

# Newsletter of the Nar-Anon Family Groups'



THE SERENITY CONNECTION



## Fellowship Prayer

At many conferences, motions have been submitted to the Conference Agenda Report (CAR) for approval to use prayers from other fellowships. However, a decision was made at the World Service Conference in 2014 (WSC 2014) to develop a prayer based on Nar-Anon members' submissions, compose a final version at WSC 2016, and submit it for approval at WSC 2018. The following prayer was approved by the group conscience of the worldwide fellowship of Nar-Anon. It is now available as Conference Approved Literature (CAL) for use in your groups.

*"Higher Power, guide me on my journey to peace and serenity. Help me let go of self-will and turn my life over to your care."*

## Facing My Reality

My oldest son is afflicted with the horrible disease of addiction. Four years ago, after he suffered back injury and was off work for a year, we invited him home to live with us. We thought we could help him get back on his feet financially, but we soon learned that he was addicted to drugs and alcohol. and we were only enabling him. Over these years of enabling, he grew worse and we grew more desperate to get our home and our own lives back.

This is what brought me to Nar-Anon three years ago. It has been a roller coaster ride and I am learning to let go.

Today I strive to accept that I am powerless over him. If he chooses not to be in a recovery program, it is not my business; it is between him and his Higher Power.

I face the reality that he chooses NOT to be in a recovery program. At least he is out of our home; he is on his own, and I commend him for his efforts to slowly get his life back in the best way he can.

I am learning to compassionately love him just the way he is, and not try to change him to the way I think he should be. I pray for him daily, reciting the Serenity Prayer in his name, asking God to grant him the serenity to accept the things he cannot change, courage to change the things he can, and to grant him the wisdom to know the difference.

Thanks to my Nar-Anon Group, I am able to strive to change my attitude and the way I react to situations. I am learning to change negative thinking to

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# "Recovery, Unity, Service"

## 2018 World Service Conference

### An Observer's View

In April, I had the honor of being a first-time observer at the 2018 World Service Conference. I was frightened to go and wanted to back out many times. I did not know anyone personally, yet reminded myself that I always feel at home when I attend a Nar-Anon meeting. The World Service Conference (WSC) was not any different. The members welcomed me with kindness, guidance, and a smile. Some members shared with me their experiences from their first Conference and what they learned that helped them enjoy and understand the WSC.

I was much impressed with the Con-

ference Facilitator and the hired Robert's Rules of Order Parliamentarian who had experience with other Twelve Step fellowships. The workload was heavy and the entire Conference joined together to complete it on time.

Service creates lifelong friends and this was evident in the relationships I witnessed.

*Inspiration*

Members from all over the world came together in unity for the common welfare of Nar-Anon. The Conference members asked questions, discussed and reworded motions. Regional Delegates often ex-

pressed their region's conscience on the Conference floor. Each time this occurred, I felt the spirit and voice of home group members who were not physically in the room. The upside down pyramid structure of Nar-Anon was alive and working.

Many times during the long weekend my heart filled with gratitude for the trusted servants and their continued dedication to the Nar-Anon Family Groups. It takes many hands and even more experience to care for and grow our fellowship.

The experience of going to the 2018 WSC inspired me to get involved and to participate in service beyond the group level. Today, I will stand at the door to inspire and encourage others.

## Reflecting on My Recovery

As I am writing a check to WSO for my Nar-Anon birthday, I am reflecting on the irony of it. During my first year, I remember thinking, "will I really have to keep doing this?" I was a little angry over that question. I was also fairly certain I knew the answer.

During the second year, I attended my first convention. I met people outside my home group who are now great friends, including the woman who

would become my first sponsor. I didn't ask her that weekend, but I guess I knew I was in this for life because I did ask her shortly after.

Many years have passed since then, but today I am grateful to have moved past the anger. The Nar-Anon program, my sponsor, meetings, and program friends have seen me through a list too long for this writing. Today I know I will be doing this for the rest

of my life. Without the recovery I found, a relationship with my addicted loved one would have looked very different than it does today. In a few weeks, when I walk her down the aisle, I will remember, as always, to be grateful.



"Today I know that happiness is being grateful for what goes right. I can let go and stop dwelling on the negative. My Higher Power will take care of me as the addict's Higher Power will take care of her."

*SESH, February 13*

Our  
Members  
Share



## A Mother's Journey Through Recovery

Our attitude is the only thing we can control or change. I hear that at almost every Nar-Anon meeting. For me, it is the strongest message in the Serenity Prayer and believe me, it took lots and lots of practice and still does. "Keep coming back — it works if you work it and you're worth it" and "fake it till you make it" were the slogans I lived by until it happened.

