



# A GUIDE TO PUBLIC RELATIONS: WHAT, WHY, WHO AND HOW

RGVANA

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THE ELEVENTH TRADITION IS THE CORNERSTONE OF NA'S PUBLIC RELATIONS POLICY. BUT TRADITION ELEVEN IS ONLY ONE OF SIX TRADITIONS THAT ADDRESS VARIOUS ASPECTS OF OUR RELATIONS WITH THE PUBLIC. THE THIRD AND FIFTH TRADITIONS TALK ABOUT THE PRIMARY PURPOSE AND ULTIMATE TARGET OF OUR PUBLIC RELATIONS EFFORTS. TRADITIONS SIX AND SEVEN DESCRIBE THE NATURE OF OUR RELATIONS WITH OTHER ORGANIZATIONS, AND THE TENTH TRADITION DETAILS OUR POLICY CONCERNING PUBLIC PRONOUNCEMENTS ON ISSUES OUTSIDE THE SCOPE OF OUR RECOVERY PROGRAM. CLEARLY, OUR TRADITIONS ARE JUST AS CONCERNED WITH OUR PUBLIC RELATIONS AS THEY ARE WITH OUR INTERNAL RELATIONS.

*TRADITION ELEVEN*

*IT WORKS: HOW AND WHY*

- [What is Public Relations](#)
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# WHAT IS PUBLIC RELATIONS

- “Public relations” is just another way of saying “taking care of our relationships.” These relationships help addicts find recovery.
- We build relationships with the general public, law enforcement and addiction professionals, and with each other. When professionals who treat addicts know about NA and have a positive opinion, they are more likely to refer potential members to our program.
- When we accomplish this, we carry a powerful and positive message of what NA can offer the still-suffering addict.
- How do we do this? We attend community events to provide information about NA and we assist NA groups to help them carry the message of recovery.
- When we effectively carry the message of recovery to the addict who still suffers, we fulfill our primary purpose.



# PR AND THE NA MEMBER

*Why is this important to me?*

- The actions we take in forming relationships with the public can have a profound effect on whether addicts can find NA.
- Many of our members are performing **public relations** without being elected to a trusted servant position and are building NA relationships with the public through the individual impressions that “we” leave.
- When we identify ourselves as NA members, each one of us may be seen as a representative of NA to those not familiar with our program. The way we interact with personnel of the facilities we use for our meetings and functions affects how the public views NA as a whole
- When people know we are in NA, we represent NA whether we mean to or not. Tradition Eleven tells us that the choice to reveal our membership comes with an obligation to protect NA’s public reputation. Even if we insist that we don’t intend to represent NA, to the public we often do
- Each of us is engaging in public relations every time we are in public. Our behavior in a restaurant after a meeting carries a message to everyone there. When we wear NA T-shirts or jewelry, talk loudly about our recovery or our addiction—people notice. The knowledge that “we are PR” is one more reason we try to practice principles in all our affairs.



# PR AND THE NA GROUP

*What does PR have to do with my homegroup?*

- NA groups-not NA meetings-are the foundation of the NA service structure
- The group is the most powerful vehicle we have for carrying the message.
- As a group, their single goal is to help drug addicts recover through application of the Twelve Steps of Narcotics Anonymous
- As a group, their public relations policy is based on attraction rather than promotion.
- The group provides each member with the opportunity to share and to hear the experience of other addicts who are learning to live a better way of life without the use of drugs.
- Together, the NA groups are responsible for making service decisions that directly affect them and what they do in their meetings as well as those that fundamentally affect the identity of Narcotics Anonymous.
- An area's public relations goals can have significant impact on the groups.
- Thoroughly discussing public relations projects during an area service meeting will help group service representatives communicate the area's discussions and goals to their groups
- Our PR efforts serve to provide information to the public. As a result, groups may need to prepare for an influx of new members by developing meeting formats that better serves the group
- Our public relations policy is based on attraction rather than promotion. The group can create an atmosphere of recovery where our public relations policy can flourish and bring addicts together so the magic of empathy, honesty, caring, sharing, and service can do their work.



