

THE STORY OF THE
BASIC TEXT

by Bo S.

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third pre-publication version

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P R E F A C E

The Basic Text, Narcotics Anonymous, was written between the years 1977 and 1982. Over this six year period, a movement grew from a few members to include thousands of N.A.'s from the United States, Australia, Great Britain and parts of Europe.

The workers who produced the work were ordinary people except in one respect: they were all addicts who had found recovery through the Twelve Steps of Narcotics Anonymous. They found among their growing ranks whatever talents, skills and resources were required to complete the task at hand.

This story is a tribute to the perseverance, faith and recovery of all those who contributed what they had to offer to collect, compile and review the Basic Text. As is often the case with such works, the times, the methods and the miracles get lost as time goes along. Their story deserves to be told.

N.A. is a spiritual, not religious, program of recovery from the disease of addiction. Even so, it is unusual for the spiritual interworkings to surface in a visible manner so that new members and nonmembers can take a look into this remarkably simple and effective way of life. Without the bonds of selflessness and a sincere commitment to the idea that recovery ought to be available to any addict seeking recovery, the work would have been doomed from the start. As it was, the strain and tensions had all to be consistently overcome to carry the work forward to completion. Telling this story may help with future works of this nature for the benefit of those who suffer.

- Bo S.

INTRODUCTION TO THE
SECOND PRE-PUBLICATION DRAFT

To introduce this work in functional terms, it may be helpful to restate obvious facts that may not be generally known. The N.A. Basic Text, Narcotics Anonymous was conceived of and written by N.A. members over a seven year period between 1977 and 1982. Since then, the Fellowship has experienced unprecedented growth. The story of how the book was written has never been told. To tell this story requires personal experience and the documentation to do an accurate and useful work. It also requires a full time effort. Our world service system is set up to address current needs of the Fellowship within the Twelve Traditions and generally accepted and approved service procedures. A work of this sort is extremely difficult or impossible to initiate or carry through to completion without interminable delays. A recent estimate to get the work on the drawing boards was ten years.

If a member is willing to do the work starting now, on a personal basis, with the well being and good of the Fellowship in mind, then putting together a pre-publication edition, going to work now, factoring in ideas, suggestions and drawing on written references, the work can begin immediately. The experience of the author suggests that this can and should be done. The benefits lie in the knowledge which can be transmitted to the reader whether they have a general interest in N.A., writing books or contemplate making anonymous contributions of their own within the Fellowship of N.A. itself.

Contempt prior to investigation is a fact of life among most people because what is not known can often not be conceived of in terms of need or application. Often, there is the feeling that knowing more will simply complicate an already complicated situation. Frequently this may be the case but where problems exist, solutions based on facts must be sought if the difficulties are to pass.

Members of N.A. will have final say as to style and content of the material. To do this without prerequisite funds and the lengthy processes that have kept works of this sort dead locked for years, a special plan has been carefully developed for the work. With fifteen thousand meetings and growing as of this writing, the need for written materials on the history of N.A. is self evident. Let it begin here.

Additional material is being sought from members who actually worked on the Book. Some might concern themselves with this effort making these members special in the sense that it might threaten their recovery in some mysterious way, this kind of projection may be the very thing that has prevented this story from coming out so far.

The members who supported, contributed material and did the work on the Basic Text are special. Their story exists in reality whether it is told or not. By, in effect, keeping their story secret, the ways in which they successfully dealt with difficulties is lost to the greater body of the membership.

All written additions and questions will be answered and

considered for inclusion in subsequent versions of this work. Finalization may require a reunion of sorts to complete the work if interest and support warrant.

This material represents the second stage of writing this book. Some items have been added from the archives: the orientation sheet from May 1979 and the WLC final report. Researching files, records, minutes, tapes, correspondence and conduct personal interviews is absolutely required if the work is to be completed.

The single item of concern from those who contacted me after reading the Story of the Basic Text was confusion over who was who. This occurred among those members who have limited personal experience or some knowledge about the writing of the Basic Text. After the twentieth member complained that the effect of the technique was more to cause reader doubt than to maintain proper anonymity, the decision to use real first names and last initials was made.

To set the record straight, I was never worried about someone suing me for using their name in this book. My sole concern was that some member would come up to me at a convention somewhere and express hurt feelings. Today, I am respondent to other concerns. The material contained in this writing as it stands is the most complete and accurate record of what we did to accomplish the writing of our Book. This was done entirely by the Fellowship of N.A. with no outside help. The writing done by members is the property of the Fellowship. While elected trusted servants and special workers may act as custodians of these materials, they neither own them nor can they treat them as their

property.

It is the principles that guided the work that need to be known. Their names are important mainly to themselves and a few friends. The members who did the work were at most addicts fortunate enough to have heard the message of recovery. They set aside personal differences, made sacrifices and prayed that the N.A. message might be carried to the ends of the earth. Through participation, they enhanced their personal recovery and experienced a degree an uncommon intensity of spirituality - as well as seeing the work through to completion.

I pray for your blessings. My gratitude goes out to those who have encouraged me to continue with this work.

A Grateful Addict

DEDICATION

Dedicated to the members and Spirit of N.A. without which the subject of this work would not have occurred, Judy without whose courage, faith and support the work could not have been done and to my two sons who have paid a heavy price for the works of their father.

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Chapter One

SAN FRANCISCO WORLD CONVENTION

"Who's working on the book?", asked the man with the Southern accent. The time 1977. The place was San Francisco. The occasion was the Seventh World Convention of Narcotics Anonymous.

He was told to go to the registration desk.

At the desk, he asked his question again. He had come a long way from Georgia and this was not the first time he had asked this question. He was getting used to being told to go see different people. No one seemed to know any specifics.

The book he was asking about was a text to serve the needs of members of Narcotics Anonymous. Talk of a text had been going on for some time from what he was able to find out. Among themselves, members said there was a work going on somewhere but no one had any details. It was also said that addicts in recovery could not write.

He himself had repeated this often enough to begin to question the statement. What did it mean? Was it that they had never tried or that they were never successful. Surely there were a few members who made their living in the writing professions. He had to find out.

He walked up to the registration table set against a wall across

from the escalator on the second floor. There were several people seated behind the table waiting on a few people signing up for the convention. There were also a few men and women standing around talking.

He asked his question one more time. The older man sitting behind the desk looked up at him and cocked his head. He seemed to be sizing up the man asking the question as much as the Southern accent. Finally, he said, "I don't know but ask these guys here." He called to one of the men near table.

A tall thin man wearing a sports jacket and old fashioned narrow tie stepped up. The man behind the table pointed to the man with the question. He threw out his hand. "My name is Jack W. Can I help you?"

"Bo S. I'm from Atlanta. I was wondering if you knew anything about the work being done on our Basic Text. I've heard some work is being done but I don't seem to be able to find out any details."

"There is something being done. I don't know that many details myself. I'll see if I can get some one to help you. Is this your first convention?" asked Jack.

"First N.A. convention. N.A. is growing pretty good back home and I came out here to learn more about N.A."

"Do you have family here?"

"Naw. I came for the convention."

"Hey, Jimmy. Here's a guy that came all the way from Atlanta for the Convention." Jack called to an older gentleman nearby.

Jimmy made a closing comment to the young lady he was talking to and came over to Jack and Bo.

"Hi there, my name's Jimmy. What's yours?"

"Bo."

"He was asking about what work is being done on our Book. I thought you might be able to help him." said Jack.

"Might be, just might be. Are you one of the members who has been writing the Office? I handle a lot of the correspondence."

"Sure. You and I have swapped some letters. I'm the Atlanta Lit Chair. I'm here for the convention but I want to know more about the Fellowship too. Who is working on our book?"

"Why do you want to know?" asked Jimmy.

"Well, the program is growing back home a lot of us are wondering about how N.A. is going out west here. We have a lot of questions. The book seems the main thing every body is asking about." replied Bo.

"Just a minute. There's someone here who can help you. I want you to meet somebody. Greg! Could you give us a minute here?"

A very husky guy with an open and friendly western look looked up in acknowledgement and came over to the group. He had a beautiful turquoise stone mounted as a slide on a string tie with one of those shirts with the western cuts in it and snaps instead of buttons.

He looked at Jack and Jimmy and then to the man he didn't know yet.

"My names Greg. What's up?"

"He's asking about the Book, Greg and we thought you might want to talk to him." ventured Jack.

By this time, Bo had the feeling he was making progress but the exact status of the book was still a mystery.

Greg said, "Well, there's been some work done. What would you like to know?"

Bo asked, "How far along is it. We had heard that there was work being done but nobody seems to know any details. I've been writing Jimmy for the last few years. I can't believe I've finally met him!"

Greg took over the conversation and Jack and Jimmy moved away

from the two to talk with other members standing around and coming up to the tables to register. There was a lot of hugs and how are you's. A swirl of talk with breaks of laughter. These people knew each other and were glad to be together again.

"I sent in my story last July. Did you see it at the Office?" asked Bo.

"I'm not sure. I believe I would remember it. I help out there now and then. Tell me more about N.A. in Atlanta."

"Well, we've got seven meetings a week now. Bunches of newcomers. They ask a lot of questions and some are hard to answer. Look, a lot of us know N.A. is for real, it's just we want to know more about the Fellowship, where the meetings started, all that."

Greg looked thoughtful for a moment, then said, "N.A. as we know it started in California. A lot of us believe that something like N.A. started many times. N.A. is the natural outgrowth of A.A."

"Is there anybody working on our Book?"

"There's been some work done. It's been a dream for a long time."

"I've been talking with a lot of members in the East and we want to help with it. If N.A. started in California twenty four years ago, surely there's been some work done. We haven't heard anything definite."

Bo wondered while all this talk was going on if his story had been received. These members were nice but why the run around about his story? Did the Office receive so many stories that his had gotten lost?

"I have some material up in my room I can show you later on. It's hard. A lot of people believe addicts in recovery can't write."

"I've heard that. Does it mean they haven't tried or that they have failed?"

"Mostly, they haven't tried."

"That's one reason I came out here. I'm suspicious that while I may not know much about recovery now, I only have three years clean, when I have ten or fifteen, I won't feel like I do now." said Bo.

"That happens. The little White Book came out in 1963 or so. It was put together by members who had been clean that long, most of them. Almost all of the pamphlets are drawn from it."

"Look, this is awkward for me. I don't want to put you guys on the spot. We've got a ton of newcomers back home and they all ask these basic questions. I don't know the answers. Is there some place we can go and talk about this?"

Greg agreed and they went downstairs to the coffee shop. The halls and escalator were filled with clean addicts. Some of them didn't look like members to Bo. They didn't have that friendly,

open look about them - like you could walk up to them and give them a hug. Greg asked about Bo and Bo told him about how he got to the program. He talked about his wife and baby. They talked about the meetings back home and the meetings in Los Angeles. Along the way, Greg would stop and say hello to different people out of the crowds they passed.

At the booth in the coffee shop, they continued their talking.

"How about a plan? Is there a plan for the Book? I'm sorry if I keep asking the same question but I really want to know."

"I hate to give indirect answers. Have you ever heard of the World Service Conference?"

"Yea. It's in the N.A. Tree. Representative body."

"That's it. It was supposed to meet here today and only one delegate showed up and they were from Northern California."

"Showed up from where? You mean all over or just California?"

"No. I mean from all over."

"That's what I mean. Where are the meetings, what's the service structure really like? I've read the Tree but it says at the end that the structure doesn't really exist yet."

"It means we are very young and that a lot of things just haven't

gotten done yet."

"Who is working on the Book. Can just anyone?"

"Sure, as long as they are members." said Greg. "What we have right now is a little material that has drifted in over the years."

"How much? Ten pages, a hundred, more..."

"I'm not sure of the exact amount. The material up in my room is about twenty pages on the Steps."

"See my problem? We're not trying to be critical but there has to be a work going on. If there's not, we have to get one started. I mean we could get with oldtimers and write down what they said, couldn't we? I had a friend come out here earlier in the year and he said the same thing you're telling me. I have written some simple stuff myself. A topic outline, some simple notes."

Greg took a deep breath. They ordered coffee. He sat back in the booth and looked across the table at Bo.

Bo said, "Look, I've read all the A.A. history. I know they got their Book in their early days. I know A.A.'s bigger than we are but there is a world full of addicts out there dying for N.A. I know there are a lot of ego trips that go with these things. If there's not anyone working on it, just tell me and we'll go from there. I didn't come all the way from Georgia to go back home without some answers."

Greg took another deep breath and started, "The Board of Trustees has been trying to get something started for years now. We even sent out a letter from the World Service Office stating that work was going on and asking for input. Nothing came in. We're not giving up hope but it's going to happen in God's time."

"Material has been coming in over the years," Greg continued, "but it's mostly poems and general statements. Not much to work up a Book from really. Let's walk around a little. We can go up to the Hospitality Room."

They stopped off on the second floor and went into some of the workshops. One of the rooms had a small workshop in the rear with tables up front. A young lady came up to Greg and asked about visiting the WSO in Los Angeles in November. She said she had some time off from work and wanted to donate some of her vacation time as a volunteer at the Office. Greg took time with her and they all sat at one of the tables. Bo sat by and listened. In the course of things, he realized that Greg was the Chairperson of the Board of Trustees.

The girl was real definite about wanting to schedule her trip and asked for dates when she could come in to help. Greg told her that she needed to call the Office and set up a time. He said that most of the work was being done and that he wasn't sure they could use her on a temporary basis. After an hour or so of this, they went up to Greg's room.

It was interesting to Bo that after they had met, that they had

stayed together. He had expected to be sent to see someone else again. Going to Greg's room meant he might see the material and find out more of what he wanted to know.

In the room, Bo was introduced to Lois, Greg's wife. She was a young dark haired woman with a quick smile and an outgoing personality. Very charming.

They sat down on the bed. Greg picked up a heavy black bag full of papers. It looked real official. After digging through it for a while, he pulled out a group of pages and handed them to Bo.

"This is the material from George S. It only goes through Step Ten."

Bo took the papers and thanked Greg. He took his time and read the material. His eyes started scanning back and forth rapidly and he finished the first page, and then the second. He continued this way through all the material. He never took speed reading but with material like this it came naturally.

When he finished, he looked up and said, "Thanks. This is good stuff. Nothing in A.A. reads like it. Especially the part about, "...would it be insane to buy your death on the installment plan, like we do the dope!"

Greg laughed and looked relieved. He really liked this guy a lot. It was hard for him to lay it all out on the line but he liked him. It had been the most interest displayed by a member about the

literature in quite a while. More was to come.

They spent several hours talking and going into details that have to do with knowing many members from various states. N.A. was growing at last. More meetings had been started in the last five years than at any time in N.A.'s difficult history.

While N.A. started in the early fifties, there were only twenty known meetings in the world in 1970. Now, in 1977 there were almost three hundred.

It got late and instead of just saying good night, Greg invited Bo to visit him in Los Angeles. He said he could stay a few days and visit the WSO. They could also attend one of the oldest meetings in the world.

Bo thanked him but said his flight left Sunday night and he had to get back to work Monday. The said good night and he wandered off to his room through the halls of the Jack Tar Hotel.

There were still addicts everywhere. They looked friendlier now. They were talking and would look up to see if they knew you as you passed. Now Bo felt like he knew them all.

Chapter Two

EARLY N.A.

The story of the Basic Text of Narcotics Anonymous goes back to the roots of Narcotics Anonymous.

Often called the 'mother program', Alcoholics Anonymous had been in existence a mere nine years by the time attempts to form a Twelve Step program working among addicts as A.A. had worked among alcoholics. A.A. was barely getting on it's feet by then.

The term 'Twelve Step program' refers to a twelve step recovery process of personality change incorporating the elements of surrender, faith, personal inventory, amends making and applied spiritual principles. The faith of the individual member according to any of the Twelve Step programs is up to the individual's choice. While much written material exists on the nature and working principles of the Twelve Steps, the process is entirely dependent on the desire of the individual member for the recovery offered by the program of their choice.

Furthermore, none of the Twelve Step programs makes a profit either directly from the recovery or affiliated services offered and have no fees or charges of any kind. Voluntary member support, emotional and financial, insures spiritual integrity. To allow a coherent program to exist where such freedom is emphasized, a complementary system of Twelve Traditions is used. These

Traditions protect the spiritual nature of the program involved. To work, each meeting has to have its own spiritual center and the Traditions prevent intrusion from outside forces while stimulating spirituality within the meetings themselves.

As one of these Twelve Step programs, Narcotics Anonymous has from the beginning been frustrated in its desire to carry its message to more addicts. Barriers of disbelief, ignorance and legal issues stood in the way of sharing out the idea that addicts could learn to live spiritually without the use of drugs. Addicts were sensibly reluctant to admit their addiction in the forties, fifties and sixties. In many places, all the police needed to hear was that there were addicts assembled and they moved in for arrests.

Criminality was the aspect seized on by a society thunder-struck by war and progress. Even though alcoholism was a recognized addiction, it was another thing entirely to call alcoholics addicts. Differences did exist between those addicted to alcohol and addicts of other sorts. These differences were held to be definitive and the underlying fact of addiction was set aside to be dealt with another day.

Drugs other than alcohol were recognized by A.A. but their focus was on recovery from alcoholism. Some of the earliest meetings of Narcotics Anonymous took place in secret. Police pressure against addiction had no way of distinguishing between clean addicts and those in active addiction. Recovery was unheard of in those days.

Out of the earliest meetings of N.A. in the East, articles appeared in the *Saturday Evening Post*, *Life* and other national magazines. Mention of 'chapters' of N.A. in other major cities besides New York like Cleveland, Chicago and Los Angeles was a common theme in these articles. Little happened in the forties and fifties to show that N.A. would grow. There was even a week or two in the late fifties when N.A. ceased to meet entirely.

Finally, in the early sixties, a few members had enough.

The period when no meetings had taken place for a brief time was so killing to their spirit, that they resumed the meetings and eventually formed the Parent Service Board of Narcotics Anonymous. Other members criticized them while they were unwilling or unable to make the same commitment. Their hard headed, stubborn stand was the basis for future growth. N.A. came to mean more because members put more into their program.

By the middle sixties, they expanded the small early form of the *N.A. White Booklet* into a larger pamphlet and included personal recovery stories. This was encouraging. Lengthy writing on N.A. recovery still had to wait.

Precise understanding has often been lacking by members of N.A. who have had to recover without extensive written N.A. material. This lack of written recovery material led to many prolonged difficulties. Action had to wait for understanding.

Writing recovery material has been elusive because of the intense

efforts to avoid conflicts among different Fellowships following a similar set of Twelve Steps and Traditions. Most members who found recovery in N.A. were content to enjoy that recovery and carry the message that recovery from addiction was possible through what they could share of their stories and by their personal example: leading a drug free life.

The nature of the disease of addiction further complicated the development of written material. N.A. members have a reasonable fear of relapse. Making too much of oneself exposes an individual to severe temptations of egotism. Since self-obsession is the spiritual nature of addiction, spiritual safeguards are built into the N.A. service structure. N.A.'s structure abounds with interlocked committees and reports.

So, here we have it: those best qualified to produce specific written material are careful to operate under strict, though often unwritten, spiritual safeguards against relapse that make writing seem impossible. The less qualified newcomers were unable to do it by definition.

As a result, thousands of addicts died before even having a chance of recovery. Hundreds of people who either found recovery through N.A. or supported indirectly the formation of N.A. groups and the general acceptance of N.A. as a practicable program died without ever knowing that their dream of N.A. growth would come true.

To overcome these complexities took simple people and simple

ideas. The sixties and seventies took a heavy toll of human life and the death of the dreams of a generation of humanity. The extreme enthusiasm and idealism of the time was matched by unparalleled despair and a sense of futility.

Rock star idols lived flamboyantly and in time a harsh message was communicated to their followers when many of the most successful and well known died or suffered the incapacitation from addiction.

Some of the addicted survivors of the sixties and seventies sought a better way in N.A. Of these, some carried with them learning experiences that have later proved to be helpful in the growth of N.A. into a worldwide Fellowship with tens of thousands of meetings and hundreds of thousands of members.

A rudimentary service structure, some basic literature, a post office box and a phone number were established in the middle to late sixties. By the early seventies a central office existed in the home of a dedicated member and real growth for N.A. began. There were twenty meetings in the world in 1970 so far as we know.

By the late sixties and early seventies, the stage was set as members of N.A. in California deepened their personal commitment to the Fellowship and intensified their efforts to the point where unprecedented results began to occur. It is this aspect of personal commitment that has preceded every positive event in N.A.'s history. The courage to change has always come after a period of difficulty during which pain and confusion seemed to

win out. Finally, when enough members see the general need clearly, they take action.

A member who saw a need for change formulated a service structure. This allowed for members from all over to gain knowledge and a personal involvement with the processes of their Fellowship that increased identification with and commitment to the general Fellowship. After careful consideration, the first N.A. service structure was approved in the form of a booklet entitled *The N.A. TREE*. It allowed for the World Service Board of Trustees and the World Service Office to continue to exist much as they had before. It added the representative body, the World Service Conference without which the Fellowship had been unable to grow at a significant rate. All recovering addicts have to safeguard against their egos getting out of hand, and only elected, formally correct service positions would allow members to get involved without the threat of egotism in their personal programs.

Elective positions of service became available in the middle seventies with the advent of the World Service Conference. As commitment and identification among members deepened, relapse became less commonplace in N.A. Basic issues became the subject of heated debate. The learning from these discussions deepened the growing knowledge and wisdom of the Fellowship.

Many of these interactions were informal and undirected. They grew out of the natural processes of recovery. Member meets members and further introductions expand the circle to include members from all over. Some items of discussion have universal

interest and application value and many do not. Where members from all over agree on something, it is significant and it is from these types of agreement that formed the original material in the Basic Text.

No one had yet surveyed and checked out the feelings of the Fellowship on any broad scale. The large, participatory WSC had only recently come into existence. The World Convention had never been outside of California in the seven years of its existence.

It took the machinery of the World Service Conference to collect the feelings of members from everywhere into group conscience on particular issues, make decisions, and take action based on the will of the Fellowship.

Once this machinery was in place, things began to happen as never before. While it took several years for the Conference to get going, each year saw new progress for the Fellowship.

Chapter Three

TWO MEMBERS

Bo had been born and raised in Atlanta, Georgia. He was born into a family of business people with the diversification of wealthy and not so wealthy relations. The mix was ideal to allow him to emerge with a capacity to look at a thing from many angles. This ability helped him understand, get along with and work directly with a broad cross section of people.

He dropped out of high school in the eleventh grade and spent a year living on the road in the middle sixties. He exposed himself to the intellectualism of the beatniks and the recreational use of drugs. He got bored with the wild life and returned to his family to finish high school and enter a local college.

A motorcycle accident cut short his education and his increasing use of drugs diminished the value of his learning. The death of friends slowed his usage to the point where he could ask himself some basic questions.

These questions led to his working for about two years in community nonprofit organizations in downtown Atlanta. Like similar areas around the country that sprang up during the Viet Nam War, the area was called 'The Strip'.

At the end of this period in his life, he first sought help in N.A. He had come across the name in a book called The Beats. Through

local A.A., he was able to locate one copy of the N.A. White Booklet and held meetings for six weeks before giving up and sending the treasury to the WSO address listed on the inside the White Booklet.

Another three years of progressive addiction made him seek recovery on any terms he could get it. He felt himself getting older and sadder, not wiser and gladder, so he went to A.A. He had been drinking in a way that reminded him more and more of the other drugs that required needles.

The years on the Strip had made him suspicious of self aggrandizement and he worked quietly to achieve the recovery offered by A.A. A month after he began to attend regular A.A. meetings, a single meeting of N.A. had begun at a local hospital. It continued to meet every Friday night for the next twelve years.

Though he also attended meetings of A.A., he shared as an addict and his desire for recovery gained him membership among the alcoholics. Some of the old-timers kept asking him what had he done for 'his people'. Their question was lost on him until he considered the time he had spent on the Strip working among addicts of all types and degree of sickness and the special aliveness of that part of his life. He realized he was finding something similar but much better in the meetings of Narcotics Anonymous.

His early experience among the beatniks had exposed him to a professional world of writers, musicians and artists. He knew well books were not necessarily that hard to produce. The increased

number of meetings and members in and around Atlanta, along with the East Coast in general, led him to attend the 1977 World Convention in San Francisco.

*** **

Greg had been born and raised in Los Angeles, California. He was raised by his mother who was working in special education. His early memories include a grandmother who died in the shower while under the effects of prescribed medication.

He attended California pop festivals, helped usher in and usher out the hippy movement and managed to attend UCLA and get a good job. He would get loaded on acid and go out to the hills of Topanga Canyon near Malibu and stare for hours at exposed fossils millions of years old.

In his using career, he had direct access to one of the great population centers for addicts of all types. In 1968 he married a lady named Lois. While very much in love and doing well at his work, his addiction was progressing to the point where he was ready to seek help. Unlike many of the early members, he came to the program in a business suit.

He immediately met every member of every known meeting in the world at the time and wound up on the N.A. Board of Trustees within a few years.

His extraordinary mind gave him the ability not only to see the

need for a N.A. service structure but the ability to help get it started by writing and submitting what became the original service structure, *the N.A. TREE*. The structure allowed for a representative body, a primary service center and a board of trustees. While these service branches did not exist in 1975, they have evolved slowly into a dynamic reality.

*** **

When Greg and Bo met at San Francisco, a very special chemistry emerged setting in motion the process that led to the Basic Text. Greg had been working to get an effort for the Basic Text started for years along with all the other members of world services. Bo at the other end of the Fellowship spectrum had heard everyone talk about an N.A. book but couldn't find anyone who knew anything about actual work on it.

Greg talked Bo into spending part of the week following the World Convention as his house guest in North Hollywood. Bo didn't take much selling.

He called his wife and gave her Greg's phone number and they left the Jack Tar Hotel Sunday afternoon for the eight hour drive to L.A. Traveling with them was another member named Henry S. The small red four door Fiat was packed.

On the way to L.A., Henry asked Bo what made him think he was the 'one' to do the Basic Text. Bo closed his eyes a moment and said, "I'm surprised at your question. I am willing. I thought God

does the work and all He needs is willing instruments. Isn't that right?" Henry let it go at that.

The N.A. talk went on for the entirety of the eight hour drive including the brief stop over at the famous pea soup restaurant at the half way point. One of the things nonmembers would find amazing about N.A. is the amount and range of our private discussion. The imaginations and curiosity of addicts seeking recovery is absolutely without limit.

Arriving in Los Angeles, they dropped Henry off and went to a beautiful little home set in a quiet residential section of North Hollywood. Both the interior and the yard contained beautiful plants and curios. Greg was a compulsive rock collector and had built his own display cases that he filled with beautiful specimens of rocks and minerals.

The next day, Greg took Bo to work with him. He supervised the production of polyurethane for a manufacturer whose main products sold to telephone companies. Bo could see the office where Greg wrote *the N.A. Tree* over a two year period starting five years earlier. It amazed him to think of such a great work developed in such a plain setting. At the end of the day, they went to the WSO.

The N.A. World Service Office was located in the home of N.A.'s most famous member, Jimmy K. Jimmy had attended the formative meeting of N.A. in July of 1953 and was continuously involved since then. He remains one of the few addicts whose

name is known throughout the Fellowship. His primary contribution beyond being an active member was to the N.A. 'White Booklet' and the establishment of the WSO as a base for the Fellowship's communications and distribution center.

