

THE INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF NARCOTICS ANONYMOUS













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THE INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF NARCOTICS ANONYMOUS



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From the editor

When my son graduated from junior high, the school principal began the ceremony by sitting down on the edge of the stage to read a children's rhyming story about beginnings. "Oh, the places you'll go...," she read. I've thought of that book a lot recently; partly because it's graduation season as I'm writing this. Mostly, it's because this issue includes many stories about beginnings in NA. With each personal story or recollection of an NA community's beginnings, I am struck with "the places we've gone." And when I look at where we are, I can only imagine the places we have yet to go.

De Jenkins, Editor

IN THIS ISSUE

Feature		Did you know?	10
 Alive and grateful 	3	Our members share	12
Sharing		Living Clean project update	14
One addict helping another What you've given me	5	www.na.org update	15
What you've given meAnother way to surrender	6 7	Picture this	16
• Today	7	Calendar	17
 Finding my place 	8	Home group	18
European beginnings	9	 Call for submissions 	7
		Product update	19

2009 Membership Survey

is included with the print version of this issue of *The NA Way Magazine* AND it's available online. Please complete the membership survey and encourage fellow NA members to complete it, too! Directly access and complete the online version at http://questionnaire.disc.na.org/ or download the PDF versions, available in various languages, at http://www.na.org/?ID=PR-index.

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."



Alive and grateful

First in a two-part series

On the 12th of December I met Rising Sun (RS) after a long gap of time. I knew he was rising every day, but we hadn't met face-to-face for a long time. But on this day, I was up early, before RS. I was in a taxi, collecting NA members on the way to Howrah Station to catch the train to Galudih, the site of the Fifth Indian Regional Convention of NA (IRCNA 5). Others on the train platform looked scandalized. No wonder: there were about a hundred NA members, all hugging and loudly cursing the choicest expletives to each other.

On the train, we were lively and chaotic, chattering about our misdeeds, dishonesty, and insanity; the oldtimers describing their pasts in vivid details. The other passengers looked relieved when we finally got off the train. We folded ourselves into a threefold (like our disease or IP #1), packed ourselves into sardine cans called auto taxis, and the caravan rolled on to the Galudih Inn.

The registration desk overflowed, choked, and spat us out. By this time everyone was wearing his/her anonymity on their chests and a belt-pouch full of food coupons. There was puri and dal on the table and recovery in the air. The site was abuzz with addicts. Streamers waved that they were alive and grateful. A banner on a eucalyptus

tree confirmed that, yes, miracles happen, and the PA system said, "Go pronto; meeting is beginning in a minute." So I waved back to the streamers, nodded

to the eucalyptus, and crossed the bridge to the "island of life," where the meeting would be held.

> As the meeting opened, we were solemnly reminded that we have been around for the last twenty-five years in India. The weekend would include NAWS workshops, speaker meetings, and an interactive session on sponsorship. The women of NA, as well as family members, had their own meetings at other venues.

Every meal was lovely, from chicken curry, veggies and rice; spongy pancakes with curried grams (called chana batora), and tea served with hugs; to fish curry, lentils and batter-fried brinjals, with sweets at the end; and cumin rice, pot-roasted cauliflower, chicken curry, and chili paneer with salad. Man, they were serious about keeping us "alive" and grateful through that great food! I really admired the food volunteers. Their service was loving. They worked for hours, missed a lot of sessions, and missed some fellowshipping. They served while others were dancing after dinner. Still, their smiles were not dulled, nor did their attention to work falter. I found a lot of recovery and NA service to learn from them.

We flocked to the merchandise stall for t-shirts, badges, and other mementos; and we lapped up cigarettes and coffee in large quantities. T-shirts were in two designs

They didn't end until everyone shared once, or until the meeting chairperson fainted twice.

and were going like hot cakes. The sleek leather purses were, alas, exhausted. Soon the slim guys were frustrated as only extra large t-shirts were left. We enjoyed listening and dancing to the music that wafted through the nights as our conversation, songs, jokes, stories,

We broke for coffee and sleep after 4:00 am.

repartee, and innuendo floated up and away in the cool night air of Galudih.

We put on warm clothes for the nightly bonfire meetings. I loved these meetings. They didn't end until everyone shared once, or until the meeting chairperson fainted twice. It took a brave volunteer to chair those bonfire meetings. As the fire roared, the topic glowed like the flames. We shared and shared and shared. One by one people went away to nod off and new people took the empty places. Lots of newcomers let down their denial and shared their hearts out.

On the second morning, after a short night's sleep (I left the bonfire meeting somewhere around 3:00 am), it seems I had a spiritual awakening. I climbed down some steps and bought a coffee (who paid for it?), lit a fag, and went into a very deep meditation, right there in the cafeteria. Some nosy, heartless bloke broke my conscious contact, so after consuming the coffee and cigarette, I hugged him, climbed the steps, and went back to sleep. Later we walked down to the registration desk to see the new arrivals, who were hugged to a pulp and admonished to stay alive and grateful. The joy of reunion, the goodwill of the fellowship, the thrill, the surprise - it was awesome.

As the night wore on, a great chat session gathered and I recounted some of my using history as best as I could remember. Naturally, the younger people were enthralled to hear about those early days when using was cool, exotic, and not unlawful. It is sheer disease when I glorify the using days, yet I find that addicts are invariably attracted to it. However, I recalled the past as an inven-

tory of my insanity and self-destruction and tried to accept once more the reality of being an addict. When the stories turned from adventurous to macabre, the new generation shivered, whether from cold or from horror, I don't know. I ended with, "We don't have to undergo all that, anymore, as long as we keep coming back!" We broke for coffee and sleep after 4:00 am.

So, of course, I woke up late and missed the areas' merchandise sale and breakfast, too. The nice t-shirts were gone in no time and when I arrived there were only badges of Mumbai and mouse pads from Nepal. I bought a few, but I was still cursing myself. So, I dug up my sponsor's body from the grave of quilts and had a nice grumble. Upon resurrection he yelled "Be kind to yourself, I'm even worse. I slept so late I missed the workshop, too." So I told him, "Don't be unkind to you," and we went to the café for some grub. Thus, I was restored to a live and grateful addict again. The program chair had asked me to share in a speakers' meeting so I took a shower, put on some clean clothes and went to the meeting.

