

# The Serenity Connection



Nar-Anon Family Groups Newsletter

Volume 28 Issue 3 Sept 2012

## I Keep Coming Back

Why do I keep coming back whether or not my loved one has found recovery?

I keep coming back to Nar-Anon because

- I want to help others as others have helped me.
- I want to be of service to those who are lost, isolated, confused, and broken.
- I want to help newcomers.
- I want to give back because I received so much.
- I want to pay it forward.

- I want to see Nar-Anon grow because there is such a need.
- I want to be around brave, empathetic, service-minded people.
- I want to live one day at a time.
- It keeps me humble.
- It's a step. Step 12.

How service has benefited my personal program of recovery.

At first....

- It was a way to keep busy.
- It was a way to keep my mind off my misery.
- It was a way to be around people with recovery maturity.
- It was a way to learn wisdom from long time members.
- It was a way to be around program people for longer than an hour.

Now...

- It's a way of life!

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## Calling All Region Chairs...



### *Ring! Ring! Calling all Region Chairs!*

Hello! My name is Kathy B. I have just returned from a wonderful, recovery-filled weekend in Atlanta where I attended the East Coast Convention. At the convention, I met other region chairs. We spent time together discussing our regions and exchanging ideas. It was a great experience to be able to reach out to my counterparts in another region, to ask questions, and to make new friends.

Three of us discussed the possibility of inviting other regions to join in our conversations. Other highlights

of a weekend discussion were to have our own forum to share ideas, successes, and failures; to discuss tough topics such as how to handle conflict and how to conduct an effective region assembly.

Unfortunately, we do not know all of the region chairs. So we are asking that if you are interested in speaking to other region chairs, to have a resource available to you, please contact me:

Kathy B at  
**Firegionchair@gmail.com**

Hopefully, we will all benefit from communicating with each other.

In Service,  
Kathy B, Florida Region Chair

## Recovery

Recovery shows me how to

- hold those I love with open hands and an open heart
- be free to be myself and walk my own path
- support without suffocating
- love without strings
- feel I am loved with an amazing love
- give as I have been given to

To love and to care is human and true.

To give up controlling is inviting divine intervention for us both!

My recovery began the same day my son went to rehab. Within 4 days, I was in the family meeting at his treatment facility and realized I also had the family disease. I felt compelled to change. I was in such

total despair as to how I would ever be able to let go.

I spent some time in grateful prayer and meditation on our one year anniversary. As I was being still and reflecting on our recoveries and the miracles that had happened in our lives, the above thoughts came into my mind so I wrote them down. This truly has been my experience in recovery.

## Remember... September is National Recovery Month

### Dig Deeper — 7th Tradition

#### Quarterly Appeal to Nar-Anon Members

Did you know Nar-Anon is celebrating its 44<sup>th</sup> year?

The first newcomers came to Nar-Anon 44 years ago and put a dollar in the basket when it was passed around for the 7<sup>th</sup> Tradition.

At that time,

- the cost of gasoline was 32 cents a gallon
- penny candy was actually a penny
- milk cost 99 cents a gallon (depending upon where you

- lived)
  - movie tickets were 25 cents
  - a first-class stamp was 5 cents
  - a new home was \$23,300
- Therefore, with a dollar you could buy
- 100 pieces of candy
  - 3 gallons of gas
  - 20 stamps
  - 4 movie tickets...

Wow, a dollar went along way!

So when the 7th Tradition basket is passed at your meeting, remember your group pays rent, buys literature and makes regular donations to the area, region, and WSO. A

newcomer packet is \$1.50, a blue book \$1.15, and a stamp 45 cents.

As you sit holding your \$4.49 Grande, extra-hot, double-shot, half caffeine, half non-fat, low- whip latte, of course this is after you stopped at the gas station and for \$30.00 maybe got half a tank of gas, please remember to **Dig Deeper**.

Your group, area, and region along with WSO need your help. The WSO staff works diligently to keep up with supply and demand. With all of our exciting changes and growth, we need your help and funds to continue carrying the message.

When I was desperate, the Nar-Anon program was there for me because members gave their support of time and money. I will now do the same.

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

*“Sharing Experience, Strength, and Hope,” Nar-Anon Family Groups Daily Reader, July 17*

# Our Members Share...

## Ann's Story

It's been almost a year since I lost my only son to drugs. It's still hard to believe some days, but the reality and finality is sinking in more and more. I owe a debt of gratitude to all of you and wanted to share that in writing.

