

DRAFT RESPONSE

February 22, 1990

Henry Dietz, Chairperson
4605 Hedge Street
Philadelphia, PA 19124

Dear Henry,

The Traditions Ad Hoc committee has received your input on Tradition Six. Unfortunately, we will not be able to use your material. Any material we receive must be free and clear of any obligation, such as copyright, so that it may be used in the development process without any restrictions. We will be glad to accept the input from your regional committee if it is released to our committee without conditions.

We also have hopes that the seeming controversy you alluded to in your letter will be fully discussed and receive the consideration it deserves at this years World Service Conference.

Yours in Service,

Jack Bernstein, Chairman
Board of Trustees

cc: WSCLC
Joint Administrative Committee
Board of Directors
RSR, Greater Philadelphia RSC
Greater Philadelphia RSC Chairperson

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January 31, 1990

To: W.S.O., W.S.B., W.L.C., J.A.C.

From: Greater Philadelphia Region Literature Committee

The attached material is copyrighted by the Greater Philadelphia Region. Any unauthorized use of this material will be looked upon by this region as disregarding the unanimous decision of all nine areas of the region.

We are happy to release this material to the proper parties, providing that no professionals or paid addicts are used in the preparation of this material into a manuscript for review or approval by the entire Fellowship.

The Greater Philadelphia Region seeks a return of literature writing to the N.A. Fellowship as a whole and supports the concept that "N.A. literature is to be written by addicts, for addicts and that special workers, staff teams and paid workers of any kind are a direct contradiction to our traditions".

Our literature is not a "service center", and therefore we cannot support the ideology that the current proposals have any foundation in our accepted Spiritual Principles.

The L.C. is a service board/committee and as such is directly responsible to the Fellowship they are used to serve, as is the World Service Conference.

We are deeply concerned with N.A. unity and our common welfare based in the principles of anonymity and being completely self-supporting declining outside contributions. We see the current trends of our World Service Center, boards and committees as compromising to our traditions. These recent and current actions are directly affecting the unity of our Fellowship as a whole. We hope to return to the fellowship-approved processes that have resulted in all our current literature.

We sincerely desire to continue serving N.A. as an anonymous part of the whole and to recede in our necessity to remind us all of the importance of following our Steps, Traditions, and Fellowship-approved processes.

As a region we support the motions by the C&P region and have high hopes that the controversy surrounding our literature development process will be finally put to rest at W.S.C. 30.

The Greater Philadelphia Region Literature Committee

For further information or clarification please contact:

Henry Metz, Chairperson
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Philadelphia, Pa 19124
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TRADITION SIX INPUT - GREATER PHILADELPHIA REGION

TRADITION SIX

**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.**

The Fifth Tradition spells out our primary purpose. The Sixth Tradition tells us how to preserve and protect our groups in important ways so that they will be able to fulfill that purpose. In carrying the message of recovery, we must be careful to keep it simple and within the framework of N.A. This tradition sets up some guidelines to protect N.A. as a whole and its' individual members. It helps to preserve and ensure that our primary purpose is fulfilled, which is to carry the message to the addict who still suffers. When members endorse or announce outside enterprises in our meetings, controversy arises and our atmosphere of recovery is adversely affected. Financing, endorsing or lending our name to outside facilities or enterprises also exposes N.A. to legal and financial problems.

An outside enterprise is an agency, business venture, religion, society, organization, other fellowship or related activity. Most of these are easy to identify, except for other fellowships. Narcotics Anonymous is a separate and distinct fellowship. Our purpose is recovery from the disease of addiction. The other twelve step fellowships specialize in other problems, and our relationship with them is not one of affiliation.

The N.A. Basic Text says that our relationship to all of these other entities "is one of cooperation, not affiliation". Upon closer examination of this statement in a dictionary we find that we must redefine the preceding misstatement.

