

*(From the 1998 Draft Public Relations Handbook, Chapter 4)*

**PI Presentations**

A PI presentation occurs whenever two or more members of the PI committee appear in front of a group from the public, and inform it about NA. Sometimes a PI presentation is part of a panel in which NA is one organization of many invited by the public organization. Sometimes a PI presentation is in a closed setting such as a classroom or for members of a civic organization. Sometimes a PI presentation is at a public event and people may be coming and going throughout the presentation.

A PI presentation is a direct way to inform the public about NA. Your committee may respond only to requests which come before it, or it may have a more organized project protocol in which a presentation coordinator sends letters to public organizations informing them that speakers are available. Whenever your committee comes in contact with an organization, offer to do a presentation if the resources are available. Some committees have several presentation coordinators specializing in different types of presentations such as those for schools, the military, professional organizations, and public organizations. Some PI committees maintain on-going PI presentations for staff, clients, or families of clients in locations where their H&I committee has meetings.

**Preparation**

To develop a budget for your committee, determine:

- a) how many presentations you plan to do during the year (or month)
- b) which literature you may want to distribute
- c) how much the literature will cost
- d) cost of copies and postage for letters informing the public that we have speakers available

Requests may come in through the phonenumber or through your area's mailing address. It is important to develop a contingency plan so this information is directed to the PI committee quickly. The presentation coordinator should respond promptly and begin collecting information about date, time, audience, and other needs .

The presentation coordinator often needs to inform the requesting organization what we do and do not do in our presentations. Sometimes it becomes clear in this initial contact that the organization does not want the kind of presentation we offer. It may be necessary to not do a presentation if what we do and what they want do not match. For example: Sometimes teachers want us to give a presentation telling students our personal stories, scaring the students,

and convincing them to not use drugs. The presentation coordinator would explain that we are a recovery organization, not a prevention organization and that we will talk about recovery in NA and how to find us if the students, or someone they know, decide they have a problem, not our personal using histories. Sometimes the caller will decide that they do want our presentation. Sometimes the presentation coordinator will determine that we cannot do the kind of presentation they want and we will pass on the request. It is better to pass on an opportunity, or schedule it for a later date, than to go unprepared.

It may be necessary for the coordinator to explain a little about our process. Some committees do not do any presentations until each one has been brought before the committee and voted upon. Other committees delegate authority to the coordinator to set up presentations and proceed. The organization should be told what kind of time frame to expect. Explain that we are a volunteer organization and the coordinator will have to determine if any volunteers are available for the time the organization would like a presentation. It might be a good idea to get several different time and date options. Sometimes the coordinator declines an opportunity because there is not enough time to prepare.

Some committees keep a supply of literature available, others order literature specifically for each presentation. Some committees have general training sessions for all volunteers and a special meeting before each presentation to discuss the audience, any special information to be presented, and how the presentation will be divided between the volunteers.

It is often helpful to develop specific guidelines for volunteers using material from this handbook. Most committees have found the two most important parts of presentations are training and practice. Some committees use experienced members to train new members giving them additional practice doing presentations themselves. Some committees require new volunteers to attend one or two presentations as an observer prior to being a presenter. Some committees use newer member reading during the presentation, but only experienced members during the question and answer period.

The committee should review both the language of the letter and the detail of the mailing list. It is not a good idea to send letters to all names on the mailing list at once because we are usually not prepared to do a large number of presentations at one time. Some areas might target different categories at different times of the year. Others might send letters to several organizations in each of several categories each month. Volunteers should be trained to do the presentations before the coordinator tries to solicit opportunities to do presentations.

It takes research to learn about the agencies and organizations we might contact. Some areas rely solely on the phone book in order to get their initial information, and then send letters. Some areas make phone calls first to

determine if there is any interest and find out who the best contact person is. After a contact person or department has been determined, a letter of introduction with some literature about the program is sent. Some areas follow up with a telephone call. It is very important to have a professional demeanor in our approach.

### **Guidelines for Presentations**

Following are some suggestions that areas use as guidelines for their presentation volunteers. Your area or region may develop some additional guidelines.

