



NA - WRITING STEPS FOR RECOVERY

P.O. Box 1541
Middletown, CT 06457-1541
a subcommittee of
Connecticut Region Narcotics Anonymous



CT WSR (BEHIND THE WALLS) POLICY AND ORIENTATION PACKAGE

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Dear

Enclosed is information concerning The *Narcotics Anonymous Writing Steps for Recovery* Committee. This packet is being sent to you because an inmate in your facility recently wrote to our committee asking that we provide him with a qualified step guide to help him write his steps for recovery. NA-WSR and many DOC Correctional Institutions have been working together since 1994 (details included in the next page titled "*A Short History* of the WSR Committee"). The Connecticut DOC Addictions Services approved the participation of this committee for all Connecticut Correctional Institutions at their July 2007 monthly meeting, and your facility has now been added to the list due to the letter we received from the inmate.

The purpose of this service is to provide guidance through writing the steps of NA with any incarcerated addict/inmate desiring recovery within NA. Working the steps is the process we've found for continuing ongoing growth with our ability to live life on life's terms without the use of drugs.

This committee operates on certain policies and guidelines. Some of the requirements to be a step guide are:

1. Two years of continuous abstinence from all drugs
2. A willingness and availability to reply to any letter within two weeks of receipt.

Among the contents of this packet you will find:

- *A Short History* of the WSR Committee
- Our current *Policy and Guidelines*
- A letter from one CT facility expressing satisfaction with our service
- The *Welcome Letter* for inmates requesting our services,
- A *Typical First Letter* from a recovering addict requesting our services
- A *Gratitude Letter* from one of the recovering addicts we have been able to serve
- The *WSR Correspondence Only Agreement* that our Step Guides sign
- The letter we send to recovering addicts who will be released within 3 months
- The letter we send to Spanish speaking recovering addicts in the event we do not have any Spanish speaking step guides available
- The *list of CT facilities* currently served by the NA Writing Steps for Recovery Committee

There are more guidelines and policies which we will be happy to discuss during a presentation to your facility if you would like to request more direct information. We are looking forward to participating with your institution.

If you have any questions or helpful comments for us, please write to us at the address above. Please let us know if the name of the appropriate contact person changes.

Yours in service to the addict who still suffers,

CT Region NA WSR Committee



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SPANISH RESPONSE LETTER

(For when no Spanish speaking guides are available)

Querida/o _____,

En estos momentos este comite no tiene un/a adicta/o que habla espanol disponible. Entonces, esta carta esta escrita en ingles, y una persona quien habla solamente ingles le va a escribir a usted para tras. Nosotros esperamos que usted pueda encontrar a alguien que pueda traducir la carta en espanol para usted.

De Usted en Recuperacion,

NA Writing Steps for Recovery Committee

Comite de Escribiendo Pasos para Recuperacion

**(En Ingles: Currently our committee has no Spanish speaking addicts available. Therefore, this letter is written in English, and an addict who speaks only English will write back to you. We hope that you can find someone who can translate the letter into Spanish for you.
Yours in Recovery,...)**



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90 Days or Less Letter

(Response to Inmates who request Step Guidance but are serving 90 days or less)
Dear

The WSR committee has just received your letter. Our committee is designed to help addicts who will not be released 90 days or longer from the time we received your letter. Because your stay is less than that we feel we can best help you by sharing some suggestions that will help you get started in NA recovery upon your release. These are:

1. Check with the volunteer or addiction services staff at your institution to obtain a meeting schedule if one is available.
2. If you can't obtain a schedule and don't know where the meetings are in your area, call the hotline number for your area. The number can be found in most phone books under Narcotics Anonymous or from Info. line. Connecticut's helpline number is 1-800-627-3543.
3. At your first meeting let people know who you are and that you're new. Get phone numbers, a current meeting schedule (if you haven't already gotten one) and start your search for a sponsor who will help you work the steps of NA recovery-
4. Don't hang out in "the old familiar places" with the "old familiar faces".
5. Most importantly, DON'T USE NO MATTER WHAT!

Narcotics Anonymous promises us that through working this program we can find relief from our obsession to use drugs. Every addict who stays clean is proof of this miracle and all it takes to belong is the desire to stay clean.

Good luck and we hope to see you in the rooms of NA soon.