From 1971 to 1981, the WSO operated from a side room added on to Jimmy's house across from a small airport in Sun Valley, California. He took the mail from P.O. Box 622 that remained in service for almost twenty years under the N.A. name.

Besides answering the mail, Jimmy personally answered the phone twenty-four hours a day and came to know members from all over. In time, he became the repository of information for the growing Fellowship because he had direct personal contact with so many members. These members ranged from his fellow members of the N.A. Board of Trustees to the newest member in the newest meeting who called seeking information and literature.

Bo was warmly welcomed. Although the recovery story he had sent in July couldn't be located, Jimmy gave him one of the treasured coffee cups from the original N.A. meetings in the sixties that moved from location to location weekly to avoid surveillance.

He and Greg went to the oldest continuously meeting group in the world located in a small church in San Fernando Valley. There were about forty members in attendance and the members shared in 'participation style'. This is where members take turns sharing what it was like, what happened and what it was like today.

Before he flew home Wednesday, Greg and Bo had a fateful talk. They had been discussing the Basic Text as a basic dream. How material could be collected. How warm, quick responses to incoming material would likely encourage members to send in more. How members might gather together in working groups of increasing sizes to evaluate and compose the material, depersonalizing and tuning the work into the spoken tradition of N.A. recovery. Those things said at meetings were a verbal form of literature. All they had to do was faithfully write it down to the satisfaction of the clean addicts in N.A.

They hoped the Basic Text would pull the whole Fellowship together. All the members who showed up to help would be welcomed. Even though some would expect to be rigidly qualified and ranked according to clean time and ability, all members would be welcomed and allowed to participate to any extent they wished. Trust and the natural process would place them where they could best serve. Greg and Bo were experienced enough at working with ideas and people to know that there is never just one way. Flexibility was the key. Staying open to the membership and keying everything into their likes and dislikes on a feeling level would allow the work to bring to light the real principles of actual N.A. recovery. The work had to go beyond being a conglomeration of good ideas unsupported by members experience and real application.

Local working groups would be formed to originate and go over the material. Greg and Bo's technical and feeling minds were activated. The ideas came in rushes spilling over into other clearly

defined sequences of likelihood. The spirit was with them. It took great restraint, discipline, faith, courage and trust to follow this inspiration with consistent action and not get sidetracked or bogged down in details.

When Bo left for home, the biggest question in his mind was will this turn out to be like the other great ideas I've wasted all my life seeking and talking about. He thought about his former girl friend Susan who was the first of his near and dears to die shooting dope. He thought of his own lost years. He thought of the faces of newcomers in his life and their chances for lasting recovery in N.A. He hoped this dream would come true for himself and many others.

Chapter Four

PERSONAL EXPERIENCE

On the flight home from Los Angeles, many thoughts passed through Bo's mind. He thought of his new friends clean in N.A. Although A.A. had been around for a long time, N.A. was just getting started. To a great extent, N.A. rode on A.A.'s good name and good record for successfully helping alcoholics.

The N.A.'s were as loving and as caring as A.A.'s and their experience with living clean was increasing at a terrific rate. This is one reason why many members like Bo traveled: to bring home answers from the greater N.A. Fellowship.

This trip had been rich in information gathering. There weren't many questions unanswered for the present. As Chair of the World Service Board, Greg had answered every conceivable question Bo had been able to verbalize. Noticeably, Greg had not stuck on answering any question. He had held nothing back. With his street instincts still intact, this was the thing that allowed Bo to trust him and everything he had said. On some questions Greg admitted that no one knew. Even this helped Bo to trust.

It was obvious that while the N.A. program of recovery was working for Bo and quite a few others, over fifteen hundred had showed up for the San Francisco World Convention, there was a lot of basic work to be done if the needs of the growing Fellowship were going to be met.

This didn't sadden Bo. He had gone to California expecting to hear a name of someone who was working, perhaps without much support, to get a book for N.A. Instead, he had found that there was no one anywhere doing the work. The old-timers were caught up in self depreciation and anonymity. They were convinced that the Book would come from the Fellowship. Bo knew the Fellowship was expecting the work to come from the esteemed N.A. old-timers who had been clean ten or twenty years. This was the impasse. It was classic. Everybody was waiting on somebody else to do the work. It took a real nobody to get the ball rolling!

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It is so easy to get cut off from the world when you're using. It is the way the disease of addiction works. Let's have fun. Your best friend just died. Let's have fun. Your teeth just fell out. Let's have fun. The cops are after you. Let's have fun. You're dead.

In recovery, clean addicts re-approach the world and go through a lot of changes getting back in touch with the world. This is why Bo wasn't dismayed by what he had found. It fit in with everything else he had learned about life and N.A.

He had learned that there were a lot of meetings. A few hundred spread out over the United States. There was a lot of enthusiasm and spirit. If the WSO were so small that it fit into the side room of a man's house, it was easier to accept that the story he had sent in July had either gotten lost or been placed in a special place.

He had expected to get a written thank you. The non-response was one of the reasons he had come to California to get some answers. He couldn't afford the trip financially and couldn't avoid it spiritually.

He was living in a house rented to him by his Uncle Joe with his wife Judy and is two-year old son Victor. He painted signs for people out of his basement. It wasn't much of a living but he got by. His Uncle was willing to sell him the house but they had never signed papers. He had a real estate license but was painting until he got enough money stored up to go into real estate. His standard of living didn't include trips to the West Coast.

His obsessive desire to know more about N.A. had led him to rant and rave in the meetings, "Who's working on our Book? There are books on after dinner gardening! There are books on manure! Why isn't there a book on N.A. recovery?" No one had any answers. Even Tommy B. who had gotten involved with world services and attended the World Service Conference had been unable to answer his questions. Tommy had actually made his air line reservation for the World Convention.

Another friend, a recovering addict doctor named Dr. Bill M. had been in Los Angeles for a doctor's conference of some sort and had tried to contact the WSO the spring of '77. He had to leave a lot of messages and succeeded in going to the Office only after great difficulty. He had brought Bo a tape of the twentieth anniversary celebration among a small group of members in Los Angeles. When Bo asked about the Book, Dr. Bill told him, "If you want

that book, you had better write it yourself! The people I met are not going to do it."

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On his return, he told his wife what he had learned. He told her that Greg had encouraged him to write up anything he could to help, that there was no one else working on it and that it would not be self will. This was important to keep Bo from feeling like he was 'on his own'. It felt right to him.

His wife was quietly excited. She believed in her husband and supported his effort totally. She was a fairly quiet country girl who had grown up in the house across the street from where Bo had been living for a couple of years. She had been a friend of his ex-wife Alicia from the Okefenokee Swamp in South Georgia.

When Alicia had gone her way, and the divorce was final, Judy came over to visit a few times and after a ten month courtship, they got married.

Bo had been going to meetings for a while and some of the benefits of recovery were beginning to shine through for him. The most spectacular was the birth of his son Victor.

On the kitchen table, Bo started writing on a variety of subjects in a spiral bound notebook. One idea led to another. On April 24, 1977 he had written some notes exploring the idea of a book for N.A.

The original list of possible book chapters was:

1. Addiction
2. Help Is Possible
3. Something Works (Steps)
4. The Wreckage of Our Past
5. Reaching Out
6. Spiritual Awakening
7. Action
8. The World
9. A New Life
10. Others
11. Member of Society
12. A Spiritual Program

Stories

This was written months before attending the World Convention

in San Francisco and meeting Greg. He had done it as a lark, to see what it felt like. Now, he felt free to take it a step farther.

He would write on each chapter title until it felt reasonably complete and move on to the next one. Eventually, he had about sixty pages of text material and another bunch of thirty or forty pages of general material.

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As was his custom, he was attending seven recovery meetings or more a week. He also attended meetings of the Atlanta Area Service Committee that met around town. There were still only eight or nine meetings in metro Atlanta. And in the State. And in the South. Still, Bo believed that the principles were sound and that the writing he was helping to start would lead to a greater awareness of N.A. recovery and growth of the Fellowship.

His years on the Strip in Atlanta had taught him to the extreme the futility of making a big noise without having something to back it up. All the noise would eliminate future ability to gain people's attention if they found out you really had nothing to say. The thing was to break up this idea that addicts couldn't write and the best way of doing that was for a clean addict in N.A. to write!

Frank B., one of the state vocation rehabilitation counselors who had been willing to get involved with the nonprofit work on the Strip, had told him that to measure a man by his reputation, you had to divide whatever you heard by ten. This applied to the good

as well as the bad. By the time the Fellowship got around to checking out work on the Basic Text, he wanted at least a hundred pages to show people. At least his efforts could motivate others to do better than he had been able to do. All he wanted was to get something started. If the Fellowship found a hundred pages, they would be able to envision a thousand.

A member of A.A. made one thing clear. He had attended a meeting of N.A. in 1971 when the Strip was dying out and Bo had first sought help in N.A. When he heard about the work on a book for N.A., he said all you had to do was to tell the truth. If you honestly write down what you have experienced in N.A. and your honest feelings, no one in the world can argue with you successfully. If you waste time in conjecture, almost anyone can pick your material to pieces. These comments were answers to the prayers Bo was making throughout each day. He prayed for God to strengthen him and guide him in His will. He still went to the mountain on the full moon.

Local members were aware of his work and Bo would talk freely about it and how it was progressing. He encouraged others to work up material themselves. He told them that any member was welcome and encouraged to do so. He shared what Greg had shared with him. That summer, Greg had to attend a meeting of the National Institute on Drugs and Alcohol Council in Washington, D.C. He somehow managed to add a little to his air fare and stop off in Atlanta on his way back to North Hollywood. He shared his story at a N.A. meeting that was held at the Clubhouse of the Rising Sun in Marietta. He stayed with Bo and Judy and looked

over the parts of the material written since Bo had last sent copies out to him at his home.

The material was rough but Greg encouraged him to keep on with it, not to give up. On the way home from a meeting, Bo shared with Greg that he had to let go of outcomes and that he avoided thinking ahead to what the work might mean to all the suffering addicts in the world. He thanked him for his support and for making the effort a 'we' thing and not something to feed his ego. They held hands tightly for a moment and thought about all the dead addicts they had known. Both men were educated to the helplessness of being an addict in a world without recovery. It was important not to be alone with this work.

He started carrying his notebook with him to meetings and to a coffee shop in downtown Atlanta. The pages filled. When he counted forty pages of handwritten material, he said to himself, "Well, I must be serious about this." He went to a local Zayre's store and bought a fifty dollar Smith Corona portable typewriter. It had a light blue cover of tinker toy plastic and the print line wavered up and down but it was a lot better than his handwriting!

He began by typing up the first forty pages from his notebook. He noticed that he was adding things as he went and the writing went better on the type writer. The ideas seem more clear.

One of his notes read: "How can an addict, convinced of his own lack of power, reluctant to expose himself to the ridicule of imaginary persons who might criticize his effort to help others,

ever get around to the old pen and paper? It has just struck me that so far my efforts have only been like a quiet meeting with myself where I write down the best I have heard and the best that has come to me. Surely my higher power, the editor, will save me from any flaws too tragic."

He would deliberately goad himself to greater efforts. He began to feel more selfish doing nothing than when he gave the little he had to offer. He prayed and searched his heart for things to do to make himself fearless and selfless. After a time, he started going to the top of a beautiful small mountain nearby on the full moon and taking his shirt off, yelling at the western sky, "Oh, Great Spirit, grant us our Book!" He did this every full moon for five years, until the Book was done. It had come to him that this simple mechanism had the power to let him know that he was appealing to God for help with the work in no uncertain terms.

He prayed a lot anyway. Like many members, he had no clear idea of God in the beginning. He had instead a lot of generalizations about God. Mainly, in the beginning, N.A.'s stay clean on the strength of their first step, which is a simple admission of powerlessness over their addiction and the unmanageability it brought into their lives. Any newcomer could relate to those two and if addiction was the problem, clean addicts had to have the answer.

As a member, Bo had the right to choose any higher power he wanted, even one that might seem silly or nonsensical to other people. So he did. He felt that calling his higher power the Great

Spirit was least ambiguous. That most of the people he met knew right away what he meant and how he felt. He meant the God of the Native Americans as portrayed in the popular imagination.

Later, on a long walk in the Great Smoky Mountains, he came to the realization that he would surrender instantly and happily to the spirit of greatness where ever he encountered it. In a thing of beauty, in a person, in an idea, in a thought of God. If Bo had to surrender to anything in this world, he wanted it to be great.

This spirit was, he believed, in every living thing and was the same age in people from infancy to senility. The ability to speak directly to this spirit in people was something he had picked up as a kid. He was one of those people who would be talking with someone and they would stop and say, "I've never told anyone else this before!"

One of the ideas he had picked up from his Beatnik days was that for the world to be right, it would have to be stood on its head. This had seemed like a weird sort of humor when he had first read it, years ago. Now it seemed like that is what the Program made possible: a total reevaluation of every act, memory and expectation.

At the end of his dope shooting days on August 2, 1969, when he was almost totally incapacitated by the LSD and crystal methedrine he had been shooting up, he wrote the following lines:

"My head was full of thoughts as I lay in bed. It seemed better to

capture them than to let them fly into the night. Last fall I literally tore my life to shreds. My mind and my heart were pledged to the good of mankind and I foolishly cast my fate to the uncaring winds. The hippy movement, growing out of the beat scene and the romantic fascination that it held for young people in the fifties had become my life. In it I was able to find and imagine hope for a positive turning point in the history of mankind. I worked hard at a job I loved and lived a life isolated from the everyday life of Atlanta. I was stoned on acid and grass nearly all the time and most all of my friends were as well. Our house was filled with laughter and rock music and it seemed that surely people so happy and filled with love would take over the world some day. The common factor seemed to be drugs; and of the drugs acid was held highest. I was inspired to talk at length of the life we shared and the places it would take us. It seemed as if we were no longer human in the earth-founded sense of the word but some newly awakened being evolved from the trees by technology and acid into a state of awareness that made us all brothers and sisters sharing a common life force faced with extinction if mankind was allowed to blunder into warfare and an eternity of peace and grace if we stripped our-selves of these self-defeating survivals of our past. The victory of our way of life seemed almost a foregone conclusion and therefore we were un-aggressive and condescending to others outside the scene sure that for each unsmiling cop and redneck there would be a glorious awakening when they would realize what fools they had been and join our ranks with serene, knowing faces and alert, tingling minds and bodies."

"Now it seems that all our hopes were purest vanity and all our dreams unmitigated foolishness. It is as if our culture sprang from a net of sub-surface life into a glorious hillside of toadstools and after a brief time in the sun sank into an ugly morass of decaying fungus. Most of the acid heads I am close to either kept far enough back from the scene to return to ordinary life or moved into experimentation with harder drugs. I remember when people around me began to call acid dope and I was incredulous because the effect I sought was at that time far from anything dopey. The routes from grass and acid are two: one is the intent, dispassionate, insect activity of the speed freak and the cool dreamy whatthehell world of opiates. Most people who take these feel they have little to live for."

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On an average Saturday he would get five type written pages towards the Book. He still talked about it in meetings and though skeptical, his fellow members were kind and patient. It did unnerve them a little to look at the material. It had been so long that N.A. existed with no Book. Dope addicts talked about doing things but what was this real writing in front of them. It was things said and heard in meetings. Things they were used to taking for granted. Bo encouraged the doubtful to do some writing themselves. He stayed in touch with Greg who was constant in his support of his efforts. Every few months, Bo would send him another ten or twenty pages until it came time for the World Convention again, this time in Houston, Texas.

Chapter Five

HOUSTON WORLD CONVENTION

As the days of summer shortened and the 1978 World Convention approached, Bo continued to write responses to various topics relating to N.A. recovery. 'Resentments Kill', 'Facing Problems', and 'Spiritual Principles' were some of the topics. He was not so concerned about the quality of the writing as the statements contained being true to the N.A. spirit and were things you would say or expect to hear in a meeting.

Bo packed his bags and left a week early for the World Convention in Houston. He flew to New Orleans to spend some time with Greg and Lois at her parents in Algiers. New Orleans was one of his favorite cities anyway so he looked forward to the trip. The idea of clean addicts meeting in the New Orleans French Quarter was fascinating.

With his mustache and dark hair, Greg looked right at home with the people you saw around that city. Lois looked at home also as, of course, she was. Her parents were a lively older couple and were very proud of their daughter and son in law. They didn't much understand recovery but whatever it was it had helped their family. Lois was involved with a parallel program for people who had a dependence on addiction in others, Naranon.

They went to a Bingo club one night in the old city. On the weekend, they got out to the countryside and had a barbecued

chicken dinner with Lois' in-laws who all seemed to work on the big tug boats on the Mississippi River. They were the old river boat people brought forward in time to the age of the CB radios and the huge diesel motors that powered the barges up and down the Mississippi. And of course, they went over the most recent material Bo was writing.

Bo tried to get Greg to tell him what he thought of it and Greg tried to be noncommittal. It was so new. Parts were tortured and unfinished. There were a few great moments in the work. The great thing about it was that an addict had produced it. Both men agreed that once others got on the bandwagon, momentum would develop that might carry them through to completion. Even if it didn't, they agreed in their talks, it was a step in the right direction.

Even with hours of plain talk, Bo had no way of completely sharing the truth about his past with Greg and could only hope that Greg's personal experience with addiction allowed him to see how burned out he had gotten. He had shot crystal and acid until his dope shooting buddies thought he was weird. At the end he had been unable to speak on any serious subject for about two years after he had quit using. Failure was nothing to him if it would help others. People had laughed at him before.

Before they left New Orleans, they went to a photocopy store and played out a scene shared by addicts clean in N.A. tens of thousands of times since then. They made copies of the new literature...

After several days had passed talking and going around the City of New Orleans, they left for Houston.

As they came into the Shamrock Hilton in Houston, the excitement of seeing old friends and meeting new ones filled the old hotel with a spiritual electricity. They were early. In one of the downstairs rooms outside where the main hall for the convention was to be, they saw a tall, beautiful young girl. She had long blonde hair and walked by the glass door several times. Finally, she came in and asked if anyone knew of any drug addicts in the building. Greg and Bo laughed and asked if she was looking for the World Convention. The girl brightened instantly and yelled to her friends, "Hey everybody! We're here!" Her name turned out to be Julie and she was from Wichita, Kansas.

During one of the workshops on the history of N.A. one of the N.A. Trustees was sharing from the podium to a large room full of addicts. Towards the end of his story, he mentioned the N.A. Book. He said, "Maybe one of you newcomers out there will write the Book! You know how we are. We write something, submit it and then act like the house is falling in if someone wants to change a single word. The first thing I say to someone when they ask me about the Book is: what have you done to help!"

Moments after the meeting closed with the Lord's Prayer, Bo caught the speaker in the hallway outside the conference room. He said he wanted to talk with him about the Basic Text. Bob B. looked at him and sure enough said, "What have you done to help?" Bo look right back at him and said, "That's just it. I have

about a hundred pages up in Greg's room I want to show you."

Bob paused a moment and said, "I've got to wash up first. I just got in." Bo asked if he could wait with him and then they could go up together. Bob said sure and they went to Greg's after the quick shower.

Greg and Lois and little Clay were all in the room when they got upstairs. Greg pulled out the papers from another of his auspicious black cases and handed them to Bob. Lois actually took a picture of the moment. Bob just sat there, looking down at the documents. It had been so long. There had been so much talk and now he was holding a substantial amount of writing in his hands. He wasn't sure what but something was a hell of a lot better than nothing.

Bob had been on the Board since it had formed. WSO had been in his home in the beginning. He had sat in on the work that had gone into the "White Booklet." He had seen a lot of addicts come and a lot of addicts go. By working with Greg, he was in tune with the changes within the Fellowship and had surely heard of the work. Still, this was something.

The World Convention that year had less than two hundred people show up, most of them from California. The Convention Committee had worked hard and those who came were the very serious members who were to build N.A. in the East. Some members who are still around date their recovery from the Houston World Convention. They live in Atlanta, Wilkes-Barre, Old Forge, Miami, Wichita and Lincoln. The Californians showed a lot of

love and affection and spiritual friendships were born which still endure.

Atlanta got the bid for the next World Convention. Bo went home and kept writing.

Chapter Six

TRUSTING GOD

During this holy period, Bo had to deal with some very worldly thoughts. He was an avid reader of science fiction and spiritual books from India, China and Japan. He also read about the spirituality of Europe and America. He had taken a history course at Georgia State College and along with the incredible political experiences of the sixties, he had two years running a nonprofit corporation on the Strip in Atlanta. All this went into the thoughts he had to deal with privately. He had only Greg and a few others to help. Only they were able to discuss and evaluate the options as they unfolded while the stack of written material continued to grow.

What about the karma changes of thousands of human beings who were not going to die? Instead, they would be walking and talking, adding to humanity in increasing numbers. After initial recovery, they would be capable of making changes in the world by the sheer weight of their numbers.

Bo knew a lot of people made fortunes off the suffering of others knowingly, consciously and above all legally. It is illegal to prey on the weakness of others in the instance of prostitution and other so called victimless crimes. Stealing minor sums of money is also illegal but if the sums are great enough, there is no way for the injured to have legal recourse. The distance between these crimes may be measured in billions of dollars. War for instance involved

incredible, deliberate killing and the destruction of whole populations along with their cities.

Bo had been a draft dodger. He had simply asked his friends who had already been drafted if he would really be serving his country if he joined or allowed himself to be drafted into military service. They said what he learned would take him the rest of his life to get over, if he ever did. There were other ways to serve one's country. So after dodging the draft in a sadly effective manner, he put in his two years on the Strip in Atlanta. He still wound up carrying a gun but he never had to shoot anyone.

One of his college professors (who initially he hadn't liked because the guy looked so business like and stuffy) had amazed him one day. He told the class that the real basis for all effective revolutions is to succeed in finding an original precedent in the experience of a country and base the revolution of a return to those simpler times and simpler values. Clean, a member had asked him to read a book called *Fire on the Lake* and he had reluctantly done so. It had put the Viet Nam War into a different perspective for him, especially how the religious belief of a land worked in the lives of its peoples. Another book, again forced on him by a N.A. member who later helped write the Basic Text was *Holocaust* on the experience of Jews in the concentration camps of Europe. Bo knew it was unbelievably obvious that cruel and horrible things could and did happen even in these modern times; addiction was a disease where the chief enemy was lies and ignorance.

Even in an individual, the fabrication of lies is the way an addict

uses and it is what cuts them off from the rest of humanity justifying terrible acts and ending in death for the individual. Bringing the truth to the clear light of day was historically one of the main routes that noninjurious correction has been possible in countless other instances. Because, he thought, simple clear writing provides an opportunity for each individual reader to complete their basic information on a subject and draw more accurate, real and functional conclusions. So, a N.A. book would do this and being descriptive of an undeniable reality would allow no one the opportunity to attack or defeat the material.

An inevitable part of the process were the personal attacks and efforts to discount the work. There is no way for an individual to change the way people live without being examined and scrutinized from every angle. The writing and the concurrent discussions had already revealed several tough items. One was what would the N.A. Fellowships position on staying clean in illness turn out to be? Would the Basic Text even get into the discussions of alcoholism vs. addiction?

Certain things were known. Addiction is a disease that does not discriminate types of drugs in addicts, once the addiction pattern is present. So how could anyone be addicted to just one drug like alcohol? By denying the basic fact of their addiction, alcoholics were accepted as alcohol addicts in what is for N.A.'s a normal pattern called denial. Denial is the funny mental trick we played on ourselves where we debate or question our addiction until we ourselves admit the problem.

We knew we were getting some support from members of A.A.

Newcomers would show up in N.A. meetings saying A.A. members recommended they come to N.A. Other times, A.A.'s would show up in our meetings saying that N.A. didn't have real recovery to offer and that we should go to A.A. if we wanted the lasting benefits of sobriety.

As a Fellowship, N.A. was unable to answer some of these questions. Until we had added to our meetings and long term membership, these allegations would continue to apply. Unpleasant experiences of this sort were one thing that helped motivate our members to the supreme effort they put forth to write their Basic Text.

The other problem involving prescribed medications in recovery was two fold. On one hand there were debates over what would we do in a car accident. Would medication given to us while unconscious constitute a relapse? How about members taking medications prescribed for mental or physical problems outside their addiction? How about methadone addicts participating in our meetings?

These questions were of the hardest type to answer. Bo had sent out a request to the members on the WLC mail list asking for the experience of members staying clean in illness. The two responses came from Flint, Michigan and Sydney, Australia. They were almost identical in content and dealt with the approaches carried out during recovery for members who fell ill. This was experience,

not ideas. They recommended telling both sponsor and home group about the illness if there was opportunity, telling our doctor and trying to get a doctor who had some knowledge of addiction as a disease. Prayer, minimal dosages, visits by members if we were convalescence and a willingness to go through detox if necessary before resuming our lives were chief among the items mentioned in the responses. The similarity of the responses and the vast geographical distance between the groups responding were impressive to Bo. They came from N.A.'s on opposite sides of the planet.

He felt at the time that no addict can take prescribed medication as prescribed if they are in the grip of an active addiction. He did not try to force this idea on others. There were a lot of ideas about this. Each member might have to face this matter on a personal basis at any time without notice with their new lives and recovery on the line.

The first matter was more difficult and harder to resolve. Because of our Tradition against having any opinion on outside issues, there was no way to bring the discussion about alcoholism vs. addiction out into open discussion or in the written materials. Those who submitted the input and did the processing were just stating their feelings and experience about the disease and recovery. Let those who took time to read our message decide the truth by which they could live and stay clean.

While it was a clear matter among us, the strange mental block that allows a person to admit alcoholism but not addiction was a

sensitive matter which only time and compassion would be able to overcome. The important thing for N.A.'s was not to be confused by any of this. For them to think they could safely use some drugs but not others was the insanity of their addiction. The Basic Text adequately developed this position.

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There was another problem about sharing recovery experience in writing. Writing involves definition. Spirit is illimitable and wouldn't the act of putting an infinite process into the restrictions of language sort of diminish the spiritual experience members had in recovery? Like putting god in a box? The only thing that helped him with this was the material written so far. The simple descriptive, nonjudgemental material was similar to the open atmosphere of a good meeting. It freshened the reader and didn't saddle them down with labored or contrived concepts and beliefs.

Other dark assassins came late at night. One of the trustees on the twentieth anniversary tape had mentioned the little voice of his disease that lived inside his head and always said, "Jack W., you're a fuck up." No matter how good he was doing. No matter if he went to school and passed courses with good marks. No matter if he was a good person and consistently helped others, the little voice was always there, looking for ways to bring him down. Bo had his own little voice.

It said: "You're an ego tripping fool. You can't get away with this. Who do you think you are, Bill W.?" Bill was the hero and

co-founder of A.A. Working on the Basic Text had always been seen as self indulgent and this all by itself had been one reason the work was so long in coming. Bo prayed for the ability to keep it simple and just do the work at hand. Look neither to the left nor the right and back not at all. Just do the next simple thing put before him and pray his ass off. In a dream he had a vision of an old man on a park bench with his head down on his chest. He thought it was his grandfather but when he came close the man raised his head and it was Bill W. The old man looked him in the eye and said, "Just keep doing the next thing."

