

INFORMATION FOR MEMBERS OF NARCOTICS ANONYMOUS

WORKSHOPS AND LEARNING DAYS

WORKSHOPS

Workshops have been generally overused throughout the Fellowship and may more accurately be termed learning days in many instances. Actual workshops, as the term implies, are those events during which a specific topic, activity or item is worked on. There are commonly two events during which workshops have been held. One is during a service conference or meeting that is arranged to deal with a certain item of business or area of service. An example would be reviewing subcommittee guidelines, reviewing a world service conference agenda or maybe even a workshop for group or service committee inventories. The common theme of these business type workshops is that time is allotted to brainstorm and examine specific issues and projects within the Fellowship.

The second event during which workshops have sometimes been utilized is as part of a convention program. Workshops scheduled during a convention generally receive better attendance when focused around a topic relating to personal recovery rather than the service type workshops described above. Topics for convention workshops might have their focus on one or more of the steps, personal relationships, spiritual principles, etc.

If a workshop is scheduled as a separate Fellowship event, it may also be successfully used to review new literature, discuss service responsibilities and positions, present new ideas for service commitments and to review and recommend action on items presented in world service conference agendas.

Workshops held as part of a regularly scheduled service conference or learning day normally have a specific topic and specific goal, and the format can be highly structured. Time allotments are usually made for presentation, discussion, and constructive criticism of each aspect of the topic or the work in progress. The structure may even utilize a chairperson, vice-chairperson, treasurer and secretary if the event is going to be a regularly scheduled, on-going activity.

Although the terms workshop and learning day are often used interchangeably, experience from around the Fellowship seems to prove that they do have separate uses and goals.

LEARNING DAYS

Learning Days, although sometimes similar to workshops, are generally felt to be a more informal sharing experience about a specific realm of service or recovery. Instead of working on a specific issue relating to the service needs of N.A. or listening to speakers talk about a certain topic during a convention, which is more what we expect from a workshop, learning days can function to increase our collective knowledge as well as provide support and unity. Learning days have been held which focus on P.I., H&I, Literature, Fourth Step, sponsorship, etc.

Depending on the focus and format, participation may include trusted servants of the area and region, trusted servants from outside the geographical area and, of course, local members.

Many experiences gained from throughout the Fellowship, indicate that the best structure for learning days seems to be a question and answer setting or roundtable discussion. Roundtable discussions, which are simply people sharing informally in a group, may be broken up into small groups during a portion of the learning day, later reforming into the larger group and sharing individual information with the whole. Five or six people might begin one group, asking questions and sharing experiences. The designated resource person (leader, chairperson) lends experience to the discussion and clarifies any problem areas. After a certain time period, the people rotate to the next group. This continues until each participant has been allowed time in each group.

Learning Days, and workshops also, require considerable preparation. Individuals must be available to serve as resource people for the discussion or presentations. These individuals should have an experience-based knowledge of the topic. They should also be skilled at lending support when appropriate or calming disagreements (personality conflicts) if they occur.

In the roundtable process, a partnership of effort serves to enhance the sharing of experience, strength and hope. As members of the Fellowship gain a feeling of participation, unity is fostered and heightened awareness can occur. This strengthened unity and heightened awareness are what allow the increase in knowledge of the topic being discussed.

Whether you decide on staying in one large or many small discussion groups, one topic only should be assigned to a group. If the general theme is P.I., for example, smaller groups may be assigned the related topics of phonedines, PSA's, interviews, newspaper announcements, etc. A phonedine theme would break up into groups discussing Twelve Step volunteers, working with answering services, phonedogs, financial support, etc.

As stated earlier, it is important to have persons assigned to lead each group who have the experience and recovery best suited to the topic. For example, a learning day on group service would involve N.A. members who have served as secretary, treasurer, group service representative and alternate.