Two others shared before me, one shared in Bengali about his difficulties admitting defeat, and then one who told her story in English. By the time my name was called, I was downright nervous. Being nervous is good for an addict like me. The self-will gets crushed and the first three steps come very easily when I'm nervous. So, by the time I introduced myself, kind HP had to take over. This way of feeling inadequate, praying, and getting help is good recovery for me. All mv prepared words of wisdom were gone and I was telling my story of hiding, managing, conning, fighting and, finally, of admitting complete defeat. I shared how I take back control and then

surrender again.

I was emotional,

natural, and it was

all impromptu. When the chairperson signaled, I admitted defeat and was happy to wind up. I was simply floored by the ovation and the hugs. People liked it and I was grateful.

Joy M, Kolkata, India





One addict helping another

Walking down the hallway, I'm full of anxiety. I have no idea what I'm going to find in Room 321. The doctors and nurses pass me without a glance. I hear the television as I pass Room 312: the opening theme song for some TV show that I can't place. I hope I'm not too late.

Entering the room, I see him in bed, eyes closed, breathing shallow and labored. He seems to be asleep. There are a few of "us" sitting around the bed. I'm thankful for the familiar faces. His wife stands to hug me, trying to smile. I can see the pain on her face, which only increases my anxiety. She explains to me what the doctors have said: "He'll be going at any time."

I pull up a chair next to the bed. He is covered by a New York Yankees blanket. I have to smile. He loved to give us s#i* when his team beat our Cleveland Indians. He was a true New Yorker in every way. As I sit and watch his breaths grow slower, I listen to the other people in the room talk about their personal experiences with him and how he touched their lives. The atmosphere in the room is a happy one. I think back to the night I met him.

I was filled with gut-wrenching fear as I walked into my very first meeting. After twenty-one years of using and spending fifteen days in detox, I had no idea what I was going to do with the rest of my life. The drugs and all that went with

them were gone. I felt alone and isolated in my thoughts. All I knew was that I wanted to stop using. The social worker at the hospital detox told me to go to that church at 7:30 pm for a meeting. As I entered

the room that night I smelled coffee and I heard people laughing. I looked around the room, seeing people who appeared to be happy. I was surprised. I didn't know what I expected, but that was not it.

My fear was out of control. My body still rebelled from the lack of drugs. My insides were on fire. My outsides trembled. My skin burned to the touch. I could feel every muscle in my body ache with each step I took. My mind ran at top speed, not able to stay with one thing for more than a few seconds. The withdrawal was still on me.

At the time I just wanted to run and hide. Instead, I made my way to the corner of the room without making eye contact with anyone, found a chair, and sat. I hadn't been sitting long when a large man approached me. He had a smile on his face, a little sparkle in his eye. He reminded me of Santa Claus, Santa

Claus with a receding hairline. I stood to get a cup of coffee, trying to avoid having to make eye contact, or having to speak to him. He stepped in front of me and said, "Hi. I'm ____ and I'm an addict." Then he proceeded to hug me. The shock must have registered on my face, because he said, "Oh, I'm sorry; at our meetings we hug each other." I was speechless. In the world I came from, hugging, or any sign of weakness, was dangerous. It was funny, though, because the hug felt good. I felt the defenses I worked so hard building over the years start to come down. This only added to my confusion. I felt extremely vulnerable and weak.

I followed suit, my arm around his big shoulder...

I made it to the coffeepot with this guy following by my side. He had some papers and a book in his hand by then. He was explaining to me what they were, and, as much as I wanted to, I couldn't focus on what he was saying. All I could do was try to focus on keeping the coffee in the cup. I was shaking so badly that I was not sure I'd be able to make it back

I'd like to think he heard our stories tonight.

to my chair without spilling it all. He took the cup from me and handed me the papers he was holding. "I'll trade ya," he said. "Come on, let's go sit."

Sitting next to him, I looked around the room. Everyone in the room was talking, laughing, and joking. I felt out of place. I remember thinking, "How can these people be so happy?" Even the idea of a smile hurt me. And to laugh...? I couldn't even remember the last time I had laughed. A month, six months, a year? I didn't know.

He was explaining to me what each piece of literature was. I heard him, but nothing was registering. I couldn't slow my mind down enough to comprehend anything. The meeting started and I was thankful. I was free to be distracted again.

Before I knew it, everyone was standing at their chairs around the table, arm-in-arm, and I followed suit, my arm around his big shoulder, my other arm around a young kid, a smile on his face, who whispered, "Don't worry. It gets better." Then I heard the guy who chaired the meeting say, "Can we have a moment of silence for the addict who still suffers. who may just be in this room, the addict who will pick up for the first time tonight, and the addict who will die tonight, followed by the Serenity Prayer." After a few seconds everyone started to say the prayer. I moved my mouth, pretending to know the words.

As I was grabbing my coat, my new "friend" was right there. He handed me a small book. He said, "This is a meeting

schedule for our area, and here in the back are the phone numbers of all the men who were here tonight. If you want to use, call someone first." I looked down at the small book in my hands and saw the words "Call Before, Not After" printed on one side. I leafed through the book and saw that there really were names and phone numbers written in the back. The thought of calling anyone terrified me, but I knew it had to happen. I wouldn't be able to do it alone. God knew I had tried many times.

As I looked up, there were a few people standing in front of me. One by one, they all hugged me. I was stunned and speechless. A woman introduced herself and said to me, "Don't use no matter what, and everything else will fall into place." I nodded with false understanding. I didn't think she knew the pain and fear I was feeling at the time. The guy to my left asked, "How long you been clean?" I explained that I was fifteen days without dope, and it had been that long since I slept, that all I wanted to do was use and make all this insanity in my head, and the pain in my body, go away. He told me, "I didn't sleep for a week coming off the dope." Then he went on to say that he was clean for thirty-nine days and things were getting better. He said he was able to sleep a few hours each night now. At that point I realized for the first time that maybe I wasn't so different from all of them after all. Maybe I was in the right place. Most of all, I was starting to feel like I was not alone anymore. With each hug, each kind face, I began to feel that maybe there was another way to live after all. I had no clue what that little bit of hope would turn into in the next few months. It was 25 March, and I felt some relief. I smiled as I pushed open the door to leave that night.

His breathing is very slow now. I count almost eight seconds between each breath. It won't be long now. I wish I had the chance to tell him how much his goodwill affected me that night at my first meeting. I wish I could tell him that he and the addicts in the room that night changed my life forever. That night I realized for the first time that I was not alone in my struggle with addiction.

As he takes his last breaths, I'm thinking about how important it is to welcome

the newcomer at our meetings. I make a promise to myself that I will do my best to welcome every newcomer I see. I hope I can be a part of the process for someone else—the process that saved my life.

