

NEWANA PRC ORIENTATION INFORMATION

PURPOSE OF THE PUBLIC RELATIONS SERVICE COMMITTEE

This section defines our purpose—the reason we exist. Our purpose is based on NA’s 5th Tradition, “Each group has but one primary purpose—to carry the message to the addict who still suffers,” and the 12th Step, “we tried to carry the message to the addict who still suffers”. Everything we do in NA Service must be motivated by the desire to successfully carry the message of recovery—that an addict, any addict can stop using drugs, lose the desire to use, and find a new way to live. The Northeast Washington Area Public Relation’s Committee is the working body for our combined group service efforts, and it is directly accountable to the ASC and the groups it represents in its actions, “The final responsibility and authority for NA Services rests with the NA Groups.” (2nd Concept)

PUBLIC RELATIONS COMMITTEE MEETINGS & MEMBERSHIP

The PRC meeting is a resource for groups and NA members interested in combining and coordinating efforts to reach the addict who still suffers, and improve NA’s reputation as a viable program of recovery in our community. It is also an opportunity for any committee member to receive information on public relations related issues they would like guidance on, and for our committee members to report on the effectiveness as well as any needs they have to continue and improve the services we currently provide. The PRC establishes a time and place to meet that accommodates the needs of the groups and current or prospective committee members.

DECISION MAKING

As a spiritual body, we try to reach all decisions by consensus; we believe that a loving God’s will is expressed through our group conscience (2nd Tradition). In the event we cannot reach consensus, we utilize a simplified version of Roberts Rules of Orders as printed in A Guide to Local Services in NA to reach our decision. One of the reasons we try to achieve consensus is it insures that we follow our 9th Concept, “All elements of our service structure have the responsibility to carefully consider all viewpoints in their decision-making process.” By carefully discussing and respectfully listening to all points of view we try to make sure this happens at the PRC. The reason all committee members are allowed to vote is the 7th Concept, which states, “All members of a service body bear substantial responsibility for that body’s decisions and should be allowed to fully participate in its decision-making processes.”

ELECTIONS

In our election process we use the 4th Concept, “Effective leadership is highly valued in Narcotics Anonymous. Leadership qualities should be carefully considered when selecting trusted servants.” We trust that our committee’s group conscience will select the coordinators and officers best suited to fulfill the responsibilities of the positions.

PUBLIC RELATIONS SUBMISSION FORM

In order to insure the best use of our limited resources, it is essential to use good planning in our public relations efforts. All proposed projects will be submitted to the committee using the public relations plan submission form contained in these guidelines. Using this form allows the committee to thoroughly analyze and prioritize each proposed project. The plan submission form helps insure all our communications and interactions are professional, consistent and mutually beneficial.

SPECIAL RULES

From time to time the PRC will make special rules to assist in carrying out its projects. Those that are permanent are recorded in this section of the guidelines.

TRUSTED SERVANTS

“For our group purpose there is but one ultimate authority—a loving God as he may express Himself in our group conscience. Our leaders are but trusted servants; they do not govern.” (2nd Tradition). Being of service to the fellowship of Narcotics Anonymous is recognized as a valuable tool for the addict seeking recovery. This section of the guidelines lists many of the basic responsibilities for those members who serve as a PRC trusted servant. Our groups have shown their trust in these individuals by, “delegating to the service structure the authority necessary to fulfill the responsibilities assigned to it.” (3rd Concept). Once we select them, we trust our trusted servants

NEWANA HELPLINE

What is NEWANA Helpline?

The NEWANA Helpline is a phonenumber in which the caller is or can be in immediate contact with an NA volunteer. Our system is menu driven and the caller can be provided with information, talk directly to an addict, or leave a voice mail.

What is a Helpline Volunteer?

A helpline volunteer is an NA member whose primary objective is to direct the potential newcomer to an NA meeting or direct questions about our fellowship to the appropriate subcommittee.

The first NA member the caller will come in contact with is usually the helpline volunteer. The response and attitude of a volunteer can have a lasting impression on the caller. This is a service position of great responsibility.