In consulting the dictionary, "cooperation" means "the act of working together to a common end or the association of a number of people together in an enterprise, the benefits of which are shared". This definition can present a problem in addressing our relationship with other organizations. Strictly speaking, the object or goal of our fellowship is not the same as any other fellowships. In this respect, it is impossible to cooperate without also endorsing or affiliating. This clearly conveys the fact that we do not associate with any other organization or adopt their purpose.

"Non-affiliation" with other fellowships needs to be stressed. Affiliation with other fellowships would dilute our message and make our purpose unclear. This would be disastrous to both the group and the individual member. We need to be able to keep it simple and strive to carry a clear N.A. message to the still suffering addict.

It is essential that we adhere to our traditions, including Tradition Six. Our survival is dependent upon our standing on our own and not affiliating with other organizations, societies, enterprises, or fellowships. We must avoid any action that can compromise the integrity of Narcotics Anonymous.

The Sixth Tradition is one statement of our independence. We have no ties to any other organizations. Groups enjoy freedom through the practice of this tradition. There is freedom to grow and experience our own independence. Although the fellowship is independent of any outside organizations we can still respect what these institutions are doing to help the still suffering addict. Their goals may even be similar to ours, to help someone get clean and be a part of the recovery process. Although they may seem to use some of our methods of recovery, they are not a part of Narcotics Anonymous and should not be recognized as such.

Narcotics Anonymous does not own or endorse any related facilities, nor finance enterprises of any nature or lend our name to these endeavors. Ownership of anything creates influence, which in turn fosters the very self-serving instincts which are contradictory to the philosophy of our program.

The Sixth Tradition tells us to avoid the struggles associated with endorsement. The underlying principle is letting go of our old ideas of money, property and prestige and grasping proven principles for spiritual and emotional growth. It is best for N.A. not to be involved with outside functions because many problems can arise. We choose not to participate in conflicts for power and influence. We have seen that the best way to avoid these problems is to stay clear of any situation which may distract us from our primary purpose. Our purpose is not to become rich or influential, but to stay clean and help the addict who still suffers. Lending the N.A. name or financial resources to other organizations defeats our primary purpose and will divide us. N.A. is a separate entity, a safe place for addicts to be with other addicts, learning the process of recovery free from outside influences.

Let us take a closer look at what this tradition really says. First, a group ought never endorse. To endorse is to sanction, approve or recommend. These endorsements can either be direct or implied. We see endorsements everyday, for example, advertisements, magazines or television commercials.

A direct endorsement is often used to persuade someone to do something, such as; use a certain product because a famous actor or sports figure tells us how good that product is. An implied endorsement is harder to define because it is not specifically stated and is a form of indirect persuasion.

In some commercials nobody directly says, "Buy this product". Instead, we see somebody glamorous or famous using it, which implies that anybody who uses this product will also be glamorous and famous. Another example: sports equipment and apparel manufacturers sometimes give professional athletes their products to use. The very fact that the athletes use those products in public constitutes an implied endorsement. It tells us that the athletes really like the equipment or apparel, which leads us to believe it is the best. We are a program of attraction, not promotion.

Our experience has shown that sharing an unclear message by referring to outside enterprises can be detrimental to our recovery and results in confusion. "The use of literature, speakers and announcements of other fellowships in our meetings constitutes an implied endorsement of an outside enterprise". The conscience of N.A. has consistently stated that at N.A. meetings, the use of literature and speakers other than N.A. is not consistent with our traditions.

Individuals who base their recovery in our fellowship and use a sponsor who does the same, carry an N.A. message that is not clouded by any other ideas or issues. We need to keep in mind that hearing about how to recover in another twelve step program can result in confusion for the newcomer attending an N.A. meeting. When speaking in Narcotics Anonymous he or she needs to be able to talk about their N.A. experience, steps, traditions, and recovery using language consistent with our N.A.-approved literature.

Our Sixth Tradition tells us some of the things we must do to preserve and protect our primary purpose. By not adhering to this tradition we could cause our members to feel uncomfortable, unwanted, or different. N.A. is a separate and distinct fellowship in its own right, our common purpose is recovery from the disease of addiction. We should also be aware of how our members and the outside world will perceive us. How well we live our principles says a lot to members and non-members alike.

