



**To:** Conference Participants  
**From:** World Board  
**Date:** 15 February 2009  
**Subject:** Self-Support Review & Input Drafts

## Hello from Your World Board

We are happy to present you with review drafts of the new self-support informational pamphlets. There are two IP drafts to review: a longer textual piece titled "Keeping It" on the principle of self-support and the importance of individual member contributions, and a shorter graphical piece called "Giving It Away" that is intended for groups and focused on the ways in which groups contribute and their participation in the NA fund flow. The World Board will offer these two pamphlets for approval at the 2010 World Service Conference to replace the existing IPs #24 and #25, "*Hey! What's the Basket For?*" and *Self-Support: Principle and Practice*, respectively. This cover memo will give you some background information on the drafts as well as some review-and-input questions to help guide your discussions.

## Project Background and Purpose

We first began publishing literature on the topic of self-support in the late 1980s. Our first pamphlet on self-support, IP #24, "*Hey! What's the Basket For?*", was published in 1988. Ten years later, that pamphlet had shown limited success in adequately raising awareness. In 1998 *Self-Support: Principle and Practice* was published, and a new fund flow model, by which groups would contribute directly to all other levels of service, was introduced to the fellowship. Still another decade has passed, and generally speaking, practices throughout the fellowship do not seem to have changed a great deal. Many of us are still contributing the same amount of money that we were when we first came to NA years or even decades ago, and most groups are still giving funds in excess of their expenses to the area service committees that they attend but not to any other level of the service structure.

How to ensure a consistent flow of funds to support NA services has been a major question since our earliest days. Since the inception of the fellowship issue discussion process, communities around the world have pointed to self-support as an issue of ongoing concern. In some cases, members haven't been reached with a message that calls them to consider the needs of the NA service system, and they continue to make minimal contributions as a function of habit. In other cases, members and groups are not inclined to consider greater contributions because they do not perceive much value in the services provided by the NA service system, up to and including those provided by world services. Whatever the case, the existing IPs on self-support do not seem to be working to raise member awareness or change patterns of behavior.

For this reason, the 2008 World Service Conference adopted the Self-Support project to produce updated and easier-to-understand pamphlets. This project has two main goals: to change the way the average member thinks about self-support and individual contributions, and to encourage groups to contribute directly to each level of service for a more stable fund flow that better covers the cost of services.

## What's in the Drafts

There are two IP drafts included in this review. The shorter piece, which is focused around four main graphics, is meant primarily as a short, easily understandable resource for groups. Of primary concern is reaching groups with the message that contributing directly to each level of service is necessary for the long-term viability of NA services. World services has never been fully supported by voluntary contributions, and many regions and areas do not fully support themselves in this way either, but it is the ideal to which we aspire. In support of that message, one of the panels in the piece features a graphic showing the percentage of NAWs expenses that is covered by fellowship contributions. If groups change their contribution methods, that ratio can change. Areas and regions also experience those gaps between expenses and contributions, and for groups to be able to contribute what is needed, members will also need to reconsider the amounts they give in meetings. The graphics also include a pie chart that illustrates a model for group contributions to each level of service. Those of you who are familiar with the existing IP #25 may notice that this proposed revision suggests just one of the three models proposed in *Self-Support: Principle and Practice*. After much discussion, the 50/25/25 model seemed like the best ideal and also the one most in line with the proportions suggested by other twelve-step organizations, most of which suggest at least a 30 percent contribution to the world level of service. Alongside the graphic is an explanation that the model is simply one possible method. Of course, as with any of the content in the proposed IPs, we are interested in your input. In addition to the illustrations and explanations, the piece includes a sample statement groups may use in meeting formats to help raise awareness of how important individual member contributions are.

The other piece out for review is a longer, textual piece, "Keeping It." This piece is not meant to be a comprehensive examination of our Seventh Tradition or of the principle of self-support in NA. As the piece points out, individual contributions from members are not the only source of funding for NA services, but they are the primary focus of the piece. There are other places in our recovery literature and service materials that we can go to for information about the Seventh Tradition and other related topics. The purpose of this pamphlet is to raise awareness and understanding of each member's personal role in supporting NA services, including some discussion of how doing so enriches our recovery. After all, if members' contributions remain the same, changing the way groups participate in the NA fund flow will be of limited benefit. As costs steadily rise all around the world, it is only by increasing member contributions that NA will be able to continue providing stable, reliable services in support of carrying our message.

## Review-and-Input Questions

These pamphlets will be of most use to the fellowship if they inspire change in the regular practices of members and groups. Sharing your personal reactions to the drafts will help make that possible.

### *Both Pieces*

1. What are your overall impressions of the drafts?
2. Are there any thoughts or ideas missing from these pieces that should be included, or any that have been included that should be elaborated upon? If so, what are they?
3. Please share with us what, if anything, in these pieces should be cut or omitted.

*Longer Textual Piece, "Keeping It"*

1. This draft is meant to express the importance of individual contributions and to clarify the ownership and responsibility that come with NA membership. What changes could be made to the draft to better communicate these ideas?
2. Would this piece influence you to change your contribution habits? If not, how could it be revised to better accomplish this?

*Shorter Graphical Piece, "Giving It Away"*

1. This draft is meant in part to illustrate the role of the group as part of NA as a whole and to convey the importance of group contributions to fund NA services. What changes could be made to the draft to better communicate these ideas?
2. Would this piece inspire your group to reconsider or change its contribution methods? If not, how could it be revised to better accomplish this?

**Deadline and Mailing Information**

Input is due **30 May 2009**

You can get project updates and submit input online at **<http://www.na.org/conference/>**.

Or send your input to:

**World Board  
19737 Nordhoff Place  
Chatsworth, CA 91311 USA**

Or email: **Worldboard@na.org**