Be prepared. All the volunteers should know about:

- a) the Steps and Traditions
- b) the audience
- c) the format to be used for this presentation
- d) each volunteer's part in the presentation
- e) where and when the presentation is, and how to get there
- f) who the contact person is at the facility
- g) where the presentation group will meet prior to the presentation

Each volunteer should:

- a) Have sufficient resources available.
- b) Know who the PI, H&I, ASC and other contact people are if needed for follow-up
- c) Know what literature will be distributed and who will be bringing it

Some areas use a professional booth at presentations, while other areas donate a Basic Text to all school and church libraries after presentations.

Match volunteers to the audience, but also provide diversity. A presentation to students might be comprised of mostly young people, but older people can participate too. If possible, have men and women (unless inappropriate for the audience).

Never go alone. Some areas send at least three people to each presentation to ensure that at least two arrive. We want to make sure no one person is speaking for NA and make sure correct information is being given about NA.

Dress appropriately and neatly. Many areas develop guidelines for their speakers. It is important to ensure our dress does not imply an endorsement of any organization or fellowship (this includes NA). Be careful not only of clothing, but also of jewelry that might endorse a religious group, other fellowship, musical group, or other outside organization. Make sure the clothing

is appropriate for the audience. We might dress up more for a presentation to a professional organization and more casually for a high school or employee assistance program at a manufacturing plant. See the Sample section of this Handbook for more specific recommendation about appropriate dress.

Know our literature and understand the traditions. Some volunteers read *The Little White Book* for themselves before each presentation. The answers to most questions can be found there. It is not necessary, but you can't go wrong if you accurately quote the literature.

Emphasize that the only requirement for membership is the desire to stop using.

Always mention that our program is free. We are totally self-supporting through our own contributions and we pass a basket at meetings, but everyone is welcome even if they don't have any money.

Don't break the anonymity of any member of the audience you might know from the NA program.

Point out that NA isn't exclusive to one kind of addict; but to anyone who believes he/she might have a problem. Explain that meetings listed as open on the schedule are open to the public and members of the public may attend to find out what a meeting is like or they may bring a friend with a problem.

Always avoid controversy and do not make a statement about a public issue or give your personal opinion. Even if the speaker says *This is just my personal opinion* it will always be connected in the mind of the listener with NA.

Don't refer people to outside agencies or other fellowships. Don't speak for outside agencies or other fellowships. During a PI presentation, you can say that's not what we're here to talk about today if questions come up. Direct the person to that organization for answers about them.

Don't break your anonymity by using your last name or alluding to geographical area or profession. This is important for several reasons:

- a) to protect your own anonymity
- b) to let the listening audience know that their anonymity will be protected. If the speaker is using their full name, a still suffering addict might be afraid that they too will be expected to stand up and give personal information about themselves if they become a member of our fellowship
- c) it reminds us that we are more important than me and that a PI presentation is about NA, not about the individual speaker. We tell NA's story, not our personal story.
- d) the spirit of anonymity is the sacrifice of personal ambition
- e) Don't argue with those whose views differ from those of NA.

- f) Don't accept contributions from sources outside of NA.
- g) Be early to avoid being late.

Keep your presentation short and the question and answer period long. The presentation should cover the most important points, not every point. The balance of the presentation will be completed during the questions and answers. This not only keeps the audience involved in the presentation, but it makes sure they get the information most important to them. Sometimes it is hard for the audience to begin asking questions, and after a short silence the presenter might say, Lots of times we are askedÉ . And then answer that question.

Practice, practice, practice. In the resource section of this Handbook is a list of questions areas have been asked at presentations. Volunteers should know how to answer these questions and stay within the 12 traditions of NA. Some areas use the list of potential questions as a training tool and discuss one of the questions and possible answers at each PI meeting. Some areas will use a panel of volunteers for the presentation and have the newer members do the presentation and the experienced members answer the questions. Sometimes we do not answer the questions directly, but bridge the question to an answer that gives information about NA.

For example: An often asked question is, What drugs did you use? An answer might be It's not important what drugs I used. The important thing about Narcotics Anonymous, and one of the things I like best about Narcotics Anonymous, is that it doesn't matter what drugs we used, everyone is welcome in Narcotics Anonymous. I know people that used every drug they could get their hands on and others that only smoked marijuana or drank alcohol so it really isn't important what drugs we used. It is only important that drugs had become a problem for us and we meet regularly to help each other stop using and find new ways to live.

