

Disruptive and Predatory Behavior



WORLD SERVICES

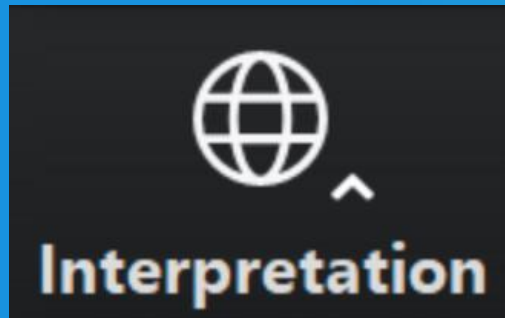
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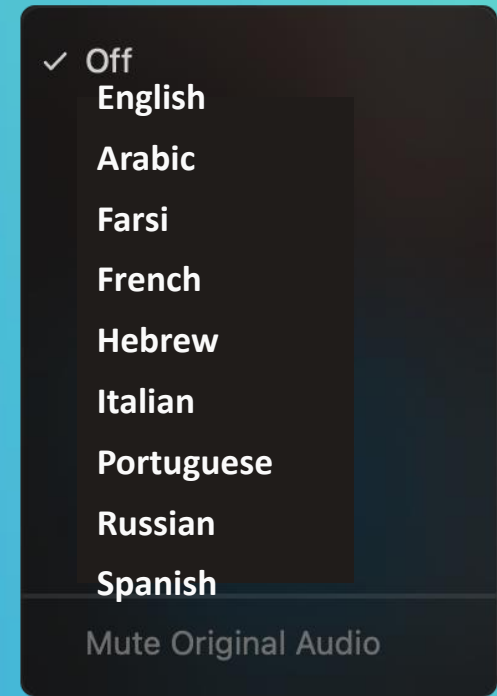
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1. Find at bottom of screen



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SATURDAY • 6 SEPTEMBER 2025 • 9:00 am PDT (16:00 GMT)
Serenity Prayer



WORLD UNITY *Day*

No matter what conflicts are unfolding in the world at large,
we aspire to an ideal of unity: Our common welfare should come first.

Basic Text, Preface

Every year, we come together to say the Serenity Prayer for the addict who still suffers and to celebrate the miracle of recovery. There are so many ways to celebrate—attend a local Unity Day event or meeting, gather with friends in person or virtually, or join us . . .

Around the clock,
from around the world!



9:00 pm 5 September – 9:00 pm 6 September

24-hours of speakers, videos,
workshops, and more!

Members from different zones and
NA World Services are creating and curating
content to share.

There's no wrong time to tune in!

Details will be posted at:

WWW.NA.ORG/ANNUALEVENTS

Member Contributions

Contributions like yours make it possible for us to provide support and services to NA members, groups, and service bodies worldwide.

We really appreciate your continued support. We cannot thank you enough.

Choose amount



As a Fellowship NA declines all outside contributions; we only accept contributions from NA Members.

One-time

♥ Monthly

Quarterly

Annually

You can log in to edit your recurring gift any time [?](#)

US Dollar (USD)



Current Issue Discussion Topics

Issue Discussion Topics for the 2023-2026 Conference Cycle.

[Home](#) > [Workshop and Issue Discussion Materials](#) > [Current Issue Discussion Topics](#)

The Issue Discussion Topics for the 2023-2026 Conference Cycle are: Gender-Neutral and Inclusive Language in NA Literature, Dealing with Disruptive and Predatory Behavior, Reimagining and Revitalizing Service Committees, and DRT/MAT as It Relates to NA. All of these IDTs are connected to surveys. The survey links are at the bottom of the materials list. Please use the online survey as it helps us to collect your input.