# COOPERATION NOT AFFILIATION

*You can't affiliate with other organizations!*

*An NA group ought never endorse, finance, or lend the NA name to any related facility or outside enterprise, lest problems of money, property, or prestige divert us from our primary purpose.*

*Tradition*

*Six*

*Narcotics Anonymous has no opinion on outside issues; hence, the NA name ought never be drawn into public controversy.*

*Tradition*

*Ten*

- Cooperation and affiliation are vastly different. Affiliation means being joined or connected. Public relations service involves cooperating with other organizations by building and maintaining relationships.
- We can work together with other organizations in ways that are helpful for both of us. We are careful to follow NA's guiding principles and realize that other organizations may not be bound by the same principles
- We maintain the boundaries established by Tradition 6. Our name, our time, our people, and our money are resources that we need to steward wisely.
- One of the important ways to protect ourselves from endorsement or affiliation is to be self supporting
- As groups and in service, we carry our message independent from the organizations and institutions we work alongside. We are more likely to form productive and cooperative relationships when we review what services we can and cannot offer to others
- Our fellowship's primary purpose defines us. When NA's identify becomes too closely tied to the identify of another organization, the clarity of our primary purpose is muddled, losing some of its power.
- Our credibility is derived from the fact that we maintain our focus on recovery from addiction and do not offer an opinion on any issue outside the scope of our own program



## PR BASICS

- The foundational principle of all our service efforts is the group's primary purpose – The Fifth Tradition: *"Each group has but one primary purpose – to carry the message to the addict who still suffers."*
- We approach our service with an attitude of humility: We are simply recovering addicts trying to carry a message of recovery—one that someone else freely shared with us—to other suffering addicts.
- NA is a not-for-profit organization. In accordance with our Seventh Tradition—*we are fully self-supporting through our own contributions*. As the public gains more knowledge about NA, they become more inclined to offer their support by referring clients, family and friends to the NA program. This type of support builds relationships with the public founded on trust and goodwill.



# PR BASICS

- Spiritual Principles in Action...
  - Show mutual respect
  - Be trustworthy
  - Be flexible
  - Be persistent
- Our job is to let others know that NA is a simple, spiritual, 12-step recovery program that can help any addict find freedom from drug addiction!
- How Does the Work Get Done?
  - We respond to requests for presentations
  - We distribute posters, flyers, billboards & do public service announcements
  - We hold learning days and workshops to educate and train our members





# PR BASICS

- ***PR Around Town...***
  - We go to treatment facilities, outpatient clinics, criminal justice, & healthcare facilities
- ***Plan a Presentation...***
  - Where: Schools, healthcare facilities, social services, treatment centers, etc.
  - Why : To give the audience a basic understanding of NA
  - Who : Determine who is the audience and who will do the presentation
  - What: Posters, billboards & public service announcements
  - When: During a convenient time for all participants
  - How: With careful planning, rehearsal and preparation of materials



There is a role for every interested member in their local PR subcommittee. Your input, suggestions, feedback, and participation are needed and valued. We openly invite you to come to our PR subcommittee meeting!

## HOW DO MEMBERS GET INVOLVED?



# Future of NA

## Narcotics Anonymous can help!

You can stop using, lose the desire to use, and find a new way to live. We are a fellowship of recovering addicts who meet regularly to help each other stay clean. We suggest you read some of our literature and attend one of our meetings.

LITERATURE & MEETINGS: [TriState-NA.org](http://TriState-NA.org)

NEED HELP NOW? 412-391-5247

PO Box 423, Homestead PA 15120

## Narcotics Anonymous



Find a meeting near you...

[www.TRISTATE-NA.org](http://www.TRISTATE-NA.org)

Tri-State Region of  
Narcotics Anonymous

Helpline / 412-391-5247  
You are not alone!