

*South Dade Area  
H&I Subcommittee*



*Orientation Package*

## INTRODUCTION

It is in the best interest of Narcotics Anonymous that we provide an Orientation. An Orientation will allow Narcotics Anonymous members a chance to become familiar with H&I work.

H&I presentations differ from Narcotics Anonymous meetings and an Orientation will give the new volunteer an understanding of the South Dade Area Hospitals and Institutions Subcommittee policies and guidelines and explain why we follow not only our own guidelines, but those of the facilities.

While listening, we encourage you to ask questions.

As you will notice in this package, there are various handouts that we use as aids to help us in ensuring that we are carrying that clear and consistent N. A. message of recovery – and what is our message? “The message is that an addict, any addict can stop using drugs and find a new way to live. Our message is hope and the promise of freedom. When all is said and done, our primary purpose can only be to carry the message to the addict who still suffers because “that” is all we have to give.

# COMMITMENT

## COMMITMENT TO H&I

Commitment means many different things to many different people. Some of these definitions may include these simple words: duty, dedication, pledge, promise, devotion, obligation, responsibility, and guarantee. The principle of commitment is one that has been taught to us by the Twelve Steps of Narcotics Anonymous. H&I work requires that we as individuals practice this principle faithfully.

At times an H&I presentation provides the first exposure to recovery in Narcotics Anonymous for many addicts. Our presentations may also be the only contact that these addicts receive with our fellowship on a weekly basis. It is important that we realize that the suffering addict in the facilities we serve may depend on us for the only message of recovery they get. For this reason we ask that you not volunteer for an H&I presentation if you are not sure you will be able to attend. If you do volunteer, make sure that you fulfill your commitment. None of us as individuals have the right to cancel an H&I presentation. By making the choice to attend a panel, we must realize that we may have to abandon activities that we might prefer. Living by spiritual principles such as commitment does not always feel good.

The consequences of choosing not to attend and fulfill our commitments is that we let down the addict who still suffers, the facilities we serve, the reputation of Narcotics Anonymous, and our own personal program of recovery. Remember that the “purpose of an H&I Subcommittee is to carry the Narcotics Anonymous message of recovery to addicts who do not have full access to regular Narcotics Anonymous meetings.” When we drop the ball and do not fulfill our commitment we send a complete opposite message to both the addict and the facility. This message is one of indifference and intolerance. The message conveyed is that Narcotics Anonymous does not care! By not attending we do our personal program great harm by living in the self-centered nature of our disease. It may take years to over this choice.

## COMMITMENT TO THE LANGUAGE OF RECOVERY

Commitment to the language of recovery in our presentations is also an important issue. In order to remain consistent with our traditions, and to insure that the message we carry is a clear and consistent message of recovery in narcotics Anonymous, we refer to ourselves simply as “addicts” not drug addicts, not addicts and alcoholic, not dually addicted, not junkies, or dope fiends, just as “addicts”! We refer to our time in the fellowship as “clean”, “clean-time”, or “recovery”, not sobriety, not clean and sober, just “clean”, “clean-time”, or “recovery”! A mixed message is a confusing message. If this is something that you feel you cannot do, then maybe you are not suited for H&I service.

### **COMMITMENT TO REPRESENT N. A.**

As H&I volunteers we must remember that when we attend an H&I presentation we are viewed as examples or representatives of Narcotics Anonymous. The fellowship as a whole may be judged on how we conduct ourselves. Common courtesy is essential! Therefore, we should arrive to the facility early. We should start and end the presentation on time. We should respect the dress code of the facility as well as the H&I Subcommittee recommendations. We should treat everyone we meet with respect. Our actions in these facilities will reflect on Narcotics Anonymous as a whole.

### **COMMITMENT TO THE SUBCOMMITTEE**

The H&I Subcommittee can be an effective tool when we all help. One of the reasons it exists is to keep an open line of communication between Narcotics Anonymous as a whole and the facilities we serve. More importantly, at the Subcommittee, we can share our experience, strength and hope, and help each other to get through problems we may encounter in carrying the message. This will allow us to grow and prosper. Without this commitment, without our members from the Panel Chair on up attending the Subcommittee meetings, the message of Narcotics Anonymous is lost and the Subcommittee loses its effectiveness. All of the steps of Narcotics Anonymous include “we” for a big reason. Together we can do anything but when individuals try to carry the load of the H&I Subcommittee the downward spiral begins.

### **COMMITMENT TO SERVICE**

The Basic Text of Narcotics Anonymous tells us “Goodwill is best exemplified in service: proper service is doing the right thing for the right reason. When good will supports and motivates both the individual and the fellowship, we are fully whole and wholly free”. Proper service is a cornerstone of our personal recovery. When we apply this principle of commitment to our lives it is our experience that we grow spiritually and mentally. Sometimes we may feel that our work in H&I is futile. That it isn’t working. However, that will change when you are sitting in a meeting some day and an addict comes rushing up to meet you and to say thank you for bringing Narcotics Anonymous to them. If we can touch one life with our presentations then we have done our job, above and beyond “we keep what we have by giving it away” H&I service will help keep us clean.