▼ Gender-Neutral and Inclusive Language in NA Literature

▼ Dealing with Disruptive and Predatory Behavior

▼ DRT/MAT as It Relates to NA: Helping Members Take Root

▼ Reimagining and Revitalizing Service Committees



na.org/localresources

resources from local service bodies

na.org/sps

Disruptive & Violent
Behavior Service
Pamphlet written
in 2007

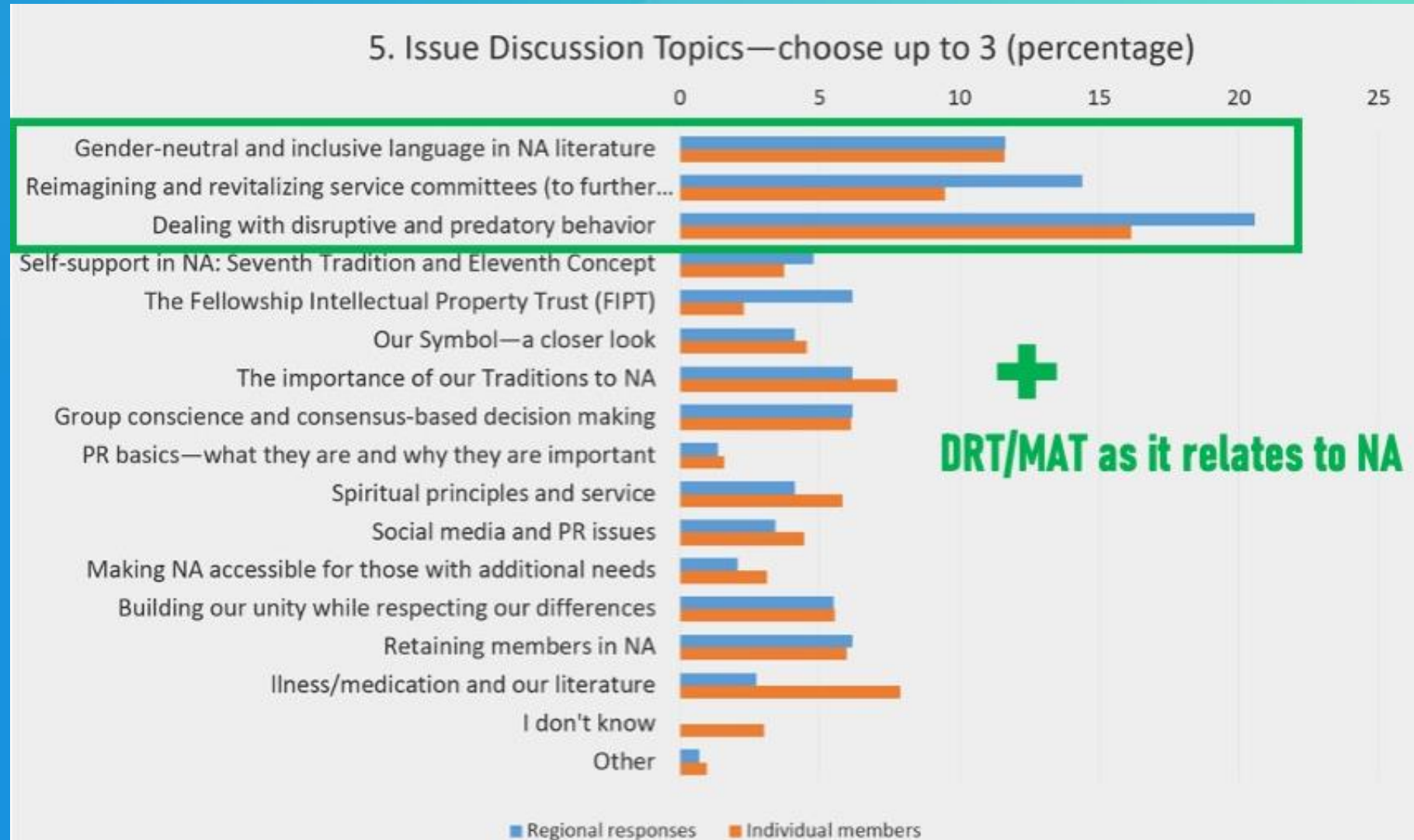