In my experience, I found that once I changed my attitude to include gratitude, I attracted more positive people to me. People wanted to know me or be around me because of my healthy and positive outlook. Those who wanted to use me, abuse me, drag me down, or try to hand off their crap, became afraid of who I was changing into and were less likely to cross my newly set boundaries. My son became proud of my changed behaviors and felt more comfortable dealing with me with honesty and in ways that were complimentary to his recovery. We were finally on the same page, not trying to tear the page from each other's hands. We found respect for each of our journeys, and although they ran in parallel, we understood they were entirely personal and on our own terms.

I believe these transformations began when I started to seek my own recovery and exposed my vulnerability. My secrets, shame, and faults no longer carried the same oppressive weight they used to when they were hidden inside me. They quit being the monkey on my back or the elephant in the room and became a part of who I was. There was comfort in knowing I could go to a Nar-Anon meeting and share anything and everything and it would all be accepted without judgement or criticism. This has and continues to

be very empowering to me and is my first taste of really letting go. The shame in my life is being replaced with healing.

So many things have started to fall into place and God's daily miracles and messages are clear and profound, like a sixth sense. I find so much more beauty in nature and in people. It was always there but seemed to be muted by my rushing headfirst looking for situations that I needed to control because who else could?! I listen more and find meaning in what people share with me and I now realize I am not alone in my daily struggles; I really am not a snowflake. I feel like the retired racehorse who, for the first time in its life, has the race blinders removed and can see the whole world.

My life in recovery is now not all about the addict, but because of him. Because of my son's addiction, I was forced to take a long look at myself and come to the realization that change would have to be all about me and by me. I no longer feel like I was the cause of his addiction and have replaced that by becoming a strong supporter and champion of his recovery. It is now OK for me to look out for myself and put myself first. All I am responsible for is myself, and for the first time in my life, I really like who I am becoming and who I can become. At the same time, I am grateful for where I came from. My journey made me and confirms that I am exactly where need to be today. Tomorrow will be today soon enough and if I worry and fret about what it will be like, I may miss something beautiful in this moment. I no longer dread the chaos tomorrow may bring but wait with anticipation for the magic instead. I will stay strong in my recovery and faith.

### Facing My Reality [...continued from page 1.](#)

positive thinking; One Day at a Time; Just for Today; Detach with Love, and have faith in my Higher Power. These are a few of the helpful tools I have at my disposal.

I attend meetings regularly, read daily literature, and use the Serenity Prayer often. I am currently in a step study group and do service for the group as treasurer.

The reality is:



and I must change my behaviour and attitudes in order to have peace and serenity for myself. I am the only one I can change.



## Our Members Share

### Trusting My Higher Power

Step Three, Question 11: “Do I trust a Higher Power can help the addict or do I still think I can save him/her?”\*

Throughout this whole process, I always believed my Higher Power could save the addict, the problem was whether he would. Just because my Higher Power can do something, doesn't mean he will or he will do it according to my timeline. I always felt he could help, but for his reasons, he was choosing not to. So, I decided if he wasn't going to help, then I had to. This decision is what led to my insane controlling behavior.

I first thought that something I did caused my son to use. As a result, I tried to become a totally different person. Then I thought I needed to find a way to cure him, so I tried to get him all the help he needed. I started to read books, looking for solutions because I thought I could control the addiction. This is when I created a whole lot of rules and regulations, which of course he broke, every one of them.

Coming to Nar-Anon and learning that I didn't cause it, I can't control it, and I can't cure it has helped me to

see I can't do anything to change what is happening to my son. Even if my Higher Power chooses to help my addict according to his timeline and not mine, it doesn't mean I should take over.

Step Three has helped me to realize my son has a Higher Power to help him and I no longer think I can save him. There are times when I'm afraid to let go and let God, but I just remind myself - I didn't cause it, I can't control it, and I can't cure it.

\* *The Nar-Anon Thirty-Six*

### Working the Program

My son almost died this week from a drug interaction. After the doctors spent two days doing everything they could to save his life, he left the hospital and went to find drugs. I went through a whole host of feelings from anger to worry and I guess now despair.

My son is killing himself day by day and there isn't a darn thing I can do about it. I've been coming to Nar-Anon for over a year and I've been hearing that this program works; I need to work the program. I'm not disagreeing. This program does work, but will it work for me?

