

protected by limiting a member to having one Group Conscience vote to be expressed only in one N.A. Group?

8. Are your Group Conscience votes taken at regular meetings or at separate meetings composed of group members only?
9. Should votes concerning group matters and matters affecting other groups or N.A. as a whole be handled differently?
10. What is the function of a group steering committee? Does your group have one?
11. Should you trust your GSR to make decisions at the ASC meeting on issues pertaining to other groups or N.A. as a whole that have not been discussed by the group?
12. Should you trust your ASR to make decisions at the RSC meeting on issues pertaining to other areas or N.A. as a whole that have not been discussed by the group?
13. Should you trust your RSR to make decisions at the WSC on issues pertaining to other regions or N.A. as a whole that have not been discussed by the groups?
14. Is Group Conscience always right?
15. How often should Group Conscience be reviewed?

Yours in loving service,

Bill Hall
WSC 84-85' Policy Chairperson

*****FROM THE TRUSTEES*****

The World Service Board of Trustees currently has one non-addict trustee and has had several discussions regarding non-addict trustees. It is the unanimous decision of the members of the WSB that the Fellowship needs more non-addict trustees. As we grow and become more involved in Public Information work there will be an even greater need for the non-addict trustee, as a result Mike Bohan has written the following timely article. Mike is in his fourth year as a WSB member and has made numerous contributions to the Board.

In addition to the essay on non-addict trustees for the Board which follows, there is a need for protection from "blind side" in recovery. The founders of Alcoholics Anonymous recognized that action coming from our "blind side" could possibly resurrect alcohol use in dire consequences. Protection from the "blind side" came to be found in a spiritual program. This spiritual program of Alcoholics Anonymous was centered around the 12 Steps and group meetings. The early membership of A.A. went through many painful experiences before they recognized that more structure was needed to support the groups. Self-will in the form of arbitrary decision making or failure to consider anonymity blocked the growth of groups and caused some of these painful experiences. This is "blind side" at work.

Some of the protective structure added to Alcoholics Anonymous was the Traditions and a Service Structure consisting of Trusted Servants,

members of Alcoholics Anonymous. Part of the Service Structure was the Board of Trustees. Here the A.A. founders recommended that non-alcoholics as well as alcoholics should be part of the Board. The idea was to add balance, further protection against the "blind side."

Narcotics Anonymous borrowed the Steps, Traditions and need for Service Structure and the concept for non-addicts on the Board of Trustees from alcoholics Anonymous. The founders of Narcotics Anonymous recognized the need for balance and protection from the "blind side." Recovery never ends, the "blind side" is always operative and protection is always necessary.

NON-ADDICT MEMBERS OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES OF NARCOTICS ANONYMOUS

The Service Structure of Narcotics Anonymous allows for one-third of the members of the Board of Trustees to be non-addicts.

Non-addicts are chosen as trustees because of special expertise they may provide the Fellowship. Experts in the field of law, journalism, medicine, business administration, religion, prison administration, counseling, broadcasting, writing, nursing, the judiciary and other professions, who are also knowledgeable and appreciative of the twelve step spiritual recovery program of Narcotics Anonymous, are potential non-addict trustees. Those of you who have participated in the growth of Narcotics Anonymous which occurs annually at the World Service Conference would agree with the need for additional expert assistance in some of the problem areas we have encountered, such as tax, law, administrative procedures and parliamentary procedures. Sub-committees would benefit from medical opinion, journalistic experience, prison experts and so on. Some of this expertise is available within the Fellowship, but more is needed. Non-addict trustees are not chosen as spokespersons for Narcotics Anonymous, nor are they trail blazers for Narcotics Anonymous. They must work within the Twelve Traditions, even though they are non-addicts. They provide advice and their counsel can be solicited by anyone in the Fellowship. They can recognize needs within the Fellowship and bring their ideas to open forum discussion at the Trustees' meetings and at the World Service Conference. They can strengthen Narcotics Anonymous and support its growth without starting meetings themselves, but indirectly by mentioning Narcotics Anonymous in press releases or at medical meetings, or in medical, nursing, legal journals and symposiums. This work can be done externally to Narcotics Anonymous by participating in the workings of the World Service Conference, at various workshops and committees.

