

Our Freedom, Our Responsibility

# Our Fellowship's Literature and Trademarks

The Fellowship of Narcotics Anonymous made the decision in 1993 to charge NA World Services with sole responsibility for publishing fellowship-approved literature and protecting NA copyrights and trademarks. This agreement is outlined by the *Fellowship Intellectual Property Trust*, which details the rights and responsibilities of the NA Fellowship and NAWS. These guidelines are spelled out in simpler terms in the *NA Intellectual Property Bulletins*:



- #1—*Internal Use of NA Intellectual Property*
- #2—*Individual NA Member Use of Narcotics Anonymous Trademarks*
- #4—*Reprinting NA Fellowship-Approved Literature*



NA literature and logos belong to the NA Fellowship, and the fellowship has made it a duty of NAWS to protect these trademarks and copyrights from intended or unintended misuse and abuse. Concerns about copyrights and trademarks are not about money or control. At NA World Services we strive to balance protecting the fellowship's property with the goal of providing useful resources and services to the fellowship. We are notified regularly by members, groups, and service bodies about infringements of fellowship copyrights. In some cases, members violate NA copyrights simply because they don't know any better. In other cases, people may not be happy with the decisions of the fellowship as a whole or may want to profit from misuse of NA property. When such issues are brought to our attention, we strive to resolve the matter as peaceably as we can. Every NA member can help us do the job we have been asked to do by not supporting any activities that misuse NA property.



Protecting the fellowship’s trademarks is often more difficult because misuse is difficult for our members to identify, and because NA members love NA memorabilia! We have tried to learn from some of AA’s experiences in no longer owning their triangle logo by ensuring that the NA name, logos, and service symbol continue to belong to, and their use be controlled by, the NA Fellowship. We have given broad parameters for any registered area or region to use the fellowship’s trademarks, and have granted licenses to vendors. We do this because trademark law requires that we use the logo in all classes of trademark registrations or lose our ownership. By licensing a vendor to produce NA jewelry, we retain control of and ownership of the fellowship’s trademarks for jewelry which we do not directly produce. Every member can help here by ensuring that merchandise purchased is produced by a registered service committee or a licensed vendor. It is also important to take care not to infringe on others’ trademarks, such as Harley-Davidson logos and Native American dream catchers.

In recent years, NA World Services has been working to better use Internet technology to facilitate greater availability of NA literature. We are challenged in that endeavor to strive for a level of security in these electronic versions in order to prevent copyright infringement. As we mentioned in the previous section, we now have available online informational pamphlets in thirty-six languages and two book-length pieces of recovery literature: the Sixth Edition Basic Text,

*Narcotics Anonymous*; and *It Works: How and Why*. We also went live this year with a popular service that was in high demand: a daily email service for *Just for Today* meditations. With the help of a former provider of this service who had stopped at our request, we have been able to put a system in place to put daily meditations into members’ email inboxes. Under the *FIPT*, groups and service committees do not have the authority to publish NA literature online. However, with so much literature now available online at the na.org website, we encourage local service committees with websites either to post links to those resources or to embed the files directly in your pages.

