
Early History

Very little is known about the antecedent groups to our present Metropolitan New York Fellowship. We have verified, however, that a Twelve-Step Fellowship calling itself "Narcotics Anonymous" existed in the City of New York as early as 1948 or 1949. Although apparently not widespread, this early Fellowship enjoyed some degree of success, established a number of groups (at least within the Borough of Manhattan) and flourished until at least as late as 1955. Their demise is as mysterious as their origins. There seem to be no survivors from this era.

From the mid-1950's onward, a number of Doctors conspired to preclude any successful attempt to establish Narcotics Anonymous in the New York area. The major deterrents were:

- a. The rise of Syranon and the "TC Syndrome";
- b. A rigid enforcement of the so-called "Rockefeller Law" and the companion commitments to various "Rockefeller Programs" (which later included referral to methadone maintenance programs);
- c. Lack of community awareness and interest;
- d. The founding of dozens of "dial-purpose" N.A. groups;
- e. General paranoia.

Nonetheless, there were several attempts to establish an N.A. Fellowship in the City. Due to all of the above reasons, as well as a total lack of support from any other N.A. Fellowship, these efforts failed. In addition, recovery for the addict in New York was further impeded by a general acceptance or tolerance of pot smoking and other "soft" narcotics use and the "you are cured" philosophy espoused by the medical profession. There seem to be no survivors from these early efforts.

Recent History

Our present Fellowship is now in its third year of growth. It dates from the near-simultaneous establishment of groups in three of the five boroughs (The Bronx, Queens and Manhattan). Each of these three pioneer

groups were founded without prior knowledge of the other two and all existed for several months with no awareness of the others.

In fact, had a member from Queens not found [redacted] on vacation in Florida, he might never have found the Bronx meeting.

The first year (1981) was, to say the least, a struggle just to survive. There was hardly an aggregate total of a dozen members in all three groups. Yet these "early-timers", at least a few, persevered, and all the existing groups are, to one degree or another, an outgrowth of these three pioneer groups.

From a handful of members and three meetings, we have grown to hundreds of members and dozens of meetings. At last count, there were more or less 50 meetings per week in the Metropolitan area (not counting suburban New Jersey and Connecticut). Since last fall (October 1982), we have averaged 5 new meetings a month. Of this, almost all are regular meetings. Of the 30-plus new meetings, only 3 have been "restricted" (H&I) meetings. We are growing at such a rapid pace, we cannot keep the meeting list up-dated.

Current Strength & Geographic Boundaries

The present Metropolitan area encompasses 14 counties (inclusive of three area codes: 212, 516 and 914) which are the five boroughs of the City of New York, i.e.:

<u>Borough</u>	<u>County</u>
Manhattan	New York
Bronx	Bronx
Queens	Queens
Brooklyn	Kings
Staten Island	Richmond

the two outer Long Island Counties of Nassau and Suffolk and seven upstate counties: Westchester, Rockland, Putnam, Sullivan, Dutchess, Orange and Ulster.

There are meetings in each of the five boroughs, both of the Long Island counties and in the Counties of Westchester and Dutchess. A new meeting is presently forming in Rockland County.

For now, there is no county in the Metropolitan area with meetings seven days per week. The strongest counties in this respect are the Bronx (6 days per week), Queens (5 days per week) and Manhattan (3 days per week).

Since January 1, attendance at all meetings has swelled, so that with statistical adjustments, the average attendance is now at 45-50 people per meeting in the city and 25-40 people per meeting in the suburban groups.

With proration for multiple attendance, our present (active) membership is between 600-750 regular members. Of this, the greater percentage is that of newcomers (those with less than 180 days). However, we do have a proportionately significant percentage (8-12%) of members with 18 months or more continuous abstinence.

Hospitals & Institutions

The New York Area Service Committee has an existing, active Hospitals and Institutions Sub-Committee. At present, our total number of restricted meetings is small (7)—not from lack of interest on the part of our local rehabilitation centers and hospitals, but because we do not have enough potential chairpeople with sufficient clean time and experience. With our present rate of growth, and continued interest, we should treble or better the number of H&I meetings in the next two years.

Public Information, Hot-Line & Newsletter

In these three areas, we have not made a spectacular showing. There exists a Public Information Sub-Committee, yet we have refrained from public-media announcements on any large scale due to our inability (at our current level of strength) to handle a large influx of newcomers. We have, however, sent speakers to some of the local schools and colleges and to speak at various seminars.