When they meet with other professionals and share their conviction that addiction need not be fatal and that Narcotics Anonymous offers a proven recovery program for addicts, they provide information which may not be known to these professionals. This is "spreading the message" and is done within the spirit of the Eleventh Tradition, which speaks of growth through attraction rather than promotion.

The positions of non-addict Trustees are not honorary positions. There is a lot of homework, travel and real dedication is required.

How can non-addicts become Trustees?

Their names must be placed in nomination at the World Service Conference by a member of the Conference, such as an RSR, the Trustees, or other voting participants. The candidates must be present to speak to the Conference of their qualifications and to accept the position if elected. If you know a non-addict who is knowledgeable of the Steps and Traditions of Narcotics Anonymous, who has special gifts or expertise to offer the Fellowship, present his or her credentials to your local Trusted Servants, GSR's or ASR, so that your RSR can nominate that individual at the World Service Conference in 1985. It is essential they be interested and must be willing to attend the World Service Conference in 1985 at their own expense. If nominated and selected, air fare home will be reimbursed if funds are available. Trustees should attend four regular meetings per year. One is held at the time of the World Service Conference, usually in late April, another at the World Convention, two others in November and February at the World Service Office in Van Nuys, California. Reimbursement for travel to these meetings will be provided if funds are available.

Currently I am the only non-addict member of the Board of Trustees. I am a physician, but that doesn't mean we cannot have other physicians. Generally however, it would be good to have some balance of representatives from other professions.

Please don't think that non-addicts have a natural handle on honesty and are free of anger, guilt and resentment. Association with addicts does not come by natural inclination. Predictable unconscious factors are usually involved. There is a greater chance than not, that the non-addict trustee or non-addict trustee-selectee is a co-addict (parent, child, spouse or close friend of an addict), thus affected with some emotional and spiritual deficits, characteristic of the disease of co-addiction. Unless co-addiction is recognized and dealt with in a recovery program such as Naranon, the co-addict trustee can do serious damage to himself or herself and to members of the Fellowship, or to the Fellowships as a whole. Narcotics Anonymous does not need "enablers"; persons serving with all sincerity but actually serving sick needs which have been unrecognized. These remarks should not be taken to mean that Naranon attendance is a prerequisite or mandatory for non-addict trustees, but objectivity is enhanced by Naranon attendance for the non-addicts working with Narcotics Anonymous. Speaking for myself, I was late (considering the number of years I spent treating addicts) in recognizing the impact of co-addiction in my life. I had long been addicted to addicts, but I did not know why. The Naranon recovery program helped me to "see." Some new awareness comes to me regularly by working the Naranon Program, just as it does for you in working your recovery program, Narcotics Anonymous.

When I awoke to realize how deeply I was involved in helping addicts -- me, a co-addict, -- my first inclination was to stop because I might be more dangerous than helpful. Further reflection suggested to me that I should stick around because what better way to force a recovery program for me and a greater in-depth understanding of the relationship between co-addiction and addiction. If co-addiction places in the role of the helper, then let us learn to help in a loving and spiritual way. Jimmy

K., N.A.'s first addict, pencilled in the cover of my Basic Text, "....Recovery is not only the area of the addict - we all need to strip the illusions from the past."

Mike B.,
World Service Board of Trustees

TO THE FELLOWSHIP:

After several lengthy discussions between the World Service Office, WSC Chairperson, the WSB Chairperson and individual members of the Board of Trustees it was decided to send a Trustee to the First Australasian Regional Convention of Narcotics Anonymous. The Fellowship had been started twice in Australia and failed each time. The remoteness of this fellowship from the strength of the fellowship in the United States may have always been an important but negative factor. Sending a Trustee was thought to be an important investment in this new effort to build Narcotics Anonymous in Australia. This Convention was to be held in Sydney, Australia from September 28 to October 1, 1984. I was privileged to have been the Trustee to attend.