# H&I SERVICE

## WHO DOES IT?

Narcotics Anonymous members, who want to put the program into practice, whether or not we have been in a similar facility ourselves, do H&I work.

Working with others in an H&I setting consistently enhances personal recovery.

## WHAT IS IT?

In order to form a clear understanding of an H&I presentation, it is important to know where it fits in our service structure. Rather than being a Narcotics Anonymous group, which may be represented at the Area Service Committee by a GSR, an H&I presentation is a service provided by the Area Service Committee through its H&I Subcommittee.

## WHY DO WE DO IT?

Narcotics Anonymous has but one primary purpose “**to carry the message of recovery to the addict who still suffers**”. H&I work helps Narcotics Anonymous members do this by providing H&I presentations.

H&I presentations are intended to introduce those attending to some of the basics of the Narcotics Anonymous fellowship, as well as, informing them of our regularly scheduled meetings that are available to them upon their release from these facilities. Assuring that no addicts need die without hearing our message of hope.

## HOW DO WE DO IT?

All initial approach to start an H&I presentation is made through the H&I Subcommittee, **we never act alone**.

It is important to remember that in the H&I setting we are seen as representatives of Narcotics Anonymous. The fellowship, as a whole, may be judged on how we conduct ourselves, so common courtesy is essential.

An H&I presentation provides the first exposure to recovery in Narcotics Anonymous for many addicts, so it is imperative that we carry a clear and consistent message of Narcotics Anonymous recovery, and project a positive image of our fellowship.

# H&I PRESENTATION

## THE FORMAT

Hello, my name is \_\_\_\_\_, and I'm an addict.

I would like to open this presentation with a moment of silence followed by the Serenity Prayer, for those who care to join in, please do.

This is an H&I presentation. What H&I does is bring N. A. presentations to addicts who do not have full access to regular N. A. meetings.

N. A. is a fellowship of men and women who get together regularly to share their experience, strength and hope. Ours is a spiritual, not religious, program that comes from the Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions of N. A. Our Third Tradition states "the only requirement for membership is a desire to stop using".

We are not social workers, or counselors, only fellow addicts who come to you to carry the message of recovery – that an addict, any addict, can stop using and find a new way to live.

Narcotics Anonymous is not affiliated with this facility nor do we have any opinions on its policies.

At this time I'd like to go around the room and have everyone introduce themselves.

I've asked someone to read "WHO IS AN ADDICT"

I've asked someone to read "WHAT IS THE N. A. PROGRAM"

I've asked someone to read "HOW IT WORKS"

(Thank readers)

At this time I'm going to introduce my speaker. There will be no cross-discussion while the speaker is speaking. After the speaker is finished sharing there will be time for discussion and any questions you may have about Narcotics Anonymous.

(Introduce the speaker)

(Thank speaker and explain the I. P. pamphlets on the table putting emphasis on the meeting list)

(Open presentation for discussion and questions)

We are out of time; we have a nice way of closing!

Can we close this presentation with a moment of silence followed by the "we" version of the Serenity Prayer, for those who care to join in, please do.

## **ADOLESCENTS**

We need to remember that adolescents are prospective members, and should be treated with respect. We need to remember that to an adolescent, the stress experienced due to peer pressure or the relationship with their parents and/or teachers may be just as much a crisis to them as losing a job, marriage, or house may be to others. In Narcotics Anonymous, we learn to deal with our feelings and emotions and share with others how we have been able to work through them by utilizing the Twelve Steps.

While some people maintain that adolescents respond better to people closer to their own age, the bulk of our experience suggests that the age of the person sharing is secondary to their ability to share a strong, clear message of recovery. Adolescents seem to respond more to the message than to the messenger.

## **MEN WITH MEN, WOMEN WITH WOMEN**

Some facilities house only men or only women. Other facilities house both men and women, but keep them separate. In these facilities only same-sex members participate. Always remember our primary purpose is to carry the message of recovery, not to make our presentations more popular with the addicts we are trying to help. Problems that arise in this area have the potential to seriously damage the creditability of Narcotics Anonymous, as a whole. Experience has taught us that we can avoid these problems if we follow this simple guideline.

## **QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS**

We normally get the residents involved with a question and answer session at some point in the presentation; it is a good idea to encourage concerning what was presented at the presentation or other general questions about Narcotics Anonymous.

Always remember that Narcotics Anonymous has no opinions on outside issues. Occasionally during the question and answer session or when talking after the presentation those attending will ask to give an opinion on outside issues such as;

1. Other recovery programs
2. Other fellowships
3. The facility, "Do I need to stay in treatment"?
4. Many other issues that do not pertain to recovery in the N. A. fellowship

It is imperative that we are not drawn into these types of discussion. Don't hesitate to say "I'm sorry I have no experience, I can't share with you on that subject". Always remember to only share your experience, strength and hope about your recovery in Narcotics Anonymous.

