



# **A Guide to Public Information**

**Revised 4/88**



## THE TWELVE STEPS OF NARCOTICS ANONYMOUS.

1. We admitted that we were powerless over our addiction, that our lives had become unmanageable.
2. We came to believe that a Power greater than ourselves could restore us to sanity.
3. We made a decision to turn our will and our lives over to the care of God *as we understood Him*.
4. We made a searching and fearless moral inventory of ourselves.
5. We admitted to God, to ourselves, and to another human being the exact nature of our wrongs.
6. We were entirely ready to have God remove all these defects of character.
7. We humbly asked Him to remove our shortcomings.
8. We made a list of all persons we had harmed, and became willing to make amends to them all.
9. We made direct amends to such people wherever possible, except when to do so would injure them or others.
10. We continued to take personal inventory and when we were wrong promptly admitted it.
11. We sought through prayer and meditation to improve our conscious contact with God *as we understood Him*, praying only for knowledge of His will for us and the power to carry that out.
12. Having had a spiritual awakening as a result of these steps, we tried to carry this message to addicts, and to practice these principles in all our affairs.

“My gratitude speaks,  
When I care and  
When I share with others  
the N.A. way”



# A GUIDE TO PUBLIC INFORMATION

Revised 4/88



## TABLE OF CONTENTS

<b>INTRODUCTION</b> .....	1
<b>Section 1: BASIC INFORMATION</b> .....	2
What Is It? Who Does It? How Does It Get Done? .....	2
P.I. at Various Levels of Service What Every Member Should Know .....	2
Public Information Contingency Plan.....	5
World Service Contingency Plan .....	6
<b>Section 2: START UP AND STRUCTURE</b> .....	8
How to Get Started.....	8
Start Up Outline for Area/Regional P.I. Subcommittees .....	9
Sample Guidelines.....	11
Guidelines for Cooperative Efforts in P.I. in Overlapping Areas or Regions.....	12
H&I/P.I. Cooperation .....	14
The Twelve Traditions and Public Information .....	17
<b>Section 3: THE WORK ITSELF</b> .....	24
Phonelines, Bulletins, and Letters.....	24
Sample Bulletins, Flyers, Newspaper Ads .....	26
The Use of Letters in Public Information.....	27
Sample Letters to Groups/Organizations.....	30
Public Information/Community Meeting .....	37
Community Meeting Format.....	38
Public Information and the Media.....	40
Letters for Radio and TV .....	53
Guide for Writing News Releases.....	58

Sample News Release .....	59
Radio PSA Scripts .....	60
TV PSA Scripts .....	66
<b>Section 4: KEEPING THE N.A. FELLOWSHIP INFORMED .....</b>	<b>68</b>
Learning Days and Workshops .....	68
 <b>QUICK REFERENCES FOR DO'S AND DON'TS</b>	
Do's and Don'ts for P.I. Service Work in General.....	15
Do's and Don'ts for Phonelines, Bulletins and Letters.....	26
Do's and Don'ts for Letter Writing.....	29
Do's and Don'ts for Presentations to Groups and Community Meetings .....	38

## INTRODUCTION

### About this Guide

It is essential that all public information efforts of Narcotics Anonymous be well planned, prepared and carried out. The clarity and quality of our public image has a direct bearing on whether or not addicts who need us will be able to find us. For that reason, P.I. efforts must be undertaken with patient, careful planning.

The information in this handbook was developed to help P.I. subcommittees sort through the sometimes complicated issues involved in P.I. work. You are strongly urged to read it carefully and consider each of your P.I. projects in relation to the applicable sections before proceeding. If you do that, you will find that many of the potential difficulties can be avoided, and this important area of N.A. service can be quite fascinating and rewarding.

Throughout the handbook you will find many references to items contained on other pages. These are samples which may be altered to reflect the needs or circumstances of your individual committees. They are included as a reflection of the collective experience of many P.I. subcommittees throughout the world and provide valuable information which we hope you will find useful.

### Revisions and Updates to This Guide

Portions of this guide are incomplete. Additional revisions and updates to these sections will be ongoing projects of the WSC P.I. Committee and sent out for review and approval as they are completed.

Due to the changing nature of public information work, this is an area of service which will need continual updating. We look forward to members' input in order to continue presenting the most comprehensive materials possible for use throughout the Fellowship.

## SECTION 1

### BASIC INFORMATION

#### WHAT IS IT? WHO DOES IT? HOW DOES IT GET DONE?

##### What Is It?

Public information is informing the public about recovery from addiction through the Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions of Narcotics Anonymous.

The purpose of a public information subcommittee is to inform the public that N.A. exists and offers recovery from the disease of addiction.

##### Who Does It?

Public information work is accomplished through service committees directly responsible to those they serve. These P.I. subcommittees provide community awareness of what N.A. is, as well as how, when, and where we are available.

##### How Does It Get Done?

We get the job done by establishing clear guidelines for our subcommittees, setting goals, prioritizing tasks, adhering to our Twelve Traditions, and a lot of hard work!

#### P.I. AT VARIOUS LEVELS OF SERVICE WHAT EVERY MEMBER SHOULD KNOW

##### The Member, the Group and Public Information

Area and regional public information subcommittees should adequately inform the Fellowship about P.I. efforts so that any member with 90 or more days clean knows what to do when someone outside N.A. requests information. So here's how an N.A. member should handle requests from outside the Fellowship for speaking engagements, general information, literature, etc.:

- Call the area P.I. Chair (or someone designated by the group if there is no area P.I. Chair) to handle the request.

- The group secretary and group service representative (GSR) should always have on hand phone numbers for the area P.I. Chair, area service committee (ASC) Chair, and Vice chair. All requests for information from outside the Fellowship should be referred to those trusted servants.

*NOTE: In some instances a group may be isolated from an ASC and will do P.I. work in the community. The group should always keep the ASC informed of its activities. Public information work done by groups will usually be limited to posting bulletins, distributing meeting schedule information and getting the word out in the community about the N.A. meeting(s). ASC P.I. subcommittees should do all they can to provide support and encouragement to groups in isolated areas.*

Some very basic rules of thumb in P.I. need to be understood by every N.A. member:

- Never do speaking engagements on your own. Refer them to the appropriate trusted servant (see above).
- Never do media interviews on your own. Refer requests for interviews to the appropriate trusted servant (see above).
- Remember that no individual member can ever represent N.A. That's why we have service committees to handle public information.

### **Area Service Committee and Public Information**

Very simply, an area service committee is responsible for establishing and supporting a well organized, informed P.I. subcommittee. The P.I. subcommittee, under guidance and direction of the ASC, should establish guidelines and develop a contingency plan (see pages 5 and 6) to respond to all requests for information from individuals, agencies or media within the geographical boundaries of the ASC.

Once a request has been received or when plans are being drawn for a P.I. campaign, the following information must be obtained and appropriate action taken:

Will this action (a newspaper interview, a professional seminar, etc.) affect other areas or regions or N.A. as a whole?

**No**--Then proceed according to your area's contingency plan.

**Yes**--Then STOP further action until all areas and/or regions involved have been contacted and a joint plan has been developed.

*NOTE: If the action involves national or international agencies or media, proceed as follows:*

- Call the World Service Office and talk with the P.I. Coordinator or the Executive Director.
- If the office isn't open, call the WSC P.I. Chair or Vice chair (Area/Regional P.I. Chairs should keep these numbers available and up-to-date. Get them from your RSR or the World Service Office).

At the world level, there is a contingency plan involving representatives from all the service arms who jointly determine how to handle each situation. National and international situations most definitely affect other groups and N.A. as a whole.

### **Regional Service Committees and Public Information**

An RSC is responsible for establishing and supporting a well organized, informed P.I. subcommittee. The P.I. subcommittee, under the guidance and direction of the RSC, should establish guidelines and develop a contingency plan (see pages 5 and 6) to respond to all requests for information from individuals, agencies or media within the geographical boundaries of the RSC.

In addition, the RSC P.I. subcommittee is responsible for coordinating area P.I. efforts and for cooperating with other regions in joint P.I. efforts. The RSC P.I. subcommittee is the communication link between the areas and the world. This means that the RSC P.I. subcommittee must provide all information and material developed at a world level to their areas. Regional P.I. learning days or workshops are a good way to improve communication among all levels of P.I. service.

Once a request has been received or when plans are being drawn for a P.I. campaign, the following information must be obtained and appropriate action taken:

Will this action (a newspaper interview, a professional seminar, etc.) affect other areas or regions or N.A. as a whole?

**No--**Then proceed according to your region's contingency plan.

**Yes--**Then STOP further action until all areas and/or regions involved have been contacted and a joint plan has been developed.

*NOTE: If the action involves national or international agencies or media, proceed as follows:*

- Call the World Service Office and talk with the P.I. Coordinator or the Executive Director.
- If the office isn't open, call the WSC P.I. Chair or Vice chair (Area/Regional P.I. Chairs should keep these numbers available and up-to-date. Get them from your RSR or the World Service Office).



At the world level, there is a contingency plan involving representatives from all the service arms who jointly determine how to handle each situation. National and international situations most definitely affect other groups and N.A. as a whole.

## **PUBLIC INFORMATION CONTINGENCY PLAN**

### **Your Area or Region**

It is essential that all members of the area/region know what procedures are to be followed when Narcotics Anonymous is contacted by a print or broadcast news entity. This plan will outline how such contacts are to be managed and should be distributed widely throughout the area/region.

Additional details on why and how a contingency plan should be used can be found on pages 2, 3, and 4, P.I. at Various Levels of Service.

Any member receiving a request for information from a media contact must immediately call one of the following:

1. The area or regional P.I. chairperson or vice chairperson;

**OR**

2. The area or regional chairperson and vice chairperson.

One of the individual(s) listed above should respond to the media contact as soon as possible, preferably within the work day or within an eight hour period.

The following information should be determined:

1. What audience level the exposure is likely to receive. It is important to understand how the information we give and/or contact we provide is going to be used. Is it going to be used in a local, regional or national broadcast or print story? There are circumstances when a story may be used in a national, regional or local area. It is also important at that point to determine if the coverage will overlap into other areas and regions, or if it needs to be handled at a world level. The caller should be politely asked to help us in responding by giving us the range of the intended audience.
2. What is the scheduling and deadline information the individual is working with in the accumulation of information for media use? In the instructions following, a different approach must be followed if there is a 48-hour or less deadline. Politely ask their help. Making our response positive and successful can only be done if we know their schedule deadlines.

Upon gaining the necessary information, the responsible individual must decide whether the media request is to be handled by the area or region. Some requests may need to be coordinated with or forwarded on to world level P.I.

*NOTE: It is always advisable to contact the World Service Conference P.I. Committee to discuss any media requests which may result in film crews and/or TV interviews with addicts.*

If the determination is made that the area or region will handle the media request, follow up will be made depending on the deadline schedule.

**AREA OR REGIONAL MEDIA AUDIENCE WITH LESS THAN 48-HOUR LEAD TIME.** Contacts involving such short time require immediate action that to some degree necessitates a lack of communication and coordination within the Fellowship among all the trusted servants who might otherwise be involved. One or more of the individuals as listed above should act for that individual service arm, responding with whatever assistance they can provide.

**AREA OR REGIONAL MEDIA AUDIENCE WITH MORE THAN 48-HOUR LEAD TIME.** One of the individuals as listed above should respond by assigning an individual to be part of the team to work with the media contact. The assigned individual(s) should be named by your individual P.I. subcommittee and be the most knowledgeable and experienced members available.

For electronic media contacts wherein television or film crews will be involved, more specific guidelines are required that involve adherence to our tradition of personal anonymity.

- Area or regional P.I. chairperson or vice chairperson
- Your ASR or RSR

Those individuals listed above should assign members with the most training and experience in working with the electronic media contacts with the Fellowship.

## **WORLD SERVICE CONTINGENCY PLAN**

This outlines how contacts with Narcotics Anonymous by national or international electronic or print media should be handled.

It is very important to ask every national or international electronic media the following:

- What is the audience exposure likely to be? (Will it be a local, regional, national, or international broadcast or print story?)
- How is the information going to be used? (Is the context of the article or program appropriate for our message of recovery?)
- What are the scheduling and deadline requirements?

As an international fellowship we need specific national or regional guidelines to ensure maximum support for members handling the media contacts. The trusted servants that are specified in these plans should have the most extensive experience possible in both public information work and in personal recovery. The principles contained in the guidelines below may be adapted to the needs of Narcotics Anonymous communities around the world. These should be adhered to in those countries where the trusted servants listed below are available.

**National or International Media Coverage that  
Does not Affect a Member's Anonymity**

Responsibility for responding to media requests shall be assigned to the WSO P.I. Coordinator in conjunction with any one of the persons listed below:

1. The WSC P.I. Chairperson or Vice chairperson. If they cannot be reached the WSC Chairperson or Vice chairperson should be reached.
2. The World Service Office Administrative Assistant or the World Service Office Executive Director.
3. The Board of Trustees member assigned to WSC P.I. and/or the Chairperson of the WSB. If both of these are unavailable the trustee geographically closest to the media contact should be reached.

**National or International Media Coverage  
which Affects a Member's Anonymity**

Contacts involving a member's anonymity require prompt response from every World Service branch. One or more of the individuals listed above should be contacted to respond with whatever assistance they can provide. These types of media contact may require the presence of a trustee or WSC P.I. committee members assigned to that region.

Certain types of electronic media coverage involving video or film crews may require the presence of a non-addict trustee to be interviewed on camera in order to ensure protection of our member's anonymity.