**DISRUPTIVE
& VIOLENT
BEHAVIOR**

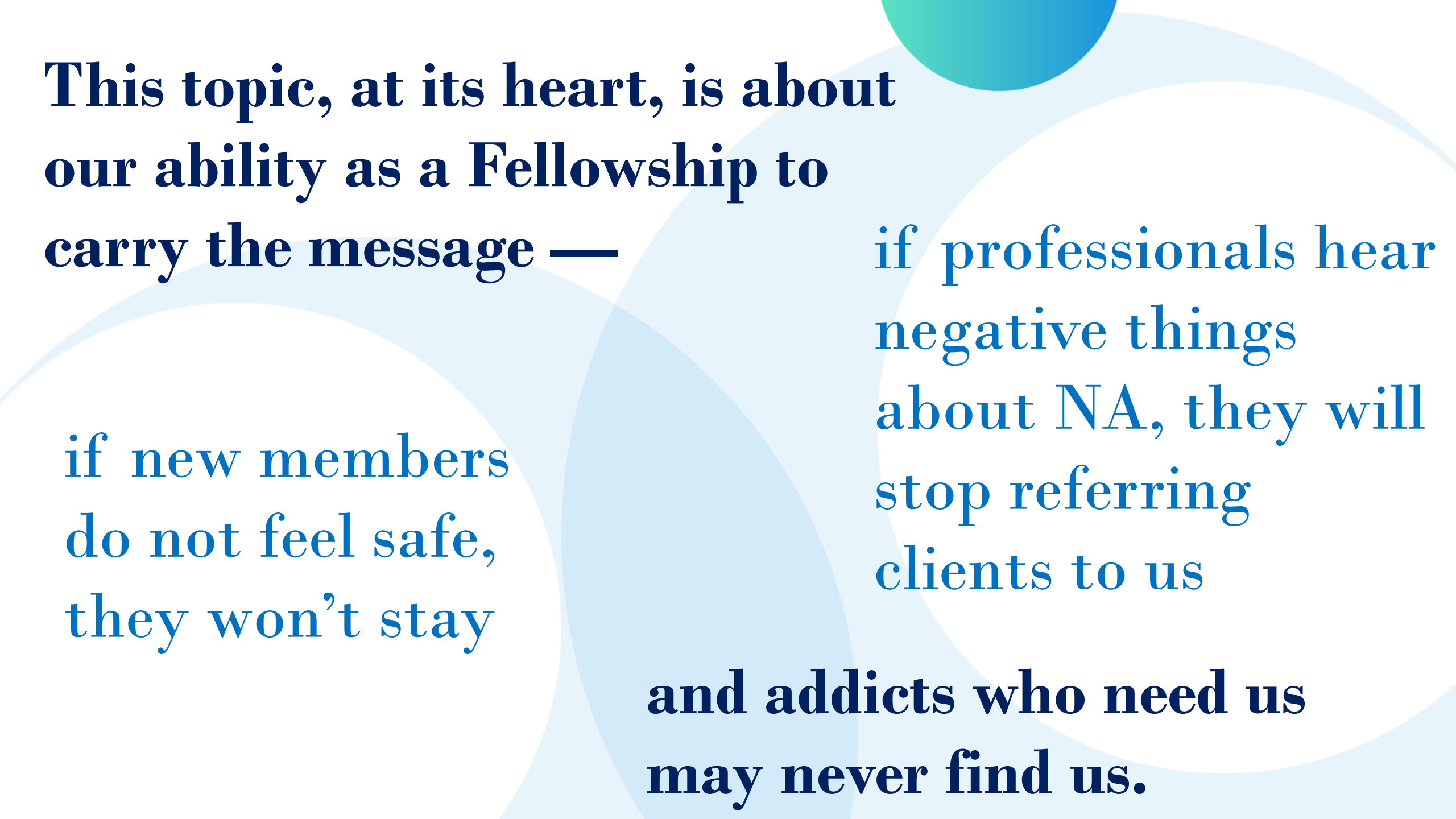
**SERVIDORES DE CONFIANZA
DEL GRUPO:
FUNCIONES Y
RESPONSABILIDADES**

**COMPORTAMENTI
VIOLENTI E
DESTABILIZZANTI**

**السلوك المعيق
والعنيف**

Guided by Fellowship input and response to the *CAR* survey, the 2023 World Service Conference selected this as an Issue Discussion Topic, or IDT.





