

Bay Area H&I Orientation Package

(New Members)

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 Hospitals & Institutions work.

H&I presentations differ from Narcotics Anonymous meetings and an Orientation will give the new volunteer an understanding of the Bay Area Hospitals & Institutions Subcommittee policies and guidelines. It will also 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 concise N. A. message of recovery. What is our message; “That an addict, any addict, can stop using drugs, lose the desire to use and find a new way to live. Our message is hope and the promise is 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

H&I presentations provide 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 message of recovery. 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.

H&I PROCEDURES

Remember, at all times, that you have a responsibility to the facility, to those attending and to Narcotics Anonymous. If you follow 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 Bay Area 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, questions)
- DO** - Use the literature provided by the H&I Subcommittee
- DO** - Make sure all literature is stamped with the Bay Area Helpline numbers
- DO** - Make Narcotics Anonymous meeting lists available
- DO** - Obey all dress codes (Facility & Bay Area H & I)

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 or cell phones in the facility

DON'T - Wear expensive or flashy jewelry

DON'T - Give out your or another person's address or phone number

DON'T - Smoke or Vape in facilities

DON'T - Take a person with outstanding warrants

DON'T - Give or accept gifts

DON'T - Take a member who has a friend or family in the facility

DON'T - Use excessive profanity

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.

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.

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 ever die without hearing our message of hope.

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 questions concerning what was presented 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 discussions. 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.

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. 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”!

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, and we should respect the dress code of the facility as well as the H&I Subcommittee recommendations. We should also be sure to treat everyone we meet with respect. Our actions in these facilities will reflect on Narcotics Anonymous as a whole.

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, emotionally 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.