## Section 2

### START UP AND STRUCTURE

First of all, it is important to understand how public information fits into the N.A. service structure. P.I. subcommittees, like other service activities, must be responsible to those they serve. This can be accomplished effectively if each P.I. committee is a subcommittee of an area or regional service committee. P.I. subcommittees should not be created or operate independently of the group, the area or region they serve. This is an important aspect of the unity of purpose which guides our P.I. efforts. Area or regional guidelines should always include specific language about the formation of the P.I. subcommittee, its officers, its duties and its responsibility to work through the group conscience of the area or regional committee. Area and regional service committees can provide support, guidance and lines of communication throughout the Fellowship.

### HOW TO GET STARTED

Attend a meeting of the local area or regional service committee and find out what, if anything, is being done in the way of public information. The geographic area to be reached will determine whether the P.I. subcommittee is a part of an area or regional service committee. If there is no ASC or RSC, begin research on forming an ASC or RSC, following the guidelines in the *Temporary Working Guide to Our Service Structure*.

It is important that P.I. efforts be carried out within the service structure. Services which are attempted without the support of area or regional committees often end in disarray and rather than carrying a positive message of recovery may result in negative exposure for Narcotics Anonymous.

If there is an active ASC or RSC, but no P.I. subcommittee, get one started. Schedule a meeting and get the word out that you're looking for members who are interested in this kind of service. Encourage representatives from each group or area to attend. This will improve communication and ensure that your committee remains directly responsible to the Fellowship of N.A.

*NOTE: There may be times in remote areas, where a group or groups do basic public information before the formal structuring of an ASC or RSC. The types of P.I. activities carried out by groups are best limited to posting bulletins, distributing meeting information and getting the word out to the community about N.A.*

Our experience has shown that good solid recovery and clean time is especially important in this field of service since so much P.I. work involves contact with non-N.A.'s. Although it is helpful to have individuals on the

subcommittee who have experience in communications or public relations, it is certainly not essential. A good working knowledge of the Traditions is the single most important asset a member can have. As N.A. members, we need to remember that no individual can ever speak for N.A. as a whole, and that our competence to speak about addiction is limited to our own experience and to the program of recovery in Narcotics Anonymous.

**GO SLOW AND EASY!** Enthusiasm is one of our greatest assets in Narcotics Anonymous, but we need to remember the importance of being well prepared when we are approaching individuals or organizations outside of N.A.

Public information work, by its very nature, is a frequent source of Tradition violations. Add to that the excitement and enthusiasm of reaching out to the addict who still suffers, and you can begin to see wherein the danger lies. Strict adherence to the Twelve Traditions is vital in order to protect the Fellowship so that it may always be able to provide an atmosphere of recovery for the addict who wants to stop using. As you are working on this project, keep the Traditions in mind. If you have questions, ask, and remember, "when in doubt, don't."

*NOTE: Use part of every P.I. subcommittee meeting to read and study the Traditions. Don't hesitate to write to the World Service Board of Trustees if you have questions about possible violations or for more information on P.I. work and the Twelve Traditions.*

At your early meetings, clearly define the need in your community or area. Contact your ASR and/or RSR and ask them to be present at the meetings. Set up basic guidelines for the P.I. subcommittee. Elect trusted servants to hold positions of responsibility within the subcommittee.

## **START UP OUTLINE FOR AREA/REGIONAL P.I. SUBCOMMITTEES**

### **Membership and Meetings**

Contact at least one member from each group/area, preferably P.I. chairs or people with one to five years clean and P.I. experience (clean time will vary depending on the age of your area or region). Get a commitment from them to attend area/regional P.I. meetings and act as liaison for their group/area. Also, ask about their experience in any P.I. activities they have attempted.

Create your initial mail list from those contacts and set a time and date for your first meeting. It has been beneficial for some regions to hold frequent meetings at first (twice a month) to lay a foundation.



## **Initial Meeting Agendas**

Guidelines for the P.I. subcommittee are essential, and should be the first item on your agenda until they are completed. This beginning work may take time but it is important to move ahead slowly and thoroughly in order to avoid problems later.

## **Contacts and Resources**

1. Compile a list and begin contacting your area's phoneline and H&I subcommittee chairpersons, encouraging their participation in the P.I. subcommittee. Phone lines must be operating at peak level once P.I. work starts. H&I must be able to respond to some of those calls and also to facilities where initial P.I. contact results in an H&I need.
2. Contact should be made with the WSC P.I. Committee, through WSO, informing them of your committee's existence and requesting information on P.I. work being done in neighboring areas/regions and a regional contact when available.
3. Contact neighboring areas/regions to share P.I. experience.

Be sure your subcommittee information contact name(s) and phone number(s) are made available throughout your area/region and be prepared to start your job as a communicator with other areas, regions and the world.

Along with your guidelines, a contingency plan should be created to ensure that all phoneline volunteers as well as P.I. chairs know who is responsible for handling various types of P.I. requests.

## **Ongoing Work**

Information kits for speakers must be created and continually updated to assure a regular supply of members available to respond to requests for speakers.

P.I. workshops should be planned and held at regular intervals throughout the year, both at regional and area levels.

In order to accomplish the above, P.I. subcommittees must constantly and consistently share information and conduct training workshops, so that area representatives are up-to-date and knowledgeable about P.I. goals and activities. It is vital to incorporate a good understanding of our Twelve Traditions in all P.I. activities.

## **SAMPLE GUIDELINES**

### **Purpose**

The purpose of a P.I. subcommittee is to inform the public that N.A. exists. It offers recovery from addiction and information about how and where to find it. All activities directed to that end shall be carried out in accordance with the Twelve Traditions of Narcotics Anonymous.

### **Functions/Responsibilities**

The basic functions of a P.I. subcommittee are:

1. To open and maintain lines of communication
  - a. Between N.A. and the public
  - b. Between the ASC/RSC and WSC/WSO
2. To respond to all requests for information in a timely and effective manner
3. To be sure that those requests are handled at the appropriate level of service (see pages 4, 5, 6, and 7). Remember our Ninth Tradition states subcommittees are "directly responsible to those they serve."

### **Meetings and Membership**

All P.I. subcommittees should meet regularly at a designated time and place that is well publicized, encouraging all members to attend. Members of a P.I. subcommittee should be defined according to one or more of the following suggestions:

1. Those assigned to head specific projects as needed
2. Those willing to help on various projects as needed
3. Voting members (defined usually as those representatives chosen by individual groups or areas with experience in P.I.)

Active membership should be further defined to include regular attendance at P.I. meetings. Some subcommittees have included a regulation that persons can be considered active only after attending two consecutive meetings.

### **Voting Participants and Procedures**

1. Who is eligible to vote
2. What is the required quorum

3. Decide upon the members who will be eligible to participate in your subcommittee's group conscience. These might be:
  - a. Elected officers
  - b. Representatives elected and sent by the groups or areas within your area/region

### **Requirements and Duties of Voting Participants**

It is generally accepted that all participants shall have the following:

1. Personal time and abilities to perform their duties
2. Willingness and desire to serve in the position
3. Clean time and service experience as stated herein
4. Understanding and practical experience of the Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions of Narcotics Anonymous
5. Maintenance of clean time throughout term of office or participation

Further discussion within the committee will determine the requirements of officers. Officers are usually limited to Chairperson, Vice chairperson, Secretary and Treasurer. Clean time will vary depending on the age of your area/region. Experience in P.I. or related activities is preferable.

Other details can usually be found by reading through the ASC/RSC guidelines. Samples can also be obtained through the World Service Office or neighboring P.I. subcommittees.

### **Task Force Committees**

Task force committees are often established by P.I. subcommittees, as the need arises, to work on specific projects such as:

1. Speaker lists
2. Information packet mailings
3. Creating and updating contact lists
4. Material for posters
5. Formats for speaker presentations

## **GUIDELINES FOR COOPERATIVE EFFORTS IN P.I. IN OVERLAPPING AREAS OR REGIONS**

### **Purpose**

To coordinate and channel P.I. requests that overlap areas/regions to the proper service committee.



## **Objectives**

1. Maintain contact with person in each area/region who handles P.I. contingency plan.
2. Share information on meetings, volunteer lists, etc.
3. Coordinate inter-area/regional P.I. workshops

## **Membership**

Choose one or more from each area/region as voting members.

1. P.I. Chair or P.I. Vice chair
2. ASR/RSR
3. Alternate ASR/RSR
4. ASC/RSC Chair or Vice chair
5. Phonline Chair or Central Office Manager

## **Meeting Schedules**

Suggested quarterly meetings with monthly correspondence.

## **Communicating and Coordinating with other P.I. Subcommittees**

Find out what is being done by other P.I. subcommittees in neighboring communities. Avoid duplication of effort and work together. If feasible, hold an all-day workshop on public information work and invite P.I. subcommittees from surrounding areas. It is strongly suggested that areas and regions follow procedural guidelines that describe the coordination of P.I. activities which may overlap geographical boundaries.

It is also important to consider how P.I. efforts may have an impact on non-P.I. subcommittees within N.A. Usually the first contact made by a person responding to the P.I. effort is through an N.A. phonline. This fact is frequently ignored by P.I. subcommittees. If a phonline subcommittee is separate from the P.I. subcommittee, it must be included in planning and implementation of programs that promote public awareness or invite contact with the Fellowship. Similarly, there may be some overlap in the efforts of P.I. and H&I subcommittees. When a P.I. project seems to spill over into the area of H&I, the two subcommittees should cooperate. The ASC or RSC provide ideal settings for such cooperation. Encourage the attendance of P.I. and H&I representatives at your P.I. meetings.

## H&I/P.I. COOPERATION

### Rules of thumb for cooperation between H&I and P.I.

Remember, we all belong to the same Fellowship and our primary purpose is the same no matter which committee we belong to.

Communication between the two subcommittees ahead of time (that means planning together how to proceed) will help avoid problems and promote unity.

Flexibility (something most of us addicts don't have much practice at) will allow for cooperative efforts that respond to the needs of the institution while staying within our Traditions.

"I can't, but we can" applies to subcommittee members and subcommittees.

Work together. When we don't, we divert ourselves from our primary purpose!

There may be instances where the most effective and productive presentation can only be accomplished by a combined effort of representatives from P.I. and H&I. This, of course, is a perfect application of our Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions--working together to carry the message of N.A. recovery to the still-suffering addict.

### Examples:

- A hospital treatment center calls for a presentation to their doctors and nurses--P.I.
- A hospital treatment center calls for a presentation to their clients--H&I.
- A call comes requesting information, maybe a meeting, doesn't know--P.I. and H&I.

If a P.I. subcommittee doesn't exist in an area or region, H&I subcommittees may take on many of the responsibilities generally taken on by P.I. subcommittees. Ask your ASC/RSC for support and information. If there isn't a P.I. subcommittee in your area or region, start one.

Generally, a P.I. activity is geared to people outside our Fellowship and includes people who come in contact with addicts and can help addicts to find N.A. The approach with non-addicts differs from the more personal sharing appropriate to talks given to addicts.

### Guides for H&I Subcommittees:

All H&I committees (WSC, regional, area and local) should remain in frequent contact with their counterparts in P.I.

Whenever possible, a liaison should be selected by the committee to attend any P.I. meetings held within their area or region, so that a spirit of

absolute cooperation can be fostered which will better enable us to carry out our primary purpose.

Whenever an H&I activity is geared to the addict, that means identification "...if they can stay clean, so can I." An H&I meeting is necessary when for some reason, our Traditions cannot be upheld. The most often found examples of this are when:

1. There are some restrictions on attendance at meetings.
2. The meeting cannot be entirely self supporting.
3. There is a need for the facility staff to be present in some form of surveillance.

#### **Guides for P.I. Subcommittees:**

P.I. subcommittees should always check with the H&I subcommittee before making initial contact with an H&I type facility. These facilities are usually one of the following: hospital, methadone clinic, jail, prison, detox center, or treatment program. This contact with H&I will determine whether H&I services are already being provided and if not, whether H&I is able to provide them if requested.

P.I. presentations are simply an information giving activity—who and what N.A. is. We do not give in-service training on addiction or drug abuse.

Whenever making a presentation, P.I. members must have the name of an H&I contact to supply to the facility if it becomes apparent that an H&I meeting is requested or required. Don't commit H&I services.

#### **Conclusion:**

At the world, regional and area levels, P.I. committees and subcommittees are working to develop materials to use in presentations to people in the helping professions:

H&I subcommittees are working diligently to better carry the message of recovery to addicts in hospitals and institutional settings.

Cooperation and flexibility are the keys that will allow H&I subcommittees and P.I. subcommittees at all levels to keep informed on what is being done by other subcommittees in their area or region. If we work together, we can accomplish any task. Unity of purpose is vital to our efforts.

#### **Do's and Don'ts for P.I. Service Work in General**

These Do's and Don'ts are important and should be studied carefully. In our past experience with public information work, we have found that by practicing the Do's we can best carry the message of N.A. to the public. When the Don'ts are not taken into consideration, our message of recovery may become lost or distorted.

