



THE NA TIMES

Phoenix – West Valley – East Valley

September 2024

For Anyone inside AZ Dept of Corrections: The NA Basic Text Audio Book is available in English & Spanish on the tablets statewide!

9th Concept – All elements of our service structure have the responsibility to carefully consider all viewpoints in their decision-making processes.

The Twelve Concepts for Service reads as follows regarding the Fifth Concept: “In defining a single point of decision for each service assignment, we eliminate confusion about who has authority to do what. We also clarify accountability for our services; whoever is given the authority for a particular task will be held accountable for the fulfillment of that task.

Some of the questions your group can ask regarding this Concept follow:

- Does your group assign particular tasks to particular people? Does this help ensure that important jobs actually get done?
 - For example, does your group have a greeter or someone to distribute tickets for a ticket meeting? A coffeemaker? A group secretary?
 - Are these appointed people fulfilling their tasks?
- What happens when more than one person or subcommittee is responsible for the same task?
 - How has this turned out? Strong communication between the assigned people or committees is imperative when this does occur. For example, in H&I, members may chair a meeting one week each month. In that case, a group coordinator can help ensure they cover all the meetings.

Sometimes as committee chairs, we have to make tough calls. When a committee or group chairperson requests someone do something, or even harder, asks them *not* to do something, it is sometimes to protect the Fellowship from a Tradition violation or other issue. Do those people accept that chairperson’s request? (If you have never faced this issue in service, keep coming back – you will.) Alternatively, rather than accepting that request, is there backlash, gossip and resentment?

This concept tests our leadership, and sometimes, our humility skills. It shows how important it is that we elect trusted servants who possess the right skills to make the sometimes-difficult decisions. Our leaders must also be thick-skinned, because leadership will invite criticism. As one of our former editors of the *NA Way* used to say, “If you stand up, you make a good target.” Service isn’t always easy.

While other people’s behaviors may trigger our response, it is always our responsibility to act appropriately or be prepared to make amends. As one sponsor says, “What part of ‘promptly’ did you miss in the 10th Step?”

A brief look at tradition 9

This is pointed out in our literature as defining how N.A. functions. I have been in N.A. service for many years and hear it said quite often “that we ought never be organized.” However, this does not give our service boards and committees the freedom to operate in an irresponsible or haphazard manner. It is my wish that I will always be the best trusted servant I can be, keeping in mind my love for N.A. and my obligation to it.

Taking a closer look at tradition 9 it refers to N.A. as such. So exactly what does that mean? our little white book tells us” N.A. is a nonprofit society of men and women for whom drugs have become a major problem. We are recovering addicts who meet regularly to help each other stay clean.”

To me that is the heart of our fellowship where the therapeutic value of one addict helping another is on display and our

message is available to all who seek relief from active addiction.

This is the primary purpose of the N.A. group. For the group to be as focused as possible on the primary purpose they join to form service boards or committees to do the other things necessary to support N.A. as a whole. We found out that when we work together, we can accomplish a lot more than individual groups.

There is also the last part of this tradition requiring these service bodies to be directly responsible to those they serve. This is best accomplished by regular communication between all involved. I have found honest, regular communication to be the key to the better personal relationships, and this also applies to our service structure and to those they serve.

Sherwood T.

Step 9: *We made direct amends to such people wherever possible except when to do so would injure them or others.*

Step 9: Amends to Self

After 54 years of addictive behavior, I finally found my way into Narcotics Anonymous. I have had to learn to surrender as in Steps 1, 2, and 3. I have had to take inventory of my life and confess to another human being all my shortcomings. Finally, now it is time to make amends for my behavior to those I had harmed. Unfortunately, most of my amends to others are too late to correct as too much time has passed. However, there is an amendment to myself I can accomplish. What is this self-amendment and why is it important?

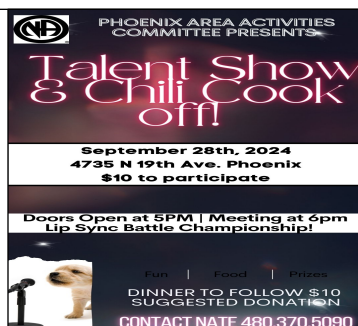
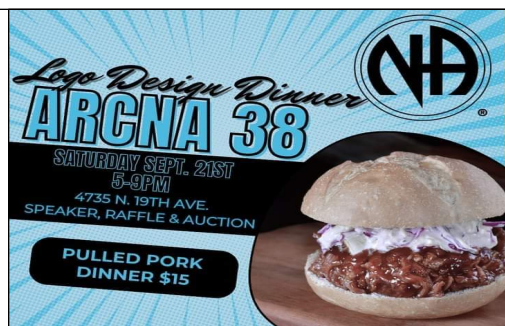
Having hit rock bottom with my low self-esteem, I was not taking care of my physical, mental, and spiritual well-being. This interfered with my recovery at first. I had to find a way to make amends to myself for that recovery. The first step was stopping the addiction and working the Steps. Just doing those two actions helped me take inventory and start the journey of self-care. “Because of the humility and selflessness so necessary in making our amends, we may be surprised at the way step Nine enhances our self-esteem . . . by thinking of ourselves less, we learn to love ourselves more.” *It Works How & Why*, page 95.

