

Newsletter of the Nar-Anon Family Groups'



A Message from our Executive Director

Unity Through Service

The Nar-Anon WSO has experienced many challenges, from staff shortages, office closing because of COVID-19, and maintaining shipping literature orders. It is true, 2020 brought many to the realization that life as we know it will forever be altered. So today it is about moving forward and once again fulfilling our primary purpose to help families of addicts.

Worldwide, the Nar-Anon fellowship has pulled together in response to that purpose. We are exploring and finding alternative ways of having meetings. The Nar-Anon members who shared their experience, strength and hope, not only about Nar-Anon but about the technology being used to connect us, have helped tremendously.

2021 has begun and Nar-Anon members worldwide have been amazing with their help and support for Nar-Anon.

In April, many of us will be attending the World Service Conference as delegates, alternate delegates, and observers. The 2020 WSC was cancelled and rescheduled for 2021 because of the pandemic. Technology will be connecting members worldwide for the conference and will give us an opportunity to be united.

We still need everyone's help and support. I hope you will consider service in Nar-Anon, whether at group, area, or region level, or even, as my experience has lead me, to the WSO. This is a "we" program and I am grateful and appreciative of the many who stand beside me in helping Nar-Anon continue to grow. As always, I am grateful to all for allowing me to be of service.

In Gratitude,
Cathy K., Nar-Anon WSO

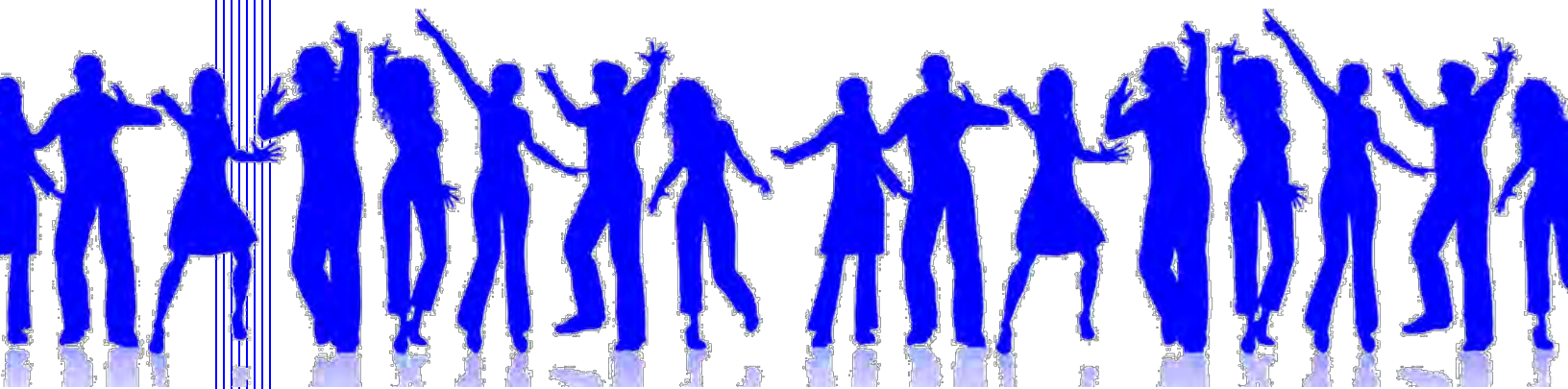
Inside this issue:

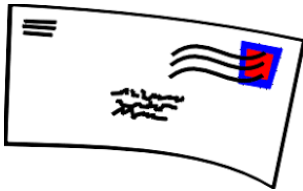
Letter of Termination	2
Principles Above Personalities	3
Sharing My Experience, Strength, and Hope	4
The Sponsorship Page	5
Working Tradition One	6
Committee Corner; Sharing Literature	7
Events	8



**Meet the
World Service Board of Trustees
(BOT) and
World Service Office (WSO)
Executive Director**
A Fellowship Roundtable

THE SERENITY CONNECTION





Our
Members
Share

Letter of Termination

When I started the program, I did not feel comfortable with the thought of a Higher Power of my understanding. I grew up in an organized religion, and had a sense of fear of "God." After completing Step One, admitting I was powerless over the addict, that my life had become unmanageable, I was ready for Step Two. After expressing my unwillingness to make amends with the "God" I grew up knowing, my sponsor suggested I write a letter of termination to my old "God" and hire a new one.