I arrived in Sydney Wednesday morning at 6:00 am following a 13 hour flight. I had plans to get a hotel, get some sleep and to call some of the contact people whose phone numbers I had. But this was not to be. When I completed the customs inspection two members of the N.A. Fellowship were waiting for me. We went to breakfast, saw some of the local sights, carried on a running conversation about Narcotics Anonymous in Australia and the states and went to a 12:00 pm meeting in Sydney which was attended by approximately 40 recovering addicts. This was followed by a scheduled interview on a radio station talk show which included Public Information about the upcoming convention and Narcotics Anonymous in general. From the radio station we went to the Australian Federal Department of Correctional Services for a meeting at which the N.A. Fellowship was attempting to convince top administrators that Narcotics Anonymous meetings should be introduced into their correctional institutions. And so began one of the most memorable weeks of my recovery.

Australia's Convention was attended by approximately 350 addicts from all over Australia and New Zealand. The enthusiasm was tremendous. The Convention began on Friday with an opening meeting with participants from all over, each one speaking briefly. Saturday contained a full day of workshops: Fellowship, Sexuality, Transition from Rehabilitation, Sponsorship, Live and let live etc. On Sunday morning a spiritual meeting started the day, followed by what the Australian Fellowship termed a public meeting, which was a very innovative P.I. endeavor. Weeks before Doctors, Solicitors, Public Officials, Treatment People and individuals involved in Correctional Services as well as anyone who dealt on a regular basis with addicts had been contacted and invited to this meeting for the purpose of learning something about Narcotics Anonymous. N.A. members had spoken on radio shows inviting those wishing to learn more about "Narcotics

Anonymous, a twelve step program of recovery from drug addiction," to attend this meeting. The public meeting was called "The Living Proof Meeting" and was a great success. A farewell meeting that evening ended the convention, and an N.A. picnic along Australia's Coast was attended by very tired addicts the following day. Many of us slept on and off thus ending the four day celebration of recovery in a relaxing way.

The Fellowship of Australia is extremely tradition conscious. The following is a quote from the history section of a convention bulletin prepared by the Convention Committee. "In Australia attempts had been made for twenty years to establish both Drugs Anonymous and Narcotics Anonymous, but the Twelve Traditions, particularly the third, sixth and seventh were not adhered to, hence there was little success." In 1981 three addicts got together and held the first contemporary meeting of Narcotics Anonymous. Today there are 24 meetings in Sydney, eight in rural New South Wales, two in South Australia, four in Queensland, eight in Victoria, three in Western Australia, three in Ackland and eight in New Zealand. There are 60 meetings a week in this region and the number is growing. One new meeting was started while I was there. Another quote from the convention booklet states "The Traditions are followed without any deviation. Time has reinforced the fact that N.A. does not grow if the traditions are not carried out to the letter." The Australasian Region had tragic first hand experience with results of deviation from the traditions and as a result they have a firm commitment to them today, and they are growing because of that commitment. The Australasian Region is "Living Proof" that the program works and that our Traditions are the umbrella that make it possible for the Fellowship to grow.

The Fellowship has opened an office and is maintaining a system of communications with the Fellowship in the United States and throughout the large area that makes up the Australasian Region. They are beginning to experience the need for legal standing with the government and are interested in exchanging experiences with other regions which may be grappling with this question. In addition they publish a monthly Newsletter and would like to exchange Newsletters with other areas and regions which publish them. If your area or region is currently publishing a news letter and you wish to receive one from Australia, mail your Newsletter to N.A. today, PO Box 440, Leichhardt, Sydney 2040 Australia and they will send you a copy of theirs.

Many of us think of our Fellowship of Narcotics Anonymous as being our area, our region, our country, however, the fellowship of Narcotics Anonymous is a world wide fellowship which transcends languages, national boundaries, countries and continents. It has its own language, the language of the heart. The Fellowship of Australia opened its homes and hearts to me and loved and cared for me just as the Fellowship of this country has and continues to do. There is no organization in the world where you can go half way around the globe and immediately find the same love and acceptance that you find in your own back yard.