Yours in recovery,

Writing Steps for Recovery Committee



STATE OF CONNECTICUT
DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTION
BROOKLYN CORRECTIONAL INSTITUTION
59 HARTFORD ROAD
BROOKLYN, CT 06234 - 1711
TELEPHONE (860) 779-2600

April 23, 2004

NA Writing Steps for Recovery
Connecticut Region NA
P.O. Box 1541
Middletown, CT 06457-1541

Dear Carleen L., Ana G. and Gordon E.:

Thank you for the information that you shared during your visit this morning. The service that **WSR** provides is most valuable in helping the men at Brooklyn C.I. **Writing Steps for Recovery** has been a beneficial tool for the men to use while they are preparing for their eventual release from prison. The subcommittee of **WSR** has provided writing sponsors for the inmates for the past several years. You are truly reaching out to help a brother in need. May God continue to bless your Fellowship as you serve others.

Sincerely,


Mike Caruso

Correctional Counselor



STATE OF CONNECTICUT

DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTION

York Correctional Institution

201 West Main Street

Niantic, CT 06357

(203) 691-6700

Fax (203) 691-6753

December 18, 1996

NA Writing Steps for Recovery
Connecticut Region NA
P.O. Box 1541
Middletown CT 06457-1541

To whom it may concern:

I would like to bring to the attention of your subcommittee the excellent service you bring to the inmates of York Correctional Institution.

Writing Steps for Recovery has proved invaluable in the progress our clients have made in recovery.

You are positively putting the 5th Tradition of NA into action. Keep up the excellent work!

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Evald EJ Johnson".

Evald EJ Johnson, Correctional Counselor

EJ/res

DETERRENTS TO IRRESPONSIBLE THINKING PATTERNS

(Excerpted from The Criminal Personality, "A Profile for Change" Vol 1, Yochelson and Samenow)

- Deterrent 1. STOP! THINK OF IMMEDIATE CONSEQUENCES
1. Before you act, think about the immediate consequences.
 2. Ask, "What gets me into trouble?"
 3. Think, "Smoking a joint equals prison."
 4. Remember, if anything can go wrong, it will.
- Deterrent 2. STOP AND THINK: WHO GETS HURT? USE A REASONING PROCESS
1. think about all the problems similar actions have "cost" you, as well as others in the past.
 2. Use your bad feelings to change yourself
 3. Think about the whole picture, the "ripple effect" your behavior has caused.
- Deterrent 3. PLAN AHEAD, THINK AHEAD AND MAKE ABOOTHER CHOICE
1. Use this deterrent when you are reminded of exciting past actions and you want more of them. Consider the past as poison
 2. Try to predict with whom, where, and under what circumstances you might get into trouble. List ahead of time your past thoughts and actions that equal poison.
 3. Avoid troublesome people and places, and make another choice.
- Deterrent 4. EXAMINATION OF CONSCIENCE – TAKE A DAILY MORAL INVENTORY
1. Think; not about the crime itself, but that it is wrong.
 2. Think; about the injuries you have inflicted upon others.
 3. Examine your conscience immediately as you think about irresponsible/criminal conduct
 4. A daily moral inventory is a preventative tool.
- Deterrent 5. DO NOT DWELL ON IT
1. Use responsible thinking patterns to replace old patterns.
 2. Before acting, use and practice responsible thinking patterns.
 3. Dismiss irresponsible thoughts fast.

Results:

- Makes a series of choices disregarding others.
- Bases decisions on assumptions, unrealistic expectations, prejudgments and not on facts.
- Takes drugs to facilitate excitement and to expand the view of self as number one.
- Uses deception, lies, and short cuts to “pull the wool over others”.
- Rejects responsible living and rejects society.
- Puts on a façade of conformity.
- Refuses to do anything disagreeable. Feels a need for excitement.
- Looks complying in behavior but the thinking is invariably irresponsible.
- Hears but does not listen.
- Does not take stock of self; daily moral inventories are never made.
- Sets no future goals.
- Has a self-serving lifestyle – “How you should serve me”.

The Fact is Criminal Thinkers are extremely fearful:

- Of not getting their own way.
- Of getting caught.
- Of being put down.
- Of being discovered on the inside.
- Of having to speak about personal fears.

Criminality is a Failure of Morality and of Responsibility:

- A criminal chooses his lifestyle and associates.
- A criminal is responsible for all personal choices and behaviors
- Crime resides in the client and is caused by the way he thinks and then acts on that thinking.
- The criminal rejects society long before society rejects the criminal. He is a victimizer rather than the victim.