To the old God of my understanding:

This is my letter of termination to you. As I begin to try and understand the concept of a Higher Power, you are getting in my way. You are judgmental and make me question my worth and whether I am "good enough" for you or the world on a consistent basis. Through this fear and sadness, I have come to resent you and question whether you are real.

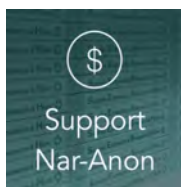
A new Higher Power of my understanding is trying to appear in my life. I am now terminating you and hiring the new Higher Power I am slowly coming to know.

My new Higher Power:

- Will love me for who I am and the mistakes I've made in the past, as well as the mistakes I will make in the future;

- Will listen to me, even when I am angry;
- Does not have a set of rules, and will not threaten or scare me into doing the right thing;
- Will show me what it is to have a happy and fulfilling life through the example of others;
- Will continue to throw things my way and challenge me beyond what I believe I can handle; he will show me I can handle it;
- Will help me to shut my mouth and listen, sit on my hands, humble my heart, and help me stomp on my ego;
- Will love me when I make mistakes, and will allow me to admit to my mistakes and own them;
- Will help show me that I am loved, I am worth it, I matter.

I heard in my group that our Higher Power would rather us yell and scream than not talk at all. I am happy to say that I have officially terminated my old Higher Power and hired a new one.



Donations are down and Nar-Anon needs your help to weather the current storm. Please consider donating today to support our loyal staff at WSO who answer the phones, keep the literature flowing, and provide assistance to Nar-Anon groups worldwide. Head to www.nar-anon.org now!

Just for Today...

- Just for today, I may be angry and upset but I will not act it out. I will open my *SESH* book, read, and meditate. This too shall pass.
- Just for today, I will accept where I am and be grateful for my Nar-Anon program.

HELP US TELL OUR HISTORY!!

The History Scribes* is reaching out to our Nar-Anon fellowship for your experiences that help tell the Nar-Anon history, especially those dating back to 1967, when Nar-Anon first began. If you can help with the following questionnaire Please email: nfgscribes@gmail.com

WHO if known, started the original group(s) or meeting(s) in your area/district of your region? **WHAT** were the name of these group(s)? Are these groups/meetings still in existence? **WHEN** was the original group(s) or meeting(s) in your area or district first started for your region? **WHERE** were these groups located? **HOW** can the History Scribes contact the original members of the first groups/meetings in your regions for more information? **FINALLY** if you have a historical story about Nar-Anon, that you would like to share. Please let us know.

Thank you!!

**Ad-Hoc Committee in pursuit of Nar-Anon History

Our
Members
Share



Principles Above Personalities

TRADITION 12: *Anonymity is the spiritual foundation of all our traditions, ever reminding us to place principles above personalities.*

Traditions, Thought for Today

"I am welcomed, supported, and loved in our Nar-Anon group. The program is here for me today because of those who came before me, and their willingness to follow the Traditions. Today I will do my part to put principles above personalities, and adhere to the Traditions that help keep this program working for those who follow."*

My sponsor and I have discussed "principles above personalities" many times. A lot of my questions about my addicted loved ones and about service, reach back to this topic.

I grew up in a nuclear family that put one member above all. If that person wanted things a certain way, out of fear and confusion and habit, her way happened. As far as I can recall, there were four generations of that pattern, on both sides of the family. Intimidation and dominance by one member replaced leadership and guidance. That was a great training ground for putting my addicted loved ones, and others' needs, above my own. That was doing the opposite, putting "personalities above principles."

When I didn't find unconditional love, I met the conditional demands of other people in order to feel loved. If I put them above all else, then they

might love me, for a bit. My character defects come from distorting and bending myself to fit these unhealthy expectations. There is no shame in my defects, because I was doing the best I could. That was my false ego, my unhealthy self. Now that I have the program, I have a safe place to address my defects and replace them with better tools, including putting "principles above personalities."