All the while he was working, these kinds of thoughts kept coming. He was able to push them out of the working parts of his mind and keep to the task at hand. God would have to handle outcomes. Others might see his actions differently and judge him. If so, so be it. Maybe they would care to write something. Another man had told him that there would be critics of the work but not to worry, they would almost surely be illiterate!

Whenever he would slow down or get distracted from the writing and encouraging others to write, he could feel the screams of the dying. It sounds creepy and it was. The only thing that would help was the writing. Like many who write, he had little choice. Whenever he backed off, even a little bit, he experienced depression. Here was a chance to do something lasting and good to make up for the balance of his life that had been spent in active addiction. For his friends who had died, for his own life and for those who might still have hope, he kept writing.

And then, after all these matters were dealt with, came the really hard ones. There is a lot of important stuff that recovering addicts have to learn about not projecting into the future or the past too much because of their tendency to loose today. They will agonize over the past that cannot often be changed or allow themselves to be paralyzed into inaction by arrays of possible outcomes until they built up multi-year strings of days in which they have thoroughly and completely done nothing whatsoever which turns out to be the worst of all.

What will it be like if we succeed? Won't some money and power hungry bums show up and try to steal control of the Fellowship from the members? Things are going great right now because we have a dream to unite us and there is universal support for the Book. Won't people start making rules and complicated procedures for themselves and as many others as they can get to buy into their games? Will the price of growth be a death of the spirit?

Bo had read something of the beginnings of A.A. and many other spiritual groups. He knew he would have to let go of all this and simply trust to the Loving Spirit if the work was to proceed at all.

He had said the prayers to be granted the ability to do this work. He had spent long hours on the phone with Greg learning how the Fellowship procedures for this and that went. He had attended his own young area and watched members deal with the growing bureaucracy of N.A. It was still small but his eye was schooled and he would catch the potentials for conflict.

He did everything he could to communicate information and ideas that had the effect of keeping him free of feeling powerful. He had learned that knowledge is power and that if he shared whatever was not generally known, he felt anonymous and one among many instead of the 'one'. He wanted to stay clean too. He knew he could still succumb to the disease as he began his long walk on this written razor's edge.

One thing kept it simple for him. Given time and enough accurate information, he trusted in group conscious. He had studied crowd behavior in the streets of Atlanta and learned that crowds liked to be entertained. They look for interest and excitement as a way of growing.

He was careful therefore to stay structurally correct. He intuitively knew that as the work went forward, he would be protected from the negative envy and petty jealousy that the work would necessarily arouse in others. The weight of the personality issues set aside to do the work would all fall in on him personally on completion of the Basic Text. He knew better than anyone his imperfections. God freed him from fear and egotism by showing him these things early on. He was prepared to die for the Book if necessary. He knew most people weren't. The world steps aside for someone who knows where they are going. Few are willing to die for what they are doing. He loved these people doing the impossible by staying clean and helping others. They were his constant inspiration.

All the odds and ends he had learned about spirituality took on a

new and immediate meaning and value for him as he saw them in application through daily N.A. recovery. Surrender, belief, faith, inventory, relief and amends preceded prayer, meditation and the application of spiritual principles on the base of a personal spiritual awakening. He was learning again and felt alive and growing. He was getting to learn the parts of life he had not covered and recovered missing parts.

God was taking out the fears and doubts that had kept him locked up for most of his adult life. Getting to read, study and scrutinize the works of others accelerated the process and encouraged him to write more. He was finally good for something.

Chapter Seven

1979 WORLD SERVICE CONFERENCE

The writing continued but the politics began.

A local member named Chuck was very instrumental in helping N.A. get its start in Atlanta. He cultivated a young newcomer from the methadone clinic into first the development of the local area service committee (ASC) then world services.

Tommy B. worked at Delta so it was easy for him to fly to Los Angeles. He believed in N.A. and was working hard to achieve and maintain his recovery. Like all newcomers, he found something unique and special in the quiet and anonymous ways of the members, groups and activities of N.A. He too had been progressively on the outside of life looking at the world go by while his addiction had been eating away at his personal involvement with it.

He had a liking and a flair for politics. What addict doesn't feel the call of power? Under his sponsor, Chuck, he was trained and groomed for world services.

Chuck was an addict also and had lived a difficult life. Always getting up his hopes. Always tripping himself up before his real dreams could come true. Addiction eats people. It places visions in our faces and then destroys our capacity to grow into the possibilities life holds for us. As an extremely skilled salesman,

and full of knowledge about Alcoholics Anonymous history, recovery and politics, he made Tommy into a most effective N.A. service politician.

Through the miracle of recovery, all the games and strategies fell away in time. The changes brought about by Chuck and Tommy went beyond their wildest dreams and the young Fellowship grew.

Tommy knew Greg, Jimmy K. and the rest of the oldtimers in L.A. He was supportive of Bo's work on the book and was genuinely supportive throughout the effort. He and Bo had flown to the World Convention in San Francisco together. Tommy had been elected as vice-chair of the World Service Conference in May of 1978.

In the early part of 1979, he and Bo were talking, probably after a meeting of the Atlanta Area Service Committee (ASC) in Marietta. Tommy stated that if Bo wanted to help with the book, he should be at the next annual World Service Conference (WSC) in Los Angeles. It would be held around the first of May in L.A.

As usual, Bo was slow on the upswing. He said he was doing more writing and he would send his stuff in to be considered by the group conscience.

The WSC had a literature sub-committee and Bo honestly expected the committee to work on his input. Tommy told him that the committee was more concerned about rewriting existing material and it might take time. Why not go to the Conference and

see for yourself?

Realizing that he was dealing with a quick minded resolute type, Tommy asked if it would be OK for him to make air plane reservations? If he couldn't make it, they could be canceled without cost. Bo agreed to this and thanked Tommy for the help.

The rest of the winter passed and some time was spent in committee sessions to prepare for the upcoming World Convention to be held in Atlanta. The Committee met monthly for the first nine months and weekly just before the convention.

Bo had been the chair of the bid committee for the 1978 World Convention and was now the chair of the convention committee itself. He exposed some of his ability to deal with coordinated group efforts in some early committee sessions much to the chagrin of those who had elected him for his symbolic leadership abilities. He asked for the sub-committees of the Convention Committee to submit estimated budgets of their expected expenses that could be compared with expected income from attending members. The committee was very slow to do this and there were some peculiar problems within the committee itself of the sort which generally plague spontaneous group efforts. This experience helped Bo to transfer what he had learned in college, marching against the war in Viet Nam and as president of the non-profit corporation on the Strip to the service world of N.A. By the time the WSC rolled around, he was ready for his first adventure into 'big time' service!

Greg picked him up at LAX in Los Angeles with an addict from Detroit named Kurt. Kurt was a big guy in a black leather motorcycle jacket and looked rough as hell. As a fellow member, he gave Bo the usual hug in greeting. The three rode to Greg's house in North Hollywood.

The hills rolled by the car and Bo could see the curious landscape that is an unsettling mixture of desert and tropical plants. Unsettling because right beside landscapes thrown together from sharp spiny plants that can withstand the desert's sun without water you find gorgeous showcase exotics that rarely grow anywhere but in florist shops and Miami. The people in L.A. are like that too.

At Greg's home they got settled in and Bo asked Greg to explain what would happen at the WSC. Greg told them they would call to order, hear reports from the sub-committees and break up into sessions to plan motions to be dealt with by the main voting body. After this there would be elections a general session and then planning sessions for the year to come. The conference would close with a final report from the new officers of the sub-committees who had participated in the planning sessions but became chairs only at the end of the conference.

This seemed simple enough.

Bo was asking about the Literature Committee. He had asked Jimmy K. for the name, address and phone number of the lit committee. Jimmy told him that the committee was a bunch of revisionists. He had called Greg and been told much the same

thing. He couldn't get their address. He was in no position to be pushy and trusted Greg's spirit, experience and judgment totally. Still, if the lit committee was working on literature, how could they be a 'wolf pack' of revisionists?

All he could find out was that they were concentrating on changing the small existing body of material so they didn't seem too smart to Bo. What N.A. needed was a book.

They visited the WSO and said hello to Jimmy. There had been some problems getting a literature order filled for the Atlanta Literature Committee in the past year.

The WSO was staffed by volunteers and everybody tried to be supportive because they were grateful and knew that it was hard to keep track of everybody's orders. No one was going to say anything against the Office but the orders did still have to be filled eventually. Bo could tell from his own visits that the work at the Office was incredibly demanding. He tried to handle the matter as quietly as possible. Showing a canceled check for the amount of the order was enough.

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The 1979 World Service Conference opened with a call to order by Chuck G. followed by the Serenity Prayer:

"God, grant me the serenity to accept
the things I cannot change,

Courage to change the things I can
And the wisdom to know the difference."

In the course of the reports, elections, motions and planning, Bo learned a lot about World Services. He was elected to Chair the World Literature Committee. He was uncomfortable voting because he wasn't an elected representative but he had been elected to Lit chair that entitled him to a vote. He tried to abstain on matters that didn't seem clear to him or his conscience. Still, he knew enough about policy to know that it was a sensitive matter. It was obvious that the structure was new and that the voting privileges had been extended to as many as possible to encourage the growth of the service body. It was true that the lit committee had been working on revisions but they had a lot to do with the service structure, not the recovery literature. A few on the IP's (Informational Pamphlets) seemed to relate to outside issues and that did seem to go against Traditions. They weren't disinterested in the material Bo had been working on. They had just been unaware of it. Final changes of editing done in the planning sessions were written down as they went. Bo was given the task of taking the material to the WSO before going home. WSO would then print and distribute the material to the Fellowship to be considered for approval at the next year's Conference.

After the WSC, Bo had a chance to visit Mark, the past year's chair of World Lit. He also met a guy named Rick and a lady name Pat who had done most of the work in the committee during the past year. Mark lived in a romantic little cottage in Venice Beach near the Pacific Ocean. They spent an evening together going over files

and different pieces of material. Bo gave them a copy of the new stuff he had been working on. He admired their energy and the idea that it was OK for him to be the chair passed to him. He learned from them that it was right and proper for the committee to consider itself THE World Literature Committee (WLC).

The WLC considers and takes action through reports, recommendations and workshops. Their guidelines were to collect, compile and review materials prior to presentation to the Fellowship at the WSC. The strange sense of wonder melted away a little inside Bo and his feet settled to the earth again.

This was the first time Bo got to observe different groups of members who did not see eye to eye with one another. It taught him to look deeper and ask more questions before he believed anything bad of anyone. Many times, he was to witness difference groups of members apparently at odds with one another from a position that allowed him to see where the roles they played were complementary. While peace in the valley might be a grand ideal, reality seemed to dictate that members routinely became so caught in what they were doing that they couldn't conceive of sincerity in others. Opposition was taken very personally. The idea that the phrase from the Twelfth Tradition, "to place principles before personalities", meant our own personality had not yet become widespread in the young Fellowship. It was usually taken to be tolerant and exhibit some openness when we really thought someone else must be insane. The arrogance and pride of this position was not yet well known.

This early learning as World Lit Chair taught Bo to study situations and at least try to make sure that all parties had the same information to head off needless conflicts.

Sunday, after the Conference, Greg dropped Bo off at the Office and he spent the afternoon with Jimmy and Betty talking about the history of N.A. and the copies that needed to be sent out by the Office for WSC. There was only one set of originals and no copies. He felt it would be OK to leave the originals and let the Office typeset the finals for the items to be sent out for approval.

Jimmy and Betty gave him a ride from Sun Valley to the airport when time for his flight came near. They sat and talked of N.A. There was much charm and friendliness in the air. Betty went to a vending machine and bought some candy bars that they ate at Delta Gate 68.

Bo was very impressed by the encouragement that he was getting. He kept trying to share his ideas because he couldn't tell which ones might turn out to be needed and which were faulty. The only way he had of screening them was to talk to these people. There were no precedents for what they were doing.

This was one of the last times they spent together in the closeness that recovery brings. Jimmy represented the safety and certainty that had built up in the past few years. Coming growth and unprecedented changes were to set them in different camps but the affection beneath the surface never went away.

Chapter Eight

WORLD LITERATURE CHAIR

On the flight home, Bo took stock of the events and people he had encountered. It was a lot to absorb.

It seems more than ever that the plan Greg and he had envisioned for the Basic Text was working. He had succeeded in initiating some writing. He was comfortable with the growing number of men and women involved with the growth of N.A. There seemed to be no intrusion to the field from outside forces.

They were on their own. The material he had read in the service manual, The N.A. Tree had been accurate including the statement at the end stating that it was visionary and that the structure outlined did not yet exist.

This year's Conference had seen representatives from the East and Mid-West in addition to the West Coast where N.A. had been in existence the longest.

The groups of personalities were simply arrayed into three groups. Some were directly connected with the operation of the WSO. Others were the Conference people who chaired and participated in the various committees. These came from the different states which now had N.A. meetings. The third group was composed of the California old-timers, many of whom were on the Board of Trustees. The reason all the Trustees were from California was that

there weren't members with sufficient clean time much less service experience to serve on the Board.

Everyone was supportive of the Book effort. The Office was pleased to have the emphasis off revision of the existing literature. The Conference itself had chosen a site for a conference to be held somewhere to work on plans for the writing of literature particularly the Basic Text. They had chosen among San Francisco, Philadelphia and Wichita. They chose Wichita because in the Midwest it would be most convenient to members who wished to attend from either coast and there was a lot of energy and new blood in the Midwest who also would be there.

Bo was delighted not only with their choice but also the internal mechanism that was his enemy. He had not once even felt a preference for any one of the proposed locations. In his first act as Chair, he had not imposed his will on others but only made sure they knew their real options and let them make the choice. If he had felt an internal drive to predetermine a location and maneuver them into affirming that decision, his internal alarms would have all gone off. He knew it would take a real selflessness to pursue this goal to its conclusion. His selflessness made him more secure that he could serve.

The planned conference would allow attending members the chance to sit down together and go over all the options. After sharing, they could develop some sort of plan that would be supportable by the Fellowship. This in turn would encourage and allow addicts from all over to submit material and come together

to process the writing in workshops.

Bo was excited only to see what they would come up with as a group. The upcoming conference would make the effort more real and he expected to be able to get more input based on the growing reality of the effort.

Word of the work had gotten out to the Fellowship earlier in the year. Greg had asked Bo to write a letter to the Fellowship that would be sent out from the World Service Office. This letter had the support of the Board of Trustees as well as the Office Staff.

Bo had objected to writing the letter on the basis that he was not in an elected position. Since he was neither on the Board nor with the Office, it felt funny. Jimmy solved this by telling him in one of their phone conversations that he was on the WSO literature committee and also the Board of Trustees lit committee. Bo asked him if there had been an election or if his position were informal? Jimmy told him he was on both committees because of the material he had written. At any rate he would write the letter. Of course, Bo said yes and he did. The letter went out with the literature and the mailings to all the groups in the world at the time. This went out several months before the Conference.

January 1979

Dear Members:

Several N.A. members and groups around the country have begun

the work that we hope will result in the creation of our definitive text. We need an original book combining the basics of our program with 50 to 100 stories of recovery in Narcotics Anonymous. We need a book that tells in detail what we have learned over the years about the problems faced both by newcomers and oldtimers. Of course there is a wealth of resource material available from other programs, but it will always be there and we really need some of our own. Articles relating the experience of recovery, how we successfully face our problems in everyday living, and how we actually work our steps will contribute directly to the development of our book. We have only to tell it like it is.

If this sounds like a big deal, it is. Our newcomers and groups in isolated areas just don't know what to do in many cases; and too many have floundered and died out. If we can combine our love and strength in this effort, we can give them many of the answers we have found for ourselves and our groups.

Many addicts are reluctant to write, but in practically every area where there are N.A. meetings there are some who can help if encouraged to do so by fellow members. Without encouragement they often hold back from fear of ego, or simply because they don't know the need. We want our book to be as complete as possible, and truly representative of N.A. as a whole. This means we need input from you, and your help encouraging and supporting others.

Those who have begun this work have found that fear of self drops away quickly. We have found that our higher power once more

does for us what we cannot do for ourselves. We need only offer ourselves and we will be used in this service. We realize that some will be skeptical about this effort, but we're really not doing this for selfish reasons. People who could be helped are dying every day from our disease. A book telling the story of recovery in Narcotics Anonymous would make our program more available to them.

A few of us can't do this alone; we need your help. Please send your stories, articles and other input to:

World Service Office Literature Committee
391 Cranfill Street
Marietta, Georgia 30060

In this way all input can be made available to the various members and groups working on this project. If you also wish to make your name and address available to those working on literature development please notify us by mail. Rest assured that a working manuscript based on your experience and the experience of others who contribute will be circulated within the fellowship prior to publication.

Bo S.
Atlanta, Georgia

This letter attracted some early input and created interest.

Now other letters could be sent out. As World Lit Chair, he could

put to work some of his ideas. He would contact all those who were interested in the project to make sure he was acting on all the best ideas available and publish them through the Office in another letter. He knew his limitations and sure as hell didn't want this project to fall short because of his personal inadequacies. The World Service Conference set the date for the Literature Conference in the Fall of the year, one month after the World Convention in Atlanta.

Thinking about the letter some more, he realized how hard it had been for him to gather the basic information about N.A. literature in the beginning. He put himself in the position of an average member. Now he knew that any member anywhere was welcome to submit material. He was the Chair of World Lit! Let's see now... Out of all the members in the world there had to be a few who were like he was and wanted to help. They either assumed that someone else was doing it, believed that addicts in recovery couldn't write or faced an impossible set of obstacles if they wanted to know what was going on. Aha! He would put out a monthly letter to everyone who was either interested or in a service position with a mailing address!

There had been a form in his preconference packet that he had filled out for the lit committee. It had a place on it that allowed you to state your preference and your qualifications to serve in a particular capacity. Aha! He could put out forms at the World Convention and increase the mail list that way. Also, he could announce in his letters that any member was welcome. The more forms the quicker a coherent group of informed members would

come together. Since all would receive the monthly letter, and all would be welcome to input to the letter it would become a communication system. He finally fell to sleep on the plane exhausted but hopeful. He prayed that the dream was real and that in time all the good dreams N.A. had brought him would come true - for himself and the many the others like him.

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Back home he hugged his wife and shared with her the great news. He had been put in a position where he could help others as Greg had helped him. The scale was Fellowship wide which meant world wide. There weren't that many members and groups overseas but there were a few and all would truly be welcomed to participate in the work. It exhilarated him even to think of it. The reality was overwhelming.

He kissed his little son who was now four years old. He had greeted this little baby into life clean and watched him grow into a real little person who could walk and talk. The Book was like this. He knew the material would be rough at first and that there may be troublesome procedures ahead to deal with but the idea was transforming into a reality, and would grow like a child until it could take care of itself. He swung the baby into the air and hugged him tightly. He put his other arm around his wife and they settled down for his first night home. They had a simple dinner and went to the local N.A. meeting.

He shared the events of the Conference with a few of the members

after the meeting. It was good to be home and so many ideas were waiting to be put into action.

The next day, he cut and coated some plywood to make signs for his customers. He loved his work and the freedom it allowed him. While the boards were drying, he made patterns for the jobs on hand, and when the wood panels were dry, began lettering them. He made good money when he worked. As much as a hundred dollars an hour. Some jobs were only thirty or forty. The trouble with the business was receiving enough work to stay busy. The down time between jobs kept his business small. While he worked, he dreamed some more good things for the Fellowship occasionally stopping to write his thoughts down so they wouldn't be lost to poor memory. There was an incredible succession of ideas coming to him. His prayers for strength and guidance seemed to be working overtime.

In the evenings following the Conference, he planned a letter announcing the progress and plans of the World Literature Committee to be published by the Office to the Fellowship. It included an announcement of the upcoming Wichita Conference.

A few weeks later a girl came up to him after the meeting and made amends to him. She said she had overheard him talking about the Book. It had infuriated her to hear him talking about doing this and doing that as if he were in charge of the project! She had gone to Tommy who now served as chairman of the World Service Conference and complained about his behavior. Tommy had told her that Bo was only doing his job. She didn't know what

a 'World Literature Chair' was. The Conference was so new! Bo thanked Laura and told her he knew how she felt. He explained that he had done everything procedurally correct and would continue to do so to the best of his ability.

One thing Bo had to initiate was a local literature committee. He had served as Atlanta Lit Chair for a few years but the committee had not been writing. They had been maintaining a growing stockpile of literature to serve the growing needs of Georgia and neighboring states. Now members supported a series of local meetings to study and write new material.

As the World Convention date grew closer, members down in the city were complaining about all the committee time they were having to put in. By June, it was so dramatic that the ASC meeting was moved to Tuesday night at 6:30 with an 8:00 N.A. meeting. ASC's take several hours in the best of times and members from Marietta and other outlying groups had to drive through rush hour traffic to make the meeting. The members who had voted for the change from Sunday morning to Tuesday weren't even showing up. To make things worse, they had others attend the meetings to prevent those who did show up from voting the meeting back to the weekends. Groups were suffering in several instances and after several months of this, the Marietta groups decided to form their own Area. Those who had moved the Atlanta ASC to Tuesday night called this disunity and politics even though Bo and others continued to attend both ASC meetings. It was the energy surrounding the World Convention.

It took Bo years to realize that the service positions offered in N.A. were about the only prestigious opportunity to hold office and do something worthwhile that some members ever had. They hadn't been on TV a lot, gone to college and other things which might offset this. It took a lot of energy for them to learn the things they had to do to fulfill their service commitment. Even simple things like typing minutes and making a flyer can be scary if you've never done them. How about maintaining order in a room of fifty recovering addicts attending a service committee?

Mark M., the former lit chair, wrote Bo a nine page letter. He encouraged Bo to do whatever he could to get the Basic Text effort off the ground. He said the worse thing would be to do nothing at all. He elaborated how hard it had been over the years in California to get anything going. He enumerated the difficulties the committee had faced over the last year, especially after the Office stopped giving out their address. He left nothing to the imagination in giving every positive reason for the work to go forward. Even Bo who was used to writing, not receiving, such letters, was impressed. It touched him deeply to receive such a letter from the former chair of a committee that was described to him as a wolf pack by people he still trusted. He renewed his prayers to be worthy. All this was going on while the World Convention grew closer.

Chapter Nine

WICHITA LITERATURE CONFERENCE

The Atlanta World Convention was held at the Sheraton Biltmore near downtown Atlanta on West Peachtree Street. It wasn't Atlanta's biggest or Atlanta's finest yet its style brought to mind the old city. There were heavy velvet drapes in one of the conference rooms that reached floor to ceiling. The tables and carpet were old but had an antebellum gracefulness. Many attending members had never been to Atlanta before so when they read the warning on the program not to walk the streets around the hotel alone, they laughed and made dope fiend humor about robbers not knowing who they were fooling with in a stickup.

There had been recent incidents where businessmen in Atlanta for company conventions had faced armed robbers with at least one killing.

Only three hundred attended yet that was more than Houston. Less than a hundred came from California. Most were from the East and some from the Midwest. Over two hundred meetings started in nearby states during the six months following the Atlanta Convention. The Wichita conference was a month ahead in October.

The World Convention was important to the sequence of events leading to our Basic Text because it gave members a chance to visit and get to know one another. Ideas and the all important

knowledge of our recovery process benefited all who came. Along with the other breakthroughs being made in N.A. at the time, the effort toward a Basic Text was discussed. Feelings were shared and thereby taken into account as the work went forward.

Many members show up at N.A. events in curious ways. One story stands out in memory. A member was hitch hiking to the World Convention from Los Angeles. As he crossed from Arkansas into Tennessee, a sudden rain storm began. A passing car picked him up and in the addict way they quickly established that they were both in the program. He was a member of A.A. When he found out that Dean was going to the World Convention of N.A. in Atlanta, he thought of an A.A. newcomer who had an interest in N.A. He dropped Dean by the members home and introduced him to Joseph.

After a few long talks, Joseph decided to make the drive and attend the World Convention himself. He gave Dean a ride to Atlanta. Joseph spent much of his time in his hotel room with 'convention blues'. Addicts become a lonely lot in their addiction and are usually uncomfortable around large crowds in the first months of recovery. Still, Joseph had background in social movements and what he found happening in N.A. was fascinating to him. His fascination overcame his fear. A month later, Joseph attended the First World Literature Conference in Wichita.

Like all World Conventions, members met members and recovery became more real. The knowledge that the problems experienced by members in each community were general occurrences raised

spirits. The feeling that we were all in this together fired the enthusiasm of attending members. They learned a lot about starting new meetings, the service structure and most importantly gained understanding of our Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions. With this information fresh in mind, they went home built up existing meetings and started many new ones.

Sunday afternoon, after the World Convention had closed, many members of the Board of Trustees came to Bo's parents house in East Marietta. It is a beautiful home with vaulted ceilings in the living room and a huge fireplace. Soon after they arrived, the lights went out. They speculated that it must have something to do with the disease of addiction. In fact, a young man died that night loaded. His car cut a telephone pole in half on nearby Lower Roswell road however they had no way of knowing this at the time. They spent the rest of the evening talking by candle light. When the time came, Bo carried them all to the airport in his funny old postal step van. Some of these members had over fifteen years clean. What a load of recovery!

Enroute, Bo was talking with Dennis M. who was a trustee from San Jose. At the airport, Bo was waxing thick with the subject of the Basic Text. He said the trouble had been that everybody had been waiting for somebody else to do something. Sort of a mass ego trip to do nothing when the Book would require something from everyone.

Dennis asked how much money it would take to complete the project. Bo said, what if ten thousand dollars stood in the way?

What if it was twenty thousand? When Bo got to fifty thousand, Dennis said, "Enough." Curiously, that's approximately the amount of money raised and disbursed by the World Literature Committee (WLC) over a two year period of production, starting then.

The day after the World Convention was spent trying to get back to normal, Bo working in the basement of his house and Judy upstairs straightening things and cooking. She was nine months pregnant.

That evening, Bo found her carrying furniture around the house with a blank look on her face. He told her to call him when she wanted something moved. She just gazed off and said she would.

After they went to bed, she woke Bo up and told him the baby was coming. Bo had many dreams that year of chairing the World Convention and being called away because Judy went into labor. It almost happened that way. The following morning, Bo's second son Alex was born. He was named after Bo's brother Alex who died in a motorcycle accident earlier in the year while Bo was at the WSC in L.A. Bo got to watch the birth in the delivery room.

In the month that followed, preparations for the Wichita Lit Conference began. Bo was behind on his rent for nine months and the little family had to move. He took his wife to a mall near his parents and sat her down to watch some kids ice skating. He told her that while the dream of the Basic Text was taking form, it would be still be hard. Now they were having to move.

He told her that the disease of addiction as if it were a supernatural agency would not like what they were doing. Based on his experiences from the 'Strip' in Atlanta, he suspected that if the disease could not stop him directly, it would attack him indirectly and that meant her. He asked her if she was willing to move into the house on the same property where they had their small sign shop. She cried when she heard this because the place would be a mess to live in. He brought up the difficulty and importance of the work. There seemed to be no other way. After she thought about it, said she yes and they moved into 890 Atlanta Road.