Avoid NA language, acronyms, and slang. This takes training and practice. When we come to NA, we begin to use a new language, a language not understood by the public. When doing a PI presentation, it is important to use language better understood by the public. Your committee will probably find some examples to add to the list below.

<b>Avoid saying...</b>	<b>Instead useÉ</b>
NA	Narcotics Anonymous
Clean	Drug free
I am an addict	I am a <i>recovering</i> addict
PI	Public Information
H&I	Hospitals & Institutions
"Hit bottom"	Reach a point of desperation...
"Fix"	Use drugs
"Hit"	Use drugs
ripping and running	Crime
B and Es	Crime

At the end of the presentation, ask if all the questions have been answered.

A follow up thank you letter is always a good idea. It lets the facility's officials know that you were grateful for the opportunity to speak to them. This additional contact may be useful in the future when attempting to set up additional presentations. Always remember to include your area's (or region's) address and phone number, so they will know where to reach NA. We are not a secret organization.

### **General outlines for presentations**

Some areas have developed specific scripts for presentations. This is often very helpful for new volunteers, and it can also help keep the message at presentations consistent. If your committee uses a script, the volunteers should practice reading it until it flows naturally. There are some sample scripts in the Resource section of this Handbook you may wish to adopt or use as guides. Here is a brief outline you may use to develop your presentations.

- a) Introduce the presenters and describe the outline of the presentation.  
*Example:* My name is \_\_\_\_\_. We are recovering addicts in the program of Narcotics Anonymous. John and Mary will be briefly presenting some information about our program and then I will join them in answering your questions.
- b) Each person should introduce himself or herself as a recovering addict.
- c) Describe the literature which is available that day and state that it is free.
- d) Give the appropriate phonenumber as contact information. Mention the listing in the phone book.
- e) Mention our books and information pamphlets that are available, that they are available on audio tape, in Braille, in large print, and in several

- different languages. Bring order forms and explain how they can purchase them.)
- f) Give a brief history of NA and current availability of meetings locally.
  - g) Describe Narcotics Anonymous.
  - h) Speak briefly on the subject, What is addiction? Some areas read Am I an Addict or a set of questions modified for students and pause to give the audience time to think about them. Emphasize that you are not looking for a show of hands in answer to the questions; audience members should answer them only for themselves.
  - i) Briefly discuss our Twelve Steps as tools to help us learn to live without drugs.
  - j) Briefly discuss the topic, Life after drugs.
  - k) Repeat the fact that NA is free and describe, again, the various ways to find us.
  - l) Questions and answers.

### **PI Presentations and Personal Stories:**

A straight PI presentation does not use any personal stories. A split PI presentation uses a brief personal story as part of the overall PI presentation. . Some areas only use split pitches when they are specifically requested by the outside agency.

In most situations we do not use personal stories with PI presentations for the following reasons:

- a) We don't need to qualify ourselves as addicts by giving personal examples. If we say we are recovering addicts, the public will believe us.
- b) They didn't call asking about us, they called asking about NA. That is the information we should give them. Sometimes the places which want us to tell our personal stories want a message of the dangers of drugs, or a scare story for their students. That is not what NA is about or what we do. We are a program of recovery, and that is our message.
- c) With students, a personal story may have the opposite effect. No matter how careful we are, personal stories tend to glamorize using. They may see us today, hear our story, and believe that they too can do the things we did and then get clean. A short pitch will not be enough time to adequately convey the pain of addiction and the struggle to get clean.
- d) Professionals have a limited amount of time and are generally not interested in spending it listening to our personal stories. They want facts and information about NA.

- e) Very little will be remembered about any presentation, maybe about 10%. We want the audience to remember the important parts about NA, not our personal story. We want them to remember who we are, what we do, and how to find us.

When using a split pitch

- a) It should be very generic and focus on recovery. It should be:
  1. non-drug specific
  2. non-crime specific
  3. non-gang related
  4. non-prison related
- a) In addition to being generic about the using part of the story, the recovery part of the story should be generic as well. Don't discuss your job, your family, your address or social position except in the most general of terms.

Example: When I was using drugs no one was happy to see me except my drug-using friends. Narcotics Anonymous has taught me how to repair the damage I did in the past with my friends and family, and how to build new relationships with people who do not use drugs.)

