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This publication is for the use of any and all NA members, specifically those involved in PI/phoneline service work. The *PI News* is mailed free of charge to all registered PI and phoneline chairpersons, as well as all conference participants. Although limited finances prohibit mailing to a wider population, service committees are encouraged to duplicate and distribute this publication to all interested NA members.

FROM THE WSC PI CHAIRPERSON

It has been quite a while since we last published the *PI News*, and we are grateful to finally be sending you this one. This publication has traditionally been a forum for sharing our combined experiences about public information and phoneline work. Unfortunately, world service funding problems, and a lack of articles from you about your efforts has forced us to reconsider its value and the role it plays in our fellowship's communication efforts.

We believe that this publication should stimulate as it is read, and inspire new concepts and direction in the area of PI and phoneline service work. It should also be a forum for questions and concerns regarding these efforts.

In this report (my last as WSC PI Committee Chairperson) I would like to offer a suggestion about being involved in NA service. It is my hard won experience: I believe that we take commitments out of love for the fellowship, but we follow through with them because we love ourselves. I told myself for quite a while that I volunteered because I loved NA. This is true, but the real purpose has become how much I love myself, and my willingness to give of my time and resources to the program that saved my

life. This helps to keep my vision clear when doing service work, especially when one of my recovering brothers or sisters does something I do not agree with. I don't take my anger or resentment out on the fellowship, or pull back from my commitment. I sincerely believe that a loving God is guiding us, even when we can't seem to agree.

Having said that, I would like to focus on our fellowship PI efforts. I've been continually gratified by the many contacts we've made with the public this year, both at the world and local levels. Some of our contacts have been with high level government agencies who are already aware of NA and wish to cooperate with us. At the other end of the spectrum, we've received several letters from small committees doing PI work, who've met with great success. These letters outlined how they went about informing their local communities about NA meetings, and the various methods that they used.

One of the most impressive PI efforts I've ever seen came by way of the Portuguese fellowship. Through a media contact there, NA was presented as a cover story in a Portuguese magazine similar to *Time*. This was an incredible feat to pull off for just a handful of PI people. The groups in Columbia, Brazil, and Peru have

accomplished similar projects by reaching out to their communities.

The point I'm trying to make, is that a few people, who are committed to PI service, can do a lot to make the NA message available. It is usually true that small PI committees have the greatest success; perhaps because they have fewer rules. Whatever the complexion of your own PI committee, we all need to inform the public who we are, how we recover, and where to find us. Maybe we could spend less time inventing guidelines and put that energy into some creative ways of spreading the NA name.

This brings me around to the USA and the incredible opportunities we have to impact decision makers with information about our organization. America seems starved for any direction from which to proceed in order to help the large number of addicts present in our society. The insurance companies have cut funding for those wanting to go to treatment. The government has had little success stopping the flow of drugs into the country. The political leaders are at a loss as to where to spend tax dollars in order to stop the drug problem. I believe the climate is right for NA to step to the forefront of the public's attention as one program which has been successful in recovery from addiction.

It's up to us, to help get our message out. A few phone calls each month to TV/radio stations, letters to editors, and calls to local civic organizations can open many doors for us. I have seen it happen over and over. Public Information is fast becoming the most important area of service we have in Narcotics Anonymous. If we do not continue to provide ways that addicts can find us, our growth rate will surely begin to drop. We have already seen signs of decreased literature sales in some regions. Around my area, I have heard such statements as, "Why do we need to grow any more? We have enough people in our meetings, we're paying our bills, and the people are recovering." Well, as we all know, we don't keep what we have unless we give it away. The toughest

part here is to make a personal commitment and do something for the addict who hasn't yet heard our message. Once one gets the ball rolling, it becomes much easier to sustain it.

Look around the rooms, find someone new in recovery who is really excited about his or her growth in the fellowship, and recruit that person onto the PI or phoneline committee. Ask a member who has been coming around for years to lend his or her experience on some PI project you're trying to undertake. Bring up the topic of carrying the message to the public at an open discussion meeting, and see what feedback you get. You never know who the next dedicated PI members might be, but they're probably close by. Personally, I never thought anything about joining a PI committee until a fellow with a few years more that I have came up and told me that I'd be perfect for public information. I believed him. Yours in service, Rogan A.

FROM THE WORLD SERVICE OFFICE

It's been a busy year for the WSO PI Department. Due to a lack of staffing, in both PI and other WSO departments, the WSO has begun to use what is called a team approach. The Conference Team (PI, H&I, Literature, Policy, and Outreach) works together in support of each other in our efforts. This keeps one staff member from being unusually burdened with work while others may be in flux. It also helps to keep each other informed about other committee activities.

On another note, the WSO has discontinued maintaining database information on the vice-chairpersons of PI and phoneline committees. It is our hope that vice-chairpersons are in regular direct contact with their chairpersons and would always retain access to the *PI News*. This move will save a significant amount of money in postage, copying, and staff support.

Sales of PI related literature can help to give an idea of how much PI activity is going on in the fellowship. The sales for calendar year 1992 are as follows: *NA—A Resource In Your Community* -- 54,900, *PI and the NA Member* -- 101,797, *A Guide to Public Information* -- 990, *A Guide to Phoneline Service* -- 646, Radio PSA's -- 37, Television PSA's -- 37, PI Posters & Folders -- 800.