Making Change:

- Some self-understanding results through identifying thinking errors but the bulk of self-understanding follows once change is put into practice.
- Only after the client has changed his behavior will he come to understand more about himself and others. He cannot wait for insight to propel him to change.
- Always close minded, the Criminal Thinker requires education about the outside world.
- It becomes necessary to learn what the restraints in life are and what initiatives are necessary.
- To recognize that life is a series of problems everyone has to meet and struggle with in a responsible way is helpful to the client.
- Needs repetition. Doing something right only once is not an indicator of change.

Criminal Thinking Patterns

(Excerpted from The Criminal Personality, “A Profile for Change” Vol 1, Yochelson and Samenow and The Criminal Personality, “The Change Process” Vol 2, Yochelson and Samenow)

Thinking Errors

1. Closed Thinking
2. Victimstance
3. Views Self as a Good Person
4. Lack of Effort
5. Lack of Interest in Responsible Performance
6. Lack of Time Perspective
7. Fear of Fear
8. Power Thrust
9. Uniqueness
10. Ownership Attitude

“A combination of thinking errors which forms thinking patterns that are unhealthy and go counter to responsible thinking”

Leads to the following beliefs:

- I can do anything I want. I can make right anything I want.
- I am all powerful.
- I must be number one.
- I must be in control.
- I must have my expectations met.
- I am a good person. I am not a Criminal Thinker.
- I must get what I want or my self image is on the line.
- I must live for the moment
- I am a loner and I am unique.
- I must never be put down.

DOC VOLUNTEER CODE OF ETHICS

- * The volunteer should maintain high standards of personal conduct
- * The volunteer should act in accordance with the highest standards of integrity
- * The volunteer's primary responsibility is to work cooperatively with staff to benefit the inmate
- * The volunteer encourages the inmate to explore his/her own values while not imposing his values on the inmate
- * The volunteer should respect the privacy of the inmate and hold in confidence all information
- * The volunteer should treat co-volunteers with respect, courtesy, fairness, and good faith
- * The volunteer has the responsibility to communicate with the WSR committee on a regular basis

FURTHER DOC RULES AND REGULATIONS

- * Respect the confidentiality of records and other privileged information
- * Do not make phone calls or perform similar services for inmates
- * **Refrain from using inappropriate or possible misinterpretable signs of affection**
- * Do not enter into business ventures with inmates

NA – WSR DOC Required Volunteer Packet

CONNECTICUT DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTION

MISSION STATEMENT:

“The Department of Correction shall protect the community; ensure a secure, safe and humane environment for staff and offenders; and provide opportunities for self-improvement in a climate that promotes professionalism, respect, integrity, dignity and excellence.”

DOC GUIDELINES FOR VOLUNTEERS

- * Listen and write carefully with sincerity
- * Accept people with different values
- * Be persistent and patient
- * Be dependable
- * Be capable of empathizing
- * Be objective
- * Be mature and confident
- * Be enthusiastic
- * Use discretion
- * Seek to establish adult relationships
- * Use good judgment
- * Encourage a positive attitude

H&I DO'S AND DON'TS

- DO Emphasize that in NA, recovery is available to any addict, regardless of "type" of drug(s) used
- DO Make it clear that NA is separate and distinct from the facility as well as other fellowships
- DO Make directories of outside meetings available
- DO Emphasize the importance of getting to an NA meeting the first day out
- DO Emphasize the importance of getting a sponsor and a home group, the ongoing nature of recovery, and the importance of attending meetings (suggest 90 meetings in 90 days)
- DON'T Break another person's anonymity or tell his or her story
- DON'T Get involved in discussion about the inmate's guilt or innocence
- DON'T Debate which drugs are acceptable. NA is a program of complete abstinence from all drugs
- DON`T Discuss conditions within the facilities or opinions about staff members
- DON'T Give or receive gifts, money, or loans
- DON'T Give your personal address or phone number
- DON'T Take messages in or out of the facility
- DON'T Debate the merits of the treatment program or the other fellowships. Remember, we have no opinion on outside issues. The best approach is to focus on the positive and unique qualities of our program. Use references from your Basic Text. It is the foundation of our program of recovery.
- DON'T Comment on the methods used by a treatment facility. Not all facilities are Twelve Step based nor do their understandings of the Steps necessarily coincide with the understanding gained in Narcotics Anonymous. We share our experience without reference to the facility's methods or to inmates' comments
- DON'T While sharing, put too much focus on what it was like. They already know.



