



2006-2008 Fellowship Issue Discussions

Taking the next steps...

The Issue Discussion Topics for this conference cycle have come a long way in a short time. Your input helped us to take the next steps. Here is where we are with discussions up to this point.

Building Strong Home Groups

The Qualities of a Strong Home Group sheet is a collection of ideas about home groups that came from various input we've received so far. The Group Worksheet is a tool to help groups use planning and work to better embody those qualities. We look forward to hearing about your experiences with these tools. In upcoming workshops, we will do practice sessions with the Group Worksheet.

Who Is Missing from our Meetings and Why?

Three themes emerged in this topic. ① Different people are missing from each NA community. ② Some missing addicts never find NA. ③ 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 demographics, 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: bringing recovery into our service system, developing a leadership culture, and making good use of our resources.

The first issue deals with having dysfunctional service committees, in spite of the fact that our program involves spiritual growth. In the spirit of "attraction, not promotion," we can explore ways to establish the same atmosphere in our service meetings that we try to create in recovery meetings.

Leadership plays a strong role in establishing a warm, welcoming atmosphere in service. Members who are strong in recovery and service set a great example for others. We become stronger leaders when we live the principles of recovery in all of our affairs, especially NA service. As we become stronger leaders and encourage others to do the same, service will continue to become more attractive.

Our resources are usually spread thin and we struggle to manage them well. On one hand, we need to find ways to encourage greater support for our service efforts—people, time, energy, and money. Beyond greater self-support, we need to make the best use of our resources. Planning is one place to begin. The Area Planning Tool, and now the Group Worksheet, can help us get started with planning.

In upcoming workshops, discussions on these areas for growth will help us explore ways to put solutions into action.



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Taking the next steps...

Building Strong Home Groups

Input on this topic led to two new group tools. The first is the “Qualities of a Strong Home Group” sheet. This sheet includes ideas from members around the world about what it means to have a strong home group. To help groups strengthen those qualities, we created the “Building Strong Home Groups Worksheet,” a simple resource that outlines basic steps for growth as a group. Use it in your groups and let us know what you think.

Building Strong Home Groups Worksheet This tool will help you find and discuss ways to improve your efforts to carry the message. Download it with the group qualities sheet at http://www.na.org/discussion_boards.htm.

Who is Missing from Our Meetings and Why Questions

for Service Bodies

If there are segments of the local population that never seem to be exposed to NA, then we need to look at our local service efforts for solutions.

1. What public relations gaps or misconceptions about NA in our community can our service bodies work to resolve?
2. What outreach work can we do to spread the word about NA to potential members?

for Groups and Members

Our program has something to offer everyone. Let's make sure that *our fellowship* does, too.

3. As a member, what personal efforts can I make (and encourage other members to make) to reach out to different types of people?
4. What changes can we make at a group level to make sure that we do not alienate members of any background, but instead welcome all?

Our Service System Questions

for Atmosphere of Recovery in Service

Let us know what you are doing or could do to bring recovery into service. Be creative!

1. What steps do you or could you take, as individual members, to bring personal recovery into your service efforts?
2. What actions do your committees and service bodies take or could they take to promote an atmosphere of recovery?

for Leadership

The goal of strong leadership in NA is to encourage others to become leaders, too.

3. How can we improve the understanding of the roles and responsibilities for each service position?
4. How can we better train, mentor, and support our trusted servants or potential trusted servants?

for Planning and Self-Support

Area Planning Tool We urge you to use the APT to bring planning into your service efforts. Download it at <http://www.na.org/handbooks/handbook-index.htm>

5. How have you implemented planning in your local service efforts?
6. What local efforts have helped or could help you address lack of human and financial resources to become fully self-supporting?



Building Strong Home Groups Worksheet



This worksheet is meant to help NA members strengthen their home groups. Use it in your group business meetings to find ways to grow and improve. The idea of longer business meetings isn't always appealing. If needed, the group can schedule an extra business meeting or have a get-together on a separate day. In a spirit of giving, a little extra time goes a long way to strengthen the group so it can better carry the message. To make the process quick and smooth, hand out copies of this sheet in advance and try to get as many group members as possible involved. The worksheet includes a list of home group qualities in three categories on the back of this page.

1 Identify Areas for Group Improvement

For each category (*see list on the back of this page*), members can choose one or two items the group can improve, before or during the business meeting. Compare lists or vote. Address the top issues, one at a time.

2 State the Issues

The group should briefly discuss what needs to be improved in each area they chose, one at a time. Remember, keep it simple! Don't get too wrapped in the problem; move into the solution.

3 Brainstorm Solutions

As a group, discuss solution ideas. Remember, there are no bad ideas and there is no need to debate. One idea that won't work might lead to another that will. Focus on ways to make progress; don't worry about being perfect. Small improvements are better than no improvements.

4 Choose the Solutions

Choose the ideas that most members agree on. If needed, this can be done by a simple vote.

5 Make Decision(s)

From the brainstorming, look for simple, practical actions the group can take to implement the solutions. Be specific about *who* will carry out the action, and *how* it should be done.

Example

Area for improvement: Practices – Public Relations

The issue: meeting facility complains about noise and mess after our meetings, and they never know who to talk to about the problem.

Brainstorming/choosing the solutions (votes):

- let people know about noise (2)
- announce in meeting format (5)
- also mention trash/cig butts (3)
- have someone stay to clean up (5)
- give the facility phone numbers (4)
- have someone check in monthly (5)

Decisions:

- Add statement to meeting format about keeping noise and mess down.
- Group secretary will give facility our contact info and check in monthly.
- Get a “clean-up” person each month to make sure we don't leave a mess.

Ideals	Principles demonstrated by the group and its members
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Consistency and Commitment – People can count on our meeting and trusted servants. <input type="checkbox"/> Spirit of Service – Members serve willingly with gratitude for NA. <input type="checkbox"/> Benefits of Service – Trusted servants demonstrate growth that comes with service. <input type="checkbox"/> Principles in Action – Members live NA principles and share about them in our meetings. <input type="checkbox"/> Positive Perspective – The group and members dream big and share our successes. <input type="checkbox"/> Intimacy and a Sense of Home – We help all members feel like a part of the fellowship. <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____
Practices	How strong home groups operate
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Safe and Positive Environment – Our format keeps us focused on recovery. <input type="checkbox"/> Teaching Principles – The group discusses the steps, traditions, and literature. <input type="checkbox"/> Self-Support – Members give time and resources freely to support the message. <input type="checkbox"/> Good Public Relations – Our group reflects well on NA as a whole. <input type="checkbox"/> Encourage Diversity – The meeting reaches all newcomers and welcomes them home. <input type="checkbox"/> Nurture All Members – Group members are supportive and challenge each other to grow. <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____
Roles	How a group interacts with NA and the community
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Evolves with Members – Members’ personal growth strengthens the group. <input type="checkbox"/> Establishes a Network – Our group puts newcomers in touch with experienced members. <input type="checkbox"/> Gateway to Service – Members introduce newcomers into group service, then beyond. <input type="checkbox"/> Model of Service – Our group prepares trusted servants to work well at other levels. <input type="checkbox"/> Unity and Credibility – We work with other groups and ASC in a spirit of cooperation. <input type="checkbox"/> Positive Message – Group members are an example of NA changing lives for the better. <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____

Group Notes (use extra paper if necessary)

- ① **Area for improvement** _____
- ② **The issue** _____

- ③ **Brainstorming** _____

- ④ **Choosing the solutions** _____

- ⑤ **Decisions** _____