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I believe the Australian fellowship benefited from the visit and I know that I personally gained insight, experience, strength and hope from meeting with them. It is with deepest gratitude to the members of the Australasian Region and the fellowship of Narcotics Anonymous that this report is respectfully submitted.

Yours in service,

Sally E.
Chairperson WSB

The article below from a trustee contains some valuable insight to important issues and is presented for general information. Enclosed is a copy of a talk given by a trustee in Washington D.C. at their Unity Weekend in September. It has been changed a bit and referred to as an article, but essentially it's unchanged.

Tradition Six: An Opinion

As Narcotics Anonymous continues its maturing process, the Twelve Traditions assume larger and larger dimensions in the life of our Fellowship. They become important for the individual member, the autonomous group, the entire service structure. As we grow, as we prosper, as we vigilantly continue to pursue our primary purpose--to carry the message to the addict who still suffers--we must seek to understand the spiritual guidelines that bind us together.

An understanding of the Traditions of Narcotics Anonymous is a requirement for genuine service to our Fellowship. The Traditions are the point from which our success has sprung, in bringing our program of recovery to tens of thousands of addicts. The Traditions cannot be taken lightly. They are not merely "suggested" nor are so hopelessly complex as to be workable. Our Basic Text reminds us: "The Twelve Traditions of Narcotics Anonymous are not negotiable."

And while it is impossible to say if one Tradition is any more important than another (as it is similarly impossible to single out any one Step as the most important to recovery), the Tradition chosen as the basis of this discussion is one whose significance looms large on the N.A. horizon--Tradition Six. I believe that the obligations that Tradition Six place on all N.A. members, groups, trusted servants, and service units are imperative to the continued well-being of Narcotics Anonymous.

What is Tradition Six?

To begin with, it's the one which says, "An Narcotics Anonymous 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.

Tradition Six comes immediately after Tradition Five, which states, "Each group has but one primary purpose, to carry the message to the addict that still suffers."

The purpose of Tradition Six then would seem to be to enumerate

the things that must be done to ensure the furtherance of N.A.'s primary purpose. It lists what we must do to preserve and protect the N.A. program of recovery.

There would be no Narcotics Anonymous if Tradition Six were a source of casual or continual violation. If there were no Tradition Six, N.A. might be destroyed from within or it might be destroyed from without, but it would most surely be destroyed.

What, therefore, does Tradition Six mean?

Tradition Six says first of all that we must never endorse or finance nor lend the N.A. name to a related facility or outside enterprise. By "endorsement" is meant to be an official expression of approval. By "finance" is meant to give money in the name of N.A. "To lend" means just that--to allow another group, organization, or entity to use the N.A. name for its own purposes, however praiseworthy and however close to our own aims. The terms "money, property, and prestige" speaks for themselves and warns us of the different ways we can be sidetracked from our primary purpose.

Possible violations of this Tradition are being constantly brought to the attention of the Board of Trustees. Questions are always being asked. It is clear to many N.A. members that to preserve the integrity of our program, Tradition Six must be rigorously adhered to.

Just in the past three months I have been personally asked to answer questions such as the following: "Can "EST" literature be read at N.A. meetings?" "Can the rehabilitation center my group meets at tell people it is an N.A. approved facility." Can we make announcements at meetings about Hare Krishna? About O.A.? About the half-way house a lot of our members live at? About the A.A. young peoples' dance?

A.A. As in ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS?

Yes, A.A.--there I've let the cat out of the bag.

Alcoholics Anonymous--the issue that causes more emotion and more confusion amongst N.A. members than any other. I believe the time has come for N.A. to discuss and resolve the issue of its relation to the A.A. Fellowship. And I believe that this discussion and resolution should occur within the context of our Tradition Six.