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POLICY AND GUIDELINES

I. Dedication and purpose The primary purpose of this committee is to provide written Narcotics Anonymous step guidance to any incarcerated addict desiring recovery within Narcotics Anonymous.

II. Guidelines for function

1. All letters are sent via the NA WSR PO Box with no personal last names, addresses, or phone numbers of step guides, committee members, or any one else given to step writers. **Step guides use pen names. Correspondence Only agreements with these signatures are filed with the WSR committee and the inmate step writer's facility.**
2. Step guides from the WSR Committee have an individual addict assigned in the order that the step guides have qualified and that addicts of the same sex become available. The coordinating secretary notifies the new step guide if they are not present at the meeting when their "turn" comes up. The step guides agree to have no prior knowledge of their assigned inmate step writer, and to respect the confidentiality of their assigned addict. They also agree to correspond through the WSR PO Box only after release.
3. After the initial letter is read (anonymously) to the committee, all correspondence between step guide and step writer is confidential.
4. All incoming and outgoing letters are logged by date with name, facility, and DOC identification number of the inmate step writer, and name, pen name, and phone number of the step guide by the coordinating secretary.
5. No arrangements for rides, visits, loans, phone calls, materials for corresponding, photos, books*, drawings, tapes, contacting family members or friends will be made between step guide and step writer. *The step writer may request *The Introductory Guide to Narcotics Anonymous* in their first letter back to their new step guide. The book will then be sent by the Corresponding Secretary upon step guide notification of the need.
6. The 12 Traditions of Narcotics Anonymous will be strictly upheld.
7. All rules and regulations of the institution will be strictly upheld.
8. Only women write to women, and only men write to men.
9. At H&I commitments, the availability of WSR can be announced, including information that the committee meets monthly, and that informational cards will be available upon request of the addicts behind the walls.
10. Informational cards will also be available for the prison addictions and volunteer services staff so that inmates who are unable to attend the H&I presentations can have equal access to WSR.
11. Any addict behind the walls or anyone who thinks they may have a problem may write the WSR Committee as a whole with any questions or concerns at any time.
12. Presentations to the fellowship and to facilities will include the WSR statement of dedication and purpose, as well as these guidelines for function.

III. Voting Policy

NA members present at WSR Committee meetings have a vote.

IV. How to Become A WSR Step Guide

Addicts will qualify and become an oriented CT DOC volunteer at the committee. **They will discuss and be able to answer affirmatively all of the following questions.** Step guides will be assigned an inmate step writer in the order that they have qualified, and that addicts of the same sex become available. The coordinating secretary will notify the new step guide if they are not present at the meeting when their "turn" comes up.

1. Is your recovery based in Narcotics Anonymous?
2. Have you done a 4th and 5th step?
3. Do you work the steps in writing with an NA sponsor?
4. Do you have at least 2 years clean time?
5. Do you attend NA step meetings regularly?
6. Do you have a working knowledge of the 12 steps and 12 traditions of NA?
7. Do you have experience as an NA sponsor?
8. Do you have the means to provide stationery and stamps for regular correspondence?
9. Do you have the willingness and availability to reply to any letter you receive within 2 weeks, and to notify the coordinating secretary each time?
10. Are you willing to sign and follow the NA WSR Correspondence Only agreement?
11. Are you willing to attend at least one WSR Committee meeting or one WSR workshop per year?

V. Cleantime Guidelines

1. WSR step guide- 2 years
2. Chair- 2 years
3. Vice Chair- 2 years
4. Coordinating Secretary- 2 years
6. Assistant Coordinating Secretary- 18 months
7. Recording Secretary – 1 year
8. Postal Facilitator - 2 years
9. Committee member- one day

VI. Responsibilities of Trusted Servants

Chair

1. Minimum cleantime requirement is 2 years
2. Keeps order in the meeting
3. Keeps discussion on the topic
4. Prepares an agenda for each meeting
5. Ensures that the Traditions are upheld in all matters
6. Maintains a link of communication between the WSR and CT Regional NA Service Committee, including giving a monthly report at that meeting
7. Attends each meeting of CT Regional Service Committee.
8. Keeps accurate record of funds received and spent
9. Obtains check from CTRSC in March for **PO Box 1541** (*yearly payment due April 1*)
10. Makes sure committee has a monthly meeting place
11. Maintains an ongoing file of all WSR minutes

Vice Chair

1. Minimum cleantime is 2 years

2. Helps chairperson keep proceedings orderly
3. Acts as chairperson in the case of chairperson's absence. Fills in for any other trusted servant position as necessary.
4. If the office of chairperson becomes vacant, serves as chair until confirmed by the CT Region Service Committee or until a new chair is elected.
5. Attends all WSR and CT Region Service Committee meetings.

