

A newsletter of the Autonomous Region of Narcotics Anonymous.

someone in NA who believes in me

and wants to help me in my recovery

The Autonomous Region of Narcotics Anonymous is comprised of groups & individual members who have come together to support each other in carrying the message in their local communities. Regardless of literature preferences, location or meeting formats.

In this issue:

- Members Speak
- Scotland "Why are we here"
- A concerned Alternate Regional Delegate:
- Declaration of Authority to Print NA Literature

Our members speak

Anonymous from Scotland "Why are we here"

"Everything that occurs in the course of NA service must be motivated by the desire to more successfully carry the message of recovery to the addict who still suffers. It was for this reason that we began this work. We must always remember that as individual members, groups and service committees, we are not and should never be in competition with each other. We work separately and together to help the newcomer and for our common good. We have learned, painfully, that internal strife cripples our Fellowship; it prevents us from providing the services necessary for growth." (Narcotics Anonymous Basic Text page, xxvi)

The first *Highlands & Islands Group of NA* meeting was started on the 19th of November, 2011, by using SKYPE as a platform to carry the message. This was created for a small group of geographically isolated members scattered around the Highlands and Islands of Scotland, and other remote locations around the UK. They banded together to form the first Online NA meeting based in the UKNA Region of

(Continued on page Two)

This is our third issue of this monthly newsletter. Our intention is for this newsletter to serve as a vehicle to communicate experience, strength and hope in recovery among the members and groups of ARNA. We welcome your input into this newsletter. Please contact us at newsletter@arna.world.

Please send anything you would like to share with other members and groups of ARNA, including - personal experience, strength and hope in recovery; what becoming a part of ARNA has meant for you and your group; challenges and successes you have experienced in becoming a member of ARNA; anything else you would like to communicate with other members and groups of ARNA.

This is your newsletter. We will do our best to serve you by delivering an updated issue regularly, editing your input into an easily readable format, to facilitate effective communication between the groups and members of ARNA. We will also welcome any ideas you may have to improve the quality and effectiveness of this newsletter.

Our members speak

From a concerned Alternate Regional Delegate:

I have emailed NAWS regarding our questions about the PPP loans. They have reminded me that no decision has been made yet, and options and input are still being considered. The response from World Board has largely been a reference to the WB Treasurer's comments at the October CP Webinar:

"The purpose of the program is to keep workers off unemployment and keep the economy stable. The PPP amount that a business was eligible for was solely based on the amount of wages for which social security taxes had already been paid in the previous year. At the time the Payroll Protection Program was created, it was announced that the goal of the program was captured in its name: to protect paychecks.

"If a business met certain criteria on how the money they received was used, so that the spending achieved the government's goal of keeping workers from receiving unemployment and keeping the economy stable, that all or a portion of the amount received could be reduced. The credit the government would reduce the principal by is based on achieving those goals.

"As we have previously reported, the world board approved receiving \$150,000 from the EIDL program and \$676,740 from the PPP program. We also were offered a \$10,000 grant from the EIDL program that we did not accept.

"In Narcotics Anonymous our 7th Tradition principle is clear that we decline all outside contributions. Based on our philosophy, we did not accept the \$10,000 grant, as we believed it could constitute accepting an outside contribution. We know we must decline all outside contributions, so the question the board will need to answer soon is this: If we accept the credit to our loan from the PPP program are we accepting an outside contribution?"

(Continued on page Eight)



Anonymous from Scotland "Why are we here"

(Continued from page One)

to use audio. Following the Narcotics Anonymous tradition going back over many years to carry the message, early members joined together to use whatever technology was available at any given time.

Narcotics Anonymous has a long history of reaching out to remote and isolated addicts seeking recovery dating back to the mid 80's with the creation of *"The Loner Group-Meetings by Mail"* service in 1984.

The Loner Group, Meetings by Mail

The Loner Group was first established as a way that geographically isolated members could participate in a meeting by sending letters to each other in the mail. The Group also published a Bi-Monthly Newsletter *"Meeting by Mail"*

By the mid 90's the advent of the internet prompted addicts in recovery to start using the new technologies available to create Online Chat rooms to run NA meetings. These early online meetings were known as *Internet Relay Chat (IRC) Groups*.

