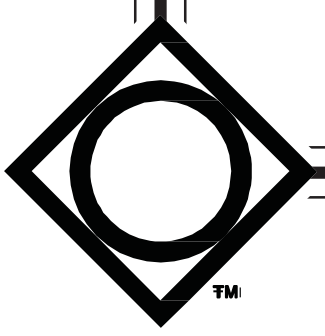
THE NAR-ANON FAMILY GROUPS

Newsletter Handbook



THE NAR-ANON FAMILY GROUPS'

NEWSLETTER HANDBOOK

© 2014 NFGH Inc. All rights reserved.
Conference Approved
S-317 ~ 25-06-20

Nar-Anon Family Group Headquarters, Inc.
23110 Crenshaw Blvd. Suite A
Torrance, CA 90505
(310) 534-8188 — (800) 477-6291
www.nar-anon.org

PREAMBLE

The Nar-Anon Family Groups are a worldwide fellowship for those affected by someone else's addiction.

As a twelve step program – we offer our help by sharing our experience, strength, and hope.

We carry the message of hope by letting others know that they are not alone; by practicing the Twelve Steps of Nar-Anon; and by changing our own attitudes.

We will respect your anonymity.

Our program is not a religious one, but a spiritual way of life.

MISSION STATEMENT

The Nar-Anon Family Groups are a worldwide fellowship for those affected by someone else's addiction. As a twelve step program, we offer our help by sharing our experience, strength, and hope.

VISION STATEMENT

We will carry the message of hope throughout the world to those affected by the addiction of someone near to them.

We will do this by

- letting them know they are no longer alone;
- practicing the Twelve Steps of Nar-Anon;
- encouraging growth through service;
- making information available through outreach encompassing public information, hospitals, institutions, and websites; and
- changing our own attitudes.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Introduction 4
What is the Purpose of a Newsletter? 5
Newsletter Committee 5
Newsletter Committee Positions 6
Newsletter Committee Correspondence 6
Newsletter Committee Meeting Schedule 6
Editing Procedures 7
Anonymity Issues 8
Suggested Topics 9
Publishing Procedures 9
Distribution 9

INTRODUCTION

The newsletter is a communication tool used to carry the Nar-Anon message of recovery to those affected by a loved one's addiction. This handbook can be used as a guide for existing and newly developed newsletters at the area and regional levels.

Newsletters can be used to relay information to the fellowship. They may be used to present financial reports, minutes of World Service Conferences, region and area meetings, and personal stories of experience, strength, and hope.

WHAT IS THE PURPOSE OF A NEWSLETTER?

The purpose of a newsletter is to carry the Nar-Anon message of recovery and report the business of the Nar-Anon Fellowship. A newsletter keeps members abreast of current and upcoming events such as conventions, workshops, and recovery days.

Newsletters may contain stories of recovery from Nar-Anon and Narateen members, which convey the message of experience, strength, and hope. Area, region, and world financial information may be included as it becomes available. Newsletters may be used to introduce new meetings; communicate the needs of the fellowship; and enlist volunteers at the group, area, or regional level. Committee and trusted servant reports may be included to keep members apprised of what is happening locally.

NEWSLETTER COMMITTEE

A newsletter committee is formed to organize, produce, edit, and distribute the newsletter. All members of the committee share in these responsibilities while ensuring the traditions, concepts of service, and primary purpose of Nar-Anon are conveyed in the message. It is helpful for a newsletter committee to include a member of the regional service structure along with other members at large.

The newsletter committee is often a subcommittee of an area or region and is formed in accordance with the section on subcommittees in *The NFG Guide to Local Services* (GLS), page 6-6

> *The RSC may establish subcommittees to carry out the work of the region. These subcommittees shall include, but are not limited to, Outreach, Literature, Conventions and Events, and Narateen. Subcommittee chairs shall be elected at the assembly.*
>
> *Once a chair is chosen, the committee may elect its own officers. Regular meetings are usually held in central locations. Each committee submits written reports of their activities and finances at RSC meetings and at the assembly. An itemized budget is to be prepared by the committee to submit to the RSC for approval.*

The committee makes its decisions based on the group conscience principle.

