



# CARRYING THE MESSAGE

Monthly Newsletter from Kathmandu Area Service Committee Vol. No.1, Issue 4, May 2008

## NARCOTICS ANONYMOUS: IN COOPERATION WITH THERAPEUTIC COMMUNITIES (TC) WORLDWIDE.

A Presentation to the World Federation of Therapeutic Communities Conference, Cartagena, Colombia, February 1998.

### Abstract:

Narcotics Anonymous, an international, community-based association of recovering drug addicts, provides peer support to other addicts who desire a drug-free outcome. We strive to cooperate with professionals such as therapeutic communities and other organizations with similar goals. This paper identifies key factors affecting NA's interactions with others, points out means by which professionals can contact Narcotics Anonymous, long-established means of direct interaction between NA and professionals, a number of strategies to facilitate client/resident introduction and entry into Narcotics Anonymous, and a description of what clients will find when they attend NA meetings and meet NA members. The paper addresses a number of areas where professionals may encounter difficulties in relating with Narcotics Anonymous, and closes by identifying ways to resolve any problems that may arise when interacting with NA. Our mission as an organization is to communicate to addicts in the community that we may be able to help them learn to live drug-free, recover from the effects of drug addiction, and establish stable, productive lifestyles.

Our public relations activities strive to attract addicts to Narcotics Anonymous without being overtly or unduly promotional. Our membership is open to anyone who wants to stop using drugs, regardless of the particular drugs they have used. There are no social, religious, economic, racial, ethnic, national, genders, or class-status membership restrictions.

We maintain a policy of "cooperation without affiliation" in our inter-organizational relations. This policy allows us to work with others in the community without becoming involved in a manner, which might distract us from our mission. This means that: "We will neither endorse nor oppose other organizations or approaches to the problems associated with drug addiction".

### Total abstinence:

The experience of our members has been that total, continuous abstinence from all drugs has provided them with a reliable foundation for recovery and personal growth. However, abstinence is not in itself the sole goal of our members; more importantly, we seek a comprehensive change in attitude and lifestyle. "Relapse" is seen as a sometimes "necessary" part of the overall addiction/recovery process for many individuals. Relapsers are not "shamed" but are encouraged to pick up the pieces, learn from their experience, and move on.

Some anti-professional sentiment. Though NA as a movement takes no such position, we have noted that some Narcotics Anonymous members bear some antagonism toward professional therapists and psychotherapeutic concepts. We cannot speculate on the reason for such antagonism. Thankfully, this antagonism is not an overwhelming feature in the life of the NA groups where it can be found.

subscription

WE LIKE TO REQUEST ALL NA MEMBERS TO SUBSCRIBE OUR E-NEWSLETTER VIA EMAIL. PLEASE SEND YOUR REQUEST TO [ktmasc.newsletter@gmail.com](mailto:ktmasc.newsletter@gmail.com) IT WILL BE OUR PLEASURE TO KEEP YOU UP TO DATE WITH THE LATEST NEWS AND INFORMATION ABOUT RECOVERY.

- NEWSLETTER COMMITTEE.

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# WHY SELF SUPPORT?

"Self-support starts at the individual and group level. As individual members, we are each responsible for furthering the success of our program in every way we can. As a society of recovering addicts, we are fortunate that the primary purpose of our groups is so clear and simple: to carry the message of recovery to the addict who still suffers. Self-support ensures that we can carry this message on our own terms, free from outside influences and control. Self-support also allows our groups to be self-governing, guaranteeing each group's autonomy as discussed in our Fourth Tradition. More practically, self-support helps us to ensure that rent for our meeting a space is paid, and literature is made available to our members and newcomers alike.

Why is self-support so important to an organization like ours? In a word, freedom! As our steps and traditions book *It Works: How and Why* says, By paying our own expenses, we remain free to carry our own message. The description of our Seventh Tradition in the Basic Text repeats this thought more forcefully: 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. Everything has its price, regardless of intent.