I have said this at meetings in the past but it bears repeating: I learned more from my sisters and brothers in this support group than I did from many paid professionals about control, enabling, and detaching with love. The readings each week,

especially about how the addicts in our lives are not trying to hurt us, gave me comfort early on. I returned every week to hear personal stories, how members coped with setting boundaries, and meaning what they say without saying it mean.

Before I started to attend Nar-Anon meetings, I thought I was living my life and could find the answers to saving my son. I learned that I needed to allow him to take charge of his life, to love

him, and show him I trusted his decisions. Our relationship was good before but improved significantly during the time I spent in Nar-Anon. As so many addicts do, my son slipped again at the end, but overall made us so proud of how hard he fought and how far he'd come.

You all do a great service. Thank you for all you do and for the time you give.

Best, *Ann*

## Oxygen Mask

I remember very clearly my first Nar-Anon meeting. The people in that meeting were talking about a subject that was uppermost in my mind throughout my daily life.

I remember clearly wanting to return to that meeting, as I was hungry to interact with people who knew and talked about drug addiction.

It was as though I were wearing an oxygen mask during the 1½ hour Nar-Anon meetings. My daily life was a struggle, but that weekly Nar-Anon meeting was a breath of fresh air.

I based my daily life around the remaining time between meetings. Tuesdays were goods days, and Wednesdays were the best days, as 8pm Wednesday night was my Nar-Anon meeting. I am very grateful that after three months in the

program a group conscience was taken, and I was asked to chair the meeting. That meant I got to take home the entire pack of CAL (Conference Approved Literature). I used the literature to prepare for the next meeting.

I remember going to bed at night and reading CAL. After a short time, I realized that reading CAL had the same oxygen mask effect as being in a meeting.

Slowly but surely, my daily struggle was aided by reading CAL and attending my weekly meeting. Recovery was engulfing me even though my addicted son was still using. I continued to immerse myself in the Nar-Anon program, and I gradually achieved higher levels of peace and serenity.

After five years of Nar-Anon recovery, my son finally reached

rock bottom, and, thanks to my Higher Power and the Nar-Anon fellowship, my oxygen mask was firmly on my face, and I was breathing and thinking clearly.

I had what I can only describe as an out-of-body experience the morning that my son hit rock bottom. He was out of control, and he reached out for help. I am convinced my Higher Power elevated me to a place of peace and serenity, and together we calmly and clearly laid out a plan that would facilitate our family participation in his recovery. We calmly set boundaries and applied many of the Nar-Anon principles we had learned over the years.

Today, I know that for my survival my lungs need fresh air, and my body, mind, and soul needs Nar-Anon.

# Members' Reflections...

## Mini-Convention Share

### Grassy Park, suburb of Cape Town, South Africa

The Nar-Anon Grassy Park Mini Convention was an emotional day. I was profoundly affected and moved to write the following story.

Before I joined the Nar-Anon fellowship, I was living, breathing, and functioning as a human being, but I was emotionally dead. I constantly found ways to block my emotions and, in time, my heart turned to stone.

Blocking my emotions became a coping mechanism to deal with

family situations and life on life's terms. In Nar-Anon I discovered my condition was no different from that of my drug addict son.

He used drugs to anesthetize himself and his emotions, and I used a stone heart to achieve the same effect.

In working the Nar-Anon 12 Step Program, I discovered ways to get in touch with my emotions. It has been a refreshing and liberating journey. Today I am grateful for the flood of emotion when faced with family situations, random acts of human kindness, and heartwarming stories.

On careful re-consideration, I now think of a "stone heart" as being a block of cold ice. The people in my Nar-Anon family became tiny rays of sunshine that warmed my heart and melted the ice. The result was a flood of emotion.

I thank each and every one of you for bringing me out of the cold. I thank my Nar-Anon groups for keeping me safe and warm. I thank my Higher Power and the Nar-Anon fellowship for shining on me.

Finally, I thank you for reading my story and letting me share my experience, strength, and hope.

## Workshop Event Share

### Greenville, South Carolina

The Greenville, South Carolina Nar-Anon group hosted a workshop on June 30 titled "What Does it Mean to Work the Nar-Anon Program?"

Approximately thirty participants from the tri-state areas of North Carolina, Georgia, and South Carolina attended the Saturday workshop, enjoying the camaraderie. It didn't hurt that there was

pizza and many goodies to be enjoyed!