Endorsements, financial issues, property, and prestige have no place in our meetings. These diversions would only cloud our message, causing disunity. Members talking about non-N.A. literature, a particular church, religion, treatment center, detox or rehab, or other 12 step fellowships at our meetings are all examples of outside endorsements. By not endorsing anything, anyone or any ideas other than recovery from addiction, we eliminate the confusion of outside influences. This confusion could alienate members and they would stop coming to our meetings. Our spiritual program would be lost to them. Whenever we read, pass out unapproved literature or use speakers from another fellowship in our meetings we put N.A. in the position of endorsing and promoting an outside organization or enterprise.

Clubhouses have a tendency to call themselves "Narcotics Anonymous" clubhouses. This gives the impression that N.A. has lent its name to those clubhouses when it has not. More complications occur when in the minds of some members the clubhouse and Narcotics Anonymous become one and the same. Since clubhouses are for and usually run by N.A. members, what difference does it make if they use the N.A. name? The difference is that if they do so, our entire fellowship assumes some responsibility for what goes on there. If a problem occurs, N.A. gets the blame, the bad publicity and our fellowship suffers. For instance, in one community a clubhouse was cited for health department violations and the local newspaper reported the "Narcotics Anonymous Clubhouse" had done the violating. In another community, a fight broke out between two clubhouses and when the incident appeared in the paper this clubhouse was also called by the name it called itself...."Narcotics Anonymous Clubhouse". Such newspaper accounts do harm to our reputation, to the addict who might want to come to N.A. who may now have second thoughts about doing so.

Members on the phonelines must sometimes use their own judgement, especially if it is a life or death situation. As a rule we should not make specific referrals, but in certain situations it is warranted. However, we must carefully explain that N.A. endorses none of them.

Our phonelines are an important way in which we carry our message to the addict who still suffers. We use phonelines for addicts who want information about N.A. Such contact often leads to a Twelve Step call. Some phoneline callers want specific referrals to a hospital or detox center. The problem is obvious. Those of us taking calls want to help the addict but don't want to make a specific referral because that would constitute an endorsement of the

facility and create potentially serious difficulties for N.A. For example, if we made a referral and the addict's experience at that treatment center was poor we might be held morally and even legally responsible.

Many of the "related facilities" we deal with: hospitals, recovery houses, probation and parole offices, would like to use the Narcotics Anonymous name in connection with their services. They think it's good advertising. To let them use our name amounts to an implied endorsement. Endorsing any facility, no matter how good, invites many problems. If we as an N.A. group or fellowship as a whole, endorsed one facility, other facilities could judge us. This would cause unnecessary dissension and controversy which would damage our reputation in the eyes of both the public and addict alike.

Many organizations wish to use the N.A. name in connection with their services. Allowing this would imply endorsement and therefore violate our Sixth Tradition. These facilities treat addicts and often refer them to N.A. Some of us may have undergone and benefited from treatment, but we are careful that if we recommend a facility to someone, we make it clear that we do so personally and not as a member of N.A. We must be careful that when we are in any way dealing with these organizations, we clearly state our policy of non-affiliation to everyone concerned. We are a separate entity, and we do not wish to be associated with any related facility.

What about our service boards/committees, our offices, recovery houses, related activities such as conventions, dances, picnics, fund raisers, clubhouses, other fellowships, detoxes, treatment centers and any other organization? All the other things that go on in and around N.A.? The answer is that these things are not N.A. They are services, related facilities and activities that sometimes help us in recovery and may further the primary purpose of our groups. Narcotics Anonymous is ONLY a Fellowship of men and women; addicts meeting in groups, using a given set of spiritual principles to find freedom from addiction and a new way to live. All else is not N.A. Those things we mentioned are the result of members, society and other organizations or facilities that care enough to reach out and offer their help, services and experience.