Finally, in this, a year of possible inventory, we would welcome any suggestions on how the World Service Office can better serve your areas and regions.

INTERNAL SURVEY--WSC PI ASKS FOR FELLOWSHIP SUPPORT

One of the most exciting projects being undertaken is a proposal asking the fellowship to support the committee in investigating an *internal* survey of our fellowship. Having substantiated information about NA available to those who might guide addicts to our fellowship has always been a shortcoming whenever our members have addressed the professional community. We believe that a survey is desperately needed in order to reach out to the addict who still suffers.

The majority of people working in the medical, legal, and social professions base their assertions upon scientific data. Their education, their respective industries, and even their personal misconceptions are guided by information based upon what they regard as scientific facts.

Consider this: The National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA) is one of the most influential organizations on the planet. This organization directly effects policy legislation in our government and in the entire substance abuse industry which, ultimately impacts the entire world. They influence the direction in which attention is focused and identify the sources professionals look to for solutions.

At the World Federation of Therapeutic Communities (WFTC) conference in Montreal, Canada last year, Rogan A. (WSC PI Committee Chairperson), attending on behalf of Narcotics Anonymous, found himself face-to-face with Dr. Charles Schuster, the director of NIDA. During their conversation Rogan found that, although Mr. Schuster had a genuine interest in NA, there simply was not enough information available to answer his questions about our fellowship in the way in which he needed them answered.

NOTE: Organizations of this type are not necessarily interested in our philosophy, principles, or history. They are simply interested in information regarding the effectiveness of our organization, and without it, are unable to give us any real attention.

We believe that it is unrealistic to expect organizations such as these to take the same leap of faith we did when we started attending meetings regularly. We know it works, but how do we prove it?

INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

We are very excited about our fellowships worldwide development during the last few years. The conference has come a long way, and we're not about to stop now.

In looking at the history of the fellowship's growth within the USA, one might see that the work which presently challenges us now is simply a recycling of the challenges the USA fellowship faced 20 years ago. For example, we networked the early NA communities and provided very basic guidelines to help newly-forming NA communities. To meet the needs of the new communities around the world, we are developing a basic PI guide, which summarizes the experience of our years of work in the USA, yet attempts to remain flexible to cultural differences.

It was pointed out during the European Service Conference, and by many members

from around the world at last year's WSC, that they really needed basic guidelines dealing with public information and institutional outreach.

This working group has worked hard to develop these tools and they are now nearing completion. In the big picture of our own work for the fellowship, we recognize the need to overcome language barriers, in order that we may assist in carrying the message to the addict who still suffers. We hope to have this basic PI guide translated into several languages and we also have other goals addressing the translation of PI materials into other languages.

We also hope to submit articles to international publications. This goal will hopefully provide us with an opportunity to reach addicts around the world (and minimize our expenses at the same time). If an article is published, regardless of language, it will be translated into several languages by the publisher prior to their distribution. If you know of international media contacts who are receptive to receiving features or articles, or if you know of any stories which have already appeared in the international media, please contact us with this information.

As another effort we are hoping to initiate a continental resource group whose purpose will be to address the networking needs of world-level PI and assist isolated or newly-forming NA communities.

We are in the process of gathering feedback from worldwide NA communities in an effort to: (1) identify the needs of those NA communities, (2) network the resources available, and (3) identify those who are in a position to assist in establishing contact with local professionals. This information, once compiled, will effectively launch us into a position we have sought to reach for years; being a world-level resource to the fellowship, wherever we may find ourselves.

The next immediate step in this ongoing process will be to establish a packet of introductory materials to send to

professionals, community leaders, and organizations which impact the lives of addicts. With each small step we take, we see an increase in the promise and rewards of the opportunity you have given us to serve this fellowship.

INPUT NEEDED FOR A Guide to Public Information REVISION

The WSC PI Committee is currently in the process of revising *A Guide to Public Information*. This is the first major revision since the guide was first published. We hope to expand several sections regarding public information service, and we need your help. This guide will hopefully be the collective PI experience of the fellowship, but will certainly fall short without your input. Please look at the current guide again. What is missing? What needs to be expanded on? What should be removed? Please send your suggestions to the World Service Office, c/o Public Information.

PI NEWS SHARING FORUM

Comprising more than simply a collection of sub-committee and working group reports, the following short essays are intended to serve as a forum in which various members share some of their experiences, strength, and hope regarding their own Public Information and phoneline efforts. We actively solicit similar short essays from any NA members involved in PI and phoneline work. Please send them to the WSO Public Information Department.

PI—Service Motivation

Do you think it's an impossible mission to motivate others? Some people will tell you that by providing encouragement and incentives, you can motivate someone. Others would argue that motivation comes from within. Both sides are debatable and it's up to you to make a decision as to which is best suited for you.

The most effective way that I found to motivate people is by providing a sense of belonging. This has a wonderful domino effect that I would like to share. People that have a sense of belonging start to share this with others. When they share at the committee level, this commitment soon develops into accomplishment and achievement, giving that person a reinforcement of his or her self-esteem and a sense of purpose with the committee.

