

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.

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Date unknown

S service
B based
R recovery
Verses
R recovery
B based
S service

Can you see or recognize the difference in these two paths?
What is the definition of one verses the other? Is it listed in any of our literature?

This is a trend that was first noticed by Greg P. in the late 80s/ early 90s, He gave voice to his observations & coined these 2 terms.

The first term service based recovery is a condition where we throw the newer member out of the frying pan and Into the Fire. Electing/entrusting someone to a Trusted Servant position, whom barely has a fundamental understanding of our program. Usually, someone with less than the required/ suggested clean time to fulfill the requirements of the position. This is a great dis-service to our newest members.

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This is our Thirteenth issue of this 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.

My 6 Little Homegrown Questions

The 12 Traditions of NA (WAIT, don't click off yet!) are not a simple read, I get it. They're often treated like the boring twin sister that tags along, while the 12 Steps with their focus on the "me" of this whole thing are much more interesting and sparkly. My perception has since changed a lot, but it can still sometimes be a challenge for me to relate to the traditions. To help, I began asking myself certain questions that seemed to help bring each one into focus and to remind me that they really are just as important today as they were when they were created, instead of just an out-of-date "this-is-2024-what-does-this-boring-stuff-have-to-do-with-me-today" years old reading I have to sit through at every meeting. I realized every one of those Traditions were in the hugs I received, the safe space that welcomed me, the message I heard, and in that free cup of strong coffee I thankfully drank, at my very first meeting.

I discovered how important these 12 agreements are to NAs survival of us and our dangerous great ideas, our diversity, our collective defects, and our disease that shows up with us at every meeting, every event and every service commitment. It turns out that the boring twin sister has a sparkle all her own.

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(Continued from page One) Recovery Based Service

Service begins at the Home Group and not at the Area level or Regional levels. Basic service begins in the Home Group. We used to call it the ABC's. Ashtray's, brooms and chairs. Setting out literature, greeting the newer member, setting out literature Etc.

Giving them a title or responsibility & throwing them into a structure that has BECOMES LARGELY POLITICAL in nature or based on popularity only leads to overinflated/ false sense of self worth. Without proper ego deflation(Steps 1-9) this is a recipe for disaster. Leading us to many of the situations and problems We have today in our service structure. Folks who think they have been elected to govern the unwashed masses.

Without humility that is brought about by the steps & a grounded working knowledge of the traditions WE have created a true Frankenstein. What we used to call- an ego maniac with an inferiority complex.

His or her entire self image will be tied to their current service position or sometimes multiple positions. Any challenges to hold them accountable/ responsible to the Groups and Members they serve will be seen as a personal affront & meet with righteous indignation.

One of Greg's contemporaries, Jim M. called these folks "The I Know Better Thans". Damn near impossible to reign in once they have been unleashed upon the membership. Inevitably, they must Crash and Burn to pierce the veil of their overblown egos as they despise correction. They never had the heart posture of a servant to begin with. How could They, WE throw them into the Service Structure when they had so little clean time or working relationship with the steps at Their beginning. Choose your trusted servants wisely.

Often times, it's better to let a position remain empty than it is to put someone in it that is ill equipped to fulfill the responsibilities that come with the position. Act in haste- repent at leisure. It may take decades for the crash and burn process to take place, if ever!!

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(Continued from page Two) My 6 Little Homegrown Questions

I've shared my little traditions questions below; I figure they help me, it's possible someone else might find them helpful too. Please feel free to do or not do whatever you want with them and if they become of some use to you, that would make my heart smile.

The Questions:

- 1.) What pitfall (danger, risk, hazard, problem) does this tradition help us to avoid?
- 2.) What would NA falling into this pitfall look like (OR) What would it look like if we didn't have this tradition (what kinds of things would happen or not happen)?
- 3.) How would it hurt NA and how could this hurt the newcomer?
- 4.) What collective character defect(s) does this tradition protect us from?
- 5.) What spiritual principle(s) does it preserve?
- 6.) How did this tradition greet me at my first meeting?