> *Arriving at a group conscience requires informative discussion by its members using the Guides to Local and World Services and adhering to the steps, traditions, and concepts of Nar-Anon in order to reach a decision. As members of a spiritual program, we invite our Higher Power to guide us throughout this process. When we treat each member with respect and learn by listening to one another, we can achieve unity. (GLS,* pages 4-4 & 4-5*)*

The committee has an obligation to work within the guidelines of Nar-Anon.

All members are encouraged to resolve any misunderstandings or disputes by applying the Twelve Traditions and the Twelve Concepts.

NEWSLETTER COMMITTEE POSITIONS

Chair: Schedules meetings, prepares the agenda, requests additional agenda items, and chairs the meetings.

Vice-Chair: Fills in when the chair is not present. Assists the chair in duties listed above.

Editor: Responsible for preparing the newsletter. Checks the newsletter email address for submissions and keeps a file of articles for current and future newsletters.

Secretary: Prepares minutes of the meeting and sends them out to the committee members.

Committee Members: Responsible for informing groups and areas within their region of the need for newsletter submissions. Encourage writing workshops at area and region events such as conventions, breakfasts, Nar-Anon days, etc. Keep the committee informed of ideas and suggestions from the fellowship for updating or improving the newsletter.

Committee members fulfill their commitments by attending all meetings and reviewing literature submissions for grammar, spelling, punctuation, content, etc. They should be familiar with the steps, traditions, and concepts of Nar-Anon. A good command of grammar, spelling, and writing is helpful.

Committee members assist in the efficient and timely publishing of the newsletter. Specific responsibilities depend upon the skills of these members. To preserve an environment of mutual respect, members may express their own views, concerns, or opinions without fear of judgment or reprisal. This principle should be observed at all committee meetings.

NEWSLETTER COMMITTEE CORRESPONDENCE

All correspondence that relates to newsletter committee business shall be sent to all committee members whether for informational purposes or for review and approval. All correspondence is reviewed and approved by the committee prior to submission to the fellowship.

NEWSLETTER COMMITTEE MEETING SCHEDULE

In addition to face-to-face meetings, the newsletter committee can expand its membership using emails and/or internet calls (depending on availability to members). Meetings should take place before the publication date in order to allow time for a review process by all committee members.

EDITING PROCEDURES

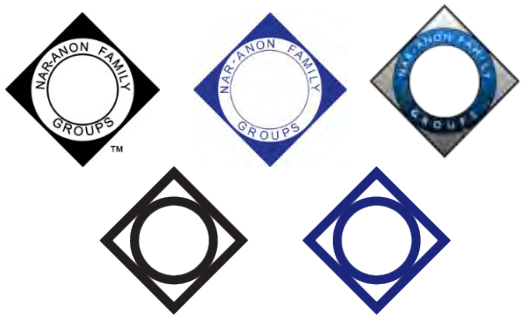
Newsletter articles will follow the traditions, concepts, *NFG Guide to Local Services (GLS),* and *NFG Guide to World Services (GWS)*. Personal stories should carry the message of recovery, always keeping the focus on the Nar-Anon program. Submissions from members that include outside endorsements or refer to other programs should be edited or eliminated. Examples of editing are changing the word Al-Anon to meeting or program, and the word alcoholic to qualifier.

The newsletter committee will edit for grammar, spelling, dialect, and gender neutrality when possible. Plagiarized submissions will be rejected. A copyright release form should be created and used to ensure committee members and writers understand the guidelines for submissions. An example of a copyright release, S-312, can be found on the World Service website. Only original Nar-Anon/Narateen member submissions will be accepted.

