

# Wednesday – 27 April 2016

**Keep Coming Back:** Every morning at 7:00 am, and every evening at the close of the Conference activity, you will find an NA meeting at the “Urban Oasis” by the pool. We also have meeting space available all week if participants want to organize a meeting during the lunch break.

FIPT and Literature Discussion	9:00–10:30 am
Survey and Strategic Plan	11:00 am–1:00 pm
Picnic in the Park	1:30–6:00 pm
New Business Deadline	6:00 pm
Zonal Meeting Space Available	6:00 pm on

## FIPT and Literature Discussion

The 2014 *Conference Report* included a discussion about issues cropping up related to our literature and trademarks, and since that time, the challenges members are experiencing in their communities seem to be on the rise. Some of the specific types of problems being faced are listed below.

For more information on the *Fellowship Intellectual Property Trust*, including an online copy of the legal document itself, go to [www.na.org/fipt](http://www.na.org/fipt).

### ***Gray Book Groups and Group Registration Concerns***

We are currently holding four registrations for meetings that have made it clear they plan to use what is called the “gray form” in their format.

The gray form was the review and input draft that compiled all of the input received from members at a middle phase of the development of the Basic Text. The input received after the draft was released resulted in substantial changes to the text. Review and input drafts are not intended for use in meetings and are not Fellowship-approved.

The *Group Booklet*, a Fellowship-approved booklet, identifies that NA groups use only NA-approved literature in NA meetings. To use the gray form in an NA meeting is in conflict with this Fellowship conscience. We believe that groups that openly disregard the Fellowship’s expectations of what an NA group is, as expressed in *The Group Booklet*, require our attention. We aren’t sure how to proceed, so we are holding these groups’ registrations until we can talk together, as a Fellowship, at the WSC about the issue.

There are already a few registered groups that use the gray form, but this was inadvertent on our part. At the time those groups registered, it was not an issue that had been brought to our attention yet. It was called to our attention primarily because posters were printed referencing “registered with NAWS” and bringing with it local controversy. It seems to us that the desire to be registered is motivated by more than simply helping an addict find their meeting. Group registration makes it possible for a group’s meetings to be listed in our meeting locator.

The *FIPT* does not require a group to register in order to be able to use the name and trademarks and reprint literature for use in their meetings. The *FIPT* does not distinguish between registered and unregistered groups.

However, this concern does raise the question that the Conference—and perhaps the Fellowship—must address: What are our minimum expectations of what constitutes an NA group? The six points listed in *The Group Booklet* are a start, but they are not as comprehensive as the text in the booklet as a whole. What do we, as a Fellowship, consider to be the bare minimum for a group to adhere to in order to be considered NA? *A Guide to Local Services in NA* points out that local service bodies have a responsibility to make decisions regarding which meetings appear on their schedules or directories—and at the local level it is much simpler to perform direct outreach to help groups understand our guiding principles. When groups register directly with NAWS, the matter isn't always as simple.

What we can say for certain is that the gray form was never approved by the NA Fellowship. It was a draft piece of literature that underwent many changes due to Fellowship input. *The Group Booklet*, which is NA Fellowship-approved, explains that only NA approved literature is appropriate for reading in our meetings. Does our Fellowship still believe that to be true today?

### ***Illicit Texts***

We continue to see challenges with the production of illicit Basic Texts, typically a version composed of the Third Edition, Revised, with the addition of language from the Second Edition that wrongly places the NA service structure outside of NA. This edited version of the Basic Text was never approved by the NA Fellowship and, in fact, the erroneous language from the Second Edition was removed by a Fellowship-wide group conscience process, a decision that has been supported by decisions on all subsequent versions of the Basic Text. The production and/or use of these illicit texts in or out of NA meetings is in conflict with the Fellowship's

conscience and a violation of the Fellowship's copyright.

Some NA members have been distributing illicit texts in jails and prisons, either as a part of their H&I efforts or independently. This activity can have a variety of consequences and can draw NA into controversy, with the possibility of damaging our relationships with facilities.

Another way we see the production of illicit literature taking place is in the reprinting and/or repackaging of NA literature and the sale of those materials as “historical documents.” All NA literature is copyright protected and not available for reprinting or repackaging, including old service manuals, earlier versions of IPs, booklets and books, and review and input drafts. NA groups are the only entity outside of NA World Services that are permitted by the *FIPT* to reprint literature, and they are only able to reprint current versions of literature for use within the group when there is a clear need to do so. Any other duplication of NA recovery literature is not in harmony with the *FIPT* or with the group conscience of NA.