**This topic, at its heart, is about
our ability as a Fellowship to
carry the message —**

*if new members
do not feel safe,
they won't stay*

*if professionals hear
negative things
about NA, they will
stop referring
clients to us*

**and addicts who need us
may never find us.**



From
*Living
Clean ...*

**“All our lives we had
looked for the peace and
safety we experience in
recovery.”**

*Addressing predatory and
disruptive behavior is part
of how we give it away.*

Atmosphere of Recovery

An atmosphere of recovery is about making sure everyone who needs NA feels safe and welcome.

Anonymity, sharing, listening, respect, no judgment, and safety.

What else characterizes an atmosphere of recovery?



Negative Behaviors

We need to come to a common understanding of the problem before we can seek a solution.

One way to think about disruptive behavior generally is behavior that interferes with the peace, security, and integrity of a meeting and its members



Negative Behaviors

Predatory behavior happens when a member knowingly or unknowingly takes advantage of another member's vulnerability.

- Sometimes blatant, sometimes subtle
- Characterized by manipulation
- Sexual connotation or targets sexuality



Here are some examples of disruptive and predatory behaviors:

- **Bullying/picking on/harassing**
- **Threatening physical violence**
- **Racist words or actions**
- **Homophobic words or actions**
- **Theft**
- **Asking members for money**
- **Private messaging members (virtual)**
- **Distribution of non-approved literature**
- **Stalking**
- **Violating restraining orders**
- **Use phone to record during meeting**
- **Loud family members/pets (virtual)**
- **Disruptive children (in-person)**
- **Interrupting when member sharing**
- **Making unwanted sexual advances**

Positive Solutions

We should be clear to all addicts:
You are welcome.

*Behavior that harms others or disrupts the
atmosphere of recovery is not welcome.*



Positive Solutions

The worst thing we can do for a newcomer is make NA feel like where they came from.

We need to do our best to protect our members, while respecting their right to make their own decisions.

- It can be a fine line between being protective and overbearing
- Am I the right person to offer help?