Example: When I was using I couldn't hold a job or keep a place to live. After sleeping on the couches of friends, I ended up in homeless shelters and finally on the streets. Narcotics Anonymous has taught me how to live my life without the use of drugs. By continuing to follow the principles of Narcotics Anonymous, I have become a productive member of society. I have a job and have been in the same apartment for several years now.)

- b) Make the personal story in a split-pitch format a minor part of the overall presentation. Remember the focus of the presentation is NA: who we are, what we do, and how to find us. The personal story should not take more than 10-15 minutes.
- c) The speaker for a split pitch needs to be experienced with regular PI presentations and chosen carefully. The PI committee should make sure he or she clearly understands the difference between a PI split-pitch presentation and a personal story at a regular NA meeting or H&I panel.
- d) It is wise to set up special training sessions about how to tell your personal story during a PI presentation, how to stay within a 10-15-minute time limit, and how to tell the whole story without telling all the details.
- e) Remember: the public will believe you are an addict just because you say you are. They don't believe someone would say that if it weren't true. The important part of your story to the public is that you are a recovering



addict. Don't use the 10-15 minutes telling what it was like, let them know how it is different now.

### **What to Bring; What to Handout**

Some areas have very formal presentations, others are more casual. You might consider bringing the following to use in your visual presentation:

- a) PI booth to give a professional appearance and show a variety of literature
- b) Basic Text in a variety of languages to show our international diversity
- c) It Works - How and Way and Just For Today to show our other books
- d) Phonenumber poster
- e) Steps and Traditions Posters
- f) Just For Today Video

Most presentations use some core literature for all presentations and then some additional literature specific to the audience.

NA literature has been translated into various languages; that fact helps us show that Narcotics Anonymous is a worldwide fellowship and can be a useful tool in our public information work. You may want to take some translated materials if members of your audience may speak other languages.

Here are some examples of literature which may be translated for use in public information:

- a) Narcotics Anonymous, A Resource in Your Community.
- b) Facts about Narcotics Anonymous.
- c) Narcotics Anonymous- A Commitment to Community Partnership.
- d) IP #1: Who, What, How and Why
- e) Little White Book
- f) IP #7: Am I an Addict?

You can obtain a complete a complete current list of translated literature from the World Service Office (WSO).

Here follows a short list which is useful for most presentations. In the next section in which we discuss different presentation locations, additional literature will be suggested.

- a) IP #1: Who, What, How and Why or The Little White Book
- b) IP# 7: Am I An Addict?
- c) Local meeting directory
- d) Literature order form (to the agency contact only)

- e) Worldwide Phonenumber directory, as available from the WSO (for reference only)

A special note about literature order forms: In several of the sections below we suggest giving the audience a literature form as well. We recommend you use the World Service Office or a Regional Service Office literature order form. Most area committees are not prepared for sales to outside organizations and do not have professional-quality order forms for PI to use.

A special note about the Just For Today video: The video may be useful in your presentations, but it may take up too much time and not leave enough time for questions and answers. You might want to show a portion of the video during your presentation and then leave it for a few days for the staff to review in full. The staff at different facilities might want to purchase the video for their own future use and training. Information should be available on how they can order the video from the World Service Office or your local regional office.

### **Specific information about organizations**

This section contains some ideas about approaching different organizations for a PI presentation. Remember to refer to the preceding section for information about presentations in general. This section supplements that information. Refer to the Sample section of this Handbook for letter you may use to introduce the fellowship when making your initial contacts. For each type of organization it provides:

- a) a description
- b) suggestions on who to contact
- c) additional literature which might be appropriate
- d) special notes about the audience

### **Employee Assistance Programs**

Employee assistance programs are human resource services available to employees from various large private and government employers.

Contact:

- a) Employee assistance program director or coordinator
- b) Human resource personnel
- c) Substance abuse counselor or coordinator

Your presentations could be to staff who might refer employees to NA, or to employees at workshops or health fairs put on by the employee assistance department.

For staff – additional literature:

- a) For Those in Treatment
- b) NA presentation papers (see resource section of this Handbook)
- c) NA - A Resource in Your Community
- d) Recovery and Relapse
- e) Literature order forms for region or world offices

Focus on how we find ongoing recovery and support with the NA program. We must present a professional-quality presentation. Remember, these are people who will be making referrals to NA. Tell them how to find us and how to get up-to-date meeting information. Some areas will give staff a sample of literature or the Introduction Guide to NA and order forms. Make sure they understand what we don't do. We don't run hospitals or recovery programs. We have no paid social workers. We do not pay for treatment for addicts. Point out any meetings that might be close to their location during an employee's lunch hour.