Coordinating Secretary

1. Minimum cleantime is 2 years
2. Attends monthly WSR meeting
3. Is responsible for the extra Post Office Box Key
4. To assure accountability, keeps a complete log of all WSR step guide/step writer communications (as described in Guidelines for Function # 4.) Keeps in phone contact with step guides if needed.
5. Mails Correspondence Only agreements to inmate's facility each time the step guide is assigned a new inmate step writer

Assistant Coordinating Secretary

1. Minimum cleantime is 18 months
2. Attends monthly WSR meeting
3. Goal of the position is to assist the coordinating secretary and to learn the duties of the coordinating secretary so that the assistant can function in the absence of the coordinating secretary.

Recording Secretary

1. Minimum cleantime is 1 year
2. Attends monthly WSR meeting
3. Takes an accurate set of minutes at each meeting and distributes them to subcommittee chair prior to the RSC (last Saturday of each month), and to members prior to next meeting.

Postal Facilitator

1. Minimum cleantime is 2 years
2. Attends monthly WSR Meeting
3. Is responsible for one of the Post Office Box Keys
4. Picks up WSR mail on a weekly basis and within 48 hours forwards all mail to the corresponding secretary.
5. Notifies/reminds WSR Chair upon receipt of PO Box renewal to assure that **PO Box 1541 is renewed on or before every Apr 1**

VII. Terms of Commitment

1. All trusted servant positions are for 1 year, with a 2 year limit on consecutive terms in the same position.
2. Anytime a trusted servant misses a meeting he or she will contact the chair regarding their inability to attend the meeting and also submit a monthly activity report. If a trusted servant fails to meet these criteria two consecutive months, the commitment will be considered OTF.
3. Any trusted servant may have other responsibilities depending on the needs of WSR.



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WSR CORRESPONDENCE ONLY AGREEMENT

WSR contact: WSR Chair, P.O. Box 1541, Middletown Ct. 06457

Step Guide's Pen Name: _____

Facility Contact: _____

I understand that in my role as a step guide in the WSR program I am to conduct myself under the guidelines as outlined by the WSR committee, the DOC, and the individual institution.

As a WSR step guide I agree to:

1. Limit my contact with the step writer to writing.
2. Refrain from using abusive or profane language.
3. Respect the confidentiality of the step writer.
4. Refrain from supplying the step writer with any materials for corresponding including envelopes, stamps, pre-stamped envelopes, writing paper and writing implements.
5. Refrain from sending the step writer any books, tapes, and items of this nature. **The step writer may request **The Introductory Guide to Narcotics Anonymous** and the step guide can then notify the coordinating secretary of the request so that this guide can be sent by the WSR Coordinating Secretary.*
6. Refrain from supplying the step writer with my telephone number, address, and any other information prohibited by the program.
7. Refrain from visiting the step writer or having contact with him/her outside the facility.
8. Refrain from contacting anyone whom the step writer might ask me to contact other than himself/herself.
9. Refrain from revealing any damaging personal information.
10. Attest to having no prior knowledge of the step writer including not having been a victim or an accomplice with him/her as the result of a crime.



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WSR CORRESPONDENCE ONLY AGREEMENT – page 2

The DOC is aware that this program is designed for the purpose of recovery through the steps of Narcotics Anonymous and will allow the WSR committee to send an Introductory guide to NA to the step writer if the institution is unable to provide the NA Basic Text or the Introductory Guide to NA.

Furthermore, I understand that every letter I send into the facility may be opened and checked for contraband. The content of the letter is to remain on the topic outlined by the program and discretion will be exercised in writing about any matter that could be construed as to jeopardize the safety and security of the facility, it's staff, it's residents, this committee or anyone else.

I understand that failure to adhere to any of the aforementioned articles will result in cessation of my participation in the WSR program and may put the whole program at risk.