Over the next few years those relatively simple IRC systems developed to become more sophisticated Chat rooms. In December 2005 the UKNA Region, using a Java Chat room, started the very first online meeting based out of the UK. These on-line meetings quickly grew to meet three times a week, using text only. Many similar Chat Room meetings were also being created in other Regions around the world, including groups like *Earth Group, NA Chat* and others.

In the mid to late 2000's Narcotics Anonymous Phone line meetings began to appear. The first such group was started in 2008, known as *The Bridge*. Many more phone line meetings followed, including the *NA-by-Phone* and *Loving Our Longtimers* groups.

As access to the internet and available technology have improved, NA members have made use of these improvements to find more and effective ways to carry the NA message of recovery online to addicts isolated from physical meetings for any number of

(Continued on page Three)

Anonymous from Scotland “Why are we here”

(Continued from page Two)

reasons, such as:

- Living in a remote or rural location
- Living with a disability
- Sick or in the hospital
- A single parent
- A care giver
- Away from home, unable to find a local meeting
- In an institution
- A professional driver
- Experiencing extreme weather locally and unable to travel
- Experiencing geographical disasters, eruptions or earthquakes, etc.
- Dangerous local situations such as riots, political upheavals and war.
- And, as we have all seen in 2020, such things as Global Pandemics

Of course, many more reasons for needing online meetings could be added to the list.

From around 2010 onwards, more NA communities began to embrace the technology and find new and innovative ways to use it, including things like American Sign Language (ASL) signed meetings for addicts with hearing impairments.

The number of online groups that have grown and flourished over these last few years is simple evidence of their value as a critical resource to carry the Narcotics Anonymous message of recovery to the still suffering addict, and established member, alike.

One would think that such a powerful resource would be widely welcomed and accepted by yet, unfortunately, that has not been the case. The first online groups to approach World Services (NAWS) for inclusion into the World-Wide NA family in the mid 90's were dismissed as not being NA and being therefore an outside enterprise.

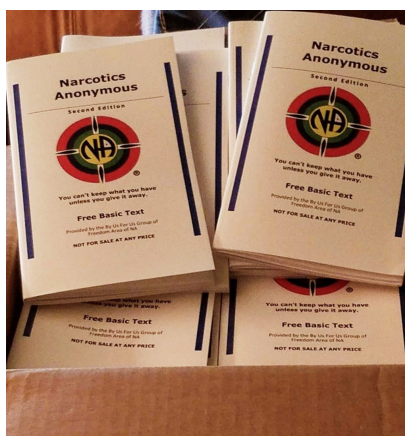
That position has been upheld and maintained until the present day, whereby NAWS and the accumulated global service bodies of NA at the Narcotics Anonymous World Service Conference (WSC) in 2020 still failed to decide to fully accept or register online meetings as being a part of NA.

Since that original determination to exclude the online meetings was made, over two and a half decades ago, many have tried, unsuccessfully, to ascertain its source or rationale. NAWS has always insisted that the determination was made by the fellowship and, as such, it would take a similar determination to overturn it. However, having been given the opportunity on several occasions, they have repeatedly failed to produce evidence to support that statement. Indeed, a thorough search of available documentation by NA members has found no mention of that original decision ever having been made via a conscience at the WSC.

As we enter 2021, following a year which, by any standards, was an extraordinary year, the Fellowship of NA is facing similar challenges as any other large organization whose function is to provide direct and practical help and support to others. The real irony is that, much like all the other mutual self-help 12 step groups, the vast majority of whose service has had to move online, in NA, those groups are left hanging with no clear mandate to be a part of.

Editor's Note:

In ARNA, all online meetings are recognized as legitimate, valued and valuable NA meetings, and as such, receive full support, in any way that we can support them. Please see our website for information on how you can join ARNA, and list your meetings on our BMLT.



Our members speak

Anonymous from Washington DC and Nebraska—Declaration of Authority to Print NA Literature

What Narcotics Anonymous member does not want to be a part of sending a message of hope to all the world's still suffering addicts?

When I made the decision to become a maker or practical buyer of our NA literature and give it away freely, I was told to do my own research. I discovered it is not only completely legal for us to print our own literature, our NA literature is life saving. The negativity on this subject in our NA fellowship was confusing to me.

