



Newsletter of the Nar-Anon Family Groups

# The Serenity Connection

## Weathering the Storm

### Did you know?

- There are over 270 Nar-Anon meetings in Brazil
- The latest Nar-Anon meeting changes are available at [Nar-Anon News](#)

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Recently we had an unusual winter storm. The storm and all that surrounded it made me reflect on how these events were a microcosm of my life dealing with addiction and the recovery associated with our Nar-Anon program.

Let's start with the signs. Prior to a storm, there are always signs. Sometimes the signs are obvious, and other times they are very subtle. The weather reports warn of severe cold and several inches of snow. The signs are there, but how many of us tend to deny and/or ignore them? How many insulate our pipes, disconnect our hoses, and close off vents in our foundations? How many prepare our emergency kits, stock up on groceries, have candles and flashlights ready, and fill jugs

with water? How often have we ignored the signs of the addict or chose to pretend that things weren't really that bad? Most of us are rarely as prepared as we should be prior to the storm hitting.

The storm begins. Slowly it builds. The temperature drops and the beautiful flakes start to fall. Again, we look at this as not being too bad; the cold won't last, and the snow never sticks around here. As time passes, we realize this isn't what we thought at all. The sun is lost, the cold is real, and flakes are not only sticking but they are building inch by inch. Chaos begins. How could this be? I don't have chains on my tires and the roads are bad. The city is shutting down, schools are

closing, and work says I should go home before it gets too bad. Everyone is scrambling to get home or get to the store for last minute supplies. Main roads are blocked by downed trees, and there are trucks jackknifed off the highway. I am nervous and afraid of what might happen to me and those I care about. I can't control what is happening and can't rescue those I love. They need to find their way home as I am stranded.

Time goes by, but things don't get better. In some ways, things are getting worse. Temperatures below freezing are now temperatures below zero. The fluffy snow has turned to ice. Life has become difficult.

*Continued on page 2...*

## New Look!

It's a new year and we've got a new look! It's almost two years since we started publishing online and we wanted to give *The Serenity Connection* a new, fresher look. Let the [Newsletter Committee](#) know what you think. It's your newsletter!

### Calling All Regions!!

When was the last time you updated your regional contact information at WSO? Can't remember? Then please go directly to the [Region Update](#) webpage and do it now. Don't miss out on the latest important Nar-Anon news and announcements from the Fellowship. Thank you!

## Our Members Share

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*"I thank my Higher Power for showing me the way. Today I am exactly where I am supposed to be."*

*~ SESH, December 31*

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## Reflections on a Nar-Anon Service Opportunity

As two Nar-Anon members, we were fortunate to have the opportunity to participate in the Pacific Northwest NA Convention in Vancouver, BC, Canada in October. Our BC Regional Committee had approached the convention organizers and was granted approval to set up a literature table at the convention. We had done this previously at local NA conventions and had received very positive feedback from both organizers and attendees.

When we arrived, the convention floor was buzzing with excited voices of enthusiastic

and energetic NA attendees. More than 200 NA members were mingling and preparing to attend the first afternoon sessions. It was wonderful to meet and share with Nar-Anon members we hadn't met before from Vancouver and the surrounding areas. This experience really made us appreciate the importance of being part of the worldwide Fellowship of Nar-Anon.

During our time at the convention, we felt that NA members really appreciated us being there and were grateful to learn about Nar-Anon through our literature and our conversa-

tions. They told us how beneficial this information would be for them and for their families and friends. We have all seen how addicts struggle with this disease. It was a gift to be present among all that positive energy and joyful interaction.

On our ferry ride home, we reflected on how grateful we are to have joined with NA members on their recovery paths, while at the same time revitalizing our own Nar-Anon recovery journey.

Anne and Sue

## Weathering the Storm...from page 1

I am afraid of the unknown. How long will my power be out? Will my car start tomorrow? What if my pipes burst; who can I call; what should I do? I am feeling frozen in fear, and, while in the middle of it, I cannot see an end.

Slowly, recovery takes place. Things begin to thaw during the day. We start feeling hopeful as the sun begins to shine. Just as quickly, the darkness comes and the overnight freeze occurs. Again, life is difficult and I am afraid. Again I will isolate. I have no path to recovery so I will wait to see what happens.

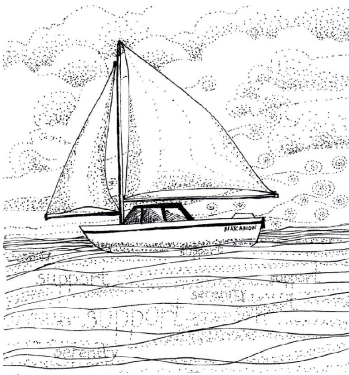
Time goes by and things do get better. Relief! The snow has melted. A warm rain takes its place. I can breathe again and feel maybe there is hope. I quickly forget the chaos, the disruption to my life, and the fear. Just when I am comfortable and feel like things are back to normal, I hear the report. I am given another sign: "watch out for black ice." I will probably ignore it.

I feel as if the Nar-Anon program is our preparation guide. The program and its components give us the tools we need to weather the storm. The *SESH* book is our emergency kit. Attending meetings keeps

us from isolating. Sharing with others relieves our anxiety while listening to the stories of people who understand our predicament provides us with the light to find our way and the traction we need to push forward. The spirit of community, the ability to provide service to others, and the miracles that take place in our rooms are exactly what we need to make it past the darkest days.

Through Nar-Anon, I am now aware of the black ice. Thankfully, I am paying attention so I can stay on the road to recovery.

Mark



drawing by Joanne

## Lost at Sea

In my journey through life with addiction, I sometimes pictured myself lost at sea in the midst of a raging storm. I was consumed by fear and clinging for life to a small piece of wood, the only fragment of my ship of life not yet destroyed by the ferocious gale. I cursed everything in the universe. How could this be happening to me, a thoroughly competent sailor? I was completely lost and alone, no shore in sight, with the endless grey of the sky weighing heavily on me. How could I possibly hang on?

Little did I know that help was close at hand. In my des-

perate attempt to control an impossible situation, I had continued to thrash about, not stopping to notice that the storm was dying down. It wasn't until I reached a state of complete exhaustion that I paused long enough to find I wasn't drowning. Only then was I able to look around and see the ship on the horizon. All I needed to do was to hold on and, with the help of the Higher Power that had kept me safe so far, reach out for the help that was almost within my grasp.

That ship was Nar-Anon. As I walked through the doors of my first meeting, I immediately felt a sense of coming

home, home to a family who would help me to weather the storm of addiction, hold me when I cried, listen to my ranting without judgment, and become my beacon in the storm.

Nar-Anon is now my lifeboat, and in that boat, I am joined by other sailors who are no longer lost at sea. Together we continue to learn and grow, weathering the storms and finding the peace and serenity that the calm waters of recovery have brought us. We are no longer lost at sea; we are no longer alone.

Mary

## My Third and Eleventh Step Prayer

I thank my Higher Power that I am yours and you are mine. Today, this moment, I give my will to you that I may be a reflection of your light in this dark and broken world; that I may be overflowing with you here, now, in this place, and in all the moments of my life.

Higher Power, I need so desperately to be wise and aware of you in my life. Today I choose to learn to lean on and be led by you.

Teach me it is in my powerlessness that you are power-

ful. It is in my neediness that I find you to be enough. May I discover how abundantly, unconditionally, extravagantly loved by you I am.

I thank you that there is no shame in my struggle. You are never surprised. You are always for me, never against me. You are all-knowing and desire to care for me still.

You desire that my fearful heart learns to trust you through the moments and circumstances of my life. Thank you for being the healer of my broken heart.

Open my eyes to hope. Fill me with peace and awareness of your presence as I practice trust and perseverance. Give me honesty, open-mindedness, and willingness. May my answer to "What now?" be "Your will." With your guidance, help me to continually do the next right thing.

Thank you for loving me. Thank you for always knowing. Thank you for walking with me always; that is enough.

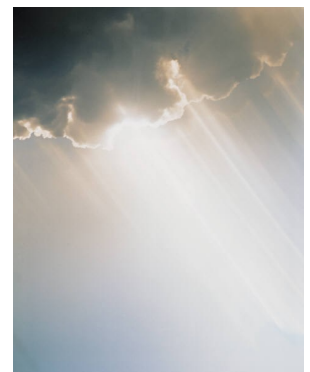
## Our Members Share

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*"I lose nothing when I share love and healing thoughts with others. By sharing, I only increase the benefits to both."*

*~ SESH, September 10*

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# The Nar-Anon Program

*“Today, I will go to meetings, be of service, and work my steps to keep my life in balance.”*

~ *SESH, June 25*

## A Message from our Executive Director

With the closing of 2013 and the beginning of 2014, I want to share with you the progress and some of the challenges the Nar-Anon Fellowship faces as we continue to move forward.

Our web presence increases each day and the sale of our conference approved literature continues. We have entered the digital age with our *SESH*, *Blue Booklet*, and *31 Days in Nar-Anon* now being available via e-book. *SESH* will also soon be available in Russian and Brazil Portuguese. At the same time unfortunately, donations have been declining, which, along with the sale of literature, are what WSO operates on.

We had a phenomenal world

convention in Philadelphia, PA (August 29-September 1, 2013) with 291 attendees, the largest turnout to date! For those who have never attended a convention, I hope you will start by attending one at your local level. If not, the next world convention will be held June 11-14, 2015 in Rio de Janeiro! There are over 270 Nar-Anon meetings in Brazil and what a beautiful way to unite and share our experiences.

I was fortunate to meet with some of our international members in Brazil and Colombia. They expressed their gratitude and said they no longer felt alone. Technology has helped, but the face-to-face meeting was important in furthering our

communication and understanding.

This year, our fifth Nar-Anon World Service Conference will be held in Torrance, CA, May 1-5, 2014. The conference is funded partly by regions sending delegates and alternate delegates, and partly by WSO. For anyone interested in attending, please email me at [wso@nar-anon.org](mailto:wso@nar-anon.org) for more details.

With the ongoing help and support of the Nar-Anon fellowship, WSO will continue carrying the message.

In Loving Service,  
Cathy Khaledi  
Executive Director, WSO

## What is Group Autonomy? How Does it Apply?

Tradition Four: *Each group should be **autonomous** except in matters affecting other Nar-Anon Family Groups, or NA as a whole.*

Autonomous is defined as: “not subject to control from outside; independent.” Does this mean our groups are independent of one another? Not necessarily. The second part of our fourth tradition states: *except in matters affecting other Nar-Anon groups or NA as a whole.* So what does that mean?

We have to ask ourselves: What are some of these ‘matters’ the tradition is referring to?

- Changing Steps/Traditions/ Concepts (rewording to suit our liking)
- Reading literature that is outside CAL (conference approved literature)
- Using clearly religious prayers

What are some of the ‘matters’ that **don’t** affect other groups?

- The times we start and stop our meetings
- How long our meeting is

- Which CAL literature we choose to read from in the meeting
- How many meetings a week a group decides to hold

Why does reading outside literature fall outside of autonomy? Any member should be able to walk into any meeting and get the same Nar-Anon message, not a message sprinkled with other messages.

Who has autonomy? Only the groups; it says so in our Fourth Tradition. Service boards, com-

mittees, World Service Office, and members of the Board of Trustees do not have autonomy. Those members are directly responsible to those they serve (Ninth Tradition).