The morning session concentrated on working the steps of the program, specifically the first step. There was much discussion as we read Step One and privately answered straightforward questions concerning our progress on this step. This process resulted in much soul-searching, not only for those of us who are new, but also for those who have worked Step One before.

The afternoon session was a forum on finding and using a sponsor. For those who do not yet have a sponsor, it was an informational session on how to ask another member to become our sponsor and how to make the relationship a worthwhile part of our lives.

The day ended with draws for wonderful gift baskets provided by the Greenville group and hopes for more inspiring sessions to come!

With time comes wisdom and understanding.  
With time comes spirituality.  
With time comes peace in our hearts and in our homes.

**"Sharing Experience, Strength, and Hope," Nar-Anon Family Groups Daily Reader, March 19**

# Committee Corner...

## World Pool Committee



**WE NEED YOU!**

A **Conference Facilitator** is needed for the 2014 World Service Conference (WSC 2014). Have you completed four years of active service in Nar-Anon and attended at least one WSC? You could qualify for the conference facilitator position. All conference expenses will be paid, including travel.

The following qualifications should not be viewed as a list of absolute requirements, but rather as an expression of the qualities and experience that will be helpful in presiding over the WSC:

- A demonstrated ability to preside over business meetings
- A working knowledge of WSC Standing Rules of Order
- A working knowledge of Robert's Rules of Order and parliamentary procedures
- A working knowledge of Nar-Anon's Twelve Steps, Twelve Traditions and Twelve Concepts of Service
- Familiarity with the Nar-Anon service structure
- Familiarity with the Guide to Local Services and Guide to World Services, and
- Strong organizational skills.

As the conference facilitator, you would have the following responsibilities:

- Preside over the World Service Conference
- Be able to attend the World Service Conference over a five day period. Travel days may add an additional day or two.
- Attend meetings via internet conferencing with the Board of Trustees or World Service Conference Committee, as needed.

For complete information about the conference facilitator position, go to [www.nar-anon.org](http://www.nar-anon.org).

Interactive Word application forms are available from the **World Pool Committee** at [worldpool@nar-anon.org](mailto:worldpool@nar-anon.org)

## Literature Committee

### **G**raphic Artist Needed

We need your **graphic design skills** for our new study guide: *"The Nar-Anon 36: 12 Steps, 12 Traditions, and 12 Concepts"*

If you have an idea on how the book cover might look, the Literature Committee wants to hear from you. If graphic design is your profession or hobby, we need your help with this and other projects.

Pick up your pencil and give back to the fellowship. Service comes in many forms! Contact the **Literature Committee** at [LitCom@nar-anon.org](mailto:LitCom@nar-anon.org)

### **Newsletter Submissions**

Articles are welcomed from all Nar-Anon members.\*

Please keep your focus on the Nar-Anon program at all times and share your *experience, strength, and hope (ESH)* from the perspective of a Nar-Anon member.

Please submit your articles to:

[newsletters@nar-anon.org](mailto:newsletters@nar-anon.org)

\* Remember, submissions must have a signed release form before publication.

\*\* Next Deadline: October 15, 2012 \*\*

## Resource Development Committee

The **Resource Development Committee** is conducting a poll on *possible* future initiatives. Many groups have inquired about having different items available to purchase from WSO.

In order for us to be successful in planning, we need you to help out by completing the survey on the WSO website at [www.nar-anon.org/Nar-Anon/RDC\\_Survey.html](http://www.nar-anon.org/Nar-Anon/RDC_Survey.html) no later than **December 31, 2012**.

## Outreach Committee

The new Outreach Information Folder, with WSC 2012 updates is now available for purchase from the WSO website at [wso@naranon.org](mailto:wso@naranon.org).

*Twenty Questions  
Information for Treatment Facilities  
Nar-Anon Offers Hope*

Also outreach packet has been revised and now includes 100 each of:

*To the Concerned Family and Friend  
Open Letter*

The World Service **Outreach Committee** is in need of volunteers. If you are interested in serving on this committee, please email [outreach@nar-anon.org](mailto:outreach@nar-anon.org) for more information. You can make a difference!

## New Nar-Anon Literature

Dropped by the WSO website lately? Have you seen the **NEW** Literature available from WSO? Here it is!