**Do**

- Have a working knowledge of the Twelve Traditions.
- Follow established guidelines.
- Be consistent. Follow through with your plan of action.
- Keep updated records of contacts, posted announcements, PSA's, speaker's list, and follow up regularly.
- Remember quality is more important than quantity. Start with one or two projects and do them well before branching out.
- Make sure that lists of meetings, Twelfth Step volunteers and speakers are updated regularly.
- Remember other Twelve Step Fellowships are part of the public we are informing. Practice cooperation, not affiliation.
- Understand and be responsive to the needs of those we serve.
- Present a good image of recovery (be on time, dress appropriately, and avoid the use of obscenities, etc.).
- Work within the service structure to determine the feasibility of projects and to keep the lines of communication open.
- Make information packets available.
- Consult with members experienced in P.I. work before contacting the media and/or public.
- Use discretion when giving out personal phone numbers.
- Assist the media in screening their features or articles for Tradition violations before publication.

**Don't**

- Don't endorse, finance, or lend the N.A. name to any related facility or outside organization.
- Don't do the work of another committee, such as H&I.
- Don't overtax your human power and resources. Burn out on a project before it is completed creates a bad image of N.A. to the community and/or media.
- Don't overstep media boundaries as far as area/regional geography is concerned. When in doubt, ask!
- Don't do it by yourself. Remember the First Tradition and that the service structure is there to be used.

## THE TWELVE TRADITIONS AND PUBLIC INFORMATION

In response to many letters from the Fellowship regarding the Traditions and P.I. service, the World Service Board of Trustees has supplied written answers to a variety of questions. The most common problems are included below in a question/answer form.

The answers, formulated by the Board of Trustees, are not meant to be the final authority, but have proven helpful to many members in gaining a better understanding of the relationship between P.I. and our Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions.

*Q. What is the importance of anonymity?*

A. Our Eleventh and Twelfth Traditions talk about anonymity. Tradition Twelve states that "anonymity is the spiritual foundation of all our Traditions, ever reminding us to place principles before personalities." Tradition Eleven cautions us to maintain our anonymity at the level of press, radio and films.

When an individual member of the Fellowship finds himself or herself in the limelight as a member of Narcotics Anonymous, the result is one individual speaking for Narcotics Anonymous. It also creates an artificial barrier between the particular member and other members of the Fellowship. It taps into the grandiosity that is a part of our individual characters and sets the person up as an expert which, of course, none of us is. Breaking anonymity at the level of press, radio and films is dangerous to the individual's recovery and might be a deterrent to other individuals coming into the program. They may feel that we can't be trusted to maintain their anonymity or that they will be required to discuss their addiction and recovery on a public level.

The Fellowship at all levels--area, regional and world--needs to be very careful in selecting individuals to do P.I. work. There are individuals who actively seek media exposure and these individuals are probably the least qualified to do P.I. work.

The individuals best qualified are those who value anonymity and are willing to serve out of love for the Fellowship and not out of ego needs.

*Q. In writing to radio and television stations, judges, hospitals, detoxes, etc., should P.I. chairpersons or committee members use their full names?*

A. Above all else, we need to adhere to the Twelve Traditions and maintain anonymity at the level of press, radio and films. Some of our members have had the unfortunate experience of having individuals from the press make promises that their anonymity would be maintained only to later see their names in print.



One suggestion is to use the following language at the end of letters written to non- N.A.'s: "In keeping with the program's tradition of personal anonymity, I respectfully request that you not use my full name if any portion of this letter is to be printed."

If there is any reason to believe the letter will be published or find its way on the air, then it is important that last names be avoided. Although letters without a full signature often have less credibility in the eyes of the recipient, the use of the first name and last initial is appropriate.

*Q. How can we answer the question, "Who is the founder of Narcotics Anonymous?"*

A. Narcotics Anonymous evolved as the result of a group effort and did not have a single founder. Along the way, a number of individuals played key and important roles. The process through which Narcotics Anonymous grew and developed highlights one of our strengths, the strength of the group; the strength of anonymous people working together.

*Q. When is it appropriate to use non-addicts to provide information about Narcotics Anonymous to the media or outside agencies?*

A. We believe that non-addicts should always be used to provide information about our Fellowship on national television, radio, magazines, newspapers, etc. With respect to local T.V. stations, we believe it would be helpful for a non-addict to appear but also realize that a non-addict may not always be available for this purpose. With respect to outside agencies, it may be beneficial to use non-addicts, depending on the agency. For example, in approaching the American Medical Association it might be helpful to have a physician who is a non-addict explain how physicians might utilize Narcotics Anonymous in working with their addict patients. Endeavors which target federal agencies might find it helpful to utilize a non-addict who has knowledge or expertise in the agency being approached.

We believe that we need to avoid the use of blacked-out faces, silhouettes and shadows. Some of these techniques have been used to maintain anonymity. However, these techniques are also used by the media to protect the identity of criminals, informers and other nefarious characters, therefore denoting a very negative image and giving the impression that we have something to hide. That negative image is something we are working very hard to get away from. For this reason, non-addicts who have an understanding of our Fellowship, our Twelve Steps and our Twelve Traditions are important to us.

- Q. *We are writing to ask if it is all right for some of our members to take photographs during an N.A. meeting.*
- A. Photographs taken at an N.A. meeting, regardless of whether it is a regularly scheduled meeting of Narcotics Anonymous or a meeting held at an N.A. function or activity, can be a potential danger to individual members' anonymity.

Taking photographs at banquet dinners, dances and picnics seems to be a common practice throughout the Fellowship. We believe this practice does not constitute a violation of our Traditions provided those individuals whose pictures are taken have no objection and that the photographs are for the enjoyment of the individuals involved and are not ever to be used at the level of press, radio, or films.

- Q. *May a group choose to announce the time and location of the N.A. meeting in newspapers, radio or T.V. in order to reach still-suffering addicts in the community?*
- A. A group may announce the time and location of the meeting in newspapers, on radio or T.V. in order to reach still-suffering addicts, but should do so only when it is absolutely necessary. Whenever possible, phonenumber numbers should be used in newspapers, radio and television announcements. We realize that this is not possible in some smaller areas and regions which do not have the resources necessary to maintain a phonenumber. These areas and regions can then announce the times and locations of meetings until they are able to maintain phonenumber(s).
- Q. *Is it a violation of any Tradition for members of Narcotics Anonymous public information committees to participate in public health fairs? Would members talking in person about N.A. constitute a breach of anonymity? Can a P.I. subcommittee pay a fee to participate in a health fair?*
- A. Participation in a public health fair would be an appropriate endeavor for an area, regional or world level P.I. effort. Health fairs provide a good opportunity for the members of our Fellowship to let the community know who we are and what we do. A booth or table is often provided at these functions where we can make literature available and tell people that we exist and can help anyone with a drug problem to recover.

This participation would not be a violation of anonymity. Individuals talking in person about Narcotics Anonymous do so of their own volition and at this level anonymity is a matter of personal choice. We suggest that first names be used and further caution participants that at the level of press, radio and films anonymity needs to be maintained as specified by our Eleventh and Twelfth Traditions. Photographs should not be allowed under any circumstances.

It would no more be a violation of our Traditions to pay a fee to participate in a health fair than it would be to participate in one. It would, however, be necessary for any funds expended in this fashion to go through an area, regional or world level budgeting process.

*Q. When an outside organization or agency requests a public information speaker and offers to pay travel expenses, can the P.I. subcommittee or individual accept such reimbursement?*

A. Sometimes these offers come from organizations or agencies who do not understand our program, our Twelve Steps, or our Twelve Traditions. These organizations and agencies are often accustomed to paying a fee or offering reimbursement for expenses as a matter of course. However, this is not appropriate for Narcotics Anonymous. We are self-supporting through our own contributions and we cannot accept a fee for P.I. work nor a check for expenses incurred. It is important that we explain our Traditions and the reason why it is not appropriate to accept this type of fee or reimbursement.

Members of a P.I. subcommittee can be reimbursed by the P.I. subcommittee for travel expenses. Reimbursement for travel expenses is a very responsible course of action by a P.I. committee and is well within the Seventh Tradition.

Area, regional and world level committees are all responsible to those they serve. This reimbursement must go through the budgetary process which has been set by the area, region or world committee.

*Q. Our public information subcommittee is currently using the N.A. logo and the name of our Fellowship, "Narcotics Anonymous," on its stationery. It has been brought to our attention that this may be a violation of our Traditions. Can you clarify this matter for us?*

A. There is no Tradition violation in the use of the N.A. logo and the words "Narcotics Anonymous" on any area P.I. subcommittee's stationery. The confusion in your area may stem from a motion passed by the World Service Conference in 1982. The motion stated that only the N.A. logo and not the name "Narcotics Anonymous" was to be used on convention and activity brochures and fliers. This motion does not apply to stationery. Hence the name Narcotics Anonymous may be used on stationery of service boards and committees at an area, regional and world level.



Q. *Is it promotion or attraction when a P.I. subcommittee contacts schools, probation officers, county or government offices and treatment centers to let them know about N.A.?*

A. Our Eleventh Tradition tells us that our public relations policy is one of attraction rather than promotion. When P.I. subcommittee members go out into the community and inform government agencies and individuals who work with addicts about who we are and what we do, they are operating well within the level of attraction. We provide information regarding our program and letting those agencies and individuals know we are a Twelve Step program of recovery from the disease of addiction.

Care needs to be exercised to avoid any promises or to make any commitments we cannot keep. When we begin to do this we have crossed the line into promotion.

Q. *Are PSA ads on the radio attraction or promotion?*

A. Whether PSA's on the radio and television are attraction or promotion depends directly on the content of the material presented in the advertisement. It seems to us that there is a fine line between attraction and promotion. Providing basic information and letting the public know who we are and what we do is another area of attraction. When we go beyond the act of letting the public know who we are and what we do, we get into the area of promotion. When we start making exaggerated promises beyond the scope of recovery from addiction, we have crossed the line into promotion.

All video materials need to be carefully reviewed by the World Service Board of Trustees to ensure that they stay within an informational framework.

Q. *Is it appropriate to convey the message that addiction is a disease in our P.I. effort?*

A. Addiction is a disease. Our literature states that addiction is a disease. Our Basic Text states, "We have a disease: progressive, incurable and fatal." We, as a Fellowship, have had firsthand experience with thousands of addicts. Based on our firsthand experience we believe we have a chronic, progressive and fatal disease which if untreated will result in jails, institutions and death for us. We believe it is absolutely necessary to state these basic facts about addiction in our public information endeavors.

We are in a stage of public understanding of the disease of addiction where Alcoholics Anonymous was with the disease of alcoholism in the late thirties. It was at that time widely held that alcoholism was a moral weakness caused by a lack of character in the alcoholic, or that it was a psychiatric disorder whose treatment consisted of instilling character in the individual by treating the

underlying psychiatric disorder whereby the excessive drinking disappeared. Alcoholics Anonymous members were the first to suggest that alcoholism was a disease. As a result of the efforts of members of the A.A. Fellowship, today there is universal acceptance of alcoholism as a disease and the stigma attached to alcoholism has substantially diminished.

There is still an enormous stigma attached to drug addiction and as long as addicts and those individuals working with addicts believe that drug addiction can and should be controlled by the addict, addicts will die trying to find ways and means to develop control. A by-product of public information subcommittee activities will be the educating of those working with addicts to the fact that addiction is a disease and the addict is powerless over it. We need to accept ourselves as persons who have a disease and we need to inform those who work with us and those who love us of that fact. We can best do this by talking about addiction as a disease in our P.I. efforts.

*Q. Should local area or regional P.I. subcommittees produce TV spots?*

*A.* It has been our experience that most regionally produced P.I. video spots have been of a very poor quality. In one incident, a local P.I. subcommittee expended considerable time, energy and money only to find the spots they produced did not meet FCC standards and the local stations refused to use them because of their over- all poor quality.

In the past, regional and area level P.I. subcommittees made video spots due to the fact that the world level P.I. committee had not produced videos. Videos have been made by the WSC P.I. Committee and are available from the World Service Office for a nominal price. They are professionally done, have been carefully reviewed by world level trusted servants including the Board of Trustees, and are well within the guidelines of the Twelve Traditions.

We recommend that with the availability of these videos, area and regional P.I. subcommittees use their time and resources in other more needed areas.

*Q. Why is it not advisable for a P.I. subcommittee to do P.I. work separate from an area or regional service committee?*

*A.* When a committee acts on its own or is not a part of a regional or area service committee, it is not accountable to anyone. The P.I. subcommittee is responsible for area, regional or world level P.I. work--these committees have responsibility to the Fellowship.

Any committee acting apart from the greater whole creates a very dangerous situation both for the individuals involved and for the Fellowship. P.I. subcommittees must be formed by the area or region in order to be P.I. subcommittees.

*Q. Why is it not advisable for an individual to do P.I. work separate from a P.I. subcommittee?*

A. Our First Tradition states that "our common welfare comes first," and that "personal recovery depends on N.A. unity." This Tradition teaches us that the "we" comes before the "I." Often, what may seem like a wonderful idea to an individual turns out to have disastrous results. Most of the very serious anonymity breaks which have occurred over the past several years have resulted from individuals acting on their own, not as the result of public information subcommittee members carrying out projects discussed and decided upon by a public information subcommittee.

When we act on our own we tend to be grandiose, and often operate on self will. One of the reasons we found our way into Narcotics Anonymous is that we could not do it alone. With respect to public information the "I can't, but we can" still applies. Sometimes when a P.I. committee does not accept our idea or project we want to rush out and do it anyway. We grow in our recovery when we can resist this urge.

### Section 3

## THE WORK ITSELF

P.I. service work is probably one of the most exciting areas of service in Narcotics Anonymous. Almost every member at one time or another will be in a position to provide information about our program of recovery to addicts and non-addicts. The ways and means of providing this information are so varied that volumes could be written about each type of P.I. activity that has ever been attempted throughout the Fellowship. The following sections of the handbook will highlight the most commonly used P.I. tools and provide details that will strengthen the foundation for each P.I. subcommittee's ongoing project.