If we were to endorse a facility we would be tied to the success or failure of that facility. If something went wrong, it would reflect on N.A. as a whole. Each facility has its own successes and failures. We do not wish to be applauded or criticized based on someone else's actions. It is our experience that only through God's help are we able to help each other recover from the disease of addiction. Experience shows that it takes some members a long time to resist the temptations offered by money, property or prestige. We had best avoid such temptations as we work on our personal recovery. If we specifically referred callers to hospitals and treatment centers, some addicts are at risk of diversion by offers of money to steer addicts to a particular facility, and might be tempted to make a deal for personal gain.

In resolving conflicts with the traditions, it helps to keep in mind that none of us sets out to intentionally harm the fellowship. Most of us do not consciously choose to create disunity in N.A. When we become aware of a member or a group acting in a way that is contrary to the traditions, we should offer a solution to help those individuals or groups live within the spiritual principles of the 12 Traditions. After coming to N.A. and participating in the process of recovery we realize the importance of our unity. Members who choose to participate in activities other than N.A. should feel free to do so outside the N.A. setting. Our 10th Tradition states "N.A. has no opinion on outside issues hence the N.A. name ought never be drawn into public controversy", nor do we need internal strife that can result from the compromising of any of our traditions.

Standing firmly on the principals of the 12 Traditions and surrendering to group conscience becomes a valuable recovery experience for us. This must be learned by open discussion with a loving and caring attitude, accepting our responsibility for our recovery and for our actions. We practice the traditions for our personal and common welfare, and for the protection of N.A. as a whole.

One way we can approach the problems that arise when the traditions are inadvertently compromised, is to share our perception of the problem with our sponsor or other experienced members. We can seek direction, experience, strength, and hope so that we do not carelessly attack or cause controversy to an individual member or group of members through self will. Having been wrong so often in our lives, when we spot a compromise of our traditions, it feels good to be "right". Being "right," can trap us into self-righteousness which leads to anger, accusations and attacks.

Our members have often slipped into compromising situations without being aware that they were doing so. How we resolve them says much about our own spiritual development. We should approach the individual member privately, after consultation, expressing the awareness that could be helpful for that person or persons' spiritual growth and well being.

If the perceived problem is with an N.A. meeting, after following the above procedure we should approach the group during the group conscience/business meeting. We can share the problem and possible solutions in a way that will not disrupt their atmosphere of recovery. If the problem still exists after sharing with the group and giving them time to seek a solution, we may feel that it is seriously affecting other groups or N.A. as a whole. We should then go to our home groups and

discuss bringing a motion or request to the other groups through the area service committee. This allows the issue that affects N.A. as a whole to be discussed by the groups.

As we learn to live in harmony with our traditions we become able to disagree with out being disagreeable. We have found through our experience that these principles also help us in our outside business and personal relations.

Our groups should focus on gratitude rather than pride. Striving for prestige can be disastrous. Our purpose is not to get rich, be the best or most important group. Our primary purpose is, and can only be, to carry the message to the addict who still suffers.

On a personal level material things that seemed unachievable often become a reality in recovery. If we look at these things in the same light as our clean time, we must realize that these gifts are a natural result of living the N.A. program, rather than anything we have earned. If we choose to focus on material possessions it can lead to substitution as a form of personal gain to feed our egos. All we are really doing is replacing the drug with the dollar. At this point we will have lost sight of what is really important: our personal recovery and our responsibilities to Narcotics Anonymous. Let us never lose sight of this. Let us strive to keep the principles of the program foremost in mind, so that the many addicts who need and want this new way of life will have a chance to recover.

Tradition Six points out a dangerous pitfall for groups and N.A. as a whole. Namely, that money or outside enterprises can easily become obsessions that can direct our attention away from carrying our message of recovery to other addicts. To endorse is to sanction, approve or recommend anything other than Narcotics Anonymous which would detract from the message of hope and the promise of freedom. When it is said and done, our primary purpose can only be to carry the message to the addict who still suffers, because that is all we have to give.