How do we apply autonomy? It’s simple. When we make decisions in our groups, we ask ourselves: “if a member from somewhere else in the world comes to visit, would the message they receive be consistent with the message

*Continued on page 5...*

## What's Worked for You?

### Last Issue's Question

*I went to a meeting that uses The Lord's Prayer. It makes me feel uncomfortable. I didn't grow up in church, I don't know the words, and it sounds like a religious prayer. I like my meeting but this makes me so uncomfortable I don't want to keep going. But there are no other meetings near my home. What can I do?*

I would ask the group for a group conscience meeting and request that an open minded discussion occur. I would refer to "Keeping Our Meetings Healthy" in the *Blue Booklet*\* and say how I feel about the prayer. Then I would ask for solutions such as trying a few meetings with the Serenity

Prayer instead. Other members may feel the same way I do but are too afraid to bring it up. I would also ask that we take a group inventory. Do newcomers hear this prayer and think they are in a religious meeting?\*\*\* As always, I would start off on a positive note, saying how

much I like my meeting and that I only want what is best for the group (Tradition 1). I would also recommend the group study the rest of the traditions to help find clarity on this issue.

\**Nar-Anon Blue Booklet*, B-200 08-08-20, Keeping Our Meetings Healthy, p 12.

\*\*Since Nar-Anon "is a spiritual, not a religious program"\*\*\* the Lord's Prayer does not align with the principles and traditions of Nar-Anon.

\*\*\**Nar-Anon Blue Booklet*, B-200 08-08-20, Newcomer's Welcome, p 3.

### This Issue's Question

*I am a GSR in a region that has over 40 groups, but only 17 are represented at the regional level. I know that some groups find it hard to get members to serve as GSRs. I have personally found being of service at the group, area, and regional levels to be a very rewarding experience, plus it helps me in my recovery. I would like to hear from other GSRs what their service experience has meant to them. My hope is to reach out to those members who would like to serve as GSRs and encourage them to step forward.*

## What is Group Autonomy?...from page 4

they hear at any other meeting?" Another question we have to ask ourselves is: "Are the decisions we make in our groups based on all of our traditions?"

What does "NA as a whole" mean to Nar-Anon?

NA is also mentioned in our Sixth Tradition "...but although a separate entity, we should always cooperate with Narcotics Anonymous." Although

we should always cooperate with NA, NA in turn does not have to cooperate with Nar-Anon. NA's traditions do not mention Nar-Anon, and to them, we are a separate entity. So by the definition of 'autonomous,' NA is separate and independent of Nar-Anon. Some Nar-Anon service members have good cooperative relationships with NA. However, we should not expect all NA

service bodies to welcome Nar-Anon. We should remember when we attend NA meetings to respect NA traditions. We should not try to speak in NA meetings nor pass out our event flyers at NA meetings.

As we answer all of these questions, we may find that our list of 'matters' is actually much longer than we expected.

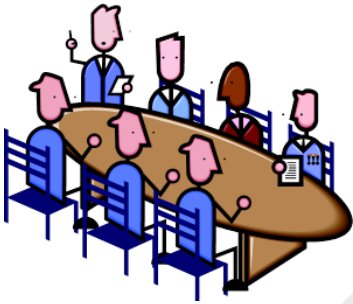
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*"I believe there is a Power greater than I am. I will make a decision to hand my insecurities and doubts to my Higher Power. This saves my day!"*

*~ SESH, March 21*

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## Committee Corner



*“By giving back,  
I support the  
program so that it is  
there to help others  
in need.”*

*~ SESH, July 17*

## Outreach Committee

### Targeting Outreach to Individuals

Looking for another way to spread the Nar-Anon message of hope? WS Outreach Challenge #2 is ready to go and will help you develop information packets targeted for outreach to individuals.

Follow the step-by-step guide outlined below and members of your group can

- Have information ready to share with a family member or friend expressing a concern about addiction
- Set packets out at community events, health fairs, etc.
- Mail packets to individuals requesting information

For easy future reference, the challenges are archived on the [Outreach Tools](#) page of the Nar-Anon WS Website. Have an idea for a challenge? Let us hear from you. Email [outreach@nar-anon.org](mailto:outreach@nar-anon.org)

### WS Outreach Challenge #2

**Challenge Goal:** Create information packets for individuals that include the *Nar-Anon Offers Hope* pamphlet, *Information About Nar-Anon* letter, and a meeting schedule.

**Suggested Uses:** Ask members to take packets to have available to share with individuals; set out packets at outreach events; mail packet to individuals requesting information.

What to Do:

1. Download the [Nar-Anon Offers Hope](#) tri-fold pamphlet. Print/copy on white paper and use for outreach only. This pamphlet should not be copied/distributed for use in regular meetings. (Note: For large quantities, it is more cost-effective to purchase the pamphlets from the WS WebStore.)
2. Download the [Information About Nar-Anon](#) letter. Print/copy on white paper.
3. Print copies of local, area, or regional Nar-Anon meeting schedules.
4. Assemble packets for individual outreach.
5. Check/replenish packet supplies as needed.

If you have questions or would like to request support with this challenge, please email [outreach@nar-anon.org](mailto:outreach@nar-anon.org)

## Newsletter Committee — Appeal



The newsletter committee is happy to report **2,068** online subscriptions to date. *The Serenity Connection* became free via e-subscription as a result of a motion to the WSC 2012. The intent of this initiative was to reach more people, and we have done that. Our newsletter is reaching ten times the number of readers it did in 2012.

Although we are excited to have so many readers, WSO incurs a cost for every online subscription over 2000. The Newsletter Committee is asking you as individuals, groups, areas, and regions for your Seventh Tradition support. Donations can be made to WSO by clicking on the [DONATE](#) button. Your help is greatly appreciated.

### Newsletter eSubscriptions

Click here for your **FREE** e-subscription to [The Serenity Connection](#)

Subscriptions to date: **2,068!**

## Literature Sales

### Hard Copy

Aug-Dec 2013	SESH	Nar-Anon 36	New Group Packets	Newcomer Packets
August	787	178	10	1,786
September	702	122	11	2,269
October	931	299	7	1,874
November	730	110	18	1,372
December	395	188	15	1,025
<b>5 Mo. Totals*</b>	<b>3,545</b>	<b>897</b>	<b>61</b>	<b>8,326</b>

Literature payment methods accepted by WSO:



\* These totals do not represent total sales of Nar-Anon literature by WSO

### eBooks

Aug-Dec 2013	SESH	Blue Book	31 Days in Nar-Anon	Totals
Apple iBook:	162	290	139	591
Amazon Kindle	250	661	222	1,133
<b>5 Mo. Totals</b>	<b>412</b>	<b>951</b>	<b>361</b>	<b>1,724</b>

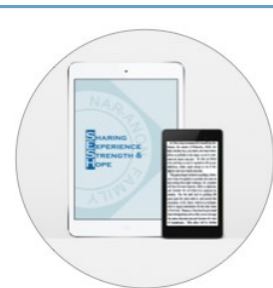
## New Meetings USA and Canada

Aug-Dec 2013	New	Disbanded	Increase
August	10	4	6
September	11	4	7
October	7	5	2
November	18	4	14
December	16		16
<b>5 Mo. Totals</b>	<b>62</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>45</b>

## Newsletter Submissions

Articles are welcomed from all Nar-Anon members. Please focus on the Nar-Anon program and share your experience, strength, and hope (ESH) from the perspective of a Nar-Anon member. Submit articles to [newsletters@nar-anon.org](mailto:newsletters@nar-anon.org). Submissions must be accompanied by signed release forms before they can be published.

**\*\* Next Issue Submission Deadline: April 20, 2014 \*\***



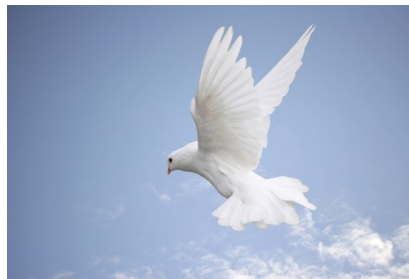
### Nar-Anon eBooks. Always Available.

Whether you use a smartphone, tablet, Apple, Android, or all of the above - select Nar-Anon literature is readily available as eBooks on both Apple's iBookstore, and Amazon's Kindle store. To learn more check out [nar-anon-webstore.myshopify.com/pages/ebooks](http://nar-anon-webstore.myshopify.com/pages/ebooks)

*“By studying Nar-Anon literature, I am learning that I can do what I need to do. I have this right...I can decide I have choices and I like it.”*

*~ SESH, October 13*

# The Back Page



## Just for Today

I will choose to practice dancing through my recovery.

I will lean into my Higher Power and ask for guidance (God U&I dance).

I will pause, ask to be led, respond, and practice my steps.

## Upcoming Events

Click on event titles for details or go to WSO website

### [5th Annual Nar-Anon MD/VA/DC Area Convention](#)

Fri, 2014-03-07 - Sun, 2014-03-09  
*"Steps to Serenity"*  
Best Western Plus  
5625 O'Donnell Street  
Baltimore, MD 21224

### [Eastern PA Nar-Anon 2014 Convention](#)

Fri, 2014-03-14 - Sun, 2014-03-16  
*"Bridge to Serenity IX"*  
Holiday Inn  
432 West Pennsylvania Avenue  
Fort Washington, PA 19034

### [Regional Spring Fling Dance](#)

Sat, 2014-03-29  
Immaculate Conception School  
53 Winter Hill Road  
Tuckahoe, NY

### [NorCal Region Nar-Anon Sacramento Convention](#)

Fri, 2014-04-18 - Sun, 2014-04-20  
Sacramento Convention Center  
1400 J Street  
Sacramento, CA 95814

### [2014 New England Region Nar-Anon Convention](#)

Fri, 2014-04-25 - Sun, 2014-04-27  
*"Together We Can"*  
Courtyard by Marriott  
Downtown Waterbury  
63 Grand Street  
Waterbury, CT 06702

### [World Service Conference 2014](#)

Thu, 2014-05-01 - Mon, 2014-05-05  
DoubleTree Hilton  
21333 Hawthorne Blvd.  
Torrance, CA 90503

### [Nar-Anon @ FRCNA XXXIII](#)

Fri, 2014-07-04 - Sun, 2014-07-06  
*"Trust Your Journey"*  
Rosen Shingle Creek Resort  
9939 Universal Boulevard  
Orlando, FL 32819

### [ECC5 - East Coast Convention of Nar-Anon](#)

Fri, 2014-09-19 - Sun, 2014-09-21  
*"Hidden Treasures of Recovery"*  
Crowne Plaza - Tampa Westshore  
5303 West Kennedy Boulevard  
Tampa, FL 33609

## ECC5 programming committee needs your help!

Please let your areas, regions, sponsors, sponsees, friends, and other Nar-Anon members know that we are looking for volunteers:

1. MEETING SECRETARIES: (called different things in some meetings) Open the meetings, do the readings, and turn the meetings over to the leaders.
2. TOPIC MEETING LEADERS: Speak on a specific topic for 10-15 minutes and open the meeting for sharing.

Please email one of the following committee members: [karen@nar-anon.org](mailto:karen@nar-anon.org), [susan-wildhorses525@live.com](mailto:susan-wildhorses525@live.com), [maxine-malbertwal@aol.com](mailto:maxine-malbertwal@aol.com)

Hope to see you at the convention.



**Nar-Anon World Service  
Headquarters  
22527 Crenshaw Blvd. #200B  
Torrance, CA 90505**

**Website: [www.nar-anon.org](http://www.nar-anon.org)  
Email: [wso@nar-anon.org](mailto:wso@nar-anon.org)  
Phone: (310) 534-8188  
or (800) 477-6291**





Newsletter of the Nar-Anon Family Groups

# The Serenity Connection

**Did you know?**

- Nar-Anon was started 50 years ago in 1964.
- There are 2400 Nar-Anon Family Groups worldwide!
- WSC 2014 was Nar-Anon's 5th World Service Conference.
- Articles from *The Serenity Connection* can be used in your meetings for literature study.