Experience has shown that the most successful phonenumber volunteers possess certain assets which are beneficial in the accomplishment of their responsibilities. These qualifications include:

1. Appropriate clean time requirements as set forth in the NEWANA PRC Guidelines.
2. Appropriate training (i.e., orientation)
3. Knowledge of the Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions of Narcotics Anonymous.
4. Familiarity with all phonenumber related NAWS handbooks.
5. The willingness to serve.
6. The willingness to give of personal time.

A helpline volunteer will need to use good judgment regarding calls. Calls from **NA members** are usually simple requests for information. These should be answered quickly. Most members understand the need to keep the phonenumber open for other calls.

Calls from **non-NA members**, such as students, professionals, or community members are usually requests for general information about NA. Sometimes the caller is requesting a presentation, special meeting, literature, or an activity. These should also be handled quickly. Give the caller a brief description of NA and explain that an informational packet is available and that their request will be referred to the appropriate member of NA. The volunteer will then get the name and address of the caller and pass this information on to the appropriate Coordinator or Officer of the PRC Committee. It is extremely important to remember to **NEVER** make any commitments on your own.

Calls from interested non-addicts can also be referred to open meetings.

Referral Numbers:

First Call for Help-509-838-4428

Nar-Anon-Monday @ 6:30 301 S. Freya 509-923-0361 / 509-924-1051

What is a Twelfth-Step Volunteer?

The Twelfth-Step volunteer is the person who will talk at length to the potential newcomer about NA, either on the telephone or in person. Certain things must be adhered to:

1. Appropriate clean time requirements as set forth in the NEWANA PRC Guidelines.
2. Make sure at least one of the volunteers is the same gender as the caller if meeting in person.
3. Try to meet in a neutral, public location (e.g. restaurant, etc.). Meeting a newcomer in your home or in their home is an unnecessary risk. If meeting or picking up the addict at their home is unavoidable, consider the circumstances and take precautions.
4. Ensure that all arrangements for meeting the caller are accurate and understood by both parties.
5. Upon arranging to meet the caller, bring the Helpline Literature Packet outlined in the NEWANA PRC Guidelines.
6. Tell someone you are going and call them when you get there.
7. Don't stop anywhere on the way to a meeting, especially at the suggestion of a newcomer.
8. The NA program has one **must** that applies to everyone: no drugs or paraphernalia in our possession. It is important that the volunteer tries to ensure that the newcomer follows this requirement. This is for the protection of the volunteer, the Fellowship, and its groups.
9. Once an addict has been taken to a meeting, the Twelfth-Step volunteer may help the addict obtain telephone numbers and transportation to other meetings.
10. If the addict is in a hospital or treatment facility Twelfth-Step volunteers can call regularly and let the addict know that members of NA care. When the volunteer visits, it is a good idea to bring along some NA literature to leave for the addict.

Note: If an addict requires medical attention refer them to a medical facility and give the caller the appropriate phone number.

DO's:

Do always identify yourself with your first name only and state that you are an addict.

Do always have the necessary materials (e.g., White Booklet, meeting list, NA pamphlets, Twelfth-Step list, and Phonenumber Log) close to the telephone, in order to avoid delay and confusion.

Do find out what the caller needs. Ask questions.

Do, if you are returning a call, be certain that the person requesting help is on the line before identifying yourself as an addict or mentioning Narcotics Anonymous.

Do remember to be helpful and polite to all callers.

Do make appropriate referrals when necessary.

Do keep a log of all the calls you answer.

Do contact the phonenumber coordinator if problems arise.

Do use the Twelfth-Step list.

DON'TS

Don't argue with people whose views of addiction differ from yours or NA's. If the caller does not want to stop using, do not try to persuade him/her to stop.

Don't try to handle calls that you are not qualified to answer.

Don't give medical advice.

Don't give out yours or other people's names or telephone numbers.

Don't use last names or places of employment.

Don't answer questions about who was at an NA meeting (e.g., to police officers, probations officers, or significant others). However, general information may be given about NA's make-up (variance in size of meeting, NA open to all age groups, etc.).

Don't glorify active addiction by telling war stories.

H&I

What is the purpose of an H&I Meeting?

The purpose of an H&I meeting is to carry the message of recovery to addicts who do not have full access to regular Narcotics Anonymous meetings. H&I meetings/presentations, except for those in longer term facilities, are intended to simply introduce those attending to some of the basics of the N.A. Program.

