

WORLD SERVICE BOARD OF TRUSTEES OF NARCOTICS ANONYMOUS

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To the Fellowship of Narcotics Anonymous:

We are quickly approaching another World Service Conference and this is the last opportunity for issues that need resolution at the Conference to go out to the Fellowship. It is also a time of inventory taking and as such it is important to take a look at what has been accomplished, what needs to be accomplished and report in an honest open fashion to the Fellowship.

Over the past two years the World Service Board has changed from being primarily a passive Board to an active involved Board. In this process we have done some things right and have made some mistakes but have hopefully learned from both. The Fellowship has asked the Trustees to assume a more active role in the Fellowship and some Trustees have done this.

The Trustees have continued to write articles on the traditions for the Newsline published by WSO. The Trustees are open to input from the Fellowship and would like to know what issues the membership would like to see addressed in these articles. In addition, material has been put together from our correspondence which contains questions the Trustees have been asked over the past couple of years and Trustee responses to those questions. The material needs work before it can be made available to the Fellowship but it is my hope that this material can be provided to every RSR at the World Service Conference in April. The Trustees continue to seek ways to provide the Fellowship with more information on the traditions and especially in newly developing areas, which usually have enormous enthusiasm and little long term recovery experience on working the steps and traditions.

Our World Service Board of Trustees acquired some valuable first hand experience in working with newer areas and regions this past year. An individual in one region wrote regarding a controversy that was threatening to split the region, fortunately the other function involved also wrote the WSB. Because of the intensity of the feelings expressed it was decided to send a Trustee to that region to assess the situation and see what could be done. The visit proved to be a great success and turned into more of a question and answer session and an exchange of ideas after the problem was addressed. As a result a new region has a better understanding of how the traditions work, how the service structure functions and thus feels much more a part of the Fellowship. The World Service Board of Trustees working with WSC and WSO sent a representative to the Australasian Convention thus

helping to develop within the Fellowship a feeling of a world wide Fellowship rather than a region, area or national Fellowship. A full report of the Australasian Convention experience is included in a later section in this report.

The trustee held three meetings this year and one more is scheduled for early February. Two years ago the meetings were one or two hours in length and held only a few times during the year. Meetings this year have grown to take the better part of two full days. These meetings have been productive as well as lengthy. Copies of the minutes of these meetings have been provided to the RSR's. With respect to the upcoming World Service Conference the Board of Trustees have input in several areas and these can best be broken down by each Sub-committee discussed and then listing the recommendation and the reason for that recommendation.

Literature:

The Board of Trustees had several lengthy discussions regarding literature in general at each Trustee meeting. The general conclusion was that at the World Service Conference two years ago a number of pamphlets were approved in a very hasty fashion and that some of the pamphlets are at best inadequate and poorly written. The WSB recommends that the Conference and the World Literature Committee carefully review these and make an evaluation and take steps to rewrite many of them.

In the case of several pamphlets, delayed action should be avoided. For example, the pamphlet Am I an Addict was discussed at length and it was the consensus of the WSB that the pamphlet contained questionable language and should be revised or rewritten. The pamphlet focuses on the specifics of addiction and in particular the use of certain drugs. The WSB believes that the attitudes and feelings that are integral part of addiction should be addressed instead. There are much better questions contained in the publication Living Clean, so the Trustees acted to bring the issue to the fellowship in this manner;

"The World Service Conference at the April 1985 meeting act to replace the questions contained in Am I an Addict with the thirty five questions from Living Clean." Conference participants should come prepared to act on this matter.

Another problem is found in the Starter Kit. On page 6, item #11 it states, "that usually members join in a circle and close with the Lord's Prayer" at the end of each meeting. The WSB believes it inappropriate for our literature to suggest what type

of prayer to close with and as a result recommends to the Conference the following:

"That item number 11 on page 6 of the Starter Kit be changed to

read, 'Usually members join in a circle and close with a prayer of their choice."

The Board also discussed at great length the pamphlet For Those We Love and Others. It was the unanimous dicision of the WSB that the pamphlet was not suitable Narcotics Anonymous literature and should be deleted from the inventory of approved literature by the following action;

"The WSB recommends to the conference that approval of the pamphlet, For Those We Love and Others be removed and its use in the Fellowship be discontinued."

The WSB suggests that possibly another pamphlet might be prepared by the Fellowship which is written by addicts containing helpful information for handling within the family issues.