Step Guide's Pen Signature

Date Signed

Step Writers Name

Step Writers Identification #

Step Writers Facility



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WELCOME LETTER

(The first thing the inmate will receive from WSR)

DEDICATION AND PURPOSE: THE PRIMARY PURPOSE OF THIS COMMITTEE IS TO PROVIDE WRITTEN NARCOTICS ANONYMOUS STEP GUIDANCE TO ANY INCARCERATED ADDICT DESIRING RECOVERY WITHIN NARCOTICS ANONYMOUS.

Dear

The Writing Steps for Recovery Committee has just received your letter. We are in the process of finding a recovering addict to write to you. WSR is unable to provide sponsorship in the strictest sense of the word, because in your situation many of the facets of sponsorship cannot be fulfilled. But we can provide you with an addict willing to guide you in the steps of recovery in hopes that step guidance can be your bridge to recovery until you find a sponsor.

We suggest that you start your search for a sponsor in an NA meeting as soon as you are released. If you have 90 days or less before your release there is not time to develop a relationship with a WSR step guide. Upon your release we're sure that you will be able to find a sponsor that will be able to meet all your needs. Addicts on the outside are able to choose someone to guide them through the steps by listening to other addicts in meetings and seeing how they live. WSR has set up some guidelines so that we can try to assure that, though your circumstances make it necessary we choose your step guide for you, you will receive guidance from someone who will help you grow in NA. All of the potential step guides have shared with this committee their commitment to their NA based recovery. They work all their steps in writing and have completed at least the first five with an NA sponsor. They have a minimum of 2 years clean and attend NA step meetings regularly. We assure you that your step guide will be of the same gender and will have no prior knowledge or acquaintance with you prior to your incarceration.

Mail is collected from our PO Box once a week. After step guides have received their letters, a reply will be sent within 2 weeks. During the process of assigning a step guide to you, your very first letter was read anonymously to the committee, but all future **correspondence will be strictly confidential between you and your step guide. It is important that you understand, though, that every letter between you and your step guide will be subject to prison rules regarding review of mail and that the prison will be notified of your involvement with WSR. Contact with your step guide will be limited to writing only** and cannot include requests for photos, drawings, pictures, messages to others, phone calls, rides, visits or any damaging personal information. We are bound by the 12 Traditions of NA and the rules of the prison.

You need to know that **if you have any questions or concerns about your relationship with your step guide or your needs for step guidance not being met, you can write to the WSR Committee and let them know.** There are times when the relationship with the person we choose to guide us through the steps doesn't work or stops working and addicts on the outside have the option of choosing someone else and so do you. You may not be able to choose an individual but you can choose a different individual. In order to protect your step guide's anonymity, step guides will be using "pen names". Many potential step guides serve on the H&I panels that service the institutions that potential step writers are coming from. A lot of jails have rules forbidding contact between H&I panel members and inmates. Also H&I is bound by their own guidelines. By using "pen names" we hope to avoid any problems which might impede the message of recovery.

Please be patient with us, someone will respond to you in the near future.

Your friend in recovery,



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TYPICAL FIRST LETTER

Hi,

My name is and I am badly in need of a sponsor because I've been trying to work my 4th Step but I can't do it alone. It hurts too much. It was suggested to me to get a sponsor and since I don't have one to visit me through the mail is my best bet. I was in recovery for almost two years but I never passed the third step probably because of fear but today I believe that if I don't deal with all this pain I'll end up relapsing again and I don't want to use ever again.

Well the reason for this letter is so that NA can find me a sponsor so I can get my life back in order and work at changing it.

Please write back soon and Thank you very much.

God Bless,

....

¹ Typical first letter from the "inside" written by a Connecticut addict inmate to NA-WSR (a CT Regional Narcotics Anonymous Subcommittee). Typing done in the interest of anonymity and readability.