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The Wichita Literature Conference took place in a community center set in a small shopping center in downtown Wichita. An early orientation meeting at the Ash House allowed members to share their feelings. The members were getting to know one another. By the time they started to work, they were ready. Seven or eight workshops of three to six members did the work. Discussions included ways members could contribute material, starting local literature committees, finances, paper work, how to start local newsletters, write IP's, contribute personal stories and work toward the goal of a Basic Text. A secretary selected by the group took notes on each workshop informally. Several times the group came together as a whole and discussed the progress of each workshop. Then they would break into workshops again. The Conference only lasted two days and only included about twenty-five members but they were the right ones.

Everything they had set out to do was completed by Sunday and they all went home feeling good. Bo promised to send a copy of the minutes and final report to each attending member. Each had paid a small registration fee to pay for copies and the token rent for the facility.

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As the months went by, two things troubled Bo.

First, the IP material that WSO was to mail hadn't come out yet. He kept calling the Office about it and they kept telling him that the approval forms of the IP's would be out any time. They never came out. Eventually, Jimmy told Bo that the originals couldn't be located. Did Bo have them? Bo got a funny feeling. Every dope addict knows what its like to give someone your money before you get the goods. Was this really happening? He lacked any real option but to trust them. He called Greg about it and all Greg knew was what the WSO staff told him.

Second, the minutes were late from Wichita. He had hoped to get them out by the holidays so members could go over them and enjoy sharing them with their friends. Also, additional ideas might come in which would help with future work. The local literature Chair said only that he was having trouble getting someone to type them. This seemed incredible and with the trouble about the IP's seemed like the hope for a Basic Text had taken a turn for the worse.

How could they have come so far to be stymied by such an unaccountable deadlock? Bo looked for the blessing in all this and found none. The good members who had showed up at Wichita would be let down when their promised reports did not come. He was still sending out the monthly letters. Progress was being made. Now, many new local literature committees formed. He had established the umbrella principle within World Lit by making every chair of a local lit committee, a co-chair of world lit. And with the formation of each committee, he added the chair's name to a call list used to work up the monthly World Lit letter. He was honest about all the problems they were having. The local lit committees were sending in new material and stories constantly.

Finally, he gave up calling the WSO about the IP's. It was out of his hands. He requested that the material from the Wichita Conference be forwarded to him and he would undertake getting it typed up himself. At first the Wichita lit chair balked at this because he felt it was his responsibility. Bo reminded him that he had done all he could and service like recovery involved getting used to receiving help from others. Bo set about finding a secretary as soon as the material arrived. Three separate secretaries, skilled at typing minutes, came to his house and took away the original copies of the material and later brought them back untyped. Bo knew they were good members and faulted them none. What was God up to with this?

Finally, the deadline for sending material out for approval before conference came and went. In total frustration, he sat down himself to type up the minutes to send out to the members who had

attended Wichita so at least that promise would be kept.

What he found was chaos. The material was unreadable. Some of it read easy, like you would expect. Some was actually written in a code of numbers relating to a topic list. None of it was in useful form. No wonder the typists had trouble typing it!

They probably felt pity for these poor fools working on a book for N.A. Looking at the basis for the minutes, Bo felt sort of sick himself. Nevertheless, he knew from sitting in on the discussions and having direct access to those who had chaired the workshops enough to make some sense out of the material.

He put a blank sheet of paper in his magic typewriter and started with an introduction similar to the original letter that had gone out a year earlier. Then he went to the first workshops material. He had to paraphrase, complete sentences and occasionally contribute his inspiration of what they meant. At first, he tried to style the material like minutes taken at an area meeting. It was so hard to do and so much was being left out of the content. He tried writing it up like a set of stories based on the material from Wichita, but including all the basic details by the end of each section. Finally, he was satisfied. A printer friend who was not in the program but who printed up program flyers and other materials suggested that it wouldn't take that much to get it typeset. It would read easier and he was even willing to print up copies that could be put into a booklet form.

Experience with several N.A. newsletters made the idea of putting

the Wichita material into a booklet form seem achievable to Bo. He checked with his people. They all said it sounded like a great idea. They put a two dollar price at the bottom of the front cover. If the WSC approved the material as a *Handbook for the World Literature Committee*, it would be a great fund raiser to meet Committee expenses! The cost of the ongoing monthly mailings were eventually reimbursed, but the money had to be raised as needed within the committee and out of Bo's pocket. Reimbursement always came later.

So Bo had it type set, printed and got together a group of members by putting out the word that the Committee needed help one Friday night. Fifty clean addicts filled the room collating, folding, stapling and addressing copies of the material entitled "Handbook for N.A. Literature Committees." The inscription in back read: "Dedicated to the continuation of the effort for new literature for the program of Narcotics Anonymous; that others may find the freedom of recovery we have found."

A Wichita gal named Annie had moved to Atlanta and had chanced to come by the house the day Bo was trying to work up a suitable inscription. He had about six choices written out and showed them all to Annie who said it ought to be something more simple and special, like this. Then she said the lines which Bo quickly jotted down. It turned to be the best choice. Much the material came through serendipity in a similar manner. You just had to be open to it.

The booklet was mass mailed to over two hundred members on the

World Lit mail list two weeks before the WSC. The rest of the thousand copies went with Bo to the 1980 WSC.

They had done all they could. The Lit Conference had gone great except for the trouble with the minutes that the booklet had remedied. The loss of the IP material was sad, but at least it didn't cripple the Fellowship or the effort for the Book. It would have to be an item dealt with at Conference. The main concern was that a considerable amount of material was coming in almost daily now from all over the Fellowship. Mailing of photocopies to local literature committees let them know that they were a real part of the committee. Phone calls kept the lit people together working up the monthly letter that was read to them over the phone. Their responses added to the content of the monthly letter. They knew everything there was to know about whatever was happening. Bo remembered the days when he had been unable to find out anything definite about the happenings in the Literature Committee. He respected the feelings of other members who must be feeling the same need to know right now. He was sensitive and careful to answer each question clearly and keep everything out in the open. He knew the principle here from personal experience. If he trusted them, they would trust him. Without their trust, there was no hope for the Basic Text.

Chaper Ten

1980 WORLD SERVICE CONFERENCE

The 1980 WSC met around the first of May. More members came than at any other Conference in our history. They came from all over the United States. A few had been coming back for the last few years. It was still the custom to recognize as a voting participant any member from an otherwise unrepresented state. These members had shown a good record of going home and somehow letting their Fellowship know that N.A. world service was a reality and welcomed them as participants. This built the spirit of trust and mutual respect among the members of the Fellowship everywhere.

The Conference was held at Valley College in a class room. There was a nearby college restaurant with tables under a protecting overhang on the other side of the same building.

After the call to order and some other initial statements and reports, the Chair called Bo forward to report for the Lit Committee. He had talked with many members about all sides of the Committee's work and felt up to the report although certain items were going to be awkward. How was he to explain the IP's that never got sent out?

Just before his report, a regional service representative (RSR) came up behind his shoulder and told him that Jimmy was sitting in the back of the room talking loud enough for everyone around

him to hear. He was saying, "Bo's not going to blame this on me."

This mortified Bo. How had this happened? What could he do now? In giving his report for the World Literature Committee, he simply stated that they had not been mailed. The committee would have to set that as a main priority the coming year.

From what Jimmy had said and from his talk with others, the Literature Committee itself was being blamed for not sending out the Informational Pamphlet material for Fellowship Review. This was to prove a God send to the committee but as usual, it didn't look like much of a gift in the beginning. Through N.A., Bo had learned to look for the blessing in any adversity. With faith, the blessing would be there.

Bo took total blame for the failure and he said it should be a first order item for the literature committee in the coming year.

To complicate matters a little more, Jimmy found the missing IP's in his secret hiding place: a safe in his bedroom with a hidden chamber in the top. Jimmy had shown Bo some precious stones he had kept there during his last visit a year ago. In the moments before leaving for the airport, Jimmy must have put the papers in that special place and later forgotten where they were until he found them in the Spring.

They had been found too late to send out to the Fellowship. Bo hadn't found this out until the Conference. Rewritten copies of the IP 'Another Look' were being passed out to attending members.

Jimmy had written the IP. Some members had been concerned that he might not like the piece being changed by the committee or anyone else. None of the other missing pieces ever came into the hands of the lit committee. Bo chose not to mention any of this in his report. He kept praying.

While these things were happening, the WSC reelected Bo to chair the Literature Committee. The WSC vice-chair who served under Tommy B. was elected to chair the WSC. She was a gifted lady from San Fernando Valley. The new vice-chair was Steve B. from Northern California.

The *Handbook for N.A. Literature Committees* was so well received that the WSC approved it because it contained only Committee related material, not general recovery material that had to go out for group conscience by the whole Fellowship for at least a year.

This was a compliment for the work of the Committee but a loss of a fund raising item for the Committee that would have used the material internally with or without approval. With WSC approval, the 'Handbook' would only be available through WSO. In those days, WSC Subcommittees had only token budgets and raised funds as needed on any basis they could. This was usually no problem because there was little work done and little or no funds raised during the year. Provision for reimbursement for expenses was clumsy and took place months after the actual Committee need. This is only information, not criticism. The WSC was young and there was little resource to meet any service objective.

Bo was getting his first taste of some of the curious mentality that sets into structural service at some level. What is simple and clear can become clouded by personalities. There is a warning to place principles before personalities as stated in the Twelfth Tradition. Trouble was, whenever Bo had seen members in a pinch he had noticed it was very hard for them to see this anonymous ideal with a flesh and blood friend who looked like they were in trouble. Very hard. All you could do was surrender and go on faith.

Again the entire voting body of the WSC, maybe about thirty votes that year, chose another World Literature Conference. The site was Lincoln, Nebraska, the week following the next World Convention that was Wichita, Kansas. The Conference had worked out the place and the timing and once again Bo was overjoyed at their wisdom. With six months, even more material would come in, the local lit committees would have plenty of time to get up additional input for the Book. Oh God, it was great!

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The real lesson of the Twelfth Tradition began to set in for Bo. Sticking to the fixed notion that a Book was possible for the Fellowship saved the Committee in a very touchy situation. Any move to the side would have cost him re-election. Any effort wasted defending himself or the Committee would have thrown the voting members off balance. Only sticking to the main goal had saved them all, and the then hidden blessings God had placed into the situation.

Bo had seen similar things in the past. The reversal that occurs when self-will tries to take over what only God can be expected to accomplish. Those who take matters into their own hands are confounded. Those who quietly keep the faith are rewarded in the end with success.

That summer Bo attended the First East Coast Convention in Lewisburg, Pennsylvania. There was an unscheduled workshop for literature and members of the convention committee asked Bo to sit in on it.

Several of the members in attendance expressed disbelief that a real work was going on for a N.A. Book. They said they had heard such talk before and it had come to nothing. Bo sat out the discussion and let them get out all their questions. He knew better than to argue with these people.

They were quite right. The members in the room were the stalwarts who had built the program up East. The Eastern Pennsylvania Fellowship was one of the oldest in the world, second only to California. They printed their own literature. This was a practice that dated from a bad period for WSO during which they had been unable to fill orders.

The discussion culminated when Dean, a young man from Southern California, raged that he wasn't going to be a part of another wishy washy bureaucratic episode in the history of N.A. Bo raised his hand. Once he had the attention of the group, he told them that he was intently committed to the effort for the Book and

that if anyone else could tell him of another group with a greater promise of success, he would resign as World Lit Chair and go with them. He pointed to the one difference between this time and the other times: material was being written.

This impressed the attending members. They picked up copies of the Committees work sheets as they filed out. Some, if not all played a role in the continuing effort for the Book. A few played major roles by forming and actively participating in the work through local literature committees. This unscheduled workshop informed and convinced enough key members from the East to provide a human backdrop to strengthen and reinforce the reports that would be coming out in future months. More names were added to the WLC mail list.

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Monthly prayers at the mountain continued. Monthly communications with the growing number of local literature committees continued with an underlying excitement. Material started to flood in. Bo now emphasized the quantity of the input by weight in pounds! The number of registered committee members grew as did the mail list. Finally, active members from the growing Fellowship assembled in Wichita for the World Convention.

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It was something. A lot had been learned from the mistakes at

Atlanta. While the Committee had been plagued with every sort of difficulty, it had distinguished itself by passing on the entire minutes including committee reports to the Wichita Committee. This helped them plan around some of the known problem areas. More and more members were finding all they needed to stay clean and grow in recovery in N.A. The past with its inertia and confusion about basic issues was sliding rapidly into the past, where it should be! This was today and N.A. said 'Today I Live'!

A work such as this cannot cover all the things that went on in these years. The growing numbers of members who showed up for these conventions bringing their hopes and troubles together to sort it all out once again. The growing depth of understanding of this thing we call N.A. The awareness that we were worth something and that our individual strengths could be combined to help us all and even more for those to come.

Dying, desperation, despair, loneliness, confusion, these were the states addicts were used to. Joy, hope, selfless concern for others, these were new to us. We practiced being the people we knew we were inside in our meetings. Even though we each had our right to individual belief, we share a special unity in our meetings where our message is strong.

At the Literature workshop in Wichita, the World Literature committee openly presented samples of the stories and recovery material that had come in over the past year and a half. Discussions of how we get together and go over material were developed by the members gathered together. While we were

intent to make a good presentation, we did nothing to heavy up the story. We all knew the impossibility of what we were doing and there was an other worldly sense of 'this can't be happening now to us, for us'. Only the miraculous nature of our recovery, that we were all clean and gathered in one place to celebrate another year clean allowed us to believe in what we were doing.

Gina H. shared from the podium Friday night that our Book was coming. It brought tears to the eyes of many. Gina had a gift for speaking anyway. She shared in such a way that we could accept that since it had to happen sometime, it might as well be happening now. She had been running with a kid in Boulder, Colorado when they got busted. He ate his stash and died on the way to the police station. She never got over it. A lot of us had been motivated into recovery by the galvanizing death of a very close friend or lover. It taught us that the disease was real and untreated it would kill us all. Gina was a literature worker in Nashville and had sent in some of the best material we had received.

The speaker Saturday night was an oldtimer who had at the time over sixteen years clean in N.A. When he approached what was happening in the Fellowship nowadays, he slowed down his talk. You could tell he had a sense of disconcertion but also wonder. Wonder that it was finally happening after all.

An odd thing happened Saturday morning. The meeting of the World Convention Committee was scheduled at nine. Bo and Joseph from Memphis were rooming together and though both had stayed up late talking, they both slept on blissfully through the

wake-up calls and the alarm clock. At precisely twelve noon, they both woke up and sat on the edge of their beds and looked first at one another and second at the television left on overnight.

The documentary concerned a quadriplegic who had been injured in action during the Viet Nam War. He was taken in from the field as dead with both arms and legs blown off. He woke up in the body bag and was immediately dragged into the operating tent and kept alive by surgery. While the emergency procedures were being carried out, he was ranting on about the actions going on in the field. He named men wounded and described battle action that occurred not only when he was on the battlefield but as the operation was proceeding. His descriptions were later verified.

He said he was not alone over the battle field but that other dead soldiers were there and watching what was going on. He said he had felt the pain and passed out. Later, it seemed he had come to but was floating around the area. This episode was being described and only took about ten minutes on the TV.

Afterwards, it gave Joseph and Bo the idea that they were indeed getting help from a spiritual realm: that the spirits of addicts who had died from their addiction were around them and helping things to work out in a special way for the Basic Text to become a reality.

Neither Bo who was more or less a pragmatic believer in God nor Joseph who was agnostic were attracted to the idea that some help was coming from the spiritual world. Still, it added an especially weird touch to the whole effort. Both were good at keeping

straight faces in uncertain circumstance and they carried on...

For many of the writers of the Basic Text, the entire work on literature during these years was a spiritual event and not the functioning of a mere Committee. The trappings of an organized committee were abundantly present but within the workings of the World Lit Committee itself, there was room for ideas, intuition, mutual criticism and humor. There was a friendly tone that gave members the feeling that if they failed at something, they would be helped not ostracized. This allowed them to open their hearts and give much more than they would have given to a mere 'committee'.

The hope of succeeding in writing book that would allow the N.A. message to be carried to millions was an enhancement but by itself cannot explain the spirit of the work. Dedicated people all sorts of motives from greed to sincere love of humanity had been working in many fields with billions of dollars of backing and the resources of national governments placed at their disposal. All those holy men and masses of money and academic credentials had failed where these sincere addicts were getting results.

While these considerations were discussed by some of the members of the WLC, they were not objects of focus for the Committee's work. The focus was on telling the kind of truth that would help others find what we had already found through N.A.

Some WLC members shared the feeling that they had been chosen for the work in some strange way. Many members who planned to attend some of the Conferences were unable to attend for various

reasons. Others showed up and played effective roles in the work without knowing about the work more than a few days or weeks in advance.

Many felt they were being used as channels of God's love and wisdom that is the promise of the Twelfth Step of recovery. All the love in California spilled across America and the world and triggered the energy brought to bear on the Book. As instruments of a power greater than themselves, the members involved tried to keep their feet on the ground and their minds and hearts on the work at hand at any given point. Faith and this practicality brought them through to completion.

On the Sunday following the close of the World Convention, we loaded into our cars and went up the road to Lincoln. Outside the car Bo rode in, an older man gave us some apples and oranges to eat on the way. He was one of the old trustees, a lawyer named Carl B. Something gentle in his giving meant a lot to Bo and the others who shared the gift they ate on the road to Lincoln.

The members who showed up at Wichita were taking a big step for the Fellowship. They had been together for the World Convention that had been held in the very city which had hosted the First World Literature Conference one year before the World Convention. Being with other members all by itself produces a catalytic energy that is strong enough to translate into personality change and recovery from addiction.

Being with other members for a week and then going to a service

conference is even more intense. By the time they got to Lincoln, they were ready to work.

Chapter Eleven

LINCOLN LITERATURE CONFERENCE

The Lincoln Literature Conference was the big turning point in the effort for our Basic Text. No more was the Book a dream, it was an evidential reality.

Greg P. and Bob B. came from the Board of Trustees. Maybe fifty members showed up in all. Jim N. as chair of the hosting Lincoln Literature Committee had arranged for the Conference to use the downtown Lincoln U.S. post office building. They had the hall ways on the ground floor. N.A. signs were posted in the windows. They worked on long folding tables and had plenty of room to work. Many participants stayed at Jim's home with his wife Donna.

The WLC had no funds to give the host community in Lincoln. Through discussion and planning, they located some typewriters and a copier that a local company was able to donate. Money was needed for supplies to run the equipment. There was so much support within the Lincoln N.A. Fellowship that several members went to a blood bank and sold blood to raise money to meet the expenses.

Work went on all day and talk went on all night. The work really got underway about Wednesday. They taped the sessions as had been done in Wichita. Minutes were kept a little more vigorously after last year's terrible experience.

Jim called to order and turned the first workshop over to Bo as Chair of the World Lit Committee. Bo thanked the members for coming and introduced the trustees. Greg and Bob went over the history of the literature efforts. As the session progressed, Greg presented an idea that probably came from Jimmy himself. That the Basic Text could be expanded from the material in the White Booklet. The chapter headings were there. The arrangement of topics had stood the test of time remarkably well in the years since 1965. Greg and Bo had talked about this those first evenings in North Hollywood.

With support from attending members, Greg established a topic outline on a black board explaining that the outline was just a list of pigeon holes to be used to sort the input, which was a stack of paper about a foot thick. Eight hundred pages of hard won writing from those who had been unable to write two years earlier.

The topic outline was typed with Roman numerals for chapters, capital letters for headings, numerals for sub-headings and so forth. Copies were made on the heavy duty copier in the corner provided by the host committee. Before it was over, two copiers were busy full time.

Once the outline was generally established, the sorting of the input began. This was a tough moment for the committee. It was a decisive moment for the committee and the members worked so hard in the last few years. Some attending members knew a little about basic writing but none were professional writers. If the Basic Text dream was to become a reality, it would be here and now.

The Committee knew that it had plenty of input. They had a topic outline and the plan to enlarge the White Booklet into the Basic Text had a certain poetry to it that they knew would suit the Fellowship. Still, how does input become Book?

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The complete files of input were photocopied. Enough copies of the topic outline to give to each member of the workshop gave everybody a chance to help. Bo worked out a provisional plan to try to go over the input and make a mark to locate where on the topic outline the input would best fit. In cases where the input was relevant to two or more locations, each location was marked. This took the committee a while.

The next step was to cut up the photo copies pages and sort them into folders marked according to the topic outline. This seemed good enough and it included every piece of input without leaving out anything. Bo, along with the other workers, wanted to keep faith with the letter and spirit of the input from the Fellowship. Many people had expressed concern about how this great idea could be effected in a practical manner. This was how it happened in Lincoln.

The plot thickens . . . How does the cut and sorted input derived from member from all over get into a coherent form? This is a real blind spot in understanding the process that led to the Basic Text. Those members who were a part of this process understand and those who were not can't believe that it could have possibly

worked.

The work took several days to reach this point. The Committee had become of one mind during this time. The group of members were working together in a systematic manner where all had an opportunity to say whatever was on their mind, pertinent or impertinent. There had been plenty of meals and meetings to break the tension and allow attending members to clarify their understanding of what was happening. Many of these members had been working in local literature committees for a year or two by the time they got to Lincoln, so their experience was taking what they knew already to a deeper level. The spirit was very strong in the room.

To begin working out solutions of literary construction, the members decided to try to work up the first item from the topic outline. This way, they would see if they could get anything useful out of it. The idea was to include all the items from the input and supply bridge sentences and connective ideas as the need for them became apparent. They took a deep breath, said their prayers and plunged onward.

There was a large circle of members sitting around a group of tables to form a center. Every face was visible. The input marked 'I,A,1' was separated into piles among the group. Everyone agreed that all the pieces would be included somewhere in the cut and paste before they moved on to the next section.

Bo led the group and told the members present to trust their spirits

to motivate them. He asked who felt they had the best piece of input to start the first chapter? "Come on," he said, "who's got it. Don't think about it. Let's get going. Who's got it?" He pushed the group until someone said they had something. They read it. Members from the group had eye contact and several said, "Naw. That's not it." Another read an item of input. They were close to good initial items but not quite on the mark. Finally, one of the members read an item that seemed to fit. It was, "Pain is our common denominator." The group was excited now. That was true and it fit. "Now," Bo said, "What's the next item? We still have a lot of input for this section. Who's got the next piece?"

The pace had to be a little fast. The members had to know, love and trust one another. All had to know they were equally welcome to throw up their hand and read their input. If two or more spoke simultaneously, they took turns. Bo kept the group moving fast. If they thought about it too much, they would spoil it and lose momentum. It was initial impact and transmission they were working by. After the first piece and the second and the third, they came to a point where nothing seemed to fit.

By right of what was not fitting, the group developed a rough idea of what was missing. This in turn helped them come up with what was needed to complete the thought and lead on to the next one. In the manner of input, members began speaking ideas and versions of what might fit. This went on until the group settled on one that seemed right. Enough. Move on to the next item!

It was like an auctioneering process. Everybody had to be up to

participate. They went from item to item and supplied bridge sentences and paragraphs where ever needed. Finally, the paste up included all input marked 'I,A,1'. The items of input had been pasted with glue sticks onto eight and a half by elevens with page numbers written in at the top. Handwritten bridge sentences joined the items of input. Bo thanked the group and called for a fifteen minute break.

When they came together again, he started off on the next section: 'I,A,2'. After a few rounds, he passed the lead to Greg you took it up and made the calls exactly as Bo had. Soon, there were many members who had taken a turn leading the table. The fast pace, sensitivity to the material and rhythm called the reactions out of the people at the tables.

Section after section was completed. Copies of the completed cut and pastes were sent to typists set up around the corner in a separate work area. They had somehow managed to get a row of brand new IBM 'Selectrics'. This made the typed finals beautiful.

The work on the topic outline of chapters took the rest of the workshop time at Lincoln. Everybody had a hand in it. One addict who was still using was asked to leave the room respectfully. Several members of the workshop in session made clear to him that they were writing so that he need not use again against his will. Out of love, they would not let him interrupt the process. One member threw an ash tray off a table and broke it. Members of the group asked him to contain himself. Joseph helped with the filing system.

The group steadied itself to complete the process of cut and paste throughout the entire body of the material. They had been loose and open in ways and tight and organized in others. By Sunday, they had done it.

To accomplish this extensive cut and paste draft of over a hundred pages from input of eight hundred pages, they had worked in sessions lasting twelve to fifteen hours. Some individuals worked twenty hours or more. They worked in the several workshops that addressed different portions of the material, helped run the copier, helped with the files or typed. Everybody found something.

After the Lincoln Lit Conference, there was a spiritual closeness among the literature workers that only natural disaster or miraculous occurrence can arouse in human beings. The commitment to the Basic Text was now deeper than ever and shared out among member from all over who had attended.

The importance of praying for selflessness and conscious contact with the God of a members understanding was illustrated for Bo in the early phases of the Lincoln Lit Conference. He noticed during one of the sessions that the young lady seated next to him was fidgeting and squirming in her seat. She seemed in an agony of sorts.

He leaned over and whispered to her. Had she said her literature prayer, yet? Several of the WLC mailings included a prayer written to help members seeking to serve in literature find a quiet place to work, pray to know God's Will and be able to work

selflessly. It included praying for God to take away the sense of selfishness and granting the ability to be used as an instrument. Bo recommended that if she hadn't done this, she should leave the room and do it now, then come back. She said she'd try it and left the room. Five minutes later, she was at the table throwing out her comments and scanning her pile of input with the best of them.

Another especially touching moment was when a somewhat rough looking man asked for help doing his story. He could neither read nor write. He was a cowboy from the Upper Platte River country and had become addicted to morphine in the warfields of Europe in World War II. A young lady volunteered to sit with him and take down his story by hand. His sincere desire to help others will never be forgotten.

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At the end on Lincoln, everyone in attendance knew that the dream of a Book for N.A. was going to come true. They couldn't say when but they had come over the major obstacle to the work: how could it be a group effort based on Fellowship input? The idea had been around for thirty years but the reality had taken a miraculous suspension of the rules and limitations that govern people in ordinary times.

Since the cut and pastes needed to be typed up before they could present them at the annual WSC, another conference was called. There was no reason to wait until the WSC in May for direction to finish what last year's WSC had asked them to do. They were still

on track with the WSC mandate to work on the Basic Text. Joseph offered to secure support for the next conference to be held in Memphis, Tennessee. It was in the lower Mid-West and the community there would love it he said. The Memphis Conference was tentatively set for early February of 1981. Announcements would confirm this. Everyone thanked each other and went home with warm hugs on the outside and warm feelings of goodness inside.

Chapter Twelve

GETTING READY FOR MEMPHIS

What had been learned about processing literature at Lincoln impacted on the Fellowship. It was a hard experience to talk about. You had to be there. Members from all over were talking about Lincoln. An attempt to have local lit committees workshop the material was made. The committee sent out the cut and pastes to local literature committees to be typed up 'we' form. This style deleted the origins of input by substituting the first person plural anywhere 'I' or 'they' or other persons were used. If this wrecked havoc with structure of a sentence or a paragraph of input, the instructions were to set it right in the best manner possible including adding sentences to make to meaning clear. Qualification was required because some 'we form' material applied to 'all of us', 'some of us' or 'a few of us'. Occasionally to include an item of input phrasing like, 'on the other hand' and 'in some instances' were necessary.

The inclusive 'we form' styling set the standard for all subsequent N.A. literature. It included a diversity of recovery experience unified by the word 'we'.