## WSC 2014: Trust in the Spirit of Unity

What an experience! I wish each and every one of you could have been there with me. This was the second time I have had the privilege of representing my region at the world service level. But I wasn't prepared for the wonderful welcome and the huge outpouring of warmth I felt as I walked into the room on my first day. It felt like "coming home" to a big family I didn't know I had.

Delegates, alternate delegates, trustees, and observers came from all over the world to attend the conference: Brazil, Columbia, Costa Rica, Russia, South Africa, Japan, Iran, Canada, and the USA. Each

brought their own perspective to the debate and each went away with new friends.

Our days were packed from morning until night with rich discussions and tough decisions on the CAR motions, the CAT material, and new motions from the floor that will go to WSC 2016. We voted on important issues raised by the regions, and we approved literature that embodied thousands of hours of work by dedicated committee members. We learned about the work of each of the World Service Committees and elected new members to the Board of

*Continued on page 6...*



**May 1-5, 2014**

- 17 - Delegates
  - 10 - Alternate Delegates
  - 11 - Trustees
  - 12 - Observers
  - 7 - WSO Staff Members
  - 2 - WSC Committee Members
  - 1 - Region Representative
  - 1 - Conference Facilitator
  - 9 - Countries Represented
  - 54 - CAR motions
  - 7 - CAT Material pieces
  - 9 - New Floor Motions
- Countless years of recovery and service!

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### FINANCIAL REPORT for 2013

Financial statements for Nar-Anon Family Group Headquarters, Inc. (NFGH, Inc.) for the fiscal year ending December 31, 2013 can be found on pages 4 and 5.

Please take a moment to review these statements. As you will see, our World Service Office operates on a very tight budget. Your financial contributions go a long way toward paying for the many services that WSO provides to the fellowship. Please consider asking your group, area, and/or region to make a contribution to the WSO. Even a small contribution can make a big difference.



Questions or comments on the financial statements can be directed to the Budget and Finance Committee at [BudgetAndFinance@Nar-Anon.org](mailto:BudgetAndFinance@Nar-Anon.org)

# Our Members Share

*“Amends sometimes just happen when I am working the program for me.”*

~ SESH, September 24

## Amends or Apologies

Step Nine: “Made direct amends to such people wherever possible except when to do so would injure them or others.”

To amend is to remove or correct faults in; rectify.

I once heard a story about a boy, a fence, and a bag of nails. The story describes a father asking his son to express his anger by hammering nails into a fence. Once his anger had passed, he was to remove the nails. As the young boy looked at the fence, he could see that even though the nails had been removed, the holes remained. The damage was permanent.

In making amends, I can never completely remove the damage I may have caused. I can ask my Higher Power,

through working Step Six, to help me remove the defects of character that caused me to have to make amends, rectify my mistakes, and correct my faults. It’s not simply enough to make an apology; I must address the defects that cause me to act or react the way I did.

In my heart, making true amends, especially to those I cannot make direct amends to without causing more injury, requires me to change my behavior. Anything less will continue to lend itself to insanity, repeating the same behavior over and over again expecting different results.

Before recovery, I made choices that hurt other people. I reacted to the addict and did things I later regretted. Then I worked through the steps with my sponsor and my Higher

Power. After much meditating and working my Fifth Step, I learned a lot about what caused me to act and react in the way I did. As a result, I made a commitment to my recovery to work on changing the defects of character that led to my inappropriate behavior.

Now, when making amends, I first ask myself: Do I plan to keep doing what I did that caused me to need to make amends? Do I plan to change my behavior? Am I only making amends to keep the peace? Is this an apology or am I making amends? If it’s just an apology, then it’s just words that don’t really mean much. I want to remove and correct my faults, rectify my wrongs. In doing anything less, I am only truly hurting myself.

## Magic Chairs

**The chairs are magic!**  
Each week set up in different variations,  
Some old, some new, some wooden, some metal.  
Side by side to offer a safe place.

The crowd varies,  
The temperature changes,  
But the feelings are often the same.

Anger, sadness, fear, pain,  
Heart-break, disappointment,  
contempt, and sometimes hate,

But one emotion always prevails...LOVE.

**The chairs are magic!**  
The more frequently one sits in them the more change takes place,  
The more courage is present.

How?

Does sitting in a wobbly and uncomfortable chair open a person’s mind?  
Does it open their ears?  
Can a chair change someone’s perspective?

Allow more love into their hearts?

**The chairs are magic!**  
When someone sits in them regularly their spirit is awakened.  
More hope fills the room.  
More light fills the room.  
More love fills the room.

**The chairs are magic!**  
They turn tears to smiles,  
Fear to faith,  
Control to surrender,  
Just for today.

**The chairs are magic!**  
Reliable, ever present,  
One chair is no less significant or more significant,  
But many chairs together, united, are magic.  
These magic chairs perform miracles.

Carla G.



## So You've Been Asked to Serve! What an Honor! Now what?

Service is a wonderful twelve step opportunity. The twelve steps help us to change ourselves. Service helps us to continue to grow and work with others in the program. Even if you are new to service, all that is needed is a willingness to serve and learn. That willingness can take you and your new role to another level of recovery.

Often in Nar-Anon, we are asked to serve simply because no one else wants to step up. Members may take on roles with no experience or knowledge of the position and feel as though they've been thrown to the lions or sharks. If you think you may be left floundering, just do the best you can – it's really okay. There's good news! Nar-Anon gives you the tools to succeed.

Are you ready to serve? Ask yourself the following questions:

- Do you know what group conscience means and how to it applies?
- Do you know what your role is? If not, do you know where to look for information on your duties?
- Have you studied the traditions? If not, are you willing to study and look to them for guidance in your new role?
- Have you studied the concepts? If not, are you willing to study and look to them for guidance in your new role?
- Do you have a copy of the service manual(s) relevant to the level of service (local, area, regional, or world service) of your role?
- Does this service level have internal guidelines? If so, do you have a copy? If not, does this level need guidelines?
- Are you ready to serve?

Now that you have answered these questions, what's next? Look to the Nar-Anon program to give you the tools you need to move ahead. Simply by studying and applying the principles to your service work, you can learn to serve in any position, at any level. Also remember – Together We Can. Willingness to reach out to others for support in clarifying your role and affirming your actions before moving ahead will chart a steadier course. With the help of others and your Higher Power, you can serve to the best of your ability.

## Our Members Share

If you step up to serve, do the job. The membership is depending on you. If you find you are unable to do the work, say so. It is a greater disservice to hold a position and not perform the duties, than to have a vacant position. Why is this? Because everyone believes the job is getting done when, in reality, we should still be looking for someone who is ready and able to serve.

Service work puts Step Twelve into practice, strengthening both the program and the member doing the service.

## Nar-Anon Conference Approved Literature (CAL) in BRAILLE

I am grateful for many of life's lessons that Nar-Anon has taught me. On my fellowship journey, I have been humbled many times. My latest experience unfolded as follows.

A young lady who was blind was escorted into my home group, and was seated in the circle. Everyone gave her a warm welcome. The meeting was opened with CAL readings and the Nar-Anon Twelve

Steps were passed around. There was an audible sigh from the group when she said "pass" when it was her turn to read, and she gave us a wry smile.

The meeting continued and we each had a turn to share. When her turn arrived, her voice was filled with emotion as she told her story. The room

was completely silent except for her voice. When I looked around, there was not a dry eye in the room.



After the meeting, she asked if our CAL readings could be e-mailed to her in Word format, which we did. At her third meeting she arrived with a file of CAL readings in Braille. During the meeting she followed

our reading in Braille and when it was her turn to read she did. Again, there wasn't a dry eye in the room.

For me to say that I've been humbled is an understatement. CAL is a precious gift from the power that guides our fellowship. I thank my Higher Power for leading me to the rooms of Nar-Anon and introducing me to CAL.

**Nar-Anon Family Group Headquarters  
Profit & Loss**

04/21/2014

January through December 2013

	<u>Jan - Dec 13</u>		<u>Jan - Dec 13</u>
<b>Income</b>		<b>Expense</b>	
3100 · Literature Sales		4100 · Payroll Expenses	
3101 · California	31,266	4150 · Salaries and Wages	132,768
3102 · Other States/Countries	263,741	<b>Total 4191 · Salaries</b>	132,768
3270 · EBooks	5,264	4196 · Workers Comp Ins	2,210
<b>Total 3100 · Literature Sales</b>	300,271	4197 · P/R Tax ER	12,199
3110 · Merchandise	486	4198 · Payroll Processing Fee	3,592
3200 · Shipping Received	49,775	<b>Total 4100 · Payroll Expenses</b>	150,769
3300 · Subscriptions-Newsletter	817	4200 · Operating Expenses	
3400 · World Convention Income		4180 · Rent	43,181
3401 · Registration	14,195	4202 · Phone	5,074
3402 · Luncheon	3,600	4203 · Utilities	4,256
3403 · Merchandise & Literature	1,732	4205 · Office Supplies	1,977
3404 · Convention-Misc Income	3,404	4234 · Staff Travel	51
<b>Total 3400 · World Convention Income</b>	22,931	4250 · Office Expenses	2,598
3460 · Royalty Income		4260 · Repairs and Maintenance	200
3464 · Russia	400	4266 · Taxes & Licenses	7,654
<b>Total 3460 · Royalty Income</b>	400	4269 · Bank Charges	287
3500 · Contributions-U.S.A.		4270 · Paypal Fees	4,651
<b>Total 3500 · Contributions-U.S.A.</b>	43,147	4271 · Stripe Fees	3,328
3502 · Contributions-International		<b>Total 4200 · Operating Expenses</b>	73,258
<b>Total 3502 · Contributions-International</b>	5,774	4210 · Accounting and Legal	1,564
3550 · Contributions-Individuals	2,774	4220 · Insurance Expense	5,877
3599 · Miscellaneous Income	0	4232 · Postage/Shipping	625
<b>Total Income</b>	426,374	4400 · Web Expense	783
		4500 · World Convention Expenses	
<b>Cost of Goods Sold</b>		4501 · -Registration	2,253
4000 · Cost of Sales - Production Dept		4502 · -Luncheon	3,599
4010 · Purchases - Paper/ Supplies	26,695	4503 · -Merchandise	559
4012 · Resale Purchases	22,794	4504 · Convention Supplies	331
4020 · Equipment/Copiers	63,555	4505 · Travel Expenses	3,609
4030 · Wages	20,766	4506 · World Convention-Misc.	5,924
4032 · Payroll Taxes	1,921	<b>Total 4500 · World Convention Expenses</b>	16,275
4040 · Rent	4,800	4600 · OUTREACH	8,351
4044 · Postage/Shipping	40,354	4701 · Depreciation Expense	3,697
4048 · Repairs	3,382	<b>Total Expense</b>	261,198
4050 · Insurance	282	<b>Net Ordinary Income</b>	-21,866
4052 · Utilities	480	<b>Other Income/Expense</b>	
4060 · Merchandise	1,763	<b>Other Income</b>	
4070 · ibooks	250	3600 · Interest Income	2
<b>Total 4000 · Cost of Sales - Production Dept</b>	187,041	<b>Other Expense</b>	0
<b>Total COGS</b>	187,041	<b>Net Other Income/Expense</b>	2
<b>Gross Profit</b>	239,332	<b>Net Income (Loss)</b>	-21,864