For employees – additional literature

- a) For Those in Treatment
- b) NA - A Resource in Your Community
- c) Recovery and Relapse

The presentation may be to a group of employees already identified with drug problems, or to a large group of employees for general information. Find out which kind of group you are addressing and tailor the presentation to the audience. If your presentation is to a general audience, suggest to them that they might want to pick up some literature for a friend. This gives them an ability to remain anonymous in the work setting.

### **Schools**

Any educational institution dedicated to teaching and learning. There are four distinct groups within the schools category; each one requires different considerations:

- a) middle and high school students
- b) college students
- c) parents
- d) teachers and staff.

### **Students in Middle and High Schools (Secondary School)**

Some areas concentrate only on high school students. Others reach out to the lower grades. Some give presentations to high schools, but will respond to requests from elementary and middle schools.

Contact:

- a) Health teachers
- b) Counselors
- c) School Nurse
- d) Principals

Some committees have found it helpful to contact the district administrative office to find out the most appropriate staff people to contact at the different schools.

Additional Literature:

- a) Youth in Recovery

Many areas find it effective to have their presentation team made up of young people. Some areas ask the students attending their presentations to write what they think NA is and does: before and after the presentation. Collecting this anonymous evaluation can help the presentation team learn if they are being effective. The most important information for students seems to be that NA is free, that anyone is welcome, that a phonenumber is available, and that we are listed in the phone book. Let them know we are not there to tell any of them they have a problem with drugs, only that NA is available should they need it in the future for themselves or someone they know.

Some areas request the teacher leave the room during the question and answer period. The student's often ask very different questions when the teacher is present. This format should be arranged before the beginning of the presentation during a private conversation with the teacher. Some teachers will not feel comfortable with this. Remember, we are guests in the classroom, and the teacher's decision should not be questioned; they know their students best. Some presentations pass a basket for the students to put written questions in so they are not embarrassed by having to raise their hands. This also gives the NA volunteers the ability to discard inappropriate questions. Sometimes the volunteers can reuse good questions from other classes, or use them later for volunteer training sessions.

Many areas take this opportunity to donate a Basic Text to the school library. They let the students know it will be there for them if they want more information. Some areas leave meeting directories with the school nurse or librarian. Make these arrangements before giving the presentation so you can refer the students to those locations. Is not a good idea to leave meeting directories unless you have a mailing list project that will send updated meeting directories. Phonenumber referrals are simpler option.

Many areas find it helpful to put the literature on each student's desk so individuals don't call attention to themselves by coming up after the

presentation to get it. We then ask the students to keep it until the day someone they know needs it.

If your area has meetings for young people, make sure to point out those meetings.

Leave literature order forms with interested staff members.

### **College or University Students**

College presentations to general health classes or student groups should be handled much like a high school presentation. Classes where the students are training to go into a particular profession in which they might refer addicts to NA need a different type of presentation. In these circumstances, please refer later in this Handbook to the type of presentation you would give to the professional in their specific field for additional information.

Contact:

- a) Guidance counselors
- b) Health department
- c) Student services
- d) Law enforcement or law departments
- e) Medical departments (science majors such as Biology, Chemistry, Physics, etc.)
- f) Psychology or counseling departments
- g) Campus organizations or affiliations

Some college students speak language(s) other than our own. Find out ahead of time if there is a large number of students which speak a common second language, and try to bring literature in that language.

Visual aides can be a great tool for presenting information, i.e., the "Just for Today" video. Make your presentation very brief, students will want a lot of time for questions. Explain that they can attend open NA meetings to get a first-hand experience of our program. Let them know that they can also contact the PI committee if they want additional information.

If your area has meetings for young people, make sure to point out those meetings.

### **Parents**

This will usually be at a parent/teacher meeting in the evening.

