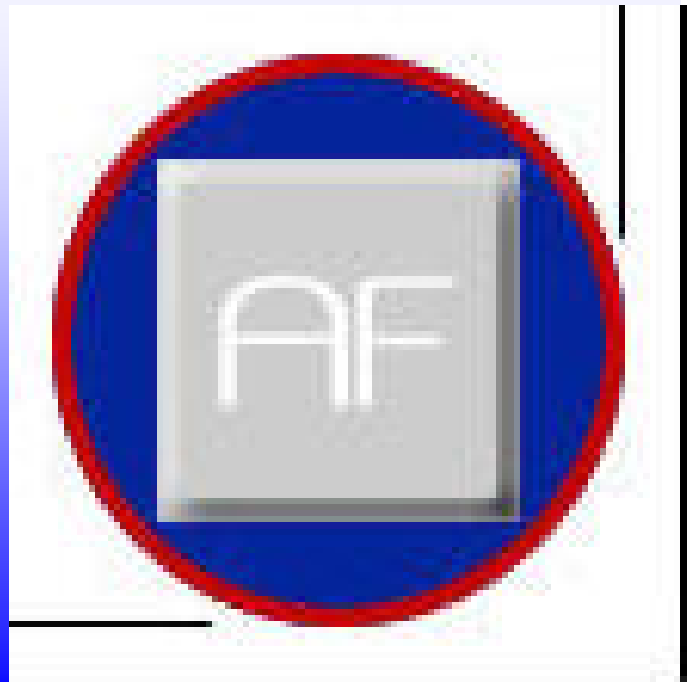


December 2007

Volume I

*The* New/Old  
NAWay



# *Mission Statement*

*Alternate Service Information Structure for Narcotics Anonymous*  
is a point of collection for the informed group conscience of N.A. While we believe an attempt to reform N.A. service from within the existing structure might be beneficial, what we believe to be a more effective strategy is to provide a steady, reliable, non-political, and non-combative alternative for directly responsible service.

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## *Ostriches and Mushrooms*

*AWARENESS & THE COURAGE TO CHANGE THE THINGS I CAN  
-OR- Of: Ostriches and Mushrooms (and Mushroom Farmers)*

I've been a bit of an 'ostrich' lately ... that is: I've kept my head in the sand. I have not shared some of what I've seen and heard. My honesty has been selective and judgmental. To me that means I've been dishonest. That sort of makes me a 'Mushroom farmer'. Mushrooms are kept in the dark and fed manure. Mushroom farmers keep mushrooms in the dark and feed them manure. I haven't shared what I see and hear because it's not real good stuff. I want people to think that everything is OK. So I just hide my head in the sand and pretend everything is OK. By doing that I'm giving people who depend on me for information "the mushroom treatment". I'm keeping them in the dark and feeding them manure ... by default. Rationalization tells me that it's better for them to believe everything is OK. They want to believe it's OK so I tell them about the things that are OK and just avoid telling them about the things that aren't OK. I'll turn my head or bury it in the sand. I'll share some of what I see and hear just not all of it.

Some people 'farm mushrooms' intentionally. They keep us in the dark and feed us manure. That makes me mad, especially when they tell me they're doing it for my own good – they don't want to bore me with the details, they ask me to trust them (which reminds me a whole lot of "...just give me the money and I'll be right back with the drugs"). I don't like what they are doing – it's wrong, it's not Ostriches and Mushrooms OK but I haven't said anything about it. By not sharing what I see happening I'm just as much a 'mushroom farmer' as they are.

Others have the best of intentions, they aren't intentionally keeping us in the dark... they have just missed the point. It always seems they've got lots of energy. Things are happening where nothing was going on before. That's good, that's OK and I share about that, the only thing is the point they missed is important. Its part of what makes us what we are. By missing the point the message that's carried is incomplete, or confusing, or wrong. That's not OK, but I've failed to mention it. I've focused on the new energy and activity and failed to mention that the resulting new projects may do much more harm than good. These projects may take lots of time and energy to undo: time will be lost; lives may even be limited or lost. But I've been an ostrich and I'm farming mushrooms as a result.

densome and one report just previous to the next WSC included a massive discussion of our service structure misrepresented as input from the WSC Policy subcommittee. This single self-willed abuse of our trust cost our fellowship an excessive quantity of time because many groups felt they must study and decide upon these ideas. Because this was not what the policy committee had requested done, the whole section was withdrawn from consideration at WSC '84. This is an excellent illustration of the warnings we were given in the discussion of Tradition 9 in the Review Form of our Basic Text ... Ostriches and Mushrooms

*(...material from review form needed)*

Further evidence of the exclusive tone of the fellowship report was that there were very few members attending WSC '84 just to observe and help out with sub-committees.