Through my own committee work, I learned how to delegate responsibility. Everyone needs to be given the opportunity to gain the respect of his or her peers. Self-respect is a very strong motivator.

As a committee, we've challenged ourselves to seek opinions whenever possible, keeping an open mind to the suggestions and criticisms being offered. Positive change takes place when one's priorities and motives are clear to everyone. This is a good way of staying focused on your sense of purpose.

Lastly, knowing we did a good job is important, of course, but having others know it is essential. As chairperson of the a PI subcommittee, I learned to acknowledge each committee member's accomplishments. I made it a habit to inform each of them individually and publicly. Each report to our area and regional service committee contained the names of the people responsible for the accomplished goals. This is not to boost egos. We've simply learned that people need to understand that doing a great job is a reward in itself, even when the work is routine.

H&I/PI Cooperation

About a year ago, I received a call through our local helpline from someone who wanted to know how to start a Narcotics Anonymous "chapter." The caller was the substance abuse coordinator at a minimum security state correctional facility and he admitted that he knew very little about NA. I spoke with him at length, explaining our

program, the meetings, recovery through spiritual principles, and what kind of H&I support our area service committee could offer the inmates he served. I concluded our conversation by scheduling a meeting with him at the prison.

Prior to our meeting, I attended a meeting of my area's H&I committee and told them what had transpired and what I was planning. I took along another NA member when I met with this professional, a member who had extensive experience with prisons from the inside and in H&I. This member told our contact about how his association with NA had enabled him to stay clean and to stay on the other side of the prison walls for over two years. The substance abuse director listened carefully and then asked us to bring a weekly H&I presentation to the prison. Next we toured the grounds and selected a location for our meeting and agreed on a day and time.

Narcotics Anonymous has now been holding an H&I panel at this facility for over one year. We have already witnessed an inmate be paroled, begin attending meetings on the outside, and return to this facility as a panel member to share his experience, strength, and hope.

Since the meeting began, I have maintained contact with the substance abuse coordinator and have had to enlist his assistance with problems that have developed. Failure of the prison staff to announce the meeting over the public address system, the need to move our meeting to a less noisy location, and other minor problems have been resolved through communication with the same staff person who originally called our helpline.

This experience has shown me that time spent initially in honest dialogue with such people can be helpful in NA's long term relationship with a facility. This relationship however, depends largely upon our commitments being honored and our promises being kept.

IS IT Time to Take our Fellowship's inventory?

These are exciting days for your trusted servants in the WSC Public Information Committee. Elsewhere in this issue, you can read the latest information about our proposed survey investigation, and the large body of work being done by our committee. In this essay, I'd like to address a particular challenge which faces our fellowship in the years to come, and suggest how your experience, strength, and hope can greatly aid PI committees throughout the NA fellowship.

The WSC PI Committee has recently formed a publications working group. In addition to publishing the *PI News*, we will also publish *NA Update--A Newsletter for Professionals* on a regular basis, as well as have direct involvement in the writing of articles for both international periodicals and professional journals.

As we begin to tread the fine line between attraction and promotion, a review of our values and their relationship to our practices might be in order. There is a consistent risk that in our genuine and sincere love for the fellowship, which saved many of our lives, we may tend to overlook a few instances of our own behavior which we might not want an outsider to believe represent NA as a whole.

Many of us who have been involved in PI work for a while occasionally hear criticism from well-meaning professionals to the effect that some of our meetings seem too informal and disorganized, and that the language heard is often more suited to the locker room than to a spiritual recovery program.

We have frequently been compared to other twelve-step recovery fellowships, and such comparisons have often measured us by the values of those other programs. This has tended either to create unrealistic expectations within our own fellowship, or resentment towards others. Both situations have the potential to endanger our primary purpose.

To submit ourselves to such comparisons might invoke a need to live up to *others'* reputations, as well as serve to provoke friction between us and other fellowships, or simply among ourselves. *Our* primary purpose needs to be our highest priority, yet when well-meaning professionals begin to steer their clients to another fellowship just because we seem a bit too "scruffy and disorganized," perhaps we are not carrying the message to as many addicts as we possibly could. On one hand, some of us felt comfortable *only* in NA because "we could hear God and f**k in the same sentence," as the old line goes. But on the other hand, perhaps we need to be a bit more vigilant about the use of gratuitous profanity.

We are at a critical time in the development of our fellowship. By measuring just the rapid growth in the number of meetings being held today, we appear to be on the edge of a critical membership mass large enough to enable us to have a chance at actually becoming a household word. But it looks as if it might prove to be an uphill fight, for if we continue to have the reputation of being well-meaning, but a bit too scruffy and undependable, a self-fulfilling prophecy might ensue, and we will continue to give an underground impression despite the best efforts of area, regional, and world PI. And, such an underground impression will serve only to keep us out of the mainstream of recovery alternatives.

Our sponsors keep reminding us about personal growth, and that this is a program of progress, not perfection. Many of us work the Tenth Step in our lives on a daily basis. But do we often think of how our fellowship appears to others? Do we ever admit that we're wrong in tolerating excessive locker room language at NA meetings, H&I meetings, and PI presentations? Is it really good public relations to have a stream of trusted servants at the area level whose membership changes so frequently that some hospitals and institutions have trouble

keeping up with us? To what extent are we truly honest about the way we portray our membership to the public?