See next page for detailed breakdown of contributions

## Nar-Anon Family Group Headquarters

### Balance Sheet

As of December 31, 2013

#### ASSETS

<b>Checking/Savings</b>	
1001 · Checking Acct	30,458
1002 · Paypal Account	4,007
<b>Total Checking/Savings</b>	<b>34,466</b>
<b>Other Current Assets</b>	
1006 · Petty Cash	121
1009 · Deposit-Rent	1,442
1010 · Inventory	11,686
1020 · WS Conference Deposits	1,000
<b>Total Other Current Assets</b>	<b>14,249</b>
<b>1014 · Office Furniture &amp; Equipment</b>	
1016 · Furniture and Equipment	26,051
1018 · Less-Accumulated Depreciation	-21,204
<b>Total 1014 · Office Furniture &amp; Equipment</b>	<b>4,847</b>
1100 · Leasehold Improvements	4,984
1102 · Less Accum. Amortization	-464
<b>Total Fixed Assets</b>	<b>9,367</b>
<b>TOTAL ASSETS</b>	<b>58,082</b>
<b>LIABILITIES &amp; EQUITY</b>	
2020 · Credit Card	5,701
2010 · Health Insurance Payable	57
2400 · Sales Tax Payable	562
2510 · Conference Deposits	25,648
<b>Total Liabilities</b>	<b>31,968</b>
3900 · Retained Earnings	47,978
Net Income	-21,864
<b>Total Equity</b>	<b>26,114</b>
<b>TOTAL LIABILITIES &amp; EQUITY</b>	<b>58,082</b>



Detailed contribution breakdown

#### Contributions - USA

Arizona	390
Arkansas	30
California-North	5,431
California-South	5,480
Colorado	1,053
Connecticut	880
District of Columbia	50
Florida	6,193
Georgia	403
Illinois	167
Indiana	369
Iowa	200
Kansas	316
Kentucky	81
Maryland	1,492
Massachusetts	587
Michigan	1,104
Minnesota	210
Mississippi	2
Missouri	290
Montana	50
Nevada	1,111
New Hampshire	40
New Jersey	1,747
New York	4,357
North Carolina	578
Ohio	453
Oklahoma	100
Oregon	279
Pennsylvania - Eastern Region	5,633
Pennsylvania - Western Region	1,527
Rhode Island	85
South Carolina	100
Tennessee	298
Texas	207
Utah	6
Vermont	10
Virginia	345
Washington	1,287
Wisconsin	205
	<b>43,147</b>

#### Contributions - International

Australia	724
Brazil	490
Canada - Eastern	1,128
Canada - Western	790
Columbia	674
Denmark	336
Iran	263
Ireland	550
Russia	275
South Africa	519
Trinidad	25
	<b>5,774</b>

Comparative financial statements for the fiscal year ended December 31, 2012 can be found in The Serenity Connection, Volume 29, Issue 2, June 2013.

## What's Worked for You?

### Last Issue's Question

*I am a GSR in a region that has over 40 groups, but only 17 are represented at the regional level. I know that some groups find it hard to get members to serve as GSRs. I have personally found being of service at the group, area, and regional levels to be a very rewarding experience, plus it helps me in my recovery. I would like to hear from other GSRs what their service experience has meant to them. My hope is to reach out to those members who would like to serve as GSRs and encourage them to step forward.*

I have had the privilege and responsibility of serving at the group, area, regional, and world service levels and would like to share some of the things I've learned from this experience.

Service is a vital part of my recovery. It has helped me grow and given me a chance to give back what was so freely given to me. Service reminds me that I am but one piece of a large puzzle in which each piece is equally important. I am an important part of the puzzle, but not the whole.

To me, service is about respecting all members of a service body at all levels. When everyone is given a chance to fully participate, governing and control issues disappear. I am constantly reminded to lead by example, to practice and share with others the lessons I am learning.

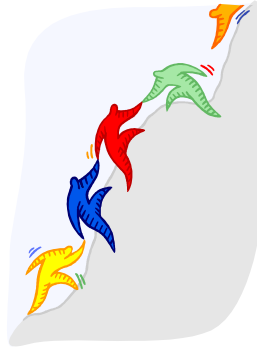
Service means having a voice. I have learned that my voice matters and so

do the voices of all the others. We do not have to agree, in fact, being able to agree to disagree keeps me humble. I place trust in the "servants" elected within our group and beyond, and I trust that decisions are made in the best interests of the fellowship.

Service in the fellowship has brought me to a whole new level in both my program and my personal life.

Nar-Anon has helped me to change many of the behaviors that no longer work for me. Turning things over to my Higher Power and allowing the answers to come through Him and others in the fellowship really works for me. Service has helped me to accept that I cannot control others; I can only control myself.

As each of us finds our special role in Nar-Anon, we become a truly united worldwide fellowship, serving together as one.



### This Issue's Question

*In the meetings I attend, I keep hearing that it's different when the addict is your child; that if the addict is your spouse, you can always divorce them. This hurts and makes me feel unwelcome. Has anyone else experienced this? How have you handled the situation?*

Continued from page 1...

### WSC 2014

Trustees. We shared tears together and we celebrated together. And it was amazing!

I am so grateful for the oppor-

tunity to serve at the world level, and I hope that one day you, too, will have the chance to participate in a World Service Conference. If you do, mark my words, you'll never be the same again!

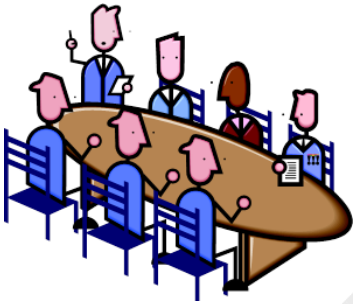


### Newsletter eSubscriptions

Click here for your **FREE** e-subscription to [The Serenity Connection](#)

Subscriptions to date: **2,591!**

## Committee Corner



*“I can carry the message by sharing my experience, strength, and hope.”*

~ SESH, December 16

## Outreach Committee

### Targeting Outreach to Professionals

There are a wide range of professionals working with individuals struggling with the disease of addiction. Many also come in contact with family and friends of addicts and could benefit from knowledge of Nar-Anon Family Groups’ resources. WS Outreach Challenge #3 is ready to go and will help you develop information packets targeted for outreach to professionals in the therapeutic, medical, judicial, spiritual, and educational communities.

For easy reference, all challenges are archived on Outreach Tools page of the WS Website. [CLICK HERE](#) for Outreach Tools.

Have an idea for a challenge? Let us hear from you. Email: [outreach@nar-anon.org](mailto:outreach@nar-anon.org)

### WS Outreach Challenge #3

Challenge Goal: Create information packets for outreach to professionals that include the *Nar-Anon Offers Hope* pamphlet, *Information About Nar-Anon* letter, a meeting schedule, and *Information About Narateen for Professionals* letter, when applicable.

**Suggested Uses:** Ask members to take packets to share with professionals they may encounter; set out packets at outreach events; drop off or mail packets to professionals at treatment facilities, mental health centers, medical practices, law enforcement and criminal justice offices, and schools (an internet search can help identify professionals in your area). Mail packets to professionals requesting information.

**NOTE:** If you received the newsletter by regular mail, you can download all the referenced Outreach by going to [http://50.63.54.209/naranon/About\\_Nar-Anon/Outreach/Tools](http://50.63.54.209/naranon/About_Nar-Anon/Outreach/Tools) and clicking on Challenge #3.

**What to Do:**

1. If you are using the digital newsletter:
  - [CLICK HERE](#) to download the *Information About Nar-Anon* letter. Print/copy on white paper.\*
  - [CLICK HERE](#) to download the *Nar-Anon Offers Hope* tri-fold pamphlet. Print/copy on white paper.\*
  - [CLICK HERE](#) to download the *Information About Narateen For Professionals* letter. Print/copy on white paper.\*
2. Print copies of local, area, or regional Nar-Anon Meeting Schedule.
3. Assemble packets for Professional Outreach.
4. Check/replenish supply as needed.

If you have any questions or would like to request support with this challenge, please email [outreach@nar-anon.org](mailto:outreach@nar-anon.org)

\*These Outreach materials should not be copied/distributed for use in regular meetings. (Note: If large quantities are needed, it is more cost-effective to purchase the pamphlets from the WS WebStore.)

## Logo Modifications Have a Negative Impact

Did you know that modifying the Nar-Anon logo can have a negative effect on expanding the fellowship? It takes 10-12 times of exposure to a logo or trademark before it begins to resonate with the public. Any changes to the approved logos shown below, including adding any graphics inside the circle, actually reduce recognition of Nar-Anon’s name and logo. [See BOT Bulletin 001.](#)



In keeping with Tradition 4, modifications of the Nar-Anon trademark logo must be directly approved by the groups through the group tally process found on page 22 of [The Nar-Anon Family Groups Guide to World Services \(GWS\)](#).

## Just for Today

# The Back Page

Just for today I will remember who has the power, and **it's not me.**

Today I will choose to live and let live. I will choose to let go and let God be GOD in the lives of those I love. I will choose to practice trust. I will choose to believe that the Higher Power who lovingly restored me to sanity and flipped on the switch of clarity and serenity in my spinning brain, has the power to do it in another's.

Today, this moment, I will take a loving step back and care about, but not feel responsible for, finding others' solutions. I will work my steps, do my part, and experience my Higher Power's peace, presence, and strength to persevere in my recovery.

Just for today I will accept that it is ok for me to be at peace even if those I love are not. I will choose to rest in my Higher Power's care and release those I love to God's care as well.

## Upcoming Events

Click on event titles for details or go to the WSO website

### [Nar-Anon Northern California Region Convention](#)

June 13 - 15, 2014  
*Detach with Love*  
Info: Karen J. (559) 269-3748  
Registration: CMSRCNA.org  
Double Tree Hotel  
1150 9<sup>th</sup> Street  
Modesto, CA 05354

### [Nar-Anon @ FRCNA XXXIII](#)

July 4 - 6, 2014  
*Finding Trust Your Journey*  
Info: 1(866) 996-6338 or (407) 996-6338  
Rosen Shingle Creek Resort  
9939 Universal Boulevard  
Orlando, FL 32819

### [Nar-Anon Pacific Northwest Region Spiritual Weekend](#)

September 5 - 7, 2014  
*On the Path: Step by Step*  
Info: Viki W. (360) 275-5616 or Kathy T. (425) 345-7000  
Falls Creek Retreat Center  
32 Falls Creek Road  
Raymond, WA 98577

### [Nar-Anon Spirituality Breakfast](#)

September 13, 2014  
*Feed the Spirit*  
Info: Sue A. (610)432-5301  
The Brass Rail Restaurant  
30145 Lehigh Street  
Allentown, PA 18103

### [Nar-Anon East Coast Convention \(ECC5\)](#)

September 19 - 21, 2014  
*Hidden Treasures of Recovery*  
Info: ECC5chair@gmail.com  
Crowne Plaza – Tampa Westshore  
Tampa, FL 33609

### [Nar-Anon New York Region Convention \(25th Anniversary\)](#)

November 7 - 9, 2014  
*The Joy is in the Journey XXV*  
The Villa Roma  
Resort  
Callicoon, NY



TM

## Newsletter Submissions

Articles are welcomed from all Nar-Anon members. Please focus on the Nar-Anon program and share your experience, strength, and hope (ESH) from the perspective of a Nar-Anon member. Submit articles to [newsletters@nar-anon.org](mailto:newsletters@nar-anon.org). Each submission must be accompanied by a signed [Release Form](#) before it can be published.