When working as a Caseworker in a prison from 1984 until 2003, there was nothing NA related of any kind available for the inmates. It was a heart-wrenching experience to witness incarcerated addicts committing suicide. Many times when they were living in the hole without a top bunk they had to twist a sheet around their necks and spin around on the floor, a slow tortuous death as they were too miserable to live. I remember, like it was yesterday, the miserable feeling of calling their loved ones to tell them their son or brother had ended it all.

Would a basic text, made easily available for them, have possibly saved them? How many lives has NA literature saved? If we were still using and were mentally or physically imprisoned, would we be grateful to have easy access to a basic text for free? Would we care what edition we received? Why would there be any opposition of groups getting our life-saving basic text economically to those with nothing?

Many years of researching facts on printing our NA literature, has taken me on an amazing recovery journey. Many members and I have been blessed to meet some of the most incredible loving fellow addicts. Many that knew Jimmy K, all of these old-timers, live the 5th tradition, "Our primary purpose is to carry the message to the addict who still suffers". For many members, the 5th tradition instructions, our primary purpose, keeps us clean and is life or death for us.

Examining Tradition Four:

Each group should be autonomous except in matters affecting other groups or NA as a whole. The Basic Text says, "This means our groups are self-governing, and not subject to outside control." In their 1988 report to the WSC the Select Committee on Service Structure said this: "Group autonomy gives each group the right to accept or reject any decision made in its behalf, even if that decision is otherwise supported or rejected by the vast majority of other NA groups." It Works How and Why says, "Group autonomy gives groups the creative freedom to find individual ways to carry the message" and, "With an open-minded attitude, we are receptive to new ways of reaching addicts."

The service center believes that they define the meaning of our traditions through their policy decisions, and through their use of the World Service Conference to affirm decisions they make. Groups use traditions to make decisions, not a service center.

Tradition 2

When writing this we pray that when we die, God knows we did our best to give hope at all costs. We pray to not allow politics or non-education to cloud the authority of God working through our group's conscience to provide those still suffering addicts our NA Basic Text. That Basic Text was miraculously and beautifully written for free, out of love for us, by more than 1100 fellow NA addicts. Which edition of the Narcotics Anonymous Basic Text that is used to spread hope for those suffering is of no consequence to the God of our group's understanding. It was written by recovering addicts for the still-suffering addicts. Matters of money, property and prestige should not stand in the way of those words, freely written, to be read by addicts, wherever they still suffer!

No addict wants to see another addict die

Today we should unite as a loving NA recovery fellowship and notify all NA members that we can print our own literature! We have made a shortcut for new members, and those old-timers in doubt, with a factual declaration statement. Proofed by old timers and legal counsel, a traditions-based statement details why and how Groups can and should print our NA literature.

Together our entire fellowship, united as recovery warriors, have a responsibility to spread hope to suffering addicts all over our world. As NA recovery H&I warriors we are humbly

(Continued on page Five)

(Continued from page Four)

Anonymous from Washington DC and Nebraska —Declaration of Authority to Print NA Literature

touched by grace, as we are privileged to freely give NA literature in the most obvious places of need, growing our fellowship as it was originally intended. This includes places such as prisons, jails, hospitals and institutions, homeless shelters, rich and poor countries, groups, treatment centers, motels, pawn shops and the streets.

Utilizing honesty, our beloved NA members need not be confused

Promoting unity - we pray for all groups' autonomy in our loving fellowship, through our ultimate authority, our Higher power. If a newcomer has an edition of our Basic Text that you do not use in our group, you can buy them or help them get the Basic Text edition you do use, right away. We need to come together for the sake of our newcomers, utilizing our traditions. We need to come together now for the addict not born yet. How long is too long? Addicts all over the world go without our life saving literature because it is unaffordable for them. They are mistakenly told it is illegal to print our own literature. Our Grey Book (Memphis Review Form), the 2nd edition, 3rd edition, 3rd edition revised (some call Baby Blue), 4th edition, 5th edition and 6th edition of our NA Basic Text, all these texts have never been disapproved - they have never been made illegal.