A couple definitions:

Traditions: a long-established custom or belief that has been passed on from one generation to another.

Pitfall: a hidden or unsuspected danger or difficulty.

NW 1.12.24

Historical RSR letter



**Narcotics
Anonymous**

New Jersey Regional Service Conference

P.O. Box 477 • Atlantic City, NJ 08404

Are RSRs still needed at the World Service Conference and do the groups still have a voice there?

Let us take a look at some of the things that have happened in the past year, some without fellowship approval. At last year's WSC, discretionary items for the budget were not ranked, as mandated, in TWGSS. We were told that there was no money or staff support available from the WSO for any discretionary items. During the course of the year, several discretionary items have been funded, as well as other changes made, the inclusion of two of the administrative directors of the WSO into the Interim Committee, the creation of the Expanded Leadership Committee and two meetings for that committee, additional trips and conference calls for WSC leadership, the creation of the single project, the Funding of 20 RSRs to the March WSC meeting. These are just a few of the things.

Now let's take a look at this year's Conference Agenda Report. First, the regions are asked to submit issues discussion papers and are given a deadline that is impossible for many regions to meet. After the C.A.R. comes out in the introduction, it states that we will only be discussing the issue picked by the Interim Committee and those issues that pertain to it, and only allow 3 hours for issues discussion at all. So, what happens to all those regional issues? The second thing is regional motions. All old business motions, with the exception of the WCC motions, have been put off to the last day of the conference, after new business. The only motions besides the WCCs are regional ones. In the past, we didn't have the time to take care of all the new business motions on the last day of the conference. So, what happens to all the regional motions?

I don't know where regional motions come from, in other regions, but in New Jersey, they come from the groups, through the areas, to the region. From there, they go back to all the groups in the region to be voted on, before going back to region and being submitted for the C.A.R.

My understanding, of the WSC, is that it is there to serve the regions, and the areas and groups they serve. So, what happens when motions and issues from WSC committees take precedence over motions and issues that come from the regions? What happens when regional issues and motions are printed, read, and voted on by the fellowship, but are never allowed to come out on the WSC floor? If regional issues and motions are not heard on the floor of the conference, and WSC committees can do as they please when the conference is not in session, is the WSC still serving the regions, or is it simply serving itself?

If RSRs are not allowed to present the issues and motions from their regions, the only purpose they serve is to be regionally funded members of WSC committees.

The views above are mine and not necessarily those of my region.

In Service

RSR New Jersey Region

(Continued from page Two) *Recovery Based Service*

Recovery based service is quite the opposite of the above paragraphs.

Recovery based service begins with the steps. A regimented and working relationship with steps 1-9 and time practicing steps 10-12. A working relationship with the traditions, a relationship with a sponsor, a relationship with a home group and a relationship with the power greater than yourself. Foremost a relationship with honesty. Something most of us know nothing about before arriving at the doors of Narcotics Anonymous. Self honesty has evaded us for years and we must remember We are Masters of self deceit. Proper Ego Deflation is a necessity before entering any TRUE Service Structure. Let us remember that the basic text reminds us we must tread lightly into any ego inflating areas. This is not limited to just the service structure of our fellowship. Anywhere. Social acceptability does not equal recovery. Most of us can talk a good game but can we walk it out? To truly try to serve the greater good is a noble endeavor but without the right spiritual posture we can also do a great deal of harm sometimes unintentionally. There's an old truism that applies- the road to hell is paved with good intention. Heed the warning. Ego and self-interest can flare up without notice of its arrival. My first sponsor used to tell me, "My Character defects are as close to me as my breathing." Do we notice when we breathe?? Probably not. One needs to frequently ask themselves, "What are my motives and intentions? Do they align with each other? Do my actions reflect my sincerest desires?? Am I in service or being of service?"

We must constantly be willing to question ourselves and ask our innermost selves some hard questions. It is said that proper service is doing the right thing for the right reason.

