochester Plaza, Rochester; event info: 585.288.8216, 585.328.1837; rsvns: 585.546.3450; www.rochesterny-na.org

3) 1-3 May; Eastern New York Region Spiritual Retreat 2; St Ignatius Retreat House, Manhasset; event info: 516.659.5902; registration: 917.847.9926; rsvns: 917.847.9926

North Carolina 27 Jan-1 Feb; Freedom by the Sea Convention 9; Sea Trail Resort and Conference Center, Sunset Beach; event info: 910.352.6249; rsvns: 800.624.6601; www.coastalcarolinaarea.org

Ohio 13-15 Feb; Toledo Area Convention 12; Clarion Hotel, Toledo; event info: 419.870.9064; registration: 419.450.3574; rsvns: 419.535.7070

2) 6-8 Mar; Cleveland Area Convention 6; Hilton Cleveland East, Cleveland; event info: 216.233.3435; registration: 216.469.0583; rsvns: 800.817.5154

Pennsylvania 13-15 Feb; Mid-Atlantic Regional Learning Conference 25; Lancaster Host Resort, Lancaster; event info: 484.338.0611, 717.293.8490; www.marscna.org

10-12 Apr; Greater Philadelphia Regional Convention; Valley Forge Convention Center, Valley Forge; rsvns: 888.201.1718; write: Greater Philadelphia Region; GPRCNA; Box 58634; Philadelphia, PA 19102 South Carolina

6-8 Feb; Upper South Carolina Area Convention 29; Hyatt Regency, Greenville; event info: 864.419.4477, 864.423.0419; registration: 864.905.2013; rsvns: 864.235.1234; www.crna.org

2) 13-15 Feb; Greater Columbia Area Recovery at Work 8; Hilton Oceanfront Resort, Hilton Head Island; event info: 803.603.5958; 803.261.3108; rsvns: 866.625.2496

3) 27-29 Mar; Gap Area Convention 16; Knights Inn, Anderson; rsvns: 864.226.6051

Texas 13-15 Feb; Tejas Bluebonnet Regional Convention; Holiday Inn Emerald Beach, Corpus Christi; event info: 361.774.3386; registration: 361.816.5196; rsvns: 888.465.4329; www.convention.tejas-na.org

Virginia 20-22 Feb; Tidewater Area Convention 9; Waterside Marriott, Norfolk; event info: 757.717.1129, 757.353.5725; rsvns: 757.622.0376; www.tidewaterareana.org

Wisconsin 20-22 Feb; Greater Milwaukee Unity Convention; Hilton Milwaukee City Center, Milwaukee; registration: 414.1628.0765; rsvns: 800.445.8667; www.wisconsinna.org/phpcalendar/index.php?month=2&year=2009

NAWS PRODUCT UPDATE

Filipino

IP No. 6: *Recovery and Relapse*
Paggaling at Relapse

Item No. FL-3106 Price US \$0.21



Brazilian/Portuguese

Roman Numeral Bronze Medallions

Traditional bronze finish in 18 months and 1-30 years.

Item No. BR/PO-43XX Price US \$2.75

Greek

IP No. 11: *Sponsorship*
Σχέση υποστήριξης

Item No. GR-3111 Price US \$0.21



Nepali

IP No. 16: *For the Newcomer*
हर बनिक्जथे दसिन

Item No. NE-3116 Price US \$0.21

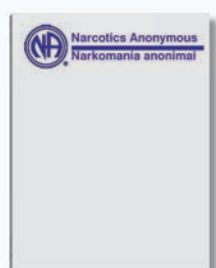


Lithuanian

White Booklet
revised to include personal stories

Narkomanai anonimai

Item No. LT-1500 Price US \$0.63



Slovenian

IP No. 1:
Who, What, How, and Why
Kdo, kaj, kako in zakaj

Item No. SL-3101 Price US \$0.21



Basic Text Commemorative Edition



Celebrate the Basic Text's 25th anniversary—and the Sixth Edition release—with this hand-numbered, limited version. The handsome deep blue and purple leatherette cover is punctuated by a debossed NA logo and silver lettering, opens to a stunning title page where a three-dimensional rendering of the NA logo...

SOLD OUT

2nd printing will be available late March 2009

Tri-plate Roman Numeral Medallions

These new medallions feature a three-color paint design on a gold-tone base. A choice of color combinations will be offered, priced at \$20 each or \$16 each for orders of 25 or more pieces.



Purple/dark blue and black/purple
Series 6200—6299 Price US \$20.00

Translucent blue/pearl & black/pearl
Series 6300—6399 Price US \$20.00

Translucent red/pearl & black/red
Series 6400—6499 Price US \$20.00



Service Pamphlets

An Introduction to NA Meetings

Revised based on fellowship input, this piece offers a welcoming introduction to NA meetings. It explains some of the practices that might be unfamiliar to those at their first meetings, and offers tips on ways to help the group preserve an atmosphere of recovery.

Item No. 2201 Price US \$0.21

Principles and Leadership in NA Service

Our Fourth Concept highlights the importance of effective leadership for quality NA services. This pamphlet addresses how our principles are applied in service. It also highlights some of the skills and qualities of effective leaders, and includes ideas about how our service bodies can work to attract and cultivate such leaders.

Item No. 2206 Price US \$0.26



French

Sponsorship

Le parrainage

Item No. FR-1130 Price US \$7.00

Group Business Meetings

Les réunions d'affaires des groupes

Item No. FR-2202 Price US \$0.21

Group Trusted Servants: Roles & Responsibilities

Les serviteurs de confiance du groupe : rôles et responsabilités

Item No. FR-2203 Price US \$0.21



Disruptive & Violent Behavior

Comportements violents et dérangeants

Item No. FR-2204 Price US \$0.21

NA Groups & Medication

Les groupes de NA et les médicaments

Item No. FR-2205 Price US \$0.26





Statement of Ownership, Management, and Circulation

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Extent and nature of circulation	Average No. of copies in preceding 12 months	Actual No. copies as of 1-Oct-08
Total printed copies	37,375	38,250
Requested subscription—outside county	37,109	37,986
Requested subscription —in-county	0	0
Total requested subscription	37,109	37,986
Total free or nominal rate distribution	134	150
Total distribution	37,243	38,136
Copies not distributed (office uses)	132	114
Total	37,375	38,250
Percent requested circulation	99.6%	99.6%

Certified, correct, complete

Home GROUP