Disruptions in Virtual Meetings

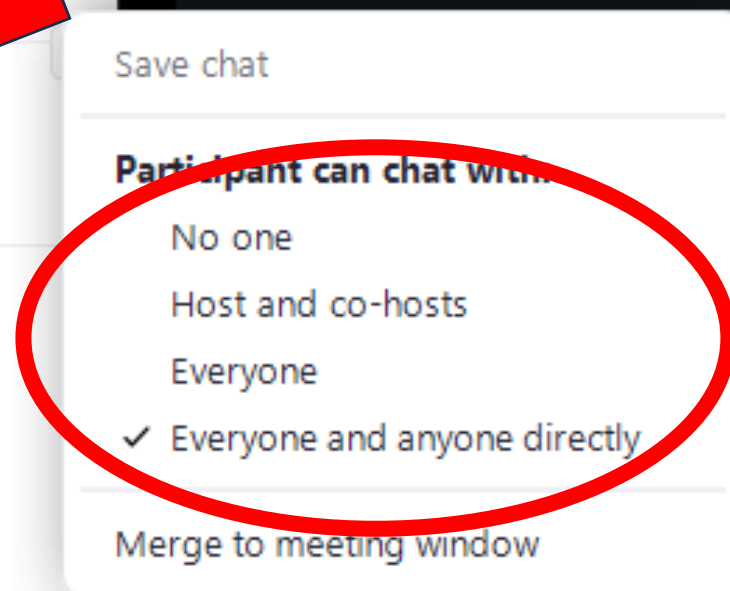
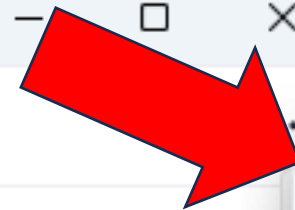
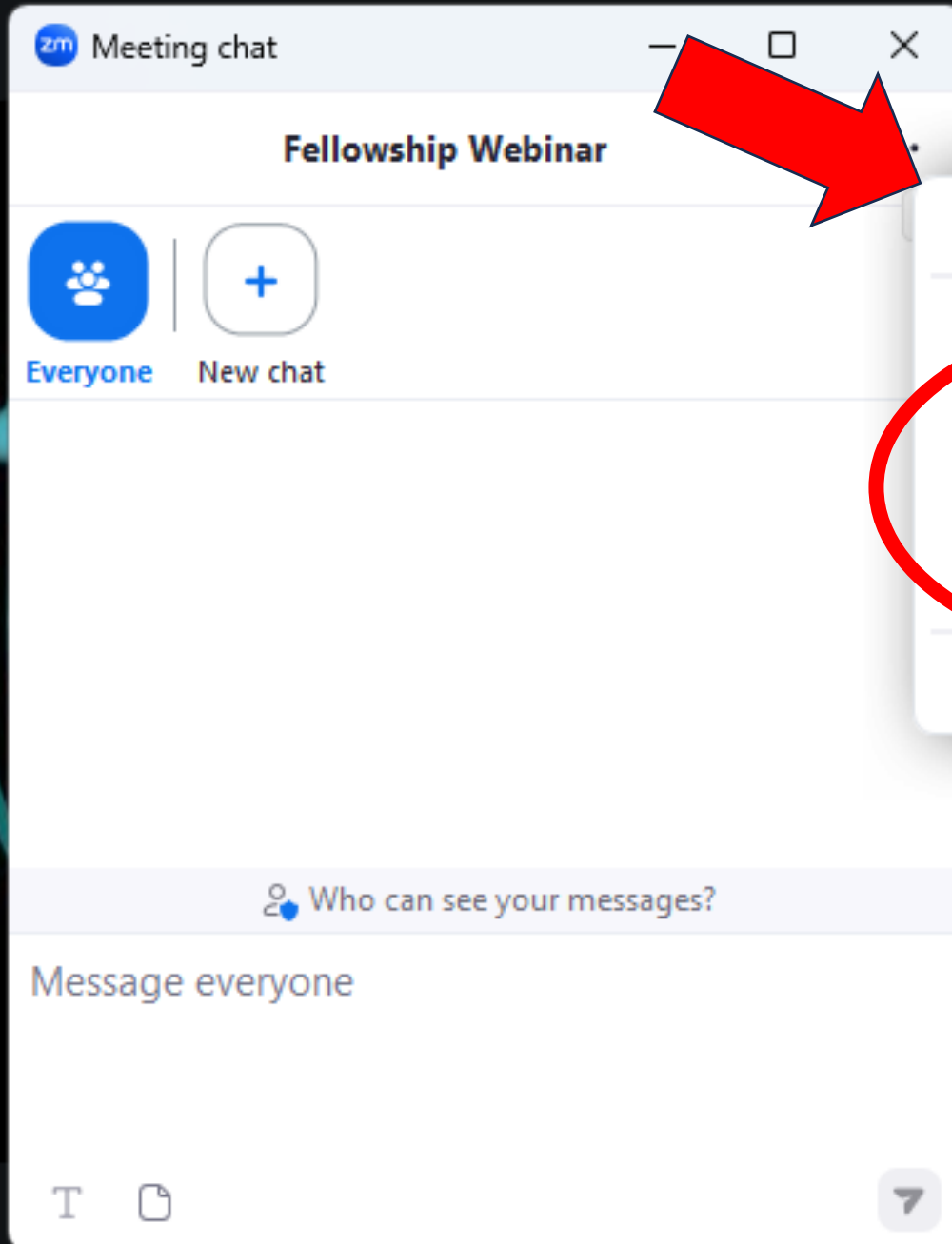
Sometimes an attendee's bad behavior might be a sign that they really need a meeting!

