

Who's Missing: Identification and Unity

As your world board, we've been focused on creating more and more ways for addicts to find and experience NA's message of recovery. We've been targeting literature to young addicts with the Youth IPs, planning for common needs events at the upcoming world convention in San Antonio, and listening to what members have said in fellowshipwide discussions about who's missing from their local NA communities. This is one of many articles addressing the Issue Discussion Topic of *Who's Missing*.



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discussion_
boards.htm](http://www.na.org/discussion_boards.htm)

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There will be resources available in this section to help you facilitate discussions, as well as information about submitting your input. These resources are routinely updated, so be sure to check back regularly for new information.

Identification...

This issue is important, because we repeatedly hear from professionals and others about addicts who do not identify when they come to NA. These potential members either go to another fellowship where they can find that initial identification, or they never find recovery. We probably cannot help all of them find recovery in NA, but we know that we can make a difference. Reaching young people is a great example of how these efforts make it possible for newcomers to see others like themselves when they come to NA. The result is that young people have undoubtedly been better able to find recovery in NA. Many of the members who get clean at young people's meetings eventually explore other meetings, serve in the service structure, and help create a diverse and unified fellowship.

Unity...

Many of us may have found the rooms of NA without these additional ways of identifying. It's also true that many of us eventually found certain groups where we could hear NA's message more easily because we were able to identify with the members there. And yet, for most of us, it is the unity we've experienced with other members—who may look or sound different from us—that we cherish.

We like to think of our efforts at addressing the question of who's missing as creating more ways for members to experience that unity. We often come to NA with a need to identify other faces and stories that seem to match our own. In our recovery, many of us find comfort in members who have faced challenges and experiences similar to our own. Yet, many of us have also experienced the powerful sense of unity that comes as another member from a completely different background touches our recovery and changes us forever.

Next steps...

We seem to be comfortable talking about efforts to reach youth and oldtimers. When it comes to other populations, however, such as Spanish-speaking members in the USA or gay and lesbian members, we seem to balk at talking about what we can do. As members who have a primary purpose to carry NA's message to other addicts, we each have to uncover the reasons why we might resist talking about ways to better reach these addicts.

We recognize that the need to identify with NA's message is crucial for many newcomers and that identification often comes from hearing the message in a voice to which we can relate. Our efforts to address the question of who's missing aren't meant to compromise our unity. Rather, we want to make it possible for more and more addicts to have a chance to experience that unity. How can we take the next steps in reaching more and more addicts who haven't yet had a chance to experience NA's message of hope? We cherish the unity that is the foundation of our ability to come together from a variety of backgrounds and share in NA's message of recovery. Our hope is that more and more addicts will continue to find NA, through a variety of ways, and have a chance to experience the unity and diversity many of us hold so dear.