Contact:

- a) Parent/teacher association at the school

- b) Parent/Teacher Association staff liaison
- c) District or county association or offices
- d) Principal

Additional Literature:

- a) Youth in Recovery
- b) NA - A Resource in Your Community
- c) Recovery and Relapse
- d) Welcome to Narcotics Anonymous
- e) Literature order forms

Often NA is part of a panel. Presentations to parents are sensitive, because they may be looking for a place to fix their children. In the spirit of cooperation, not affiliation, you might let Nar-Anon's PI committee know of the presentation and they might be included in the panel.

Many times the presentation speakers may have children of their own. It is very important to not share how they deal with their own children and drugs. That is a personal opinion that does not represent the program of NA. Remember, personal opinions will be remembered by the audience as opinions of NA members.

Invite parents to attend an open meeting so they can see for themselves what our meetings are like. They may be afraid to allow their children to go to a place where drug addicts meet. Don't promise them it will be safe. Encourage them to go and see for themselves. Recommend that the parents pre-arrange transportation to and from the meeting for their children.

If your area has meetings for young people, make sure to point out those meetings.

**Teachers and staff**

Contact:

- a) Principals
- b) Guidance counselors
- c) Librarians
- d) Attendance clerk
- e) Health teachers
- f) Student services
- g) School board

#### Additional Literature:

- a) Recovery and Relapse
- b) Sponsorship
- c) NA - A Resource in Your Community
- d) Youth in Recovery
- e) Another Look
- f) NA presentation papers
- g) Literature order forms

It is important to present the information we normally give to students and then, present additional information, specifically targeted to educational staff. They have different priorities and questions than their students, and will want to know more about the structure of our fellowship and our method of recovery. Let them know we have speakers available for student classes or student groups.

The possibility of establishing a meeting in the school might come up. Don't volunteer to do this unless you are prepared to continue working with the school in order to maintain the meeting. Some areas work with their H&I committees to make these kinds of arrangements. While this situation doesn't fall within the traditional H&I guidelines, it shares the characteristic with conventional H&I meetings that it often can't be open to the public. In some places, Outreach committees might help to arrange a meeting on a high school campus. Regulations about non-students on campus, however, can be an issue. Perhaps one or two members of the fellowship might serve as Secretary and GSR. Often there are school regulations about raising money, so the Seventh Tradition collection might not be permitted; this may be another reason to consider this situation an H&I meeting. Although high school students are not confined to campus, sometimes the evening meetings we have are not available to them because of the time factor.

If your area has meetings for young people, make sure to point out those meetings

#### **Helping Professions (Medical, Therapeutic, Clergy, Social Services)**

Those in the helping professions may refer their clients to NA for help. Our presentations vary widely, depending on the specialty and their reason for referring people to NA. Presentations may be done at a single facility, or with professional associations. The phone book is a good place to start your research.

**Contact:**

Medical

- a) Emergency room staff
- b) Hospital human resources departments
- c) Paramedic organizations
- d) Doctor and nursing associations
- e) Therapeutic
- f) Psychologists or psychiatrists
- g) therapists
- h) drug counselors
- i) residential drug and alcohol treatment centers
- j) drug abuse counseling agencies
- k) chemical dependency hospital units
- l) addiction research centers

Clergy

- a) ordained leaders
- b) lay leadership
- c) professional clerical organizations
- d) religious counseling centers

Social Services

- a) child protective services
- b) Public assistance departments
- c) general nonprofit relief organizations
- d) social security office

Additional Literature:

- a) *Another Look*
- b) *Recovery and Relapse*
- c) *In Times of Illness*
- d) *NA - A Resource in Your Community*
- e) *Youth in Recovery*
- f) NA presentation papers



- g) Literature order forms
- h) Audio versions of the Basic Text and IPs

The "Just for Today" video might be appropriate for professionals and they may want to purchase a copy to use with their clients..

It is important for them to know what we do and do not do. A long question and answer period will help make sure they get the information they need. Some of these professionals might want to be added to a mailing list to receive updated meeting directories if your area is working on that project. Emphasize the fact that we are free.

The pamphlet Am I An Addict and phoneline cards or lists are most helpful for reaching addicts and making referrals. The addicts with whom these professionals deal may have trouble reading or may be illiterate. Be sure to express the availability of certain types of our literature on audio tape.