I hope that when the time comes for me to die, I will die as a recovering addict, surrounded by my friends and family, like this. I'd like to think he heard our stories tonight. I'd like to think that he knew how much he was loved. I'd like to think we helped him in some way.

Jason F, Ohio, USA

What you've given me

In 2004 I was totally in despair, without faith, and sure that the only way out, or for relief, would be death. After the last drop of water, I was offered help and I went to a twelve-step facility without knowing whether it would work. But without knowing another way, I decided to accept it. Within a few days I attended my first H&I panel. There, I heard everything that I needed.

When I left the institution I went to a meeting, became a member, and kept coming back. My life changed in ways I never could have envisioned. I stopped using, lost the desire to use, and went through job loss, promotions, opportunities to study for free, relationships, a broken heart, deception, disillusion (especially with NA service), laughter, crying, moments of despair and fear, and moments of faith. Today I am unemployed, single; but for the grace of a Higher Power and NA, I am clean. I am sure that in twenty years I'll be rocking in a hammock, seeing my kids play with my wife, enjoying a life that I could never dream of—all without being high.

I'd like to just share with you what you have given me: You changed a lonely boy without control, an atheist without dreams, into a productive member of society, a trusted servant, a sponsor, a worthy human being, a genuine member of NA.

Diego G, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil

Another way to surrender

A few days ago I was at an NA meeting, picking up a keytag as a sign of surrender. I have over twenty-five years clean in Narcotics Anonymous, but I was detoxing from over four months of narcotics prescribed by an informed physician (I later found out he was in recovery) for extreme physical pain. At long last my pain had gotten down to tolerable levels and I knew it was time to get off that stuff. I didn't even have extra pills squirreled away in case things got really bad during the withdrawals. Even with the monkey on my back, just like in the good old days, I simply had no desire to use: but I still had my wife hold the medication because I knew I didn't need that stuff around me.

Just like the Basic Text had told me, my body did not know the difference between drugs prescribed to me by a doctor for pain and those I prescribed to myself to get high. Amen, brother! Truer words were never written. The only difference was that my spirit and my heart were clean through all of those months of medication. My phone still rang with NA members, emails still came from sponsees around the country and overseas, and my vision hardly turned to character defects for survival the whole time I had to use what I had to use.

A huge wave of gratitude came over me as I stood to pick up a white keytag to show that, just for today, I had a desire to stay clean. No, I did not surrender my cleantime. I had not relapsed, right? I just picked up a welcome keytag as a sign of surrender.

Heck, I have picked up many a white keytag over these last many years when life knocked me down and I needed to let go of something and surrender one more time. That is why, when I give out the chips and ask if anyone wants a white one, I always ask if there is someone who wants to get clean or join NA, if there is anyone with a desire to stay clean just for today, or anyone who has something they need to surrender.

Anonymous, Virginia, USA



Call for submissions

The Home Group comic strip was introduced in 1989 to mixed reaction. Some were offended by the cynicism, while others lauded the humor of recovery life's twists and turns. Slugg and the other seven home group members reflected some of the best and worst assets and defects of recovering addicts. Eventually, concern about the tone led to a new set of Home Group members in 2002. These are the more generic characters many of you have come to know. Now, we believe it's time for another change, so we're inviting you, our NA members, to develop and submit your own characters, settings, and situations. Electronic documents (jpg, gif, pdf, etc.) may be emailed to naway@na.org with NA WAY COMIC in the subject line. You can fax submissions to 818.700.0700, attn: NA WAY COMIC, or mail them to NA WAY COMIC; PO Box 9999; Van Nuys, CA 91409. Submissions received by 30 November 2009 will be considered for publication and we'll share more information with you in upcoming issues.

Today

My clean date is 15 October 2000. Although I have been clean a while, I feel like a newcomer more and more. The first eight years of my recovery were a balancing act between recovery, school, and work. Many times other NA members going through the same struggles share their experience, which has helped me keep my priorities intact.

I don't know if I would have ever come to Narcotics Anonymous on my own. I need to stay thankful for the local police who arrested me and the judge who sentenced me to a recovery-based

...now it was about life itself.

prison. It was there that I established the foundation of the recovery I have today. There I got the first glimpse of what life might be like if I actually participated instead of just floating along with what was familiar to me.

After being locked up for several months, I began to slowly work an NA program. Upon release I went through six months in-house rehab and got my first sponsor. She was an amazing woman. I say "was" because she passed away four years ago from this disease. Within ten months of her death another woman vital to my early recovery also died of this disease. Needless to say, these deaths rocked my whole world. The two women I learned to open up to, to share the real me with, died. And not just died, but died of this disease. No longer was my recovery about maintaining my freedom from prison; now it was about life itself.

I struggled with the concept of a Higher Power. I faked it for some time, thinking I was grasping it. At about three years clean I felt empty inside. I couldn't figure it out; I had a good job, good friends, and what I thought was good recovery. I decided to go to an Eleventh Step meeting to see what it was all about, scared because I had heard rumors of the "gurus" that attended the meeting. Well, those "gurus" treated me like one of them. They extended themselves and shared their recovery and were a pivotal point in my recovery. I heard concepts

and ideas that reshaped my own ideas and helped my process move forward.

I am still young in my recovery, though at times I feel I have experienced a lifetime of events in these few short years. I recently got married to a kind, wonderful man I hope to experience the rest of my life with. I now have real friends in my life who care about me for who I am, not what I have. I have learned so much. yet feel that each day is an opportunity to learn something new about myself and the way I view the world I live in. At moments I regret all the wasted years of using, but then I realize that without the path I have taken I wouldn't have the life I now live. Thank you, Narcotics Anonymous, for leading me back to my Higher Power and teaching me how to live.

Lisa R, California, USA

Finding my place

I got here because of someone's NA public relations work. I was referred to the NA helpline in the city where I lived. I still remember that first meeting and how I felt going there—frightened, and too proud to admit it! My mind racing a million miles a minute. I heard what was being read and, although I had no way of comprehending what it all really meant, I heard. Who is an addict? Yes, I suppose I am. Why are we here? Yeah. well, it would appear that such is why I came. The Twelve Traditions. Here we go: the rules. But, wait, what is this? "Our leaders are but trusted servants; they do not govern" and "The only requirement for membership is the desire to stop using"? Well, if that's the case, nobody is "boss" and nobody can throw me out unless they have rules about qualifying my desire. Okay, I'll come back and check out this NA thing again.