We will eventually have a PI video, available for local public information committee use. But, will the staged examples intended to attract addicts to our meetings exist solely as idealized representations, while the actual reality is a bit more rough? Should we change that video to accurately reflect the kind of fellowship which has given rise to the outsiders' opinions mentioned earlier? Or, should our groups simply work harder to live up to the image we have been asked to portray? On the one hand, are we not obligated by the spirit of our traditions, to create a video which accurately reflects our fellowship? Or, perhaps, should the fellowship take its own inventory, and begin to make whatever changes are deemed necessary to live up to its own publicity?

This is one of the challenges which faces Narcotics Anonymous in our immediate future. We must make certain that our fellowship measures up to its own ideals. That the fellowship to which we owe our lives is sufficiently attractive to the professionals who come into daily contact with addicts who are still suffering, that they will recommend us on an equal (or better) basis with the other twelve-step programs. Fulfilling our primary purpose demands no less.

If you think about it, being the best fellowship we can be shouldn't be all that hard to accomplish. I believe we've done much more difficult things already!

THOUGHTS ON OUR PUBLIC RELATIONS POLICY

The following essay resulted from a WSC PI working groups effort to develop a coherent statement of the essential features of Narcotics Anonymous' public relation policy, as it has evolved over the past

several years. The members of that working group feel it is now time to put their essay out before the general NA public, and solicit further feedback. Consequently, we would welcome any and all ideas and comments. Please send them to the World Service Office, c/o Public Information.

Introduction

As stated in our Fifth Tradition, "Each group has but one primary purpose—to carry the message to the addict who still suffers." In public information, we work toward this goal by informing the general public about Narcotics Anonymous, primarily to reach that person who is in contact with the still-suffering addict, or has decision-making power over still-suffering addicts. Our informal survey of NA members has clearly revealed that most people found NA through outside people or agencies.

Before the explosive growth of NA in the mid-to-late eighties, our PI work was generally carried out by individual members who put announcements in newspapers and on the radio, and made public presentations. Those members of the public who came in direct contact with recovering addicts also began seeing changes in their lives after they had joined the fellowship.

Because the anti-drug movement gained momentum and Narcotics Anonymous became more visible to the public, we have experienced a huge increase in public interest, particularly through the electronic media. As a result of this increased exposure, our PI efforts began to evolve. Areas and regions started to develop more organized and efficient PI and phoneline committees to respond to these public requests. This contact with the public was accomplished through bulletins, letters, flyers, community meetings, and non-NA events. We even saw our world fellowship produce a set of audio and video public service announcements as tools for use in our public information work.

Through this increase in work and outreach, NA started to be viewed as a viable resource for recovery. Institutions which had excluded or expelled us have since invited us in and back. Judges and other members of the court systems now direct addicts in their jurisdiction to NA; in a judges' conference, we were told that many other methods had been tried, but few worked as well as NA's simple approach.

The following essay was developed by a working group of the WSC PI Committee in order to examine our principle of seeking publicity not for promotional purposes, but out of a willingness to cooperate with representatives of the public who seek information about our program. Narcotics Anonymous is committed to helping the still-suffering addict through such methods as: phonelines, H&I meetings, poster campaigns, public service announcements, meeting lists, etc. We are available to share our message of recovery from active addiction as well as our new way of life. We respond to those who ask for our help, and as we see the need arise. We let our Twelve Traditions and the experiences of our trusted servants guide us in our efforts.

Public Information and Our Traditions

Our Eleventh Tradition states, *"Our public relations policy is based on attraction rather than promotion...."* This is a public relations policy statement, but it is one which tends to address only our general questions about what is acceptable and what is not acceptable. One of the spiritual principles underlying this policy is *humility*. When we share our message in public, we state it simply and directly, rather than by making overblown claims about Narcotics Anonymous. We stick to carrying our message of recovery to the still-suffering addict: If someone has a drug problem, NA may be able to help. We have helped many addicts to stop using, lose the desire to use, and find a healthy, productive place in society. However, attraction rather than

promotion does not mean that we do not or can not do anything. We are not a secret society. We believe in personal anonymity, not fellowship anonymity.

In all public relations, NA's primary purpose is to share our message of recovery from active addiction with those in the public who come in contact with the still-suffering addict. NA cannot help addicts if they never hear of us, or if our reputation is such that addicts are advised to avoid us. Although some addicts will hear our message whether or not we have good community relations, the vast majority of addicts must be reached indirectly, through contact with others in the community. Therefore, it is important for Narcotics Anonymous to establish an understanding of our public relations policy with the guidance of our traditions, so that addicts and those interested in the disease of addiction may learn of our experience as members of a fellowship dedicated to learning to live with our disease. We have a responsibility to maintain our relations with the community so that our message is carried as widely and responsibly as possible, and so that, in turn, we serve our community as effectively as possible.

