

During the 1982 WSC a motion was made and carried to direct the WSC Administrative Committee to compile from previously approved actions, all of the information that would comprise the Structure of NA.

This was done and introduced at WSC 83 for Conference consideration. Following some discussion a motion was made and carried in the following manner.

Moved by John F. (Greater Philadelphia) and seconded by Bob K. (Tennessee) that "the report of the Vice-Chairperson George H., concerning the compilation of the NA Service Manual be accepted". An amendment was offered which was followed by a substitute amendment. The substitute amendment was adopted and the motion as amended was adopted.

The original amendment was as follows: Moved by Henry B. (Pacific Northwest) and seconded by Martin C. (Chairperson of the Finance Sub-Committee) "to change title of the report to: A REPORT ON THE CURRENT STATUS OF THE PURPOSE AND FUNCTION OF THE SERVICE UNITS."

The substitute motion to amend reads as follows: Moved by Jim T. (Tri-State), seconded by Henry B. (Pacific Northwest) "to amend that it be titled A TEMPORARY WORKING GUIDE TO OUR SERVICE STRUCTURE."

The material presented in the following pages is a photocopy of the report that was presented at the Conference that the WSC voted on. If you have any questions on this information you should contact the Vice-Chairperson of the WSC

WSO July 1983

THE PURPOSE AND FUNCTION OF THE SERVICE UNITS
OF
NARCOTICS ANONYMOUS

1. The primary purpose of an N.A. MEMBER is to stay clean a day at a time and carry the message of recovery to the addict who still suffers, by working with others.
2. The primary purpose of an N.A. GROUP is to carry the message of recovery to the addict who still suffers, by providing a setting for identification and a healthy atmosphere for recovery where an addict can come for help if they have a desire to stop using.
3. The purpose of an AREA SERVICE COMMITTEE is to be supportive to an N.A. group and its primary purpose, by associating a group with other groups locally and by helping a group deal with its day-to-day situations and needs.
4. The purpose of a REGIONAL SERVICE COMMITTEE is to be supportive of its areas and groups and their primary purpose, by linking together the areas and groups within a region, by helping areas and groups deal with their basic situations and needs, and by encouraging the growth of the Fellowship.
5. The purpose of a WORLD SERVICE CONFERENCE is to be supportive of the Fellowship as a whole, and to define and take action according to the group consciousness of Narcotics Anonymous. The W.S.C. joins the members, groups, areas and regions into a unified Fellowship. The Committee deals with the situations and the needs of the Fellowship and actively encourages the primary purpose and growth of Narcotics Anonymous.
6. The purpose of a WORLD SERVICE OFFICE, our main service center, is to carry out the directives of the World Service Committee in matters that relate to communications and information for the Fellowship of N.A., services, groups and members. The W.S. Office achieves this purpose by maintaining correspondence with N.A. groups and service committees, by printing and distributing W.S.C. approved literature, and by maintaining the archives and files of Narcotics Anonymous.
7. The purpose of a BOARD OF TRUSTEES, who act as guardians of the Twelve Traditions, is to insure the continuation and growth of N.A. by seeking new and better ways to carry the message to the addict who still suffers, by seeking to ensure the maintenance of the Twelve Traditions, and by dealing with those things, both within and outside the Fellowship, which affect its continuation and growth.

MEMBER

The front-line, so to speak, of N.A. Service is an individual N.A. member. Any addict can be a member--the only requirement is a desire to stop using. The service that each of us provide are the most important of N.A. It is a member who carries our message of recovery and works with others. Without an active membership there would be no need for the rest of this service structure. There would be no N.A.

The benefits of membership are clear to us all: a drug-free life, the chance to grow, friendship, and freedom. However, membership is not without its responsibilities. It is the responsibility of each member to maintain their personal recovery. Also, it is the responsibility of each of us to share freely our experience, strength and hope with an addict who still suffers, and work to ensure that which was freely given to us remains available to the newcomer and old-timer alike.