**\*\* Next Issue Submission Deadline: July 20, 2014 \*\***

Nar-Anon World Service  
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Torrance, CA 90505

Website: [www.nar-anon.org](http://www.nar-anon.org)  
Email: [wso@nar-anon.org](mailto:wso@nar-anon.org)  
Phone: (310) 534-8188  
or (800) 477-6291



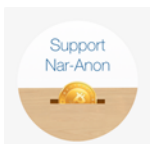


Newsletter of the Nar-Anon Family Groups

# The Serenity Connection

**Watch the Nar-Anon Family Groups Website for:**

- A new Nar-Anon website experience coming September 1!
- Nar-Anon (PSA)
- *Nar-Anon 36: Steps 1 to 9* now available
- Group codes
- Board bulletins
- Nar-Anon eBooks
- Archived copies of *The Serenity Connection*



**Inside**

**this issue:**

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## Letter from the Chair

It was a great honour to be elected to the position of Board of Trustees Chair in May. To take over from Karen M. after her nine years of service in this position is a daunting task. Working with such a talented, knowledgeable, and well-rounded team of trustees will make this task a lot easier.

My personal mission as chair is to continue to create more unity within our fellowship and the world services available to us. It is not a coincidence that unity is the principle behind our First Tradition. We have already accomplished so much. At this past World Service Conference (WSC 2014), we had a record seven countries participating and two others observing. The number of attending delegates continues to rise. Each conference, we learn more and more from each other. We all hear great ideas that we try to incorporate into our

service to the fellowship. The more delegates who attend, the better the group conscience.

At WSC 2014, it became clear that we needed to allocate more resources to literature translations. Our international fellowship is relying on guidance from our world services. A new subcommittee has been formed to answer that need but, as with all new things, we need plenty of help. It takes a lot of effort to ensure that what is translated accurately reflects the original content. So if you are multilingual, please consider this service work.

Another way we have continued to improve unity is through our newsletter. With our quarterly *Serenity Connection* hitting over 3000 e-subscriptions, we get to share more and more with each other. Be sure to send in articles and pose questions. Tell us about successful events in

your region. Honour that one purpose that we speak of in Tradition Five, "to help families of addicts," by sharing how you used a tool of the program to get through a tough time or how you used a tradition or principle to improve your home life, group, area, or region.

In closing, I would like to ask all of you to help improve unity by submitting questions and thoughts to the Board of Trustees. What ideas do you have? What concerns do you have? What areas do you feel need more attention? How can we help you grow your groups, areas, and regions? Let's get talking!! You can use the email for the board, [BOT@nar-anon.org](mailto:BOT@nar-anon.org), or contact me directly at [Rhenda@nar-anon.org](mailto:Rhenda@nar-anon.org).

Rhenda R  
Chair, NFG Board of Trustees  
Toronto, ON, Canada

### EXCITING NEWS! Nar-Anon Public Service Announcement!

The new Nar-Anon PSA (Public Service Announcement) is now available to use in your outreach efforts. To see and hear the PSA on the world wide web, go to [Outreach Tools](#) on the Nar-Anon website and click on "Video PSA." For questions or assistance, please contact [outreach@nar-anon.org](mailto:outreach@nar-anon.org)

# Our Members Share

*“Nar-Anon encourages me not to hold onto resentment. I can simply ask for peace and serenity.”*

*Thirty-One Days in Nar-Anon, Day 3*



## Devil’s Alley

I remember as a boy in rural Kansas being out for a Sunday drive and coming across what my aunt and uncle called a “devil’s alley.” It was very simple, really; an alley between two fences. I asked why they called it a “devil’s alley.” My aunt said that the farmers long ago had an argument about who was doing their share in building the fence between their farms, so each decided to build his own. My uncle laughed and said he could just imagine the two of them out there, working in parallel but not together, twice as hard, to achieve the same purpose, just because they didn’t trust each other. And so there was this alley of mistrust, a dead zone that grew nothing. It was nothing but a reminder of how uncooperative human beings can be.

Before I came to Nar-Anon, I seemed to be building a lot of useless fences and doing a lot of hard work that got me nowhere. Since I couldn’t get the addict, or even others who were involved with the addict, to agree with me, I created my own devil’s alleys between me and others. I felt increasingly lonely, miserable, and alienated.

Human relationships are tricky in the best of circumstances. How much more so when drugs are in the picture! I exhausted myself with my own plans and ideas as to how things should be. Thus I stopped really living. I accumulated more and more evidence of just how untrustworthy other people were, even the world itself!

Gradually, through the fellowship and principles of the program, I began to be gently drawn in another direction. At first, I thought the steps were harsh and demanding. As I worked them, I discovered they were gentle and forgiving. I wondered, in contrast, how I had come across to others in my insanity. I began to slowly, almost imperceptibly, move toward a gentler path. I was especially surprised that no one gave me advice. I wondered why, since I had been so ready with it myself, even though nothing I had tried actually worked. I thought maybe they didn’t offer any advice because I already knew it all. In my vanity, I assumed that they needed my thoughts, not the other way around.

The irony, of course, was that I was a know-it-all who couldn’t

hear any advice anyway. It was a hard lesson. But not everything was amenable to my need for answers and clarity. I had to learn to trust in NOT knowing.

Our paths ought not to divide us, but allow us to walk together. A path should lead somewhere, not be a pointless barren waste. How silly those farmers were, long ago, unable to see what they had in common. To build an alley to nowhere, a mere symbol of human distrust, is truly a “devil’s alley.” It is even a waste of an alley!

I found a path finally, and began to tear down some of the fences I had erected. I now share a journey, a path, a direction with thousands of others, who have gained spiritual freedom through the generous and gentle principles handed down to us through Nar-Anon. We don’t tell each other what to do, nor do we even adopt the same solutions, but we are on a shared path, and we know we are going in the direction of something new.

David R.

“Remember all people are always changing. When we judge them, we judge on what we believe we know of them, failing to realize that there is much we do not know, and that they are constantly changing as they try for better or worse to cope with life.”

*Nar-Anon Blue Booklet, p. 14.*

## Helping Families of Addicts: Encouragement vs Gossip

Recently I was at a convention talking with another member about an issue we had both run into in our regions. It occurred to me that I had heard this same topic in other regions. Some members use the term “addict update meetings.” This is not a formal term but rather slang to describe meetings where members share about what the addict has done or needs to do; their using, stealing, court dates, lawyers, probation, jail, prison terms, release dates, treatment centers, recommended treatment programs, and so on. At many of these meetings, members spend the entire time sharing stories of the addict.

Throughout that day at the convention, we continued our discussion and agreed that this type of meeting is not healthy. We both admitted we had left such meetings feeling worse than when we had arrived.

The following week I attended my ongoing tradition study group. My Higher Power must have been at work because through the study process, rather than through my own interpretation of the traditions, the answer became clear. Tradition Five says “Each Nar-Anon family group has but one purpose; to help families of addicts.” This tradition goes on to tell us how to carry out that purpose, by practicing

the Twelve Steps of Nar-Anon. When members share only about the addict, we don’t learn how to practice the twelve steps for ourselves or even why we should practice the steps. We don’t learn how to set boundaries or how to detach from the addict. Members who practice the steps for themselves learn a different way to live. Working the steps helps each of us to recover and deal with addiction in our daily life.

Tradition Five also tells us to encourage and understand our addicted relative

(s). How do we do this? It seems confusing. This part of the tradition does not tell us to continue trying to fix or save the addict, nor does it tell us to gossip about the addict.

“Encouraging” is defined as “giving support, confidence or hope to (someone).” We have to ask ourselves how we can encourage the addicts without continuing to enable them. Sponsors and other group members, along with our Higher Power, can guide us towards accomplishing the task of encouragement. As a group, we must ask ourselves: Does updating on the addicts’ activities lend itself to encourage-



ment? Do we leave our meeting with a new perspective or tools to manage ourselves between meetings?

Finally, this tradition tells us to welcome and give comfort to families of addicts. How do we welcome families? How do we give comfort? Many members do not find comfort in hearing what the addicts are doing week after week. Many of us came to meetings thinking our

primary purpose was to get the addict to stop using. It is up to the chair and seasoned Nar-Anon members to keep

the focus on Nar-Anon. These members can remind the group that outside sharing after the meeting is welcome. Keeping the meeting focused on recovery helps foster unity, thus supporting our first tradition. It is important for us to give more to others than we allow them to take from us. What does this mean? Often a group will reserve the last ten minutes of the meeting for open shares.

How does updating what the addict is doing comfort other family members still suffering? Is this helping Nar-Anon members grow in recovery? Is sharing treatment center infor-

## Our Members Share

---

*“Detachment with love brings me serenity and growth ... I keep the person I love separated from the disease which I hate.”*

*Thirty-One Days in Nar-Anon, Day 16*

---

mation helping families or can that be shared after a meeting? Is gossiping about the addict helping? “Gossip about others, including the addict, will defeat our purpose” (*Nar-Anon Blue Booklet* p. 12). Are addict updates gossip?

Sometimes it seems easier to stay in the storm than to step out of it. We get so engulfed in the disease we cannot see any other way to live. Only when we become willing to try something new do we learn tools that can change our lives... beyond our wildest dreams!

# The Nar-Anon Program

## REGIONAL SERVICE COMMITTEE MEETINGS VS REGIONAL ASSEMBLY MEETINGS

There are two types of regional meetings listed in *The Nar-Anon Family Groups Guide to Local Services* (GLS): Regional Service Committee (RSC) meetings (p. 6-3) and Regional Assembly meetings (p. 6-8).

**RSC meetings** are held to discuss the business of regional and area matters as described below. These meetings are attended by officers, Area Service Representatives (ASRs), regional subcommittee chairs, and the delegate and alternate delegate. All Nar-Anon members are welcome to attend. At the discretion of the chair, speaking by non-voting members may be limited.

The voting members are the officers (chair, vice chair, secretary, and treasurer); ASRs; subcommittee chairs; and others as the region may deem appropriate. The delegate and alternate delegate are not voting members of the RSC.

### The Regional Service Committee

- Hears and discusses region and area reports
- Hears subcommittees' reports and reviews their activities
- Hears and discusses the delegate's report
- Reviews ways of keeping the groups informed and unified
- Establishes subcommittees
- Develops policies for assembly approval
- Develops the region's budget
- Raises funds for the delegate's equalized travel expenses to attend the World Service Conference (WSC)
- Drafts a slate of nominees eligible for election at the Assembly

An **Assembly** is an event held at least once a year. The Assembly is attended by officers of the RSC, the delegate and alternate delegate, the region's Group Service Representatives (GSRs), ASRs, and subcommittee chairs. The assembly is a vital link between groups and the region where members conduct the following business:

- Set policies for the region
- Receive, discuss, and vote on proposed motions from groups to be submitted to the World Service Conference (WSC) committee
- Review and vote on the *Conference Agenda Report (CAR)*
- Give a vote of confidence to the delegate to vote his/her conscience at the WSC on items not in the *CAR*
- Hear area and subcommittee reports
- Hear the delegate's report
- Elect officers of the RSC, the delegate, alternate delegate, and subcommittee chairs
- Approve the region's budget developed by the RSC

The only voting members of the Assembly are GSRs, or in their absence, alternate GSRs. This is consistent with one vote per group. To conduct business, a quorum of the region's GSRs voting their group's conscience will be necessary.

For more information, refer to [The Nar-Anon Family Groups Guide to Local Services](#) (GLS). Questions? Contact the Policy and Guidelines Committee at [pandgcommittee@nar-anon.org](mailto:pandgcommittee@nar-anon.org).