Anonymity fills me with gratitude.

Check it out I did, and by the grace of the God of my understanding, I have been abstinent since 25 May 1986. For several years I did everything I could to be part of the solution: sponsorship, service, practicing the fundamental principles to the best of my ability. The recovery process was in effect in every area of my life. After about year eleven, I felt our fellowship was confronted with grave danger. I thought it had been progressive. In fact, the problem or situation had been there all along.

Our local NA community was young and inexperienced, and I had long since been viewed as an oldtimer. NA was just two and a half to three months old in my area when I came in. I have always viewed service as a privilege more than a right, and when I would see others in service governing, stealing, lying, being violent, and intimidating, it saddened and scared me. Unresolved feelings of anger and betrayal and lack of faith in our

spiritual principles pushed me away from our fellowship. It took me a few years of isolation and being ostracized before I returned. I came back with resentments, yet desperate for fellowship and recovery. Gradually, I began to feel a part of a group and got increasingly involved in group service. I found a new sponsor, and deliberate step work ensued, as did expanding my service efforts as a GSR. Although I was respected for my experience at the group level, area service work was another matter altogether. People elected to function as "trusted servants" were justifying their governance and spent hours debating controversial things and adopting bylaws contravening our guidelines.

Once more, I felt alone and in despair. How could I live and be of service? My then-sponsor suggested I could be of service in translating our literature. (I fellowship in a French-speaking community.) I am still of service, and although much of what I do is "out of sight," I can still be seen in our rooms. My service efforts are designed to carry the message to others by way of the material I help translate. Anonymity fills me with gratitude.

Boe B, Saint Hubert, Canada



Members interested in being considered for nomination at the 2010 WSC will want to update their World Pool Information Form by 31 August 2009.

The online version can be found at www.na.org/?ID=HRP-wpifdefault.

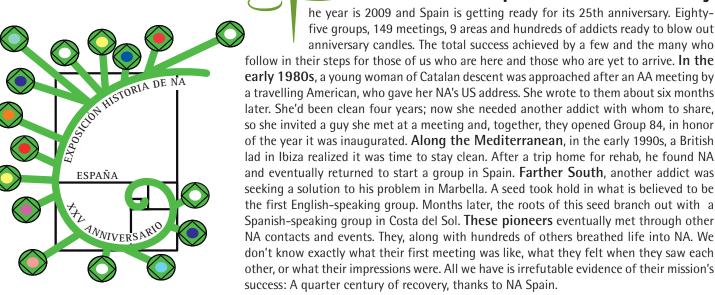
European beginnings

The EDM

It seems impossible to address European beginnings without describing the importance of the European Delegates Meeting (EDM). At the 1990 European Convention and Conference of NA in Lisbon, a small group of members from Belgium, France, Ireland, Portugal, Spain, Switzerland, and the UK joined together as the European Study Group to consider options for a European service structure. Later dubbed the European Delegates Meeting, it is now comprised of delegates from thirty NA communities. The EDM's mission is to further member communities' common welfare and unity. support their growth, and help them fulfill their primary purpose of carrying the NA message. The EDM is responsible for ECCNA. It organizes and funds fellowship development visits to emerging NA communities to help them build their service structure and deal with local issues. For more information, visit www.edmna.org. Many NA communities are born of similar circumstances: Addicts seeking recovery (often in another twelve-step fellowship or an institution) receive information about NA and start meetings, learn from the experience of established members, and the community gradually grows. Another common experience is the powerful sense of identification members feel when they experience the NA message in their native language; so as NA materials are translated and produced, NA communities flourish. We invite you to experience a bit of the beginnings of NA in Europe here in the pages of The NA Way, as we come together for our worldwide recovery celebration at WCNA 33 in Barcelona, Spain.

Information gathered via personal accounts, NAWS archives, and the websites of the European Delegates Meeting (EDM) and European regions. Thanks to Bob McD, USA; Conor H, Ireland; Daniel S, Germany; Kevin H, United Kingdom/Thailand; Monica A, Norway; Paul D, Belgium; Saraya P, Spain; and Vivianne R, Sweden

NA Spain's 25th anniversary



Did you know...

ICELAND

NA in this isolated island country began in the early 1990s and formed its first ASC and a translation subcommittee in 1992. Since 2002 approximately 10 pieces of literature have been translated to Icelandic, a dialect of the Old Norse Viking language spoken by only about 310,000 people worldwide.

BELGIUM

WSO – Europe opened in Brussels, Belgium in the early 1990s. The first office was in a small residential apartment with the desks and files in the living room, IPs and books in the bedroom, and keytags in the kitchen. At the time, the local NA community had about 3 meetings and 20 regular members and there were NA meetings in about 10 of the continental European countries.

UNITED KINGDOM

A member recalls the first NA meeting in the Chelsea area of London in 1980, and the first UK Service Office opening in the mid-1980s. Deliveries and outgoing orders were carried up and down six flights of fire escape stairs. The UK Region was seated in 1985, and then the London Region in 1986. After reorganization, the United Kingdom Region encompassed all of England, Scotland, and Wales.

IRELAND

NA in Ireland is traced to 1978 when addicts in Dublin attending AA started their own meetings for people with drug addiction. They received literature from the WSO in early 1979 and then established NA meetings. A trip to a learning weekend in London sparked creation of an Irish ASC in 1983 in Dublin.

GERMANY

The "Young Love Group" in Frankfurt met Friday nights beginning in 1978, but many locals didn't attend because it was held in a US Army hospital. Eventually, the group moved from the hospital to a member's flat. After three German members attended the Second European Service Conference in London, meeting schedules were developed and initial PI efforts began. The first translation of the White Booklet, to German, was a significant first lesson in the subtleties of translation as the version was done in "formal" language such as "If you, sir, would like to have what we have..."

FRANCE

The Mother Earth restaurant in Paris was the site of the first Narcotiques Anonymes meeting in 1984. The first ASC was formed in 1987. By 1988 Paris had a meeting per day in French and 3 meetings per week in English. NA France hosted ECCNA in July 1988.

PORTUGAL

In 1986, Portugal reported to the WSC International Committee that they had 4 regular members and 2 meetings per week. Five years later, the Basic Text was published in Portuguese, followed by IP #1 in 1992—also the year the Portugal Region was seated at the WSC.

1TX1 X

Rome was the starting point for NA in the early 1980s, and members report attending ECCNA for the first time in 1992. The Italy Region was then seated at the 1993 WSC, Italian keytags were available in 1995, and the Basic Text followed in 1997.