Remember, we are not in competition with the professionals. We do not replace what they do. Some may have a different view of addiction. Don't argue with them. They may be confused by our program of complete abstinence from all drugs. They may misunderstand and think that means medication. Some members of our fellowship require medication for physical or mental ailments. This is outside the scope of our fellowship and certainly they can recover and learn to leave drug-free (not medication-free) lives and establish stable, productive lifestyles. It may be helpful for all presentation volunteers to read the Chapter More Will Be Revealed in the Basic Text and the In Times of Illness pamphlet prior to a presentation to helping professionals.

Some professionals believe that all Twelve-step programs as being the same and we may need to explain how we are different. This is a good opportunity to explain why we identify ourselves simply as addicts. It can help their clients to better fit into our environment if they understand the meaning behind our language.

It may also be important to explain about our traditions of non-affiliation. For example, some areas have had problems with recovery homes advertising their events as an NA function, treatment centers regulating how NA meetings should be conducted in their facilities, facilities offering monetary compensation or favors to meetings and/or members to promote that particular facility, or addiction researchers soliciting NA members to participate in some type of study by handing out flyers during meetings or at functions.

When addressing treatment professionals, discuss our Seventh Tradition and the way in which our meetings are self-supporting; they can then pass this information along to their clients. The literature and coffee distributed at meetings is paid for by donations from our members. It has occasionally been necessary to discontinue meetings at locations in which they are overwhelmed

by vans of treatment-center newcomers who do not contribute to the Seventh Tradition collection. It is important to explain that everyone is welcome, but we do have costs for literature, chips, refreshments, and rent.

It may be helpful to explain the following characteristics of NA meeting etiquette:

- a) different meeting formats
- b) the concept of raising our hands to share
- c) no cross talk or problem solving for others
- d) the Seventh Tradition
- e) anonymity
- f) what is said in a meeting stays in a meeting
- g) we share our recovery in NA with NA literature
- h) we don't discuss outside organizations (like treatment centers) or outside events.

It might also be helpful to discuss the suggestions we give at the end of our meetings:

- a) Come to 90 meetings in 90 days.
- b) Read or listen to some NA literature every day.
- c) Get phone numbers and use them.
- d) Get a sponsor, learn to work the steps, and don't use drugs.

Any presentation given at a treatment facility should also include members from your H&I committee in order to help answer questions about H&I meetings which might be asked. The possibility of establishing a regular NA meeting in the facility might also come up; therefore members of the PI committee should know the area's contingency plan and policy for helping new meetings to get started.

When addressing clergy, we should emphasize the spiritual principles of the program such as honesty, open-mindedness, willingness, compassion, integrity, responsibility, accountability, acceptance, humility, forgiveness, and making amends. One of the most-asked questions from this group involves our affiliation with religious organizations and our definition of God. Keep in mind that NA is a spiritual program based on spiritual principles and we have no opinions about a God other than the importance to find a Higher Power which works for a particular individual's recovery.

Many professionals are in contact with addicts on a regular basis. Many of us at one time or another have found ourselves needing assistance. Our intention is

to inform these professionals about Narcotics Anonymous and make information available to the addicts through those who work closely with them.

### **Government Agencies**

Government agencies are designed to administer the use of public funds to support and enhance services in the community. In some countries the government plays different roles, particularly in relationship with NA. In some countries NA meetings must be registered with the government. Sometimes government officials will introduce NA to the country.

Contact:

- a) city councils
- b) county or district supervisors
- c) state or provincial legislatures
- d) state, provincial, or national boards of education
- e) state or provincial department of alcohol and drug programs
- f) elected officials
- g) departments that deal with addiction or laws regulating addicts

### **Additional Literature**

- a) Recovery and Relapse
- b) Sponsorship
- c) NA - A Resource in Your Community
- d) Youth in Recovery
- e) Another Look
- f) NA presentation papers
- g) Literature order forms

This group is interested in factual information about the number of meetings already taking place in the community, and in our method of recovery. Government organizations are often concerned with statistics before they are willing to listen to information about our program. NA - A Resource in Your Community or some of our professional resource papers may be useful in opening a dialogue with them.

We might also spend time explaining our structure and self-supporting nature. The Just For Today video can add a level of professionalism to the presentation. As with our other presentations, a short presentation with a long question and answer period is recommended.

### **Law Enforcement, Probation/Parole Officers, Judges, Prisoner Services**

In many places these organizations are familiar with our program but may have misconceptions about what we do. These groups have the ability to make significant differences in the lives of still suffering addicts, and often refer newcomers to our meetings.