In a Traditions meeting, a wise member said that service will highlight our character defects. I found that statement to be so true!

If tonight's meeting was my last, that meeting would continue without me, without any ONE member. One person does not make or break the truth and magic of these rooms.

The delusion of terminal uniqueness is the belief that I am so special that no one can understand or help me. In service, it can mean I'm sure that I'm the only one who can do a given job. That's a control issue, a character defect, and personality being placed above the principle of unity in Nar-Anon. The beauty is that in the rooms, in service, I have a safe place to learn these lessons, to make my mistakes, and still be accepted. It is a wonderful training ground. We are here for one another.

Service brings up a lot of questions about "principles above personalities":

- Am I strong enough to stand up for a Nar-Anon principle, even if my Narabuddy disagrees? Or am I afraid to lose their approval? Can they speak up to me about the same thing?
- Am I feeding my ego? Or someone else's ego? Am I looking for someone's approval or love?
- If I am offering an opinion or a vote, am I siding with my friends, or am I accessing my Higher Power?
- Do I side against another member that I don't care for or understand yet? One who has hurt MY ego? Do I gang up?
- Am I living in the delusion of terminal specialness, as if the rules that apply to everyone else don't apply to me?
- Do I hold another member as my Higher Power? Am I encouraging another member to hold me as their Higher Power?

These are heavy questions.

But this program offers a spiritual solution to these heavy questions, to the confusion that can arise about "principles over personalities," and to the impact that my role in addiction can bring. I begin to see my motives with clearer eyes. I am learning to turn the situation over to my Higher Power, work my Twelve Steps, apply the Twelve Traditions, bring it to my sponsor, do service for Nar-Anon, and contact other members outside of

[Continued on Page 4...](#)



Our Members Share

Sharing My Experience, Strength, and Hope

When we first learned about our daughter's addiction, we were devastated. We had always prided ourselves on being a close-knit family. We took vacations together, had family dinners every Sunday night, and stayed in the middle of everyone's business, good or bad. So, we were blown away to find out she was using drugs. About a month before we found out there were signs. We knew something wasn't right but were just not sure what. She had always been very head strong, opinionated, and always outspoken.

My husband and I tried everything to get her clean. We demanded detox and rehab to stay in the family. It didn't work. We finally chose to kick her out of the house and ban her from working at a family business.

I was a mess and at the point of a nervous breakdown when I decided to go to my first Nar-Anon meeting. My addict was the one who told me about it. She had seen a flyer at the church where she occasionally went to twelve step meetings.

The first night I walked into a Nar-

Anon meeting I was greeted by friendly people. One lady asked me to sit with her. I felt an instant connection with her and the group. I walked away that night feeling like these people knew what I was going through, and I was not alone. I went home and told my husband about the meeting and asked if he would like to go with me the next week. He told me he didn't need a meeting; he wasn't the addict. When he did reluctantly go with me, he too felt the instant connection. We continued to go every week after that.



For the first year I never spoke in the meeting. I came in, took my normal seat, and just sat

back and listened and watched. At times there were tears, sometimes smiles and laughter, sometimes pain for the newcomers as they told their stories, but there was never judgement.

Working the Nar-Anon program helped me learn how to deal with our

addict. I learned I was as much an addict as she was. I was addicted to my daughter. She controlled my life in many ways. If she wasn't happy, no one was happy. We walked on eggshells for many years. Working the program gave me tools to learn how to set healthy boundaries for myself. I learned what it meant to detach with love. I learned to not react immediately, to stop and analyze my motives. This cut down on the arguments.

By coming to Nar-Anon and working the steps, I was able to learn how to have peace and serenity in my life. With this newfound experience and strength, I was able to help lead a meeting and eventually set up a new meeting in my area. My husband was a big support for me being able to do this. It has been a successful meeting and continues to grow.

I would like to say our addict found recovery but that was not the case. She passed in February 2020 from an overdose, just after finishing a court-ordered 21-day rehab program.

I continue to serve and spread the Nar-Anon message to anyone reaching out for help.