MALTA

In 2008 the young NA community of Malta held its second national convention and also formed a local translation committee.

European beginnings

NORWAY

One long-time member reports that NA meetings started and stopped in Oslo from 1983 through 1987, and have been running continuously since 1988. The first ASC was formed in 1991 with PI and translation subcommittees. The Basic Text was published in 2000 – the same year the Norway Region was formed.

SWEDEN

The first Anonyma Narkomaner meeting in Stockholm was a Tuesday night in the winter of 1987. Meetings began in English with literature supplied by an early member who got clean in England, but Swedish-speaking groups quickly followed. At many early meetings, the reading of a personal story from the Basic Text took the place of a speaker.

FINLAND

Nimettomat Narkomaanit started in Finland in 1988. In 1995, Finnish keytags were produced, and by 1998, there were 32 groups in 12 cities. Finland was seated at the WSC in 1999.

RUSSIA

The first donation to NAWS from a registered group in Russia was from a Moscow group in 1992. In 2006, the Western Russia Region was seated at the WSC. Today, NA communities in Russia span 11 time zones.

BALTIC STATES

Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania comprise this area along the Baltic Sea. Narkomanai Anonimai started in Lithuania in the late 1990s to early 2000s with help from Swedish members. NA Latvia was founded 23 February 2000 and the first Baltic Conference and Workshop was held in 2003. Members from Estonia attended the 2nd Baltic Conference and Workshop in 2004.

POLAND

Anonimowi Narkomani began in the late 1980s or early 1990s. In 1996, the first RSC meeting took place in Torun and the "Zero Convention" was held in Warsaw. A service office opened in 1998, H&I and PI efforts began in 2003, and the region was seated at WSC 2008.

UKRAINE

Most accounts place NA's first meeting in the early 1990s in Odessa. Ukrainian keytags have been produced, but since most Ukrainians also speak Russian, this is the language of the literature used by NA members.

SOUTHEASTERN EUROPE

This group of countries in Southeastern Europe includes NA communities in Bulgaria, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Greece, Serbia, Slovenia, and Turkey. The earliest NA presence in this area seems to have been in Greece (1987) and Turkey (early 1990s). Though identified as an ASC beginning in 1995, the Greece Region was officially formed in 2001. Turkey's RSC was reportedly established in November 2003. Bulgaria reported 2 meetings per week in Sofia in 2001 and followed with translation of IP #1 in 2005. As of 2008, there are several NA members reported in Sarajevo (Bosnia and Herzegovina) who participate in NA events, but only one known group in Zenica. Since its beginnings in Zagreb in early 2002, the Croatian NA community has grown to be the third largest NA community after Greece and Turkey. Serbia reports its first meeting occurring in September 2004 in Belgrade, and after initial contact with WSO-Europe in 2000, Slovenia reported two ongoing groups in the Starjerska region in late 2001. The first Basic Text translated among these communities was published in 2008 in Turkish.

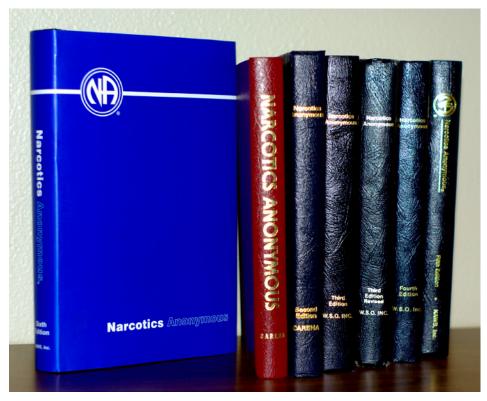


Beginnings

This sample of stories from early members gives some glimpses of NA in the late seventies and early eighties. They have been chosen in part for their historical significance and, as such, have not been edited. Over time we have learned to be clear in our language and identification; these stories, however, are reproduced exactly as they were published in the Fifth Edition Basic Text (1988).

Our members share

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 includes stories about finding acceptance in NA and creating a safe and 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 issue of The NA Way Magazine, we've included excerpts from "Beginnings" and "Coming Home."



Mid-Pacific Serenity

here was a four bedroom house next door to us for rent, and one day this woman appeared and told us that God had told her that she was supposed to live there. She was in her fifties, had long gray hair to her waist and wore a bikini most of the time. She had no money, but said she was led to this house.

This woman seemed to radiate a feeling of love and joy that I had never felt from anyone else before. Immediately upon meeting her, I felt as if I had known her forever. Something in me was drawn to her. Little did I know that she was to become my sponsor, and play such a big part in my life! This was the beginning of a journey that even today amazes me. It is a way of life, a way of learning complete trust in a Higher Power. Through a series of miracles, which I now have come to see as quite normal to my life, this woman ended up in this house with the rent paid every month. Needless to say, this house became a program house.

A meeting was started at this house. It was called the Beachcombers Spiritual Progress Traveling Group and through the years it has traveled throughout the United States, from Hawaii to the East coast, and through Europe twice, always attracting the addict who still suffers, offering a way up and out.

I remember my first meeting at this house in 1968. For the first time, I felt as if I really belonged. Not so much because I heard people talk of using drugs as I had, but because they spoke of what was going on inside.

Coming home

These members share about reaching the end of the road and surrendering. Their paths to find recovery differed, but they all found that in coming to NA, they have come home.

At the End of the Road

As far back as I can remember I have had a need to escape from myself and my feelings. As a child I lived in the world of books and fantasy in an effort to escape from emotions like fear, shame, in-

adequacy, insecurity, inferiority, and oversensitivity. I be-

came someone else. I went away from my family as often as I could to experience something different. I had to excitement, something new all the time. I left home at sixteen years old. By that time I had already started to use drugs. I joined the hippies in the early seventies, and I left Norway and went to Denmark. I continued using, and I started to smuggle drugs because I was not able to keep a job. I went on to India—on the hippie trail—and I ended up at the "end station," which was Goa, in India, Here. I was hanging out with freaks from all over the world. I could get my hands on all kinds of drugs. I thought I had arrived in paradise. It looked like it from the outside, but there is no such place as paradise for an active addict. The drugs turned against me. I was imprisoned by my addiction, and I tried to get away time and time again. I continued my criminal behavior and became an international drug smuggler. I ended up in jail, but I continued using while incarcerated. I became an extravagant consumer of drugs. I had developed a lifestyle of drugs, parties, and travel. But the emotions I tried getting away from caught up with me: The shame, fear, inferiority, despair, and loneliness only got bigger and bigger. I could not go on anymore. At one point I was sure that I would die a using addict. I was close to death. I had

This was the condition in which two members of Narcotics Anonymous found me and brought me the message of re-

developed chronic bronchitis, and the

attacks became more and more frequent.