### Regional Meetings: RSC vs Assembly

In short:

- Regional Service Committees discuss, review, and plan
- Regional Assemblies discuss, listen, and VOTE



## What's Worked for You?

### Last Issue's Question

*In the meetings I attend, I keep hearing that it's different when the addict is your child; that if the addict is your spouse, you can always divorce them. This hurts and makes me feel unwelcome. Has anyone else experienced this? How have you handled the situation?*

**Answer 1:** I once visited the addict in my life when she was living in a group home. I walked into the house while they were discussing, or may I say arguing about, who was worse, the "crack-heads" or the "dope-fiends." This insanity reminds me of a Nar-Anon meeting when the topic gets around to which is worse; having a child or a spouse as an addict.

Each person's pain is their pain and has nothing to do with whether the addict is a spouse or a child. Once I set myself apart as "different," the program is no longer a "we" program but me against you. I need to refocus on my program. I really don't know what you need to do.

As our first tradition says, "Our common welfare should come first; personal progress for the greatest number depends on unity." Separating ourselves based on who the addict is does not promote unity. Rather than giving advice, I choose to practice the traditions in all my affairs. When I hear the phrase "thus we became sick, too,"\* I remember why I need meetings.

Barry

\**Nar-Anon Blue Booklet*, p 4.

**Answer 2:** In a lot of meetings, I hear that it's different when the addict is your child. I usually hear this from a new hurting parent who does not understand that my spouse is someone's child. What I hear is that I don't belong because at least I can divorce the addict; a parent cannot divorce their child. This hurts and makes me feel very unwelcome. Whether I am here for a child, spouse, or friend is irrelevant.

I went to a meeting once at which we introduced ourselves by first name only and were asked to say what our relationship was to the addict. At first, I thought that was kind of neat but then, as we went around the room and there were no other spouses, I soon felt like I didn't belong. Again my shares were irrelevant because "I did not carry the addict for nine months."

I did eventually divorce the addict six years ago. I still attend meetings. I keep coming back because recovery for me was never about the addict. Steps Two through Twelve don't speak of the addict; those steps are about me and changing me. I keep coming back because I was once affected by someone else's addiction. Step Twelve tells me to keep coming back to carry this message to others. If I keep coming back, I am giving back what was so freely given to me. I keep coming back because it does not matter who the addict is; it matters who I am.

### This Issue's Question

*What is the most powerful gift you have been given as a result of sponsorship ?*

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Subscriptions to date: **3,009!**



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## Just for Today

Just for today I will recognize that being attached to those I love is not healthy. A loving step back gives me room to grow and discover my choices, my path, and myself.

When I first heard it said that detachment in my relationships was necessary to recover from this family disease of addiction, my immediate reaction was alarm and fear. I mistakenly equated detachment with not caring, with building walls of rejection, and with deserting those I love.

I have learned that detachment is truly a matter of allowing others the freedom to see themselves, make their own choices,

and experience the consequences of those choices. When I practice not being attached, I am able to see that I have choices. I can step out of the despair of being captive to the “shoulds,” the shame, and the blame of this disease. I ask my Higher Power for the wisdom to change myself and release others with love to their Higher Powers’ care. I have come to believe it is in this new space between us that our Higher Powers are at work in our lives.

By practicing my new unattached thinking, I begin to discover myself and my responsibilities. I start to see my part in relationships and no longer feel solely responsible for everyone. I practice under-

standing, compassion, acceptance, and forgiveness (release). I let go of my non-reality-based expectations and the resulting resentments. I have learned to give myself a break, stop taking everything personally, and stop feeling hurt emotionally by others’ words, choices, and behaviors.

Just for today, I will practice healthy loving detachment, which sets me free to grow and be myself. I learn to simply be there for others. I accept that I am only able to find my own answers; it is OK. Others’ answers are theirs to discover with the help of their Higher Powers. Others I can only love; that is more than enough.

## Board Appeal

### Whose Responsibility Is It?

World Service Board of Trustees’ Mission Statement:

*The World Service Board of Trustees is dedicated to the growth and financial stability of Nar-Anon Family Groups. In cooperation with the world service committees and World Service Office, we will support the worldwide fellowship by developing services necessary to carry the message of Nar-Anon.*

One of the Board of Trustees’ main responsibilities is to ensure Nar-Anon has adequate financial resources to fulfill the mission of carrying its message around the world. We envision a future of always being available to those in need. Remember the first time you came to a meeting? Remember the first time you found serenity? How about the first time you realized you were no longer alone? What about all the friends you made in the fellowship, who walked by your side on this journey through the good times and bad? Would-

*Please read this message at your business meetings during this quarter*

n’t you want those who have yet to find Nar-Anon to be able to receive the gifts our program has to offer?

Tradition Six states, “Our Family Groups ought never to endorse, finance or lend our name to any outside enterprise, lest problems of money, property and prestige divert us from our primary spiritual aim.”

Where do funds come from to operate our World Service Office (WSO)? Nar-Anon does not take money from outside entities. We are supported by member donations and from the sale of literature. In recent years, all businesses and organizations have had to tighten their budgets and deal with cutbacks while material costs continue to rise. We too have felt this economic impact, as our donations have decreased over the past three years.

Our Seventh Tradition states, “Every group ought to be fully self-supporting, declining outside contributions.”

How does Nar-Anon keep itself fully self-supporting? Just as the group’s Seventh

Tradition basket serves to support the group, this same basket also serves to support every level of service beyond the group. These funds help to provide services on behalf of all members through the WSO. Without group support, phones at WSO may not be answered, utilities and salaries may not be paid, and literature may not be published.

While WSO generates income from literature sales, it is not enough, and more funds are needed. Currently, Seventh Tradition contributions only account for approximately 12% of our operating income. This is clearly out of balance.

Concept 2 states, “The final responsibility and authority for Nar-Anon services rests with the Nar-Anon Family Groups.”

What does this mean? It takes every member, every group, every area, and every region to keep our world services functioning, and it is our collective responsibility. Our groups make decisions



### Board Appeal ...continued from page 6

for our fellowship through the World Service Conference, but what does that responsibility encompass? We authorize our world service committees and WSO to perform services on behalf of all our groups. Prior to executing any service, funds are needed. What else does WSO need to perform those services?

- Rent, utilities, insurance, salaries
- Phone and internet services
- Computers, copiers, printers, paper, and ink
- Outreach

World service committees provide other services that require funds:

- Literature production and software

- Website upkeep and associated fees
- Newsletter and subscription provider fees
- Outreach
- Narateen

We are making an appeal to all groups, areas, and regions to discuss at your next group conscience business meeting the financial requirements for providing world services to the fellowship. Once the prudent reserve (See GLS pg 8-2) has been met, we ask all members to support area, region, and world services so we can continue to carry the message to those in need.

Donations can be made to WSO online at [www.nar-anon.org](http://www.nar-anon.org) or by mail to: 22527 Crenshaw Blvd, Suite 200B Torrance, CA 90505

Click here to donate:



## Committee Corner

### Literature Committee

#### Priority List

The following priority list is the result of a survey presented to World Service Conference 2014 participants by the Literature Committee:

##### Priority One

- Steps Ten - Twelve
- Traditions One - Twelve
- How to Deal with the Death of a Loved One
- Narateen – 31 Days
- Boundaries

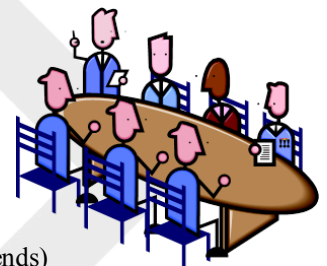
##### Priority Two

- Concepts One - Twelve
- Parents of Addicted Minors
- Why CAL?

- Seventh Tradition pamphlet
- Fourth Step Workbook

##### Priority Three

- Adult Children of Addicts
- What Now? (When active addiction ends)
- Why Are We Here?
- Pamphlet for Men
- Addiction in Marriage



The World Service and Regional Literature Committees have begun working on the Priority One list.

We encourage members to submit writings. Regions interested in forming literature committees to write and/or edit literature are asked to contact the World Service Literature Committee at [LitCom@nar-anon.org](mailto:LitCom@nar-anon.org). Together we can.

### Outreach Committee

Look for the latest outreach challenge by clicking on [OUTREACH CHALLENGE #4](#) on the “Outreach Tools” page of the Nar-Anon Family Groups website.

### Life's Rewards

The reward of unmanageability is motivation  
The reward of listening is hope  
The reward of change is trust  
The reward of letting go is being held  
The reward of open mindedness and honesty is

understanding and compassion  
The reward of prayer is awareness of your presence  
The reward of asking for help is guidance  
The reward of guidance is learning to choose mindfully  
The reward of seeking through prayer and meditation is that I am found.

## Don't Let Your 'BUTs' Get in the Way

I would do something about his using,  
BUT...

I don't know what to do  
I don't know what my family or  
friends would say  
I don't know what he would do  
I don't know where he would go  
I don't want him to get hurt  
I don't want him to sleep on the street  
I don't want him to suffer

I don't know where he would eat  
He doesn't have any money  
He might get angry  
He might threaten to kill himself  
He could lose his job  
He might end up in jail  
He might say he doesn't love me  
He might die

I thought that if something happened  
to him, I couldn't live with myself.

However, the simple truth was that I al-  
ready couldn't live with myself.

I thought that I didn't like what he was  
doing to me, when actually what I didn't  
like was what I was doing to myself!

Nar-Anon has taught me that I cannot con-  
trol my addict's life; all I can do is live the  
best life I can for myself.

Nar -Anon – keep coming back.

## Upcoming Events

Click on event titles for details or go to the WSO website

### [Nar-Anon Pacific Northwest Region Spiritual Weekend](#)

**September 5th - 7th, 2014**  
"On the Path: Step by Step"  
Contact: Viki W. 360-275-5616  
Falls Creek Retreat Center  
Raymond, WA 98577

### [Nar-Anon Spirituality Breakfast](#)

**September 13th, 2014**  
"Feed the Spirit"  
Contact: Sue A. 610-432-3374  
The Brass Rail Restaurant  
Allentown, PA 18104

### [Nar-Anon East Coast Convention \(ECC5\)](#)

**September 19th - 21st, 2014**  
"Hidden Treasures of Recovery"  
Contact: ECC5chair@gmail.com  
Crowne Plaza—Tampa Westshore  
Tampa, FL 33609

### [Southern California Region Narathon 2014](#)

**September 20th, 2014**  
"Seeking Serenity"  
Shoreline Baptist Church  
Fountain Valley, CA 92708

### [Nar-Anon en la 9a Convencion Hispana de NA](#)

**September 26th - 28th, 2014**  
Contact: Maria 562-298-6932  
Hotel Airtel  
Van Nuys, CA 91406

### [Nar-Anon Midwest Region 5th Annual Assembly](#)

**October 18th, 2014**  
"Hope/Recovery in the Ozarks"  
Contact: Christine Z. 417-598-7500  
Barrington Hotel & Suites  
Branson, MO 65616

### [Nar-Anon PNW Convention #10](#)

**October 24th - 26th, 2014**

"Freedom for Families of Addicts"  
Contact: Laura V. lfvincent3@gmail.com  
Valley River Inn, Eugene, OR 97401

### [Nar-Anon New York Region Convention \(25th Anniversary\)](#)

**November 7th - 9th, 2014**  
"The Joy is in the Journey XXV"  
Contact: Ron L 516-622-0336  
Villa Roma Resort & Conference Center  
Callicoon, NY 12723

### [W Pennsylvania Regional Conv.](#)

**November 14th - 16th, 2014**  
"Celebrate the Journey: Serenity XXVIII"  
Seven Springs Mountain Resort  
Campion, PA 15622



## Newsletter Submissions

Articles are welcomed from all Nar-Anon members. Please focus on the Nar-Anon program and share your experience, strength, and hope (ESH) from the perspective of a Nar-Anon member. Submit articles to [newsletters@nar-anon.org](mailto:newsletters@nar-anon.org). Each submission must be accompanied by a signed [Release Form](#) before it can be published.