The gathering together of two or more member addicts for the purpose of learning how to live a drug-free life by practicing the principles of N.A. constitutes an N.A. meeting. When such a meeting is held regularly, it can become a Group.

GROUP

An N.A. Group is any meeting which meets regularly at a specified place and time, providing that it follows the Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions (having no outside affiliations and receiving no outside financial support). To facilitate communications and unity and to better serve N.A. as a whole, Groups should register with the Secretary of the World Service Office Sub-Committee of Narcotics Anonymous. The Group is the second level of our N.A. Service Structure.

The primary purpose of an N.A. Group is to carry the message to the addict who still suffers. However, it also provides to each member the chance to express ourselves and to hear the experiences of other members who are learning how to live a better life.

Groups hold two basic types of meetings: Those which are open to the general public and those closed to the public (For Addicts Only). Meetings vary widely in format from group to group. Some are participation meetings, some speakers, some question and answer, some topic discussion, and some have a combination of these formats.

Despite the type of format a Group uses in its meetings, the function of a Group is always the same: to provide a suitable and reliable environment for personal recovery and to promote such recovery.

A Group has proven to be the most successful vehicle for Twelve Step work. After sharing one's personal experience, strength and hope, the most valuable thing a member can do is to bring prospective new members (addicts) to a Group meeting. In this way a Group meeting becomes a place

where newcomers know they can come for help. Often the first thing that can open the doors of recovery for addicts is the recognition of themselves in others. A group provides a setting in which the newcomer can find this identification by hearing a number of recovering addicts, rather than just one or two.

A Group is the level at which we first find some of the day-to-day business of N.A. being taken care of. There is rent to pay, literature to buy and distribute, refreshments to be provided, a meeting hall to be kept clean, a time schedule to follow, announcements to be made and other things to be done for the maintenance of a Group. A Group should stay in contact with other groups in its local area and with the rest of N.A., so it can find out about activities, learn of new groups opening up, get new literature, and find out what's happening in N.A. This can best be accomplished by a number of Groups in an area creating an Area Service Committee. This will be discussed further in this manual. This is also the first level at which Fellowship funds are handled, and the correct use of this money is essential for the preservation of a Group. It is at a Group level that the principle of the Trusted Servant comes into being: "Our leaders are but trusted servants, they do not govern." The officers of a Group are elevated by a majority vote of the Group conscience. They are: (A) a Secretary, (B) a Treasurer, (C) the Group Service Representative, (D) the Group Service Representative Alternate. These trusted servants are the nucleus of the steering committee. The steering committee is made up of those people who regularly attend, support a Group and attend the business meetings.

SECRETARY (A)

A Secretary is responsible for the day-to-day functions of a group. It is their responsibility to assure that the group meeting takes place when and where it is supposed to. The Secretary (selects a leader for each meeting) makes sure the coffee and refreshments are ready, (arranges for group business meetings,) (arranges for the celebrations of "birthday",) makes sure that the meeting hall is left in proper order, and answers all correspondence. This job is important because without a good Secretary a group has little chance of surviving and providing an atmosphere of recovery.

TREASURER (B)

A Treasurer of an N.A. group is responsible for the funds which come into a group from the collection and for the handling and distribution of these funds. The money collected in our meetings must be carefully budgeted. There are numerous expenses necessary for running a group. The Treasurer keeps an accurate record of all the group's financial transactions, meeting log books, maintains a group bank account, and distributes a money to pay the rent, purchase literature, provide refreshments, buy supplies, and cover the cost of any miscellaneous expenses a group incurs. In order to

maintain our Fellowship and freedom, monies which come from a group's collections and members' contributions must always be used to further our primary purpose. A group must first support itself.