Far from being unworkable, this was a simple and easy method and the main requirement for quality was a feel for the Fellowship practices, especially the parts of recovery that were general or universal in practice. Groups comprised of members from many separate geographic regions was best for this sort of work. What

they discussed was only suspected before: in instance after instance the spiritual principles of recovery proved to be universal based on written input.

The mailed cut and paste effort was a technical disaster. Although great care had been taken in the preparation of the materials sent out to the local literature committees, the instructions were literal to point of fault and referenced processing that had never before taken place in the N.A. Fellowship. The process was entirely unknown except to those few members who had attended the Lincoln Conference.

One chapter, the first, was typed up and a hundred copies were copied and bound by the Atlanta Literature Committee. A committee member named Greg R. read and followed the instructions with the help of other members and had the material produced at a nickel copy store.

Two separate things about the processing at Lincoln were hard to explain to others. First the creative unconcern that was required to cut and paste input from many sources. The occurrence of similar experience, phrasing or feeling was selected for if it was found from many diverse sources. What the literature workers thought or felt was not totally dismissed. The written input was taken to be a little more important than their experience to reduce personal bias. This helped keep personal bias from predetermining how a section would come out.

There had to be a time when the material was totally up in the air.

It took a sort of tough minded faith to realize that no piece would get lost and that anything done could be improved on at a later stage of processing. It is more ordinary and therefore less offensive to proceed quietly reading each piece slowly and considering each point in detail with discussion of each new, relevant idea or concept. The trouble with this is that it is not general enough to allow a piece to be literally 'roughed in' before the more calm and deliberate procedures are applied.

Going the other route and doing it slowly is so precise that a formulation sets in too early and makes new ideas seem a threat to the fabric of the material, when in reality, all may and do occur in applied recovery situations. The roughness is expectable at this point of development. However, the effect on the uninitiated is like a thousand fingernails scratching blackboards all at once!

Some members were entirely incapable of staying in the room when this was going on even though they came back and were able to great work excepting cut and paste of raw input.

The above concerns made it difficult to do anything but generally describe the process and hope the listener or reader could follow the process. The WLC felt it had a duty to keep the Fellowship informed. Since the work took place with members present who could explain these things as the work progressed, the main attempt to explain processing was limited to the main committee and the local literature committees who also learned the techniques from their members who had attended conferences of the WLC.

The word of the Lincoln Literature Conference generated much interest and even more input. Stories came in from people who had laughed at the effort a few months before Lincoln. Belief that a serious effort was underway was spreading from the reality of what was happening.

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The now approved 'Literature Handbook' helped give lit workers everywhere a common information base. The monthly letters took care of the breakthroughs and new events to be considered by a growing body of hundreds of members from Frankfurt, Germany to Sydney, Australia.

Naturally, the growth of the WLC was viewed with some alarm by the previously unchallenged WSO as Fellowship information center. Since much of the printing and mailing was done for the WLC from Memphis, there was a growing concern that Memphis wanted to be the location for a new WSO! Again, while some members may have thought this was a good idea, the main Committee never entertained the motion. To Bo, such talk was merely another in a long list of potential distractions and side issues.

Bo spent five to ten hours on the phone daily. The rest of the time went to correspondence. His marriage and business was slowly falling apart. He still served as Atlanta Lit Chair and editor of the monthly 'Rainbow Connection' newsletter.

Plans for the Memphis Literature Conference that it was going to be a pull out the stops effort. Planned to be nine days long and running twenty-four hours a day, it would easily be the longest and most demanding conference in the history of Narcotics Anonymous. The Lincoln Lit Conference had gone through 20,000 photocopies and Memphis was going to be held at Memphis State University in an unused conference room in a student dorm. Plenty of floor space. A dozen or more 'Selectrics' and two heavy duty copy machines were going to provide the equipment base. As many as a hundred members were expected to show up.

Among the considerations that had to be considered was the sincerity of the members involved. No one was coming to the literature conferences for fun or glamour. It was not socially acceptable to be doing this. As with any new thing, there was a mystique of utter sincerity, hard work and faith. Unlike some veneers, this mystique was real and ran to the core of those committed to getting a Basic Text for Narcotics Anonymous. Whatever they needed, they could come get. It was happening.

Memphis seemed like the last great chance before the effort became politicized by others who would come just to be a part of something big. It was the sincerity of the courageous early supporters that thrilled and excited Bo. His studied and personal experiences had taught him how beautiful and rare such a phenomenon was in human history, much less in these times.

When Bo got home, he looked through the files only to find that major portions of the material were entirely missing. Joseph had

been in charge of keeping the files and much as he hated the idea, it seemed that some of the material had been stolen. Waves of anger and betrayal washed over him. He took another look and it seemed like the best material was gone. What was he to do?

He thought about all the people that had come to do the work. How could it be that they were going to have to make up the work? Had his higher power been sleeping, to let such a thing happen. Finally, he called Joseph, hoping that there would be some reasonable explanation.

At first, Joseph was aghast. He seemed as surprised as Bo had been. Was he faking it? Bo went on to specify and describe the missing material by the headings on the empty file folders. Joseph started asking questions. Then he told Bo that the material wasn't missing. That he had established the headings himself and that the contents never developed for some of the committees topic outline slots. All the file folders had been marked in advance and the contents inserted as they were developed by the committee's processing.

Bo had learned a great lesson: one that was to help preserve the unity and forward force of the spiritual service they had undertaken. Don't trust appearances. Be willing to dig for facts and get past the emotions so quick to present themselves as if they were facts.

Keeping the principles in and the personalities out had been a matter of quickness. Even though years had passed since the

original discussions with Greg who had moved to Oregon, the time was quick in terms of the movement of ideas among even such a comparatively small group of ten or twenty thousand people. Those with prestige and reputation to uphold had held back. The little guys had been proving to themselves and to the N.A. world the magnificence that lies in each recovering addict. It had been a real thrill for Bo to watch the spirit come out in himself and these others and do the work accomplished so far.

Bo didn't prejudice himself against outstanding people; he had just been studying people and life for meaning and purpose. Most of the world religions predicated that God was in all people and even that it was the same God, despite all exterior forms: age, race, sex, time period, geographic location, language and culture. Through the work on the N.A. Book, he was getting to see the miracle happen in fascinating slow motion.

One of the oddities which first showed at Wichita, and was evident even more at Lincoln, was the way the members seemed to step beyond their ordinary limitations. People who hadn't finished high school were editing with a refinement and technical sensitivity to phrasing and tone that would have done credit to PHD's. If they had been forced to present credentials, they would have shrunk down into their personal boundaries. Through the Spirit of N.A., they could expand far beyond these limitations and by forgetting themselves in an effort to help others reveal the deep, true and oh so beautiful spirit within. This was Bo's higher power now. He worshiped it through service to N.A.

There is a saying in the anonymous programs that you can get so spiritual that you're no earthly good. The commitment to service and to the Basic Text had long since exceeded the boundaries of reason for Bo. His Dad saved his business a time or two. His wife did sweet little things and made the old ramshackle house on Atlanta Road in Marietta into a home. It took much love and courage on her part. The children were growing but not yet school age, thank God.

Whether it was the disease or the unlikeliness of it all, there was considerable stress involved for Bo as well as the other active lit workers of the times. Maybe the simple trouble was that they were doing work with no formal support system. If they had been doctors or scientists, their work would have fit into a specialized, recognized groove and they would have had a different sort of support. Instead, the ground they were breaking was more dependent on a special kind of truth and the trappings that go with formalized support system would have hindered or prevented the work they were doing.

When Bo prayed, he still had the feeling that they were doing a good thing and that they were on the right track. His personal program had progressed. He had taken his own inventory and could see where his defects had been working against him, not for him. He had been able to admit, share and willingly ask God to remove any hindrance to doing God's will. He had made initial amends and found it to be a healing process although he could not control the when but only the who of the amends.

His involvement with personal service beyond his committee service extended to about twenty people he sponsored and his membership in a home group that was for three years, the longest N.A. meeting in the world. The 'Survivor's Group' lasted seven or eight hours every Saturday night from eleven o'clock to just before sunrise Sunday morning. Most often the group would go then to the mountain and meditate while the sun came up. Afterward, they would go to a nearby omelette shop and talk about N.A.

As using addicts, many of us had spent a great deal of time talking about the troubles of the world and the many things we would do better if we got the chance. The more our addiction progressed, and the worse we felt about ourselves, the greater the fantasies we would create about how we would change the world someday. We had truly outrageous dreams and no aspect of life from the cold bloodedness of the establishment, to war and the general sense of inhumanity was sacrosanct to us. Additionally, our irrational meanderings were couched in terms of ultimate morality. The more our addiction cut us off from our feelings, the more desperate we became to wringing every ounce of emotion from the tragedy of it all, without even seeing ourselves as centers of the tragedy. Something awful was happening to us and we projected our feelings outward. Our hilarity while using reflected our hysteria instead of good humor.

Our early recovery experienced is in many ways based on these 'high' standards. In time, we may become more realistic. The part of the dreams that append to the genuine heartfelt feelings are likely to remain with us but find new outlets.

So, is it any wonder that clean addicts armed with faith, hope and each other, imbued in spiritual principles, would undertake this great work in all seriousness and humility.

At the time it was considered and discussed that if the Twelve Steps of N.A. could do for addicts in general what A.A. had done for alcohol addicts in particular, then the effort would be worth any personal price we had to pay to move the effort forward.

We were willing to do the work because our individual and collective conscience would not allow us to be dissuaded from our task for any reason. We looked neither to the left nor to the right but straight ahead to the goal: the one thing we could not do in our active addiction.

Doing the work for no money, nor any other personal benefit, was used to raise the spiritual value of the work beyond what institutions could raise with all their money, credentials and prestige. We had to win the hearts of our people for the work to progress. Selflessness was a basic imperative if the work was to go forward. Bo realized that as the one others looked to, he had to disclaim any desire for money and set a pace for himself sufficiently hard to get results from the efforts of others who would follow his example.

It is worth mentioning that one of the keys to working with other addicts on the Basic Text was telling each new potential worker that no one anywhere knew why N.A. worked. Plus the book work was not an effort to determine that. Then Bo could see the member

visibly relax and ask the questions they had about the work. It always seemed to Bo that the real interworkings of the Twelve Step recovery process involved some deeper aspects of human beings and it was akin to sacrilege to try to figure it all out. Kind of like dissecting a woman to see why she was beautiful. Describing the recovery process and what was said and heard in our meetings was acceptable and doable. It was non-interruptive to describe the beauty without defining it.

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The Memphis Literature Conference was scheduled to begin Saturday and run through the following Sunday nine days later.

A big screen print job delayed Bo's departure. A dozen or so member showed up at his house in Marietta and worked with him on the big job so they could all leave. It involved specialized processes that no one knew how to do but they could follow instructions and as a group they had to innovate solutions to various problems connected with doing the job. Bo could have just said to hell with the order but there were the usual bills to be paid and he felt badly to let down a customer, much less his wife and children by leaving them all in a lurch.

The hidden benefit in all this was that by the time they completed the job and left for Memphis, they were accustomed to working together as a team.

As a note of interest, one member from Miami confessed that the

notion he had thought up was that the Book was already written and that members were simply being called in to co-sign the material. One measure of the closeness that the members felt was that instead of keeping this to himself, he had come out and shared it.

They came in a car and a Volkswagen bus. They took the interstate through Nashville and would have stopped for a meeting if it had been later.

As they drove down through the mountains of Tennessee toward the flatlands approaching Memphis, Bo looked up and saw the sun breaking through the clouds in a distinct set of rays. He counted them and there were twelve in all. He asked other members riding in the bus and sure enough, there were twelve rays in all.

They followed the map into Memphis State University and found the dorm where the Conference was already in progress. They whooshed in with the momentum from the past two days still carrying them.

Chapter Thirteen

MEMPHIS LITERATURE CONFERENCE

Joseph met them in the parking lot at Memphis State University. He welcomed them with a hug and led them into the building where the members were already reading and workshoping parts of the material. After the traveling members had brought their luggage into the Conference area, they called together the first of many group conscience sessions.

There were about fifty members present and they were all waiting for a clear idea of what they were to do. Some general preparation had already been done. Files gone over and sorted. They had the cut and pastes from Lincoln to type up into "we form" drafts. Some of these needed going over before typing. They needed additional bridge sentences or paragraphs to complete, introduce or develop the basic ideas.

Bo opened the session with the Serenity Prayer, as were all the group conscience sessions. He said, "Well, we're here. What are we going to do? At the first two Literature Conferences we went around the table to hear from each member why they had come and give everyone a chance to ask questions. If it's OK with everyone, I'd like to start the ball rolling by sharing my hopes and concerns."

"We've come a long way. The Book is now in cut and paste form and all we have to do is type it up 'we form.' Then we can start

going over it to iron out the rough spots and make sure we include all the basic ideas. As most of you know, we make every effort to use the wording of the original. We also give ourselves the freedom to add to the material from our own experience. I don't have to tell you that the main thing is to stay true to what is said and heard in our meetings or practiced in N.A. recovery."

"Another thing. You know how unusual it is for us to be here to do work like this. A lot of members made plans to come and have been unable to make it. A lot of you only found out about the effort recently and have miraculously found the time and money to get here. We have started a 'miracle list' of the strange, unlikely ways in which you have gotten here."

"Let's start on my left and go around the room until we've heard from everyone. These group conscience sessions should allow us to work on a particular project but stay aware of what the other members are doing as well."

It took about an hour to go around the room. Members shared their experience at home working in local literature committees. They shared their hopes for the Memphis Conference. A few had questions about the technicalities of the work. At the end, they took a brief break and sat down at the tables together again. Bo reopened the discussion.

"We have ten chapters to go through and all the stories yet to be considered. Some chapters are ready to go into editing and others need additional work before typing can begin."

"You should feel free to sit in on any workshop and move around just as freely. Wait until you feel like you're in the one that is right for you. It will help the process if you move around some. Could some of you volunteer to chair the workshops?"

Members who had attended Lincoln chaired workshops to complete cut and paste sections. Some members newer to the work took material that had been typed up from hand written originals for editing. They broke into several workshops and got the new material from the file cases at the side of the room.

Some members volunteered to type or collate material from the copy machines. There were ten beautiful 'Selectrics' on tables along one wall. The dorm cafeteria was just outside the entrance to the work area within the building. The Mid-South Regional Lit Committee as host to the Conference had arranged for a telephone located at the end of the room, near the cafeteria. This would allow attending members to stay in touch with their local literature committees at home.

They worked late into the night and most got to sleep only a few hours before the Conference convened at nine o'clock in the morning. The fast pace and their growing familiarity with the material was resulting in less and less interruption of the various processes going on at once. Still, there was some drag getting started. By the end of the day, they had almost all the material ready for typing and some material was in editing.

The cut and paste workshops were going like Lincoln, maybe a

little slower. Once the material was pasted, it was more a matter of catching things that were not on the sheets yet.

The editing consisted of five or ten members sitting around tables each with hand held copies and reading through the material carefully. Members would stop the reading from time to time to discuss points of interest or concern. They held up each item to the measure of their personal experience. It was amazing how much more they had in common in terms of recovery experience than anyone had even guessed before. It could only come out in sessions like this.

By Tuesday, all the material was in typing or editing. Some material that had been through a first edit was ready to be read and reconsidered. On Wednesday, the Conference was in full swing. Everyone knew the processes and the material. There were no conflicts.

Linda M. from Wichita had emerged as the librarian of the World Lit files. With her quiet manner and quick mind she was able to do a great deal of work without breaking her spiritual calm. She also directed the typing, filing and copying needs of the Conference. By Wednesday, she requested a blackboard to keep track of the work.

She made a chart of the entire Basic Text chapter by chapter. She listed the chapters in the left column and the items to be done across the top line. As each piece completed a certain phase, she would make her check mark. The blackboard kept at the end of the

room in full view of the members so they could check their progress at will.

Through the group conscience sessions, all the members present got to play major roles. Each had something special to offer. Some could catch flaws. Some were good with language and some had degrees. Some were just good workers. All were needed and felt their usefulness. The group was grateful to all its members.

Some members working in editing came to the section of the material where direct quotes from 'Another Look' would fit perfectly into a cut and paste from Lincoln. They telephoned Jimmy K. as author of the I.P. He refused permission to use it because he couldn't see the rest of the material. He said he might go along with it after he had a chance to look at it. The WLC decided not to push it.

The Sixth Chapter on our Twelve Traditions was unwritten and the WLC only had a little input. Greg P. was unable to attend but was contacted in Wolf Creek, Oregon. He said he had some material that seemed pretty good to him. The time it would have taken to get from Wolf Creek to San Francisco, put the material on a jet and receive it the next day was determined to be too long. So the material was taken over the telephone.

A lit worker from Iowa who was skilled at typing agreed to take down the material. The trouble was she couldn't hold the phone and type simultaneously. Bo held the phone to Molly's ear for four hours and she typed it directly from Greg's voice over the phone.

Eventually, Bo got tired and had to set up a high office seat behind her chair. They worked out a system whereby she could shrug her shoulder to have him press the receiver closer or pull her head away if she wanted less pressure. It only seemed like two hours to them. The phone call probably only cost thirty dollars since it was placed after eleven o'clock. The material went straight in to editing. The rest of the chapter was taken over the phone the next day.

Another thing was money. In a car driving through the boulevards of Memphis to get office supplies, Bo asked Joseph how much it would cost to have the material typed up and sent out to members. Joseph said he guessed about three thousand dollars. This seemed like a great sum to Bo at the time. They both wondered how much they could trust the other with this much money. Then they both laughed. They had each put in more than three thousand dollars in the project through travel and lost time from work, not to mention phone calls.

When they got back for the next group conscience session, Bo asked Joseph to elaborate on printing and distribution. Now Joseph said six thousand dollars. He had begun to list the things that would have to be done to complete the printing and mailing. Six thousand dollars would allow for a copy of the material to be sent to all the groups free of charge. When asked what 'all groups' meant, Joseph said all the groups in the world. The potential of this reality struck the group with wonder.

Phone calls to local Fellowships all over went out from the end of

this session for the rest of the month. Attending members had paid twelve dollars registration. Each would receive a copy of the final along with the minutes. Additional copies after those mailed to N.A. groups would be sold for twelve dollars.

The minutes that had been such a problem last year were now done as the group conscience sessions progressed. That is to say, the minutes went into typing before each session closed. The typists sat only twenty feet away and could participate in the session if they wanted.

Members would go to lunch and find their minutes ready when they returned. At first some attending members said this was impossible. Bo said it may be impossible but if we do it, I hope it will be OK. It was done this way for each session and attending members went home with their copies in hand.

Toward the end of the week, the editing was getting bogged down in hair splitting sessions. What they needed was overview to eliminate redundancy and to make sure the material read well since most of it would have to be readable in meetings. They experimented some and tried reading the chapter material as fast as possible with twenty to forty members following it with hand held copies. They were asked to mark the material where they spotted an item that seemed incorrect or redundant. The members working directly on the material noticed that another member could walk into the far side of the room and distract the reading with the slightest sound. Ordinary editing was done in smaller groups with a room full of members at different tables where they

couldn't hear what was said three feet away. Another style of editing was developed on the spot. The 'Memphis flow reading' allowed participants to utilize another part of their minds. It was helpful at spotting problems of redundancy and poor wording. It required a different sort of concentration; more like the concentration people have reading alone. As at Lincoln, this technique grated the nerves of some members so badly, they had to leave the room while the readings were going on.

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Many of us came to believe that there was a real spirituality available to mankind and that we had found our way through the Steps. While personal belief is an individual matter in N.A., we all come to believe in something. Even those who were unclear about their personal belief, were attracted by the spiritual energy they could sense in others.

A discussion took place Wednesday at the Memphis Literature Conference. Many spiritual viewpoints were discussed. The subject was the use of the first person masculine pronoun 'He' or 'Him' for the God of our individual understanding in English.

In recovery, "God" becomes a word for Higher Power and is understood by most of our members to mean the 'God of a person's understanding'. This is made possible through our belief that true spiritual principles are never in conflict. By extension, the use of 'He' and 'Him' was discussed more in terms of an English convention than a philosophical or religious imperative. In our

Twelve Steps and in the context of our Second Tradition, 'He' is used. The Second Tradition defines our Ultimate Authority as a Loving God as expressed in our group conscience.

Bo commented that the alternatives were 'She', 'They' and 'It'. None of these alternatives were in common usage among English speaking members. There is an esoteric view that holds that the 'mother' religions use 'She' that would ultimately be as confining as pronoun 'He'. 'They' is pagan and would exclude many by seeking to include only a few. The impersonal 'It' is hardly a term for a spiritual source that is 'Loving' as stated in our Second Tradition.

This type of consideration was also given throughout the Basic Text writing. The intent was to include all addicts seeking recovery regardless of spiritual belief or personal preference. This effort concerned our members as newcomers and later as members with five or ten years clean.

The Judeo-Christian language embedded in our English language was more ordinary, less contrived than the alternatives considered. Further, the bias could be diluted with other ways of referring to the Higher Power, such as, 'God as you understand God'.

It was discussed and intended that translation would have to be dealt with on a per language basis to conform to the recovery and heritage of members who speak that language. Again, the material would be tuned to the members rather than have them adapt English speaking values and concepts which might hamper rather

than assist their recovery process.

About fifty members were on the floor working twenty hours a day for seven of the nine days of the Conference. This means about seven to ten thousand hours were put into the work in an amazingly short length of time. The addicts loved it but even those of us who were there couldn't appreciate how unusual it was. Along with the lit workers at Memphis, much work was done by members working in local literature committees which met that week. A whole network of participating members sprang up overnight. Word went out that we needed funds to print and publish the 'Memphis Review Form.' This form was later called the 'Gray Form' because it had a gray cover.

The local literature committee in Philadelphia called to say they had material that might help. A dozen members were standing around the telephone. Bo told the group they could have the material the next day if they used an express mail service. The circle of members got even quieter, thinking about the editing processes in session and the need for the material. Finally, one member broke the silence and asked if we couldn't have it flown in from Philadelphia and pick it up at the airport later that night. This was done. We couldn't wait twenty four hours unnecessarily.

By the end of the week, money was beginning to come in, the work was nearing completion according to Linda's blackboard, and members were talking about what would happen next.

The material would have to be typed for one thing. Then it would

have to be printed, bound and mailed to groups that had yet to be located beyond the listing in the last world directory. The Lit Committee's mail list distinguished between groups and individuals but they knew they didn't have them all. WSO was asked to share their most complete mail list.

They said it was unavailable and asked what we planned to do. We told them that we were going to mail out the review form so members could consider it prior to the upcoming WSC. They told us it couldn't possibly be gotten out in time. How would we get the money? We told them everything we had done and exactly what we had in mind. They wished us luck. As far as the mail list went, they said the list they had wasn't as complete as the one we had recently sent them. It is hard to keep such lists up to date. Unknown addressees tend to build up on such lists quickly unless they are used for routine mailings and the addresses of returned mail pieces faithfully marked off or new addresses entered.

The problem from the year before with the IP's gave the literature committee the duty and task of getting it's own review pieces out to the Fellowship. This was going to be a big review piece.

The stories were simply typed up by one of the workshops and evaluated. While most were good and readable, they all went into the files for later consideration. Only a few members got involved with this workshop. No one played favorites about whose story was going into the Book.

There had been a banquet Saturday night and the Literature

Committee passed out a plaque of gratitude to the Memphis Community for being host to the Conference. The food and Fellowship had been great.

At the end of the week, Linda made her last check mark on the blackboard. The work was as complete as we could get it for the present. Bo had announced he was stepping down from chair of the committee and asked them to choose another good chair for themselves. Some of the Traditions material had talked about committees that became extensions of the personalities of their chairs. He didn't want this to happen with the Literature Committee.

The site of the next Literature Conference would be announced by mail. One attending member had been in a N.A. meeting in Los Angeles. Someone had put a plane ticket to Memphis in his pocket and told him to attend the conference. He was from Santa Monica, California. That turned out to be the next conference site. And he turned out to be the chair of the host committee.

First, they had to locate any additional meetings to receive the Book, type up all the material, get it printed and mailed. The Memphis Conference ended on February 8, 1981. The Committee had three weeks to get the material out before the sixty day deadline established at last year's WSC. Does that seem like a long time? It's not.

The Memphis Review Form, later called the 'Gray Form', was close to four hundred pages long. It took over a quarter of a

million pages for the printing.

After the workers left Memphis State that had been their home for the last week, they went to Joseph's to talk and have a meeting. The lights went out in the living room and candles were brought to light the meeting. It was raining enough to flood the nearby Mississippi. The cause of the power outage was a fire in an auto parts house right next door. It burnt to the ground that night, surrounding Joseph's house with screaming fire engines. The rain continued though unable to stop the fire and we had our meeting.

To everyone's surprise, there was not a piece of approved material in the house: not a single White Booklet or I.P. The Basic Text material contained in the files was all we could find. We had already opened with the Serenity Prayer and in the moment when everybody was trying to decide what to do, a newcomer said, "Who is an addict. Most of us do not have to think twice about this question . . ." He went on until he came to a line he couldn't remember and another member picked it up. We did the entire readings from memory. We had so closely tuned ourselves into the material that we literally knew the White Booklet by heart!

Chapter Fourteen

SANTA MONICA LITERATURE CONFERENCE

The Memphis Conference went on for months following the closing ceremonies on February 8, 1981. The group assembled charged the WLC and the host community in Memphis with much undone work. For this reason, several members moved to Memphis for the rest of the month! One even commuted between Ohio and Memphis to help get the work done, editing pieces on the plane. The energy Fellowship-wide was tremendous. After attempts to retype the material completely proved to be beyond the skeleton crew of volunteers, a typing service was hired to do the job. They found a printer and selected the cover stock and binding style.

In Marietta, a man who had showed up for the 'Third World Literature Conference' thinking it involved third world countries, worked day and night to locate every group address in the world. His name was Roger T.

With a typing speed of two hundred words a minute, a near photographic memory and an exceptional ability to do anything the Committee needed done, Roger moved to Marietta so he could help with the work. Although his prior involvement had been primarily with A.A., he moved into N.A. lot, stock and barrel. Hardly anyone else could have taken on the task of locating all the groups in the world and followed it through to completion. Brainstorming with other members, he would call the next nearest listed meeting starting in the big cities and working his way out to

the countryside. If there was a gap between major cities, or a major city with no N.A. listing, he would call A.A. helplines or hospitals seeking N.A.'s to send the review form of the Book.

Roger lived with Bo for the months following the Memphis Lit Conference and they had many talks as the work progressed. One night a man showed up on Bo's couch who had been unable to stay clean going to several other Twelve Step Fellowships. They talked about N.A. and recovery until late in the night. Before going to bed, Bo put thirty dollars of committee funds that had come in that day into the bank bag he kept in his desk. The next morning, the man was gone and so was the money. He thought honestly about all the money he was putting into the effort and took thirty dollars out of his own money and put in into the bag. He resolved to be more careful in the future.

Roger saw this and it seemed to be a funny moment. While Bo thought no more about it, subsequent events made it possible that Roger thought Bo was taking, not giving, since they looked so much alike.

Joseph had established a policy of sending Memphis Review Forms only to existing N.A. groups. Several of the members wanted copies sent to friends or doctors who had been supportive of N.A. This wasn't enough for Joseph. If they believed in N.A. so much, why hadn't they started groups or encouraged others to do so? The WLC agreed.

