Chapter 5

Extended Outreach
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A) Introduction

- Outreach efforts are meeting needs not currently being filled by any other service committee.
- What is generally referred to as “extended outreach” can be most simply described as service committee assistance to members, groups, or Areas that are geographically isolated from the nearest existing part of the NA service structure.
- Due to the geographical distances extended outreach efforts need to be done in an organized and coordinated manner.
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B) Helping Struggling Groups/Areas

- Outreach efforts to isolated NA groups provide a beneficial and much needed service in many parts of our Fellowship.
- The very presence of such “outside support” can provide a means of verifying for the isolated group the fact that carrying the message is indeed the primary purpose of NA.
- An extended outreach effort strengthens the ties that bind addicts together, creating a sense of connectedness.
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Visiting Isolated Groups

- To the greatest extent possible, Outreach is done in teams.
- It is important in Outreach visits to remain low key and respect each group’s autonomy.
- Answering questions and explaining the purpose and functions of the area and its subcommittees are also an important part of these visits.
- Groups are identified for Outreach visits at the Outreach subcommittee meeting, or by direction of the Area.
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Visiting Isolated Groups (cont.)

- Before visiting groups, and as a regular part of Outreach subcommittee training, review the section “What Outreach Is Not.”
- The last thing Outreach needs is to get a reputation as a bunch of “Traditions Troopers” or “NA Police.”
- Outreach can best function by providing groups with NA literature as a source of information, not by “judging” groups in how they conduct their meetings.
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Visiting Isolated Groups (cont.)

- Maintaining regular communication and being available are ways that an outreach committee can provide support and help groups to learn how to help themselves.

- Outreach subcommittees can also ensure that the group is listed on local meeting lists and registered with the United States Service Committee.

- Often, it is the local Outreach subcommittee that knows more about the NA groups in the area than any other part of the service structure.
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Providing “Starter Kits”

• The idea of providing Group Starter Kits has been around longer than Outreach subcommittees.

• Outreach subcommittees are the preferred vehicle to coordinate the delivery of the starter kit and report back to the ASC.

• This practice affords the Outreach subcommittee the opportunity to offer additional assistance when they visit the group.
C) Loners! The Loner Member

- A “loner” is an addict who has found the program of Narcotics Anonymous and has embarked on the road of recovery in isolation.

- Many Area and Regional Outreach subcommittees have created services which are available for “loners.”

- The following publications are available for loners and those seeking to overcome the loners’ isolation.
  - IP #21 - “The Loner – Staying clean in Isolation,”
  - The “Meeting by Mail” publication,
  - The USSC Newsletter.
D) Letter Writing to Loners and Isolated Groups

• Isolated addicts may not be able to meet with other addicts due to a variety of different circumstances.

• If an outreach committee decides to correspond with loners, that correspondence should be frequent and consistent.

• The letter writing campaign can be an important part of an Outreach Committee.

• Suggestions and discussion concerning letter writing methods are found on pages V - 5 – 7.
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E) Nomadic Addicts

- Nomadic Addicts, Addicts on Asphalt and Car-a-vans are all names for an Outreach methods to connect and support small and isolated groups and meetings.
- Nomadic Addicts can also help to increase unity in sparsely populated areas and regions.
- An additional advantage to this type of service is the opportunity it provides for involving new people in service.
- The only requirement is a desire to stay clean, and the willingness to attend another meeting.
F) Workshops/Learning Days

- Often the terms “workshop” and “learning day” are used interchangeably, they do have separate uses and goals.
- A workshop is an event at which information on a specific topic is presented for discussion, and actually “worked on” by those attending.
- A workshop can provide a forum for members to learn about such things from those with some experience or an opportunity to share new ideas and to problem solve.
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F) Workshops/Learning Days (cont.)

- It is important to listen to the requests of members asking for help through workshops.
- Each workshop is tailored to the specific needs of the members it is designed to serve.
- Members who conduct workshops should have the necessary knowledge and background to be able to deal with all questions pertaining to the branch of service they are involved with.
- Workshops can be conducted in such a way as to allow for brain-storming to serve their needs.
F) Workshops/Learning Days (cont.)

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F) Workshops/Learning Days (cont.)

- Workshops do not constitute the final word on service issues.
- A workshop will generally last one to three hours, and usually focuses on a specific aspect of service.
- A learning day is also an opportunity for sharing experience about different aspects of service and/or recovery.
- However, Learning Days are of a longer duration than a single workshop.
- Scheduling some fellowship time at the end of a learning day is of great benefit.
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