Why do we publicize the NA program? As stated in our Fifth Tradition, *"Each group has but one primary purpose, to carry the message to the addict who still suffers."* To this end, our PI committees can help attract addicts to meetings by informing the public about our program of recovery from the disease of addiction. As our Basic Text reminds us, *"The group is the most powerful vehicle we have for carrying the message."* (Basic Text [Fifth Edition], p. 65) But what message? It is important that public information subcommittee members carry a clear and unambiguous message in order to avoid conveying inaccurate impressions of our fellowship to the community. Our Third Tradition says that *"The only requirement for membership is a desire to stop using."* In Narcotics Anonymous, it's clear that this means our focus is to stop using drugs, not

compulsive overeating, gambling, criminality, or sex-seeking. The Basic Text goes even further: *"The message is that an addict, any addict, can stop using drugs, lose the desire to use, and find a new way to live... That is all we have to give."* (Basic Text [Fifth Edition], p. 65)

Our non-addict friends have been instrumental in starting Narcotics Anonymous in many communities and in helping NA grow. Narcotics Anonymous could not completely fulfill its primary purpose without the cooperation of others. We do, however, have certain traditions guiding our relations with other organizations. Among them are the Sixth, Seventh, and Tenth Traditions:

"An NA group ought never endorse, finance, or lend the NA name to any related facility or outside enterprise, lest problems of money, property, or prestige divert us from our primary purpose."

"Every NA group ought to be fully self-supporting, declining outside contributions."

"Narcotics Anonymous has no opinion on outside issues; hence, the NA name ought never be drawn into public controversy."

The nature of our cooperation with others has, at times, been a gray area. Often we have been approached for PI engagements and have declined out of fear of violating one of our traditions. This has sometimes left the unattractive impression that NA is an underground network, reluctant to be recognized or afraid to speak out. We are now respected within our society to the point that, at times, we have been asked to sit down in informal meetings in which others ask our advice. Out of fear of endorsement or getting involved in opinions on outside issues, we have declined some of these invitations. What type of message does this send the public? How does this non-action carry the message to the still-suffering addict? We can use these informal settings to sit down face-to-face with those leaders of our community who have an impact on the lives of thousands of addicts; even when we

don't endorse an outside issue or endeavor. We can still capitalize on the opportunity to let them know about the NA program and how it works.

Media Considerations

Some other questions which often surface involve our relations with the various media:

1. What about the use of side-views with an interviewer at a convention?
2. Should we initiate contacts with the media at conventions and other major gatherings, so we are better prepared for public exposure?
3. Should we initiate public outreach, rather than just responding to requests of others?

By avoiding these media opportunities, we not only miss a chance to carry our message to the still-suffering addicts, we risk sending a message to the public that we are anti-social and/or that we have something to hide. There are many methods available to protect one's anonymity while carrying the message in these types of media settings. Most reporters respect our program, especially if we take the time to discuss our traditions with them before hand. Any action taken needs to be directed through an established PI committee at some level of responsibility.

TV stations, in conjunction with PI members, have used some of the following methods to preserve anonymity while using audio/visual media:

1. One TV director used a careful arrangement of lighting, seating, and camera angles so that the TV screen showed the interviewer clearly, but only the silhouette projection of the addict appeared.
2. The addict can be filmed from the rear so that only the back of the head shows, or a side profile.
3. Close-ups of hands and feet could be used.

4. Use one camera for the addict and frame it so that the addict is shown only from the chin down.
5. Frame several cameras at different angles so that the addict is viewed from multiple angles, yet without any direct face-shots.

Our best public image consists solely of what we have to offer; a successfully proven way of maintaining a drug-free lifestyle. While it is important to reach as many people as possible, it is *imperative*, for our protection, that we are careful about the content of advertisements, circulars, and any literature that may reach the public's hands. Our attraction is that we are successful in our own right. We have found that the success of our program speaks for itself; this is our only legitimate attraction.

Cooperation, not Affiliation

In cooperating with the professional community, we want to find creative and productive ways of effecting cooperation without affiliation. Cooperation is important when carrying the message of NA to the still-suffering addict. Without cooperation with those who come in contact with addicts, many of us would have died never having heard the words, "Narcotics Anonymous." We want to work with other organizations, but we do not want to be merged with them in the public's mind. Affiliation would have the opposite effect and would lead us away from our primary purpose. By associating the name Narcotics Anonymous with other agencies, we give the impression that we are one and the same. This threatens our independence and is certainly undesirable. We simply wish to make it known that NA is a resource for other organizations.

Local public relations efforts ought to be supported entirely by NA members and groups through an area service committee. Local businesses, government agencies, or civic organizations may approve so heartily of what we do that they offer advertising funds to help us carry our message. Public

information subcommittees must decline that kind of support, well-intentioned as it is. We require of ourselves that we pay our own way.

NA has no interest in the business of education, medicine, counseling, research, prevention, treatment, or funding. We are in competition with none of the above. We share our message simply and directly; we have helped many addicts to stop using, to lose the desire to use, and to find a healthy, productive place in society.

Community and professional presentations are one way we inform the community of the existence of Narcotics Anonymous. When giving a presentation to the community or a business, we are often asked to help set up an employee assistance program, or are asked what that business can do to help us. In all such instances, we politely and directly state that we cannot get involved in the internal affairs of another organization, but we can provide information about our fellowship through our literature and meeting lists.