This is not what I want. I want a healthy happy son who can be part of our family. Instead, I have a drug addicted kid who is an outcast. I'm not going to sit here and say this is OK, because it is not. This breaks my heart and I don't know if any amount of

working the program is going to lessen the degree of loss I feel right now. But, here I sit, working my program because this is all I can do. I want to change it, but I can't change it. I want to scream, but I can't scream. I want to hit something but instead, here I sit. I'm resolved to changing me. I feel like I got the consolation prize, not one that I wanted.

OK, so enough feeling sorry for myself. I need to work the program. I

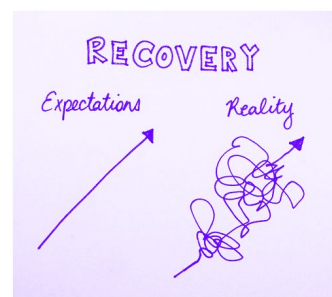


have written down all the feelings and behaviors I have experienced over the past three years, and I've prepared a list of Nar-Anon tools I can use to work through them. I'm now using both to do spot checks and a daily inventory. For example, this week as

my son was going through whatever he was going through, I had a whole host of reactions that I turned into potential text messages to him. Out of about 20 possible texts, I chose to send only one. This is what our book calls a spot-check inventory, stopping momentarily to assess my attitude and behavior.

In the heat of things, sometimes I don't remember what I should and shouldn't be doing. This is the time for me to reach out to another Nar-Anon member or to my Higher Power, or a time to get into the Nar-Anon literature. At the end of the day, I write down a few things, some of my feelings and behaviors and some of the Nar-Anon tools or steps I was able to use. I'm careful not to write down all my negative behaviors. I may not be able to change what happens to my son, but today I can work the program.

## Our Members Share



### Expectations

I thought I had accepted the fact that I had no control over my addict. One thing in my daily life contradicted this and made me realize I was still trying to control him.

What I realized was that I had expectations. A statement in *SESH* stood out to me. The writer said, “I am able to accept the fact that I have no control, and thus have no expectations.”\* I realized that no control meant having no expectations.

However, I still had tons of expectations. I had the expectation that once my addict got clean he would make better decisions. When he continued to make poor decisions, I got bent out of shape. I had the expectation that he would start listening to me. This was also a totally unrealistic expectation, but I still continued to expect it and was upset with him for not listening. I had the expectation that he would respect our wishes in the house. The first day he stayed over, he violated

our wishes and lied straight to my face about it. I had hoped things would be different.

While he was still using, I was forced to accept that I could not change him. Now that he is not actively using, I’ve started to try and change or control him through my expectations.

Expectation can be defined as “a strong belief that something will happen or be the case in the future.” The synonyms for expectation are supposition, assumption, presumption, conjecture, surmise, calculation, prediction, hope.

After I read these synonyms, I was convinced that I had not let go of trying to control the addict. Maybe I was no longer outwardly telling him what to do or doing things for him, but I was still full of assumptions that I knew what was best for him. I was still full of calculations that if he worked his sobriety in a certain way,

then he would stay sober. I still predicted that if he chose pharmacy tech as a career he would be doomed. I still had expectations and was subtly trying to control him through them.

Let go...This is such a profound and difficult thing to do. It has to become my practice. Let go of my expectation. Let go of my assumption. Let go of my calculation. Even let go of my hope. The only thing I don’t have to let go of is my love for him. I realize that this letting go is not just a one-time thing. This letting go has to become a daily, hourly activity.

I cannot do this alone; there is no ability in me to do this without help. I need to have millions of conversations with my Higher Power. God grant me the serenity to accept the things I cannot change – I cannot change my addict’s past, I cannot change my addict’s present, and I cannot change my addict’s future.

\**SESH*, February 11

### Quoting Nar-Anon Literature

Did you know you can include Nar-Anon’s Twelve Steps, Twelve Traditions, Twelve Concepts of Service, and Mission and Vision Statements from the *Nar-Anon Blue Booklet* when you communicate with other members and with the public? Did you know you can also use up to 25% of any page, section, or article from Conference Approved Literature

(CAL) in your communication? Using CAL ensures all members are hearing the same message.

When using CAL, always include the following words: “Copyright 2018 Nar-Anon Family Group Headquarters, Inc. Used with permission from Nar-Anon Family Group Headquarters, Inc.” The year of the copyright should be the year shown in the par-

ticular piece of literature as it is printed. For example, quotes from the *Blue Booklet* should be from the 2014 version. For more information on using Conference Approved Literature (CAL), please refer to pages 27 and 28





## Literature Committee



### Literature Priority List

We are pleased to present the 2018 Recovery Literature Priority List. This list was presented at the 2018 World Service Conference where it was voted on by the participants with input from their respective regions. The items with an asterisk \* indicate we do not have writings for the requested piece. Requests for or submissions of recovery literature come from the fellowship. Share this list with your groups, areas, and regions. We encourage members to share their experience, strength, and hope with others by contributing writings. Remember, all writings submitted must include a signed [Copyright Release Form](#).