We are taught NA recovery is an action program;

As productive members of society we take care of our areas, take care of our areas' literature needs, thus providing hope where there is none. Many of us grew tired of sitting on our behinds while we were told a service center was supposed to take care of this. We were told, "Be a part of a fundraiser, inmates can write letters and stand by. Be careful what you do as the service center will have you ostracized if you join the wrong NA group." As a newcomer, it was easy to feel governed by popular NA cliques, where traditions were not being followed. Our fellow still suffering addicts were dying every day. Why would any NA recovery warriors want still suffering addicts standing by? This experience was punishing to my personal recovery.

Old-timers valued message

Old-timers tell us the best book to put in a still suffering addict's or newcomer's hand is our NA basic text. The little white book is excellent and economical but the print is small. Many using addicts do not have reading glasses, especially in jail. The "Introduction to NA" book is extremely formal and not attractive. Our program is a program of attraction.

Researched Facts from FIBT & hard won experience from old-timers

To print our NA Literature so no one in the World can criticize your group, and all members should support you, merely follow the guidelines below. You can support our 5th tradition and 12th step with integrity.

Join or start a group that is freely printing and giving away literature. If you're not sure, pray about it, then discuss in your Group's Conscience. Our ultimate authority is God as he speaks through our Group's Conscience.

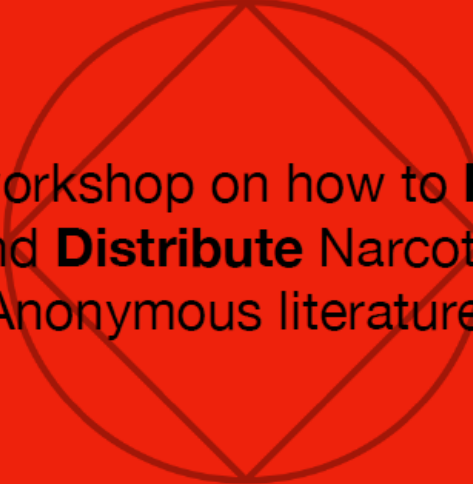
There are many valid reasons to print your own literature. Here are some appropriate examples:

- * Your group has no NA literature.
- * Still suffering addicts with nothing are dying today.
- * Area jails and prisons have no NA literature in their libraries.

Over the last 40 years the entire world's prison population has been exploding due in large part to the disease of addiction. The USA incarcerates more of its citizens, related to drug and alcohol offenses, than any country in the world today. Newcomers leave meetings without a Basic Text because they cannot afford one. For many members, giving away Basic Texts is part of our personal recovery program, a way we become productive members of society.

If a Group decides, through its Group Conscience, to produce literature or otherwise use the NA name or logo(s), then Traditions 2 and 4 are satisfied. If the Group ensures that the use and distribution of the literature is neither attributed to the Group ("Freely provided by ABC Group") nor identified as for a particular recipient (the cover cannot identify the beneficiary "Property of . . . XYZ" or "Gifted to . . . XYZ"), Tradi-

(Continued on page Six)



A workshop on how to **Print**
and **Distribute** Narcotics
Anonymous literature..

Date : 13.2.2021

Time : 15:00 UK GMT

Join us on Zoom
Meeting ID :
7697227366

(Continued from page Five)

Anonymous from Washington DC and Nebraska —Declaration of Authority to Print NA Literature

tion 6 is satisfied. The Group may receive reimbursement for printing and distribution costs, but the Group is ultimately responsible for the costs.

The Fellowship Intellectual Property Trust (FIPT), posted below, actually allows NA groups to print. It is okay to print our own NA literature. Isn't that exciting? The reliance upon Trustee Bulletins is probably misplaced, as the service center believes it has legally superseded these with the FIPT. Nor (per point 2) should there be a requirement that NA Groups only print literature to be used within the Group, as a Group's use of the NA Fellowship's intellectual property is controlled by the Traditions and not the determination of a Service Board or Committee (or a Special Worker), per Tradition 4.