An active P.I. subcommittee needs financial support from the Fellowship. The money can come from groups, ASC's, and RSC's. Prior to beginning any P.I. activities, make a realistic evaluation of the expenses involved for various types of P.I. work (mailing fliers, copying, printing, telephone charges, audio and video tape duplicating, etc.). The approach your subcommittee takes may well be determined by the funds available.

## PHONELINES, BULLETINS AND LETTERS

Phonelines, bulletins and letters are probably the most commonly used P.I. tools. These and all other P.I. activities should always be carried out in accordance with our Traditions and in cooperation with the area or regional service committee as suggested in previous sections.

Phonelines are usually handled by a separate subcommittee. A large amount of work and planning is required to establish an efficient phoneline in your area or region. For this reason, phoneline guidelines have been printed in a separate handbook and may be ordered through the World Service Office.

Bulletins are used to inform the still-using addict, and the community at large, of what Narcotics Anonymous offers, how and where to obtain help or additional information, and when and where local meetings are held. Phoneline numbers and/or meeting places (open meetings only) may be listed in bulletins.

Many local newspapers provide space for community announcements. The bulletins your committee chooses for posting may also be used in newspapers. Public information work carried out via newspapers and other forms of media is discussed in more detail in a later section.

The following guidelines have been compiled from the experience of P.I. subcommittees throughout the Fellowship. Read them carefully before you begin posting bulletins.

- Divide the area into smaller, geographical areas for which one P.I. committee member, on either a full time or part time basis, agrees to be the contact person. This commitment involves determining where to place bulletins, how many will be needed for that person's particular geographical area, and being responsible to see that they are posted.
- Work through your ASC and RSC to be sure the meetings being listed are aware that this activity is going on. They must be ready to handle a possible increase in new member attendance.
- Arrange for printing the bulletins and provide them, along with guidelines for each person who will be posting, to the contact person.
- Determine any follow-up procedures you may need, i.e., mailings of information packets to community members or professionals, possible increase in volunteers to work phonelines and Twelfth Step lists.
- Post five to six bulletins at each location, if possible, so that interested people may take one, if desired. Larger numbers are suggested in some places—it is left to the discretion of the contact person to determine this depending on the size and location of the facility.
- Post bulletins at all public institutions where large numbers of people will see them. Generally, permission is not necessary; however, if in doubt ask, especially if larger numbers of bulletins are to be left.
- Do NOT put bulletins on telephone poles, trees, fence posts, etc., nor leave them in public restrooms. Many communities have ordinances concerning this type of activity, so it is most important to use discretion in distribution as it can affect the reputation of the entire Fellowship.

### **Places for Distribution**

#### **Public Institutions**

1. Police stations
2. Health clinics
3. Welfare offices
4. Hospitals  
(both emergency rooms and  
employee bulletin boards)
5. Courthouses
6. Colleges
7. Junior high and high schools
8. Libraries
9. Post offices

#### **Private Businesses**

1. Stores (groceries, drug stores, etc.)
2. Civic auditoriums
3. Churches
4. Laundromats
5. Factories
6. Supermarkets



## Do's and Don'ts for Phonelines, Bulletins and Letters

### Do

- Study these guidelines.
- Remember the Twelve Traditions.
- Ask permission when necessary.
- Remember that our public relations policy is based on attraction rather than promotion.
- Remember that, though you are not a representative of N.A., you are being seen as an N.A. member. Conduct yourself accordingly.

### Don't

- Don't go alone to post bulletins--there is less possibility of Tradition violations when two or more members are present.
- Don't act as spokesperson for N.A. as a whole.
- Don't antagonize those whose ideas of addiction differ from those of N.A.
- Don't take contributions from outside sources.
- Don't refer to any agency or other Fellowship.
- Don't state an opinion or take a stand on any controversial or public issue.

## SAMPLE BULLETINS, FLYERS, NEWSPAPER ADS

Bulletins should always include your P.I. subcommittee's mailing address. Some subcommittees use the back of flyers or bulletins to list several local meeting locations.

1. If using drugs isn't fun anymore and you've tried to stop but you can't, there is a group of recovering addicts who can help you live life without the use of drugs, Narcotics Anonymous.

For more information call \_\_\_\_\_.

Meetings are held at \_\_\_\_\_.

2. If you think you may have a problem with drugs, give yourself a break. There is a way out with the help of other recovering addicts in Narcotics Anonymous. We have been there.

Call \_\_\_\_\_ for more information.

3. Narcotics Anonymous is a group of recovering addicts who live without the use of drugs. It costs nothing to be a member. The only requirement for membership is a desire to stop using.

Call \_\_\_\_\_ for more information.

4. Drug addiction is a disease. Narcotics Anonymous is a group of recovering addicts who help each other stay clean. There is a way out of having to use through the help of Narcotics Anonymous.  
Call \_\_\_\_\_ for more information.
5. As recovering addicts, we have found that it is possible to live without the use of drugs with the help of Narcotics Anonymous. If you are still using and can't stop, we can help. Give yourself a break.  
Call \_\_\_\_\_ for more information.
6. If you have found that drugs are causing you problems, there is a solution. Narcotics Anonymous is a program that works if you want to stop using. We can help.  
Call \_\_\_\_\_ for more information.
7. If life seems hopeless and you can't stop your drug use, Narcotics Anonymous offers a way out and a new hope for life without the use of drugs. Give yourself a break.  
Call \_\_\_\_\_ for more information.

## **THE USE OF LETTERS IN PUBLIC INFORMATION**

Letters can be used as an effective means of introducing Narcotics Anonymous to various segments of the public. The type of letter you use will depend on the group or organization you decide to contact.

Some of the types of letters described below are for use in introducing N.A., responding to requests for information and/or speakers, announcing a public information/community meeting and following up or sending thank you letters.

### **Introductory Information Packets**

Information packets are commonly used to mail various N.A. pamphlets (I.P.'s) with a cover letter to individuals or organizations who might come in contact with addicts and be able to direct them to Narcotics Anonymous. These information packets should include a meeting directory for your area or region and the phonenumber, if available.

Information packets should also be available and mailed in response to requests received either through the phonenumber, by mail or during community meetings. The amount of information your committee includes in this type of packet may depend on your financial situation. Decide ahead of time how much money you can afford for purchasing N.A. pamphlets, duplicating meeting lists and letters, and the cost of mailing.



## Letters to Specific Individuals or Groups

When your committee decides to target a specific segment within the community, i.e., treatment counselors, doctors, or employee assistance directors, one of the example letters should be used and mailed with I.P.'s. Use first class postage and individuals' names whenever possible. Otherwise, your letters may end up in a trash can. Professionals often do not have time to read every item of mail they receive. If your letter looks like advertising or bulk mail it may never be read.

At this point many P.I. subcommittees also decide to arrange for a community meeting. After an initial letter of introduction has been sent, you may follow up with letters inviting members of the community to a community meeting. Always be sure that your choice of letters accurately reflects the type of individual or group you are contacting.

Before beginning a mailing be sure that your ASC or RSC is aware of your activities and that any other subcommittees that may be affected are involved in the activity. You will need support for both manpower and money. Remember that planning a community meeting will require the rental of a meeting space and the purchase of sufficient literature for those attending to take with them.

## GROUPS/ORGANIZATIONS TO CONTACT

The use of letters in P.I. work is discussed in detail in previous sections of the handbook. Refer to those sections before using the list below.

This list is not intended to be all inclusive, but rather to help trigger ideas. Expand or delete as necessary. Each P.I. subcommittee should take the time to make up this type of list for their community.

Remember to work with your H&I committee when contacting any agency that might need an H&I meeting.

### Religion

Members of the clergy  
Church groups--  
young people's social, etc.  
Clergy associations  
Theological seminaries

### Industry

Unions  
Employee assistance programs  
Personnel directors

### Education

Teachers  
Teachers associations  
Student teachers  
High schools and grammar schools  
(social studies or health classes are usually the best options)  
Colleges--health services  
Seminars on addiction or chemical dependency

### **Governmental**

Police academies  
Judges  
Probation officers  
Wardens  
Military  
Police departments

### **Medical**

Doctors, dentists, etc.  
Medical students  
Nurses and student nurses  
Hospital staff  
Clinic staff

### **Organizations**

Clubs (service or social).  
Neighborhood organizations  
Nursing homes and rest homes  
Youth groups  
Fraternal organizations  
Ethnic associations  
Suicide prevention or crisis centers

### **Do's and Don'ts for Letter Writing**

The workers in the field of drug and alcohol treatment, rehabilitation, etc. are overloaded with mail. The biggest enemy that stands in the way of getting the message out is the wastebasket. Here are some suggestions that others have found to help get your mailings read:

#### **Do**

- Use first class mail. Most mail is sorted by postage; third class mail is seldom read.
- Have a point of contact (Dear Mr. Clagari). It takes more time to find out this information, but most people are put off by impersonal headings.
- Use standard form and layout. No one is going to take you seriously if your letters are a mess.
- Use typewritten letters if possible. Many times correspondence is sent out on photocopies that are next to illegible. If you can't type, find someone who can (even a paid professional, if the price is affordable).
- Use the definitions from our literature (N.A. is a Fellowship or group of men and women for whom drugs had become a major problem). If you use terms that mean nothing to the professional or have different meanings to them your point is lost.
- Get to the point, try to stay away from "drugalogs." Try to stick to facts like:  
1. It Works. 2. It's Free. 3. It's Available.

- Point out that we are not here to take the place of the professional. Never make it sound as though we believe we can do the professional's job for him. Point out that we have a common goal, to help the addict who still suffers.
- Follow up, Research has shown a personal contact (phone call, visit, etc.) is much more effective than a simple mailout.

### **Don't**

- Use bulk rate mail.
- Use generic titles (Dear Health Care Person).
- Be sloppy.  
Use bad copies.
- Use slang or "catch" phrases such as "Just a bunch of hope-to-die dope fiends who stopped cooking and live one day at a time"
- Ramble on.
- Threaten the professional.
- Mail and forget.

### **SAMPLE LETTERS TO GROUPS/ORGANIZATIONS**

When composing your subcommittee's letters, please remember that these sample letters are just that--samples. They may be used just as they are, or they may be modified to meet your subcommittee's needs.

One area of flexibility is the tone of the letter. Some members feel a direct, assertive tone is better than a softer more subtle manner, and vice versa. As long as the message is clear and accurate, either style is acceptable.

The communities you serve may be rural or urban, working class or well to do. The letters presented are generic and can readily be changed to reflect those differences.

## Sample Response Letter

Dear:

In response to your request, the purpose of this informational packet is to acquaint you with Narcotics Anonymous. N.A. is a fellowship of recovering addicts who meet regularly to help each other stay clean. We charge no dues or fees; we are self supporting through our own contributions.

Enclosed you will find pamphlets that further explain the N.A. program. These are available in Spanish as well. Please note the meeting directory, which lists all current meetings in the ( ) area. For meetings open to the public (i.e., non-addicts), please refer to the meeting list. We have included an order form should you wish to purchase additional literature.

We also operate a "helpline," staffed by clean addicts, to aid those who want to stop using. Our number is: *(You can be more specific in what your helpline/phoneline offers).*

If you have any further questions or if we can be of further help to you, please contact the Public Information Subcommittee at the above address.

Sincerely,

Public Information Chairperson

## Cover Letter for Information Packets

Date

Organization/Individual/Etc.  
Address

Dear Friends:

The purpose of this letter is to bring an awareness of the Fellowship of Narcotics Anonymous to the community. We hope to create an understanding of our Fellowship so that if you feel our program may be of benefit to you, or to the people you serve, you will know how to contact us for further information. Narcotics Anonymous is a non-profit Fellowship of men and women for whom drugs had become a major problem. We are recovering addicts who meet regularly to help each other to stay clean. This is a program of complete abstinence from all drugs. Our Fellowship is concerned with the disease of addiction and recovery from that disease; the drug (or drugs) of choice is unimportant.

We, in Narcotics Anonymous, would very much like to give more information to the public, in hopes that those who can use us, will be able to find us. Feel free to use our literature, meeting directories, etc. as referral to our program. If you would like N.A. speakers at your facility, please allow a two to four week notice. Please address your requests to:

Group/Area/Region Name  
Address  
City, State, Zip

Thank you for your time and we hope that we may be of some service to you, your group or organization.

Sincerely,

P.I. Committee Chairperson  
Group/Area/Region of  
Narcotics Anonymous

## Sample Letter to Professionals

*(Use names where possible)*

Dear Counselor:

The purpose of this informational packet is to familiarize you with Narcotics Anonymous, also known as N.A. You may have clients with a drug addiction and you may want to suggest they attend Narcotics Anonymous. Possibly together we can help the addict who still suffers.

Narcotics Anonymous is a Fellowship of recovering addicts who meet regularly to help each other stay clean by sharing their experiences, strength and hope.

N.A. is composed of men and women of all ages from all walks of life. We are an anonymous Fellowship so that addicts who seek recovery here may be confident that their anonymity will be protected.

We have enclosed some literature and a current schedule of N.A. meetings. If after reading this literature, you would like to obtain additional copies, please call or write us and we will make them available to you.

We also operate a phoneline to aid those who want to stop using. Our Fellowship provides much to the addict. It does not, however, provide legal counseling.

N.A. costs the addict nothing. N.A. costs you nothing and is entirely self-supporting and declines outside contributions.

