

Our Freedom, Our Responsibility

Fellowship Issue Discussions

The process of fellowship issue discussions continues to grow and evolve, allowing us to continually strive to work better, both at local levels and as a worldwide organization. These discussions have also had an impact on the projects approved at the 2008 World Service Conference.

The theme for WSC 2008, and for this conference cycle, is “Our Freedom, Our Responsibility.” What we hope to emphasize is that simple principle laid out in our First Tradition: “Our common welfare should come first; personal recovery depends on NA unity.” The welfare of NA, now and in the future, is up to each of us.

There is no organization or outside enterprise taking care of us. And as stated in our Twelfth Step, the responsibility that comes with the gift of freedom we have received is to try to carry this message to addicts, and to practice these principles in all our affairs. Many of our biggest challenges seem to involve putting what we believe into action at every level. This includes taking the time to have a thorough, honest look at our home groups to see how we can improve, and being willing to step outside of our comfort zone and work extra hard to carry our message to addicts who may think that they don't belong here, because we know this program works. This also means that we need to exercise the courage to step up and try new ideas in our service system. As our Basic Text states, “We learn that we are growing when we make new mistakes instead of repeating old ones.”

The Issue Discussion Topics for the 2008–2010 cycle are *Building Communication*; *Our Freedom, Our Responsibility*; and *Leadership*. These topics all carry forward aspects from our discussions during previous conference cycles. Communication has been one of the important elements of our discussions on *Infrastructure* (2004–2006) and *Our Service System* (2006–2008). *Leadership* similarly has been a topic of fellowship-wide discussion for several conference cycles





now and continues to be a focus of our efforts throughout the service structure. The topic of responsibility has come up in response to the common refrain we've heard in discussions throughout the fellowship for years, that our service efforts in many places are hindered by apathy and a lack of participation.

We all need to begin to recognize our ownership of and responsibility for the success of NA in carrying our message and achieving our vision. By improving and diversifying our communications at every level, we can broaden awareness in the fellowship about what is happening in the NA service system. And by encouraging greater personal and collective responsibility for that service system, we can begin to develop an atmosphere of leader-

ship among our trusted servants, as well as an increased desire to support the work done on behalf of NA groups worldwide.

As we have done in the past, we will develop session profiles with step-by-step outlines to help members facilitate workshops on these topics. These profiles, information about the Issue Discussion Topics, and topic-oriented online discussion boards will all be available on our website at <http://www.na.org/IDT/IDT.htm>. As we did in 2006–2008, we will use fellowship input from the first half of the conference cycle to refocus these discussions mid-way through this conference cycle, so be sure to check back often and watch *The NA Way Magazine* for updates.