Whether the price is money, promises, concessions, special recognition, endorsements, or favors, it's too high for us. Even if those who would help us could guarantee no strings, we would still not accept their aid.... We will not put our freedom on the line. By paying our own way, we remain free to carry our message in our own way, free from outside influences. But this freedom also implies responsibility: We remain committed to supporting our groups, and the services that support them, through our own voluntary contributions.

In addition to this freedom, supporting the NA service structure beyond the group's needs also allows our members to feel a part of a growing fellowship. As a long-time member puts it, if we don't help or support it, we don't own it. Every group should participate in sending money to support our services structures. That makes a group a part of. It gives them a stake in what's going on. So our principle of self-support ranges far beyond maintaining the group's simple financial responsibilities. Together, we are responsible for the success of all our service efforts. Our collective willingness to shoulder the burden of supporting our services will determine the success of our efforts to better carry our message to addicts throughout the world.

Funding NA services is therefore our collective responsibility. We truly believe in the principles of our program. We also recognize that, paramount among these principles are selfless giving and self-support. In our recovery, we learn to give more than lip-service to these ideals. We breathe life into them (and, thereby, into ourselves) by becoming of service, and by supporting our trusted servants. An effort, making sure that money is the least of our problems in carrying our message to the still suffering addict. The program works!!! We are all living proof of its effectiveness. But what about NA as an organization that seeks to help suffering addicts find a new way to live? If each of us committed just one-tenth of the resources that we spent on our active addiction to providing service in Narcotics Anonymous, what a powerfully dynamic organization we would be!"

IP No.25 *Self-Support: Principle & Practice*



## SERVICE WORK: PASSION OR ADDICTION ?

We lived our lives in a world of despair, depression, and addiction to drugs, alcohol, or other things that impede any daily similarity to a sane way of life. We find one day this ugly bottom of what has been observed by others and told to us that our path was to be just this. What to do is the question we now struggle with. Live or die? In living how do we then proceed with all the unspeakable things we have done to so many we love and care about?

We dig down deeper than we ever thought possible to find the soul we know exists within us and climb out of this nightmare by entering into the world of Recovery. We find this world to be one of peace and serenity that protects us from all the evils we so desperately wish to leave behind. There is a solace in knowing that within this world we learn to help others like ourselves. We begin a new journey of doing anything, anytime we can to help others. In doing so it brings a bit of cleansing to our soiled life that in deed will show others of our change to be better. How do we continue to get better ourselves? We dig in deeper to help others. Is this a good thing? Are we forgetting to take care of ourselves and work the program that we came to so love because of its ability to allow us to live amongst the world again?

Sometimes when our lives become so unmanageable we find it easier to cope with life if we can at least manage other people's lives. It gives us the time to forget that our own life is unmanageable and for too many that thought is comforting. We have now taken on a new addiction to clear out the old one. An addiction to helping others is not a method of eliminating our own addictions. We can find in fact that in doing so we now have compiled so many issues on top of what we forgot to directly address with ourselves and that on days when everything seems to be going wrong we now not only look at our own problems but this mass of other peoples problems. We can't understand why what we do isn't working to help them much less why our own lives have become unbearable when we are doing so much to help others.

So when do we know if what we do in our service work has become a passion or an addiction? A passion to help others can only be recognized when we first know that we are in control of doing what is required of us to maintain our Recovery by working the program. When we are keeping our side of the street clean first and foremost as it has been said many times. Then and only then can we work to help others and pass along what we have learned in hopes of helping them. We can devote our time and energy outside of our own Recovery to others if we understand that we need to dedicate the time to manage our own lives first.

With the Internet becoming a fast growing tool of easily obtained knowledge

we are finding that there are more and more people that have become instruments of carrying this wonderful message of Recovery by becoming webmasters or volunteers to websites. However there are many that are doing so and finding themselves in a deeper depression in their Recovery than when they first started the program. The reason for this is they expect a website to be an extension of their inner self that will become a fast Recovery tool for helping others. When this does not happen with a quick response from others by either joining in their forums and actively participating, or donating to help support their website they become more depressed and find old behaviors rearing its ugly head.