Our Hot-Line has been in existence for more than a year (almost 18 months). Initially, there was some difficulty financing its operation. However, for the past 6 months, we have been able to meet our obligations consistently, promptly and in full. We have also seen a rise in calls to the Hot-Line (from the initial 10-20 calls or less) to more than 300 per month. Most calls are for meeting information only.

The New York newsletter, "Our Attitudes Today", has been in existence (so to speak) much longer than actual production began. The two primary deterrents to consistent production have been a lack of both funds and personnel.

Debt

Covered by separate report, attached hereto.

Areas of Concern

FINANCE: As with much of the Fellowship, especially in relatively new areas, we suffer from an acute cash flow imbalance. There is a steady growth in receipts as our numbers multiply, but this is consistently offset by a geometric growth in obligations for rents, literature, telephone, postage and stationery.

Nonetheless, our capital account now appears stable, our group funding appears to be in position to operate from the basis of " prudent reserve"

accounting (versus "break-even" accounting), and we hope to begin a program of regular contributions to World Service beginning this year.

CONTINUED GROWTH & NEW FACILITIES: The singular, most crippling drawback to our continued growth in New York is the lack of facilities for new meetings. There just aren't that many places willing to accept a bunch of "drug addicts" with open arms. Too, many that could be available are too expensive for a new group's "budget." As far as some hospitals, rehabs and TC's are concerned, N.A. does not complement the existing modalities.

Further, we are in stiff competition with other Fellowships (especially A.A., but also P.A., O.A., G.A., E.A., NOMAD, Recovery, etc.), social clubs, fraternal organizations, religious groups and political organizations.

The number one competitor is, of course, A.A. This is their flagship city, they have had a 45-year headstart, and they enjoy both a good reputation and a good press. In the Metropolitan area alone (not counting some of the upstate counties), A.A. has more than 2,300 meetings per week.

THE "METHADONE CONTROVERSY": This is our oldest (and most hotly debated) area of controversy. The issue is, basically:

"Do we permit an actively using addict, such as someone on 'legitimately prescribed' medication like methadone and in the process of detoxification to share during the meeting?"

One side (a majority) says: "No, that would condone or endorse prescriptive addiction and detract from the atmosphere of recovery. The purpose of a meeting and sharing is to talk about recovery. If you are still using, you're not recovering. You can't talk about something you aren't familiar with yet."

The other side (a vocal minority) says: "Yes, because someone detoxing needs feedback and encouragement in order to get through the detoxification process. Detox is part of recovery, too."

Our local Area Service Committee has taken a "neutral" position, saying only that the individual group must adhere to the primary responsibility of carrying the message, yet has the inherent right to autonomy.

THE METROPOLITAN NEW YORK REGIONAL SERVICE CONFERENCE: The New York Fellowship, encompassing the geographic boundaries as above described, has agreed by consensus of its existing Area Service Committee to form a Regional Service Conference this year. This consensus was an acceptance of the following criteria:

1. That we would not seek to join with nor recruit any area or region not contiguous to the above defined;
2. That initially we would form three Area Service Committees, viz:

- a. Area I: The Boroughs of Manhattan, Brooklyn and Staten Island;
 - b. Area II: The Borough of Queens and Area Code 516 (Long Island):
 - c. Area III: The Borough of Bronx and Area Code 914 (the seven upstate counties);
3. That we would subsequently form into not less than seven Areas (one each per Borough and one each for Area Codes 516 and 914);
 4. That we would not subdivide any of the initial three Areas until each successor Area was supported by not less than 10 groups.

The target date for actual formation of the Region is June 1983, with a reassessment planned for January 1984. Guidelines are now being written by committee.

Subsequent to the above consensus, a suggestion was made by members of the Northeast New Jersey Area Service Committee that they be included in the Metropolitan New York Regional Service Conference. No motion has been offered at either Northeast New Jersey Area Service Committee or New York Area Service Committee to this effect.

DUAL MEMBERSHIP: Not only is A.A. our biggest competitor for facilities, that Fellowship (and to a lesser extent, P.A.) absorbs many potential members of Narcotics Anonymous. The New York A.A. Fellowship has dozens of well-established, dual-purpose meetings (for the so-called "cross-addicted" alcoholic). Many of these dual-purpose groups also permit addicts with no history of alcohol abuse to attend and participate in the meetings (despite A.A.'s clearly stated membership policy as covered by their Third Tradition). This in and of itself is not a problem to Narcotics Anonymous.

We, of course, have no opinion on outside issues and Alcoholics Anonymous is an outside issue. Further, we have not sought to recruit (or "Twelve Step") from within the A.A. Fellowship as we are a program of attraction and not promotion.