We cannot ignore taking care of our bodies and our physical health and our mental health and our spiritual health. This is the amends to us. “Our physical, emotional, and spiritual lives are interwoven.” *Living Clean*, page 84. We have abused our bodies and minds during active addiction. We have created low self-esteem and self-loathing. Shouldn’t we put ourselves on the amends list? Yes!!

After forgiving ourselves, we need to show that we are accepting these amends to self by giving us what it needs – love, health, medical and mental care, whatever was ignored or abused. Spiritual needs should be taken care of also. “An honest relationship with ourselves and real, tangible change in our lives are necessary for amends to have much value.” *Living Clean*, page 152.

I needed to change my diet. Exercise daily. Seek psychiatric help. Explore my spiritual growth. There was so much damage done that it required a long time and many outside treatments to bring me back to health. Of all the amendments, this one has been the biggest one for me to do. It was not okay to put myself first in my addictive behaviors over everyone around me, but it is okay to put myself first in my recovery by making amends to myself.

Kathy M.



Lately I've noticed a lack of old-school meeting etiquette. What are the things your sponsor taught you about meeting etiquette? For example, old-timers used to say, "If you show up late or have to leave early, you don't share." What are some of the old-school etiquette statements you were taught in recovery?

We had a lot of interesting dialogue.

A. If you share about the mess, clean it up with a message... 🤔

A. It's a cycle. Seems to me there's a lot of people that got clean in multi-program facilities that don't know NA meeting etiquette or why it exists, and a lot of others afraid that teaching or correcting them will chase them away. Often, the person that says something in the meeting is treated as the grouchy old-timer who needs to accept change. But I've found that it comes back around as people's lived experience demonstrates the need for it.

A. Guys coming in late and hugging all the ladies before sitting down and getting back to looking at their phones before sharing and leaving. I want to be like them but I'm too self-conscious.

A. Get off your phone!!

A. Don't preach the program, share your experience and share where you are today...then listen.

A. One thing I was taught was follow the format created and voted on by the group conscience, as it's written. Don't always see that. I also try not to get up and rustle around while someone's sharing. Sometimes you got to pee, and I get it, me too. But you have to be able to read the room. If someone's sharing, especially heavy shit, now's probably not a good time to meander about and be a distraction. If someone's upset and sharing about their mom just dying, it can probably wait.

A. Come in early enough to get a cup of coffee, then sit down and listen to the message. Please don't get up two or three times to refill your coffee – this isn't freaking Starbucks. It's an hour people!!

A. Bill H. told me that if I am in a meeting, to identify myself as whatever term that fellowship uses. That grouchy old-timer might do well to remember that he or she was a newcomer once and that correction can be done in private after the meeting. Take the newcomer aside and say, with love, that in this fellowship, we identify as... I attend four different fellowships on a regular basis: AA, NA, CMA and Celebrate Recovery. I have no problem respecting the protocol of these different organizations (Just my two cents). Have a blessed day unless you have made other plans!

A. As far as not sharing if you show up late or have to leave early: not everyone runs on a perfectly timed schedule. If they come to a meeting at all it's a good thing. Now, playing with a damned mobile phone during the meeting... As someone else here said, it's only an hour or so! Ask yourself what you may miss while being glued to the device.

A. Throughout the years the makeup of the substances has changed. I do think that this plays a part in someone's recovery early on. Restless and get up and down – anxiety. Going back to what I know about the first two years of recovery, when someone's brain chemistry is trying to re-route and relearn how to behave in general without the substance it is different than before. So, before I judge what anyone is doing, I have to take a look at it. Is it really going to affect my recovery if that person is doing the best that they can in the moment? No! It's really not. Talking to the person and making them feel welcome is all that they need in the moment and that is ok. They had the courage to walk through the doors late, on time or early, they are there. Maybe they leave early because they are not comfortable with the hugs just yet. Sometimes I will take a step out with them to check in and see how they are doing. It can be a lot and if I spend too much time judging others for how they act than for me I am missing the point.

A. Lately I've noticed a lack of TOLERANCE. Some people are just trying to make it through the next hour, it's not helpful to EXPECT they all meet your expectations, just for today I'll practice acceptance for those who are struggling just to stay.