We can not expect others to participate in a manner that we guideline for ourselves when starting a project to help others. When we involve ourselves in service work we must keep in mind that we are as sick as those we are trying to help. Our expectations are only that, ours. Not what we perceive others should be doing to help our efforts to help others. When we get caught up in helping others so deeply that we have forgotten about our own Recovery then we now need to recognize that our passion has become a dangerous addiction that could make us fall back into our addiction of choice that brought us to where we are today.

I personally found times when it was easier to stay in a safe place of helping others that took the focus off of me when times were hard in my Recovery. It becomes easier and easier when everything flows along so well for others and you take time to pat yourself on the back knowing you had a hand in helping. But when the help you extend goes wrong of no fault of yours it makes you stop and reflect. In that reflection arises all of your problems that you kept in the shadows of your safety net called service work. We now have to re focus our Recovery and what exactly we are trying to do for others. Are we helping others or hurting them when we know our own Recovery is in jeopardy?

We trudge on each day remembering what we have learned and sharing that which we know helped us to help others. We hope that in all of this madness of addiction that the attempts we make to help ourselves will be passed on and work for others too. Can we forget our program? For some reason that can be done quite easily if we do not keep our focus. It is not so hard to get caught up in the idea that we are the program because of the knowledge we pass on instead of remembering to be part of the program and pass on the knowledge.

There are many forms of service work that surrounds our programs today that are in and out of the rooms of Recovery. Many of us volunteer for that work eagerly but have we really thought out the reason why? Take time today if you are one of those people who does service work and take a look deep into yourself and see if you can find your real reason.

It is wonderful to have a passion in life. It is even more wonderful when that passion is to help others. We must always keep in mind when helping anyone, that we do them absolutely no good at all unless we take care of ourselves first.

## BENEFITS

The Basic Text talks about how as Addicts we want the benefits without the work. This sounds like me.

When I first found NA there were a lot of examples around. The ones I wanted to follow were the ones that would let me continue in my behavior. This was mainly avoiding work. I am sure you've seen it, like at dances, showing up late (empty handed), eat for free, dance a lot (complaining about the choice of music), and leaving at just the right time (just before clean up).

Or how to join the right Group. You know, the Group with a lot of people. So I can do Service and not the work. I get a position so I can say I am into Service. My all time favorite one was H&I, Translation and opening meeting, I'm still not sure what my duties consisted of.

The only problem with all of this is I still had a hole in my life, a vacuum right behind my belly button. I tried to fill this with jobs, lots of friends (none of the close), reading, movies, etc. None of which filled the gap. I still felt like I was just visiting this planet. A very uncomfortable feeling to say the least.

Now I was very unwilling to feel like this for the rest of my life. The truth is I know I could not survive without clean. The Basic Text says our only hope is in those who have been in our dilemma and have found a way out. So I started to look at the other examples. We all know it's easy to look good in a meeting. But as I spent time with people in NA, I met people who felt whole. They were real? If you know what I mean. They were not walking shells looking to fill up. I saw the proof of the program in the way they lived, the way they reacted or responded to what happened to them. How they coped with things like flat tires, money problems, or the Big One, Relationships.

I asked these people what was missing in my life. And they shared about commitment (how I hate that word) and follow through. Follow through is very important, on the Steps, in the meetings, with sponsors and people we sponsor.

With all of this comes fulfillment. Today NA helped me to be in service which makes me productive, acceptable and responsible members of this society. I found it worked to overcome the natural resistance to good living that my Disease brings. Its hard to act loving when I don't feel loving or to be part of a Committee with people I don't care too much for. Going that extra length is hard but worth every bit of the work.

In Gratitude - Suyash R.