...continued from Page 3

Principles Above Personalities

meetings. The more I participate in these practices, the clearer the concept of "principles above personalities" becomes to me, and the clearer my behavior becomes. In gratitude, I am gaining a better understanding of boundaries, of my relationship to my addicted loved one, of my interac-

tions in the program, and of my service role in Nar-Anon. And I am helping to keep the program healthy for those who follow.

* SESH, Feb 1, p. 32.

Newsletter Submissions

Please share your experience, strength, and hope with the fellowship. Submit articles to newsletters@nar-anon.org. Each submission must be accompanied by a signed [Copyright Release Form](#)

Next Deadline April 20, 2021

The Sponsorship Page



This section is designed to offer insight into that special relationship we call sponsorship. It is an opportunity for you to share your sponsorship experiences and to gain insight into the experiences of other sponsors and sponsees. Please send your writings to newsletters@nar-anon.org and visit this page in each new issue of *The Serenity Connection*!

Step Work Application

... continued from the December 2020 issue of *The Serenity Connection*

Step 10: *Continued to take personal inventory and when we were wrong promptly admitted it.*

When we come into Nar-Anon, we find ourselves in the depths of addiction. Having fallen into the pit of despair with our addicted loved ones (ALO), we sought a way out. The steps proved to be the answer we sought. We walked out of the pit by working the previous nine steps. Step Ten is one of the three growing up steps that allow us to maintain our progress thus far and ensure our continued growth. It is our insurance that we do not jump or fall into the pit of addiction again.

The action of Step Ten is to live Steps One through Nine in our everyday life. When trouble comes, we first admit we are powerless, reminding ourselves God can restore us to sanity. We then pause, asking for help and turning our will over to the God of our understanding. Next, we take a spot check inventory of our wrongs and the character defects that have once again come alive. We admit all of this to our sponsor or a Narabuddy. Once we admit our wrongs, we humbly ask our Higher Power to remove the characteristics that are causing our pain. Our Sponsors help us to determine whether we owe amends and if we do, we make those amends immediately.

Action: Create a Step Ten 'Review of the Day.' We make it specific to us. Include character defects to watch out for and contrary actions to practice. Include things we have trouble doing, such as selfcare, avoiding gossip, or reaching out to others. Here is an example of a review:

- Did I talk with a member of Nar-Anon today?

- Was I controlling?
- Did I get upset?
- Was I afraid?
- What did I do to put myself first today?
- Did I mind my own business?
- Did I complain and play God?



Step 11: *Sought through prayer and meditation to improve our conscious contact with God as we understood Him, praying only for knowledge of His will for us and the power to carry that out.*

Experience! Step Eleven is our opportunity to experience the power of God in our everyday life. Each day we seek to improve our relationship with our Higher Power. We build a structure woven with faith, trust, understanding, willingness, commitment, dedication, discipline, and action.

Prayer

Action: Prayer is the way we talk with the God of our understanding. To improve how we pray, explore the written prayers of others. Create a book of personal prayers to use in our daily life. To take it further, begin and end each day with a written or verbal prayer.

Meditation

Action: Search out the many different types of meditation. Try at least ten different kinds. What we seek is experience. Meditation is not a theory. It is action, and as such, we dedicate ourselves to finding a type that works for us. We continue to explore the different kinds of meditation until we find the best one.

[Continued on Page 6...](#)

Newsletter eSubscriptions

Click here for your **FREE** e-subscription to [The Serenity Connection](#). Subscriptions to date: **>5000!**



[...continued from Page 5](#)

The Sponsorship Page

Step Work Application

Improve our conscious contact with God

Action: Write a plan to improve our conscious contact with God. Then live it. For example: "I will start my morning writing a letter to God, and listen to spiritual music while getting ready for work. When I am stressed, I will pause and ask God for inspiration and specific action to take. Midway through the day, I will listen to a guided meditation. I will write a nightly inventory reflecting on my character, words, actions, and thoughts of the day."

Slogans:

- God's will is not urgent.
- If I am willing to let go of the outcome, I am in God's will.
- God, grant me the power to carry out your will even if it is not my will.
- FAITH – Finding An Idea That Helps.
- If God brings me to it, God will bring me through it.
- There is not a step that says "and then we figured it out."