We seek to provide helpful information about the NA program to others in our community. We seek to cooperate with others as much as we can as members of the community. At the same time, we maintain a clear distinction between NA and other organizations. We neither endorse nor oppose the work of others. We do not provide funds for the work of others, and do not accept outside funding for our own activities. NA has a place in the community, and it is the responsibility of Narcotics Anonymous to maintain that place.

Abiding by our Seventh Tradition is critical to NA. We not only want to be self-supporting, but demand it. This has often brought up questions concerning the use of public services offered to nonprofit organizations:

1. What about the use of services such as billboard space, free commercial time, bus signs, bus benches etc?

2. What about presentations with other twelve-step fellowships? Does this promote or erode the Narcotics Anonymous message?

It should be noted that self-support questions are not always black-and-white issues. A phonline ad in the local paper annotated, "sponsored by John Doe Enterprises," would clearly denote an outside contribution. However, most TV and radio stations provide a certain amount of free public time to non-profit service organizations. Some transit companies offer reduced bus bench rates to non-profit endeavors. On one hand, these could be considered "outside contributions;" on the other hand, to decline them would be similar to declining use of publicly-funded roads while on a twelfth-step call. Each public information subcommittee will have to exercise its own best judgement in such cases.

There is an important matter to keep in mind when considering our relations with other organizations: in order to maintain its focus, Narcotics Anonymous has established a tradition of neutrality on outside issues. We do not take positions as an organization on anything outside our own specific sphere of activity. Narcotics Anonymous does not express opinions, pro or con, on civil, social, medical, legal, moral, or religious matters. We do not even take stands on secondary addiction-related issues, such as criminality, law enforcement, drug legalization or penalties, prostitution, HIV infection, or free needle programs. We believe that our sole competence lies in providing a place where suffering addicts can identify with others like themselves who have experienced substantial recovery from addiction. To remain free from the *distraction of controversy*, we focus our energy on what we do best.

Anonymity

The basic premise of anonymity allows addicts to attend meetings without fear of

legal or social repercussions. This is an important consideration for an addict thinking about going to a meeting for the first time. Anonymity also encourages an atmosphere of equality in meetings, by helping to ensure that no individual's personality or circumstance will be considered more important than the message of recovery shared in NA.

In cooperating with the community, we want to find creative and productive ways to carry our message without jeopardizing our anonymity. We do this for two reasons. First, we want to keep the focus on the NA message rather than the individual carrying the message. Secondly, we want newcomers to be assured that their identities will remain confidential.

Anonymity in the media maintains the unity of our members and provides the attraction to the fellowship for the addicts who need our help. As our Eleventh Tradition clearly states, our personal anonymity must be maintained at the level of press, radio, and films. Any information which could reveal a member's identity (whether name, photo, work, home address, etc.) would compromise this tradition.

To reveal oneself to another member however, whether in person or through committee reports, does not compromise our Eleventh Tradition.

It is also important to keep in mind the message we carry when, in public, we choose to wear clothing or items that contain our NA logo or slogans. We should also maintain a similar self-awareness when we deal with people who know that we are members of Narcotics Anonymous. This may be the first impression someone might have of our fellowship.

Anyone is welcome at an open NA meeting, just as most of our conventions or similar gatherings are open to the public. If, by chance, a member of the media attends, the only restriction we place would be that he or she not compromise the identity of any NA member, whether directly, by name, or

Indirectly, by alluding to the member's story. Cameras, video equipment, and any other recording devices are never to be used by the media in NA meetings. When a member of the media wishes to attend one of our open NA meetings, he or she should first be directed to the local PI chairperson or PI contact for further information. Initial contact will avoid many possible problems later on.

Good community relations are vital to the fulfillment of NA's primary purpose. Without the help of others in our community, many addicts will never hear about Narcotics Anonymous. We have a responsibility to maintain our relations within the community so that our message is carried as widely as possible, and that we may serve our community as effectively as possible. For our fellowship's own well-being, we need to learn as much as we can from other organizations in our community. We in Narcotics Anonymous are "a part of" the larger community around us, not "apart from" it.

The Twelve Traditions provide specific guidance for our public relations activities. When our sole motivation is the humble desire to serve our fellow addicts, our message will be carried clearly, and our fellowship will be represented faithfully.

PARTICIPATION IN NON-NA EVENTS

The following are excerpts from a report which resulted from a member of the World Service Board of Trustees' attendance at the International Federation of non-Governmental Organizations Conference in the Philippines. Narcotics Anonymous was afforded the opportunity to make a presentation at this major non-NA event.

We landed in the Philippines on November 24, 1991, registered officially on Sunday night, and were made ready for the grand opening of the conference at Malacanang Palace with an address by Her

Excellency, Mrs. Corazon C. Aquino. After the official opening, we were shown to six large buses and taken to a convention center two hours out of Manila. For the next five days we participated in the conference, attending workshops, plenary sessions and many informal conversations over meals and in corridors. There was no escape!

I would like to mention here that there is no point in presenting a paper and leaving a conference. It doesn't achieve as much as the interaction with the rest of the participants, both before and after the conference. Furthermore, when participating in this sort of conference, where little is known about NA, I have found it wise not to break my anonymity. In my experience as a health professional, especially in this part of the world, I have seen presenters lose immediate credibility by breaking their anonymity; I therefore found it necessary to alter my paper to remove anonymity breaches.