Contact:

- a) judges
- b) lawyers
- c) district attorney's office
- d) parole offices
- e) probation officers
- f) precinct supervisors
- g) community resource managers or volunteer coordinators at jails and prisons
- h) affiliation groups

#### Additional Literature

- a) Recovery and Relapse
- b) Sponsorship
- c) NA - A Resource in Your Community
- d) Youth in Recovery
- e) Another Look
- f) Staying Clean on the Outside
- g) H&I and the NA member
- h) NA presentation papers
- i) Literature order forms

You may be speaking to a range of individuals from local law enforcement officer, probation or parole officers, to lawyers and judges. This could take place at you local police station, parole officer's office, district attorney's office or even in the judges chambers at the court house. It may not be practical (or safe for the volunteers) to do this type of presentation in all locations. In countries where it is illegal to be an addict, even an addict in recovery, these types of presentations must be approached with great caution or postponed until government officials understand more about addiction and recovery.

Some officials may confuse our program with other programs. Keep your presentation very brief. Your answers to their questions will help to ensure that they get the information they need.

It might be helpful to discuss the suggestions we give at the end of our meetings:

- a) come to 90 meetings in 90 days
- b) read some NA literature every day
- c) get phone numbers and use them
- d) get a sponsor, learn to work the steps, and don't use drugs

Explain the concept of anonymity and that we do not keep records on our members. Explain that many meetings will sign attendance cards from the courts as a courtesy, but only with the secretary's first name. Some meetings use a rubber stamp rather than the secretary's signature. Each NA meeting is autonomous and not all meetings or secretaries sign these cards.

Add these people to your mailing list (if you have one) so they can regularly receive updated meeting information. If you do not have a mailing list, give them phonenumber cards and explain how your local phone system works so they can explain it to their clients.

A discussion about surveillance at meetings is always appropriate. Sometimes these organizations feel it is necessary to check up on the people they referred to us. An explanation about our program and our traditions may help this potentially controversial situation from occurring.

### **Military or Armed Forces**

The military usually has a policy of no tolerance for drug use. Your committee's speakers must take special care to give those still suffering addicts that might be in the audience the information they need while still protecting their anonymity.

#### Contact

- a) Unit commander
- b) Substance Abuse Specialist
- c) Chaplain's office
- d) Installation medical facility

#### Additional Literature

- a) Recovery and Relapse
- b) Sponsorship

- c) NA - A Resource in Your Community
- d) Welcome to NA

Your presentation might be part of a panel shared with other fellowships at the officers or enlisted men's hall. Some areas have a monthly presentation coordinated through a drug abuse program. Some installations have a regular program and the NA PI committee might be able to become a regular part of that program.

Because many of the men and women are from outside the area or even the state, it is important to emphasize how to find NA in addition to giving them local meeting directories. Explain the difference between open and closed meetings, (closed meetings are for addicts only, or for people who think they might have a problem with drugs.) Let the members of your audience know about the local phonenumber and how it works. Make sure to let them know they can contact the World Service Office (address on each piece of literature) to help them find meetings in their home town or next station if they cannot find NA in the phone book. Give them the WSO phone number and let them know the office will accept collect calls.

Special care must be taken to protect the anonymity of the audience. Let them know we are not there to tell anyone that he or she has a problem with drugs. Let them know that although our meetings are anonymous, the presentation is not. We are on a military base and they should protect their own anonymity. NEVER let it be known if you recognize anyone from one of our meetings. Explain that our meetings are anonymous, but not confidential, and they should take special care of their anonymity in NA meetings while they are still serving.

Any potential addicts in the audience will not be able to identify themselves as such, so make your question and answer period short and make sure all of the material is covered in the actual presentation. This is a situation where a split pitch works really well. A split pitch is part standard PI presentation, part personal story. You might be able to coordinate with H&I to get speakers experienced at telling their personal stories in a short period of time focusing on recovery.

Make sure the literature is placed at each seat before the meeting starts because someone with a drug problem might not want to risk exposure to come pick up our literature. Tell the audience that we ask them to do only one thing for us – keep this literature until they find someone who needs it because chances are, someday, someone they know will need help with a drug problem. This not only gives them the literature, it also gives them a reason for having it in their possession later on.