There was no great intent to push for approval of the review form

that came to be known as the 'Gray Form.' Their was the desire for approval. Each line of the text was numbered to simplify input and subsequent processing. The GBC binding method with a plastic gripper spine which allowed the pages to lay flat. This was chosen with review in mind, not approval.

With help from all twelve local literature committees, the addresses of every locatable group in the world including Europe, India, Canada and Australia was assembled. Amazingly, the finished books were sent out on time. The phone bill in Marietta only ran about five hundred dollars - a hefty sum in those days.

Money had poured in from all over the Fellowship and far exceeded the initial expenses. San Francisco, Philadelphia, Atlanta, Chicago, all sent money. Groups, areas and members all sent money to get the review forms sent out. It cost more to do than the projections had allowed for. No one had known about the hundreds of extra meetings that had been found. A copy of the mail list was routinely sent to WSO for their uses.

The trouble over who was supposed to mail the IP's at the last Conference gave the WLC the duty of printing and mailing review materials. This allowed the WLC to send out the unforeseen 'Gray Form.' The WSO was developing a rather cool attitude to the WLC.

The first copy of the 'Gray Form' was sent to Jimmy K. in sincere gratitude for all his years of help and selfless devotion to N.A. It was the greatest honor those working on the Book could give a

man who had devoted his life to N.A. and helped get it all started.

Almost before the 'Gray Forms' went out, rumors began that the WLC was going to push for approval in May at the WSC. This was put into some newsletters by some members of World Lit but was never policy for the Committee with the support of its members. The exuberant phrase 'Hardback in June' had been typed at the bottom of the first page of the Review Form. It may be that some members felt this way but it was not the position of the committee as a whole. No one had even had a chance to review the finished work. The 'Hardback in June' comment didn't help dispel the growing tension between the WLC and the WSO.

Orders for personal copies (as opposed to the free group copies paid for with contributions from the entire Fellowship through the WLC) flooded into Memphis and Marietta.

With the review form out, the Committee rested until the annual World Service Conference in late April. The phone calls and correspondence came in at an increased rate but this was normal for the Committee.

The Treasurer of the Committee was unable to deal with the figures and never turned in a financial report. Bo made an increasing number of calls to get the report as the WSC approached. The Treasurer had been elected to serve a small service Committee and the size of the project seemed to overwhelm him. This turned out to be quite an embarrassment for the WLC at the World Conference. Any report from the

Treasurer would have been better than no report.

The next Conference site was Santa Monica with Nolan who had attended the Memphis Conference chairing the host Committee. The Conference would be held in the Retail Clerks Union Hall one block inland from the Pacific Palisades. This was near the Santa Monica Pier and just down the coast from Malibu.

Bo had come home to an empty house. The utilities had been cut off and his wife had moved into her parents with the children. There was nothing he could do but pick up his lettering brush and try to make a little money. The marriage was irretrievably broken. One too many pretty girls had run up to him for hugs that went a little beyond Fellowship affection. He had remained devoted to her but acted out the role of ringmaster. The Committee had taken on a carnival air. The work was consistently intact but nothing could avoid the crowd effect once the crowd began to gather.

The files had grown to fill two full foot lockers. The time flew by until time came to leave for California.

The monthly mailings to lit committee members had grown into a huge project. After Memphis, the list had grown to over a thousand. The WLC used a printing press that belonged to the Rainbow Connection Newsletter. A crowd gathered each time there was a monthly mailing to get out.

The last letter cited the one problem facing the Committee to get the Basic Text done: any review form attracts input that is factored

in and is published as another review form. Another form was needed for the Book to go before the Fellowship for approval. This basic idea had to be throughway understood by the Fellowship before finalization could become possible. Sending in input to change specific words would hold up the work forever. Approval required sensibility. Not sending in input on major items, the member ran the risk that no one else would catch that particular thing.

So, with everything done that could be done, the Fellowship representatives and the literature workers, began the migration to California. One man hitch-hiked from Atlanta and fresh from being stranded in the desert, showed up with a horrible sun burn. It wasn't his red hair that earned him the nick name 'Tom the Red'.

The WLC Conference in Santa Monica started one week before the World Service Conference that was again being held at Valley College in a larger room.

Early arrivals were housed in the home of a member who worked on the set of the "M.A.S.H." television series in Venice, California, a few miles south of Santa Monica. They planned and talked. When Gina showed up from Nashville, she played a tape of a song written by a member named Steve M. He and Gina had been the founders of N.A. in Nashville along with a guy named Winston. The song was called 'Step Right In' and was written one night after a meeting. Gina sang it and a rare magic filled the room.

Nolan did a wonderful job setting up the Conference. The

equipment was excellent and there was plenty of room for members to sit at tables and conduct workshops.

Roger was stuck in Marietta because he couldn't afford a plane ticket. Bo took up a collection to fly him in to help with the Conference. He had done so much to help get the 'Gray Form' out to the Fellowship, it didn't seem fair to leave him out of the Conference.

Around a hundred and fifty members showed up. This was the biggest yet. Bo had some concerns about security at this one. Out of the whole world, resistance to the work was centered in one place: San Fernando Valley where the WSO was quartered. There was tension along with the spiritual energy in the air. In a recovery meeting at the Union Hall, one member shared that he had come there prepared to burn the place down. He had heard that there wasn't going to be any mention of God in the Book!

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The Basic Text did not spring ready made from thin air! Personal sacrifices by those who believed they had something to offer paved every step of the way for the Book.

Many of us had grown up with the Viet Nam War. Some had actively opposed the war and participated in the great Civil Rights Movement. At any rate, we were thinkers and the capacity to feel emotions based on reality was gradually restored by recovery. The energy unleashed by the spiritual growth offered in the Twelve

Steps grew and spilled over in to the effort for the Basic Text.

Bo had to discipline himself to keep his full attention focused on the project. Others had to do the same. Had they not, we would have no Book! They were judged fairly or unfairly by those who observed.

Few have known this story of the Basic Text. Many lost jobs, families and suffered financial disaster. There was no way to pay people for the work. It had to be done by those whose motivation was for the wellbeing and future. It was a matter that fit into the category of what can we do today. They did the work before them and let God take care of the outcomes.

Few had any doubts that there would be those who judged them in terms of externals and what it would take to get them to do the work they saw others doing. Many viewers were from Los Angeles where to write is to be paid. Without the years of development there would have been an insufficient foundation to hold the work together through completion.

Bo and many of the lit workers talked from time to time about the cuts the work was making into their personal lives. They were pledged to the work and nothing would sway them. If they slowed the work to suit the understanding of all the onlookers, how could they ever hope to complete the work. They had known there would be great hardship, criticism and all the mental devils the disease of addiction could raise to stop them.

Devotion and spiritual non-attachment were their watchwords. This meant they might do all they could to insure the work would go on. They would not do anything to insure a line of text was forced on the groups of members doing edit work or that someone's friend had their story included in the Text. All who submitted stories with release forms had their stories in the review form. There could be no favorites.

Their commitment was that the work would go on. How it went was up to the members who came and contributed their part by doing the work. The literature workers tried to be servants in the best sense of the word providing for the needs of the literature workers without interfering or hindering the directions the material took as it was processed. This allowed them to serve without feeling that they were dominating or controlling the work or its content.

While in retrospect it might seem that this was a contrived method, put together by Bo or other committee officers, it was more an evolution of approaches which suited attending members. It felt right. Members involved all felt welcome and were adored by the lit workers. Nothing else was ever considered.

The Committee depended on momentum and hard work to screen out those who sought personal glory in the work. That kind is too lazy to work hard, especially for an ideal. Again, this is visible only in retrospect and wasn't done with this effect in mind. Unfortunately, the WLC was sometimes judged by statements made by members who couldn't keep up with the pace or had

strong personal attachment to ideas the WLC wouldn't support. It could have been worse. At least, they went forward to completion.

This method had its shortcomings but it was clearly a case where the members involved had to go with whatever solution God placed near at hand. There would be time later, once the Book was done, to work on refinements.

Bo and the others set it up so that there would be no royalties of any kind paid to the workers. This was important to keep the work selfless. There was a great desire that the Book would stand as a monument to the loving and caring nature of Narcotics Anonymous. Only this message was strong enough to attract a newcomer to our meetings and it was made the same with our Basic Text. Jimmy K. called N.A. the self-adjusting program. He went further to explain that this meant that as we changed ourselves, we changed the world. Also, as a Fellowship, when we needed something else, we would gradually accept it and adjust to the reality.

Proceeds from the sale of the Basic Text would pour down on the Fellowship in the form of services forever. This is what the Fellowship supported.

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The Santa Monica Literature Conference opened with the Serenity Prayer and the words from Bo, "Here we are again! What are we going to do this time?"

They went around to hear from all attending members and when that was done hammered out a plan to factor in the Fellowship's input into the 'Gray' review form.

To begin with, they had a style of editing that had been derived from the original cut and paste method. They decided to sort the input and break up into workshops, each to work on one chapter with input directed at that chapter. Each piece of input eventually would be gone over by a table of no less than ten members.

Once the input was factored in, the piece would be marked as 'Santa Monica Draft # ___' and sent to typing. Secretaries were trusted to make non-substantive changes in the material and ask for help if any parts were unclear or problematic. It was understood that the material would be workshoped again and there was little fear that anything of value would be lost in the process.

Again, from a cold start without preconception, the Committee had worked out a logical, practical solution to the problem of factoring input into the review form material that satisfied both the requirement to take the Fellowships input seriously and to keep the process simple enough to be feasible.

About the third day, many members saw a need to go over the entire ten chapters as a group. The feasibility of a large group doing this was too complicated. The idea that two or three would be sufficient to insure continuity without a human selectivity was not seen as feasible. They might bias the material toward some viewpoints and away from others that might be important enough

to a significant number of members to warrant inclusion. The committee had developed almost a statistical analysis attitude toward multiple pieces of similar input. If a thought was expressed in more than two items of input, it was taken very seriously and included even with difficulty.

An experimental approach to this problem was tried wherein Bo as WLC Chair, Greg as resident Trustee and a lady from Ohio named Pam as recording secretary plus a rotating additional member would go through all the material, chapter by chapter. The final would hopefully include all sides to every issue and yet have the flow and continuity to be readable. Greg, Bo, Pam and a series of members went through the entire body of the Basic Text from start to finish in this manner.

The material was to go immediately to typists and then back to the editing teams for evaluation. This small workshop took place in the main room open to all members present to come and listen in on and everyone who wanted to sat in on the edit at least once. The material was left with the typists at the end of the night's work.

Not one chapter of this material was ever found the next day. Lost or stolen, it is the only part of the Committees files ever lost throughout the entire effort. No accusations were ever lodged against any of the attending members. It would have done no good. The work simply disappeared and was never found. Everybody who had sat in on the edit felt good about the material. It is a shame that the editors the next day were denied their voice in the quality as well as the effectiveness of the technique.

Each evening, the Conference would break up and walk out to the Palisades and watch the sun go down over Malibu. As they watched the Pacific sunset, they would talk quietly about the progress of the work and personal matters.

During the Santa Monica Literature Conference, Bo went out with Nolan looking for more typewriters. They stopped by a local recovery house, trying to get one more machine. A beautiful lady with blond hair and a Manhattan accent came up and asked if there were meetings in New York City yet.

They told her no - but that they had a saying, "First the Book, then New York!" She thought about this for a moment and got time off from work to spend the rest of the week helping get the work done at the Lit Conference.

At the end of the Santa Monica Lit Conference, there was a new set of drafts for each of the Book chapters. The next conference site was set for Ohio where many of the steady support for the writing had been strong for some time.

Roger was elected to Chair the WLC when Bo stepped down.

Chapter Fifteen

THE LITERATURE PROCESS DEEPENS

The work at Santa Monica exhibited for the first time the elements of diversity and interaction of very different ideas about our Book: what it should be, how it should be finished what it should address, who was working on it, etc.

The effort could no longer be written off as a disunified, loosely organized group of radical members who were unlikely to complete the project they had begun. The Committee had proven itself way beyond the expectations of most that it could set, announce and attain goals within its tight structural boundaries. Those who had been unable or unwilling to travel great distances to support and participate in the work who happened to live in and around Los Angeles could now hop on the freeway, drive to Santa Monica and check it out!

The divisions within the Committee and the disparate notions of those who may have been clean a long while but never, never experience the likes of these happenings in the N.A. of old all raised interest and involvement to a fevered pitch. The work was for the first time seen clearly in its political implications. The N.A. old guard was being left behind. The literature workers were deliciously unaware of what was going on because the intense nature of the work consumed their time and politics to them was basically a side issue. Bo, Greg, Bob B. and some of the others reviewed these things as lightly as possible. The main focus was

kept on the work. It was quicker and easier to wish the other members in world services well and leave it to them to decide what they would do.

One issue was gone into at great length: There was no special sort of member for whom the Book was being written. The idea was to include literate and illiterate, rich and poor, occasional and heavy users - so long as they were self admitted addicts. It was deliberately written to include as many valid viewpoints, concerns and experiences to enable it to serve the largest and most diverse Fellowship possible. Whether read by a Catholic, Hindu, Christian, Jew or uncertain of belief, it was meant to invite and encourage all addicts who sought recovery in N.A.

Further, the writers sought to record and illustrate the changes we go through as addicts in various stages of recovery. Whether as a newcomer, dealing with life on life's terms, someone who had been clean a while fighting off a relapse or someone coming back to the program - all should be able to reach for the Basic Text and find identification, strength and hope.

Beyond these more superficial concerns were the divisions that exist in each of us. The conflicts caused when we say we believe one thing and act knowingly against that belief. Where we set one standard of behavior for our lips and another for our lives. This is where we have difficulty admitting and coming to terms with our humanity. Where we are puritanical in criticizing the sex life of another and we jump for every chance that comes our way. Where we have one set of values we would die to defend and another that

we actually devote our daily lives to with what amounts to every ounce of our being. Where we have one set of feelings and emotions on the surface and another set buried a little deeper . . .

These were the real conflicts that we learned to explore by mutual agreement. Any member knowledgeable in the ways of the lit committee could say anything that came into their minds at any moment during editing or general discussion. While honesty is a virtue that is praised throughout the Fellowship, not many people are comfortable hearing their deepest fear or area of guilt freely and openly discussed by teams of writers. This inhibition had to be set aside for the work to go deep into the processes of recovery. Honest comments can seem unfeeling and personal passions were set aside to explore the reasons behind the fears with freedom in mind.

Some discussions at the work tables did not reflect this and during Santa Monica the tide shifted away from the total honesty of the early work and began to concern itself with appearances. In consequence to this, the 'Gray Form' makes interesting reading. Many gems of immortal wisdom are stated in everyday phrasing.

It was inevitable that some valuable material disappeared in the editing and reediting of certain portions. It was the hope that once the first edition was complete, approved and published that more work would be done. Valuable material in the drafts of each chapter from the various literature conferences could be searched. These files and records still exist and there is still hope for a quiet time to review them all.

A peak of disunity rose at Santa Monica when everyone rushed for their dictionaries to decide whether we suffer from a 'chronic' or a 'morbid' illness! Another sort of peak experience occurred when Kathy from Memphis quietly raised her hand and presented the simple construction of a Tradition. A heated discussion that was based more on fatigue than real disagreement was resolved in a calm observation. The point is not what the item was, it was the response of the group to her clear spirit.

Those who had been a part of the process the First World Literature Conference and before worked as hard as they could to keep up the forward movement. They hoped that these debates would fall by the wayside as more positive courses were developed for the group's energy.

After the week at Santa Monica, the WSC elected Roger T. to chair the World Literature Committee. He was instated with full support at a group conscience session of the WLC in Santa Monica. Bo expressed his amazement at being able to walk outside the Retail Clerk's Union Hall and leave the position to Roger. Roger had been an able assistant and the Committee proved itself to be stronger than any personality, even Bo's!

In retrospect this seems to have been a mistake. The material from the Traditions chapter was new at the time and may have left out important considerations. No one will ever know all the thought and planning that went on unseen to keep the spirit of the Committee informed, unified and moving forward. Roger's great talent had shown itself in his ability to help the Committee get

specific jobs done. Chairing the entire Committee was quiet another job.

At the WSC Bo gave the WLC's report. The only snag was an incomplete financial report that listed only current known figures from the main Committee. Only general figures were available for the three Conferences that had still not closed their books. Lincoln was the smallest and while the figures were small also, the final report had not come in yet. One WLC member present was also the RSR for Nebraska and explained the situation to the Conference. Some final bills had not come in yet.

The Memphis Literature Conference still had bills to pay and was still shipping the balance of the 'Gray Forms' for the WLC. Again, a representative from Tennessee explained the situation to the Conference.

The Santa Monica Literature Conference was still going on as the WSC met in San Fernando Valley. Even estimates of it's total cost and receipts were unavailable.

Still, when the Fellowship is overwhelmed by change, they always go to finances. Despite the enormous personal sacrifices of WLC members, brows furrowed over the cost of supplies, equipment and postage. The main point of the report was for the Basic Text to become a reality, an approval form would be necessary. The admission of 'approve with input' responses from RSC's had to be denied. Strange that this obvious fact took a while to get across.

The member says, I like everything but the use of the word '_____' on page forty six. Approving the work with this type of change from either thirty voting representatives or hundreds of imputing members would require another approval form. This would make the form in the first instance not an approval form but a form that gathered input, and so merely a review form. Approve or disapprove with input became the terminology used to deal with this reality.

The next Conference site chosen was Warren Ohio. Bo went back to Marietta as WSC Vice-Chair. Elected as WSC Treasurer, Joseph went to Memphis to finish mailing 'Gray Forms.' Greg went back to Oregon still a Trustee. Another member of the World Literature Committee went back to Ohio to help prepare for a Literature Conference.

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Jim M. had become involved at Memphis and is one of the members who stayed on after the Conference closed to help ready the 'Gray Form' for mailing. His business commitments forced him to fly back and forth between Ohio and Memphis several times during February. His strict upbringing on the family farm had included discipline for bad grammar. His mental ability to follow the most convoluted thought through to its logical (or illogical) conclusion is still amazing to any who know him.

In working on literature for the Fellowship of N.A., Jim was able to follow the complicated proceedings. During his chairmanship,

Bo had learned to rely heavily on Jim to catch a logical flaw or carry out an approved plan of action. Jim was as important to the work on the Basic Text as Joseph who excelled at doing the impossible with limited funds and Greg who could always find a spiritual yet effective approach to solutions.

Jim, in his unerring direct manner secured an entire school house in Warren for our use the week of the Lit Conference! Dining halls, assembly rooms, gymnasium, classrooms, kitchen and grounds were ours.

Jim was host to Roger after Roger's long drive up the west coast and across through Canada and back down to Jim's farm in Ohio. Jim had taken on the responsibility of his families farm with a large house, a gigantic barn and about fifty milk cows. Jim's main profession was photographing award winning milk cows. To allow Roger the time it took to do the job of Chair for the WLC, Jim invited him to live there throughout his entire term.

Since 1979 when Jim had attended the World Convention in Atlanta, Ohio had grown from four to forty meetings. In his travels throughout Ohio, he handed out copies of N.A. literature and helped addicts get meetings started. In his spare time, he helped the Ohio region get started. Right now, he had a literature conference to set up.

Chapter Sixteen

OHIO LITERATURE CONFERENCE

Working with local members, the local literature committee found a school house that had discontinued classes. The entire school was available to different non-profit community groups. The host lit committee selected the school house for the week of the Ohio Literature Conference.

This was no one room school house. The ground floor included an office, auditorium, cafeteria, gymnasium, library and several classrooms. The second story contained only classrooms. Attending members were given cots to sleep on with space for their luggage. The announcements went out to the N.A. Fellowship and about a hundred and twenty members showed up to lend their support to the effort.

Roger welcomed all the attending members. Now, members came from California. Several members of the N.A. Board of Trustees came. There was Sally E., Chuck S. and Greg P. Another Californian was Sydney R. She had worked with the local literature committee in Santa Monica. Bo had attended one of their committee meetings and was struck by the spirit and trust of the lit workers there. Members came from Georgia, Florida, Pennsylvania and many other states. One man hitch hiked from Washington State with a huge pack frame to carry his gear.

The work method was consistent with prior conferences. The main

body broke up into workshops on each Chapter. The stories were again dealt with as a group. Periodic group conscience sessions reported the progress of each workshop to the main group. These were at most every six hours. Individual workshops would sometimes spin off and get caught up in details if they went too long without hearing from the other workshops. Knowledge of what the other members were running into or achieving helped each group maintain its clarity of attention. They could attend to their particular work while keeping in mind their works relationship to the whole. With so many members working hard for such long hours, the Literature Committee had to develop and refine the skills it took to keep the workers fed and rested while the work was going on.

While all this work was going on, members shared ideas, experience and concepts about Narcotics Anonymous. Recovery talk filled the halls as members shared between meetings of the various working groups.

A member mentioned a new feeling he had about anonymity. He said that it was becoming obvious to him that as we progress in recovery, we get our bills paid and arrange our lives. This eliminates the names and labels we pick up in active addiction. We are no longer characterized as known felons, deadbeats, sicko's, freaks, but are instead increasingly regarded as what we become reasonably productive and happy people. The anonymous factor is that we don't stand out in a crowd in the old ways. If we want to buy a house, go to Europe and get an education, someone checks our credit rating and says, "Sure, no problem." We are anonymous

in the sense that there is less and less about us that would attract negative attention. Our name is not restricted by our past actions because of the changes recovery brings to our lives.

In a phone conversation with Greg P., Bo asked once in 1981 why the Californians felt so upset with the work and why weren't they pleased to see their old dream coming true? Didn't they know the Book would go to the Office once the work of the Literature Committee was complete? There had been early rumors that the lit workers were receiving some outside support, perhaps from the Ford Foundation!

Greg said, "You have to understand, what is happening today has never happened before. Many oldtimers just can't believe it. To them it has never happened and they decided a long time ago that it was impossible. To them, it is impossible, therefore untrue." So they sought ways to preserve the comfortable world they had grown to know. Adjusting to a new world where addicts worked together and wrote literature and started new meetings in odd places all over the planet was difficult for them.

Many Californians couldn't envision recovery on any scale in the East. Members in the East met and communicated with the Californians at their best and tried their best to live up to the standards set for them. Their love, strength and guidance fed back through our structural and personal interaction and emitted the energy that became focused on the Basic Text.

Roger seemed to be doing a good job as chair. The arrangements

had never been better. Attending members were able to sense the seriousness of the work. The wonderful support offered by the Ohio fellowship was an inspiration in itself. The school house made for an atmosphere of friendliness that helped the work go well.

Roger had chaired the committee six months and between traveling and his inability to work while chairing the committee, the communications had broken down somewhat. The monthly WLC letter had stopped coming out. Bo couldn't tell if things were really going well or not. There was something like bad blood between himself and Roger. It was one of those curious things that comes up in service sometimes. While visiting members of the committee at Jim M.'s Farm in Leetonia, Jim related a viewpoint that confused Bo. He said that if he walked into the other room and talked with Roger about the WLC, that it would be proper. Jim could talk as a member of the Committee. He said if Bo were to talk with Roger about the Committee, it would be politics. Bo waited for the punch line but none came. He asked Jim if he were serious. He asked about why the guides all said for the incoming chair to stay in close touch with the past chair especially to maintain continuity of effort. Jim said this was so but nevertheless, this was how Roger felt.

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Still, the mood was one of optimism not only for the writing effort but also for the growing Fellowship. Where there had been four meetings in Ohio in 1979, there were now more than forty. The

interest and liveliness of the Ohio members was both creative and strongly intellectual. They thought through things from the N.A. point of view and established their groups with this in mind. The air of spirituality was easily matched by the dedication and hard work in evidence.

Bo got with Joseph about the financial reports that had yet to be completed. Joseph said he had the full set of receipts, deposits and checkbook information with him in a box. They got as far as looking at the box and realizing that if they got into the bookkeeping, they would have time for nothing else for the time of the conference.

Besides, 'Gray Forms' were still being sent out and receipts were still coming in from members who wanted personal copies. Final reports of conventions come at the end with all the bills paid and the balance forwarded to their service committee. Most conventions sent some money to the young WSC. Since this couldn't be done at this point, Bo and Joseph participated in the Conference they had come to support.

Moving from workshop to workshop through the building, Bo would sit and listen to the work in progress. While he waited a decent interval, he would notice that certain of the procedures used at prior conferences weren't being followed. He would ask for the attention of the group and recommend that they do flow readings with members marking specific material that needed to be addressed. Then they could discuss their concerns and go over their marks. Members were asked to restrict discussion to their

marks only to save discussion time. Then another flow reading began. This way they could stay specific and yet deal with the whole piece.

By now they were working with drafts of chapters that were beginning to show increased clarity. While the group would break for meals, and during group conscience sessions, the material would be retyped and the changes from the last workshop added to the material. The members were getting plenty of experience at innovating literature processes.

One blind alley was allowing the specific details of the material to get in the way when considering the general or conceptual sense. Likewise, it was interruptive to get hung up on favorite words during final editing. Distinguishing between the two required an experienced chair for each workshop. The overuse of key words can be useful shorthand for roughing in but the material reads better with a little variation.

One advantage of the process was that only N.A. members were doing the work. This allowed them to simultaneously see, hear and speak to the material. This way they involved all their senses including the intuitive feeling needed for the work. Qualification of the 'we form' was still something that could usually be agreed on with uncanny accuracy even among members from opposite sides of the continent.

A new member from Columbus, Ohio went along with Bo from workshop to workshop. Finally, he asked why he was saying the

same thing in each of the five workshops they had just visited. Bo told him it wasn't by design, he was just sharing some routines they had worked out. The member got Bo to sit down and write out what he had been saying. When they were done, they gave copies of the procedures to Roger. Copies of the procedures went to each workshop.

At the end of the Ohio Literature Conference, it was obvious that the material was close to being finished, very close. It was inclusive of all the input they had received. Discussion and editing were becoming more refined.

The next Conference site was chosen. Attending members agreed on Miami, Florida. The Miami Lit Conference would follow the upcoming Miami World Convention set for September. It start on Monday after the Convention closed and last a week.

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To avoid the paralytic heaviness that addicts are subject to when they get caught up in conceptualizing and forecasting events beyond their control, the future of the Basic Text was almost never addressed. We treated the work as we treat all our recovery, it was just for today, a day at a time.

We did whatever God put in front of us and hoped it would all work out somehow. We avoided negativity and infighting and tried to keep busy doing useful things to help further the work.

It is probable that everyone involved thought of friends who had succumbed and died using. They could all look back to the long periods of hopelessness, shame and despair that preceded their seeking help in N.A.

It is certain that they prayed to the God of their understanding for the strength to go on. The work kept them inspired and tuned into a direct outlet for their energy. As is true with all members, they were used to thinking and talking N.A. all day long. Here all they had to do was consider how the written material stacked up against the yardstick of their personal experience.

They left Ohio still not knowing when the Book would be completed. They took with them evidence of their labor in generous bundles of photocopies, personal notes and minutes. The Fellowship was becoming literate.

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After the Ohio Conference, Bo went to Memphis to share in the anniversary of N.A. in Memphis. They hoped to work on the WLC financial reports. The anniversary went great but at the end, Bo had carried his luggage out to the car to go home when he stopped, looked at Joseph and said, "We're doing it again." He reached in his pocket, pulled out a coin and flipped it in the air. It came up heads, so he brought his luggage back in and told Joseph to get his books out.