Jimmy shared a bit of practical experience with an acquaintance of mine when He was upstarting a new NA community about checking motives. He stated, " if you're trying to get in their pants or get

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Excerpts from ***Recovery Beyond Borders***

This publication represents a collaborative effort of love by members who care enough to serve – and an expression of gratitude from all the individual's involved behind the walls of Santa Clara County, CA, USA

This H&I service is an international group collaboration between 'Seeking Traditional Solutions' (USA) - and 'Written by Addicts for Addict' (UK) group of Narcotics Anonymous. These addicts have continued to provide H & I service to the Elmwood facility since the onset of the global pandemic [and beyond]. The incarcerated men and women consistently receive H&I presentations three times a week. In loving Service.

Robert - I would like to let you know that it has been an enjoyable experience participating in the NA meeting here at Elmwood. The presenters have been truthful and very motivating. I have learned a lot about the affect of drugs and alcohol. I will remember those lessons for the rest of my life. Thank you all for how you conduct the meetings and how valuable they were to me and the other inmates. The NA program is God sent and is very needed. Keep up the Great Work. Thank you.

Kayla Rae: - This program is amazing. I've learned to be and stay clear and sober that you can't judge a book by its cover. Everyone has a story. We are a family here and we stay strong together. We build a community of hope and strength. We never leave a soldier behind and always keep each other about 'we'. Keeping clean is the way to go forward and never look backwards.

Jessica C: - How do the Virtual Meeting from the UK help me? These meetings, I believe, have been the most inspiring because I can relate to many of the speakers' stories, and it has kept me motivated to stay clean and sober. They inspire me to be of service and to help others along my journey. Thank you and God Bless.

(Continued from page Four) Recovery Based Service

in their wallet, it's not going to work. You have to keep your motives/ intentions pure."

One of our most fundamental principles to be remembered when it comes to Recovery Based Service is that there is no higher level of service than that which exist in the Home Group & for Our Newest Members or Potential Members.

We are reminded time and again in our Basic Text that the Home Group is the ultimate Weapon/Vehicle for carrying the message to the addict that still suffers. That's the newer member is the most important person at any meeting. We also are warned what happens when the stability of the group is compromised, the atmosphere of recovery is not nourished and the spirit of our Traditions are negotiated to become all things to all people. We have a very specific directive or primary purpose, to carry the message to the addict who still suffers. Let us never forget that this is the highest level of service & there is room for all to be of service.

Aside from being a chair person, leading a meeting, secretary, treasurer or just showing up as supporting home group member to share E.S.H. There are positions both formal and informal that greatly assist the Home Group in maintaining stability by provide the atmosphere of recovery.

This may be in the form of being a greeter/ hugger, coffee maker, chair Stacker, cleaning bathroom/ kitchen facilities, policing the parking lot or meeting place for litter, soda bottles, coffee cups or cigarette butts. Some of these are unofficial but they must be done if we are to keep our good name & reputation intact. None of this happens by accident or are coincidental. It takes commitment, dedication & action to serve the Greater Good. This is Goodwill in action and it supports the Home Group. If the Group perishes the individual dies.

Some of you may have noticed by now that I did not include Group Service Representative within the list of essential Service positions in a Home Group. The Omission was intentional and the reasoning lies within Our Non- Negotiable Traditions. Our traditions state that "We may create service boards or committees directly responsible to those they serve."(The H.G.'s).

Without strong Autonomous Home Groups(Trad. 4) committed to carrying our message(T-5), practicing Tradition 7(self support) it's a moot point. We have either eroded into a social club, coffee get together or group therapy. It's as simple as knowing the meaning between being IN SERVICE & OF SERVICE.

It would be more beneficial & practical to have a Dedicated Member showing up with a key to open up the meeting early than sending someone to an A.S.C. meeting. We must remember, Recovery starts in the Home Group and not a Service Committee. Tradition 9 tells us "ALL ELSE IS NOT N.A."!! BUILD STRONG HOME GROUPS!!

Remember some of our oldest slogans- FIRST THINGS FIRST!!