- **Nar-Anon Family Groups' Guide to Local Services:** *information for the group; download for FREE*
- **Appropriate Sharing & Crosstalk:** *promoting healthy communications at meetings*
- **Slogans Bookmark**

- **Questions on Sponsorship:** *suggestions for the sponsorship relationship*
- **Journal - Progress Not Perfection:** *for your reflections*
- **Three Poster Set:** *Steps, Traditions, Concepts*
- **Outreach Poster:** 2' x 3'

Go to: [www.nar-anon.org/Nar-Anon/Literature.html](http://www.nar-anon.org/Nar-Anon/Literature.html)

## What Worked for You?

The newsletter committee would like to introduce you to our new section – **What Worked For You?** Have you ever wondered how to handle an issue that your group is struggling with?

How about emailing a brief description of your problem to the newsletter committee. We will post it in the next edition and ask the fellowship to offer

solutions that your group may not have thought of.

Please keep in mind this will not be a way of giving advice, but an opportunity for us to share our experience, strength, and hope.

Remember our principle of anonymity: no names and no locations, only the brief details of your situation. Together we can work toward a solution.

### ***This Issue's Question:***

*My group uses non-CAL literature. How do I explain to the group that outside literature makes me uncomfortable and why we should not use it?*

Please email your responses to: [newsletters@nar-anon.org](mailto:newsletters@nar-anon.org)

Watch for solutions in the **December** newsletter!

# Upcoming Nar-Anon Events...

**September 8th, 2012**

National Recovery Month

## **Nar-Anon Florida Day of Serenity**



Locations and times for all *Day of Serenity* meetings:

**Dacco:**

4422 E. Columbus Avenue, Tampa, FL 12 noon to 4 PM

**Dunnellon Presbyterian Church:**

20641 Chestnut Street, Room 204, Dunnellon, FL 34430  
(Office Bldg, Use rear entrance across from Memorial Garden)  
10 AM to 2 PM

**Operation Par - Beverly and CW Bill Young Center for Research and Recovery:**

13800 66th Street North, Largo, FL 33781 12 noon to 4 PM

**Pompey Park Recreation Center:**

1101 NW 2nd St., Delray Beach, FL 33444 12 noon to 3 PM

**September 15th, 2012**

## **Day of Sharing Colorado Nar-Anon**

**Bethlehem Lutheran Church**

2100 North Wadsworth Boulevard  
Lakewood, CO 80214

9:00am - 3:00pm

Guest Speakers / Workshops / Potluck /  
Door Prizes

Contact: [jgreen2219@gmail.com](mailto:jgreen2219@gmail.com)

**September 15th, 2012**

## **Feed the Spirit Nar-Anon Spirituality Breakfast**

**Brass Rail Restaurant**

3015 Lehigh Street  
Allentown, PA 18103

10 AM

Host: Serenity in the Valley of Allentown  
Call Nancy H. at 610-437-6323

### ***Nar-Anon 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*

September 28th - 30th, 2012

## Hope - Faith - Healing Nar-Anon Spiritual Weekend 2012

McKenzie River Convention Center  
Mile Post 47  
Rainbow, OR

Please register by September 20, 2012

"CELEBRATING A BALANCED LIFE PRACTICING  
THE 12 STEPS OF NAR-ANON"

## *Attending a Nar-Anon Event?*

Drop us a line and share  
your experience with other  
Nar-Anon members.

We'll post your article in the  
**Members' Reflections**  
section of the newsletter.

September 29th, 2012

## Program For Recovery 22nd Annual Narathon

Canyon View Estates Clubhouse  
20001 Canyon View Drive  
Canyon Country, CA 91351

9:00 am - 3:30 pm  
Host: Southern California Region  
Contact Joe K. at [Kel149@hotmail.com](mailto:Kel149@hotmail.com)

November 30th -  
December 2nd, 2012

## The Joy is in the Journey XXIII New York Region 23<sup>rd</sup> Annual Nar-Anon Convention

Villa Roma Resort and Conference Center  
356 Villa Roma Road, Callicoon, NY 12723  
Reservations (with deposit) by October 5, 2012



January 18th - 20th, 2013

## Keys To Serenity Nar-Anon Monterey Convention

Monterey Conference Center  
1 Portola Plaza  
Monterey, CA 93940

Questions? 1-888-688-78334 or [montereynaranon@gmail.com](mailto:montereynaranon@gmail.com)

Thanks to all who make The Serenity Connection a success with your submissions!