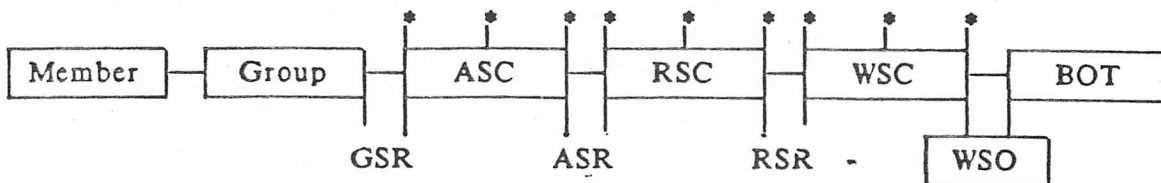
Some practical aspects of planning a learning day may seem routine, but should not be overlooked. The day and location can be very important in attracting as many N.A. members as possible. Consideration must be given to work days, holidays, other Fellowship events and distances to be traveled. For example, in some areas, people are less likely to travel long distances on a Saturday than a Sunday. Similarly, a Saturday learning day may be poorly attended following a Friday night dance. Cooperation and communication with activity committees can reduce the likelihood of some of these circumstances. Consideration of the practical aspects is important because each geographical area has its own needs and circumstances which may vary greatly from place to place within the Fellowship.

MARCH, 1986

INFORMATION FOR MEMBERS OF NARCOTICS ANONYMOUS
PUBLIC INFORMATION PRESENTATION
OUTLINE FOR WORKSHOPS/LEARNING DAYS

This outline should be used in conjunction with the general information about workshops and learning days described in the previous pages. The outline, set up primarily for WSC P.I. presentations, can be adapted by area and regional committees, using the suggestions for topic discussion groups relative to the needs and activities of the individuals groups involved.

- I. Begin with a general description, diagram if chalkboard is available, of the service structure.



* = subcommittees

- II. If presentation is done by world level trusted servant or special workers---
- Describe roles of WSC committees and/or WSO coordinators and their responsibilities to conference committees
- A. Networking of and communication between world and regional/area P.I. subcommittees
- B. Creation and/or distribution of P.I. materials
1. Go over any new item or projects being worked on
- C. Mention P.I. Newsletter and its function as an information sharing forum for P.I. subcommittees.
- D. Discussion of PSAs
1. Their use in various regions
2. Problems with TV stations
3. Need for communication between areas and regions where broadcasts areas overlap
4. Price and description of PSAs and PSA kits PSAs can be shown now or later

III. If presentation is done by regional level trusted servants --

Describe roles of regional subcommittees

- A. Starting slowly
- B. No individual efforts
- C. Developing committee guidelines, goals, lists of volunteers
- D. Networking, communicating with area P.I. subcommittees
- E. Ongoing communication, education and updating of volunteers to do various types of P.I. work
 - 1. playacting of interviews, questions & answers, etc. can be very helpful

NOTE: Always emphasize the concept of group conscience benefiting all service efforts and the importance of working through the service structure and service committees.

NO INDIVIDUAL EFFORTS



GENERAL INFORMATION ABOUT P.I.

WHY -

To carry out our primary purpose and ensure that no addict seeking recovery need die without having heard about N.A.

WHO -

P.I. committees, area, regional or world, depending on geographical coverage

1. Development and use of a contingency plan which assigns specific geographical limits and names the persons responsible for making decisions in different types of situations. (Sample contingency plan in Guide to P.I. or available upon request from WSO)

HOW -

By carrying the message about recovery from addiction in Narcotics Anonymous

1. A clear message which focuses on the disease concept and recovery
2. A unified message through group conscience efforts

Through direct or indirect contact with addicts and others who come in contact with addicts

1. Various types of P.I. tools and activities are discussed in Guide to P.I. The choices made depend greatly upon the individual characteristics of a specific area or region.

WHEN -

When we are organized and prepared

Starting slowly is imperative in preserving an atmosphere of attraction and abiding by the Twelve Traditions

Additional information to be covered usually includes:

1. Discussing the importance of all Twelve Traditions in P.I., even though Traditions 10,11 and 12 are often thought to be the only ones relating to P.I.
 - A. Two frequent misconceptions
 1. that personal anonymity means we can't talk about N.A.!
 2. that it also means we can't break anonymity on a one to one level as opposed to "the level of press, radio and films"

2. **Discussing requests for interviews**
- A. difference between giving personal stories and talking about Narcotics Anonymous - how do we stay out of the grey areas?
- by sharing experience and playacting
 - B. the importance of not stating opinions, not being the spokesperson for N.A. and knowing when a media request is outside the realm of P.I.