Following WSC '84 the fellowship report has become increasingly burdensome, verbose, and exclusive sounding. In the last fellowship report we are informed that there will be no more quarterly fellowship reports. Furthermore, it is suggested that the NA fellowship should invest world level 'trusted servants' with the "authority to make routine business decisions" just as "a large corporation would assign corporate officers or chief employees". We are further informed that the fellowship will receive equivalent (to the fellowship report) communication through the WSO Newline which is distributed to much of the fellowship free. Ostriches and Mushrooms The WSO Inc. is a business. A business in service to NA is a business all the same. A business should advertise goods and services for sale.

The WSO Newline is how our business advertises the goods and services for sale to us. It is necessary that the WSO does this and by the nature of WSO the advertisement sheet called Newline is also very informative and service oriented. But it is an advertisement from a business all the same.

This is my perception of what has happened and is happening in NA World Service. We have created an administrative structure in NA world service that is forcing organization on us that has the capacity to destroy us spiritually. We have done this – you and I – by being 'mushroom farmers' and 'ostriches'. Money, property and prestige have insidiously diverted us from our primary purpose. Unnoticed addiction in the form of deceit and manipulative communication from world services have worked to place personalities in service to NA and their opinions before the Principles of our Steps and Traditions.



**MY QUESTIONS ARE SIMPLE:**

DO WE WANT A WORLD SERVICE ADMINISTRATIVE STRUCTURE  
LIKE  
WE HAVE TODAY?

-OR- DO WE WANT DIRECTLY RESPONSIBLE TRUSTED  
SERVANTS WHO ACT ON MOTIONS PASSED AT WSC THAT REPRESENT  
THE GROUP CONSCIENCE OF THE FELLOWSHIP?

I know that those who trust me will eventually learn the truth and be very angry with me for keeping them in the dark and feeding them manure. They may not trust me anymore. Right now, however, they think I'm great and everything is just OK. That feels pretty good except when self-honesty reminds me that I've lied by omission. My disease seeks to destroy me; I'll continue to live like this till I'm given the courage to change the things I can. I want to be honest. I want to be willing to try. What happened was I thought I was becoming open-minded. When I'd been honest before, others called me radical. When I acted courageously others branded me a dissenter. I lost my anonymity and yearned to be just a member Ostriches and Mushrooms again. So ... I compromised. I stopped sharing what I saw and heard and knew. Cowardice sort of felt comfortable, my name is no longer "in the news". But my conscience hurts. I can't stand it any longer and I must get honest. Recovery demands it—so here we go ...

First, let me tell you who I am. My name doesn't matter but my recovery experience does. I'm neither a newcomer nor an old-timer. I have five years clean. The NA program allowed me to stop using drugs. There was essentially no fellowship here when I stopped using. I surrendered to powerlessness over addiction and am recovering on that basis. There are no ties in my recovery to any fellowship or program other than Narcotics Anonymous. I attended my first WSC in 1980 at 1 year clean and participated in WSC '81, '82, '83 and '86. My life in recovery is dedicated to working the 12 steps of NA, becoming a responsible productive member of society and serving my higher power through NA. I was involved in the development of our Basic Text, our fellowship magazine, our service manual, a couple of regional service committees, area committees, NA meetings, and most important to me an active, effective, NA Home Group. I am fallible, human, talented, self-destructive, diseased, and recovering. Most of all I care desperately about Narcotics Anonymous. Now let me tell you what I see that I haven't been sharing: We have made some mistakes lately and are on the verge of repeating them. The mistakes we've made have compromised the spiritual principles in our traditions and it would be insane to repeat them and expect different results. The mistakes I speak of are Ostriches and Mushrooms World Service mistakes they affect all of us. Allow me to share what I've seen and ask some questions:

In 1981 we decided to publish a quarterly world service report to the entire fellowship: the quarterly fellowship report. Before fellowship reports began coming out there was no effective system of unbiased fellowship-wide communication. Before fellowship reports began coming out very few RSR's knew what-all- would be voted on at the WSC ... which made it difficult to know how the Areas, Groups, and members they represented would have them vote. The principles guiding NA structural service: Traditions 2, 7 and 9, were just that – principles, very little had been done to really make them work. Our World Service Fellowship Report was a first giant step toward NA having real Group Conscience and Direct Responsibility. In '81 and '82 several dedicated trusted servants produced the first two fellowship reports. These early attempts were simple informative and effective. They worked to produce the **first real unity in the history of NA**. The tone of these communications was INCLUSIVE – members were led to believe that they could help with NA World services and that their help was needed and encouraged. One of the results was that a large number of members attended the 1982 World Service Conference they were encouraged to feel a "part of".

Apparently those who became responsible for the quarterly fellowship report following WSC '82 were either unable or unwilling to produce it as the fellowship desired. World service fellowship reports were consistently late and not published quarterly. The tone of these Ostriches and Mushrooms reports became increasingly exclusive it seemed to me that members were being progressively more discouraged from participating in NA world services. Following WSC '83 more reports were published and they were more nearly on time, however the exclusive tone of the reports accelerated. The reportage itself became excessively wordy and bur-

## *IT'S A MIRACLE!*

*One would think that any time people like us got together, the results would be mass chaos Groups of self-centered, self-willed, isolated individuals just can't meet together peacefully and safely; but we do.  
The reason we can is our Twelve Traditions!*

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## A Path Through the Confusion

It doesn't seem like too long ago that life was unbearable because of the confusion going on in my head. Today there is just as much confusion, but I know what to do with it. It's called turning it over. This for me has to be done on a daily basis.

The confusion I feel today seems to be centered in the controversy within our Fellowship. Much of it deals with the language and terminology being used to define recovery and some of it concerns things going on in service. I used to jump right in, because my disease told me I wasn't powerless over such things. I rode right back out the doors of N.A. on a cloud of controversial confusion. I thank my God that I made it back alive. Today I have a different outlook on it all.



Today the only way for me to survive the confusion is to live "as best I can" the spiritual principles of our program. I have to pray to God as I understand Him to take my will and my life, to relieve me of self enough to be used as an instrument. I have to make a commitment to the program on a daily basis, without reservation. When I do this, it seems like the confusion is a lot easier to live with, because I know why I am here. I'm not here to add to the confusion, but to try to help make some sense of it all by sharing my recovery patiently and with loving tolerance. I pray to my Higher Power *that it all is serving a purpose.*

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## Visit our website at [www.anonymi.info](http://www.anonymi.info)

This website is dedicated to [true trusted service](#) for the NA Member, Group or committee who wants to effectively carry the NA message of total abstinence from all drugs and Recovery from Addiction to the addict who still suffers. We will be steady, reliable, non-political, and **non-combative.**

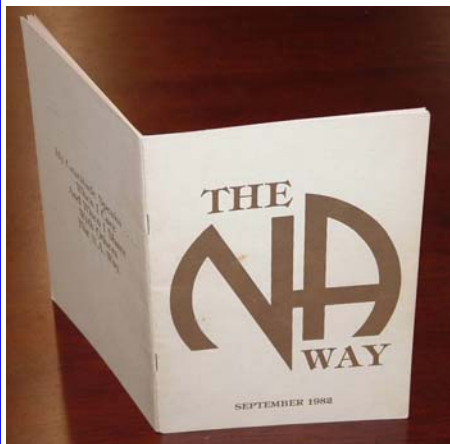
We are guided by the [12 Traditions](#) of NA and [Directly responsible](#) to those NA Groups we serve.

# Your Fellowship Magazine

Share...  
and be shared with...

Like it was when NA was new and  
young and life-or-death intense:

*You matter to us so we will tell you the  
truth as we know it with nothing held  
back.*



*“...so that no addict seeking recovery  
need ever die...”*