Only NA groups have the authority under IP Bulletin #1 to reproduce fellowship-approved recovery literature in certain instances. When preparing to reproduce NA Fellowship-approved recovery literature, we suggest that NA groups discuss the Fourth Tradition and follow these six general guidelines:

1. An NA group shall only reproduce NA Fellowship approved recovery literature when it has a clear need to do so.
2. NA Fellowship-approved recovery literature reproduced by an NA group should be distributed only within that group. Such materials should always be given away free of charge; they should never be sold to generate income.
3. The text of NA Fellowship-approved books and pamphlets reproduced by an NA group should not be altered or modified in any way.
4. The copyright for the item being reproduced should be shown prominently as follows: "Copyright (c) [year of first publication by NAWWS], Narcotics Anonymous World Services, Inc. Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved."
5. As long as the conditions of IPB# 1 and this IPB# 4 are met, no advance permission is required. Groups need not, but are encouraged to, register themselves with the World Service Office.
6. In the event that there is any conflict relating to the interpretation of this bulletin, the procedure outlined in IP Bulletin #5, Conflict Resolution Within the NA Fellowship, will govern.

Here's a few more points to consider:

(Continued on page Seven)

(Continued from page Six)

Anonymous from Washington DC and Nebraska —Declaration of Authority to Print NA Literature

*We are ready to put out a video that teaches how to make affordable basic texts.

*It would also be relevant that NA members realize they can write their own group literature.

*Why not have a basic text that includes a step guide attached in the back for us to donate to the prisons?

Making amends to my Father through God's purpose for my group with H&I

My Dad grew up during the great depression. He was the greatest humanitarian I have ever met, a walking service center for others. He would bury dead animals along the road so they could go to heaven. Even today, many years after his death, people mention they really miss Jerry H. walking all over town with his dogs, always smiling and waving. The old teacher was always interested in what you were doing with your life and any problems you had. If I can be 5% the man my dad was, it will have been a good life.

Can you imagine trying to explain to him our literature controversy? My Dad was alive when I first went to NA. He met some of the members. He was loved there as much as me. He ran the educational department at the Lorton federal prison. From that prison and the streets of D.C. he knew what addiction was and how sick it is. He told me I had finally found my place, a home with NA He had watched his only son use and destroy himself for more than 28 years.

Imagine telling him, instead of using hard earned money to buy or make basic texts to save addicts lives, for every dollar we give to a service center, they apply 7 cents to fellowship development, and 93 cents of every dollar to pay rent and themselves? I am positive my dad would say do not think about that - addicts are dying today. Use your money to give hope directly.

This basic text printing verification can be translated in other languages and forwarded to countries that have been told it is illegal to print our own NA literature while suffering addicts there are dying. It should be noted this service center believes that they define the meaning of our Traditions through their policy decisions and through their use of the World Service Conference to affirm decisions they make. Again, groups use traditions to make decisions, not a service center. Let our groups give back without further tradition violations.

By not dragging our feet, we can help our fellowship grow. How many have been left out when we are ordered to pay prices for a Basic Text we cannot afford to buy in quantity? For what?

Re-Imagining the FIPT - Workshop ***Who Owns our NA Literature ?*** ***Who Has Authority in NA ?***

Saturday February 13, 2021 - 5:00 PM Eastern Time (US)
Meeting ID: 896 8765 4842 Passcode: 110516

**An Open discussion of Issues of Concern Related to the Fellowship Intellectual Property Trust (FIPT),
the Authority and Autonomy of the NA Group, and
Who Are We as a Fellowship**

This is an opportunity to hear alternative viewpoints related to the 12 Traditions, The NA Group, NA Service, and conflicts with the FIPT. We need to include all of our NA members within our Fellowship in our discussion that affect all NA members of our Fellowship. We need to include all points of view on decisions that all of our NA Groups.

All presentations will be limited to 30 minutes

PRESENTATION # 1 Introductions— limited to 30 minutes

PRESENTATION # 2 Presented by the European Fellowship Service Conference

PRESENTATION # 3 Presented by the Autonomous Region

PRESENTATION # 4 Input on FIPT Amendments-by the Grey Book Step Study Group (New Jersey USA)