Step 12: *Having had a spiritual awakening as a result of these steps, we tried to carry this message to others, and to practice these principles in all our affairs.*

Step Twelve acknowledges what we have experienced. Change. It encourages us to give away what was so freely given to us. Passing on our experience of working the steps is vital to our daily recovery.

We carry the message to other Nar-Anon members when we:

- Say YES to a Nar-Anon request to be of service
- Say YES to an invitation to share our story
- Say YES to being a sponsor
- Say YES to phone calls between meetings

Practicing is the act of repetition. Some of us found the principles of recovery challenging to understand and apply at first. Soon we discovered, the more we used them, the more comfortable they were to use. What seemed hard at first eventually becomes second nature.

Action: It is impossible to practice the principles in all our affairs without knowing what they are. Write a list of Nar-Anon principles, slogans, and recovery tools to use each day.

Action: Read Nar-Anon CAL "Becoming a Sponsor" and "Questions on Sponsorship."

- What questions will you ask a potential sponsee?
- How will you work with them: weekly, face-to-face, virtual, telephone?
- How long will you meet: 1 hour, 90 minutes, 2 hours?
- What type of sponsor do you want to be?
- Pray to be an effective sponsor.
- Ask other members questions about how they sponsor.

Action: Read through Nar-Anon Conference Approved Literature. Note pages and tools you can share with a sponsee or a member when they are struggling.

Example: "if you don't let go, you will not be restored to sanity."*

* *SESH*, p. 214 and *Nar-Anon 36*, p. 18.

Working Tradition One

Tradition One: *Our common welfare should come first, personal progress for the greatest number depends upon unity.*

"I think you are leaving someone out of 'our common welfare'," my sponsor said as we worked on Tradition One.

I was puzzled. I thought I had done a good job. I had identified many ways I could defer to the common welfare and many ways I could promote the common welfare. "Who did I forget?" "You," she replied.

Oh, that's right. I am part of the group. My needs and

wants are part of the common welfare. I now realize I must consider what is best for my entire group, including me, before talking, taking positions, or doing things. I need not forget my needs, but only put them in perspective as merely equal to every other member.

As we talked, my sponsor explained the key role Nar-Anon's traditions play in the development and strength of our groups. I realized I have a responsibility to my group, my region, and Nar-Anon as a whole. I had not thought of that. Have you?

My sponsor also pointed out that what works for Nar-Anon groups also works for families and work groups.

[Continued on Page 8...](#)

World Service Committee Corner



Outreach Committee



Recruiting? Join us at Outreach!

Passionate about outreach? Ready to step up your service commitment? The WS Outreach Committee might be the perfect fit for you. Serving as a resource to help carry the Nar-Anon message of hope throughout the world, the committee develops literature, materials, and strategies to raise public awareness of Nar-Anon Family Groups. To see how the work has taken shape, check the Outreach landing page and Fellowship Review (Outreach section) landing page of the Nar-Anon website to view the range of resources developed by the committee. The work continues. We invite you to join us as we create the vision for what comes next.

The committee meets monthly via Zoom on the third

Sunday at 3pm Eastern time. Monthly meetings are limited to one hour and used to review work in progress, discuss new projects and assign tasks. Between meetings, individuals or small groups work to carry the committee agenda forward. We invite you to consider joining in this collaborative work.

Have questions? Want more information? Ready to explore service with the WS Outreach Committee? Email outreach@nar-anon.org

Website Committee



The World Service Website Committee will be hosting a roundtable on Saturday, April 3rd to discuss "accessibility and anonymity in flyers and websites." Please check the [Events](#) page on the World Service Website for meeting information.

Sharing Literature with Newcomers

Just last year, when newcomers walked in the door, many received Newcomers Packets. Some included a copy of the *Blue Booklet*. Some added a list of members' phone numbers. Then, we moved into a virtual world. What do we do now?