The incredibly adaptable Joseph got his box of receipts and

disbursements and sat down at his table. For the next day and a half, he and Bo went through the box. Bo sat on one side with a legal pad and growing lists of numbers and Joseph sat across from him and handed him all the slips, check stubs and order forms he had collected before, during and after the Memphis Literature Conference.

At the end, they had constructed a fourteen page financial report covering the World Literature Committee, the Lincoln and the Memphis Literature Conferences. Copies of the report were sent to all regional committees as well as the World Service Conference, the World Service Board of Trustees and the World Service Office. The last copy of the 'Gray Form' went to a member in an institution in Oregon.

Chapter Seventeen

MIAMI LITERATURE CONFERENCE

The Miami Literature Conference was held in a small church auditorium in Fort Lauderdale, Florida. The grounds were beautiful and the white stucco building contained plenty of the tables they would need for the workers. It was to begin just after the World Convention in Miami.

The usual equipment was in place except for one thing, a telephone. While there was a pay phone near, the host committee felt that communication with out of towners was cutting down on the efficiency of the work and wouldn't get a phone despite concerns expressed by attending members.

An odd thing had happened at the World Convention. Roger and Bo met one morning early and were finally talking. Roger apologized for some of the things he had been saying and doing that he felt were out of line. Bo had heard of these things but had not had an opportunity to talk with Roger about them directly. He knew something was wrong. He hoped this early morning talk was the beginning of an easing of difficulties between them. He felt that if they were to disagree openly, it would hurt the Book.

It seemed like they were going to talk it all out when two young women came up and hugged Bo. They were effusive in the N.A. way of things and chatted a moment before going back to work on the registration desk. Bo looked around for Roger and found him

sitting in a nearby chair. He walked over and sat down to resume their talk and Roger glared at him. He said, "If I had a gun in Ohio, I would have shot you." He got up and walked away. They never talked as friends again until years later.

Bo tried to renew the talk but it was over. He never did understand this. He tried to get Roger to tell him what it was about and Roger wouldn't talk. In the end, Bo just had to let go of it.

The Lit Conference started up with the usual preliminaries but the difference was that this time attending members knew that they were going to be resuming workshops on familiar drafts. Most had been to preceding lit conferences. The lessening of communication between the WLC and the local literature committees throughout the United States resulted in fewer members but of those who came, the experience and increasing competence was beginning to show in the work. They went into the week's work dedicated, prepared and hopeful that the Book might get done before they left for home.

The center of the large meeting hall was dominated by the now standard long folding tables arranged in a circle. This arrangement permitted a maximum number of members to sit with copies of the material and react to it with full eye contact.

Drafts of the various chapters workshoped in smaller groups were read and discussed point by point, word by word and paragraph by paragraph. While there was tension in the air, it was never allowed to interfere with the work. Any N.A. member in the world who

showed up could help and participate in the workshops and the editing. They would come in, be greeted and made to feel welcome and wander around sitting in on different workshops, not knowing what to expect. They listened, received copies of work and used the simple mechanism of raising their hand to be recognized by the group.

Work at the large table involved reading and fine tuning pieces. Next, the pieces went to workshops with recommendations or comments. Specific changes would be made if the material had to be retyped. A workshop could bring a piece into the main group to get help dealing with a specific problem but mainly whole chapters were considered.

As was now the custom, each draft was marked by the name of the conference site and the number of the subsequent drafts produced there. So, we began with Ohio finals and went through Miami 1, Miami 2 and so on through the Miami final draft for each chapter. Sydney R. and Sally E. were in attendance and full participation. Sally was a member of the N.A. World Service Board of Trustees and her presence and support enhanced the effort. She and Sydney had come into the Santa Monica Lit Conference and been a part of the movement ever since. Sydney had continued with the local literature committee in Los Angeles and both were now veteran lit workers proving that addicts in recovery can write.

There were several members from the Miami area who had moved in from New York City. They were very frustrated. A law in New York called the Rockefeller Act forbade the association of known

felons, and had the effect of outlawing N.A. recovery in New York.

These members, one of whom was Paul, were making regular trips to New York to pass out N.A. literature including 'Gray Forms'! How N.A.

The lit committee had taken on some aspects of a traveling road show. The Committee files were now contained in three large foot lockers. When regular committee members unloaded the lockers from a pickup truck, you almost expected to see drums sets, guitars and amplifiers come out! Naturally, the members loved this air of mystery but there were no mixed ideas as to who they were and the job they were committed to completing.

Many of the same people had been showing up for each succeeding conference. This lent continuity and allowed some conventions to develop. These general practices helped the group to deal with the extreme conditions of working fifteen, eighteen or more hours at a stretch. Then sleeping six hours only to get up and do it again.

Such was the concentration of this core group that the newer members could pick up on the spirituality and mentality of the work with almost no orientation and very few questions. Many of these were lit workers back home. Many had received the WLC letters for years by now. The group of a hundred or so members had become welded into a spiritual working body. They were working from material gathered from over a thousand members

inputting directly to the WLC or through local literature committees. This allowed the committee to go beyond the usual statement that committees don't write books.

At the end of the week, the work still wasn't finished. The material had been taken through several drafts of each chapter. While the group was willing to set another conference date, it also decided to move the Conference to a nearby clubhouse for N.A. meetings in Ft. Lauderdale.

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The work resumed and the disagreements were getting fewer and fewer over more specific items out of the general body of the material. There were ten chapters in all which still related to the original chapters from Lincoln but titles had changed and the contents had been through succeeding revolutions. As many as fifty present knew the entire body of material. Many knew the origins of the material and the various versions it had gone through from conference to conference.

While up to the last moment, everyone expected another conference would be necessary, Bo could sense that the material was nearly completed, at least as far as the group currently working on it could take it. He sat in on discussion, watched faces and talked with members outside the main discussion area.

The feeling was growing in him that all was done that could be done for now. After several hours of this, the feeling was so strong

that he asked to address the group. You asked, you didn't tell this group anything.

Right at the point where he did this, discussion had broken down and two extremely hard working and hard minded members were squaring off with the words, "I'll see you about this at the next Conference!"

Into this moment, Bo expressed the concern that Joseph had brought up. If some general agreement wasn't reached soon, there would be no time to prepare an approval form before the annual WSC in the Spring. The material had to be out for a considerable time for N.A.'s world wide to look at it before a vote for approval would be feasible or valid at the upcoming WSC. Although it was September, it would take the Committee some time to raise the money and get the material printed.

Brushing off his sleepiness and forcing himself to full attention, Bo appealed to the members present to get real about their feelings and work toward some agreement. If it came down to a few simple points that could be discussed and voted on by attending members, then the material would be ready to approve within the Committee. If they lacked unity as a committee now, how could they expect the Conference to approve the material?

He gently reminded the group that the Committee had never expected to satisfy everyone on every point and issue. Consensus of fact and feeling was their objective.. If more Conferences were really needed, then we could do that. That was not what the

members had been saying. They had been saying that they wanted a little more on sponsorship in this one chapter. They were countered by another member who felt that there was enough on that in another chapter. In other words they were discussing the material in terms of finalization.

Bo said, if chapters one through ten met with the Committees approval, they should approve it and let it go. He knew better than to take up much time with all this. They were tired. They had been working all week after attending the four day Miami World Convention. Neither did he want to push them into something they didn't really feel.

Part of the ongoing discussion of the Committee included the careful filing of the successive drafts of the Basic Text chapters. This material, including the variety of ways each statement was addressed in different edits was thought to be a safeguard against permanently losing anything of importance since the material would be available for later study, after the first Basic Text was done. Additional future works of all types was also a big part of the WLC's vision for the future. First the Book had to be approved and in use for a number of years.

Within the hour, the Basic Text of Narcotics Anonymous was approved for printing an 'Approval Form' by the World Literature Committee of Narcotics Anonymous. The impossible had been done.

Chapter Eighteen

MID-SOUTH REGIONAL SERVICE CONFERENCE

It was the night of the full moon when the book was done. Bo, Joseph and Jim were in a motel room on Miami Beach with a beautiful view of the moon over the Atlantic Ocean. The three men had worked hard over the years and they were both thrilled and baffled. They had been working so hard so long and against odds so terrific that it was a little hard for them to adjust to the reality of the work was at an end, at least for the moment.

They decided that they ought to call Greg who had in a way been the supporting force in the background of the work. Without his early support and ongoing faith in the work, they may not have managed to maintain the level of courage and clarity the effort had demanded.

Greg had moved to Oregon to build a school house on some family land for a special education program. Wolf Creek, Oregon seemed a long way off. Although it was three o'clock on the East Coast, they dialed the number. He came on the line and they told him the WLC had voted to send out the material to the Fellowship for approval. The Book was done.

It was a profound moment for them all. Each had spent hundreds of hours on the phone with each other and thousands with the many members who did the main work. Each in their own way had seen a real dream come true - something that made the faith and

love from the meetings available to addicts seeking recovery all over the world. None of it had come easy. Each had paid a personal price.

Unspoken were the conversations with the members who had come to help. Their dreams were coming true as well. It was so good to have finally been a part of something worthy. The pain of past failures accentuated the shock of success.

They sat for a long time after they had gotten off the phone; three friends sitting in silence under the moon. After a while they began talking and reminiscing about all the difficulties along the way and what would they do with their lives now.

Bo said they had picked up extra energy to fulfill their commitments. They should do their best to put the knowledge and know how into the growing regions of N.A. They still had work ahead. The Committee had yet to deal with the stories section.

Jim said he guessed he would go back to the farm and Joseph said, "Good luck, sucker! If you think you can go back to the way it was before, you're wrong." Joseph said he was interested in the follow through. They talked a while longer.

"One thing we all have to think about is the help Greg and others have given us." Bo said. "If there is one principle I believe in it is that through helping others we are helped. I think we should be open to passing on the help we've received. You guys know the politics we've survived clean and grateful. There are going to be

thousands of members getting clean. Some of them will be just like us."

"If we really believe in what we've been doing, we should pray to be there for others. That is the best safeguard for the future. By helping them understand and do quality work within the structure, we will be insuring that the spirit that has guided us will endure to guide others."

They ended sitting a while longer each with their thoughts but feeling very close until the time came to get some rest.

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The next Conference was to be held at Memphis where the 'Approval Form' of the Basic Text would be handed out to attending members. The mass mailing of 'Approval Forms' to the world wide Fellowship would begin. The Fellowship was either anxiously awaiting the Book or completely unaware of what was happening.

By group conscience of the WLC, Roger was to do the finished typing of the final form and send it along to Memphis for type setting and printing. He typed at two hundred words a minute and even with the Committee injunctions against single copies of originals, he was trusted as chair to keep the original and type the final form.

Committee members who had been concerned about dear old

Roger were glad to see him get this chance to exonerate himself in the eyes of the Committee by doing this task.

Linda M., who had been at Wichita and had never missed any of the Literature Conferences was still the Librarian Emeritus of the WLC. She was a corn fed girl from the Mid-West with a great spirit and a spiritual calmness that touched all who came around her. She was to take the main files back to Kansas with her.

So with much feeling, everyone who had worked so hard went home to prepare for the next conference. They were delighted with their accomplishment and looking forward to the work before them in Memphis.

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A month went by.

Joseph, now WSC Treasurer and active with the Mid-South RSC that would be sponsoring the upcoming workshop in Memphis, called Bo. He sounded upset. He told Bo the final Roger was to have sent had not arrived yet and he couldn't reach him by phone. We had six weeks to go and were approaching a deadline for sending the work to the printer. What were we to do?

One of the committee members, Jim B., had asked his mother to proofread the material for typos and errors. Joseph had received sixty-six of the expected one hundred pages. People were coming to Memphis to mail Approval Forms. If he didn't get the rest soon,

there would be no time to get them printed.

While they were seasoned and not given to immediate despair if things didn't always go as planned, they ran down their list of options and likelihoods. They didn't want to do anything to make Roger look bad. Support the Chair was their first rule. Why couldn't they reach him?

Could he be experiencing some problem? Could he need help and be having the typical addict difficulty asking for it? Did someone steal the material? What could be happening?

Joseph and Bo had made up a key tool for dealing with the problems trusted servants encounter. It was especially helpful with those things which had no precedents. They would consider a problem from all sides, talk with all parties involved and then formulate a non-directive, self-replicating and easily stated solution. A useful approach to the problem which once set loose would spread unopposed throughout the Fellowship. The two elements essential for these solutions to work were that responsibility for the problem not fall on individuals and that the solution feel good and bring members together. Our solutions should always be based in general principles and must base responsibility in our groups, not our individuals. It seemed impossible to work this formula in the present case. While they might wish that the problem didn't exist, they felt a duty and obligation to get the work done as charged by the Committee and as Officers of the WSC.

Bo recommended that Joseph assume that everything was all right

and start taken increasingly strong measures to get in touch with Roger. Along with additional phone calls, he suggested writing. He would also call.

After another few weeks had gone by, Bo and Joseph pulled out the stops and deliberately placed about fifty calls to all known member contacts in South Florida seeking contact with the Chair of the WLC. There was no response. Members saw Roger at meetings and told him of the calls but he just wouldn't call.

In the end, Joseph had to call several members who had complete personal notes of the final approved form. He made telephone comparisons in the sections where the last untyped changes had occurred.

Even after he had done this and Ms. B. had been through all the work, he was still uneasy about committing the material to the typesetter without a second opinion. He Federal Expressed a copy of the complete body of work to Bo who drove across town that evening to Atlanta International Airport and took delivery of the material.

He went into his apartment in Smyrna, Georgia at ten P.M. He locked the door. He would not go out until he had been through all the material and gone over all the proofreaders marks. He worked until six o'clock A.M., slept until ten and worked until four o'clock when the work was done. He drove across town and sent it back to Memphis.

He kept a complete copy of the final. He had gone over every item and while he understood Ms. B.'s confusion on certain parts of the material, he could hear the words of the editors speaking to the final form and exactly why they wanted it that way and not another.

He was most curious about the first chapter and the First Step. He had been so close to the work through so many versions, that it was fascinating to read the material afresh without the idea of changing things. He could almost hear members discussing the material. He felt like they were there with him. It was fascinating to look closely at what the members of N.A. had agreed to as common recovery experience.

In particular, he noticed that the main thing about addiction was that addicts couldn't 'use successfully' or 'control their using'. This was such strange simplicity, elusive truth. This was the bugaboo which spawned government programs, confounded doctors and religious leaders through the world. The truth was so simple.

In reading the material for the first time, as would hundreds of thousands of members in the future, he was awed with the insightfulness that had come from the super intense open editing. Many committee members had favored short, economical sentences and the material reflected this. The material had been read and reread so many times that it read well aloud. There were places where it was rough. Bo smiled when he remembered one editing session that had broken up for that day when Gina from Nashville had started calling it the 'incredible shrinking chapter'.

Still, no changes would be allowed now and Bo simply carried out his task and made written responses to all the edit marks and sent the material back to Memphis. He had agreed to all corrections and stuck by some of the parts that were more a problem of newness to Ms. B. than misstated portions.

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When the Mid-South Regional met, the white cover 'Approval Forms' were in the hands of the Fellowship for the first time. Attending members were delighted.

Roger never showed up and the administration of the Committee fell to the vice-chair, Page C. who was able to do a great job and maintain the spirit of the committee.

While other WSC Committee work took place at Memphis, the WLC concentrated on getting the Approval Forms mailed and dealing with the general matters of other informational pamphlets and the technical aspects of the Fellowship's first major instance of Fellowship wide approval. The support and involvement from the host community in Memphis was fantastic. Many Mid-South RSC members had been getting clean a year before during the Memphis Literature Conference. They addressed books for mailing and the Approval Forms went out to whole Fellowship.

Along with 'addicts in recovery can't write' was another lie that had long held back the N.A. Fellowship. It was the notion that addicts were of a personality type that would automatically

prevent sufficient unanimity to get anything approved by the world wide Fellowship.

While it would have been easy enough to censure Roger for his difficulty, it was not forgotten that he had been new to N.A. at the time of the Memphis Literature Conference. He had been elected three months later to chair the WLC, the largest service body in the history of N.A. and it was now only six months later! The others had years of surrendered training and study to prepare for their service positions. Compassion was more the feeling than censure. Still, the work had to go on and the Committee survived.

The next conference was to be in Philadelphia. It would focus on the stories of N.A. recovery. The main committee would now turn it's attention to the second portion of the Basic Text. The date was set for February of 1981.

Chapter Nineteen

PHILADELPHIA LITERATURE CONFERENCE

The Philadelphia Literature Conference took place in spite of a serious snow storm.

In Ivyland, Pennsylvania, there is a big rambling farm house where Pete B. and Al R. were living. This house was the site for the last of the conferences dealing with the Basic Text. The main portion was already in the hands of the Fellowship.

Again, Roger did not attend. Page acted as chair and the Committee decided to acknowledge Page as chair in Roger's absence. Non-attendance and inability to perform the duties as chair were the reasons cited in a letter from the Committee to the Fellowship and recorded in the minutes of the WLC that in effect removed Roger from the position of service.

There may have been some who felt vindictive or angry. Bo and many others felt sadness for a friend and saw in him their own capacity to get so caught up in issues that service became impossible. At any rate, the WLC couldn't tolerate an inactive chair who might show up at the WSC antagonistic to the work and objectives of the Committee.

His total commitment and the excellent work he had done in service to the Fellowship was not to be forgotten. They were all addicts and as N.A. service workers, had to take care to love and

be gentle with members. Bo had read in some spiritual material that a person has to learn to be firm and correct. The old games from active addiction no longer need to apply in the lives of clean addicts.

The criteria for story selection, editing and the distribution of stories to include all different types of addicts was established in the early sessions. There were lengthy discussions.

One crucial item had to be dealt with. Many stories mentioned that the member had sought help in A.A. and been unable to find it there. It seemed crass and ungrateful to have over half the stories in our Basic Text document that A.A. didn't work for drug addicts in general. We knew the increasing number of N.A. meetings would take care of this matter of carrying the message in time naturally. Did we want our Book to make an opinion on an outside issue, in this case, the one outside issue to whom we owed our existence? The Committee unanimously agreed to change any reference to A.A. or any other anonymous organization such as Overeaters Anonymous and Gamblers Anonymous to 'another 12 Step Fellowship'. Many readers of the Book might think that all these references were all to A.A. but it was decided to leave it general. To delete the item entirely would have been inaccurate and our guidelines told us to describe the reality. In this way, a prospective member who came to us after having had other experience with the Twelve Steps would feel welcome.

One of the dramatic things that happened during the Philadelphia Literature Conference was the attempt to locate and obtain an

Asian story of recovery. Through one of our members in Hawaii, we found a recovering addict in Tokyo named K.

Bo made the call for the Committee. It was his most humiliating moment in world services.

At the end of the long string of numbers he had to dial having faith they were the right numbers, a voice came on the line speaking Japanese. While this possibility had been considered, the reality of the situation was almost humorous. All Bo could do was ask if K. was there. The person who answered the phone called out for him and K. came on the line. Speaking only a little English, K. said that he would call Greg M. at fourteen hundred o'clock, Honolulu time. Greg was the member who had met him in Hawaii the year before. Bo tried to tell K. that the American Fellowship was glad they were there and loved them. He looked through an English/Japanese dictionary somebody had come up with, but it didn't do much good. It was Bo's most humble moment in world services. The story was eventually gathered but was not in time to be included in the Story Review Form that came out of the Philadelphia Literature Conference. At the end, all the stories had been lightly edited. Again, incredible attention had been focused on the writing and each word and meaning sifted for intent, meaning and possible difficulty. In view of this, it is remarkable how few changes were made.

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In the years which had gone by while the Basic Text, Narcotics

Anonymous was being written, the Fellowship had grown in numbers and unity. It was now a much more mature Fellowship than had existed in the middle seventies. More had been written about the actual experience of addicts living clean lives through Twelve Step recovery than at any other time in the history of mankind. The process that had evolved through getting the job done was a dynamic mixture of common sense and inspiration. It took a good measure of each to get the work done.

There had been so many obstacles to the work that at first had not seemed possible except to a very few. And now the writing was complete, at least for a first edition. The WSO would grow. Services would proliferate throughout the world. The Fellowship would continue to grow. The individuals involved felt they had a better than average chance of ongoing recovery. The very process of writing had been like the original universities in Europe. Many universities began as groups of learned people discussing particular forms of knowledge. Cambridge was once no more than the name of a town.

The questions arise, what would have happened if the chain of events had been at some point broken? How many times had they been guided past various obstacles that arose in their path? How had they survived the various personal sacrifices along the way? What if they had lost momentum or simply given up in the way of addicts? What if another person had been Chair of the Board of Trustees and sent Bo home with the double edged saying, "Keep coming back!"

What if the politics that began about half way through had so concerned and interrupted the process that the effort had been diverted? What if those involved had not had exactly the right mixture of life experiences to prepare them for the work? What if they had lacked the crucial ability to value the experience and feelings of others as much or more than their own? All these questions have one answer: the work would have failed.

There are stronger forces than the law of the land. After the initial exhilaration of recovery wore off, many of us sought ways to grow beyond what N.A. had to offer, maybe some of us find it. They don't come back to say and we wish them well in their new lives. Those who do come back or never leave but merely look elsewhere for periods of time, affirm that they find in recovery all the things promised in the other places they have looked. This is our great freedom. Their experience only deepens their involvement with and commitment to Narcotics Anonymous. The year the Book came out, the law of the land was changed. The Rockefeller Act in New York City was repealed and N.A. members were allowed to meet in groups for the first time in decades. Changes in the way society looked at the addict and the way addicts looked at themselves had been set in motion that will never end.

Many not only participated in the writing but helped set the stage as part of their Twelfth Step. Addicts from all over the world sent in material or attended the Conferences. Together, they were able to share the rare and special truth in such a way that it could help others. These servants feel a special charge to honor and respect

the work of the many who actually did the writing or contributed to the effort in some way.

Because of the way most books are written, appearances were misleading to unschooled observers. The truth shared was very rare and sacred. The courage and trust of those who did the work was incredible. In taking up for the work, it may appear that some of the stage setters are attached to the work as their own. The Basic Text was the result of a special spiritual process that is not likely to be repeated.

For an addict to dream is no big deal. It takes recovery and a Power greater than ourselves for these good dreams to become real.

The curious marker between special worker and trusted servant is difficult to discern and appears to move. A special worker may come with an idea that may be pertinent enough to move with a force of its own. It may become an ongoing part of our common welfare. Our trusted servants may be able to do jobs that would otherwise require massive amounts of money and the precise arrangement of academic and work skills to result in a productive group. There can be no greater example of this happening in our history than the Basic Text, Narcotics Anonymous.

With the sale of our Basic Text, our resources and support systems have grown to meet our growing needs. The moment of surrender we experience each time we sincerely pray is the key that keeps us clean and moving in positive directions. It feels like we can rise

above ourselves and see people and events around us differently.

We know that the Book came to us through the basic desire of members to help secure for themselves both ongoing recovery and a way of helping all those who were out there: never seeing the hand that was squeezing the life out of them, never understanding that hand was connected to their own arm and they could not stop.

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The work was essentially finished. The stories were sent out to the Fellowship as had been the first ten chapters. Those who did the work stayed involved and helped to birth the Fellowship in the years that followed.

In time, it was forgotten who exactly had been involved but those who did the work remembered. They deepened what had been learned along the way. They utilized what they had learned in literature to further the other services which had so far gone waiting.

The material in the files from the Seven Conferences remains a resource to the Fellowship and is in the hands of all the attending members who were sent home with thousands of pages of draft material to share with their local literature committees.

Within God's eye, the material that was passed out in this manner, the working processes and those who did the work are still resources to N.A. The recovery process deepens and brings to light

in ever greater clarity the exact paths the disease takes to work against our happiness and well being, even in recovery. As more is learned, more will be written.

We wish we could say all of us were still clean. We wish we could say all of us were still alive. Thank God we can say there is hope for the future. We know there will come a time when the Fellowship will gather it's forces together again and focus it's combined will to advance our cause. Many distractions can delay this. Money, property and prestige can overwhelm us.

The Basic Text came after the Californians had stopped fighting among themselves. Differences can always be found and made to appear unreconcilable. It is our similarities that join us as members. When our common needs take precedence over our personal preferences we will replicate the staging which lead to our Basic Text.

APPENDICES

WORLD SERVICE CONFERENCE LITERATURE COMMITTEE MAY 1979

* ORIENTATION SHEET *

Thank you for your interest. We have begun work on a basic text for the program of Narcotics Anonymous. We are members who recognize the need and the opportunity to serve. We realize that our work will be incomplete without the input of every NA member with something to offer. In the Spirit of the Fellowship, we hope to attract and to involve members of Narcotics Anonymous from all areas with concern and talent who are willing to set aside personal differences in love and service to the addict who still suffers. It is necessarily their place to let us know of their desire to be of service and our place to welcome their interest and participation.

We are asking that members within each area of the fellowship form a literature committee and/or contact us immediately. To secure this material without giving offense to those we serve, we should practice the principles and develop our own humility, tolerance and patience. Practicing these principles may help us to remember that the book is a giant Twelfth Step for us all. Committees or individuals can work on articles and pamphlet material, tape and transcribe NA speaker meetings and special topic

discussion meetings, or just note down thoughts and feelings as they occur. Through correspondence, phone calls and personal visits between different areas, we can keep in touch and feed back to one another. Get into action and send in material now!

For the book, we need complete and accurate material relating directly to NA recovery. Real, personal experiences and the spoken tradition should form the basis for our text. The personal experiences of learning to live clean and sober will provide examples of how it works that should be useful to others in recovery. The spoken tradition is comprised of those things we say to help others achieve NA recovery. Many members have written down things that might be of use others. This material should be sent in now.

To get results we are trying to set achievable goals and break the work down into steps or stages. The first stage we see is developing and collecting material. The second stage will be composition and arrangement of the material into a useful and natural order. The third stage will involve review of a working manuscript by literature committees and individual members. There are four main ways to contribute that have worked so far. They are also things that almost any NA member can do at some point in their recovery.

The following four ways allow any willing NA member to contribute or participate:

I. Articles and pamphlets will support and illuminate the process

of NA recovery. Inspired members and groups will contribute their insights and viewpoints in this way. Work on the pamphlets will reveal some amazing people and groups who want to serve but just don't think they have a way to get involved right now. God willing, we can change that.

II. One liners and paragraphs can be worked into the text during the composition stage. We need to start accumulating them now. Many of us are writing down things as they occur to us at meetings or in fellowship. We have many pages of notes of this sort; we need more.

III. Material transcribed from tapes of NA speakers and topic discussions will allow many thoughts and feelings to be included that don't often occur to us in writing. Special care and consideration is called for in this area if we are to avoid breaking someone's anonymity. We need material on member's experience of NA recovery, not war stories and details of a personal nature.

IV. Stories of NA recovery telling what it was like, what happened and what it's like now will serve as resource material for the basic text. Many of these stories will likely appear in the first edition. It may be helpful to emphasize those things which gave us early help in recovery, experience with the principles and the Twelve Steps or would help a newcomer identify with our program.