As we were in the Philippines for the IFNGO Conference for the purpose of making non-NA event presentations, the extra two days stay in Manila Metro was worth the extra expense by enabling us to make contact with our fellow recovering addicts in Manila. This was not an easy task as communication problems are extremely difficult to overcome within the Philippines. Every meeting on our International Directory was listed incorrectly and was outdated. We did not have one current contact number or address on file at WSO. During our search for NA contacts, we actually overheard some AA members talking at the IFNGO Conference and, after some deliberation, asked them if they know anything about other twelve-step meetings. As you can imagine, one thing lead to another and, upon arriving at Manila and making about a dozen telephone calls, we found a meeting.

The meeting had about 15 Filipino members in attendance: five women and ten men. We were asked to share. After the meeting, we were taken to dinner. The rest is

what you'd expect: talk, talk, coffee, food and, of course, service!

We believe the aims and objectives of this contact were definitely achieved and now the Philippines joins its neighboring communities Hong Kong, Kuala Lumpur, Singapore, Australia and New Zealand in the South Pacific/Asian NA communication and development network.

Here are some more of my observations. I believe that, due to the enormous potential of the incredible concentration of addicts in this part of the world, NA should definitely maintain its Twelfth Step and PI efforts in this zone.

Except for two agencies that send their residents to NA meetings, there are no other referral points. H&I and PI are not in place yet, and other agencies and/or treatment centers are not open to NA yet, since we have no profile with them.

NA is not registered with either the health department or governments, although officers do know it exists.

The Filipino representative has compiled a current meeting list to send to us. The Philippines has had more than its fair share of political and natural disasters during the last few years, which has made communication even more difficult.

Singapore Fellowship

I also went to Singapore. The Singapore members had some work cut out for me on my arrival! They had pre-arranged three official non-NA events:

Islamic Foundation

This presentation consisted of the paper I was delivering in the Philippines at the IFNGO Conference. It was attended by a variety of health professionals from prisons to drug & alcohol agencies. Approximately twenty attended. None of them had been previously exposed to NA.

Seralang Prison

(the drug addicts-only division of Changl Prison Complex)

This visit consisted of morning tea with the superintendent of the prison and a tour of the complex. After talking to his staff about NA, he led me (and a local NA member who accompanied me as an H&I service contact) to a huge room that held about 200 prisoners. The superintendent told me I could inform these men about NA. He also arranged photocopies of translated literature in Mandarin and Malay to be handed out. He was very favorably disposed towards self-help groups. He surprised me at one point as he thanked me for the Basic Text we sent him last year after the IFNGO Conference in Singapore. His wife is a drug and alcohol counselor and was very impressed with the text. There are twenty-two self-help groups (not NA) throughout the prison. After a very encouraging visit, he insisted in taking me and my Australian accomplice, Mark, to dinner to meet his wife.

H&I efforts have been coordinated so that H&I meetings could be started in order for prisoners to have somewhere to go when they leave prison.

Sembawang Prison Center

(for drug addicts only)

This visit was a bit more intense. The center held approximately the same number of prisoners (1,600). These prisoners were mainly repeaters (ie. multiple re-offenders). The prison terms went up to a maximum of three years. Again I was introduced to staff and psychologists, and I gave them a presentation. This prison seems to have more security. Once again I got to address approximately 200-250 prisoners about NA and, as at the first prison, I ran a "mock" NA meeting, pretending I was an addict, if you know what I mean! They understood 100%! I introduced my H&I person to them, who I hope will be allowed to follow up. Again they distributed the translated literature; the only

translation we were missing here was Cantonese.

At this stage we only hold meetings in an Islamic institution. The Islamic institution only accepts Muslims. Our NA fellowship in Singapore is entirely made up of Islamic members to date. These members are the ones doing H&I work at the prisons. In the prisons there are Mandarin, Cantonese, Indian and Malay prisoners. We still have the problem of cultural restraints between religions and various prejudices, not to mention the fact that women are not allowed to mix with men at meetings. Our members are doing their best, but they will need help to assist future NA members of different cultures and religions to get started.

Kuala Lumpur Malaysian Fellowship

This was the first visit Malaysia had from world services. Last year while in Singapore at the 12th IFNGO Conference, telephone communications were made and kept up throughout the year.

The aims and objectives from last year had been fulfilled, especially since the Kuala Lumpur representative had been accepted as a guest speaker at WCNA 21 in Australia. Unfortunately, due to passport problems, he was not able to attend. Communication has been steady and they now have three different NA meetings per week in Kuala Lumpur. The NA meeting held at the half-way house, Selangor, still takes place, but it is not on the meeting list.

In contrast to Singapore, Muslim and Christians now meet under one roof for meetings. Kuala Lumpur NA members' experiences range from recovery gained in Australia and, now, England. The meeting I attended in Kuala Lumpur was a typical NA meeting which was self-supporting, held on a church property, and used conference-approved literature, the *Temporary Working Guide to the Service Structure*, and plenty of pamphlets in English. Clean time ranged from six months, two years, onto nine years. PI and H&I efforts are still at a minimum,

although due to a member being accepted to speak at WCNA 21, awareness of NA's presence has gone through a considerable number of politicians and government departments, (which I got to hear about in Manila from the Malaysian Conference delegates). The members (eight in total) at the meeting I attended really appreciated the visit. Although I was there for only twenty-four hours, they had my attention and input for at least nineteen hours of my stay.

