

Fellowship Issue Discussions

As mentioned previously, the fellowship issue discussions project has continued to grow and evolve. In our workshops around the world that followed the conference, we conducted sessions on all three issue discussion topics, Building Strong Home Groups, Who Is Missing from Our Meetings and Why?, and Our Service System. This year marked an exciting new development. The input we collected from these workshops gave us a better understanding of the needs and concerns of our fellowship across the globe, so we processed that information to adjust our approach to each of the three topics. We published an article in the April *NA Way Magazine* that included the information we gathered, as well as a new tool created from your input. The “Building Strong Home Groups” worksheet and the accompanying “Qualities of a Strong Home Group” information sheet came directly from the information you gave us in workshops on that topic. We hope that you’ll make use of these tools in your groups and continue to send us your reactions.

In preparation for the 2008 World Service Conference, we have continued to collect input for all three issue discussion topics. Those topics include:

Building Strong Home Groups

Fellowship input on this topic led to the development of two new tools for groups to use. Members from around the world shared common ideas and understandings about what it means to have a strong home group. The “Qualities of a Strong Home Group” information sheet that appeared in the April 2007 *NA Way Magazine* is a collection of the ideas culled from the input we received. To help groups embody those qualities, we created the “Building Strong Home Groups” worksheet, a simple resource that outlines basic steps for growth as a group. This tool was modeled after the Area Planning Tool, a resource that came out of the *PR Handbook*. We hope to hear from groups about their experiences with these tools.



Concord, California



Who Is Missing from Our Meetings and Why?

Three themes emerged in this topic. First, different people are missing from each NA community. Second, some missing addicts never find NA. Third, if the missing addicts did find NA, they clearly didn't stay. The first step in each NA community is to look at the local population to find out who's missing. If the missing addicts never find NA in the first place, local service bodies can look at their outreach efforts. Our service bodies might not adequately reach certain demographic groups, or may not sufficiently dispel misunderstandings about what NA is or who NA is for. If these addicts find NA but don't stay, our groups and members can examine their efforts to welcome everyone. It might be that our behavior, or the behavior of people in our meetings, alienates some potential members. We might not be able to make every member feel equally welcome, but we can certainly do our best to not make anyone feel unwelcome.

In some ways, this challenge is a sign of our growth as a fellowship. We have done a lot to reach addicts in mainstream populations. We now have the chance to try to fill the gaps. As the base of our fellowship expands, the point of our freedom will continue to reach new heights. In upcoming workshops, we can work together to continue looking for local solutions.

Our Service System

Input on this topic fell into three main categories: maintaining an atmosphere of recovery in our service meetings, developing a leadership culture, and making good use of our resources. The first category is about find-

ing ways to have service bodies that are better examples of the spiritual growth our program offers. As a fellowship, we can explore ways to establish a warm, welcoming atmosphere in service meetings just as we do in recovery meetings. The second category, leadership, is essential for that goal. Members who live our program in their service efforts set a great example for others, especially newer trusted servants. Effective leadership based on spiritual principles will help make service attractive. This will help us improve in the final category—managing our resources. Our resources are usually spread thin. In addition to making service attractive, we need to raise awareness among our membership that financial contributions are needed to fund our services. Once we have the people and money to do our work, we need to make wise use of those valuable resources. Careful planning is crucial for that. Tools such as the Area Planning Tool and the Building Strong Home Groups Worksheet are ways to implement planning in our efforts.

We will continue to discuss these topics around the world in preparation for WSC 2008, and the *Conference Agenda Report* will include essays and questions to guide those discussions.