

September

2020

**C&P Region of NA phone line: 800-543-4670**

DC LINK

**Message of NA: *“…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 of freedom.”***

**Primary Purpose*: “…to carry the message to the addict who still suffers…” Basic Text - 6th Ed. - Pg. 68***

***Concept 9***

**"*All elements of our service structure have the responsibility to carefully consider all viewpoints in their decision-making processes."***

It’s easy to discuss things with those who agree with us. But in recovery we’ve learned that our own best thinking may not necessarily offer us the best possible guidance. We have been taught that, before making significant decisions, we should check our judgment against the ideas of others. Our experience has shown us that the ideas of those who disagree with us are often the ones we need most to hear. The Ninth Concept puts this aspect of our recovery experience to work in the service environment. When making a decision, our groups, service boards, and committees should actively seek out all available viewpoints. An effective group conscience is a fully informed group conscience. The Ninth Concept is one tool we use to help ensure that our group conscience is as well-informed as it can possibly be. In any discussion, it is tempting to ignore dissenting members, especially if the vast majority of members think alike. Yet it is often the lone voice, offering new information or a unique perspective on things, that saves us from hasty or misinformed decisions. In Narcotics Anonymous, we are encouraged to respect that lone voice, to protect it, even to seek it out, for without it our service decisions would undoubtedly suffer. Concept Nine also encourages us, individually, to frankly speak our minds in discussions of service issues, even when most other members think differently. No, this concept is not telling us to become perpetual nay-sayers, objecting to anything agreed to by the majority. It does say, however, that we are responsible to share our thoughts and our conscience with our fellow members, carefully explaining our position and listening with equal care to the positions of others. When we show the courage necessary to speak our mind, while also showing respect for one another, we can be confident that we act in the best interests of the NA Fellowship. By insisting on thorough discussion of important issues, the worst we can do is take a little of each other’s time; at best, we protect the fellowship from the consequences of a hasty or misinformed decision. When a service body is in the process of making a decision, the Ninth Concept can be exercised in a variety of ways. If you are a member of that service body, all you need do is raise your hand and speak. If the point you wish to make is complex, you may wish to put it in writing, so that other members of the board or committee can study it more carefully. If you are not a member of the service body in question but, as an NA member, still have something to say about a service matter, there are a variety of avenues you can take to express your position. By sharing your views at your group’s business meeting, you ensure that your ideas will be included in the mix of group conscience that guides your GSR when she or he participates in service discussions. Many service boards or committees set aside a portion of their agenda for open forums, when you can speak your own mind on issues before the body.

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***Tradition 9***

***"NA, as such, ought never to be organized; but we may create service boards or committees directly responsible to those they serve."***

Narcotics Anonymous is a spiritual program and we put our spiritual purposes first. It is important that we don't get so caught up in the business side of our group directed functions. Those boards and committees we create are admonished to maintain directly responsibility to the general membership: those we serve. We get two sorts of direction from the Fellowship. First, what we do in the way or providing a service. For instance, we may decide to start a help line or a service project at the world level. Second, how we proceed in setting up or maintaining a routine service. What we do it is decided once, how we do it may be updated from time to time. Or we may decide we can no longer provide a given service. In the past members have often had trouble separating what we do from how we do it. Both are policy items but they require different considerations. What we do depends largely on the strengths and weaknesses in a given service area. No sense in committing to H&I panels if you don't have members who can service them. Also, if we commit to put out meeting schedules and flyers at probation offices or other places where addicts can get them, it requires a certain amount of money and has to be done on a regular basis. No service boards or committee should be allowed to govern the Fellowship. In selfless service, members may choose to become involved with committees our service boards. But since they are not NA, opinion and manipulation has no place, just group conscience as explained in our Second Tradition. Members may trust specific members to carry their collective conscience but this does not make this member a leader, governor or an organizer. It simply makes that person a trusted servant. No one has the power or authority to make decisions for NA. NA as a whole makes decisions for NA as a whole. Our sanctioned events and service efforts are done by trusted servants. All are addicts seeking recovery at times and all are members who act as resources to those who suffer at other times. Surely, we will all fall short at times. But if enough of us are mindful of Tradition Nine, we can offset any harm done. The basic problem seems to be when the business aspect of an event makes our members uncomfortable. Our policy of openness and service is conducive to good feelings about service and trusting our trusted servants. If our servants can't trust us, who are we to trust them? Special words require our attention. It can be a mistake to assume we know why these terms are special. Like many 'addict words,' ordinary definitions may or may not apply. This can prevent our going that one extra step that could lead to much more useful knowledge and understanding. Organizations are functional systems and they work to preserve these functions. An organization is built around beliefs held in common. The means to enforce adherence to its rules and goals is generally inclusion or exclusion. Businesses are organized from the inside out. NA is organized from the outside in. We invert the structural pyramid, with Members at the top and service positions at the bottom. Our group conscience processes blend ideas and suggestions from many sources so that we include a maximum number of viewpoints and people.. We can surrender as part of our programs and our service yet it is entirely voluntary. In NA, we deal exclusively with the disease of addiction. NA "as such" referred to in this Tradition applies to our meetings where recovery is shared. This may include two members sharing on the phone in the middle of the night, a regular meeting or a convention meeting. All else is "not" NA. is not a business where business practices can take precedence over spiritual values.