**\*\* Next Issue Submission Deadline: October 20, 2014 \*\***

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Torrance, CA 90505

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or (800) 477-6291





## Newsletter of the Nar-Anon Family Groups

# The Serenity Connection

### Check out the new Nar-Anon Family Groups website:

- Find a meeting anywhere in the world
- Learn how to start a new group
- Download Nar-Anon Service Guides
- Find out about Narateen
- Get great outreach ideas
- Purchase literature
- Find upcoming events in your area

## New Website! New Content! New Navigation!



The new Nar-Anon website has been rebuilt from the ground up (and will go on evolving) to continually better serve both existing Nar-Anon members, and more importantly, newcomers to the program. The responsive design makes reading content simple and achievable using any device. The always-present and refined navigation bar makes it easier than ever to get to where you want to go. The new website provides a new visual and interactive way to find meetings nearby, and much, much more. Welcome to the new site. We really think you'll like it!

### Inside this issue:

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What's Worked for You?	5
31 Days in Narateen Daily Reader	6
Nar-Anon Donations	6
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## Are You the ONE? Service Challenge!

### Did you know....

There are 11 Nar-Anon World Service Committees (plus a translation sub-committee) run by 90 committee members, made up of:

- 11 board members holding a total of 28 committee positions in addition to their board responsibilities
- an Executive Director who holds 5 positions in addition to her full time management responsibilities!
- 62 members at large (delegates, alternate delegates, and members)

Dedicated members who make up these committees devote countless hours of their time and expertise in the service of Nar-Anon Family Groups worldwide. Without these volunteers, the work of Nar-Anon could not be done. However, with so few members carrying the load, it will be difficult to keep Nar-Anon moving forward in a timely fashion.

That's where you come in. If you have been a member of Nar-Anon for three years, you could be eligible to serve on a Nar-Anon WS Committee! If only ONE member from each region/area/group steps up to serve on a WS Committee, we can make Nar-Anon a truly efficient and effective organization. I challenge YOU to be the one. Let's make it happen!

# Our Members Share

## Living Life

Basing my choices on what I don't want is like driving through life backwards trying not to hit anything.

This is how I lived my life prior to finding Nar-Anon. The fear of having to relive the pain of my past kept me looking in the rear view mirror; not looking forward out of fear of the pain that might be in front of me. I would drive the same path over and over again because it was familiar. I had convinced myself that I could control my life and everything in and around it if only I could avoid those bumps and ruts in the road. The result of living my life this way caused me to put up so many barriers and roadblocks that my life became very small, dark, and isolating. I was not living life at all; I was avoiding it.

I didn't want to move forward because it would make me vulnerable to pain and disappointment. It wasn't until I became sick and tired of being sick and tired of looking at the same scenery over and over again that I was ready to try something different. Attending many meetings, getting a sponsor, and working the steps gave me courage to change my focus from the rear view mirror to the front wind-

shield, facing forward, and leaving my past behind. I found there was a reason for the small print on rear view mirrors stating things appear larger than they really are!

The first thing I noticed was that I was on the wrong damn road. I had been missing all the signs in my denial and my attempt to control. The road on which I was travelling was not mine. It belonged to someone else. Working my steps and listening to my Higher Power, I was able to see the road I needed to travel, but it took me a while to find the courage to begin that journey. I could hear the voices of my Higher Power and my sponsor gently guiding me to turn or to consider my choices. I had all kinds of excuses not to do the next best thing in my recovery, but that was okay too, because now I could see where I wanted to go.

I had to be willing to be vulnerable to begin my journey on my own road. It was scary. I left the road of misery, pain, and chaos that active addiction had put me on, and I wanted a guarantee that my journey would be pain-free. I had learned tools and a better way to live. I could either sit idling in indecision or move forward. Moving backward was no longer an option. Accepting life on life's terms,

knowing I was powerless over the outcome, was a difficult hill to climb. I began to focus on the process, doing the work of allowing life to unfold, and knowing whatever was over the next hill can be faced with faith and hope rather than fear.

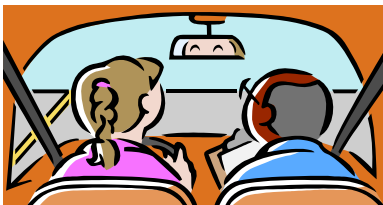
I was surprised to find how much I had changed through working my program. The past pain I tried to avoid for a very long time was no longer the same pain I had moving forward. I cannot go back to that same miserable place because I am different now. I do have a way of dipping my toe into those miserable potholes now and again. I am finding even those moments can bring comfort because they let me know I am human, remind me of where I have been, keep me humble in my recovery, and give me choices I didn't know I had.

I am so grateful for the fellowship and long-timers who loved me while I was learning to love myself and find my way. I am grateful you stand beside me with a hand to help me up when I fall, if I am willing to reach for it. I love stepping into life rather than stepping away from it.

*Dawna*

*"In Nar-Anon, I learn to forgive, release, and move forward with my life."*

*SESH, September 16*



"Focusing on me is similar to driving in the appropriate lane for the turns I must make to find serenity and peace of mind."

*Sharing Experience, Strength, and Hope, Nar-Anon Family Groups Daily Reader, July 12.*

## Step Two and My Higher Power

When I joined Nar-Anon, I struggled with the concept of a Higher Power. I grew up in a family that was active in a religious community but when I left home, I stopped participating in any organized religion. I grew to believe that whatever problems arose in my life, I had the power within me to solve them. I was strong and didn't need to ask for help. As far as I was concerned, that was just part of growing up. I was at last a mature adult!

However, life didn't turn out to be quite that simple. I became very good at hiding my feelings and thoughts, fearing if I revealed any weaknesses, I would be judged as less than adequate. I stuffed all those real feelings down inside where they couldn't be seen by anyone else. Unfortunately, keeping them hidden did not make them disappear. It just allowed me to put off dealing with things in my life that were too uncomfortable to confront. They festered away until I couldn't ignore them any longer. Instead of looking inside, I exploded in anger, lashing out at whomever happened to be nearby. Usually it was a family member who had no idea why I was so angry. Even I didn't know why I was angry.

Coming to Nar-Anon has

helped me start to solve the puzzle of my anger. It has opened my eyes to the fact that I am not alone. It has led me gently down the path of recovery, allowing me to discover along the way that I have people around me who really care. Nar-Anon has taught me I don't need to keep my feelings and thoughts inside. I won't be judged by my words and actions. I am learning to share what's really going on in my life even though it may be uncomfortable.

Nar-Anon has taught me there is a power greater than myself. It may not be the religious God of my youth, but it is there nonetheless. It may not look like a prophet in white robes. It may not appear to me as a lightning bolt, but it has a presence. I can give it whatever form works for me.

I give thanks for the members in my Nar-Anon group who helped me struggle through my first and second step studies, questioning the concept of a Higher Power at every turn. They were so very patient and understanding! My hat goes off to all the wonderful people who created our very own step study guide, *The Nar-Anon Thirty-Six*. It wasn't until I embarked on my third step study, with the help of this wonderful docu-

ment, I really got it. At last, I had a Higher Power to turn to when I was in pain and needed help.

The quotes below helped me come to an understanding that my Higher Power can be whatever I want it to be. They are written by Nar-Anon members and appear in Step Two of *The Nar-Anon Thirty Six*.\*

*~ At first the idea of having a Higher Power in my life, in any form, was foreign to me. I realized I was just resistant to the concept of the God of my upbringing; a God that was judgmental, a God that supposedly loved me, but only if I behaved according to strict societal and church guidelines. One day I heard someone say, "I can only believe in a God who dances," and that turned it around for me. A Higher Power, Great Spirit, or Goddess who is joyous and only wants me to be happy is the only kind of spirituality I will accept in my life. The name of the Power is irrelevant.*

*~ What do I mean when I say Higher Power? I was raised with specific religious beliefs*

\* From *The Nar-Anon Thirty-Six, Steps One – Nine*, 2014, NFGH Inc., Step Two, pages 26-27.

## Our Members Share

*"Came to believe that a Power greater than ourselves could restore us to sanity."*

### Nar-Anon Step Two

*so I have no novel idea about what God means to me. I do not, however, believe in the same God I did as a child. I was afraid of Him. I now believe in a Higher Power of love who can work more miracles in my life than I could have ever imagined, if I just get out of the way and let Him do it.*

*~ My Higher Power is something I cannot describe in words, much less define. My Higher Power does not have a face or body. I do not see, feel or think of a Higher Power as being a certain sex, age, or ethnicity. I often call my Higher Power "God" be-*

*continued on page 4...*

*"The process of coming to believe will help restore me to sanity. The strength to move into action comes from this belief. I am beginning to understand this Higher Power concept."*

*Sharing Experience, Strength, and Hope, Nar-Anon Family Groups Daily Reader, Feb. 20*

# Our Members Share

*“Recognizing my fears and shortcomings...with the help of my Higher Power, has given me hope and the ability to recognize my strengths.”*

*SESH, August 8*

## Confronting Our Fears

When I was approached to start a meeting for Nar-Anon, I thought to myself, “Am I the one to be doing this?” Sound-ed simple; just start a twelve-step meeting for friends and families of addicts. Denying that I could be of any use to anyone, I hesitated for almost a year before taking the big step and going for it.

During that time, my son was well on the way to recovery and I could see the spiritual emphasis of his twelve-step program working for him in unbelievable ways.

I eventually mustered the courage to approach an organization for a meeting space. When I was told there was a room available, I experienced a total release of fear and I thought, “What was I so afraid of?” Many years of working and volunteering had given me a deep sense of compassion

and patience. Past family situations had helped me understand that life can change in an instant, and had taught me to trust in a loving God. And, when anxiety and the thought of relapse put me off keel, the Serenity Prayer helped me return to normalcy.

With renewed confidence, I opened the doors to the first Nar-Anon meeting in our area. I could not guess in advance how people would react to the program. As it turned out, many did not feel the need to continue attending meetings after a few months. I had to trust they gained something from what was shared at meetings, from Nar-Anon readings, and from studying the Twelve Steps. Each of these tools helps sow the seed from which can grow better way of life. They help us become non-judgmental, understanding, compassionate, loving, and caring towards our-

selves and others. We can each move ahead in our own time and in our own way.

In the beginning, I had to stem my tendency to control the group. Over time, I learned to call upon the Nar-Anon Traditions to help guide me and provide balance to our meetings. As our group grew, we learned that healthy meetings need members to serve and carry the message. We filled the leadership positions in our group and went on to help build a regional structure in our province.

It has been a true pleasure serving in Nar-Anon. As I look back over close to 30 years of service, I never forget the initial fear I felt in confronting the unknown. My life is so much richer as the result of my experience in Nar-Anon. Today, I wouldn't change a thing!

### Step Two and My Higher Power ...continued from page 3

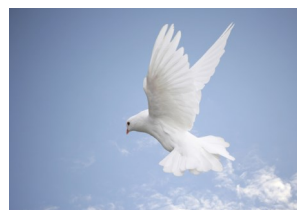
*cause I think of God as being all powerful, all forgiving, all understanding, and all loving.*

*~ Sometimes I think of God as a being who nurtures me as if I was in the palm of a hand, although as a unifying force, God is never confined to a human image. My Higher Power is wise, like friends in my program who give me their time, strength, and hope. The fact that I have been given life*

*and can enjoy it and experience God's creative energy through everything, people, nature, music, art, and ideas, is humbling. These gifts shared with me are from a Higher Power. I am just now realizing God is present in change, fear, tragedy, and loss. With my Higher Power, I am working through life's problems so I can appreciate life's joys.*

*~ My Higher Power today is*

*loving and caring, and is there when I am in need. My Higher Power today loves me for all my faults and my assets, no matter what.*



*~ What is God? I think God is an unknowable quantity. To*

*attempt to define God is to say one knows what God is, which means I could be leaving something out.*

Now, my Higher Power walks by my side, as a close friend who never judges what I do or say. My Higher Power may not look like anyone else's, but it is there for me and I am no longer alone. For that I am eternally grateful.