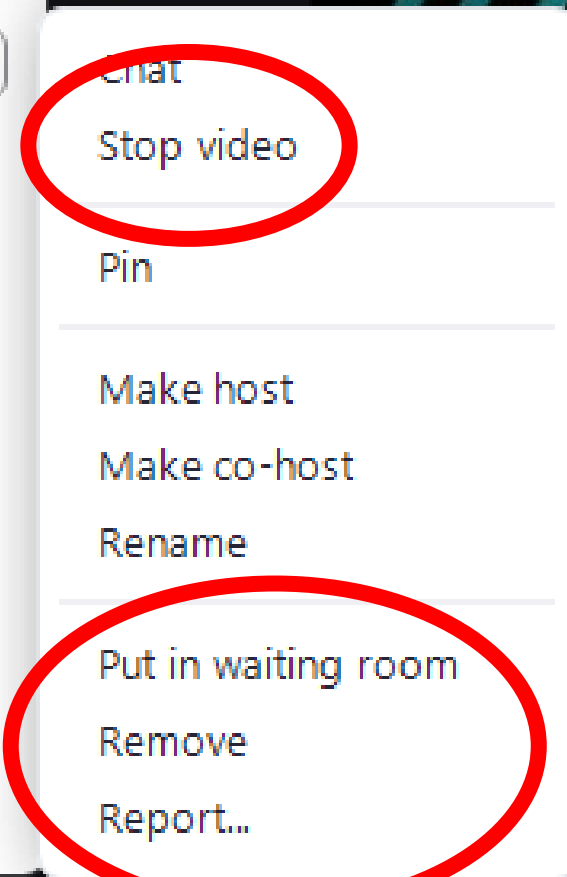
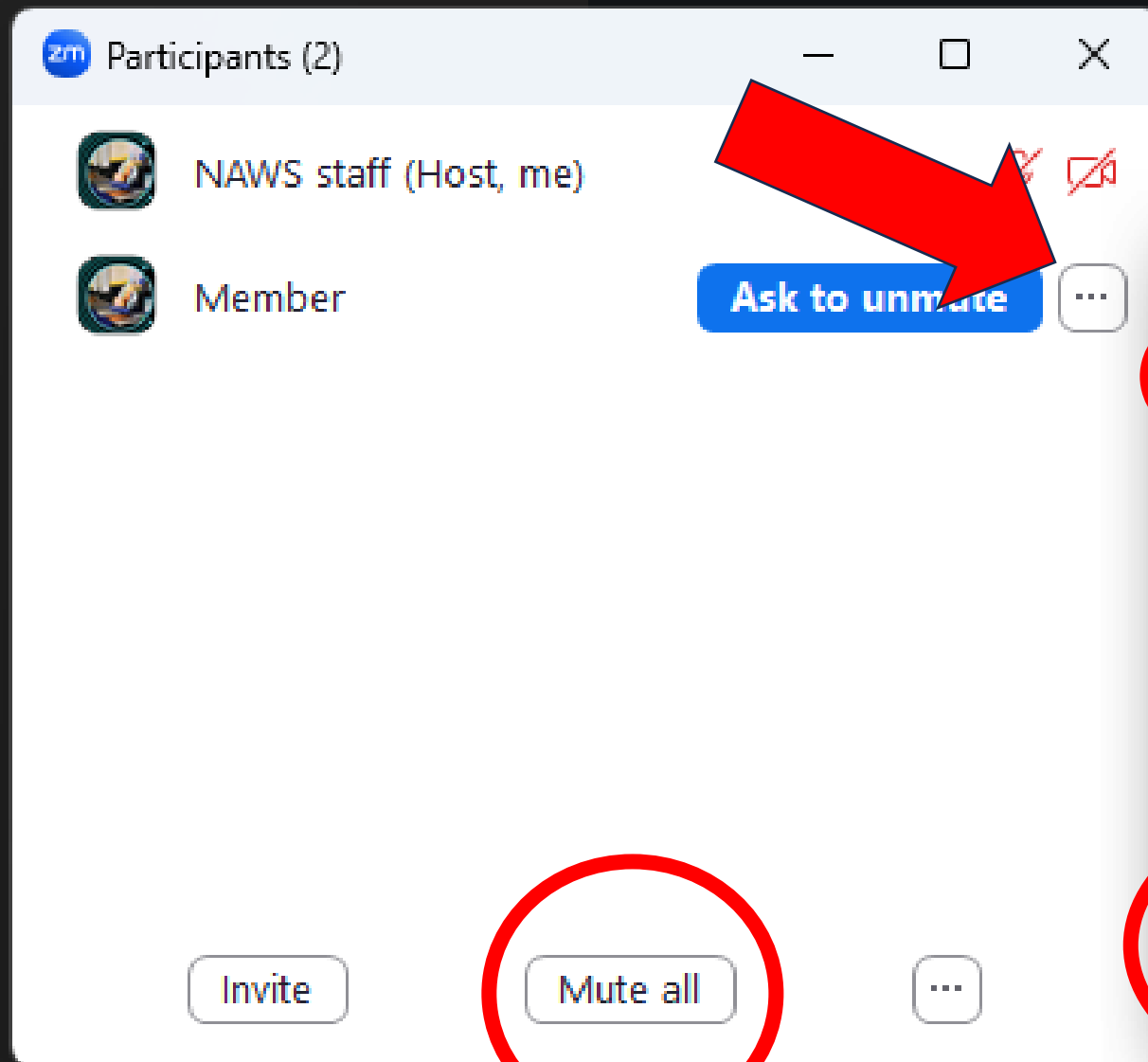
There are steps we can take to protect the meeting:

- mute or turn off a camera
- restrict screen sharing
- close down the chat feature

There are tools and suggestions
in Virtual Meeting Basics: na.org/basics







Below is a list of possible solutions:

- **Add a paragraph to the group format**
- **Approach new members and make sure they feel welcome**
- **Join another member(s) and pull aside the member exhibiting the behavior and try to talk to them**
- **If someone is violating a protective order, have a couple of people offer to go to another meeting with them**
- **Turn off camera/put a member in the waiting room (virtual)**
- **Discuss behavior in a group business meeting**
- **Chairperson/leader/group secretary can request a short break or ask group to join in a prayer or moment of silence**
- **Hold a recovery meeting focused on a discussion about atmosphere of recovery**
- **Discuss with other groups at a local service body meeting**
- **Approach member in a loving and caring way**
- **Temporarily suspend meeting**
- **Call law enforcement**

The Asia Pacific Forum





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Solutions for Predatory Behavior



What is Predatory Behavior?

Many recovering addicts around the world have been thinking about the best way to address predatory behavior in the fellowship. In meetings, one of the most common ways this occurs is unwelcome sexual and romantic advances towards members, especially newcomers.

While the vast majority of NA members do not engage in this kind of behavior, the unfortunate reality is that too many of us, Especially our most vulnerable, have experienced it in various forms.



What is Predatory Behavior?

Some may perceive the discussion of this topic as controversial and divisive, but the future of our fellowship depends upon our collective willingness to engage in honest dialogue about difficult topics that affect our most vulnerable members. This pamphlet addresses predatory behavior in the fellowship from multiple perspectives, drawing directly from the experience of our members. What follows is a solution-oriented discussion, reflection, and list of suggestions for moving forward in a spirit of unity.

“We want our place of recovery to be a safe place...”

Basic Text, “What is the Narcotics Anonymous Program?”



Historical Context

The problem at hand is a real part of our history. Though predatory behavior is not exclusive to our fellowship, it may be exacerbated in the recovery community. Most of us have heard the term “13th Step” used to describe a situation in which a member with more clean time takes advantage of a member in early recovery. This is a form of exploitation that deprives the newcomer of an opportunity to recover. It is predatory by nature because one person has more power than the other.



What is Predatory Behavior?

- Requires looking beyond individual acts of misconduct towards the institutional nature of sexism and male dominance in history
- Vast majority of cases involve women
- Issue has always been prevalent in NA; partly because problems in NA are often a reflection of problems in society

“Mostly we know when we are doing something wrong, taking advantage of someone who is vulnerable, being controlling, deceptive, or abusive—and we have a responsibility to ourselves as well as to the other person to stop it.”

Living Clean: The Journey Continues, Relationships



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Moving Forward - The “Safety Statement”

- Small, but important step forward
- Accountability and responsibility begins with the group
- Shedding light on predatory behavior = difficult discussions ahead
- Uncharted territory full we must navigate together and grow
- How do we handle reports of harassment, abuse, or threatening behavior?
- May be times when we should suggest that a member seeks outside help from a mental health professional or, in extreme cases, law enforcement



NA doesn't enforce rules or regulate behavior, but a safe atmosphere is integral to our primary purpose. Harassment, threats, or abuse jeopardize our primary purpose. If someone feels physically or emotionally unsafe due to the behavior of another NA member, they may be unable or unwilling to stay in the meeting or to return, preventing them from hearing the message, participating in their recovery, and benefiting from the program and fellowship. Predatory behavior threatens the livelihood of the individual addict and the fellowship as a whole.