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***Step 9***

***“Made direct amends to such people wherever possible, except when to do so would injure them or others.”***

Step 9 completes what I started in step 8. I make amends to those that I have harmed. I pay back debts I owe. I apologize. I write letters. I find time to do and say things that would help heal the damage that I have done. I try to bring goodness where previously I had brought discord and destruction. It takes insight, courage and dedication to make such amends, but now I have the help of my God to know what to do and how to do it. I learn to earnestly seek the right way to go about this process from my God. I start to live the kind of life that my God has meant for me to live all along. After we have made a list of people we have harmed, have reflected carefully upon each instance, and have tried to possess ourselves of the right attitude in which to proceed, we will see that the making of direct amends divides those we should approach into several classes. There will be those who ought to be dealt with just as soon as we become reasonably confident that we can maintain our sobriety. There will be those to whom we can make only partial restitution, lest complete disclosures do them or others more harm than good. There will be other cases where action ought to be deferred, and still others in which by the very nature of the situation we shall never be able to make direct personal contact at all. We will need to have the proper attitude as we approach this step. First, it is good to have forgiven both ourselves and the people we injured, regardless of anything they might have done to retaliate. We will not succeed in resolving the conflict if we are still angry and defensive. Second, we need to have a good idea going into the encounter about what we want to say and accomplish. Most importantly we want to make sure we state our apology without assigning any blame to the ones we injured. We must act responsibly as we make our confession and attempt amends, having thought through all the possible consequences so that we will not be caught off guard and be provoked to anger. A rehearsal with a sponsor, therapist, or friend may help prepare us. There are five categories of persons to whom we may consider making amends. Notice how this contrasts with what we did in Step 8. There we included *everyone* to whom we were *willing* to make amends. In Step 9, however, as we prepare to execute this step, we use a high degree of discretion regarding *to whom* we will make amends and *when* this should happen

We need to be open to any response we get from people we've injured and be ready to accept their response without becoming angry. We are not there to manipulate them into forgiving us. In order to have this come off smoothly, we should make every effort to purge our bad feelings toward the person or incident before we meet to speak. This will help us resist the temptation to point out to them what we felt they did to provoke us. We are only there to talk about our own behavior. It is also a good idea not to take the other person by surprise. They have a right to know that you intend to make amends. They have a right to refuse to let you do this at this time....You can leave an open invitation to talk whenever and wherever they might feel comfortable at some time in the future.

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*DC AREA SERVICE*

Meets 1st Saturday of every month  
 Westminster Presbyterian Church

400 I St. SW

Admin. Body meets at 10:45am

Full body meets at 12 noon

*Names of newly elected DCASC*

*trusted servants will be posted in*

*September newsletter*

Chair: Joan H.

Vice Chair: Darryl J.

Secretary: OPEN

Asst. Secretary: OPEN

RCM: Gloria M.

RCM ALT: Earl J.

Treasurer: Tecoy W.

Asst. Treasurer: Michael J.

COC Rep. William W.

DC Area Rep. to CPRCNA Program

Sub Committee: Vanessa G.

DCASC Subcommittees:

Hospitals & Institutions (H&I)

Meets 4th Sat. at 116 T St. NE 3:00pm   
Main Conference Room

Chair: Sranda W.

Vice Chair: OPEN.

Special Events

Meets 3rd Sat. of every month at

Dorothy Heights Library 10:00am

Chair: Robyn R.N.

Vice Chair: OPEN

Newsletter

Meets 3rd Mon. of every month at

Lamond Riggs Library 6:00pm

5401 South Dakota Ave NE  
Chair: Tammy F.

Vice Chair: OPEN

Literature   
 Meets 1st Saturday of every month  
 Westminster Presbyterian Church

400 I St. SW 10:30am

Chair: Eric W.

Vice Chair: April C.

Policy

Meets 3rd Tues. of every month

at Plymouth Congregational

United Church of Christ 6:30pm   
5301 North Capitol St NE   
Chair: Eloise C.  
 Asst. Policy Monitor: Deboria A.

Public Relations (PR)

Meets 1st Sun of every month at

SOME 2:00pm

71 O St> NE

Chair: Marie W.

Vice Chair: OPEN

May 2020 Anniversaries &

Acknowledgements Congratulations All!!

**Joan T. 35th Anniversary, September 22, 2020, 6:30 at Give Yourself A Chance Group**

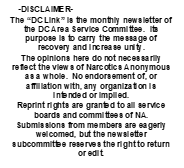
**Meeting ID: 966 890 1973, No Password**

***DC Area NA meetings are held virtually or closed until further notice.***

***CPRNA Virtual & Phone Meetings : District of Columbia***

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**Release Form:** This signed release form must accompany all submissions. The undersigned give the NA Fellowship any of its agent’s permission to publish the original written material I have submitted and also grant full unconditional release from any liability arising from its use. I understand that my material may be edited or may be published in whole or in part in another NA publication other than the “DC Link”. I understand that sending my submission electronically indicates my agreement with the terms of this release.

Signature:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Date:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**Contact DC Link: DC Area Newsletter |**

**PO Box 9863 Washington DC 20016 or**

**dclinknewsletter@gmail.com**

***Submit your service perspectives, Step, Tradition, Concept and Recovery Experiences***

**Submission Deadline: 3rd Monday of each month**

**DC Link On-line** [***http://www.cprna.org/our-areas/news/district-of-columbia-area/***](http://www.cprna.org/our-areas/news/district-of-columbia-area/)