Many addicts have credited professionals such as yourself for directing them to N.A. Thank you for your time and concern.

Sincerely,

P.I. Chairperson



## Sample Letter to Professionals

*(Use names where possible)*

Dear Educator:

The purpose of this informational packet is to familiarize you with Narcotics Anonymous, also known as N.A. You may have students addicted to drugs and you may want to suggest they attend Narcotics Anonymous. Possibly together we can help the addict who still suffers.

Narcotics Anonymous is a Fellowship of recovering addicts who meet regularly to help each other stay clean by sharing their experience, strength and hope. N.A. is composed of men and women of all ages from all walks of life. We are an anonymous Fellowship, so that addicts who seek recovery here may be confident that their anonymity will be protected.

We have enclosed some literature and a current schedule of N.A. meetings. If after reading this literature you would like to obtain additional copies, please call or write us and we will make them available to you.

We also operate a phoneline to aid those who want to stop using. Our Fellowship provides much to the addict. It does not, however, provide educational counseling, lectures on the pharmacology of drugs or related research. We do have speakers who are recovering addicts available to talk to individuals or groups about N.A.

As an educator, we know you will impact many individuals who may be addicted or will need information regarding our Fellowship.

Many addicts have credited professionals such as yourself for directing them to N.A. Thank you for your time and concern .

Sincerely,

P.I. Chairperson

## Sample Letters to Professionals

*(Use names where possible)*

Dear Doctor:

The purpose of this informational packet is to familiarize you with Narcotics Anonymous, also known as N.A. You may have patients addicted to drugs and you may want to suggest they attend Narcotics Anonymous. Possibly together we can help the addict who still suffers.

Narcotics Anonymous is a Fellowship of recovering addicts who meet regularly to help each other stay clean by sharing their experience, strength and hope.

N.A. is composed of men and women of all ages from all walks of life. We are an anonymous Fellowship so that addicts who seek recovery here may be confident that their anonymity will be protected.

We have enclosed some literature and a current schedule of N.A. meetings. If, after reading the literature, you would like to obtain additional copies, please call or write us and we will make them available to you.

We also operate a phoneline to aid those who want to stop using. Our Fellowship provides much to the addict. It does not, however, provide detoxification, hospitalization, medication, psychiatric or medical diagnosis.

N.A. costs the addict nothing. N.A. costs you nothing and is entirely self-supporting and declines outside contributions.

Many addicts have credited professionals such as yourself for directing them to N.A. Thank you for your time and concern.

Sincerely,

P.I. Chairperson

**Sample Thank You for Use after  
Speaking or Community Meeting**

Dear:

On behalf of Narcotics Anonymous, I would like to thank you for allowing us the opportunity to speak at your school/facility/etc. Our presentation seemed to be very well received by the students/patients/etc.

Should other teachers/facilities/etc. be interested in a presentation by N.A., we can be reached at the above address. A message can also be left through our phoneline at \_\_\_\_\_.

Once again, thank you for your assistance.

Sincerely,

Public Information Chairperson

**Thank You for Attending and/or  
Response to Request**

Dear:

On behalf of Narcotics Anonymous, I would like to thank you for the time you took to attend our recent community meeting presentation. Community members/professionals like yourself are often the vehicle through which suffering addicts first hear about N.A. meetings.

In response to your request (during the meeting or on the sign-up sheet) we are enclosing additional information about the N.A. Program of recovery which I hope will be very helpful to you.

If you or others you know would like further information or presentations, please don't hesitate to contact our committee at the following address.

A message can also be left by calling our phoneline at \_\_\_\_\_.

In service to the Fellowship,

Public Information Chairperson,  
Your Committee's  
Name and Address

## **PUBLIC INFORMATION/COMMUNITY MEETINGS**

Public information/community meetings may result from your subcommittee's invitation or at the request of an individual or group. The most frequent contact is initially made through the phoneline, which is one important reason for communication between subcommittees. Phoneline volunteers must have contact names and numbers of those members active in P.I. so that requests can be responded to quickly and efficiently.

### **What Is a Public Information/Community Meeting?**

The purpose of this type of meeting is to inform the public about our Fellowship. A public information/community meeting (call it what you choose) differs from an open N.A. meeting in that we invite people outside our Fellowship to attend and we structure the meeting to address the particular focus of our guests. This is a "special meeting" rather than a regular N.A. meeting.

The focus of a meeting of this type will be determined in part by your choice of the people who will attend. Examples include 1) a community meeting in the neighborhood inviting clergy, teachers from nearby schools, or members of a neighborhood association, or 2) a city-wide or county meeting to inform health care professionals and workers in governmental agencies.

An important point to consider is what time of day and day of the week will best accommodate the people you are trying to reach.

The point is, this is a meeting hosted by Narcotics Anonymous and structured to effectively carry the message to addicts and to people who come in contact with addicts.

### **Legwork for Setting Up a P.I. Community Meeting**

1. Target the groups or individuals you want to reach.
2. Find a location that is easy to reach, centrally located and if possible, well known.
3. Send out a letter of invitation to these individuals and groups.
4. Follow up by calling organizations/groups to see if they will be sending a representative.
5. If you wish to reach the community at large, have the meeting announced on radio, community calendars, in newspapers, etc.
6. Set up speakers and guest speakers ahead of time.
7. Get refreshments.
8. Make sure speakers understand the time limit.
9. Be sure that all participants understand the need to dress nicely and avoid foul language.
10. Start on time.

11. End on time.
12. Bring N.A. literature and meeting lists.

### **Do's and Don'ts for Presentations to Groups and Community Meetings**

#### **Do**

- Prepare P.I. speakers for P.I. presentations.
- Try to match speakers to their audience to create the best possible identification.
- Stress our common welfare and the importance of unity.
- Stress that there are no leaders--only concerned members.
- Express the spirituality of the program.
- Express our primary purpose--to carry the message of recovery to the addict who still suffers.
- Stress that the only requirement for membership is the desire to stop using.
- Point out that N.A. isn't exclusive to one kind of addict; but to anyone who believes his/her life is unmanageable due to whatever the drug of choice.

#### **Don't**

- Don't do it by yourself.
- Don't take a stand on any controversial/public issue.
- Don't do this for personal gain.
- Don't refer to outside agencies.
- Don't be a spokesperson for N.A. as a whole.
- Don't break your anonymity by eluding to geographical area or profession.
- Don't forget--the spirit of anonymity is the sacrifice of personal ambition.
- Don't argue with those whose views of addiction differ from those of N.A.
- Don't accept contributions from sources outside N.A.

### **COMMUNITY MEETING FORMAT**

#### **Introduction:**

Hello, I'd like to welcome everyone to this public information meeting, sponsored by the \_\_\_\_\_ group/area/region of Narcotics Anonymous. My name is (first name only), and I'm an addict.

The purpose of this meeting is to inform the community of what we offer in Narcotics Anonymous: recovery from the disease of addiction. Our message is simple: An addict, any addict, with the desire to stop using drugs, can stop using, can lose the desire to use, and can find a new way of life through N.A.

N.A. is a worldwide Fellowship of recovering addicts who help each other stay clean. N.A. was founded in July of 1953. It grew very slowly for the first twenty years, but began to spread quite rapidly in the early 1970's. By the early 80's, that growth was explosive, in part as a result of the publication of our Basic Text, *Narcotics Anonymous*. By January of 1988, there were some 12,000 N.A. groups in 43 countries, with several new groups being added to the list each day. Narcotics Anonymous is growing at an incredible rate today in all 50 states and across Canada, and continues to stabilize in more countries all over the world. Here in \_\_\_\_\_, N.A. was formed in (year), and has grown to (number) meetings per week. We will discuss the local N.A. Fellowship in more detail later.

We will begin tonight's meeting by reading from some N.A. literature to better acquaint you with our program. A recovering addict will then be called on to share his/her personal experience with addiction and recovery. Next we will give you a detailed description of our local N.A. groups, including meeting lists, contacts, and hotline numbers. We will finish up with a question and answer session. Any opinions you hear tonight are the speaker's, and not necessarily those of N.A. as a whole. The meeting will last until (time). You are invited to stay for coffee after the meeting is over.

### (Optional)

As is customary in regular meetings of N.A., we will begin with a moment of silence for the addict who still suffers, followed by the Serenity Prayer.

### Readings:

I have asked \_\_\_\_\_ to read "Who is an Addict."

I have asked \_\_\_\_\_ to read "What is the N.A. Program."

I have asked \_\_\_\_\_ to read "How it Works."

Before I call on the first speaker, I would like to say a few words about anonymity. We remain an anonymous Fellowship so that addicts who seek recovery here may be confident that their anonymity will be protected. Many of us eventually come to have nothing to fear from society if it becomes known that we are recovering addicts; still we maintain anonymity as a reminder that it is not our personal identity that is important in N.A. What is important is that we are addicts who have learned to live without drugs. Personal anonymity at the public level remains an important spiritual principle, reinforcing the humility necessary for ongoing recovery.



Thank you for respecting that when you leave here tonight. Our first speaker tonight is (first name only).

(Share your experience, strength and hope)

Our second speaker tonight will share information about our local N.A. groups (first name).

Local history of N.A.--where and when the first group started, when expansion began, how many groups today (It is sometimes helpful, if applicable, to be candid about the change in atmosphere in the local groups since the "early days." This may address any preconceptions or fears about N.A.).

Formation of service committees--describe local H&I efforts, literature outlets, phonenumber arrangements, P.I. efforts, etc.

How to make use of N.A.--describe the steps to take in contacting N.A., and how they may expect you to respond. Tell them about Twelfth Step lists, pass out meeting lists, including phonenumber number, explain sponsorship and how it is handled locally, explain how they may get an H&I panel or P.I. speakers to come to their facility, etc.

Include other relevant local information, if any.

(The floor is now open for questions and answers.)

(After Q & A)

The pamphlets and magazines on display are free; the books are for sale. World Service Office order forms are also free, should you want to order your own literature directly. Thank you for your attention tonight; please stay for coffee and fellowship after the meeting, and feel free to contact N.A. at any time should a need arise.

(Optional)

**Closing Prayer.**

## **PUBLIC INFORMATION AND THE MEDIA**

### **Overview**

Contact with the media can be a wonderful opportunity to carry the message of recovery in Narcotics Anonymous. However, it can also be a major source of tradition violations, personal ego inflation and Fellowship disunity which is detrimental not only to the individual member(s) involved, but may affect N.A. as a whole.

Each P.I. subcommittee should be aware of the WSC P.I. Contingency Plan found on page 6 and 7. This should be supplemented by area/regional

contingency plans of your own. The following guides can help prevent problems if they are used in responding to all kinds of media contact.

### Responding to Media Requests

The two basic types of requests which P.I. subcommittees receive from the media are either for: 1) General information on Narcotics Anonymous, or 2) Requests for N.A. members to do interviews.

Many area and regional P.I. subcommittees have a standard letter and literature packet which is mailed out in response to every request. Often these are left at helpline offices in order that members who work the phones may assist P.I. in responding as quickly as possible to callers' requests.

The following are some frequently asked questions during initial phone calls. Many requests can be handled easily over the phone and require little or no other follow up.

*Q. Can you provide updated information for a directory of self-help groups (or any other type of phone/contact list)? How should N.A. be listed?*

A. Usually they will want a service office address and number as the main heading (should the WSO be used?). Check the geographic parameters of the listing. In any case, encourage them to indicate something like "contact with Narcotics Anonymous in your community can be made through the local phone directory."

N.A. may be listed under "self-help," "drug abuse," "community services," and/or other related categories.

*Q. Do we provide public information speakers/meetings outside of N.A.?*

A. Yes. We have found this to be a good way to inform the general public of who and what we are.

The reasons for speaking are two-fold. First, it establishes awareness and communication between N.A. and the non-addict community. Second, there might be individuals at the presentation who need us and what we have to offer.

*Q. What if a reporter wants to attend a meeting?*

A. A reporter may attend open meetings only and should be accompanied by a member of the P.I. subcommittee. It's always best to provide the reporter with a copy of an anonymity statement. For an explanation on the difference between "open" and "closed" meetings, please refer to page 46.

*Q. What if the reporter wants to bring a camera crew and take pictures at a meeting as part of the story?*

A. NO!

*Q. Why not?*

A. Photographs taken at an N.A. meeting, regardless of wheether it's a regularly scheduled meeting of N.A. or a meeting at any N.A. function or activity, can be a potential danger to individual members' anonymity.

*Q. How about blackouts, silhouettes, or covered faces on camera?*

A. Generally, this technique is used to protect the anonymity of persons engaged in or accused of criminal activities. We are working very hard to correct this negative image of the addict. Some addicts have been interviewed using rear upper torso camera angles. We have had more success with interviews which have been pre-recorded in a studio setting than recorded live or on location. The best way to ensure our members anonymity, however, is to utilize non-addicts who have an understanding of our Fellowship's Steps and Traditions.

Even when it is unclear whether or not the media is requesting general information or an interview with an addict, we can never go wrong by having literature and a letter on hand to provide them with an immediate response and clear, written information. Sometimes the media caller is unclear on what N.A. is and whether an interview with an addict is appropriate for their purposes. Often our literature can answer their questions better than we can and our open meetings can let them know what N.A. is when our words fall short.

When a reporter, producer or writer calls requesting an interview with an addict, your area/regional contingency plan should be put into effect immediately. The contingency plan ensures that no one is doing it alone. It helps us define geographical boundaries, it ensures N.A. unity and helps uphold the Twelve Traditions.

