

HOME GROUP

How nice it is to have a place to call Home. My Home Group meets once a week in a conference room of a local hospital. We set out the literature and encourage people to take it. Our books are sold at or below cost, or if the new person doesn't have any money, a member or two will buy a book for the person. Coffee is made for those who would like a cup or two during the meeting. The tables and chairs are set up by anyone wishing to lend a hand. Conversations are started up on topics such as, what's going on at the ASC, when is the next activity coming up in the Area or Region, how we have been doing in regard to the topic that we might have brought up at the previous week's meeting, how much we learned at and enjoyed the last Area function. We may talk passionately about a new found hobby or recreational activity or as the GSR or Secretary or Treasurer a question about the Group. Maybe we would make a newcomer feel welcome by getting them a few Informational Pamphlets and a meeting schedule, or visit with other Home Group members and exchange Hugs. Then at the appropriately scheduled time we begin the meeting. Since we meet once a week we usually have all Home Group members in attendance, so this allows us to really get to know each other on a much more personal basis, which affords us the opportunity to open up more freely, which invites us to trust more readily and others to trust us without reservations. A vicious circle of acceptance, encouragement and trust. I would like to wish this upon everyone who enters the doors of Narcotics Anonymous. This would truly be an excellent example of a program of attraction, especially in the case of somebody who is attending their very first meeting. I wonder how many addicts slip through the cracks to jails, institutions or death because they let their addiction tell them that they are very different from those people at those meetings, or simply because they didn't feel that warmly welcomed, and definitely could not see or believe the statement that is read at every meeting about the newcomer being the most important person at every meeting. We are not given a Second Chance at making a good first impression. So we need to cherish any and all opportunities to make a newcomer feel welcome.

With this in mind, I wonder just how effective it is to simply pass around a piece of paper and have everyone put their name and phone number on it during the meeting for the newcomer. Or having a printout of names and numbers to distribute. Think about it if you were on the other side. Would you more likely call a phone number of someone you may not have met, or would you more likely call someone who has walked up to you and told you that you never have to use again because they know that this program works, that it's changed their life and they were new one time also. That they know how you are probably feeling so they gave you their home phone number and told you to call if you need help because they care and they don't want you to die. Who would you call?

Now that we are looking at things from another perspective let's take it a few steps farther and ask ourselves some pertinent questions about having a Home Group the meets more than once a week.

*** Are we suppressing the growth of N.A. in our community by clustering most of our meetings in a few places rather than spreading them throughout the entire city?

***Isn't it said that the only way you should miss a meeting of your Home Group is if there has been a death in your family, namely yours? If this is the case how do I attend 2 or 3 meetings a day and still keep a job and/or find a Life?

***Is it the most effective way to promote N.A. unity, and our common welfare if we are in essence segregating ourselves off from each other by having groups that meet more than once a week?

***How do you form a Relationship with other Home Group members if you might only see them once a month?

***By having possibly 14 meetings a week with only 1 GSR, 1 Secretary and 1 Treasurer are we not depriving 13 other sets of Group Trusted Servants from having the opportunity to be of Service?

***Have we considered how having a Group that meets more than once a week affects N.A. as a whole?

***Do we stifle the New Group that's getting started by having meetings every night of the week and knowing that they need support yet all we do is make the announcement that of them needing support and not supporting them because we are supporting a meeting of our Home Group?

***How do other Home Group members know you are not making it to your Home Group, if your Group meets more than once a week, so they can give you a call to see what's going on with you?

***Have we digressed in our spiritual aim by not being able to give each meeting the Home Group atmosphere by having the same faces there week in and week out so we are able to get to know and trust each other?

I am asking these questions not so much as I need an answer to them, but to maybe take a look at how we are developing as a fellowship, and to question ourselves about our approach and to try and see if maybe we could be doing things a little differently in an effort to attract more desperate, dying addicts and keeping them here.

This article was written and contributed in an effort of love for my Home Group and the addict who still suffers. The words did not come easy though. I have tried to phrase things openly and honestly without fear of the Counterpoint Man. Yet I must admit that throughout my writing I could not help the feeling of undue scrutiny that I am sure these words will endure. I have a sincere desire for these words to be used only for personal consideration and appraisal. With this as my final statement I hope that some of the courage it took to write this will rub off on those who take the chance to read it.

Personal Anonymity at the level of Press, Radio and Film.