1. *Traditions 1-12 for the Nar-Anon 36*
2. *Fourth Step Workbook\**
3. *Traditions booklet*
4. *Concepts 1-12 for the Nar-Anon 36*
5. *Parents of Addicted Minors\**
6. *Addiction in Marriage\**
7. *Narateen Steps 1-12*
8. *What Now? (When Active Addiction Ends)\**
9. *Narateen 31 Days*
10. *Adult Children of Addicts\**
11. *The Seasons of the year – Spring*
12. *After Treatment\**
13. *7th Tradition pamphlet\**
14. *Just for Today bookmark\**
15. *Grandparents' Stories – The Family Disease*
16. *A New Daily Reader*
17. *Narateen Do's & Don'ts bookmark\**

### Literature Under Review

What is the difference between [Recovery Literature for Fellowship Review and Input](#) and [Service and Outreach Literature/Materials for Fellowship Review](#)?

Recovery literature is used in our weekly meetings and our personal recovery. This material is directly used by the majority of the members. Materials out for fellowship review and input will need to get conference approval before being used in the weekly meeting. All input for changes

prior to submission for conference approval must be received by the set deadline and sent to [litcom@nar-anon.org](mailto:litcom@nar-anon.org).

Service and outreach literature/materials are created for specific purposes and not intended for use in weekly recovery meetings. These materials are for service members and do not directly affect the weekly meetings. These are tools to help service members when carrying out service tasks. All input for changes must be received by the set deadlines and sent to [bot@nar-anon.org](mailto:bot@nar-anon.org). These materials will be reworked and put through the remainder of the process before getting conference approval. These pieces are available for use while in the review process.

Remember Nar-Anon's literature is not to be posted on any website during the review period or after it has received conference approval.

## Outreach Committee



Get ahead of the game with outreach!

As school gets back in session and holidays approach, our fellowship often sees a growth in meeting attendance, an increase in calls to area/region hotlines and the WSO. Why not anticipate this need with outreach to those most in need of our fellowship, as well as to those they might turn to for support?

Outreach efforts can be directed to middle and high school guidance counselors. Reach out to college recovery residences. Contact your place of worship. Anticipate where individuals might turn for help with addiction and its effect on family and friends.

Visit the Outreach landing page at [www.nar-anon.org/outreach/](http://www.nar-anon.org/outreach/) for downloadable cover letters, pamphlets and other resources to support your efforts. As neighbors in our communities reach out for help, consider increasing outreach to insure Nar-Anon's message of hope is readily available to them.

Have questions? Need help with outreach efforts? Email [outreach@nar-anon.org](mailto:outreach@nar-anon.org)

## The Fellowship

### 2018 World Service Conference

#### BOT Chair's Welcome

Welcome delegates, alternate delegates, observers, staff, facilitator, secretary, and trustees to 2018 World Service Conference "Recovery, Unity, Service." Welcome back to those who have been here before, welcome and apologies if it's your first time.

Have you ever heard people talk about the "theys"? "They" don't do xyz or "they" should... Who are these "theys"? Who are these people being accused of not doing enough, or not doing it the way we want? Last night, we asked the people who had never been here before to raise their hands. Those hands that didn't go up are some of the "theys." Those that did go up, I want to challenge you to become a "they." Get to know the "theys" and together become "we" because we cannot do alone what we can do together.

Just a few facts about the "theys" for the 2016-2018 conference cycle. There are:

- 10 active reporting committees
- 66 committee members, however, only 42 people fill the 66 positions because:
  - \* 19 serve on 1 committee
  - \* 20 serve on 2 committees
  - \* 2 serve on 3 committees
  - \* 1 serves on 4 committees
  - \* 1 serves on 7 committees!

This cycle, the committees worked at

the very least 3,081 hours. This does not include individual work members did preparing for meetings like preparing agendas, taking minutes, developing and researching. Some committees have 9 members and some only have 5. Some meet for only 1 hour and some meet for 3 hours.

These next few days, we will roll up our sleeves and work. At times it will be a challenge, at times spiritually fulfilling and at other times spiritually draining. During the challenging times, I ask you to put Nar-Anon as a whole first, not your region's desire or your desire, but the needs of the entire fellowship.

Be cautious of jumping on the good idea bandwagon without understanding the bigger picture. Not all good ideas are good ideas for Nar-Anon or may not be good ideas for Nar-Anon right now.