- We can give newcomers the link to the Nar-Anon store and let them buy literature: <https://nar-anon-webstore.myshopify.com/>
- We can give newcomers a link to the wonderful Nar-Anon literature that is free to download: <https://www.nar-anon.org/outreach> and <https://www.nar-anon.org/service-literature>
- We can tell them that electronic versions of the *Blue Booklet*, *SESH*, and a few other items can be purchased and downloaded instantly.

What we cannot do is make copies of Nar-Anon literature and mail it to the newcomers. We cannot photocopy the *SESH* page for the day and email it to everyone in the group. We cannot type up our favorite parts from the *Blue Booklet* and email them to the newcomers. "Nar-Anon

conference approved literature (CAL), which includes recovery, service, and outreach literature and materials, is copyrighted and owned by NFGH, Inc. It is expressly prohibited to reproduce, retransmit, or republish copyrighted literature and materials without written permission."* We cannot print our own dollar bills. We cannot photocopy a dollar bill and send it to a friend so they can print it. Nor can we photocopy or email Nar-Anon literature.

But what if we simply display our personal copy of Nar-Anon literature on the screen during a meeting? Many groups are doing this. For example, a member might buy an electronic copy of the *SESH* and then display the copy they own on the screen during the meeting. In doing this, are we helping the newcomers follow along? Or, are we enabling the newcomers and telling them they do not need to buy, read, or study our literature because we can do it for them?

**Guide to World Services, 2018-2020, p. 26*

Coming Events and Activities

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

In the Spirit of Cooperation:

Nar-Anon and NA Web-Based

March 2, April 13, May 4, 2021

Sharing our Individual Stories

Email for Updated Times & Zoom Info

InTheSpiritOfCooperation@gmail.com

What Can and Cannot be Shared

March 6, 2021 **Web-Based**

Workshop to Discuss Screen Sharing

Nar-Anon Literature

8 am PST, 11 am EST, 4 pm GMT,

7 pm Moscow

Watch for Details!

Website Roundtable

April 3, 2021 **Web-Based**

Accessibility and Anonymity in Flyers and Websites

6 am PDT, 9 am EDT, 5:30 pm Iran,

4 pm Moscow

[Zoom Link](#)

WebCommittee@Nar-Anon.org

World Service Conference (WSC 2021)

April 30 to May 3, 2021

Growth Through Service

Contact wscconference@nar-anon.org

or wso@nar-anon.org

Nar-Anon East Coast Convention 7

Rescheduled to March 18-20, 2022

On the Road to Recovery

Wyndham Garden Philadelphia Airport

45 Industrial Hwy, Essington, PA 19029

Contact ECC7chairs@gmail.com

www.naranonepa.org

...continued from Page 6

Working Tradition One

Strengthening my understanding of how to promote the common welfare of my Nar-Anon groups also helps me with every group I am a part of, including my family.

Tradition One is helping me to more fully realize how Nar-Anon provides principles for living my entire life. Now I am working on how I can help my groups achieve more unity. To me, unity is strengthened every time we take a meeting inventory and honestly discuss everyone's input, respecting all voices, and listening carefully to those who we do not initially agree with. Every time we limit our sharing so everyone has a chance to speak. Every time we use Nar-Anon literature in our meetings. Every time we go to a regional or national convention. Every time we practice Nar-Anon principles. Every time we practice humility and patience with self and others. Every time we pause and let our Higher Power guide us. Every time we ... (you fill in the blank), we promote unity.

What else? Well, I am still on my journey to more fully understanding Tradition One. How are you doing?

Step By Step Workshop

Every 2nd and 4th Wednesday

Web-Based

12—Step Virtual Workshop

5 pm PDT, 8 pm EDT, 12 am GMT

[Zoom Link](#)

Contact Mtcake15@gmail.com or

loischez@gmail.com



The
Back
Page



Nar-Anon Family Groups

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Email: wso@nar-anon.org

Phone: (310) 534-8188

or (800) 477-6291

Share Your Events and Activities

Did you know there is a page on the Nar-Anon website where you can share information about upcoming events and activities? Go to <http://www.nar-anon.org/events> to see a list of upcoming events and activities. Or send a PDF to events@nar-anon.org if you have a flyer you would like to share.