## California Has a New Region!

Since the beginning of Nar-Anon Family Groups (NFG), California has been comprised of two very broad geographical areas that divide this large state into southern and northern regions. The majority of groups were located in the largely populated areas of San Diego, Los Angeles, San Jose, and San Francisco's South Bay.

As years have gone by and the large area between the northern and southern regions has grown in population, so has the need for sup-

porting families and friends of addicts. Nar-Anon meetings have started over the last decade in this middle part of California, some of them far from the established service structure of the southern and northern regions.

Trusted servants from newer groups decided to take the opportunity to connect for support. Thus the idea of forming a third region was born.

The concept was taken to four groups in December 2013. After much time spent in dis-

cussion, reading the GLS, GWS, traditions, and concepts of service, seeking our Higher Power through prayer and group conscience, and talking to service sponsors, a Central California Region Formation Committee was formed.

The committee, comprised of 18 members from the state of California, elected interim officers. Every month the committee made progress and grew to strengthen the establishment of a third region in our Golden State.

October 2014 marks the Cen-

## The Nar-Anon Program

tral California Region's (CCR) first Elections Assembly and Service Committee meetings. We are grateful for those who helped us along the way. This has truly been a year filled with wonder and opportunity.

If anyone is interested, CCR would be happy to share details of our process and be of service to NFG as a whole.

## What's Worked for You?

### Last Issue's Question

*What is the most powerful gift you have been given as a result of sponsorship?*

When I first came to Nar-Anon, I knew immediately that I needed to find a sponsor. Fortunately, I quickly found someone who had what I wanted; serenity, inner peace, and a loving soul. She had been attending Nar-Anon for years, even after her addict had found recovery.

One of our first exercises was a resentment list. My assignment was to list all of my resentments, even those that had nothing to do with the addict. I was to write until nothing more poured out of me. As each part of the assignment progressed, I learned how hard headed I was (I kept replacing the items my addict kept pawning), how little control I had over my life, and

how I treasured my resentments and carried them with me for years. It was through this assignment that I also learned to recognize what I had control over and what was actually my responsibility.

The best and final gift I received from my sponsor was to forgive others, even my addict. Years later, the addict I had divorced told me he thought I would never forgive him for all he had done to me. I looked at him and told him with truth in my heart, "I already have." Without my sponsor and her gift, I may never have become willing, much less able, to forgive. My sponsor taught me how to forgive. What a precious, precious gift.

### This Issue's Question

*I have been part of a group that took a group conscience and used Nar-Anon contributions to fund food and drinks for a party. This made me feel uncomfortable. Have you ever felt dissatisfied with your group's use of contributions? How were you able to resolve this issue?*



## 31 Days in Narateen Daily Reader

The WS Narateen Committee has begun working on a Narateen daily reader. It will contain 31 readings written by Narateen members who share how the Narateen program has helped them. We are asking for inspiring stories of recovery that other teens can relate to.

Share on any topic you feel is important. Just think of struggles you've been through and how Narateen supported you.

Keep it simple! You don't

have to be a good writer or write essays well. Your experience, strength, and hope are what really matters. You can even audio record your sharing. Just choose a topic, record yourself for about 3-4 minutes, and send it to us by email.

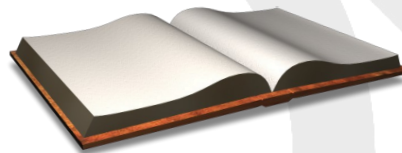
A completed copyright release form, including your parent's or guardian's permission, must be submitted with anything you share. Email your Narateen sharing and release form to [Narateen@nar-anon.org](mailto:Narateen@nar-anon.org).

You may also mail your shar-

ing and release form to:

Nar-Anon World Service Office  
22527 Crenshaw Blvd.  
Suite 200B  
Torrance, CA 90505

Together We Grow!



*"As I continue my high school education, I also continue to work my program. Today I have hope for a better future."*

*SESH, September 16*

## Nar-Anon Donations

*Please read this message at your business meetings this quarter*



Help support Nar-Anon's continued mission by contributing what you can. Your donation helps Nar-Anon ...

- stay staffed to answer 20,000+ calls and emails a year
- continue in-house upkeep of the Nar-Anon website and webstore
- send outreach literature to providers and institutions
- develop new Nar-Anon literature
- create future innovations to the program and WSO

**Please remember the Seventh Tradition:** "Every group ought


to be fully self-supporting, declining outside contributions."

**Did you know you can make a donation to Nar-Anon online?**

It's easy! Just go to the [Nar-Anon Webstore](#) and click on **Donate** at the top of the page. This takes you directly to the [Support Nar-Anon](#) page where you can either select a design-

ated amount to donate or enter a custom amount. Confused? Then click on the [Webstore Getting Started](#) video or check out the FAQ for helpful information. Try it!

Please remember that in order to avoid affiliation with outside enterprises, only Nar-Anon members may donate.



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Click here for your **FREE** e-subscription to [The Serenity Connection](#)

Subscriptions to date: **3,228!**

# Committee Corner

## Outreach Committee

### Share Hope with Nar-Anon's Audio PSA

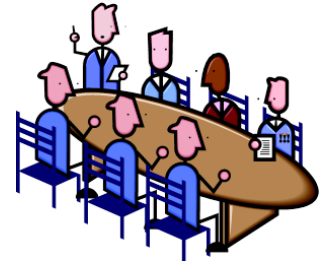
Public Service Announcements (PSAs) are messages in the public interest designed to raise awareness and change public attitudes and behavior towards a social issue. They can be utilized for outreach over venues such as radio, TV, cable network, internet classifieds, and public information boards at no cost. A Nar-Anon PSA can be a powerful tool, carrying Nar-Anon's message of hope and practicing the principles of Step Twelve, Tradition Six, and Tradition Eleven. Please consider using a conferenced approved PSA to help build awareness of Nar-Anon in your community.

### WS Outreach Challenge #5

Challenge Goal: Request local radio stations' PSA time to share the Nar-Anon Audio PSA.

What to Do:

1. Using the telephone book or the internet, compile a list of local radio stations and their contact information.
2. Call the radio station during normal business hours and ask to speak to the person responsible for the station's PSA broadcasts.
3. When you reach the person responsible for PSAs, identify yourself as a Nar-Anon member, briefly explain the program, the PSA, and ask if the station would be willing to broadcast the 30-second PSA. A sample script might read:  
*"My name is Jane and I am a member of Nar-Anon Family Groups, a worldwide 12-step fellowship for those affected by someone else's addiction. Nar-Anon recently developed a 30-second audio PSA directing the listeners to find information about Nar-Anon at our website or toll-free number. Would the radio station be willing to broadcast this PSA?"*
4. If the designated person is not available, ask if you may leave a message or get an email contact and follow up.
5. If the station agrees to air the PSA, [CLICK HERE](#) to go to the WS Website Outreach Page. Scroll down to **Outreach Tools**. Under Outreach Tools, go to **PSA Downloads** and click on "here" for the audio-only version.
6. If a station agrees to air the PSA, follow-up with a thank you message, expressing Nar-Anon's gratitude for the air time.



7. If the station does not agree to air the PSA, it is a good practice to follow-up with an email thank you asking them to please consider Nar-Anon for a future PSA. Remember to check back with the station in the future.

If you have any questions or would like to request support with this outreach challenge, please email: [outreach@nar-anon.org](mailto:outreach@nar-anon.org).

## Narateen Committee

The Narateen Committee is thrilled to share news from the 2014 World Service Conference. The World Service Narateen Safety Guidelines were approved at WSC 2014 and are available on the website. They were written by members of the Narateen Committee to ensure the safety of Narateen members, facilitators, and Nar-Anon/Narateen as a whole. All new and existing facilitators are required to complete certification, register with the WSO, and agree to background checks. Certification is a formal acknowledgement that a member has met the requirements to be of service to Narateen. It is recommended that a Narateen Process Person keep records, communicate with potential facilitators, and receive results of background checks. The complete Narateen Safety Guidelines are available for download on the [Narateen](#) page of the WSO website.

As the result of a motion passed at WSC 2014, the term "Facilitator" will replace "Sponsor" to eliminate the confusion between a personal sponsor and a Narateen service member. All Narateen literature is currently being updated to reflect this change. Please view the [Narateen](#) pages on the new website.

## Literature Committee

### New Literature Submission Page on the Website

The World Service Literature Committee is asking for original writings on The Twelve Traditions and Twelve Concepts of Service, for possible inclusion in the Nar-Anon 36. Writings should be accompanied by a Copyright Release Form, which is included in the Literature Writing Guidelines pamphlet and may be found on the NEW [Literature Submissions page](#) on the website and on page 43 of the Guide to World Services. Submissions can be sent to [LitCom@nar-anon.org](mailto:LitCom@nar-anon.org).

## Upcoming Events

Click on event titles for details  
or go to the [WSO website](#)

### Nar-Anon @ MCBNA VI

**January 23-25, 2015**

“Journey to Serenity”

Monterey Conference Center

One Portola Plaza

Monterey, CA 93940

888-688-7834

montereynaranon@gmail.com

### Nar-Anon Eastern PA Region 2015 Convention

**March 6-8, 2015**

“Bride to Serenity X— It’s About  
Time!”

Crowne Plaza

4700 Street Road

Treose, PA

*Save the date*

### Nar-Anon New England Region Convention 2015

**April 24-26, 2015**

“With Faith there is Hope”

Courtyard by Marriott Downtown

63 Grand Street

Waterbury, CT 06702

Rose T. 203-641-9380 rtrtrys@gmail.com



## Six Simple Steps

When the addict does things  
That arouse my anger,  
Or send me into panic,  
Or make me gasp in disbelief,  
The First Step shows me  
I am powerless over the addict,  
And helps me focus on my own serenity.

When I feel my life is  
Out of control,  
Spiraling downward  
Into a pit of despair,  
The Second Step reminds me  
That, with God, anything is possible;  
Even the restoration of my sanity.

When the weight of my cares becomes  
Too great to bear,  
Having tried and failed  
To make sense of my own life,  
The Third Step allows me  
To release my control and  
Turn all of my problems over to God.

When I come to wonder exactly  
How much blame I bear  
For the chaos that  
Befell my family,  
The Fourth Step directs me  
To look inward for answers,  
Since only there can I find truth.

## The Back Page



When I finally recognize  
That I am not perfect,  
And see what my mistakes  
Have cost me,  
The Fifth Step teaches me  
To admit my wrongdoings  
So I have freedom to move forward.

When I trace my errors back  
To my own personal weaknesses,  
Character flaws I have  
Lived with all my life,  
The Sixth Step prepares me  
To let go of my old behaviors,  
And let God help me discover  
A better way to live.

TM



## Newsletter Submissions

Articles are welcomed from all Nar-Anon members. Please focus on the Nar-Anon program and share your experience, strength, and hope (ESH) from the perspective of a Nar-Anon member. Submit articles to [newsletters@nar-anon.org](mailto:newsletters@nar-anon.org). Each submission must be accompanied by a signed [Release Form](#) before it can be published.

**\*\* Next Issue Submission Deadline: January 20, 2015\*\***

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