One doctor told me I would die from this.

covery. They saved my life. They told me I had a disease, and that recovery was possible. I went to a treatment center and there started to attend NA meetings. I moved back to my native country after having been away for nineteen years. While spending a few months in the south of Europe, I had the opportunity to attend my first local NA convention and my first regional European convention. I went back to Norway, started an NA meeting in my hometown, and became active in trying to spread the message about NA to the public. I mostly sat by myself at this NA meeting, but when I stopped listening for footsteps and instead focused on the fact that I was there for my own sake, things went much better. I was a member of NA, even if I was there alone.

After one year I moved down south, still clean, and got involved in an already-established NA community with a couple of groups going. We formed a service structure, and slowly but surely, NA started to grow in Norway. I started to work the steps, and I also, slowly but surely, started to grow.

The Basic Text is available online at www.na.org/?ID=ips-index or may be purchased at www.na.org/?ID=OrderLiteratureOnline-Content.



Living Clean The Journey Continues

We are
recovering in the
here and now
and the future
becomes an
exciting journey.

Basic Text

www. na.org/?ID=Living Clean_Project

livingclean@na..org

www.na.org

Any member interested in assisting with creation of this book-length piece is encouraged to get involved. There are several ways to engage in the book's development. Those familiar with the literature development process understand that the best time to affect new literature is in the early stages. This has contributed to trying new and innovative input gathering methods. It is our hope that as many members as possible offer their experience, strength, and hope so that this new book will speak to our fellowship about living clean over the long haul.

There is a session profile for development of input for the project so that members in local NA communities can help create some of the material in their own input sessions. The session profile is posted at http://www.na.org/?ID=Living_ Clean_Project. The outline and session notes forms are also available there.

The latest innovation is an online discussion board that is PUBLIC and open to members of the fellowship. We sent out an eblast inviting people to join the discussion board to participate in development of "Living Clean." This discussion board is open to any NA member. Upon registering, you develop a screen name of your choosing and have the option to hide your email address. The link is http://naws.org/lc. The discussion board is organized by chapters and the topic outline for each chapter is posted for easy reference. Members are sharing their experience living clean regarding the topics covered and some other topics as well. This is a wonderful reservoir of source material that is aiding in the development of the book. Thank you to everyone who has joined the discussion board!

Of course, the tried and true method of sending input to us via regular postal mail is available for all aspects of this project. Send to NA World Services; Living Clean; Box 9999; Van Nuys, CA 91409.

Review and Input

The outline, Chapter 1, and Chapter 2 went out for review and input at the beginning of June, with an input deadline of 15 September 2009. The review and input process and the drafts are available here: http://www.na.org/?ID=Living_Clean_Project. We hope members who wish to be involved will read the material and share their thoughts with us.





NEW Welcome to www.na.org

The website of the Fellowship of Narcotics Anonymous

> Home

We launched the new website in early March and many visitors appreciate the ease of use and functionality of the website. It will continue to be a work in progress, as we will frequently update and change the site.

The *Just for Today* daily email list is a great success. Approximately 19,000 subscribers receive the daily meditations via email. To join this list, go to http://www.jftna.org/jft-subscription.htm.

Members can now subscribe to an RSS (Really Simple Syndication) feed that allows for daily notification of changes to the website. To subscribe, click on the RSS symbol on the "What's New" button.

We've seen a considerable increase in website traffic, with now over 7 million hits per month on the various web servers that comprise www.na.org.

Visit The NA Way Magazine at www.naway.org

The fellowship issue discussion boards were developed to nurture discussions about the Issue Discussion Topics; however, participation decreased continuously, and often discussions veered completely off topic. After lengthy discussion, we decided to close these boards at the end of May. Other discussion boards are still available at http://disc.na.org.





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.).









Since 15 September 2006, Grupo San Agator in Santa Marta, Colombia has been carrying the NA message. Today, the group meets at 7:00 pm Monday through Saturday, holding both open and closed meetings.

Pablo remembers, "On the day we started to paint the sign, two people arrived. One was a member from Manizales, Colombia, who had come to Santa Marta on vacation and decided to stay, and the other was a member from Peru who was passing through."

When a member celebrates a cleantime birthday, the meeting is dedicated to him/her and the day is marked with a keytag or medallion, cake, and soft drinks.

Pablo S, Santa Marta, Colombia





Multi-day events and those occurring between publication dates are printed according to the schedule below. To enter events or to access event details, visit the online calendar at: www.na.org/?ID?=comingup-toc. (If you don't have Internet access, fax or mail your event info to 818.700.0700, attn: NA Way; or The NA Way; Box 9999; Van Nuys, CA 91409 USA.)

Issue	Submit event info by	For events taking place during
January	15 October	second week of January through first week of April
April	15 January	second week of April through first week of July
July	15 April	second week of July through first week of October
October	15 July	second week of October through first week of January

Bahamas

New Providence 30 Oct-1 Nov; Bahamas Area Celebration 20; British Colonial Hilton, Nassau; rsvns: 242.302.9000; info: 242.456.6911; speaker tape deadline: 19 Sep; write: Bahamas Area; Box N-3849; Nassau; 00010 Bahamas

Brasil

Rio de Janeiro 2-4 Oct; 1 Encompasso da Area Oceanica; Acampamento Batista, Niterói; rsvns: 21.93480162; info: 21.92916423

Canada

Alberta 13-15 Nov; Canadian Assembly Convention 17; Coast Plaza Hotel, Calgary; www.canaacna.org

Quebec 9-11 Oct; Quebec Regional Convention 22; Hôtel des Seigneurs, St-Hyacinthe; www.crqna.org

Saskatchewan 14-16 Aug; Southern Saskatchewan Area Convention 25; Kings Corner Church of God, Regina; www.ssascinc.sasktelwebsite. net

Denmark

Skanderbork 31 Jul-2 Aug; Area Midtjylland Konvent og Camp; Audonicon, Skanderborg; www.nakonvent.dk

El Salvador

San Salvador 31 Jul-2 Aug; El Salvador Regional Convention 6; Hotel Casino Siesta, San Salvador; www.naelsalvador.net

