

Many MPA members feel that the way we do things is as important as what we do.

The "MPA way" of doing things occasionally causes problems that might be avoided if we worked in a traditional, bureaucratic manner but many of us feel that the way we do things is part of our goals and it is the only way we can really accomplish the rest of our goals.

We are people oriented rather than being product oriented. We see ~~affairing human services~~ having a humane, sensitive way of working together as part of our offering humane, sensitive services to people.

In a sense, what MPA does is how we do things. One of the ways we straighten out our own heads is through the way we do MPA work--in an emotionally warm, egalitarian, democratically run group.

Everything MPA does is open to participation by all members. (A member is someone who has been by the drop-in centre at least once and who is somewhat interested in MPA--we are not too fussy about this). Members, especially new ones, are encouraged to take an active and responsible role in any MPA activity they are interested in. It is rather easy to become quickly involved in important decision making around MPA.

All MPA work is supposed to be co-ordinated through a work group, which of course anyone can join. We avoid professionalism; no one is felt to possess some magic that allows that person alone to do their job. Most people have the abilities to do most tasks, and with help from others most people can learn to do what they want to do.

All members are encouraged to try their hand at any work that appeals to them; we believe in on-the job training. Members are encouraged to start their own activities, with some sort of approval from some sort of work group (thing happenin an informal way around MPA).

We also avoid specialization; we do not feel anyone "owns" their job. A real attempt is made to rotate tasks. Someone might write a letter to the Deputy Minister of Mental

Health in the morning, clean out the drop-in centre in the afternoon, participate in a sing-along in the evening and help a person through a serious crises late into the night

(and then fall apart and not show up for a week).

General Direction for what MPA does comes from the general meeting currently held ~~every third~~

every third Wednesday evening at 7:30. More specific direction comes from the weekly business

meeting (Tuesday at Noon currently). And even more detailed direction comes from the various

work group meetings. All MPA meetings are open to all MPA members. We try and make all

important decisions openly and in meetings. Of course, majority decision rules in all

meetings--everyone's vote has equal weight. We also try and resolve hassles in

meetings.

Even though we are very group oriented, most work gets done on a more or less

individual basis. What happens is that something needs to get done and if it is urgent

someone will usually do it immediately. If it is a major task or not urgent, one person

or a group will take the job but do it mostly on their own, but co-ordinating it ~~with the group~~ or

getting group consensus as it reaches completion. There are some exceptions to this;

when people work very closely together throughout the entire task if it seems necessary.