From GWS, page 30:

> *Area, regional, or world service committees may use quotes or reprint portions of Nar-Anon/Narateen CAL that do not exceed 25% of the original piece or do not exceed 25% of a single chapter or section, if taken from a booklet or book. The Twelve Steps, Twelve Traditions, Twelve Concepts of Service, Mission and Vision Statements, the Preamble, The Newcomer's Welcome, The Family, Changing Ourselves, About Addiction, Keeping Our Meetings Healthy, Helping, Just For Today, We've Been There, Serenity Prayer, Prayer for the Growth of our Fellowship, Third Step Prayer, 20 Questions, and the Narateen Table Card be made available for download from the World Service website for use at virtual meetings, Nar-Anon/Narateen websites, or Nar-Anon/Narateen events. These excerpts shall always include proper notation or credit identifying the origin of the quote or reprinted portion. This does not create any legal right or claim to Nar-Anon/Narateen's CAL*.
>
> *The Nar-Anon name and logo are trademarks of NFGH, Inc. Placing the symbol ® or capital letters "TM" to the right of all Nar-Anon trademarks shows that the Nar-Anon name and logos are legally owned or registered trademarks. This helps protect the fellowship's legal right to ownership of its trademarks. Nar-Anon's trademarks must not be used in any way that would serve to endorse, finance, promote, or affiliate the Nar-Anon Fellowship with any outside enterprise. These trademarks must not be used in any manner that could draw us into a public controversy.*
>
> *Groups, service boards, and committees may use Nar-Anon's name and logos as long as they follow the guidelines stated above.*

Nar-Anon®



In keeping with Tradition One – *Our common welfare should come first; personal progress for the greatest number depends on unity* – the newsletter should never be used as a voice of controversy.

Questions for the committee to consider when editing and reviewing:

- Does this submission share experience, strength, and hope?
- Does this submission focus on Nar-Anon?
- Does it focus on the writer's recovery?
- Does it mention other recovery programs or religious denominations?
- Does it focus on the problem rather than the solution?
- Does it contain original content? If not, was the quote verified for accuracy and properly credited?
- Does this submission focus too much on the addict's recovery?
- Does this submission use Nar-Anon language?

ANONYMITY ISSUES

Anonymity is an important aspect when writing, editing, and publishing within the Nar-Anon program. The GLS on pages 8 - 1 and 8 - 2, clarifies anonymity as follows:

> *"The experience of our groups suggests that the principle of anonymity, which is summed up in Tradition Twelve as "the spiritual foundation of all our traditions," has three elements: anonymity as it applies outside Nar-Anon, anonymity within the fellowship, and anonymity as it contributes to our personal growth."*

> *"The assurance of anonymity is essential to our efforts to help other families and friends of addicts, and the Twelfth Tradition reminds us that Nar-Anon and Narateen principles are found in the equality expressed in anonymity. Our principles come before personalities.*

Material which is published will be signed in the way the writer wishes: first name and initial, initials only, "Anonymous" Regional newsletter editors usually follow this procedure.

SUGGESTED TOPICS

Announcements
Recovery poems
Treasurer's reports
Election announcements
World Service Board Chair's reports
Minutes from meetings
Region, subcommittee, area, and delegate reports
World Service Office reports
Recovery month outreach announcements
Step workshop announcements
Convention announcements
New meetings
Personal stories of recovery – sharing experience, strength, and hope
Excerpts from current literature
Fellowship updates
Slogans
Steps, traditions, and concepts
Questions and answers from fellowship
How service has helped recovery

PUBLISHING PROCEDURES

Once the newsletter has been prepared, a draft copy is sent to the chair for review. The chair forwards the revised draft to all committee members for their review. The committee meets to discuss concerns, additions, and questions; to make final revisions; and to approve the newsletter for publication.

DISTRIBUTION

Newsletters may be published periodically as decided by the committee and distributed by email, regular mail or posted to a website according to the needs of the fellowship. Subscriptions to the newsletter can be made available to individuals and groups.