DO's:

Do make schedules of outside meetings available to residents.

Do clarify the facility's rules with anyone you bring in.

Do start and end on time.

Do briefly explain what H&I is.

Do make it clear that N.A. is separate and distinct from the facility as well as other fellowships.

Do try to get residents involved, especially those in long-term facilities (i.e., literature, coffee maker, readings, etc.)

Do obey all dress codes. Exercise common sense and dress appropriately.

Do keep the staff aware of your whereabouts at all times.

Do explain the language that we use ('addict', 'clean', 'recovery') and why we use it (the First Step of N.A. and the Sixth Tradition of N.A.)

Do emphasize that in N.A., recovery is available to any addict, regardless of type of drug(s) used.

Do emphasize the importance of getting to an N.A. meeting the first day out.

Do emphasize the importance of a sponsor and a home group, the ongoing nature of recovery, and the importance of attending meetings (suggest ninety meetings in ninety days.)

Do use the literature recommended for H&I work, if we are supplying the literature. Encourage the treatment centers to supply N.A. literature on their own if at all possible.

Do let the panel leader know if you have a friend or family member in a facility.

DON'TS

Don't break another person's anonymity or tell his or her story.

Don't debate any issues involving the facility's rules or regulations.

Don't discuss conditions within the facilities or opinions about staff members.

Don't debate the merits of the treatment center's program or other fellowships. Remember, we have no opinion on outside issues. The best approach is to focus on the positive and unique qualities of our program. Keep the Basic Text handy, and read from it. It is the foundation of our program of recovery.

Don't comment on the methods used by the treatment facility. Not all facilities are Twelve Step based nor do their understandings of the Steps necessarily coincide with the understanding gained in Narcotics Anonymous. We share our experience without reference to the facility's methods or to residents' comments.

Don't while sharing; put too much focus on what it was like. They already know.

Don't debate which drugs are acceptable. N.A. is program of complete abstinence from all drugs.

Don't carry excessive cash or expensive flashy jewelry.

Don't show favoritism to any resident(s).

Don't take any messages in or out of the facility.

Don't give out any person's address or phone number, including your own.

Don't carry in any contraband items, such as cigarettes (if applicable) or weapons.

Don't rely on flooding a treatment center with literature to carry our message. The most powerful tool for carrying our message is the N.A. member.

Don't read too many literature selections at the beginning of the meeting. Keep it short and simple to keep their attention.

Don't collect any money.

Additional *Do's* for Correctional facilities

Do follow all security regulations at all times.

Do make sure all speakers carry a clear N.A. message of recovery.

Do follow the guidance found in all H&I related NAWS handbooks.

Additional *Don'ts* for Correctional facilities

Don't get involved in discussion about an inmate's guilt or innocence.

Don't give or accept gifts.

Don't carry letters in or out of the facility.

Don't give the residents money.

PUBLIC INFORMATION

What is Public Information?

Public Information is informing the public about recovery from addiction through the Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions of Narcotics Anonymous. The purpose of Public Information is to inform the public that N.A. exists and offers recovery from the disease of addictions.

DO's:

Do have a working knowledge of the Twelve Traditions.

Do follow established guidelines.

Do be consistent. Follow through with your plan of action.

Do remember quality is more important than quantity, Start with one or two projects and do them well before branching out.

Do remember other Twelve Step fellowships are part of the public we are informing. Practice cooperation, not affiliation.

Do understand and be responsive to the needs of those we serve.

Do present a good image of recovery (be on time, dress appropriately, and avoid the use of obscenities, etc.)

Do work within the service structure to determine the feasibility of projects and to keep the lines of communication open.

Do make information packets available.

DON'TS

Don't endorse, finance, or lend the NA name to any related facility or outside organization. (6th Tradition)

Don't confuse a PI presentation with an H&I presentation or meeting.

Don't overtax your human power and resources. Burn out on a project before it is completed creates a bad image of NA to the community and/or media.

Don't overstep boundaries as far as area/regional geography is concerned. When in doubt, ask!

Don't do it by yourself. Remember the First Tradition and that the service structure is there to be used.

Don't contact the media without an approved "Plan Submission Form".

Don't give out personal phone numbers without prior approval from the PRC.