After paying its bills, any remaining funds should be placed in a group bank account, accumulating a reserve adequate to run a group for two or three months. After this "prudent reserve" has been established, excess funds should be diverted to the "Area Service Committee". In cases where no ASC exists, send this balance to your "Regional Service Committee". If no RSC exists, send this balance to our WSC Treasurer. One of the biggest problems we have faced has been the misuse of a group's money. This abuse severely limits what the N.A. Fellowship can offer to recovering addicts. A Treasurer has a grave responsibility and much thought should be taken in selecting a member to perform this function.

✓As a general guide we have found that the Treasurer and Secretary are most successful if they have certain assets necessary for the performance of their responsibilities. These qualifications include:

1. The willingness and desire to serve.
2. We suggest a minimum of six (6) months continuous abstinence from all drugs.
3. Knowledge of the Twelve Steps and the Twelve Traditions.
4. An active participation in the group they are to serve.

The two remaining trusted servants of an N.A. group are a Group Service Representative (GSR) and a GSR-Alternate (GSR-ALT). Because the roles of the GSR and GSR-ALT are so important to the success of an N.A. group, these two trusted servants will be discussed in greater detail in the next section of the manual.

✓A group Secretary and a Treasurer serve for a period of one year, after which time they are succeeded by another member who has been elected by the group. The use of any drug while serving as an officer constitutes an automatic resignation of that office.

✓NOTE: One of the responsibilities of officers of a group is to train other group members to replace them. A group can be strengthened by new officers who are prepared to take over the responsibilities of those they replace. Continuity of service can be aided by staggering the election of trusted servants and overlapping the terms of service. (Example: A Secretary might be elected in November to begin serving in January and the Treasurer elected in March to begin in May. This would always allow a group to have representation from experienced officers. Remember: Choose your trusted servants well. It is you whom they will be serving.)

(C) & (D) GROUP SERVICE REPRESENTATIVE AND GSR ALTERNATE

A Group Service Representative (GSR) is first in line of communication between a group and Narcotics Anonymous as a whole. They are the links that bind the groups together

in the performance of our primary purpose. It is their responsibility to keep a group informed and to express a group's conscience in all matters. In other words, they are, in fact, the voice of their group. Electing GSRs who will take an active part in the business of N.A. is probably the most important thing we can do to improve the unity of the Fellowship. Active representation, more than any other thing, can strengthen the ties that bind us together and promote our common welfare.

The GSR speaks for their group at Area Service Committee meetings. They take part in the planning and implementation of any functions which affect the members of their group. As a result of their participation they can keep their group informed about what is happening in N.A. Members of a group should always be able to go to their Representative and find out about activities, other groups, how our N.A. service structure works, the Twelve Traditions, and how they can become more involved.

A Group Service Representative normally serves for a period of two (2) years. The first year is spent as a GSR-Alternate, working closely with an existing GSR, learning the duties of the office and taking over in case the GSR is ill, or cannot for any reason continue to serve. Also, if the GSR cannot attend one of the monthly Area Service Committee Meetings, the GSR Alternate has the responsibility to vote in their absence. It is also suggested that a GSR share some of their responsibilities with their alternate. The second year they become the group's GSR, taking over the full responsibilities and functions of the office, and in turn are helped by a newly elected Alternate. This "apprentice" system serves two purposes: first of all, it helps to provide a continuity of service which never leaves a group unrepresented; and secondly, the year spent as an Alternate provides the training necessary for an effective GSR. As you can see, the role of a GSR is not a simple one, nor one to be taken lightly. The election of effective GSRs and GSR Alternates is probably the most important thing that you, as an individual member, can do for the unity of N.A. In choosing your Representative, remember that they are your voice and your ears in N.A. If you wish to be well represented and well informed, it is your responsibility to elect the best possible nominee. For this reason we suggest that candidates for GSR should have:

1. The willingness and desire to serve.
2. We suggest a minimum of one (1) year of continuous abstinence from all drugs.
3. An active participation in the group they are to serve.
4. Knowledge of the Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions.
5. An understanding of our N.A. service structure and the responsibilities of a GSR.