## RECOVERY BEHIND THE WALLS:

I had about nine months clean time, and was asked to talk at a meeting and I was terrified. I knew that I had to take a stand for what I was doing and becoming, or I might risk it if I didn't. God once again carried me on that night, and I was very surprised at the reaction of my fellow inmates. I realized that things were happening like they were supposed to, and in god's time, not mine.

My wife turned up pregnant by my neighbor and quit coming to visit me. I got a letter from the parole during board telling me that I would be given no parole during my entire sentence due to my previous record.

All those things happened to me in a very short space of time and I was about to explode from inside. I know now that it was the grace of god, my friends, my sponsor, and those NA meetings that carried me through those times. I had a very strong desire to use but I kept remembering a line in the NA Basic text that said, "No matter what, don't use and you will have the advantage over your disease of addiction."

Those terrible feelings of fear, hopelessness, anger, and resentment slowly were being replaced within me by hope, faith in my higher power, understanding, and acceptance.

Note: This is a personal sharing of a member from our fellowship. We would like to thank the NA member who wrote this to us from prison.

## STEP + SERVICE = "SERENITY"

To eliminate character defects in normal life and to gainsay poverty of family, I was progressive towards drugs. I had a bike accident and dead for a week. Then I was alive in a hospital's bed for a month in a state of abstinence; couldn't drink any liquid, couldn't sleep due to the sickness, couldn't speak, and my parents carried me to toilet. I didn't ready to rescind with my re-live. So, I accepted my family's proposal to get marry just to maintain my addiction. Later, I was mentally & emotionally weak. I can't share the real feelings of emptiness while using the drugs prescribed by psychiatric, but I can feel it. This reclusive life brings me to the hell. During the treatment I had sexual relation with my wife, without any real desire. Later, my physical condition was so bad that I couldn't use drugs even if I wanted, because of no active vein in my whole body. Then, I had to stop using when the desire accumulated by the born of my lovely son. In this hitting bottom, my father gave me the message of NA, when few addicts just started to conduct meetings in my home town. I attended those meetings but I was surprised with sharing of addicts and I couldn't trust they weren't using. I was living despair and isolated life, used to think that I was alive just for using and also tried once to jump in a river considering, "it is better to die than to live this hated life". After discharged from a rehab center I attended few NA meetings but this time I was untruthful and refused to believe alcohol is also a drug. Due to the reservation, I was living reckless life of addiction. I couldn't face fellows; I didn't have any trust for myself and world around me. I strived almost all methods to stop using but was unable to stay clean. So, I was living unmanageable life without any hope.

A fellow joined my office as a higher power through which I was receiving NA message. Then, hope and trust starts to restore. One day a client threatened me to do official work as he wanted but I didn't, I would rather shoot him and go to prison. I occluded it for my son and worked in sanity for the first time in my life that I made call to the fellow in ASC meeting and I went directly there seeking the fellowship. This was the surrender, I did due to the hope and to say veracious that there were no way. This was a spiritual principle through which I worked in first step (acceptance-honesty), second step (faith-open minded) and third step (turn it over-willingness), one day at a time. So, my first meeting was NA service meeting, where I got enough hope, experience, faith, courage & strength. I did surrender myself in the NA Way, everyday. Gratitude goes to all NA members who loved, cared and shared to me during, before and after the meeting. This is the reason why I have continuous recovery. I am grateful to got NA message effectively and properly; about steps, traditions, concepts, sponsorship, service, events, meditation, prayer, inventory, meetings and all the NA Way.

By practicing the NA way; there was beginning of happiness, inner satisfaction, calm and serenity in my life. It demands hard efforts to accept the life terms and turn my will & my life; however I am practicing this principle with hope that everything will be right. I am trying to do unconditional NA service, which was the best way to practice spiritual principles without any unrealistic expectations. I attend NA meetings not only to enhance personal recovery but also to carry the message of hope. I am serving in a PI sub-committee because I got NA message through my father no matter how much it was effective and believe that the normal people to whom we do PI will provide effective NA message to the suffering addicts. It's all about carrying the message.