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Step Guide Orientation



1. Review WSR introduction and history
2. Read "typical first letter" or actual new letter anonymously
3. Read "Welcome letter" out loud (is the first thing sent to inmates requesting WSR)
4. Go over Correspondence Only agreement
 - a. Note especially "no prior knowledge"
 - b. Also "confidentiality of all information"
 - c. Only letters can be sent from step guides; the Introductory Guide is sent by the committee upon the step guide's request
5. Go over 12 Guidelines for Function from WSR Policy
 - a. Details of How to Become a WSR Step Guide from WSR Policy
 - b. Emphasize importance of affirming and read aloud all 11 questions
 - c. Point out importance of notifying coordinating secretary at the time of each response
 - d. Importance of attendance at WSR meetings, learning days, and workshops
 - e. Importance of maintaining pen-names and **CORRESPONDENCE THROUGH THE WSR PO BOX ONLY UPON RELEASE** as a bridge to recovery in order to give step-writers the same opportunity to "do as we did" in creating their own network and finding a sponsor in real meetings on the outside.
6. H&I do's and don'ts
7. Do DOC Orientation
 - a. Emphasize emotional vulnerability of inmates and the importance of maintaining a supportive and loving but not inappropriate intimate tone
 - b. Be clear that we are to remain known as pen names only
8. Share these tips about WSR letter writing:
 - a. To address the envelope to step-writers: *"inmate id#; full name, then the CI name & address"*.
 - b. Your return address: *"Pen-Name-WSR NA; PO Box 1541, Middletown, CT 06457"*.
 - c. 1st letter- make sure they have received the "Welcome letter" and that they understand our basic guidelines
 - d. Ask if they have a Basic Text. If not, notify coordinating Secretary so NA Introductory Guide can be sent. **(If they asked for it in their introductory letter, let them know that they need to write a letter to you starting the step process in order for the committee to send them a book)**.
 - e. 1st letter- let your new step writer know that turn-around time for letters is much longer than the 2 weeks the step guides have from time of receipt, and that it has to do with time for the SW letter to get to the PO box, be collected, then to SG.
 - f. Give step direction just 2 or 3 questions at a time at first
 - g. Emphasize importance of planning NA meeting schedule when on furlough and with upcoming release. Send schedule information for their home area.
 - h. Educate about 90/90, phone numbers, "people, places, things" etc.
 - i. Make a **copy of each letter that you write**. Occasionally the letters don't get to the addict or they lose them and ask you for a copy. Also it is helpful to look at what you wrote when writing your next letter or making sense out of the response you got back.
9. Mention, review & discuss as necessary:
 - a. "It's working" letters from facilities
 - b. 90 days or less letter
 - c. Spanish response letter (for when there are no Spanish-writing SG's available)
 - d. List of participating CIs



NA - WRITING STEPS FOR RECOVERY

PO Box 1541
Middletown, CT 06457-1541
a subcommittee of

Connecticut Region Narcotics Anonymous

A Short History



In June 1993 the following letter to Connecticut Region NA was received from an addict serving time in a state prison requesting help in finding a sponsor:

"My name is C____. I'm currently a resident of____ Correctional Institution. I've been involved in (their) Drug and Alcohol program for 2 months now. It is a 6-month program. I'm looking for a sponsor. I really need one. I'm serious about my recovery. If you could help me, which I hope you could, please write back to me. I really appreciate it. Thank you very much."

This letter was passed on to the Regional H&I committee, and read in July. It was apparent to all that we didn't have a place in our service structure to help addicts in this situation, and most were aware that this letter was **one of many received over the years. Our H&I World guidelines tell us that sponsorship is not a function of an H&I presentation panel, and since many incarcerated addicts have no opportunity to meet any other recovering addicts until they are released**, an ad hoc work committee within Regional H&I was formed and met for a year to propose an answer within our service structure. It was called: Sponsorship Behind the Walls at first.

H&I, and then the CT fellowship through the usual group conscience process, approved the policy with few changes, and SBTW started functioning as a subcommittee of H&I in the fall of 1994. Letters from incarcerated addicts have been coming in ever since at 5 in the beginning to 40 per month now.

The committee name changed in accordance with input from WSO Board of Trustees in December 1995. They pointed out that since we used pen names, and were offering step direction through NA service that this was not traditional sponsorship as we who are free to go to regular meetings know it. We, and the groups in our region agreed, and the name was changed. At that same time, the committee became a standing subcommittee of the Connecticut Region, rather than a subcommittee of H&I, since the work of the committee is quite different from that of bringing presentations into institutions. These two changes were approved by group conscience from all CT groups as represented at CTRNA in the usual manner.

During the past couple of years, we've had about 30 to 45 inmate "step writers" writing at any given time, and about 30 to 35 "step guides" writing to each of them. **It is the closest thing to written sponsorship we can offer within our guidelines and traditions, and it seems to be working very well. OUR PURPOSE IS TO PROVIDE WRITTEN GUIDANCE THROUGH THE STEPS OF NARCOTICS ANONYMOUS TO ANY INCARCERATED ADDICT DESIRING RECOVERY, AND WHO IS UNABLE TO FIND REGULAR OPEN SPONSORSHIP BEFORE RELEASE FROM PRISON.** Each one is assigned a personal Step Guide and after the first letter, which may be read anonymously to the committee, all is confidential between the step writer, and the step guide.