“In Narcotics Anonymous, we are concerned with protecting ourselves from ourselves.” Basic Text, Tradition Two



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A “Safety Statement” can be integrated into the opening reports of trusted servants or included as a separate reading. The statement below is adapted from IP #29 “An Introduction to NA Meetings.”

“We strongly discourage any harassment, threats, or disturbing behavior before, during, and after our meetings. This includes unwelcome sexual and romantic advances towards members, especially newcomers. Our meetings are for sharing NA recovery. It is the responsibility of all group members to help maintain an atmosphere in which every addict is safe to recover. If you feel harassed or threatened, share your concerns with the meeting leader or a trusted servant.”



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The statement above is not fellowship-approved literature but a group can decide to include it in their format. The “Safety Statement” has been adapted from IP #29 to be more suitable for the group setting. If groups are considering the inclusion of the “Safety Statement” in their meeting format, they can assure members it is closely derived from IP #29, which is fellowship-approved literature. Most importantly, the “Safety Statement” embodies the spiritual principles that are needed to cultivate an atmosphere of recovery for all our members.

“An atmosphere of recovery in our groups is one of our most valued assets, and we must guard it carefully...”



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"In active addiction, we worked hard to reach goals that left us feeling empty, lost, and dead inside. We got what we needed, no matter the cost to ourselves or those around us. As obsession and compulsion drove us to bitter ends, we surprised ourselves at what we would do, or what we would sacrifice. The more we pursued our goals, the less we felt any sense of purpose at all."

Guiding Principles: The Spirit of Our Traditions, Tradition Five

"11. What is an atmosphere of recovery? As a member of an NA group, what am I doing to create and sustain an atmosphere of recovery?"

"12. What do I recognize as exploitative behavior? What is my part in our shared responsibility to keep NA a safe place for all?"

Guiding Principles: The Spirit of Our Traditions, Tradition Five, Questions For Members



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Preliminary questions that may serve as a starting point for discussions at business meetings or annual group inventories.

- What should a meeting leader or trusted servant do when a member reports an incident involving predatory behavior?
- Are we equipped to handle such reports? If not, how can we train trusted servants to deal with these issues?
- When should members intervene in predatory behavior?
- What is the best way to approach or confront a member who is engaging in predatory behavior?
- What kinds of incidents fall under the realm of “outside issues”?
- When should we suggest that members seek outside help?
- What protections are in place for minors and young addicts who attend our meetings?
- How can we assure parents of young addicts that their children are safe in our meetings?
- How do our home groups take an inventory of these issues on a regular basis?



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These questions represent the beginning of a necessary and fundamental healing process that should take place among reflective NA members around the world. Rather than problems, these questions present us with opportunities for spiritual growth. When we come together in a spirit of unity, nothing is too great a challenge. Our resourcefulness, experience, strength, and hope always prevail when our minds and hearts are open to God's will for us and the power to carry it out.



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Spirituality in Action

There is a growing number of us, men and women, who want to make a difference and become part of the solution. It's especially important, now more than ever, for us to organize by holding learning days, workshops, speaker jams, conventions, conferences, and other forums that feature speakers and topics that address predatory behavior in the fellowship. We should make an effort to seek out those individuals, groups, areas, and regions who have already been working diligently to make progress. Discussing this topic openly doesn't cast Narcotics Anonymous in a negative light, but instead demonstrates our honesty, courage, and willingness to apply spiritual principles to a problem that has been affecting NA members for too long. As we look toward the future, we should always be concerned with the safety, protection, and recovery of all our members, especially newcomers, young people, and other vulnerable addicts. We are not defined by how we treat our most experienced members, but by the actions we take to ensure the recovery of the addicts who need us most. Breaking the silence on this topic is a spiritual act of love, faith, and courage that has the power to help our fellowship right now and in the future.

Don't forget to fill out the form at na.org/survey

This is one of four IDTs this cycle.

The other three are:

- Gender Neutral and Inclusive Language in NA Literature
- Reimagining and revitalizing service committees (to further the reach of the NA message, improve communication, provide mentorship and training, and make service more attractive and accessible, learning from our experience the past few years)
- DRT/MAT as it relates to NA

**As workshop material is available,
it will be posted to na.org/idt**