## **TOPICS**

Topic should be chosen carefully, with the Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions of Narcotics Anonymous in mind. There are a multitude of topics that relate to our personal recovery in Narcotics Anonymous. There are also many topics that have nothing to do with recovery. It is important to remember in an H&I presentation we are dealing with addicts who are relatively inexperienced with recovery. When we select a topic for an H&I presentation, their needs should be considered first.

1. Any information pamphlet or selection from the Basic Text
2. Honestly, open-mindedness and willingness
3. Surrender
4. Acceptance
5. The basics; don't use, meetings, phone numbers, sponsor and the steps
6. H.A.L.T.S.; hungry, angry, lonely, tired, or serious
7. Responsible for our own recovery
8. Freedom from active addiction
9. Identify rather than compare
10. Spiritual not religious program
11. Going to any lengths
12. Transition to the Narcotics Anonymous fellowship from treatment
13. Tools of the fellowship
14. Letting go
15. Feelings
16. Learning to trust
17. Giving up old people, places, and things
18. Living just for today
19. The first three steps
20. Denial
21. Reservations
22. Sponsorship

## H&I PROCEDURES

Remember at all times that you have a responsibility to the facility, to those attending and to Narcotics Anonymous. If you observe the suggestions below and follow the Twelve Traditions of Narcotics Anonymous, you will uphold your responsibilities to all.

### DO'S

- DO** Be selective about who you choose to speak
- DO** Clarify the facility's rules and regulations with your speaker
- DO** Clarify H&I Subcommittee policy and guidelines with your speaker
- DO** Use South Dade H&I Subcommittee format only
- DO** Start your presentation on time, and end on time
- DO** Explain what an H&I presentation is
- DO** Explain that Narcotics Anonymous is separate and distinct from the facility, as well as other fellowships
- DO** Explain the language that we use [addict, clean, recovery]
- DO** Emphasize that in Narcotics Anonymous recovery is available to any addict regardless of the type of drug(s) used
- DO** Emphasize the importance of getting to a Narcotics Anonymous meeting the first day out
- DO** Emphasize the importance of getting a sponsor and a home group, and the importance of attending meetings
- DO** Try to get those attending involved [reading, sharing, questions]
- DO** Use the literature provided by the H&I Subcommittee
- DO** Make sure all literature is stamped with the Dade-County Helpline numbers
- DO** Make Narcotics Anonymous meeting lists available
- DO** Obey all dress codes

## **DON'TS**

- DON'T** Rely on flooding a facility with literature to carry our message, the most powerful tool for carrying our message is the Narcotics Anonymous member
- DON'T** Put too much focus on what it was like, they already know
- DON'T** Mention names of other fellowships
- DON'T** Mention specific names of hospitals, rehabs, doctors, etc...
- DON'T** Break another person's anonymity or tell his/her story
- DON'T** Debate any issues involving the facility's rules and regulations
- DON'T** Discuss conditions within the facility or opinion about the staff
- DON'T** Comment on the methods used by the facility
- DON'T** Debate the merits of the facility's program
- DON'T** Debate the merits of other fellowships
- DON'T** Debate which drug(s) are acceptable, Narcotics Anonymous is a program of complete abstinence from all drugs
- DON'T** Show favoritism to any client in the facility
- DON'T** Take personal messages in or out of the facility
- DON'T** Collect any money
- DON'T** Carry excessive cash
- DON'T** Wear expensive or flashy jewelry
- DON'T** Give out your address or phone number
- DON'T** Smoke

## **COMMONLY ASKED QUESTIONS**

**QUESTION:** I don't know if I'm an addict! What should I do?

**ANSWER:** Suggest reading the I. P. "Am I an addict" If you feel your life has become unmanageable and are sick and tired of being sick and tired, and want to find a new way of life, you may want to try Narcotics Anonymous.

**QUESTION:** I'm an alcoholic. Can I go to Narcotics Anonymous?

**ANSWER:** Alcohol is a drug. Narcotics Anonymous treats the disease of addiction. If you have the desire to stop using, you fit the requirements for membership.

**QUESTION:** Will you be my sponsor?

**ANSWER:** Suggest reading the I. P. "Sponsorship". Explain the way addicts get a sponsor is at a meeting.

**QUESTION:** Can I have your phone number?

**ANSWER:** Explain how they can get phone number at meetings. Explain that if they see you at a meeting, you will be glad to introduce them to other addicts.

**QUESTION:** I'm an addict and an alcoholic, but I drank more than I used drugs. Should I go to AA or go to NA?

**ANSWER:** Alcohol is a drug. Narcotics Anonymous treats the disease of addiction, and we have no opinions on other programs.

**QUESTION:** What should I do when I leave here? Should I go to a halfway house or go home?

**ANSWER:** Narcotics Anonymous has no opinions on any issues other than those relating to narcotics Anonymous. We do suggest that you go to a NA meeting the day you leave this facility.

**QUESTION:** I still feel sick after two (2) weeks. How long before I'm not sick anymore?

**ANSWER:** We are not doctors, only addicts like you, and we can only share how it was for us.

**QUESTION:** While I'm in here am allowed to go to meetings. Could you take me to a meeting?

**ANSWER:** Refer them to the Helpline numbers.