

III PERSONAL COMMITMENT



COMMITMENT TO H&I

Commitment means many different things to many different people some of these definitions may include these simple words: duty, dedication, pledge, promise, devotion, obligation, responsibility & guarantee. The principle of commitment is one that has been taught to us by the Twelve Steps of Narcotics Anonymous. Hospitals and Institutions, (H&I) work requires that we as individuals practice this principle faithfully.

Often time an H&I presentation is the first exposure to recovery in NA for many addicts. Our panels may also be the only contact these addicts receive with our program on a weekly basis. It is important that we realize that the suffering addict in the facility we serve may depend on us for the only message of recovery they get. For this reason we ask that you not volunteer for an H&I meeting if you are not sure you will be able to attend. If you do volunteer, make sure you fulfill your commitment. None of us as individuals has the right to cancel an H&I meeting. By making the choice to attend a panel, we must realize that we may have to forgo activities that we might prefer. Living by spiritual principles such as commitment does not always feel good.

The consequences of choosing not to attend and fulfill our commitments are that we let down the addict who still suffers, the facilities we serve, the reputation of NA, and our own personal program of recovery. Remember that the purpose of an H&I subcommittee is to carry the NA message of recovery to the addicts who do not have full access to regular Narcotics Anonymous meetings”, when we drop the ball and do not fulfill our commitment we send a complete opposite message to both the addict and the facility. This message is one of indifference and intolerance. The message that is conveyed is that NA does not care! By not attending we do our personal programs great harm by living in the self centered nature of our disease. It may take years to overcome this choice.

COMMITMENT TO THE LANGUAGE OF RECOVERY

Commitment to the language of recovery in our meetings is also an important issue. In order to remain consistent with our traditions, and insure that the message we carry is a clear consistent message of recovery in NA, we refer to ourselves simply as “addicts”, not “drug addicts”, not “addicts and alcoholics”, not “dually addicted”, not “junkies”, not “dope fiends”, just as “addicts”. We refer to our time in the program as “clean”, “clean time” or “recovery”, not “sobriety”, not “clean and sober”, just “clean”, “clean time” or “recovery”!. A mixed message is a confusing message. If this is something that you feel you can not do, maybe you are not suited to H&I service in NA.

COMMITMENT TO REPRESENT NA

As H&I volunteers we must remember that when we attend an H&I meeting we are viewed as examples or representatives of NA. The fellowship as a whole may be judged on how we conduct our selves. Common courtesy is essential! Therefore, we should arrive to the facility early. We should start and end the meeting on time, we should respect the dress code of the facility as well as recommendations made in the H&I handbook, and our areas orientation. We should treat everyone we meet, staff, patients, inmates, guests with respect. Our actions in these facilities will reflect NA as a whole and will carry a message of recovery.

COMMITMENT TO THE SUB-COMMITTEE

The H&I sub-committee in our area can be a really effective tool when we all help. One of the reasons it exists is to keep an open line of communication between NA as a whole and the facilities we serve. More importantly, at the sub-committee, we can share our experience strength and hope and help each other through problems we may encounter in carrying the message. This will allow us to grow and prosper. Without this commitment, without our members from the panel and members on up attending the subcommittee meetings, the message of NA is lost and the sub-committee loses its effectiveness. All of the steps of NA include “we” for a big reason. Together we can do a great job but when individuals try to carry the load of the H&I subcommittee the downward spiral begins.

COMMITMENT TO SERVICE

The Basic Text of NA tells us that “good will is best exemplified in service: proper service is doing the right things for the right reason. When goodwill supports and motivates both the individual and the Fellowship, we are fully whole and wholly free.” Proper service is a corner stone of our personal programs. When we apply this principle of commitment to our lives it is through our own experience that we grow spiritually and mentally. Sometimes we may feel that our work in H&I is futile, that it just isn’t working. However, that will change when you are sitting in a meeting someday and an addict comes rushing up to meet you and to say thank you for bringing them in the message. If we can touch one life with our panels, then we have done our jobs. Above and beyond we “keep what we have by giving it away”. H&I service will help keep us clean.