The World Service Board of Trustees provided considerable input to the World Literature Committee's work in progress on the Twelve Steps and the Twelve Traditions. Three trustees attended the Literature Committee's workshop on this material in San Diego. The draft of material was then reviewed by members of the WSB. At our December 3, 1984 meeting the work was discussed. It was decided by unaminous vote "to draft a letter to the WSC Literature Committee recommending that procedures be changed regarding this work to allow for outside professional assistance in the development of this material."

Last summer the WSC was once again asked by the World Literature Committee, and by the WSC Administrative Committee to recommend that a minor change be made in the Third Edition of the Basic Text "Narcotics Anonymous." By unaminous vote the Board voted to recommend that the phrase "I urinated on Stalin's tomb be deleted." For many of the Board members this action was reminicent of the WSB action with respect to Tradition Four and Nine which caused so much controversy two years ago.

The Board after much discussion voted unanimously to ask the Fellowship through the World Service Conference for permission to make minor changes in our Literature. This would be authorized by a change in the Temporary Working Guide to the Service Structure on page 27, by adding the following language to the end of the first sentence of section IX, after the word, "Board: except when two-thirds of the World Service Board of Trustees agree that a Tradition violation has occurred, the Trustees be empowered to collectively exercise their obligations to the Fellowship by attempting to resolve any breach of our Traditions in favor of a clearer, 'understanding and application' of the Traditions."

Public Information:

Throughout the year the WSB has engaged in extensive discussions related to Public Information. Two very serious breaks in anonymity occurred this year; one happened as the

result of a film which will be widely distributed throughout the country. N.A. members identified themselves as N.A. members by name and talked about their recovery in Narcotics Anonymous. Many of the Board discussions involved how to avoid this.

The Board decided to recommend to the Fellowship and to the P.I. Committee that "The committee should utilize non-addict trusted servants for any national media or regional media requests for a representative or spokesperson where there is danger of a break in anonymity. The only two individuals currently available for this purpose are Michael Bohan (Trustee) and Bob Stone (WSO Manager).

The Board further believes that with respect to national television, that no local, area or regional P.I. Committee should attempt to make any arrangement for, or send any member to be on any national news program, talk show or any nationally televised show of any type. In order to respond to the needs that will develop over national media exposure, the WSB recommends that the Conference adopt the following motion.

"That individuals participating in any national television program be selected jointly by the World Service Board of Trustees, the WSC P.I. Chairperson and the WSC Administrative Committee Chairperson."

We believe that in this area the potential harm coming from individuals acting on self will or ego is tremendous and the Conference needs to safeguard the Fellowship from the disastrous consequences of such actions.

The World Service Board of Trustees had considerable discussion with respect to Public Information Videos. The WSB reviewed a number of videos that had been made by Regional or local P.I. Committees. The Board was concerned about the overall quality of the Videos and felt that those which emphasized recovery and appropriate use of language rather than the specifics of the disease were preferable. The Board was particularly concerned over the issue of whether or not non-addicts were used in the Videos which showed people. It was not indicated whether these individuals were actors or members of the Fellowship. The Board felt that a policy should be developed which provides indications in such videos that the individuals are not addicts, but actors and perhaps an even better solution would be the adoption of a policy whereby faces never appeared in a video developed for use by the Fellowship. In addition it was proposed to formulate a policy that will provide for trustee participation in the review of video productions or use prior to the final production, as is currently being done. A Committee was established for the purpose of developing overall policy recommendations on video review prior to production.

International Committee:

The International Committee has been plagued with a series of problems. Its chairperson has become inactive, and then resigned. In addition receipts have not been received for funds expended. The Trustee liaisons of that committee suggests that as a safeguard to the Fellowship should it become advisable to formulate new sub-committees that those sub-committee be established with only a very limited budget and a period of one year be set aside for that new sub-committee to provide the Conference with its guidelines and a list of goals and objectives along with a plan of action for achieving those goals or objectives.

Convention Committee:

The World Service Board of Trustees will provide the Fellowship with the Board's opinion with respect to the relationship of conventions to the Fellowship. A Trustee adhoc committee was created to review the proposed convention handbook and the Trustee recommendations will be made prior to the April 1985 World Service Conference.

Hospital & Institutions:

The issue of what constitutes an H&I meeting was raised and discussed at the September meeting of the Board. An adhoc committee was appointed to review this area of conflict and report back to the full Board at the February meeting. The Trustee report will be made available to the Fellowship at the earliest possible moment.

The members of the World Service Board of Trustees are looking forward to a very productive conference and wish as this time to thank the Fellowship for allowing us to be of service.

In loving service,

Sally E., Chairperson
World Service Board of Trustees