A. I was told by a very wise sponsor to comply with NA's suggestions on posting on social media.... It seems almost everyone ignores it. Again, not aimed at anyone. I just see people get very self-righteous about their NA orthodoxy and ignore these guidelines. Just my view. I'm old and old school.

(Continued pg. 4)

UPCOMING EVENTS

Check out *Arizona-NA.ORG* for more Details

Game Group – Ray of Hope	Saturday, September 7 th , 14 th , 21 st , 28 th 2-4pm
PMS retreat	Friday, September 13 th – Sunday September 15 th
United Day Campout	Saturday September 14 th – Sunday September 15 th
Logo Design Dinner – ARCNA Fundraiser	Saturday September 21 st 5:00pm
EV Skyline Serenity Hike	Saturday September 28 th 11:00am
Talent Show & Chili Cook-Off	Saturday September 28 th 5:00

Question and Answer: Q &A (Continued)

- A I was told by a very wise sponsor to comply with NA’s suggestions on posting on social media.... It seems almost everyone ignores it. Again, not aimed at anyone. I just see people get very self-righteous about their NA orthodoxy and ignore these guidelines. Just my view. I’m old and old school.
- A If the meeting format requests that you speak for a set time limit, don’t go on for ten minutes because you think you have so much recovery to share. Home groups often set time limits so that people who need to share can share. Sometimes, newcomers need to share. I was often told that if you need to talk longer than the group suggests, it’s probably time to call your sponsor.
- A I too want everyone to "hear the message" in the rooms when it is shared. But at the same time, not everyone in the room is there for the same reason. Many still come to satisfy the external reason they came. The "sit down, shut up, and listen" concept rarely made me a better listener when I was new. My listening skills weren't handed to me. They were developed. I was no longer tripping on drugs. I was tripping on all the movement within the rooms that were my distractions, which led to my lack of focus on what should have been more important. But my desire and my willingness kept me *clean*, while the process of *recovery* began thereafter.
- A Taking time out of a meeting to run the business meeting during the meeting, especially when you have a room full of newcomers. They don’t care what your prudent reserve is, or even need to hear a GSR report. They need to hear the message, get some hope, relate, and sometimes share to stay clean another day.
- A To always make it a point to welcome the newcomer and give them some IPs.

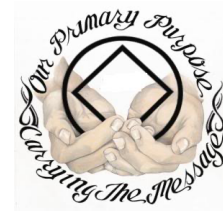
Sponsorship Behind the Walls

Sponsorship in Arizona for inmates is 100% voluntary and can begin with just a letter of willingness to participate. Once your message of interest has been received, your initial projects to be completed will be sent to you. After completion, a sponsor is then assigned to work with you as long as the communication remains open. Your Sponsor will send you an initial welcome letter letting you know who they are and how to further reach them with "Step Work" and other correspondence. This method of sponsorship is useful for those who are serving six months or longer than six months from their release date.

Where to mail your letter:

Arizona Region of Narcotics Anonymous – H&I
PO Box 1351
Phoenix, AZ 85001

While you wait to hear from us, search out your unit for existing NA meetings and begin attending. In the meantime, let us welcome you to Narcotics Anonymous, **Arizona Sponsorship behind the walls.**



A. Write to us about:

1. What did using cause you to lose or give up/away?
2. Where did you first hear about Narcotics Anonymous?
3. What have you gained from working a program of recovery?
4. If you are working with a sponsor:
 - a. Is he an inmate?
 - b. Someone from before?
 - c. Or from writing to "Sponsorship behind the walls"?
5. What keeps your interest in NA alive?
6. How long will you remain incarcerated before release and your concerns for that eventful day.

B. Guidelines for writing:

1. Keep your story concise and fit it on one page or less.
2. No need to over emphasize with cussing.
3. Please don't write with excessive details about the drugs or drug class which you used.

C. Once completed send your story to:

East Valley Prison Coordinator
PO Box 5264
Mesa, AZ, 85221



Inmates! *Show your creativity*

We would like to publish your artwork. **The NA Times** - Phoenix, West Valley, East Valley – is looking to involve the members of the fellowship **Behind the Walls**. Send your artwork and a piece of your recovery story to us for publication (Keep the artwork clean and recovery related).

Send to:

Narcotics Anonymous Prison Coordinator
PO Box 5264
Mesa, AZ 85221

GAME GROUP

**SATURDAYS
2PM-4PM**

**JOIN US FOR
FELLOWSHIP
&
BOARD GAMES!**



Ray of Hope

MARICOPA LIBRARY & CULTURAL CENTER
18160 N MAYA ANGELOU DR
MARICOPA, AZ 85139