Israel

Dead Sea 3-5 Sep; Israel Regional Convention 10; Royal Dead Sea Hotel, Dead Sea; write: Israel Region; Hamikzoa Street 6; Tel Aviv, 67772

Mexico

Sonora 27-29 Nov; Primer Convencion Region Baja Son; Peñasco del Sol Hotel, Puerto Peñasco; www.bajason-na.org

Nepal

Kathmandu 9-11 Oct; Kathmandu Area Convention 5; Hotel Madhuvan Resort, Kathmandu; www.nakathmandu.org

Puerto Rico

San Juan 24-26 Jul; Puerto Rico Regional Convention 20; Condado Plaza Hotel and Casino, San Juan; info: 787.274.0488

Spain

Barcelona 20-23 Aug; World Convention 33; Centre Convencions Internacional (CCIB), Barcelona; www.na.org/wcna

Turkey

Istanbul 16-18 Oct; Turkey Regional Convention Natak 7; Grand Hotel Gursoy, Istanbul; www.na-turkiye.org

Venezuela

Miranda 12-15 Nov; Convention of Latin America 9 and Latin American Zonal Forum; Colegio San Ignacio de Loyola, Urbanizacion La Cas, Caracas; www.clana9.com; www.fzlatino.org

United States

Alabama 18-20 Sep; Alabama NW Florida Region Spiritual Retreat; Cheaha State Park Lodge, Campsites, Delta; info: 256.365.2553

Arkansas 28-30 Aug; Central Arkansas Area Convention; Austin Hotel, Hot Springs; www.caasc.org

2) 2-4 Oct; Central Arkansas Area Ozark Mountain High Campout; Petit Jean State Park, Morrilton; www.caasc.org

3) 16-18 Oct; Arkansas Regional Convention 2; Holiday Inn City Center, Fort. Smith; www.arscna.org

California 7-9 Aug; Central Sierra South Area Mountain Miracle Campout 25; Pinecrest Campgrounds, Pinecrest; info: 209.586.9632

2) 14-16 Aug; South Shore Area Mountain High Campout; Camp Richardson Resort, South Lake Tahoe; info: 530.318.9862

3) 28-30 Aug; River Cities and 916 North Area Men's Spiritual Retreat 8; Eagle Lake, Susanville; www.916northna.org

4) 4-7 Sep; San Francisco Area Rainbow Convention 14; Hotel Whitcomb, San Francisco; www.sfna.org

5) 16-18 Oct; First Mexico, Arizona, California Convention; Quechan Casino Resort, Winterhaven; http://sites.google.com/site/maccna1/ **Colorado** 23-25 Oct; Colorado Regional Convention 23; Crowne Plaza Hotel, Colorado Springs; www.nacolorado.org/crcna

Connecticut 21-23 Aug; Greater Hartford Area Miracles Do Happen Campout; Camp CedarCrest, Orange; www.ghasc.org/2008_flyers/campout09flyer.pdf

2) 9-11 Oct; Solutions for Sisters Group Women's Retreat; Incarnation Center, Ivoryton; info: 203.676.1363

Florida 7-9 Aug; Treasure Coast Area Convention; Hutchinson Island Marriott Resort, Stuart; www.treasurecoastareana.com

2) 14-16 Aug; Freedom Group Speaker Jam 8; Sheraton Sand Key Resort, Clearwater Beach; info: 513.295.3130

3) 4-7 Sep; South Florida Regional Convention 15; Deauville Beach Resort, Miami Beach; www.sfrcna.org

Hawaii 14-16 Aug; Maui Area Gathering; Camp Kenae, Keanae; www.na-hawaii.org

Illinois 21-23 Aug; Living the Dream Area Convention 7; Crowne Plaza Hotel, Springfield; rsvns: 217.529.7777; info: 217.522.9906;

Indiana 11-13 Sep; Central Indiana Area Convention 6; Marriott East, Indianapolis; info: 317.828.3642

Maryland 18-20 Sep; Tri-County Area Unity Retreat 3; Lions Camp Merrick, Nanjemoy; www.cprna.org/events/index.htm

2) 23-25 Oct; Ocean Gateway Area Convention 12; Clarion Fontainebleau Resort, Ocean City; http://www.geocities.com/jpjeanie55/regform.html

Massachusetts 4-7 Sep; Southeastern Massachusetts Rough'n It in Recovery Campout 13; Camp Yomechas, Middleboro; rsvns: 508.642.2424; www.newenglandna.org

2) 10-12 Sep; Central Mass Area Spur-of-the Moment Campout 12; Camp Marshall, Spencer; info: 781.884.1167

3) 11-13 Sep; Berkshire County Area Convention; Crowne Plaza Hotel, Pittsfield; www.berkshirena.org

Michigan 14-16 Aug; Steppin' Up Group R&R at the Fort 9; Camp Fort Hill, Sturgis; info: 269.506.9160

Minnesota 31 Jul-2 Aug; Back to Basics Area Hopefest 5; McGowan's Farm, Mankato; info: 507.351.4410

2) 18-20 Sep; First Inner Cities Unity Convention; Hyatt Regency Minneapolis; www.icuctc.com

Mississippi 23-25 Oct; Mississippi Regional Convention; Clarion Hotel, Jackson; info: 601.316.3689

Missouri 4-6 Sep; Subject to Change Group Discover Recovery Campout 2; Cuivre River State Park-Derricotte Campground, Troy; info: 618.520.6895

2) 18-20 Sep; Show-Me Region Unity Campvention; Lake of the Ozarks State Park-Camp Rising Sun, Kaiser; info: 573.893.3006

Nebraska 2-4 Oct; Nebraska Regional Convention; Howard Johnson Inn. Lincoln: info: 402.796.233

New Hampshire 17-19 Jul; Seacoast Area Freedom under the Stars 19; Goose Hollow Campground, Thornton; info: 603.427.0965

New Jersey 16-18 Oct; Greater Atlantic City Area Convention 2; Clarion Hotel, Egg Harbor Township; info: 609.344.9030

New York 14-16 Aug; Suffolk Area Convention 9; Marriot, Melville; www.sasna.org

2) 4-7 Sep; Buffalo Area Recovery in the Woods 21; Camp Pioneer and Retreat Center, Angola; www.nawny.org

North Carolina 11-13 Sep; Central Piedmont Area Convention 15; Holiday Inn, Salisbury; rsvns: 704.637.3100

Ohio 25-26 Jul; Midwest Zonal Forum Workshop and Meeting; Crowne Plaza - Columbus North, Columbus; rsvns: 614.885.1885; www.naohio.com