The requirements for the office of GSR-Alternate are the same as those for GSR, except that there is a minimum

of six (6) months of continuous abstinence from all drugs. These qualifications are not, of course, hard fast rules. They are, however, some of the things you should consider in the selection of your Representatives. The Group Service Representative as we have described them are your link to the rest of N.A. They are also the ties that bind the personal service you and your group perform to the next type of service which is offered by N.A.: Area and Regional Service.

It is suggested that when holding elections for group officers the description of each officer's job and the suggested qualifications for nominees be read from this manual in order that the nominees and members of the group fully appreciate the responsibilities and ramifications of each office.

AREA AND REGIONAL SERVICE

The next level of service in N.A. is Area and Regional Service. These Services provide the support necessary for groups of N.A. members to work together for their common welfare.

In 1969, N.A.'s first committee, specifically designed to fill our general service needs at the group level, was established. This committee and other like it have contributed greatly to the growth of N.A. However, today it is no longer enough to have a few members getting together to keep their groups going. N.A. is growing.

Area and Regional Services are both geographic and functional designations. When an Area or Region grows to a point where it cannot efficiently serve their members' needs, that area or region should divide. (An Area is designed to provide service to individual groups with specific needs, and a Region to provide services to areas with common needs.) This difference in function is important to keep in mind as we discuss, in the following section, these very similar services. Our experience has shown that our groups have situations which they cannot handle on their own. In the spirit of our Fellowship, we as individuals seek help from one another to deal with our living situations; just so, groups can find help from other groups. However, most of the situations a group faces are of such nature that another group located many miles away can be of little assistance; and for this reason this part of our service structure contains both Area and Regional committees.

★ A "DESIGNATED AREA" within N.A. is any local area, community or town with a significant number of N.A. groups.

Any set of groups within definable geographic boundaries that need to function together as an area can be a "Designated Area."

A "DESIGNATED REGION" is a broader geographic unit made up of a significant number of areas. Normally we consider a region to be any state in the United States, or any other country. Again, the definition of a Region is ultimately one of need. Areas with this need can be considered a Designated Region. We feel it necessary to stress that, for

the purposes of N.A., the designation of a Region should always be based on specific needs. Successful growth of any Region will result in dividing into additional Regional Committees. This is beneficial since it allows these service committees to more effectively serve the needs of their member groups.

SUGGESTED SERVICE COMMITTEE MEETING FORMAT:

1. Opening Prayer
2. Reading of the Twelve Traditions
3. Minutes of the last Service Meeting
4. Treasurer's Report
5. Representative Reports
6. Sub-Committee Reports
7. Group Reports
8. Old Business
9. New Business
10. Announcements
11. Closing Prayer

NOTE: GSRs are the only voting members at ASC meetings; ASR's are the only voting members at a RSC meeting; all service committee meetings are open to the Fellowship.

AREA SERVICE COMMITTEE

An Area Service Committee (ASC) is a committee made up of representatives (GSRs) from groups within a designated Area, which meets monthly for the express purpose of serving the specific needs of its member groups.

There are certain facilities which are necessary to the service provided by an ASC. In the beginning these may simply be a permanent mailing address (usually a Post Office Box), a bank account, and a place to hold meetings.

As the membership and number of groups within an area increases, or when an Area decides that it needs a broader spectrum of services, more facilities may be needed. These might include a telephone answering referral service, a ditto machine, a typewriter, an adding machine and a place to store literature, among other things. As an Area grows still more, the members may decide to consolidate and improve these facilities by opening and staffing a local office.

Most ASCs have found that a sub-committee system is necessary. A sub-committee does the actual work to implement ASC directives. The sub-committees normally deal with a single service such as Public Information, Hospitals and Institutions, or Entertainment, and may meet to do the work as needed during the month between regular ASC meetings.

The most important service which an ASC provides is that of its group's support. Whenever a group has a specific situation or need which it has not been able to handle on its own, it can come to its Area Service Committee for help. These situations are almost limitless in scope; however, we have learned that we can get much accomplished when we work together.