For many the answer to this issue is very simple; unfortunately a lot of N.A. members do not agree on just what the simple answer is. To clarify a discussion of the situation I would like to create two hypothetical N.A. members--each representing the two most prevalent positions on the issue.

Member #1 believes that the A.A. issue doesn't even need to be discussed. For him A.A. is an outside organization to which he doesn't belong. This member hates the mere mention of A.A. at Narcotics Anonymous meetings and feels people who are so attached to A.A. should stay there, since they obviously have no respect for the N.A. Traditions.

Member #2 went to A.A. before there was N.A. in his area. He sees the A.A. program as being the parent of N.A. and entitled to a status in the N.A. program that no other organization has. Since he sees no real difference between the two programs and since everybody he knows

goes to both N.A. and A.A., he doesn't understand how talking about A.A. at N.A. meetings could possibly be a violation of Tradition Six. He ridicules Member #1 for being an "N.A. purist."

While perhaps lacking somewhat in tact and sensitivity, Member #1 is, of course, essentially correct in his interpretation of the Traditions. And while Member #2 has a point of view which comes from his love, of the A.A. program of recovery, it is essentially in violation of the N.A. Traditions and therefore in error which really can't be negotiated.

Accordingly, this article is not directed at Member #1. It's offered to Member #2 as an honest attempt to explain the rationale and importance of Tradition Six. It is also offered to every N.A. member who has been puzzled, angered, or confused by the A.A. issue.

As a beginning to this discussion I would like to acknowledge as an historical fact that Narcotics Anonymous is deeply indebted to A.A. N.A. was founded in July 1953 by addicts who had learned the tools of their recovery from addiction in the A.A. program. N.A. freely admits its debt in its literature when it says in our White Book that "In N.A. we follow a program adapted from Alcoholics Anonymous...We are grateful to the A.A. Fellowship for showing us the way to a new life."

But from the origins of our Fellowship N.A. members have always known that it was something different to be in N.A. than to be an A.A. member--even if (as many people apparently do) a person belonged to both Fellowships.

When I was preparing this article I began to wonder if there was perhaps some new way I could approach a discussion of Tradition Six in order to more clearly and lovingly explain its spirit and importance. I realize that it's a difficult thing to ask some N.A. members to leave their membership in the much-loved A.A. program outside the N.A. meeting door. But I knew that I had to find a way of making them realize just how important this was to N.A. unity.

But not only did I want to convince these members who couldn't distinguish between the N.A. and A.A. programs, I also wanted to impart some of the frustration many N.A. members feel. After all our efforts to explain Tradition Six, we go to our home group and still hear people identifying themselves as "cross-addicted alcoholics" were expressing their gratitude to the A.A. (but not the N.A.) program for their "sobriety" (not recovery); Then during the secretary's break the latest A.A. dance is announced. I felt that they needed to know how much we love N.A. and how Tradition Six violations tear us up.

So, what could I say differently this time?

I had an inspiration and found an answer--an answer at least to the issue of a new perspective. The answer has to do with history.

I wonder how many realize that both N.A. and A.A. have complex roots and that both of these Fellowships grew and changed to their present shapes? That A.A., for instance, didn't just happen and like N.A. has its origins in another, "parent" organization? and that the genius of the A.A. founders lay in their ability to synthesize material already there?

I bet that not too many people know the details behind some of the

above statements. Most people (even A.A. members) seem to believe that Bill Wilson and Dr. Bob Armstrong--the founders of Alcoholics Anonymous--were inspired by absolutely new ideas which had no relation to do anything that had ever happened before.

This belief, however, is not true and, if they were still alive, would be contradicted by Bill and Bob themselves. In his book, A.A. Comes of Age, the co-founder of A.A. came to him and where they come from. He discussed, for instance, the medical theories of William D. Silkworth and the pragmatic philosophy of William James as providing a context for the A.A. program.