The area where this is a problem is not from A.A. itself, but from certain members of that Fellowship. There are those who preach the philosophy that "After all, we are all the same program anyway, and A.A. is older, bigger, and has more old-timers... The real recovery is in A.A." These are the people who "come to N.A. to talk about drugs," and go to A.A. "to learn about Steps." These uncommitted seem incapable of understanding the simple fact that there would be more talk of recovery in the N.A. rooms if they weren't so busy telling war stories.

SEPT. 1 TO 4 1983 W.C.N.A 13 WAS HELD IN NEW YORK CITY. AT THE VISTA HOTEL. THERE WERE OVER 1,300 IN ATTENDANCE.

40
OREGON - Greg - Stated he was not Delegate from Oregon, but resides there. Young fellowship. About 3 months old. Meetings run 5-10 people. New meetings starting everywhere.

81
Oregon - Gene Haag, Representative from Oregon, gave his report. Things going good in Pacific Northwest, region he represents. Regional service committee (their first) in Portland and elected officers. Washington, Oregon, Idaho, and possibly Canada. They elected a chairperson from B.C., Canada. Vice chairperson from Seattle, Secretary from Portland, Treasurer from Boise, Idaho. Alt. Rep is from Vancouver, Washington. Wide representation. Meetings coming along real good. 1 meeting in Bend, 2 in Klamath Falls, 1 in Mervyn, 1 in Grants Pass, and 1 in Medford. Seattle has many meetings now. 3 years ago Seattle had no meetings. Portland has quite a few, as well as Vancouver, Washington. Area service committee meetings in southern Oregon started a couple years ago right after 2nd Pacific Northwest Convention.

82 NEW YORK STATE...Lin Andrukut, 123 E. Jackson St., Palmyra, New York, 14522, (315) 597-4566

Before I give my report, Mr. Chairman, I would like to raise 2 points. (at this point the points were presented and discussed at length.) Motion made by Lynn: that WSC abide by our own Service Manual of NA, paragraph at bottom of pg.19, as opposed to ASB's receiving votes only via voting privileges. Motion does not require a second. Motion restated: Move that WSC abide by paragraph on bottom of pg. 19, S.S., as opposed to applying for voting privileges as stated in format. Correction this motion does require a second. Seconded. Discussion. Parliamentarian clarified. Much more discussion. Call for a vote. Motion failed. Will follow our format. Lynn's second point was discussed and clarified. Now for the report: We had our 1st NA meeting August 31, 1973. We went with one NA meeting in New York State for 4 years and folded in 1977. I don't know what happened between them because I didn't live in New York but when I went back in 1980 there were a few scattered meetings in Buffalo and Syracuse and nobody knew of each others existance. In April of 1981 with 26 active members, we formed the NYS Area Service Committee. Meeting-3 rroups represented, 20 members in Buffalo, 3 in

New York State cont

42

Rochester and Clifton Springs, in Syracuse, 2 in Rome, and this was a year ago. Today we have meetings in 6 cities. Rumors of meetings in Fredonia and Corning and we are checking on that. One of the things a year ago I personally did was go to Ohio and saw how the program from '79 to present blossomed and I asked, what would you contribute as the main factor for the program really going strong and starting dynamite there? And they told me, service work, beginning at the area level and proceed up to regions as your area grows. One of the things we believed as we were trying debate whether or not to come to this conference as a Region, and we decided with all the cities we are representing that each city is just beginning to blossom and grow and we decided that it was more important that we all as a state, keep getting together, on a monthly basis because, as we have formed this area a year ago, our meetings have trippled, with growth by leaps and bounds. So we have been having regular ASC meetings with minutes submitted to WSO. Lynn presented the following data: Active cities: Lockport, Buffalo, Rochester, Clifton Springs, Syracuse and S. Syracuse. Buffalo, 40 members, many meetings starting and folding due to personal bickering. Lockport-40 members, good strong NA, having dance May 7th. Rochester-heavy interest and excitement over new group just formed. Strong seed planted from previous NA group there from 1973-77. Clifton Springs-all walks of life from a member who is a doctor and referring people from Taylor Brown to the unemployed residents from F.L.A.C.R.A. half-way house. FLACRA wants to see more NA, especially additional groups soon in Newark, who has good co-operation from outside agencies. Syracuse-3 meetings, just starting to settle down, had a lot of problems and growing pains but doing well. WE HAVE AN AREA P.O. BOX: NYS-ASC of NA, P.O. Box 278, Palmyra, New York, 14522.