

## Fellowship Issue Discussions

### Purpose and scope:

The Issue Discussion Topics (IDTs) selected at the World Service Conference have taken on more importance in recent years and we consider them a high priority. NA World Services facilitates fellowship-wide discussion of these identified issues and has continually strived to improve the dialogue, focus, and follow-up on these IDTs. Engaging the fellowship in local discussions about issues of worldwide importance has inspired action around current issues and helped members apply NA principles in their local service efforts. Topics will be presented to WSC 2014 for approval for the 2014–2016 conference cycle.

We believe we still have much to understand and discuss about our Third Tradition, and the discussions this past cycle about delegation, accountability, and group conscience are certainly not finished.

The IDTs are not just about the content of the discussion, but also the process. Objective A and Objective F in our Strategic Plan outline what we hope to do with Issue Discussion Topics in the upcoming cycle. The IDTs offer us an opportunity to continue working on communication within the fellowship and improving the channels of communication between World Services and members, groups, and service bodies. The IDT process also provides a good opportunity to work on models or methods of consensus building. All of the principles within the topics we are considering for the upcoming cycles contain ideas that affect us as a fellowship now, and building a common understanding would not only help us now, but could improve and inform the drafting of the Traditions Book as well as future work on our Service System.

We have submitted this project plan every cycle but we do not really capture these expenses like a typical project. We use standard NAWS reporting to forward these ideas and the IDTs do not incur enough additional direct expense that it makes sense to track separately. We believe this has become part of essential services.



*The objectives, outcomes, and approaches which led to this project plan are:*

### Issue: **Communication Channels**

Objective A: Continue to improve communication between NAWS and groups and individual members, by developing consistent, reliable ways to share information, ideas, and tools with each other, supplementing effective communication through the delegation stream.

#### Preliminary Outcomes by 2016

- More groups and members are participating in dialogs with NAWS.
- Members have a simpler and more convenient way to access existing information and resources and are more aware of what is available.

#### Approaches

5. Encourage the use of current IDTs, and produce a summary of results at the end of the cycle.
6. Develop key messages, and use interactive technology to encourage discussion of them and around other issues important to the fellowship.
7. Develop a tool (FAQ, video tutorial, etc.) on how to get the most from NA.org as a resource.
8. Host IDT webinars.

essential services/cycle commitments

second priority

third priority

**Issue: Global Consensus Building Process**

Objective F: Increase involvement of the fellowship in issue discussions and use those discussions to help build a model/methods for consensus building

**Preliminary Outcomes by 2016**

- Consensus-based decision making is widely used among service groups.
- More NA communities and zonal forums include IDT discussions on their workshop agendas.
- A method is in place to track and report on the outcomes of issues discussions so those who contributed can see the impact of their input.

**Approaches**

1. Develop and distribute models for IDT discussions that are appropriate for a range of cultures, languages, and levels of recovery and service experience.
2. Implement a means to report on the outcomes of issues discussed, so those who contribute can see the impact of their input.
3. Facilitate sharing between members and trusted servants regarding CBDM.
4. Create simple means (e.g., webinars, YouTube video, tools) for understanding, learning, and implementing CBDM, and working through any challenges that may arise.

**Direct expense items:**

Distribution of material is covered under Publications and other line items in the NAWS Budget

**Direct expenses:**

### Issue Discussion Topics—Selection and Discussion

At WSC 2002, the following process was approved for use for two conferences. We continue to refine the IDT process each conference cycle.

**INITIATION AND CHOOSING TOPICS:** The WSC meeting is the best place to initiate Fellowship discussions. Without the efforts of all conference participants when they leave the conference, the Fellowship would not be aware of what these issues are or why they are important.

The conference may select Issue Discussion Topics through any combinations of the following:

1. The World Board can come to WSC with a variety of topics, derived from many sources, for participants to either rank or choose from. The sources for topics would include reports from the worldwide workshops, WSO Fellowship Services' correspondence, topics submitted from regions or members, world convention workshops, etc.
2. The World Board can come to WSC with one or two topics already chosen for the next conference cycle. These topics would come from the same sources mentioned above.
3. Conference participants can generate topics throughout the week and choose one or two from a compiled list near the end of the week.

**CONFERENCE PARTICIPANTS AND FELLOWSHIP INVOLVEMENT:** The general steps below provide for wide participation of conference participants and members of the Fellowship.

Conference participants, in small groups, can generate points to help establish the type of information in **the “News Flash” for each topic**. [Note: While we no longer publish *News Flashes* we do include information on the IDTs in *The NA Way* following the conference and post that information online as well.]

**The WB can finalize the News Flashes after** the WSC meeting and distribute them widely.

The WB will invite input from the Fellowship discussions. It will be important to actively encourage members and committees to share their experience, strength, and hope instead of asking for their opinion or “position” on the topic. Our recovery is built on this kind of sharing of experience rather than taking a position.

**FINALIZATION:** The World Board will provide feedback to the Fellowship in the form of a synopsis or report on the input received. This could be in *The NA Way*, *NAWS News*, a special report, on the website, etc. The input might or might not be usable as input for a **bulletin** or even for a new project plan.

The approach outlined above delivers what is hoped to be an inclusive process that has a definable outcome. It outlines the selection of Issue Discussion Topics, and the initiation and finalization of discussions. It allows for the Board to draw from staff, worldwide workshops, convention workshops, member ideas, regional submissions, and Board correspondence. The *News Flash* idea that was so well received during the last conference cycle is utilized, the selection process is taken out of the *CAR*, and “position papers” are discouraged in favor of shared experience.

This approach also preserves the value of holding Fellowship discussions in many different settings while creating the sense of building community among the discussion participants.