In July of 2007, DOC Addictions Services approved WSR function in all Connecticut facilities based upon positive experiences over the past 13 years.



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The closest thing to written sponsorship we can offer within our guidelines and traditions, until the incarcerated addict is able to go to regular open meetings and find a regular sponsor.

"...When I write to my WSR sponsor and she writes to me it is like being at a meeting when I read. All the time when I write to her I look forward to knowing I will have some mail that is positive. This is the best thing that ever happened to me, especially since my addiction has burnt all my bridges now. The only thing I have left is my life and if I use that will be gone.."*

"...I am very very grateful to NA Each time I receive a letter from my WSR step guide with step work and I read it, it makes me get honest with myself which is very important so I don't use again. I feel I would not be as involved or serious in my recovery as I am now if it weren't for Writing Steps for Recovery. Prison saved my life but my step guide is helping me to learn how to live and stay clean. I hope this letter will help another addict like my step guide has helped me..."*

* Letters from the "inside" written anonymously when inmate step writers were invited to share what they would like addicts on the outside to know about their experience with NA - WSR (Fall '96)

WSR Regular Monthly Meeting

7:30 PM EVERY 3rd Thursday
St. John's Lutheran Church
downstairs - 2nd room - 295-303 Arch St. New Britain, CT
for more information, contact a committee member!

Gerry P 860-416-4109
Roberta T 203-389-5165
Carleen PL 860-738-0272
Pat C 203-284-9970
Cat L 203-935-7596

gerry12@earthlink.net
robertatravers@yahoo.com
carlylin@earthlink.net

chinacatsf@hotmail.com

♥ ...Check for yourself ... another "NA Way" to give back what was so freely given... ♥



NA - WRITING STEPS FOR RECOVERY

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Connecticut Prisons (as of 9-2007) Working With WSR

<u>Facility</u>	<u>Staff Liason</u>	<u>Mailing Address</u>
Bridgeport CI	Diana Garcia (203) 579-6131	1106 North Avenue Bridgeport, CT 06604
Brooklyn CI	Bill Clancy (860) 779-4572	59 Hartford Road Brooklyn , CT 06234
Carl Robinson CI	Pat Kupec 860-763-6200	285 Shaker Rd Enfield, CT 06082
Cheshire CI	Rick Henault, CCS 203-250-2600	900 Highland Ave. Cheshire, CT 06410
Corrigan CI	Sue Paquette (860) 848-5700	986 Norwich - New London Turnpike Uncasville, Ct 06382
Enfield CI	Ida Terry (860) 763-7300	289 Shaker Road, PO 1500 Enfield, CT 06082
Garner CI	Howe Lundquist 203-270-2800	50 Nannawauk Rd, Newtown, CT 06470
Gates CI	Leigh Ware 860-691-4765	131 N Bridebrook Rd Niantic, CT 06357
Hartford CI	Barbara Segura (860) 240-1800	177 Weston Street Hartford, CT 06120
MacDougall-Walker CI	Barbara Segura (860) 627-2100	1153 East Street, South Suffield , CT 06080
Manson Youth	Ken Matthewson 203-806-2500	42 Jarvis St Cheshire, CT 06410
New Haven CI	Robin Hobson/ Nyles Glover 203-789-7111	245 Whalley Ave New Haven, CT 06530
Osborn CI	Marge Oiszewski 860-487-2712 860-763-8600 860-566-7500	PO Box 100 Somers, CT 06071
Radgowski CI	MaryAnn Murphy / Lisa Dean 860.848.5000 (860) 848-5700	986 Norwich-New London Turnpike Uncasville, CT 06382
Webster CI	Ms. M. Garneau 203-271-5921, 203-271-5900	111 Jarvis St. Cheshire, CT 06410
Whiting /Dutcher		Middletown, CT 06457
Willard-Cybulski	Terry Kelley 860-763-6577/ 860-763-6522 7:30 – 3:30 T,W,F /1:30 – 8 M, Th	391 Shaker Road Enfield, CT 06082
*York CI (women)	Tracy McKoy (860) 691-6700	201 West Main St Niantic, CT 06357