If there were no meetings then I couldn't be clean. All the requirements with servants were ready to conduct meetings when I need. I just had to go meetings; I hadn't done anything except listening with delicious tea. Now also there are addicts having desire to stop, who need meetings & fellowshiping. If they don't get NA message effectively then they might use again.

So, I am going to meeting regularly because I believe that at least a member will be there only the reason of I will be there. This is the program of attraction rather than promotion, so I again serving in a home group. If an addict get the message of hope then he/she don't needs to die without seeking recovery. Working in the 5th tradition somehow I am working in the 12th step and I will have it by giving away that any addict can stop using drugs, lose the desire to use, and find a new way to live. The proper combination of steps and service i. e. steps working in services gives me serenity which brings freedom through the way of spiritual principles. It also reflects in the society hence become admirer. There is a conscious contact with God of my understanding while doing service. I can heal the freedom that described by our symbol of NA as a universal program, by the appropriate combination of Self, God, Service, Society & Goodwill.

This simple practice does easy in all affairs of my life. I am doing job easily in that office from where I was about to kick out before. I finished my Bachelor education as a topper student of that college in which I was not admitted before. I am living happy recovering life much better than both normal & addict life. It proves NA message is hope and the promise of freedom. So, I impair by thinking about back to either active addiction life or normal life. Doing the things based on need rather than want I am getting inner satisfaction and calm. The serenity is the ultimate target of my life, so I am living this way of working the steps in the services because of this brief saying "steps plus services is equals to the serenity".  
- Asab B.

## Do You Know Jimmy K. ?

James P. Kinnon (5 April 1911 - 9 July 1985, commonly known as Jimmy Kinnon or "Jimmy K.") was the co-founder of Narcotics Anonymous. During his lifetime, he was usually referred to as "Jimmy K." due to N.A.'s principle of personal anonymity on the public level. He never referred to himself as the founder of N.A., although the record clearly shows that he played a founding role.

From the very start, unlike many other attempts to form self-help groups for drug addicts, Narcotics Anonymous was based on both the Twelve Steps and the Twelve Traditions devised by Alcoholics Anonymous (AA) and adapted to the specific needs of N.A. While there is no official biography of Jimmy Kinnon, a certain amount of pertinent information can be found on the web and in print.

Kinnon was born on 5 April 1911 in Paisley, Scotland. On 8 August 1923, he arrived with his family on Ellis Island, New York. He worked as a roofer, struggling with his drug addiction until he achieved permanent and complete abstinence from all drugs in Alcoholics Anonymous on 2 February 1950.

He and a few other drug addicts who had met in AA started holding a series of independent meetings for drug addicts, beginning 17 August 1953. The first documented recovery meeting of Narcotics Anonymous was held on 5 October 1953 in Southern California. Today, members of Narcotics Anonymous hold more than 60,000 weekly meetings in over 127 countries worldwide.

Kinnon is a key figure in the history of Narcotics Anonymous for several reasons. He wrote several portions of the Little White Booklet, which formed the basis for N.A.'s basic text, published in 1983 under the title Narcotics Anonymous. This book also contains his anonymous biography, titled We Do Recover. Kinnon also designed the NA logo and served as the volunteer office manager of N.A.'s World Service Office from the time it began to 1983.

Jimmy died on 9 July, 1985 in Los Angeles, having spent the last 35 years of his life as a "clean" and recovering member of Narcotics Anonymous.

Narcotics Anonymous

## SERVICE IN NA - DO YOU KNOW YOUR DUTIES?

Suggested guidelines for service positions within the Kathmandu Area of NA fellowship \* Group Secretary  
\* Group Service Representative (GSR) \* Group Treasurer

### Duties of Secretary

- w Suggested clean time - Above three months.
- w Organise chair/speaker with at least 3 months clean time to share experience, strength and hope.
- w Organise seating arrangements
- w Ensure sufficient supply of NA literature including plenty of meeting lists.
- w Maintain order throughout the meeting.
- w Ensure meeting starts and ends on time.
- w Organise a collection in accordance with the 7th tradition.
- w Organise refreshments before/after the meeting.
- w Ensure that the meeting honors its rent commitments by payment of cash or literature donation.
- w Ensure that group conscience takes place on a regular basis.