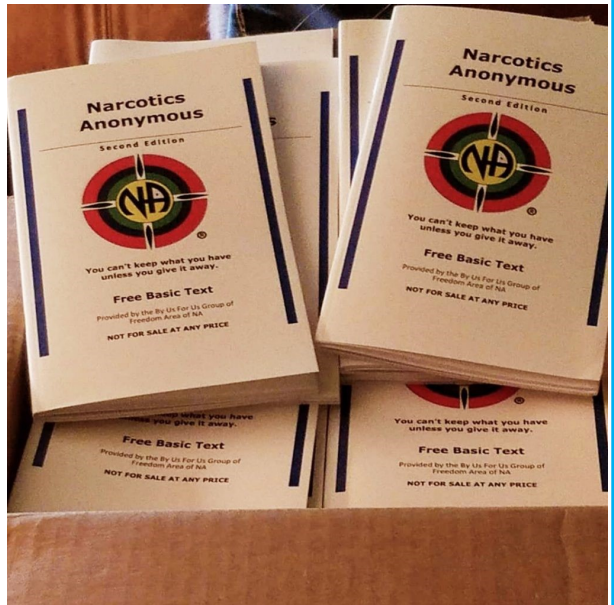
PRESENTATION # 5 Alternative Service and Alternative Literature. Presented by ASIS

PRESENTATION # 6 Presented by the NAWs World Board (If possible)

PRESENTATION # 7 (Unlimited Marathon - until we are done)

Questions and answers, opinions, and necessary grandstanding. Everyone should be heard (within a 5 minute time limit)

Topic: Re-Imagining the FIPT Workshop
Time: Feb 13, 2021 05:00 PM Eastern Time (US and Canada)
Meeting ID: 896 8765 4842
Passcode: 110516
One tap mobile
Dial by your location
Find your local number:
<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/kUzTnLjgP>



From a concerned Alternate Regional Delegate:

(Continued from page Two)

“As NA World Services treasurer, my recommendation to the world board, and to all of you, is that we accept this loan reduction. I don’t believe taking this credit is accepting an outside contribution.

“My reasons for believing this are simple: this is a credit given to any business entity that had employees for which social security wages were reported and paid, and the credit is only available to businesses that use the PPP funds to protect paychecks and keep workers paid by their employer, instead of receiving government unemployment compensation. The loan reduction is essentially a credit of taxes previously paid, in that the amount that any entity will have credited to their PPP principal balance is approximately the same or less than the social security and other government employer taxes that were paid in the previous year for each employee.

“In other words, the credit we would take will not exceed the amount of money previously paid in taxes.

As a state and federally recognized non-profit entity (in the US we are federally recognized as a 501c3), NA World Services enjoys many financial advantages such as not paying state or federal income taxes on that portion of our income that exceeds our expenses, as well as other benefits and deductions available to all qualified non-profit business entities. These benefits are not an outside contribution. They are benefits available to all qualified non-profit entities.

“Accepting legitimate financial advantages and tax deductions as part of our business practices is essential for an organization like ours that, among many other things, distributes literature around the world. The same logic naturally extends to the portion of the PPP credit NA World Services is eligible to receive, which is why I recommend that we accept it.

“While I have your attention, I want to take a moment to remind us of how important it is to change our culture in Narcotics Anonymous regarding the principle of self-support. While our Fellowship is generally excellent at declining all outside contributions, the natural corollary of this is that we must receive “inside” contributions to carry out our primary purpose.

“Historically, most of World Services’ income has come from excess revenue from literature sales, not from member contributions. One thing the pandemic has made clear is that we can’t continue to rely on the sale of literature to fund the services that we provide. I know some of you are feeling a similar need on a regional level to turn away from dependence on event income to fund services.”

From our members:

“PPP loan has become a government grant as IRS now says that money is taxable income (technically, that expenses offset by PPP money cannot be offset by earned income). This conclusively converts the loan to a grant and hence converts the loan into an outside contribution.”

And....

“A Tradition violation. The way this reads the only concern is if the money is gifted. There is more to the 7th tradition than that. One phrase in the tradition that is very relevant is 'Money has always been a problem for us. We could never find enough to support ourselves and our habits. We worked, stole, conned, begged, and sold ourselves; there was never enough money to fill the emptiness inside.’

“In our recovery, money is often still a problem’. In this response, they are only focusing on part of the Tradition, not the whole tradition. Reading the whole tradition as it is written in the Basic Text makes the argument of accepting any of this money being in direct conflict with the 7th tradition clear.

“Our policy concerning money is clearly stated: We decline any outside contributions; our Fellowship is completely self-supporting. We accept no funding, endowments, loans, and/or gifts.’

In conclusion, the argument put forth by the WB doesn’t appear to pass the 7th Tradition test, as noted above.

What do you think?