Contingency plans provide a guide and checklist which enable us to determine if the request is 1) appropriate for Narcotics Anonymous to handle at all and 2) appropriate for our particular area or region, or requires joint action, or needs to be referred to WSC P.I.

Often national media requests are referred back to the region/area in which the event will occur. The sections that follow provide guidelines for handling area and regional and national/international P.I. media events. The role of the P.I. subcommittee will be discussed, as well as the role of the N.A. members who find themselves involved in some way. Whether you are an interview coordinator, interviewee, the member who answered the phone or the member who gets to welcome the newcomer who got the message due to our P.I. efforts, SERVICE IS A PRIVILEGE!



## **Pre-interview Coordination**

### **Point #1:**

At the time the contingency plan is put into effect, a coordinator should be selected who will be responsible for all direct contact with the media until the interview or project is completed. The coordinator is very often the P.I. chairperson. The coordinator should be someone other than the person(s) to be interviewed in order to avoid giving out phone numbers or work places of the interviewees. The coordinator is responsible for keeping the area or regional or world P.I. media contingency group informed of ongoing progress and any last minute changes that may arise. The coordinator should agree ahead of time to prepare a report for the media contingency group at the end of the project. If the contingency is area or regional only, the coordinator should send a copy of the report to WSC P.I. in care of the WSO. This ensures continued evaluation of our procedures and decisions in order to help us improve our effectiveness in dealing with the media and national organizations.

The coordinator needs information about the reporter and the paper or station they are from. This information should include: name, address, phone numbers, date of contact, probable date the information will be used, and the different papers or stations that will use the information.

### **Point #2:**

As soon as a request for an interview is received, the coordinator will make sure that an informational package is express mailed or hand delivered to the people in the project:

- Executive producer of the show
- Producer
- Reporter (person doing the interview)
- N.A. interviewee
- N.A. member coordinating the interview

The informational package should include literature, an anonymity statement, demographic data on N.A. (number of meetings, estimated number of recovering addicts, etc. which is available from the WSO upon request). The N.A. members involved (interviewee and coordinator) should know what information has been given to the media and should have extra copies of the anonymity statement to give to the camera and audio crew at the shoot.

### **Point #3:**

The N.A. member to be interviewed must be someone with experience and knowledge of the traditions. As trusted servants, our responsibility is to find N.A. members who can handle this type of interview "on their own."





The coordinator should spend time with the possible interviewee and feel confident that they are not doing the interview for any personal gain, don't have an axe to grind, and fully appreciate the importance of maintaining their anonymity for themselves and for the Fellowship as a whole. As trusted servants, we have a responsibility to avoid putting someone in a situation that would be very difficult for them to handle. We also have the responsibility to find N.A. members who can best articulate N.A. recovery in an interview situation.

**Point #4:**

Once an interview has been scheduled and an N.A. member or members have agreed to participate, it may be helpful for the interviewees to talk directly with the reporter or coordinator in order to get a better idea of what the interview will be like. The producer or reporter for a story may be concerned that the N.A. service structure is attempting to censor or control the interview situation, that the concern about anonymity was overstated, and that we were going to attempt to give them a line of propaganda rather than a personal interview. Having the interviewee(s) talk directly with the media contact may alleviate many of the producer's fears and make for a much smoother situation the day of the interview. The producer or reporter will usually want to know something about the person they will be interviewing ahead of time in order to better prepare themselves and to make sure they aren't wasting their time talking to someone who doesn't fit their story or show.

**Point #5:**

Immediately after the interview, the coordinator should make clear records about the subject discussed, information revealed and other pertinent facts about the interview. A written or verbal report should be given to the subcommittee chairperson immediately after the interview is over.

**Point #6:**

THE ANONYMITY OF THE N.A. MEMBER BEING INTERVIEWED SHOULD BE MAINTAINED WITHIN THE FELLOWSHIP AS WELL AS WITHOUT. The N.A. member(s) being interviewed may be concerned that they would have to deal with jealousy, judgments and opinions from other N.A. members about their participation in the interview. Most of us who agree to be interviewed do so because it might help an addict who is out there using but we do not want it to adversely affect our own recovery within N.A. The identity of the N.A. members involved should be disclosed only on a "need to know" basis.

## Sample Interview--Questions and Answers

Following are some question and answer formats which seem to come up frequently when contact occurs from newspapers, magazines, radio and T.V. Every P.I. subcommittee should study and discuss these sections in preparation for any media contact.

*Note: Both questions and answers are only examples. Answering questions about our Fellowship is easy and can be very informative if we remember three things:*

1. The first thing to remember is to use one of the best tools we have for providing information about our Fellowship, the Basic Text. It contains a wealth of information about almost every aspect of the program. You can feel safe quoting from it.
2. The second thing to remember is that the person asking the questions will usually have only a limited knowledge about N.A. Because of this, whatever you end an answer with will usually help lead the interviewer into the next question. So the better informed you are about your answer, the better prepared you are for the next question.
3. The third thing to remember is that every question has an answer. Any question, no matter how obscure it may seem, can be used to give information about Narcotics Anonymous. These three things can best be shown by the following examples:

**Q.:** Question

**A.:** Suggested Answer

**Q.** *How do you feel about the "war on drugs"?*

**A.** Our Tenth Tradition says that Narcotics Anonymous has no opinion on outside issues, hence the N.A. name ought never be drawn into public controversy. The "war on drugs," specific drug usage or drug education are issues that are outside the purpose of our Fellowship. In N.A. we deal only with recovery from the disease of addiction. This tradition helps keep us focused on our primary purpose of carrying the message to the addict that still suffers.

**Q.** *What is the "N.A. message"?*

**A.** Our message is that an addict, any addict, can stop using, lose the desire to use, and find a new way of life through the Program of Narcotics Anonymous.

**Q.** *Is N.A. only for narcotics addicts?*

**A.** No. We believe our problem is not the use of any specific drug or group of drugs. Our problem is the disease of addiction, and our program is one of abstinence from all drugs.

*Q. What about dual addiction?*

A. The term dual addiction has no application for us. We believe there is one disease, regardless of drugs used. All addicts are welcome in N.A. We make no distinction among them.

*Q. What is the difference between "open" and "closed" N.A. meetings?*

A. An "open" meeting is one which non-addicts may attend to see how N.A. functions. A "closed" meeting is only for those who are there because of their own addiction problem.

*Q. When did N.A. start?*

A. N.A. began when several addicts who were seeking recovery held their first meetings in Southern California in 1953. The primary purpose in the beginning was the same as it is today, to help suffering addicts find a solution that would help them get clean and recover from the disease of addiction. Since, the Fellowship of Narcotics Anonymous has experienced a tremendous amount of growth. By mid-1987, the number increased to over 10,000 Narcotics Anonymous meetings in 40 countries. Around the end of 1987 the number increased to over 12,000 Narcotics Anonymous meetings in over 43 countries. We are currently increasing in size at the rate of about 50% annually.

*Note: You may wish to add information on when N.A. started in your area.*

*Q. What is the Basic Text?*

A. In 1982, the book Narcotics Anonymous was first published. In its pages the disease of addiction is described by recovering addicts who share their personal experiences, strength and hope. The Basic Text of Recovery provides general information and discussion about the principles of recovery found in the Narcotics Anonymous Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions.

*Q. What's the difference between N.A., A.A. or any other Twelve Step Program?*

A. The response should focus on the First Step, the fact that N.A. deals with the disease of addiction, not any specific drug.

*Q. What is your World Service Office?*

A. The World Service Office is the publishing and distribution center of the fellowship, and also provides clerical and administrative services.

*Note: Contact with the World Service Office can provide additional information.*

*Q. Who funds N.A. and how much does it cost?*

A. We decline any outside contributions; our Fellowship is entirely self-supporting. A collection is taken in our meetings to cover our expenses and whatever is left over goes to support services such as phonelines to further our primary purpose.

*Q. Who can become a member of N.A.?*

A. Anyone can be a member of Narcotics Anonymous. The only requirement for membership is the desire to stop using. Anyone may join us regardless of age, race, sexual identity, color, creed, religion or lack of religion.

*Q. What unique service does N.A. offer?*

A. The unique aspect of our program is our approach to the disease of addiction: the therapeutic value of one addict helping another.

*Q. What is the best way to get help from N.A. for a person with a drug problem?*

A. Get the number of Narcotics Anonymous from your local phone listing. Give the number to the person and suggest they call. Get information where and when local N.A. groups meet and suggest the person attend a meeting (local meeting lists are often available upon request through the phoneline or contact the World Service Office at: P.O. Box 9999 Van Nuys, CA 91409).

### **Some Insight about Reporters:**

If the reporter learns from any source about the participation of a "public person" (a professional sports figure, entertainer, etc.) they may go to almost any lengths to get information, even an acknowledgement of the individual's membership in N.A.

Reporters are people doing a job. They have a responsibility to their editors and papers or stations to produce stories that contain facts, revealing facts if possible, including names and other specific items that they believe are important. They will direct the questioning in ways that they believe will be informative to their audience as a whole. The story, as they envision it in their minds, may not necessarily involve information that you feel is important for them to know about N.A. Your task is to respond to their needs and to our needs by providing positive information that does not cause problems for you or the Fellowship.

Reporters are trained to use every item of information that comes to them, written or orally. If you mention names of people, events or places, they will record that, whether on paper, with their equipment or in their minds, and use it, even if you think they missed it. If you reveal something to a reporter that should not have been stated, such as an anonymity break, you must--immediately before the next word is spoken--ask that that item of knowledge not be reported. If you do not immediately make that request, it

may be too late. They are not likely to respond favorably to a phone call the next day with the same request.

There is a difference in the objectives of reporters and P.I. subcommittee members. The reporter is responsible for obtaining information for a story that is better if it has specific names, dates, places and phone numbers. They will particularly want to know about the relationship of the members and the Fellowship to drug use generally and about specific levels of drug use for certain drugs. They will want to know the relationship of members to former suppliers and others currently using.

The task of the P.I. subcommittee is to take advantage of opportunities in talking with reporters to provide information about Narcotics Anonymous, NOT to provide information for an expose. It may take some experience and patience to steer clear of giving answers to such questions as illustrated above, but it is important to do so. Our experience has shown that reporters' questioning often relates to specific substances or issues. Although direct answers to these would seem to be in violation of our traditions, it is possible to answer reporters in such a way as to provide more information while protecting the integrity of our spiritual principles.

### **Initiating Media Requests**

In addition to responding to requests from the media, some area and regional P.I. subcommittees have taken it upon themselves to contact newspapers, radio and television stations. In addition to the information listed previously for reporters overall, there are several other points to consider in this type of P.I. effort.

1. Make a contact list of the stations in the area. Call the station and ask for their mailing address and the names of the station manager, program director, public service director (PSD) and the news director. This is important, for you will be using them all at a later time.
2. Then pick the station you want to use first and call to make an appointment with whoever handles PSA's. Have available different types and lengths of PSA's.
3. If you receive an appointment, then you have the opportunity to take written information in order to share about who we are and what we are trying to do. Usually, we share a little about ourselves.
4. Remember to present information only. Don't promote! The media has no responsibility to follow our traditions, that is our job.
5. Wherever possible, quote from or discuss N.A. Conference-approved literature. This will ensure a consistent message and provide information on the literature we have available.
6. All persons involved in the contact should feel prepared, be polite and be patient! Creating a good rapport with the media will make future contacts more productive.



7. If the Public Service Director doesn't have time for an appointment, ask them if you can drop a PSA off at the front desk (be sure to call back later and ask if they received it and when they'll be finished with it). In each case, try to find out when they would start airing.
8. Immediately after the contact is made, send a thank you note for the appointment and/or their time regardless of whether you got to see them or not.
9. In about two weeks, call the PSD and inquire when you might pick up your copy of the tape. This serves two purposes. One, the PSA won't get lost in the shuffle. Two, it offers you the chance to enhance the relationship and show continued interest.
10. Always report to the ASC/RSC about which stations have the spot and ask groups to let you know if a member reports seeing it. This gives the opportunity to send another thank you letter to the station. This time, send it to the station manager, thanking him for the station's efforts.
11. Call the PSD regularly and ask if anything is needed.
12. Take a new selection to each of your stations every six months and review their commitment.
13. Keep a calendar of contact dates and action taken.

As always, regional and area boundaries must be considered prior to any contact. Although you may feel quite prepared for the outcome of any media contact, an area that might be affected by the contact may not feel prepared.

The advantage of this type of contact is that you are asking the media to broadcast our message, rather than fulfilling their informational needs. It is therefore important to have all information to be presented prepared prior to the actual contact.

### Some Points to Remember

Don't get frustrated if your PSA effort does not seem to be resulting in new members or increased phonenumber activity. At first, there may be a good deal of concern about phonelines being flooded with calls. In many cases, the amount of incoming calls stay about the same. Remember our primary purpose and if just one addict calls, it's worth the effort.

You may start getting more calls from concerned individuals and organizations requesting written information. Advance preparation for this is a good idea.

There are several thousand non-profit groups competing for the limited amount of free air time. In the near past, the U.S. Government required that the stations provide free air time but that has been deregulated now. The station decides how much air time is available and that's not much.



You might ask that the running times be after 11:00 p.m. and before 6:00 a.m. and you will have a better chance of getting them run. Most non-profit groups want prime time and there isn't much. It seems like many addicts watch TV during that period of time. We have been happy with that.