NB: It is strongly recommended that groups elect treasurers to serve for a full year.

### Duties of Group Service Rep (GSR)

- w Suggested clean time - Above six months
- w Act as link between the group and the Area Service Committee. ATTEND THE ASC!
- w Discuss upcoming service committee business and get direction on how the group wishes to be represented, should a vote be required.
- w Make donations on behalf of group to the service committee.
- w Purchase NA literature on behalf of the group from the ASC.

### Duties of Treasurer

- w Suggested clean time - one year.
- w Maintain records of all income and expenditure.
- w Give regular financial reports to the group.
- w Ensure safety of money.
- w Never use money for personal advantage.

## editor's notes

The aroma of recovery is everywhere in the air, all we need is a good sense to smell it and feel the presence of freedom. "We do recover, we are the proof" this phrase has proven to be myth in present context as we see so many addicts wandering here and there in seek of recovery. It looks as if we failed to carry the message of hope and freedom in our vicinity. Even we have witnessed so many relapses. Those things are inevitable but thinking further, maybe uniting fellowship and carry the message of recovery even better.

I was very upset when I saw very good and closed NA friends relapsed. In my mind those questions did not come which I used to feel before when someone relapse like: Why they relapse? Or how they relapse? Or when they relapse? This time it was little different and terrible feelings came in my heart like being an individual NA members what can we do? What is our weakness? How we can help?

I did some personal inventory on this, asking myself: Did I attend the meetings? Did I carry the effective message of NA? Did I try to help newcomers? How we can carry the message of recovery effectively? Doing this inventory I did lots of prayer and call my Higher Power to help me with his knowledge and inner strength.

Then I was inspired to get more involve in NA service. You know some of our members are still in isolation and lying on a bed hoping that someone will come to share and listen his feelings of trouble and pain. Someone is still using even if he wanted to stop using because he can't face the fellowship with feelings of guilt and shame. They have not found the way out, so what is our individual NA member's responsibility? Where is our Gratitude prayer which guides us that it speaks when we care and when we share with other...The NA way!!!

Therefore, we have so many ways to reach them in the NA way, who is still seeking recovery. We can help addicts in jails and hospital by doing service in H&I, we can help those addicts to whom we can never reach by giving the NA information to public (PI). There are so many ways to get involve in NA service if we have a real desire to help addicts like ourselves. Therefore, I humbly request every individual NA member to be in service so that "No addict seeking recovery need ever die from the horror of addiction".

### UPCOMING NA EVENT:

2nd Annual Pokhara Area Convention, July 8 - 10, 2008  
"One Promise, Many Gifts"  
venue: Sarangkot Hill, Pokhara City, Nepal.  
TO CONTACT ORGANISERS: Phone 977-980 415 9346

### CLEANTIME CELEBRATION

Kumar A. .... 1 year  
Milan G. .... 1 year  
Jyoti M.D. .... 2 years  
Ganesh L. .... 4 years



For cleantime celebration email us.

## "SELFLESS SERVICE IS OUR IDEAL"

The disease of addiction is our greatest strength because it brings us together, it also our greatest weakness because it tends to tear us apart. Our disease is one of obsessiveness and compulsivity; it is physical, mental and spiritual in nature. We recognize that there is a direct relationship between quality of service and personal recovery. We stress the need for each member involved in service to keep their personal recovery (physical, mental and spiritual) as their first priority. When individuals get distracted by their disease, fail or fall short in their service we treat them with compassion and love rather than rejection, exclusion or punitive action. We strive for progress and do not demand perfection of each other.