

NLANA H&I PANEL MEMBER/PRESENTOR ORIENTATION



The purpose of an H&I presentation is to carry the message of recovery to addicts who do not have full access to regular Narcotics Anonymous meetings. H&I presentations, except for those in longer-term facilities, are intended to simply introduce those attending to some of the basics of the NA program. We are here to give of ourselves through loving service in the spirit of our Fifth Tradition, dedicated to the proposition *“that no addict anywhere need die without a chance to know a better way of life.”*

When we show up for an H&I presentation we are seen as a representative of Narcotics Anonymous. The fellowship as a whole may be judged by how we conduct ourselves, so common courtesy is essential. For example, show up on time, be neat in appearance, and avoid the use of profanity.

An H&I presentation provides the first exposure to recovery in Narcotics Anonymous for many addicts, so it is imperative that we carry a clear and consistent message of Narcotics Anonymous recovery and project a positive image of our fellowship.

Our First Step gives us one focus: our addiction. The wording of Step One also takes the focus of our powerlessness off the symptom and places it on the disease itself. When our members identify as “addicts and alcoholics” or “dope fiend,” for example, or talk about “sobriety” and living “clean and sober,” the clarity of the NA message is blurred. The implication in this language is that there are two diseases, that one drug is separate from another, so a separate set of terms is needed when discussing addiction. At first glance this seems minor, but our experience clearly shows that the full impact of the NA message is crippled by this subtle semantic confusion.

The NA approach to the problem of addiction must shine through clearly in what we say and do at an H&I presentation. Remember, our purpose is to carry the message of Narcotics Anonymous. We can be most effective by identifying simply and clearly as addicts, and using the words “clean,” “clean time,” and “recovery,” which imply no particular substance.

Speaker Presentation: In a speaker meeting, an NA member shares his/her experience, strength, and hope. This tends to lay out some basic symptoms and characteristics of the disease, and shows how NA has brought about recovery. A narrative of events accomplishes little, but a sharing of feelings, self-image, turning points, new awareness, etc., carries a powerful message of recovery and the fact that our disease is progressive, incurable, and fatal.

Panel Presentation: This is similar to a speaker presentation. Rather than telling one’s personal story, panel members usually take one aspect of recovery in NA each and share on that subject. In this way topics that supply a variety of relevant information and experience on different subjects can be selected in advance.

Question & Answer Session: When answering questions it is important to remember that NA has no opinion on outside issues. When answering questions such as “Do I need to stay in treatment? What about AA? Should I stay on the medication the doctor gave me?” we can always convey a feeling of acceptance and interest in the person who asked, but don’t hesitate to say, “I’m sorry, but I cannot offer an opinion on that subject.”

You have been invited to carry the message of NA recovery through an H&I presentation because:

1. You are abstinent from all drugs.
2. You have a strong NA message of recovery from addiction.
3. You seem willing to comply with all of the H&I subcommittee's and the facility's requirements.
4. You are willing to carry the message in a responsible way.

UNIVERSAL DRESS CODE

- No midriffs, tank tops, muscle shirts, shorts or see through clothing of any kind.
- Proper undergarments must be worn.
- No drug or gang related apparel.
- No head attire such as hats, bandannas, or baseball caps.
- No steal-toed shoes, spiked heels, extra long shoelaces.
- No clothing that mimics the uniforms worn by facility inmates.
- No cell phones or pagers.

DO

- ☺ Do start and end on time.
- ☺ Do obey all dress codes. Exercise common sense and dress appropriately.
- ☺ Do remember that this is a "we" program. No addict should feel he/she is being preached to.
- ☺ Do take care to use the language of Narcotics Anonymous.
- ☺ Do keep staff aware of your whereabouts at all times.
- ☺ Do tell them that there is fun in recovery, i.e., social events, fellowship, etc.
- ☺ Do acknowledge and validate their feelings and emotions.
- ☺ Do acknowledge and validate their clean time.
- ☺ Do emphasize that NA recovery is available to all addicts regardless of drug(s) used.
- ☺ Do adhere to the security regulations at all times.
- ☺ Do carry a clear NA message of recovery.
- ☺ Do tell them about living the NA way.

DON'T

- ☹ Don't emphasize using days while sharing an NA message of recovery.
- ☹ Don't give anyone within the facility your address or telephone number.
- ☹ Don't use excessive profanity.
- ☹ Don't make offers of sponsorship
- ☹ Don't offer transportation.
- ☹ Don't break another person's anonymity.
- ☹ Don't debate any issues involving facility rules, regulations, programs or other fellowships.
- ☹ Don't get involved in discussions on outside issues, remember why we are there.
- ☹ Don't discuss facility staff members with inmate(s).
- ☹ Don't discuss conditions within the facility.
- ☹ Don't wear flashy jewelry and don't carry excessive cash.
- ☹ Don't show favoritism to any resident(s).
- ☹ Don't take messages or carry letters in or out of the facility.
- ☹ Don't attend a facility where you have friends and/or family members in residence.
- ☹ Don't ask what type of crime an inmate has been convicted of or discuss guilt or innocence.
- ☹ Don't accept money or gifts from, or give money or gifts to any inmate.

