

COLLABORATION

11:10 am - 12:45 pm

Session led by Jim DeLizia and Ron H (WB)

This session focused on specific issues to communicate in the 2012-2014 cycle, and involved participants in the forming of the Issue Discussion Topics for the next cycle.

IDTs are defined in a cycle through the same environmental scanning process that leads to the priorities in the strategic plan. These priorities lead to the IDTs, which in turn help to identify key messages.

Ron H (WB) first introduced the issue of Principles before Personalities by asking if this phrase meant that personality was therefore unimportant. The room agreed with Ron that it did not mean this; however, we do have evidence that strong personalities are an issue within NA at times.

Ron then introduced the issue of Collaboration by discussing how this is something we have been doing for a long time, and discussed how the autonomy of the Fourth Tradition could be interpreted as saying that collaboration isn't necessary. Ron suggested that this may happen if the second half of the tradition isn't considered. Ron discussed how the application of the Traditions sometimes involves finding the tension between complimentary principles.

Small Group Discussion

Jim stated that successfully discussing these issues with the fellowship would require the careful use of language and concepts, and that delegates have an essential role in forming this approach. Jim divided the room in half and assigned one to discuss Principles before Personalities, and the other to discuss Collaboration. The questions to consider were:

- What are the reasons this is an issue?
- What do we want to improve by addressing this issue?

[Note: Full copies of these small group discussion notes are available on request.]

Some of the reasons shared for why **principles before personalities** are an issue included:

- They can set a tone that is difficult to overcome.
- Personalities can become "poisonalities."
- Strong personalities can cause disunity.

If we were to be successful in addressing these issues, what specifically would be improved, asked Jim. Some of the ideas shared included:

- A more collaborative and involved process focused on our primary purpose and keeping integrity in service.
- Cooperation rather than confrontation.
- A change from "unprincipled" to "principled" personalities through recovery.
- More members bringing their step work into service meetings.

Some of the improvements we hope to see by addressing **collaboration** include:

- More rotation in service which will help prevent personalities taking over
- More inclusivity, open mindedness, and acceptance. Jim pointed out that understanding has to come before acceptance.
- Understanding of the difference between sovereignty and autonomy. As Ron H pointed out earlier, autonomy does not have to conflict with collaboration, added Jim.

Key Messages

Jim talked about key messages as communication tools that leaders use to get a concept across in language that makes sense to an audience and moves them to greater understanding and belief that they need to act. Good key messages move people from where they are to where they need to go. They reflect your understanding of your audience. Effective key messages have meaning for the audience; they are clear, concise, and consistently delivered; they can be delivered in different forms; and they move the audience.

During the small group discussion portion of the session each table was to develop key messages. Jim gave each table a goal for their key messages—an idea that the messages were to communicate.

The goal of the key messages for **Principles before Personalities** was to communicate the idea “personality is valuable, but not at the expense of unity.” Ideas included:

- We shouldn't have to choose between the two. Both together, not either/or
- Include spiritual awakenings in the process. Rather than using buzzwords, go with spiritual principles.
- Include all viewpoints, including the newer member.
- Consider our common welfare.

The responses for **Collaboration** were related to the phrase “autonomy doesn't mean we don't collaborate” and included:

- The greater good is more important than the localized viewpoint.
- Diversity challenges certainty and encourages creativity.
- Working together produces better results.
- Mentor and train more efficiently.
- The spiritual nature of collaboration is close to that of service.

Jim explained how key messages have many uses, both inside and outside the fellowship, and thanked everyone for their help in this session.

NAWS REPORT

2:15 pm - 3:37 pm

Session led by Ron M (WB Chair) and Anthony E (NAWS Executive Director)

This session was divided into two parts, with question and answer sessions after each part. The first session covered staff introductions, strategic planning, NAWS communications, and a NAWS Facebook presence. The second session covered *Living Clean* and literature development, the na.org website, the removal of PDFs from na.org, and a brief WSC seating discussion.

Anthony E (NAWS Executive Director) showed photos of staff from the five NAWS offices and distribution centers, and asked the conference to thank them for their hard work. Participants responded with round of applause and a standing ovation.

Strategic Planning

Ron M (WB Chair) reviewed the strategic planning process, focusing on its cyclical nature and the progress that has been made in recent cycles towards a broader acceptance of planning in NA service. Ron reflected on how planning is used in several of his local sub-committees. Ron also offered some examples of the broad range of information that is reviewed as a part of the environmental scanning phase of the strategic plan.