Wilson also extensively discusses the relation of the early A.A. groups to a protestant evangelical religious movement called the Oxford Group (or sometimes known as Moral Rearmament). The Oxford Group, by the way, was the initial basis of Wilson's own sobriety in the early 1930's. The first A.A. groups considered the Oxford Group--with its precepts of "confidence, confession, conviction, conversion, and continuance"--so crucial that for the first two years' of A.A.'s existence (1935-1937) in order to join A.A. a person had to join the Oxford Group.

Bill Wilson makes no bones about A.A.'s debt to the Moral Rearmament movement and has other sources. He acknowledges, for instance, that when he wrote the steps that "most of the basic ideas had come from the Oxford Group, William James, and Dr. Silkworth."

In 1955, at its General Convention, A.A. received a special visitor. They were addressed by an Oxford Group clergyman a non-alcoholic named Samuel Shoemaker, who was instrumental in starting many early A.A. groups. Bill Wilson expresses his gratitude for Sam Shoemaker in the following passage in A.A. Comes of Age:

It was from Sam Shoemaker that Dr. Bob and I in the beginning had absorbed most of the principles that were afterward embodied in the Twelve Steps of Alcoholics Anonymous... A.A. got its ideas of self-examination, acknowledgment of character defects, restitution for harm done, and working with others, straight from the Oxford Groups and directly from Sam Shoemaker, their former leader in America, and from nowhere else. He will always be found in our annals as the one whose inspired example and teaching did most to show us how to create the spiritual climate in which we alcoholics may survive and then proceed to grow. A.A. owes a debt of timeless gratitude for all that God sent us through Sam and his friends in the days of A.A.'s infancy.

In 1937 a remarkable event occurred. Despite the great love and dependence early A.A. had for the Oxford Group, the two split. As Bill Wilson later wrote, "we most reluctantly parted company with these great friends."

What happened? The answer is plain: A.A. recognized that in order to survive as a Fellowship it had to assert its independence, it had to concentrate on its primary purpose, it had to be affiliated with no other group, it could neither endorse nor lend its name to anything or anyone--not even its beloved parents. In other words, Alcoholics Anonymous decided to follow the Traditions.

My purpose in telling you this is not to diminish the respect that we all have for A.A., but to ask you to see the parallels in the situation: here were two groups, working closely together, possessing similar methods and aims, having members belonging to both, with one group functioning as the "parent" of the other, and with many members sentimentally attached to the original group although the benefits derived from the "child" group were their true reason for joining.

The point, I hope, is clear: some N.A. members who also belong to and love A.A. are probably in the same position as some early A.A. members who belonged to and loved The Oxford Group were. Where does one group end and the other begin?

The experience of A.A. and the Oxford Group speaks directly to the issue. The answer for A.A. was found in the development of the spirit of Tradition Six. With that principle in mind, the early A.A. members could continue to belong to the Oxford Group if they wished (and many did), but they had to realize that their Oxford Group membership was separate from their A.A. membership and the Oxford Group had to stay outside the A.A. meeting door.

N.A. sees both the wisdom and the irony of being guided by A.A.'s experience with the Oxford Group. We believe in this principle so much that we are willing (as A.A. was willing) to apply it to our parent organization. Narcotics Anonymous cannot endorse, lend, nor join its name to Alcoholics Anonymous. A.A. should be mentioned at N.A. meetings as frequently as the Oxford Group is mentioned at A.A. meetings.

John F.
Trustee

*****CLOSING COMMENTS*****

This edition of the NEWSLINE is the longest issue to date and contains more information than any previous issue. Unfortunately this issue was in production at the same time as the reproduction on the World Directory, the Fellowship Report, and the N.A. Way Magazine. It has been a busy month for the staff here at the office, the busiest so far. Regions are reminded to send flyers about their conventions to us for inclusion in the NEWSLINE. We need these flyers at least eight weeks in advance of the event in order to allow for production and mailing time. The copy sent to us for reproduction should be printed on white paper. The color paper versions cause difficulties for printers to reproduce. When making the flyer, instruct the printer to make a small number (25 or so) on white paper so that if it becomes necessary to make photo copies (as we do here) the colored paper does not cause a poor copy to be produced.

Yours in Service