Addicts are still considered the number one public enemy of the country. I believe government officials are and would be more open to NA with more communication via our own *NA Update--A Newsletter for Professionals*.

The Kuala Lumpur and Singapore representatives communicate constantly by telephone now. NA is developing slowly but surely.

The newer members have gotten clean solely within Kuala Lumpur, and are doing fine. They are extremely interested in service, so we need to maintain constant communication to get over that initial hump in order to help them build their service structure in an orderly manner.

The representative's mailing address is still the same as last year. There still aren't any female members yet.

Kuala Lumpur's fellowship is alive and healthy, and shows definite growth since last year. Service efforts are on the way.

In my opinion, publications like *NA Update--A Newsletter for Professionals* look like our most cost-effective way to reach the non-NA policy-makers that will make it possible for NA to meet and grow in countries such as the ones visited during this trip.

Before I comment generally on the IFNGO Conference, I will give some more factual details:

1. Some 450 delegates participated at this event. The breakdown is as follows:
 - 200 Filipino delegates
 - 90 Malaysian delegates

130 Asian delegates

30 Westerners

450 Total attendees

As this conference was in an isolated and remote conference center, most sessions were well attended. Our own presentation was also well attended.

2. There was little or no understanding of NA, and virtually no concept of twelve-step programs or aftercare mentioned anywhere else on the conference program. Our paper was met with enthusiasm and healthy debate during the question and answer period.
3. Unfortunately, literature for display and distribution did not arrive until the last day (Friday). Despite this unfortunate mishap, there was virtually no literature left by the time we left. I pulled some of it for our local Filipino fellowship but, unfortunately, Singapore and Kuala Lumpur missed out. *NA Update—A Newsletter for Professionals* was a great hit. This periodical needs to be very professional if it is going to professionals.
4. This is an annual event.
5. At this stage in the planning process for next year's conference, it is still undecided as to whether it will be held in Australia or Malaysia.
(Note: The event was held in Kuala Lumpur Malaysia. Narcotics Anonymous was invited and our presentation abstract was accepted. Unfortunately, world services funding was not available for us to attend.)
6. In my opinion, and if funds permit, this event should be an annual fixed non-NA event expense.
7. As I said last year, I believe our representation was productive and successful; the final outcome will depend on how successfully follow-up and maintenance activities are handled.
8. The gap that was obvious in our world services last year is being closed up. I refer again to *NA Update—A Newsletter*

for Professionals. Although we managed to get one volume out (January '92 issue) I believe we really need to survey what professionals want to know about NA. I believe it will be one of our most cost-effective PI tools if we can be consistent with our mailings and quality of content.

From my experience, I believe one thing is a must when attending these conferences: have your "paper" printed in advance and take it yourself. This way you can have it included in the conference package handouts. I took 500 copies with me and they were all taken and distributed.

This conference, like other international conferences, was attended by a high percentage of government, correctional and health professional policy-makers. There were not many "front line" substance abuse workers in attendance. "Self-supporting" sounds great to officials in this part of the world, due to mammoth poverty.

Some basic points of interest about drug abuse in the Philippines. Marijuana remains the major drug of abuse. Due to poor surveillance and the fact that remote areas are not approachable by road, organized crime is having a good year as the natural disasters have also used up most of the Philippines manpower resources. The second most used drug is Shabu (methamphetamine HCL). It is affordable and frequently exported to Japan. Although authorities believe that most Shabu is manufactured locally, they have been unable to break any major distributors. The poorer class' drug of abuse tends to be industrial inhalants. Although heroin is imported, it is not that popular YET. Most drugs here are smoked or inhaled. Syringe fixing is not yet common among drug abusers.

I hope this report has been informative to you. I would also like to take this opportunity to thank world services, and the fellowship, for allowing me to be of service.

<p style="text-align: center;">PUBLIC INFORMATION AND PHONELINE SUBCOMMITTEE REGISTRATION FORM</p>

The World Service Office is trying to maintain a list of public information and phoneline subcommittee chairpersons. This is in the hope of keeping local NA communities informed about new and developing PI/phoneline service activities, and non-NA cooperation opportunities that may arise. If you are already registered, please share this form with other PI/phoneline chairs who may be interested in linking up with world services. All registered PI and phoneline chairpersons will also receive the *PI News*, as well as other general PI/phoneline correspondence.

Is this an [area] or [regional] subcommittee? (circle one only)

Area or regional service committee (not subcommittee) name, mailing address, and phoneline number

Is your committee responsible for [public information], [phonelines], or [both]? (circle one only)

PUBLIC INFORMATION SUBCOMMITTEE CHAIRPERSON

Name _____

Address _____

Daytime phone _____

PHONELINE SUBCOMMITTEE CHAIRPERSON

Name _____

Address _____

Daytime phone _____

Please send this information to the World Service Office Public Information Department, Post Office Box 9999, Van Nuys California, 91409. Thank you for your support.