We have already published bulletins that clearly state our position on this issue (see [www.na.org/fipt](http://www.na.org/fipt)), and we are asking for help from the Fellowship to put an end to this behavior. There are individuals who seem determined to stop nothing short of legal action, but given the outcome of the last lawsuit, we believe our most reasonable approach is to simply exercise due diligence. An external remedy will not solve this problem. We, as a Fellowship, must continue to embody our shared values, as expressed in our NA Fellowship-approved literature and the decisions we have made together on this issue in the past. Our Fellowship's conscience on the matter has been expressed time and again. Unless the Fellowship makes a decision to change its position on this matter, those who defy the guidance of the *FIPT* are not just acting

in conflict with the law, they are acting in direct conflict with the will of the NA Fellowship.

### ***ASCs/RSCs posting recovery literature***

Some area and regional service committees post NA recovery literature locally, on their websites. Posting NA literature is a form of duplication, and the *FIPT* does not permit service committees to duplicate NA recovery literature. When local websites' postings like this are brought to our attention, we ask the responsible service committees to remove any recovery literature from their website and servers, and most do. We have a variety of literature freely available on the na.org website, and anyone is free to link to that material. Posting our recovery literature on local sites—particularly our book-length pieces—can become very problematic.

As one example, a treatment center found a PDF version of *The NA Step Working Guides* online and began to print individual chapters for their residents. Organizations outside of NA do not have the ability to reprint NA literature. The company found the PDF on an NA area website and assumed it was acceptable to reprint for commercial use. Once we discussed the matter with them, they agreed to purchase guides for their clients.

Some NA service bodies have refused to remove the book-length pieces. We have not taken legal action to pursue removal of the texts. If we did so we could probably eliminate about 70% of the instances overnight, but doing so would harm our relations with well-meaning NA service committees (and would also disable their websites), and those who wish to harm NAWS can easily find alternative methods to post copyrighted materials online.

Unfortunately, some who have been able to post literature online without interference have boasted about it and invited others to follow suit.

### ***In Conclusion***

All of these practices are increasing, and we need to bring the issues to the attention of our Fellowship. Gathering a clearer sense at the Conference of what our members currently do believe will help World Services gain guidance on how to move forward. In the spirit of the First and Fourth Traditions, the majority of NA members and service bodies want to comply with the Fellowship's wishes—it's just a matter of reaffirming those wishes together. We need the Conference to help clarify the will of the Fellowship and how they see our role in relation to that conscience.

In our experience, it is not possible to have a truly deep and definitive conversation at the WSC without a series of breakout sessions. We are limited by the size of the WSC and the time on our agenda, but we do want to try to get a general sense of how the membership feels about some of these issues. Does the Fellowship still affirm the rules we have agreed on in the *FIPT*? If so, then it is up to all of us to stand up for the decisions we have made. We believe the discussions in this session may need to carry over to the Thursday afternoon session currently marked TBD (to be determined).

**Group Conscience & NA Literature**

World Board April 2015

In 2011 the World Service Conference passed two motions—one to reaffirm that the WSO holds ownership of NA's intellectual property in trust for the Fellowship of NA, and another to reaffirm that the WSO is exclusive publisher and distributor of all NA literature.

At the time, WSO's intellectual property attorney explained to the Conference:

"This needs to be done for the benefit of those people who do not have the time, energy, or the interest to look back at what really happened and would rather argue that the past consists of what they believe should have happened."

And here we are again—increasing numbers of our members are illegally copying and distributing NA literature around the world, seeding seeds of confusion and distrust, in all the places where NA is in early stages. In particular, people are producing a booklet that contains the Third Edition Basic Text as the Second Edition version of the Fourth and Ninth Traditions, a booklet that was compiled by a few individuals and has **never been Fellowship-approved**. It is bad enough that we have had this ongoing struggle with NA, now it has become a public problem because these texts are being distributed in institutions.

The roots of this conflict go back more than 30 years. The history of the Basic Text is a story that gets told many ways, with different heroes and villains depending on who is doing the telling. There are some things, however, that are not open to interpretation:

- 1. It goes against group conscience.** The Fellowship has decided on these issues repeatedly:
  - ◆ happening in 1984 when the Fellowship voted to return to the First Edition language for the Fourth and Ninth Traditions,
  - ◆ and again in 1988 when the conference rejected the idea of extensive changes to the text beyond fixing the errors in the Fourth Edition,
  - ◆ and again in 1993 when the conference voted against reconsidering which edition of the book should be published,
  - ◆ and again in 2003 when the Fellowship approved the *Fellowship Intellectual Property Trust*,
  - ◆ and again as recently as 2004 when a CAW motion was passed authorizing revisions to the Basic Text but specifying no changes be made to chapters one through ten of the text. That 2004 motion resulted in the Sixth Edition Basic Text, which was approved unanimously in 2006.
- 2. It's illegal.** The unauthorized production of NA literature is a violation of copyright law. NA groups can copy and distribute NA literature for use within their groups, but that right does not extend outside the group or to individuals and service bodies.