### **Local Programming**

Most stations produce their own local community service/action programs. These are usually thirty minutes to one hour in length. Call the station and ask for the producer or assistant producer of the show. Ask them if they need a new topic for one of their shows. If yes, arrange time, send them information on N.A. and start getting ready. If no, thank them for their time and send them information. Usually, the ones who say no will give you a scheduled time on the second call after they receive your written information. Either way, we call each program monthly.

Keep abreast of any activities of the local media regarding drugs or addiction. This will help you know when the time is most appropriate to make your contact.

Many papers/stations have public service projects on a periodic basis, ranging from awareness days to fairs to simply listing information on local services. Initiating a contact in connection with these projects can be an opportunity to provide the public with information on N.A. on a recurring basis with regularity and oftentimes less work.

Talk shows are always in need of and grateful for a new idea or story. There is so much talk in the media about the negative area of drug abuse. Call and offer them the other side of the story.

Inviting the would-be host to attend an open meeting can be of great benefit. She/he will then be able to ask informed questions, on the show, about what it's like at a meeting. Always explain the Twelve Traditions prior to their attendance in order to protect the group.

Again, after each contact, follow up with thank you notes, N.A. information and the like.

### **Local Newscasts**

Although you may call news directors and give them our name as a contact it's a good idea to shy away from the news program. The reasons are:

- Short time notices
- Possibility of being picked up at a national level
- Editing can take our statements out of context

- High exposure to anonymity breaks
- Helpline number is hard to get on the screen

What about volunteers to speak and their selection? The first consideration is to select different speakers each time. By doing this, dissension and jealousy can be avoided. P.I. administrative members and coordinators should appear only when there is a "no show." Everybody should get a chance to speak but not a chance to be a star or representative. As for the volunteers, whenever the media is involved we never have a shortage.

In trying to keep the selection process simple speakers may come from the "helpline" list or P.I. subcommittee.

Important speaker assets include the following:

- The most clean time available in the area
- An active commitment to N.A.
- Prior service experience
- Experience in articulating N.A. recovery
- Working knowledge of the Twelve Steps and Traditions
- Good speaking ability

## **Newspapers**

Almost all the newspapers have community meeting/happening sections in them. Get all the papers you can and determine the availability of the announcement section. Prepare a press release and mail them out.

The World Service Office has many items that can aid you in providing accurate and consistent information on the N.A. program. These items range from audio and video public service announcements, to press releases, to packets of information on the history and growth of N.A. worldwide. It will be important to give the media some information on the growth and history of N.A. in your area and region as well. The actual amount and type of information appropriate for a contact of this type will depend on the size of the media audience, the size and support available in N.A. in the area to be covered and the willingness of the media to honor your request. Regardless of the media's reaction to your request, you will have provided them with a view of N.A. recovery. If you continue to keep in touch with them, through follow-up or thank you letters, chances are you will have a very successful vehicle to help carry the N.A. message.

## **Public Service Announcements General Information**

Generally speaking, there are three types of PSA's for radio and TV.

1. Television--10, 20, 30 and 60 second spots supplied to stations on 3/4, 1 or 2 inch video tape.
2. Radio--"Canned" cassette or reel, 10, 20, 30 and 60 second spots.

3. Typewritten spots read by the station's disc jockeys.

### **Suggestions**

Quality is more important than quantity. Go slowly, be careful and be thorough.

Keep records.

Be sure that radio and TV tapes are stored in a cool, dry, dark area. Heat and water can quickly ruin tapes.

Be sure spots have the name and phone number of a P.I. contact, spot length and title particulars on labels, both on tape and case.

A 10 second spot has approximately 20 words.

A 20 second spot has approximately 50 words.

A 30 second spot has approximately 75 words.

A 60 second spot has approximately 150 words.

(See pages 60-67 for scripts of radio and TV P.S.A.'s available from the World Service Office).

Use spots provided by the world or regional level P.I. committee whenever possible.

Do not hand write or print. Use typewritten spots only. Use 8 1/2 x 11" white bond paper. Provide only one announcement per page. The copy must be clear and easy to read. Do not fold or staple the paper. Do not use abbreviations. Use double spaces, and upper and lower case type. A sample set of a properly prepared radio spot is provided on the above mentioned pages.

## LETTERS FOR RADIO AND TV

### Thank You Letter for Interview

This should be edited to reflect the correct information for your area or region.

XXX News  
John Doe  
Street  
City

Dear Mr. Doe,

Thank you for the opportunity to share with you and your viewers the recovery program of Narcotics Anonymous. We appreciate the cooperation and open-mindedness shown to us by the members of your news staff. The radio/television media provides us with an excellent form of communication to the suffering addict who doesn't know where to turn for help. In their most desperate hours, many addicts have heard/seen a public service announcement with an N.A. phonenumber and made the call for help.

We would appreciate a copy of the broadcast in order to keep a record of our committee's work and to communicate successful methods to other areas.

Our Fellowship continues to grow by leaps and bounds every year. Since 1953, when the Fellowship was established in California with only a few addicts, the number of clean, recovering members has increased to hundreds of thousands.

We are always grateful to organizations which are understanding and respectful of the Twelve Traditions of Narcotics Anonymous. If there is any additional help or information you may need, now or in the future, please feel free to contact our committee, either through our phonenumber or the address below.

Sincerely,

Contact person  
Committee name  
Address  
Phone

## Letter of Introduction for PSA Placement

This should be edited to reflect the correct information for your area or region.

Dear Public Service Director:

*(Use names wherever possible)*

We are writing in response to our recent conversation with your station concerning Narcotics Anonymous.

Narcotics Anonymous is a worldwide Fellowship of men and women for whom drugs had become a major problem. We are recovering addicts who hold regularly scheduled meetings to help each other live drug-free lives. We feel that our approach to the problem of addiction is completely realistic, for the therapeutic value of one addict helping another is without parallel. We feel that our way is practical, for one addict can best understand and help another addict.

We are a non-profit organization, self-supporting through our own contributions. Therefore, we charge no dues or fees for our service.

We believe it is of vital importance for our community to be aware of the service we offer. It is our hope that your station will be able to aid us in this task by airing our PSA's. If there are any questions concerning Narcotics Anonymous or our status as a non-profit organization, please do not hesitate to contact us. We can be reached through our phoneline in the \_\_\_\_\_ Area. Ask to speak with the Public Information Contact person.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Public Information Subcommittee  
Narcotics Anonymous  
(Include a name and  
phone number)



## **Letter of Introduction for PSA Placement**

This should be edited to reflect the correct information for your area or region.

Dear \_\_\_\_\_:

Narcotics Anonymous of \_\_\_\_\_ County is requesting the help of area radio/TV stations in an effort to reach people with a drug problem who want to stop using.

In order to do so, the Area Service Committee of \_\_\_\_\_ County is operating a phoneline, available to anyone seeking help. This service covers the areas of \_\_\_\_\_ Counties. The number is \_\_\_\_\_.

We are trying to let the public know of this service and we have prepared 30-second public service announcements which we would greatly appreciate your airing during your broadcast day.

Narcotics Anonymous is a Fellowship of recovering addicts who meet regularly to help each other stay clean and free from drugs. We offer a means of recovery to others who wish to stop using. We charge no dues or fees. We are not affiliated with any hospitals, drug recovery houses, agencies or institutions.

We will be contacting you in the near future to establish communication with your station so that we may answer any questions you might have. We would appreciate your advising us of air time and frequency of broadcasts as we are endeavoring to maintain records.

Thank you for your attention and cooperation.

Sincerely,

Radio and TV Coordinators

Chairperson: \_\_\_\_\_

**Thank You Letter for PSA Placement**

This should be edited to reflect the correct information for your area or region.

Dear \_\_\_\_\_:

The \_\_\_\_\_ (area) Public Information Subcommittee of Narcotics Anonymous would like to thank you for your cooperation in our effort to carry the message of Narcotics Anonymous by airing the public service announcements we previously sent to you. The response has been positive and extremely valuable.

Being aware that it is not possible for you to air our public service announcements on a continuing basis, we have prepared and enclosed updated versions. We thank you again for your cooperation and if you have any questions or require additional information, please feel free to contact me at my home or through this committee.

Sincerely yours,

P.I. Subcommittee Chair



## **Thank You Letter for PSA Placement**

This should be edited to reflect the correct information for your area or region.

Jane Doe  
Public Announcement Director  
XXXX Television Station  
P.O. Box \_\_\_\_\_  
Your City, Your State and Zip

Dear Ms. Doe,

The purpose of this letter is to express the gratitude of the \_\_\_\_\_ (area) Public Information Committee of Narcotics Anonymous for running the N.A. Phoneline video/N.A. TV PSA's.

We feel that it is very important that we bring to your attention the impact this video has on addicts, on families of addicts, and on friends of addicts. It seems that people who suffer from the deadly disease of addiction reach a point of total defeat. They are then ready to admit that they have no control over their drug use and become willing to seek and to accept help. It is crucial that they are aware that there is a Fellowship and a program available to them in which addicts help each other to stay clean.

We are very grateful to your station for the part you play in circulating the message that recovery is possible by working the Twelve Steps to recovery in N.A. We feel that as a result of your support many people are now aware that they can lead a clean, healthy, and productive life.

Sincerely,

P.I. Subcommittee Chair

## GUIDE TO WRITING NEWS RELEASES

1. Content needs to be news--something has to have happened; a newsworthy event should be the focus.
2. All information must be accurate. In order to preserve credibility and an attractive public image, we must always do our best to carefully check any information, such as addresses, etc., and any figures, claims made, or any other data we present, for accuracy.
3. Press releases should be written in journalistic style, presenting facts, using clear, concise, simple, to-the-point sentences, with information placed in order of importance (sample news release attached). The release should give the "five W's," telling what happened or will be happening, whom is involved, where the event took place or will take place, when the news event took place or is to take place, and why it happened or will happen. "How" it happened or is expected to happen should also be included. The release should end with a journalistic closing symbol, "-30-" or "###."
4. Use no more than one sheet, if possible. Use letter size paper (8 1/2 by 11 inches). Type and double space the text, leaving large margins on the top, bottom and sides. When it is necessary to use a second sheet, put "-MORE-" centered at the bottom of the first page, and "-2-" or "page 2" at the top of the second page. Also at the top of the second page, include a short identification line, such as "Narcotics Anonymous," or an abbreviated version of the heading used on page one. This will help if the second page is accidentally mislaid or separated from the first page.
5. The top of the page should say "PRESS RELEASE" or "NEWS RELEASE." It is a good idea to use a special style of stationery instead of regular letterhead paper. The upper left hand corner of the page should give the appropriate address, including the name Narcotics Anonymous, and a phone number if there is one. Also on the heading should be a release date which says "for immediate release," or, if you need more control over the timing of the release, gives a specific time for release, such as "for release June 3, 1987" or "for release after 11:00 a.m., Wednesday June 3, 1987." The heading should also include the date of the release. Before the text of the news release, put a title line which describes the contents to follow. The line looks like a headline, but it is provided for the news editor or reporter's information, and it may not be used in print.
6. A press release should be designed to be read in a very short period of time. It should not contain advertising style attention getting statements. Reporters can contact us for background information if they want to. Then we may supply further information, such as a press kit. Provide your release to the media in a timely fashion. If you are informing the media about a community meeting to be held, be sure they get the release several days in advance.

## SAMPLE NEWS RELEASE

From:

Narcotics Anonymous

P.O. Box \_\_\_\_\_

Contact:

(name), Public Information Committee

(Telephone)

Number of Narcotics Anonymous groups in (name of town) TOPS (number)

(PLACE OF RELEASE), (DATE OF RELEASE)--Narcotics Anonymous (N.A.), a non-profit group for drug addicts, announces that (number) N.A. groups are now meeting each week in (name of town). In addition to those meetings, (number) special N.A. meetings in area institutions are regularly held. The number of N.A. groups worldwide surpassed twelve thousand (12,000) in February 1988.

Narcotics Anonymous offers hope and help to drug addicts. At N.A. meetings, addicts meet other people who have had similar experiences and problems who are now staying off drugs and learning a better way to live. There is no fee for attendance at N.A. meetings.

Founded in 1953, N.A. now exists throughout the United States and in over 40 other countries. Narcotics Anonymous is for any drug addict, regardless of which drug or combination of drugs that person used. N.A. literature emphasizes that when addicts substitute one drug for another, it just releases their addiction all over again. By focusing on recovery from the common problem of drug addiction, N.A. provides an environment where addicts who may not have used the same drugs identify with and help each other.

The only requirement for membership in N.A. is a desire to stop using drugs. Open N.A. meetings may be attended by any interested members of the public. Information about Narcotics Anonymous and local meeting schedules are available from \_\_\_\_\_.

## RADIO PSA SCRIPTS

### Radio PSA #1

*(WSC-approved; available through WSO)*

#### Organization:

Narcotics Anonymous  
( \_\_\_\_ Area Service Com.)  
0000 Every Street  
Anytown, USA 69696  
000-0000

#### Contact:

John Doe  
Public Service Director  
000-0000

#### Reading Time--10 seconds

##### Voice/Over 1

Recovery is what happens in N.A. meetings. It is possible to stop using drugs.