When you don't know what to do, stop and read the traditions and/or concepts to help guide you. This is not about winning and losing, or who gets their way... This is about Nar-Anon as a whole; newcomers, longtime members, and those yet to find Nar-Anon.

One fellowship describes the principles as "effective as those who are obedient to the unenforceable." Another fellowship states "the traditions are not negotiable."



Our traditions and concepts are our boundaries, and as long as we keep between the lines, all will be well. When we pick and choose which traditions or concepts we are going to honor while skirting those we don't agree with, we put a crack in the door. Someone else may come along one day, open that door all the way, and bring in things we may regret.

Be of service these next few days not of self will or self-want!

We have all heard the saying about two ears and one mouth. True listening takes special skills, special skills to really hear those ideas we disagree with or people we disagree with. "Principles above personalities" is such an important principle that it is clearly stated in our traditions and is the very last words in our Twelfth Tradition.

It has been a privilege, an honor, and at times a challenge to be of service to this fellowship. It additionally has been a challenge, a privilege, and an honor to chair the World Board of Trustees. I am grateful and humble for the opportunity. Hand in hand with the entire Board of Trustees, I can say we do our best to be of service to the groups.

#### Newsletter Submissions

Next Issue Submission Deadline: **October 20, 2018**

#### Newsletter eSubscriptions

**FREE** e-subscription to [The Serenity Connection](#).



## Coming Events

Click on event titles for details or go to the [Events page](#) on the World Service website.

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

**September 7-9, 2018**

*Pathways to Spiritual Serenity*

Falls Retreat Centre  
32 Falls Creek Road  
Raymond, WA 998577  
Helen 360-931-0647

### [28th Southern California Narathon](#) [September 8, 2018](#)

*I am Not Alone*

4221 Rose Drive  
Yorba Linda, CA 92886

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

**September 15, 2018**

*Feed the Spirit*

The Brass Rail Restaurant  
3015 Lehigh Street  
Allentown, PA 18103  
Tanya A. 610-295-9142

[Registration Form](#)

### [2018 Nar-Anon Western Pennsylvania Region Convention](#)

**September 21-23, 2018**

*Invitation to Serenity XXXII*

Laurelville Christian Retreat Center  
941 Laurelville Lane  
Mt. Pleasant, PA 15666  
Valerie T. 412-973-7287

[Registration Form](#)

### [High Desert Region Nar-Anon Convention](#)

**September 28, 2018**

*Fall in with Recovery*

Gold Coast Hotel & Casino  
4000 W. Flamingo Road  
Las Vegas, Nevada 89103  
[hdrregion@gmail.com](mailto:hdrregion@gmail.com)  
702-526-1079

### [1ª Convención Regional Costa Rica](#)

**Octubre 6-7, 2018**

*Desprenderse Con Amor Y Esperanza*

Hotel Suerre  
Guápiles, Costa Rica  
[Save the date!](#)

### [MD/VA Regional Convention](#)

**November 2-4, 2018**

*Reaching for Recovery*

Fredericksburg Hospitality House  
2801 Plank Road  
Fredericksburg, VA 22401  
Roni 410-371-7407  
Pre-Registration Form available

### [Nar-Anon Russia Service Conference](#)

**November 3-4, 2018**

*Freedom, Unity, Service*

Salut Hotel  
158 Leninsky Avenue  
Moscow, Russia  
Phone 7(985) 197-09-60

[Registration Form](#)

### [3rd Annual Colorado Nar-Anon Convention](#)

**November 3, 2018**

*Crowne Plaza DIA Hotel &*

Convention Center  
15500 E 40th Avenue  
Denver, CO 80237  
*Save the date!*

### [New England Region Spiritual Breakfast](#)

**November 4, 2018**

Ocean Beach Park  
98 Neptune Ave,  
New London, CT 06320  
Steve R 860-443-8103

[Registration Form](#)

### [New York Region 28th Annual Convention](#)

**November 9-11, 2018**

*The Joy is in the Journey XXVIII*

*Change Let it Begin with Me*

The Villa Roma Resort  
356 Villa Roma Road  
Callicoon, New York 12723  
*Save the date!*

### [XIV Encontro Nacional Nar-Anon Brazil](#)

**09, 10, e 11 de novembro de 2018**

Gran Hotel Stella Maris

Praca Stella Maris, 200

Salvador, BA 41600-500, Brazil

[encontronacioal2018@naranon.org.br](mailto:encontronacioal2018@naranon.org.br)

[Ficha de Inscricao](#)



**Grupos Familiares  
Nar-Anon do Brasil**



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