2) 2-4 Oct; Western Reserve Area Woman to Woman; Clarion Inn, Hudson; info: 330.612.2016

Pennsylvania 14-16 Aug; South Hills Area Spiritual Retreat 4; Racoon Creek State Park, Racoon Creek; info: 412.512.6434

2) 21-23 Aug; Greater Erie Area Spiritual Retreat 3; YMCA Camp Sherwin, Lake City; info: 814.323.2515

South Carolina 14-16 Aug; Central Carolina Area Welcome Home 14; Courtyard Marriott, Columbia; www.crna.org

South Dakota 16-18 Oct; South Dakota Regional Convention; Best Western Kelly Inn, Yankton; www.sdrna.com

Tennessee 28-30 Aug; Middle Tennessee Area Unity Convention 9; Millennium Maxwell House, Nashville; info: 615.428.6305

Texas 2-4 Oct; Esperanza Area Frolic in the Woods; Garner State Park, Concan; info: 210.434.0665

Virginia 31Jul -2 Aug; Almost Heaven Area Convention 23; 4-H Center, Front Royal; info: 304.279.3105

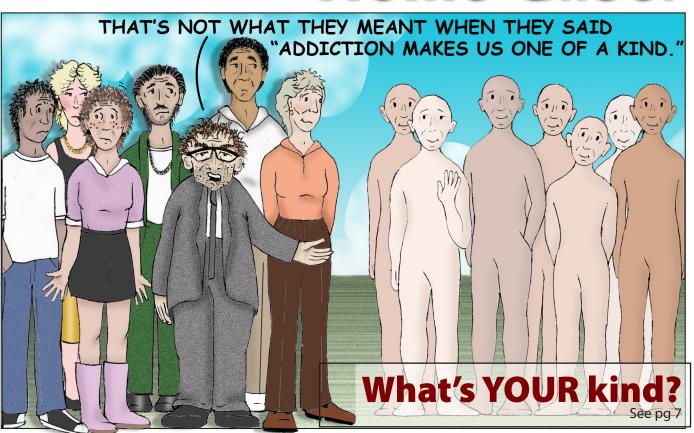
2) 4-7 Sep; Marion Group Campout 13 Part 2; Hungry Mother Park Lutheran Retreat Center, Marion; wwww.mana-e-tn.org

Washington 21-23 Aug; Tri-Cities Area Summer Sizzles; Clover Island Inn, Kennewick; www.3citiesna.org

2) 27-30 Aug; Hardcore and Free Group Campout; Eagles Park, Zillah; www.hardcoreandfree.com

Wisconsin 25-27 Sep; Big Rivers Area Let Loose 4; Wyalusing State Park; Hugh Harper Indoor Group Camp, Bagley; www.bigriversna.org

Home Group



NAWS PRODUCT UPDATE

Castilian

IP No. 13: By Young Addicts, For Young Addicts

De los adictos jóvenes, para los adictos jóvenes

Item No. CS-3113 Price US \$0.26



Croatian

Group reading cards - Set of seven

Item No. CR-9130 Price US \$4.00

French

Just for Today – Pocket-sized edition

Juste pour aujourd'hui

Item No. FR-1113 Price US \$8.00



IP No. 13: By Young Addicts, For Young Addicts

Par des jeunes dépendants, pour des jeunes dépendants

Item No. FR-3113 Price US \$0.26



IP No. 27:

For the Parents or Guardians of Young People in NA

Pour les parents ou les tuteurs des jeunes dépendants en rétablissement

Item No. FR-3127 Price US \$0.26

Lithuanian

IP No. 10: Working Step Four in NA **Dirbant su Ketvirtu Žingsniu Narkomanuose**

Item No. LT-3110 Price US \$0.65

anonimuose



Maltese



Keytags

Welcome through multiple years Item No. MT-4100 – 4108 Price US \$0.45



Manipuri

IP No. 10:
Working Step Four in NA
নাকোতিক্স এনোনিমশতা মরিশুবা খোঙথাং পাঙথোকপা
Item No. MP-3110 Price US \$0.65

Norwegian

White Booklet

Anonyme Narkomane

Item No. NR-1500 Price US \$0.63



IP No. 10: Working Step Four in NA

Arbeide med trinn fire i

Anonyme Narkomane

Item No. NR-3110 Price US \$0.65















Price Change for Translated Basic Texts

The price for translated Basic Texts with only the first ten chapters was originally set to ensure availability of this material rather than being priced like other literature. With the Sixth Edition Basic Text being priced at \$11, it seems past time to adjust the cost of these alternate versions. Effective 1 July 2009, the price of these versions will change from \$5.50 to \$7.50. We will continue to work with affected communities that receive additional discounts, subsidies, or free literature

Change in Pricing at WSO Europe

After reconsidering proposed WSO-Europe price changes, we decided to standardize pricing for one year (1 July 2009 through 30 June 2010), splitting the difference in price changes between NAWS and the local communities. During this period, a Sixth Edition Basic Text in US dollars is \$11.00 and 9.50 in Euros. IPs priced at \$0.21 are 0.18 €. Keytags are \$0.45 and 0.40 €, while bronze medallions are priced at \$2.75 and 2.40 €. During this time, we will further discuss fair and reasonable arrangements for all. For a complete Euro price list, please visit our product webpage: www.na.org/?ID=catalog-products or email wso-europe@na.org.

Sold Out

Inventory of the 2nd printing of our Commemorative 25th Anniversary Basic Text has been depleted and discontinued.

Coming soon

New Products Available September 2009



Sixth Edition Basic Text Gift Edition

Features a handsome deep blue and light blue leatherette cover, debossed NA logo, and silver lettering, presented in a one-piece debossed gift box.

Item No. 1107 US \$25.00

Basic Journal

A whimsical cover design opens to ruled pages in this 6 x 9 inch journal.

Item No. 9400 US \$18.00

Basic Text Pocket-sized Softcover

The 3.5 x 5.4 inch pocket-sized softcover fits easily in pocket, purse, briefcase, or backpack.



Medallion Holders

In response to fellowship demand, we are offering a keyring or necklace in gold or silver finish.

Medallions sold separately

Keychains US \$12.00

Item No. 6090 (gold) Item No. 6091 (silver)

Necklaces US \$12.00

Item No. 6095 (gold) Item No. 6096 (silver)

Tri-plate Medallions

A black velveteen pouch will be included with each tri-plate medallion and the price will be adjusted to \$20.28 each or \$16.28 for 25 pieces or more.