It is important to pass on your material as soon as it is completed or when you stop working on it. This way it will be available to other literature committees. Communications between literature

should include minutes of meetings, tapes and transcripts, and unfinished material. This raw material is exciting. Only by honestly applying ourselves to the footwork do we provide our Higher Power with the opportunity to guide us towards completion of a book incorporating the best we know of recovery from addiction in the program of Narcotics Anonymous. We combine in this effort for our own recovery, for our newcomers today, and those sure to come.

In Loving Service,

Bo S., Chairman

Please direct correspondence to:

WSC LITERATURE COMMITTEE

391 Cranfill Street

Marietta, GA 30060

or call: (404) 436-0953/427-2086

This prayer has been helpful:

“God remove our ego and self-will and give us the strength and guidance to do your footwork.”

WORLD SERVICE CONFERENCE
SUB-COMMITTEE FOR LITERATURE
1981

CONTENTS

REPORT LINCOLN LITERATURE CONFERENCE

REPORT MEMPHIS LITERATURE CONFERENCE

REPORT WORLD LITERATURE COMMITTEE
AUGUST 1981 - MARIETTA, GEORGIA

SECOND WORLD LITERATURE CONFERENCE
LINCOLN, NEBRASKA
SEPTEMBER 8-12, 1980

TREASURER'S REPORT

EXPENSES:

Table and Chair Rental \$ 84.00

Copier and Copies 232.00

Paper and Toner 163.20

Mailing 225.00

Printing 37.00

Hall Rental 100.00

Supplies 45.01

Telephone Calls 63.80

Typewriter Rentals 82.56

Miscellaneous Items 41.87

----- TOTAL EXPENSES \$ 1074.90 -----

FUNDS:

Funds collected prior to WCNA-10 \$ 275.00

Funds raised at WCNA-10 450.00

Registrations (32 @ \$10.00 each) 320.00

----- TOTAL FUNDS COLLECTED \$ 1045.00 -----

WLC-2 closed with a deficit of \$29.90. This amount was made up from group and personal contributions from the Lincoln, Nebraska area.

REPORT OF THE MEMPHIS LITERATURE
CONFERENCE
JANUARY 31, 1981 TO FEBRUARY 8, 1981

CONTENTS

SCHEDULE OF INCOME
SCHEDULE OF DISBURSEMENTS
FINANCIAL ANALYSIS
compiled July 22, 1981 Memphis, Tennessee

MEMPHIS LITERATURE CONFERENCE
SCHEDULE OF INCOME

DONATIONS:

11-19-80 WSC-LC (to open account), GA \$ 285.00
12-01-80 ORANGE COUNTY ASC, CA 50.00
12-04-80 SOUIX CITY, IOWA 25.00
01-21-81 UNITED SURVIVORS - TOPEKA, KS 25.00
01-27-81 HERE AND NOW - MEMPHIS, TN 75.00
01-30-81 JOPLIN, MO 50.00
01-31-81 ROBERT M. - MEMPHIS, TN 6.00
01-31-81 PHILADELPHIA ASC, PA 75.00
01-31-81 NE OHIO ASC, OH 32.38
01-31-81 BILL B. - DECATUR, AL 20.00
02-01-81 MARK Z. - WICHITA, KS 11.00
02-03-81 BOISE, ID 50.00
02-05-81 JEFFERY L. - OMAHA, NB 20.00
02-05-81 DAN K. - OMAHA, NB 20.00
02-05-81 YOUNGSTOWN, OH (three groups) 35.86
02-05-81 NA OF NORTHERN CALIFORNIA 250.00
02-05-81 GENE L. - MEMPHIS, TN 10.00
02-06-81 SOUTH AVONDALE NA - BIRMINGHAM, AL 66.00
02-06-81 GENE L. - MEMPHIS, TN 20.00
02-06-81 MARY L. - MARIETTA, GA 7.45
02-06-81 PEGGY V. - MARIETTA, GA 7.45
02-06-81 GEORGE S. - MARIETTA, GA 7.45
02-07-81 TINA E. - MARIETTA, GA 7.45
02-06-81 TOM L. - MARIETTA, GA 14.90
02-06-81 ROWLAND C. - MARIETTA, GA 7.45
02-07-81 KURT D. - BATON ROUGE, LA 8.00
02-07-81 MORRIS S. - MEMPHIS, TN 8.00
02-07-81 KEVIN - BIRMINGHAM, AL 15.00
02-07-81 DOUG - OMAHA, NB 10.00

02-07-81 BO S. - MARIETTA, GA 7.45
02-07-81 LINDA M. - TOPEKA, KS 10.00
02-07-81 JIM M. - LEETONIA, OH 45.00
02-07-81 DANNY - ALABAMA 7.50
02-07-81 WSC-NA - MARIETTA, GA 550.00
02-07-81 NOLAN W. - VENICE, CA 40.00
02-07-81 MARIETTA - ATLANTA ASC FUNDRAISERS 285.00
02-07-81 DENNIS E. - MEMPHIS, TN 22.30
02-07-81 IOWA NA 100.00
02-07-81 CINDY H. - MEMPHIS, TN 10.00
02-07-81 BRENDA M. - IOWA 10.00
02-07-81 BOBBY M. - MEMPHIS, TN 30.00
02-09-81 GINA H. NASHVILLE, TN 15.00
02-09-81 HENRY S. - BEVERLY HILLS, CA 20.00
02-09-81 CHUCK S. - WHITTIER, CA 50.00
02-09-81 SEATTLE, WA 25.00
NA - MEMPHIS, TN 24.37
02-12-81 GINA H. - NASHVILLE, TN 10.00
02-12-81 DOUG W. - LINCOLN, NB 283.00
02-12-81 DEBRA R. - PLUMSTEADVILLE, PA 20.00
02-12-81 STEVE Y. - NASHVILLE, TN 50.00
02-12-81 NE OHIO NA 350.00
02-12-81 FT. LAUDERDALE, FL 33.00
02-12-81 GENE L. - MEMPHIS, TN 56.74
02-12-81 METRO ATLANTA NA COMMUNITY 815.00
02-12-81 MARY ELLEN M, - MARIETTA, GA 10.00
02-12-81 DIANA LEE F. - MARIETTA, GA 367.00
02-12-81 ROBERTA A. - ATLANTA, GA 20.00
02-12-81 JULIE L. - MARIETTA, GA 25.00

02-12-81 LOIS W. - ATLANTA, GA 100.00
02-12-81 TED/MARY D. - ATLANTA, GA 30.00
02-12-81 JAMES/MARY ANN F. - STONE MOUNTAIN, GA 10.00
02-12-81 FEELING FREE GROUP - ATLANTA, GA 10.00
02-12-81 TOM W. - ATLANTA, GA 10.00
02-13-81 JOHN C. - WARRINGTON, PA 20.00
02-13-81 INTERGROUP OMAHA - IOWA 200.00
02-16-81 GEORGE R. - FAIRLESS HILLS, PA 50.00
02-16-81 OXFORD CIRCLE GROUP - PA 60.00
02-16-81 LINCOLN NA, NB 20.00
02-19-81 SOUIX CITY IOWA 75.00
02-20-81 DOUG W. - LINCOLN, NB 91.88
02-20-81 PHOENIX GROUP - SALINAS, KS 15.00
02-20-81 PINE STREET - PHILADELPHIA, PA 30.00
02-20-81 NA GROUP #1 - ST. LOUIS, MO 1,000.00
02-20-81 SOUIX CITY IOWA 150.00
02-20-81 SATURDAY NIGHT LIVE - OMAHA, NB 100.00
02-20-81 DENNIS E. - MEMPHIS, TN 50.00
02-20-81 NADINE M. - MEMPHIS, TN 5.00
02-22-81 HOLMESDALE, PA 5.00
02-23-81 PHOENIX GROUP - SALINAS, KS 15.00
02-23-81 MAPLE HOUSE GROUP - WICHITA, KS 6.00
02-23-81 GREG P. - WOLF CREEK, OR 20.00
02-23-81 5th TRADITION GROUP - JOPLIN, MO 35.00
02-23-81 SE CENTRAL RSC, GA 50.00
02-23-81 LINDA M. - TOPEKA, KS 5.00
02-23-81 NA BOOK GROUP - SOUTH GATE, CA 30.00
02-23-81 ASH HOUSE GROUP - WICHITA, KS 81.74
02-23-81 LEE B. - WICHITA, KS 5.00

02-26-81 LINDA S. - WILKES-BARRE, PA 6.50
02-26-81 SAN JOSE CONVENTION, CA 945.00
02-26-81 H.A.N.A. - NEW CUMBERLAND, PA 75.00
02-26-81 MARK W. - WASHINGTON D.C. 10.00
02-26-81 HENRY G. - SAN JOSE, CA 5.00
02-26-81 HILLERI K. - SAN JOSE, CA 10.00
02-26-81 MELVIN F. - SAN JOSE, CA 10.00
02-26-81 JAMES D. - GILROY, CA 10.00
02-26-81 RICHARD A. - SAN JOSE, CA 25.00
02-26-81 JAMES B. - MORRO BAY, CA 5.00
02-26-81 JENNIE C. - SAN JOSE, CA 5.00
02-26-81 LIBBY B. - SANTA ROSA, CA 5.00
02-26-81 ANDREW T. - SAN FRANCISCO, CA 10.00
02-26-81 DONALD D. - SAN JOSE, CA 10.00
02-26-81 E.N. B. - SAN FRANCISCO, CA 25.00
02-26-81 WILLA D. - SAN JOSE, CA 5.00
02-26-81 JACKIE R. - SANTA ROSE, CA 5.00
02-26-81 MICHAEL S. - SAN JOSE, CA 5.00
02-26-81 JUDITH W. - SAN FRANCISCO, CA 5.00
02-26-81 RICHARD B. - SAN JOSE, CA 5.00
02-27-81 MID-AMERICA RSC - TOPEKA, KS 400.00
02-28-81 JACK H. - MEMPHIS, TN 20.00
03-04-81 WINNERS GROUP - PEORIA, IL 30.00
03-04-81 ORIGINAL GROUP - TULSA, OK 16.00
03-04-81 SOUIX CITY, IOWA 75.00
03-04-81 RICHARD H. - CANTON, GA 12.00
03-04-81 H.A.N.A. - NEW CUMBERLAND, PA 75.00
03-04-81 DAY BY DAY - ALLENTOWN, PA 27.00
03-04-81 RENO, NV 50.00

03-08-81 AUSTRALIA NA GROUPS 12.00
03-08-81 ORANGE COUNTY NA, CA 100.00
03-13-81 CHARLES D. - CHOSEN GROUP - BATON ROUGE 87.00
03-13-81 NONA B. - SANTA CRUZ, CA 50.00
03-13-81 ROBERT V. - SAN DIEGO, CA 20.00
03-23-81 SOUTHSIDE SURVIVORS - COLLEGE PARK, GA 10.00
04-02-81 ROY D. - NE OHIO ASC - COURTLAND, OH 217.36
05-23-81 OMAHA, NB 100.00
07-20-81 MEMPHIS DONATIONS TOTAL NOT LISTED 400.00

----- TOTAL DONATIONS: \$ 9,808.23-----

INCOME FROM BOOKS SENT OUT:

03-03-81 MARK W. - POTOMAC, MD \$ 10.00
03-03-81 LINDA S. - WILKES-BARRE, PA 6.50
03-07-81 DAN Z. - COSTA MESA, CA 12.00
03-08-81 ROWLAND H. - NEW ORLEANS, LA 10.00
03-10-81 PAGE C. - MARIETTA, GA 24.00
03-11-81 COOKIE W. - PORTLAND, OR 12.00
03-12-81 CAROLYN K. - 12.00
03-13-81 COOKIE W. - PORTLAND, OR 12.00
03-13-81 MELODY C. - EUGENE, OR 12.00
03-17-81 NANCY R. - LA JOLLA, CA 14.00
03-19-81 WALTER E. - MARIETTA, GA 12.50
03-19-81 DAVID H. - LA 14.00
03-20-81 GINA G. - NEW ORLEANS, LA 16.00
03-21-81 TOM R. - ROSWELL, GA 12.00
03-23-81 RICK G. - INDIANAPOLIS, IN 30.00

03-25-81 PAUL E. - FT. LAUDERDALE, FL 180.00
03-25-81 RANDEL Mc. - PEORIA, IL 24.00
03-26-81 LISA M. - SAN DIEGO, CA 15.00
03-27-81 OTIS ORCHARDS, WA / SPOKANE, WA 36.00
03-30-81 FRAN W. - ENCINO, CA 30.00
03-31-81 EAGON B. - EASTERN, PA 5.00
04-01-81 BILL B. - DECATUR, AL 24.00
04-02-81 JIM B. - DALLAS, TX 15.00
04-02-81 CHARIS C. - RANCHO PALAS VERDES, CA 20.00
04-03-81 ANTHONY G. - VANCOUVER, WA 12.00
04-04-81 JODIE S. - GLENDALE, CA 14.00
04-06-81 KEN M. - HEAVY DUTY GROUP 15.00
04-06-81 ST. LOUIS, MO 24.00
04-11-81 JOHN C. - CLEVELAND, OH 15.00
04-13-81 MELVIN G. - PORTLAND, OR 12.00
04-13-81 J.T. - MARINA DEL RAY, CA 17.00
04-14-81 JAMES S. - MENOMONEE FALLS, WI 5.00
04-14-81 J.P.S. - DAYTON, OH 28.00
04-18-81 BEA P. - XENIA, OH 36.00
04-21-81 FARY C. - CAMIS, WA 12.00
04-22-81 NOLAN W. - MARINA DEL RAY, CA 84.00
04-25-81 GOOD SAMARITAN GROUP - DAYTON, OH 12.00
04-27-81 M.P. - CHAMPAGNE, IL 12.00
05-02-81 LAVERNE T. - PALM DESERT, CA 14.00
05-03-81 COOKIE W. - PORTLAND, OR 12.00
05-06-81 M.P. - CHAMPAGNE, IL 12.00
05-08-81 GALE C. - BEAUMONT, TX 12.00
05-08-81 MARJIE C. - HOUSTON, TX 24.00
05-08-81 COOKIE W. - PORTLAND, OR 12.00

05-11-81 GREG R. - COOSBAY, OR 36.00
05-11-81 RON D. - TOPEKA, KS 180.00
05-11-81 DOUG F. - SAN FERNANDO VALLEY, CA 120.00
05-14-81 LINDA M. - TOPEKA, KS 122.50
05-14-81 DEBRA A. - SHARON, PA 15.00
05-18-81 BOB D. - ST. LOUIS, MO 144.00
05-19-81 LINDA M. - TOPEKA, KS 117.00
05-29-81 JAMES S. - VANCOUVER, WA 25.00
06-01-81 PAULETTE B. - McALESTER, OK 12.00
06-01-81 CHUCK S. - WHITTIER, CA 14.00
06-08-81 JAMIE T. - EUGENE, OR 45.00
06-08-81 TERESA D. - SAN DIEGO, CA 30.00
06-09-81 JIM D. - KAMLOOPS, B.C. CANADA 16.00
06-13-81 COOKIE W. - PORTLAND, OR 12.00
06-16-81 JAMIE T. - ROSEBERG, OR 30.00
06-21-81 JAMIE T. - ROSEBERG, OR 15.00
06-24-81 BILL B. - DECATUR, AL 24.00
07-08-81 WILLIAM A. - ALLENTOWN, PA 12.00
07-10-81 BILL D. - EAST POINT, GA 15.00
07-25-81 JOHN G. - ROSEBERG, OR 15.00
04-30-81 INCOME FROM REVIEW FORMS AT
SANTA MONICA LITERATURE CONFERENCE 552.00
06-29-81 MID-AMERICA REGION 135.00
UNLISTED INCOME 247.95

TOTAL INCOME FROM BOOKS: \$ 2875.95

REGISTRATIONS FOR THE CONFERENCE:

48 REGISTRATIONS AT \$12.00 EACH: \$ 576.00

TOTAL INCOME:

DONATIONS: \$ 9,808.23

BOOKS: \$2,875.95

REGISTRATIONS: \$576.00

TOTAL INCOME: \$ 13,260.18

MEMPHIS LITERATURE CONFERENCE
SCHEDULE OF DISBURSEMENTS

PRINTING:

\$ 45.00 SHEPHERD
20.00 SHEPHERD
72.00 SHEPHERD
27.00 SHEPHERD
2,500.00 C&J PRINTING
512.00 FULL CIRCLE SERVICES
2,000.00 C&J PRINTING
140.00 FULL CIRCLE SERVICES
214.12 SHEPHERD
223.25 SHEPHERD
25.00 SHEPHERD
400.00 C&J PRINTING
27.70 SHEPHERD
100.00 SHEPHERD

73.00 STAR PRINTING
92.54 SHEPHERD
79.40 C&J PRINTING

\$ 6,551.01 TOTAL

POSTAGE: \$26.48, 105.00, 20.30, 15.00, 17.03, 54.50, 15.75,
150.00, 82.78, 15.00, 125.00, 70.00, 9.68, 4.98, 33.69, 1000.00,
20.10, 39.40, 30.70, 47.80, 125.50, 16.76, 6.62, 257.50, 15.38,
124.60, 24.65, 13.65, 13.58, 13.97, 101.50 WLC V, 12.84, 10.85,
34.55, 17.27, 14.32, 9.45, 9.40, 101.50 WLC V, 17.52, 10.95,
31.64, 23.97, 8.40, 30.05, 15.70, 30.18, 10.97, 20.40, 35.26, 22.43

TOTAL TO US MAIL AND GREYHOUND: \$ 3,065.45

PHONE: \$ 62.32 15.95 45.70 196.23 401.57 108.00 292.23
50.00 278.48 326.50 WLC 188.52 289.40

\$ 2,254.52 TOTAL TO SOUTH CENTRAL BELL

EQUIPMENT AND SUPPLIES:

\$ 14.50 BEST RUBBER STAMP
20.00 ASSOCIATED SERVICES
637.50 MEMPHIS STATE UNIVERSITY
22.04 MEMPHIS STATE UNIVERSITY BOOKSTORE
239.57 ASSOCIATED SERVICES
8.30 J. EDGE & CO.
37.10 ASSOCIATED SERVICES

47.80 OFFICE SUPPLY
37.20 J. EDGE & CO.
46.00 SUPPLIES
131.44 ASSOCIATED SERVICES

\$ 1,241.45 TOTAL

TOTAL DISBURSEMENTS:

PRINTING: \$ 6,551.01

POSTAGE: 3,065.45

TELEPHONE: 2,254.92

EQUIPMENT & SUPPLIES: 1,241.45

\$ 13,112.83 TOTAL DISBURSEMENTS

MEMPHIS LITERATURE CONFERENCE
FINANCIAL ANALYSIS

INCOME: \$ 13,260.18

DISBURSEMENTS: 13,112.83

BALANCE ON HAND: \$ 147.35

Of the total income of \$13,260.18, \$6,551.01 was spent on printing, \$3,065.45 on postage, \$2,254.92 on telephone and \$1,241.45 for equipment and supplies. The income was from member and group donations, book donations, and Conference registrations and the listing itemizes this income.

Disbursements were to the Shepherd Printing Co., the C&J Printing Co. and the Star Printing Co. which includes the plates, 250,000 sheets of paper, the printing and the binding of twelve hundred copies of the review form. The typing was done by Full Circle Services. The figures for postage include both that paid for

by members ordering books and that which it took to send out review forms to every group in the world we could find. Sending our these books to NA groups free and paying the postage was the will of the Memphis Conference so that no group would be deprived of a copy. In all a ton and a half of the copies were sent out. In all cases possible they were sent out bulk and distributed by local members. In the rest of the cases, they had to be sent out first class mail since the postal service cannot be relied on to deliver second or third class mail. This cost an average of \$2.50 per copy when we started and rose to over \$3.00 due to an untimely rate increase before we were done.

To attempt to get a copy to every group in the world required extensive telephoning. The isolated groups would not otherwise have been able to receive a copy. The mailing list on NA groups Fellowship wide became the most complete and up to date we know of and the list was passed on to the World Service Conference, the World Service Office, the World Convention and any other part of the Service Structure of NA on request. The telephone bill came to \$2,254.92.

The figures for equipment and supplies include costs before, during and after the Conference dates of January 31st to February 8th, 1981. The books had to be kept open to carry out the will of the Conference. The material had to be typed, printed and mailed as addresses became available. The last of the free group copies went out to a prison group in Salem, Oregon on July 22, 1981 and the books were closed on that date. The balance of \$147.35 will be passed on to the 1982 World Literature Committee.

We want to thank the thousands of NA members who contributed to this Conference in various ways. Without your faith and support, our desire to serve would have yielded nothing.

The Memphis Conference - Joseph P.,
Chairman

WSC LITERATURE COMMITTEE 1980-1981
OVERALL FINANCIAL ACTIVITY

INCOME:

5-12-80 Starting balance from Atlanta Literature Committee \$ 40.00
6-04-80 From World Service Conference for expenses for May 66.00
6-17-80 Anonymous donation 30.00
7-21-80 Memphis Literature Committee, Board of Trustees, Miami
Literature Committee, Lincoln Literature Committee 110.00
8-15-80 Anonymous Donation 6.50
8-01-80 WSC monthly payment for June 66.00
8-10-80 WSC monthly payment for July and August 132.00
9-19-80 Anonymous donation 19.14
9-25-80 WSC monthly payment for September 66.00
10-27-80 WSC reimbursement for postage and printing 170.00
11-10-80 Contribution from WCNA-11 at Wichita 500.00
11-12-80 Tris K. and Roger P. for Double Bubble Group in
Pittsburgh 50.00
11-21-80 Brian O. - Nashville 25.00
12-04-80 H.A.N.A. - Pennsylvania NA 100.00
12-04-80 Forward Group - Marietta 20.00
12-12-80 Fran B. - Nashville 20.00
12-12-80 Elisa E. - Nashville 20.00
12-12-80 Katherine A. - Nashville 10.00
1-23-81 Portland NA 10.00
1-23-81 Philadelphia NA 200.00
2-18-81 Marie H. - Marietta 20.00
2-18-81 Vancouver NA 5.00

2-24-81 South Miami Survivor's Group 300.00
3-05-81 Shirley W. - Chattanooga 10.00
3-05-81 Linda N. - Marietta 25.00
3-05-81 Clean & Green Group - Greenville 25.00
3-18-81 Frogmyre Junction Atlanta 25.00
3-27-81 Nancy S. - Smyrna 12.00
4-02-81 Katherine F. - Atlanta 12.00
4-10-81 Anonymous donation 10.00
4-10-81 Motorcycle Ed - Marietta 12.00
4-10-81 Connie W. - Marietta 12.00
4-14-81 Lane W. - Atlanta 12.00
4-14-81 Neal B. - Greenville 12.00
5-07-81 Anonymous donations 55.00
5-14-81 WLC-3 Memphis 325.00
5-15-81 Donation 52.00
5-29-81 Donation 27.50
5-29-81 Atlanta Literature Committee donation 150.00
5-29-81 Orange County ASC for copies of material from Lincoln 10.00
5-29-81 Pete B. - Philadelphia 20.00
4-08-81 Wilkes-Barre NA 83.68
4-03-81 Bill W. - Philadelphia 15.00
4-03-81 Scott L. - Atlanta 20.00
4-03-81 Steve - Marietta 20.00
4-03-81 Donation 20.00

WSC reimbursements from April 1981 _292.96

\$ 3,243.28 TOTAL INCOME FOR WLC 1980-1981

DISBURSEMENTS:

5-13-80 Atlanta Literature Committee - reimbursement \$ 40.00
6-17-80 Creative Imprints stationary 56.95
6-19-80 Rainbow Connection - postage reimbursement 20.88
7-14-80 Doug F. - copies of WLC material for Memphis,
WSB, Miami and Lincoln Literature Conference 110.00
10-08-80 Joseph P. - to set up Memphis Lit Conference 125.00
10-20-80 Marietta Reprographics - printing 53.05
10-20-80 Bo S. - postage reimbursement 57.32
11-08-80 Rising Sun - telephone deposit 50.00
11-25-80 Creative Imprints - copies 8.66
11-29-80 Mary L. - supplies 9.17
11-30-80 Sign City - postage reimbursement 26.56
12-01-80 Creative Imprints - copies 3.00
12-03-80 Creative Imprints - copies of chapter material
sent to local literature committees 150.00
12-19-80 Fair Oaks Hardware - postage 20.09 101
1-05-81 WLC-3 Memphis postage and flyers 250.00 102
1-24-81 Rising Sun telephone 50.00 103
1-24-81 Rainbow Connection - postage reimbursement 20.00
1-24-81 Greg R. - printing 1st Chapter material 111.28 105
2-02-81 WLC-3 Memphis Literature Conference expenses 300.00
2-14-81 Rising Sun telephone 50.00 107
3-12-81 Rising Sun telephone 300.00 108
4-07-81 WLC mailing - printing and postage 120.00 109
5-13-81 Rising Sun - telephone 150.00 110
5-14-81 Rising Sun - telephone 350.00 111
8-03-81 Rising Sun - telephone 78.00

Bank Charges - FNB of Cobb County 60.00
Service Charges - FNB of Cobb County 6.57
Santa Monica Literature Conference in April 292.96
WLC mailing - postage 200.00

\$3,119.49 TOTAL DISBURSEMENTS 1980-1981

DISBURSEMENTS ANALYSIS FROM ABOVE FIGURES

PRINTING: \$ 612.94
POSTAGE: 344.85
TELEPHONE: 1078.00
SUPPLIES: 9.17
BANK: 66.57
ALC: 40.00
MEMPHIS: 675.00
SANTA MONICA: 292.96

TOTAL: \$3,119.49

WSC LITERATURE COMMITTEE
FINANCIAL STATEMENT

INCOME: \$3243.28

DISBURSEMENTS: \$3119.49

BALANCE: \$129.79

ANALYSIS AND CONCLUSION

In addition to the "bare bones" represented by the figures contained in this statement of Committee activity are the thousands of hours of dedicated effort on the part of members from all around the Fellowship of Narcotics Anonymous pulling together to meet our single biggest need: new literature to make our message more available to the addict seeking recovery. Before this year's effort, the reality of a basic text for NA seemed remote. Because of the combined work of hundreds of our members from all areas, we now have a book in review form. Something like seven hundred went out free to groups all over the world. Another five hundred went to members for the registration fee at Memphis. Twelve hundred review copies in all exist in the hands of our members and will hopefully provide the missing link between no book and a hardback.

At the date of this writing two more major Literature Conferences have been held in Santa Monica and Ohio. The next will be in Miami in September. The evidence that addicts in recovery can write has replaced completely the rumor that they cannot. The fact that our members have been able to set aside personal differences in the attempt to produce a book to serve all our members speaks highly of the spiritual condition of our Fellowship and this year will be remembered. The volunteers who participated and did all the footwork accomplished something beyond monetary value. Their love, dedication and relentless Spirit provided for all the needs of our Committee. Enduring gratitude to their selfless service.

As chairman of this Committee for the past two years, all I can say is that it has been the most wonderful experience of my life. I want to encourage those carrying on the work. Theirs is a great responsibility. I can only hope that their devotion to prayer and meditation is as great as mine has been because without our loving ultimate authority we would have fallen prey to the dark shadows of fear, distrust and suspicion which characterize our disease. Freedom and the joy of service have guided our effort and I sincerely pray it remains so.

In Loving Service,

Bo S.