##### Voice/Over 2

Call Narcotics Anonymous, we can help.  
(Name of Organization) File #00000000000000

## **Radio PSA #2**

*(WSC-approved; available through WSO)*

### **Organization:**

Narcotics Anonymous  
( \_\_\_\_ Area Service Com.)  
0000 Every Street  
Anytown, USA 69696  
000-0000

### **Contact:**

John Doe  
Public Service Director  
000-0000

**Reading Time--10 seconds**

**Voice/Over 1**

**It is possible to stop using drugs.**

**Voice/Over 2**

**Call Narcotics Anonymous, we can help.**

**(Name of Organization) File #000000000000**

**Radio PSA #3**

*(WSC-approved; available through WSO)*

**Organization:**

Narcotics Anonymous  
( \_\_\_\_ Area Service Com.)  
0000 Every Street  
Anytown, USA 69696  
000-0000

**Contact:**

John Doe  
Public Service Director  
000-0000

**Reading Time--20 seconds**

**Voice/Over 1**

I was searching for an answer when I reached out and found  
Narcotics Anonymous.

**Voice/Over 2**

Surrounded by fellow addicts, I realized I was not alone.

**Voice/Over 3**

Recovery is what happens at N.A. meetings. It is possible to stop  
using drugs.

**Voice/Over 4**

Call Narcotics Anonymous, we can help.

(Name of Organization) File #000000000000000000

## **Radio PSA #4**

*(WSC-approved; available through WSO)*

### **Organization:**

Narcotics Anonymous  
( \_\_\_\_ Area Service Com.)  
0000 Every Street  
Anytown, USA 69696  
000-0000

### **Contact:**

John Doe  
Public Service Director  
000-0000

### **Reading Time--20 seconds**

#### **Voice/Over 1**

I admitted I was powerless over my addiction--that my life had become unmanageable.

I had tried to quit on my own but it never worked.

In Narcotics Anonymous I learned that it is possible to stop using drugs.

#### **Voice/Over 2**

Call Narcotics Anonymous, we can help.

(Name of Organization) File #000000000000000000



## Radio PSA #5

*(WSC-approved; available through WSO)*

### Organization:

Narcotics Anonymous  
( \_\_\_\_ Area Service Com.)  
0000 Every Street  
Anytown, USA 69696  
000-0000

### Contact:

John Doe  
Public Service Director  
000 -0000

### Reading Time—30 seconds

#### Voice/Over 1

I was searching for an answer when I reached out and found  
Narcotics Anonymous.

I came to my first N.A. meeting in defeat, and didn't know what  
to expect.

#### Voice/Over 2

Surrounded by fellow addicts I realized I was not alone.

I heard them talk about the same feelings I was afraid to share.

#### Voice/Over 3

Recovery is what happens at N.A. meetings. It is possible to stop  
using drugs.

#### Voice/Over 4

Call Narcotics Anonymous, we can help.

(Name of Organization) File #000000000000000000

## Radio PSA #6

*(WSC-approved; available through WSO)*

### Organization:

Narcotics Anonymous  
( \_\_\_\_ Area Service Com.)  
0000 Every Street  
Anytown, USA 69696  
000-0000

### Contact:

John Doe  
Public Service Director  
000-0000

### Reading Time--60 seconds

I admitted I was powerless over my addiction, that my life had become unmanageable.

I had tried to quit on my own but it never worked.

I was searching for an answer when I reached out and found Narcotics Anonymous.

I came to my first N.A. meeting in defeat, and didn't know what to expect.

Surrounded by fellow addicts I realized I was not alone. I heard them talk about the same feelings I was afraid to share.

Recovery is what happens in N.A. meetings.

It didn't matter what drug or how much I used. In Narcotics Anonymous I learned that it is possible to stop using drugs.

I don't have to do it alone.

Call Narcotics Anonymous, we can help.

(Name of Organization) File #000000000000000000

## TV PSA SCRIPTS

### TV PSA #1--Basic Text

*(WSC-approved; available through WSO)*

30 Second PSA

Title: Basic Text

"I was searching for an answer when I reached out and found  
Narcotics Anonymous...

...I came to my first N.A. meeting in defeat and didn't know what  
to expect..."

"Surrounded by fellow addicts I realized...

...that I was not alone; I heard them talk about the same feelings  
I was afraid to share..."

"Recovery is what happens in our meetings."

"It is possible to stop using drugs."

"Call Narcotics Anonymous..."

...We Can Help."

"Check your local phone book or write,  
Narcotics Anonymous  
P.O. Box 9999, Van Nuys, California 91409."

### TV PSA #2--Woman at Table

*(WSC-approved; available through WSO)*

30 Second PSA

Title: Woman at Table

"I admitted I was powerless over my addiction..."

...that my life had become unmanageable...

...It didn't matter how much or what drug I used."

"In Narcotics Anonymous..."

...I learned that it is possible to stop using drugs."

"I don't have to do it alone!"

"Call Narcotics Anonymous..."

...We Can Help."

"Check your local phone book or write,  
Narcotics Anonymous  
P.O. Box 9999, Van Nuys, California 91409."

### **TV PSA #3--Man in Phonebooth**

*(WSC-approved; available through WSO)*

30 Second PSA

Title: Man in Phonebooth

"I remember how scared I was. I was desperate. I know I was desperate because I wouldn't have called otherwise. I was sick and I was beginning to do things I'd promised myself I'd never do. There wasn't anyone left who was glad to see me anymore. So I took a chance and called Narcotics Anonymous. You don't have to wait until you're as bad off as I was before you reach out."

"Check your local phone book or write,  
Narcotics Anonymous  
P.O. Box 9999, Van Nuys, California 91409."

### **TV PSA #4--First Meeting/Hallway Scene**

*(WSC-approved; available through WSO)*

30 Second PSA

Title: First Meeting

"When I went to my first meeting I was scared. I didn't know what to expect."

"A bunch of drug addicts in a room together, gimme a break."

"But it was weird, no matter what anyone said...nobody was surprised. Other people felt the same way."

"I'd been running alone for so many years and now...I wasn't. You know what I mean?"

"It is possible to stop doing drugs. The proof is at the meetings. But you've gotta get there first."

"Check your local phone book or write,  
Narcotics Anonymous  
P.O. Box 9999, Van Nuys, California 91409."

## Section 4

### KEEPING THE N.A. FELLOWSHIP INFORMED

*NOTE: This section is incomplete. It will be revised to contain some of the following information and more.*

The effect of the Twelve Traditions on P.I. needs to be discussed here also, especially the issue of attraction rather than promotion and personal anonymity.

P.I. subcommittees, at every level of service, need to keep the Fellowship informed of what is being done in P.I. This can be done through sharing materials from WSC, RSC's and ASC's. This should also be done by holding regular workshops utilizing the material below.

### LEARNING DAYS AND WORKSHOPS

#### Learning Days

Learning Days are generally felt to be an informal sharing experience about a specific realm of service or recovery. Instead of working on a specific issue relating to the service needs of N.A. or listening to speakers talk about a certain topic during a convention, which is what we expect from a workshop, learning days can function to increase our collective knowledge as well as provide support and unity. Learning days have been held which focus on P.I., H&I, literature, the Fourth Step, sponsorship, unity, etc.

Some of the best structures for learning days seem to be a question and answer setting or round table discussion. The question and answer setting is usually more formal than a round table in that the ideas are presented and then the floor is opened for questions or discussion with the speaker or panel. Discussion is done in an orderly fashion without breaking into smaller groups.

Round table discussions, which are simply people sharing informally in a group, may be broken up into small groups during a portion of the learning day, later reforming into the larger group and sharing individual information with the whole. Whether you decide on staying in one large group or many small discussion groups, one topic only should be assigned to a group. If the general theme is P.I., for example, smaller groups may be assigned the related topics of phonelines, PSA's, interviews, etc. The designated resource person (leader, chairperson) lends experience to the discussion and clarifies any problem areas.

A combination of the two formats may also be used. Depending on the focus and format, several different forms of participation may be used, including trusted servants from within or outside of the area.

Learning Days and workshops require considerable preparation. Individuals must be available to serve as resource people for the discussion or presentations. These individuals should have an experience-based knowledge of the topic. They should also be skilled at lending support when appropriate and at calming disagreements (personality conflicts) if they occur.

Some practical aspects of planning a learning day may seem routine, but should not be overlooked. The day and location can be very important in attracting as many N.A. members as possible. Consideration must be given to work days, holidays, other N.A. events and distances to be travelled. Cooperation and communication are important in scheduling a smoothly flowing learning day.

Although the process and methods of learning days and workshops differ, they have the same primary purpose: to inform and aid the addict seeking recovery.

### **Workshops**

The formats of workshops are different from those of learning days. Actual workshops, as the term implies, are those events during which a specific topic, activity or item is worked on. Some of the events during which workshops have been held are during a service conference or meeting that is arranged to deal with a certain item of business or area of service.

Examples of workshop topics include developing subcommittee guidelines, reviewing a World Service Conference agenda or maybe even a workshop for group or service committee inventories. The common theme of these business type workshops is that time is allotted to brainstorm and examine specific issues and projects within the Fellowship.

Workshops held as part of a regularly scheduled service conference or learning day normally have a specific topic and specific goal, and the format can be highly structured. Time allotments are usually made for presentation, discussion and constructive criticism of each aspect of the topic or the work in progress. The structure may even utilize a chairperson, vice chairperson, treasurer and secretary if the event is going to be a regularly scheduled, on-going activity.

Public information workshops have also been included as part of a convention program. Topics for these workshops may include one or more of the Twelve Traditions, public speaking, formation of a P.I. committee, as well as other topics suitable to be used in a convention setting.

If a workshop is scheduled as a separate event, it may also be successfully used to review new literature, discuss service responsibilities and positions, present new ideas for service commitments, and to review and recommend action on items presented in World Service Conference agendas.

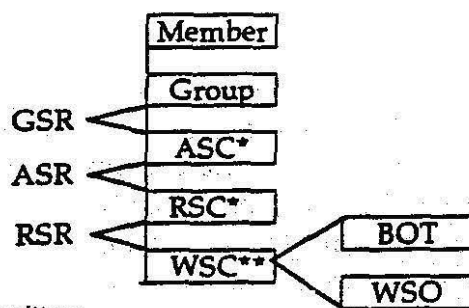


Although the terms workshop and learning day are often used interchangeably, experience from around the Fellowship seems to prove that they do have separate uses and goals.

### Sample Outline for Workshop/Learning Days

This sample outline may be used in conjunction with the general information about workshops and learning days described in the previous pages. The outline, set up primarily for WSC P.I. presentations, can be adapted by area and regional committees, using the suggestions for topic discussion groups relative to the needs and activities of the individual groups involved.

1. Begin with a general description, diagram if chalkboard is available, of the service structure.



\* Each of these may have subcommittees

\*\* The WSC has standing and ad-hoc committees

2. If presentation is done by world level trusted servant or special workers--

Describe roles of WSC committees and/or WSO coordinators and their responsibilities to conference committees.

#### A. Networking of and communication between world and regional/area P.I. subcommittees.

1. Networking is utilizing a mutually agreed upon procedure or protocol to cooperate and communicate between these service committees.
2. Exchange of minutes between areas and/or regions.
3. Exchange of contact lists (persons and procedures).

#### B. Creation and/or distribution of P.I. materials.

1. Creations.
  - a. Cover letter--introductory letter to the public at large.
  - b. Enclosures--meeting lists, information pamphlets, bulletin cards, hotline pamphlets, etc.

- c. PSA's.
    - d. Radio Spots.
  - 2. How materials can be obtained.
    - a. Directly from WSC, RSC or ASC (exchange of materials).
  - 3. Go over any new item or projects being worked on.
- C. Mention P.I. Newsletter and its function as an information sharing forum for P.I. subcommittees.
  - 1. Quarterly newsletter comprised of input from all levels of service.
  - 2. Available to any registered P.I. subcommittee.
- D. Discussion of PSAs.
  - 1. WSC-approved tapes only.
  - 2. Their use in various regions.
    - a. Input on area may increase helpline/hotline calls--"Are you prepared?"
  - 3. Problems with TV stations.
    - a. Mutually agreed upon airing times to be aware and prepared for reaction to PSA.
    - b. Type of equipment used.
    - c. TV station may want to edit tapes
    - d. Running tape prior to or immediately following a rehabilitation facility-type broadcast.
  - 4. Need for communication between areas and regions where broadcast areas overlap.
    - a. If possible, area may use cable TV to broadcast only to local area.
    - b. To insure mutual preparedness of all areas affected.
  - 5. Price and description of PSAs and PSA kits.

PSAs can be shown now or later  
Question and Answer Period



## **THE TWELVE TRADITIONS OF NARCOTICS ANONYMOUS.**

1. Our common welfare should come first; personal recovery depends on N.A. unity.
2. For our group purpose there is but one ultimate authority—a loving God as He may express Himself in our group conscience. Our leaders are but trusted servants, they do not govern.
3. The only requirement for membership is a desire to stop using.
4. Each group should be autonomous except in matters affecting other groups or N.A. as a whole.
5. Each group has but one primary purpose—to carry the message to the addict who still suffers.
6. An N.A. group ought never endorse, finance, or lend the N.A. name to any related facility or outside enterprise, lest problems of money, property or prestige divert us from our primary purpose.
7. Every N.A. group ought to be fully self-supporting, declining outside contributions.
8. Narcotics Anonymous should remain forever nonprofessional, but our service centers may employ special workers.
9. N.A., as such, ought never be organized, but we may create service boards or committees directly responsible to those they serve.
10. Narcotics Anonymous has no opinion on outside issues; hence the N.A. name ought never be drawn into public controversy.
11. Our public relations policy is based on attraction rather than promotion; we need always maintain personal anonymity at the level of press, radio, and films.
12. Anonymity is the spiritual foundation of all our Traditions, ever reminding us to place principles before personalities.