

HOW TO START A GROUP

If there is no Nar-Anon Family Group (NFG) in your community, contact WSO by writing to Nar-Anon Family Group Headquarters, Inc., 23110 Crenshaw Blvd., Suite A; Torrance, CA 90505, by the web at www.nar-anon.org, by email at WSO@nar-anon.org or by calling 1-800-477-6291 for information. Anyone who has an addicted relative or friend or is concerned about the effects of drug use in others in any way may start a group.

The first step in getting a group started is finding at least one other person sharing your concern. It is easiest to start a group with three or more people. If you do not know anyone, attending NA meetings to meet the relatives or friends of addicts after meetings can be a successful way of locating others interested in starting a new group. Usually NA groups are happy to cooperate with Nar-Anon, but they must be assured that their anonymity will be protected.

Next find a meeting place, usually in a church, school, community center, hospital, or rehabilitation center. Some choose a location and time coordinated with an NA meeting. Our 7th Tradition states: Every group ought to be fully self-supporting, declining outside contributions. The expenses include a small donation for use of the meeting room. After a meeting place is found, contact WSO and your region to purchase a new group packet. The packet includes all necessary information and literature to start a meeting along with the group registration form. A permanent mailing address, such as the group secretary's, will assure your group continues to receive the benefits of WSO's services.

REGISTRATION OF GROUPS

The founding of a group and its functions are the responsibility of those qualified for membership. WSO will register any group designating itself a Nar-Anon Family Group (NFG) or Narateen group with the understanding that it will abide by the Twelve Traditions and the Twelve Concepts and meetings will be open to any Nar-Anon or Narateen member. Group registration forms are available online at www.nar-anon.org and at the end of the Guide to Local Services (GLS).

You will need to attract more members to your group. Informing the clergy, doctors, social workers, and others in your community who have occasion to counsel families of addicts may be productive. This can be done by mail and you can keep your anonymity. Some newspapers will include Nar-Anon listings in the local events columns without charge.

In Nar-Anon's format for group meetings, it states we have no dues or fees, but we pass a basket at each meeting to pay for literature, to cover the group's expenses, and to support Nar-Anon beyond the group level. This is in accordance with our Seventh Tradition.

GROUP STRUCTURE

Organizing a group should be kept simple. Officers are elected by group conscience to serve for a period decided by the group, often from three to six months. Regular rotation of service positions gives all members the privilege of serving. Officers are trusted servants, they do not govern. Every group needs a meeting leader, sometimes called a chair. A group will also need a member to act

as secretary. The secretary often acts as treasurer until the group is large enough to divide duties among other members. Each group also has a group service representative who participates in the wider service organization of Nar-Anon.

DUTIES OF GROUP OFFICERS

Chair/Leader

- Plans meetings in advance
- Opens the meeting with a moment of silence followed by the group reciting the Serenity Prayer
- Reads the Newcomer's Welcome and Preamble
- Introduces speakers or announces the topic of the meeting
- Invites new members to share (e.g., last 15 minutes of meeting)
- Helps establish committees, if these are necessary
- Can act as chair of the steering committee, when there is one

Secretary

- Handles all routine matters between the group and WSO including the annual group registration form which can be found in the *Guide to Local Services*
- Handles any group correspondence
- Uses a home or other address to serve as a permanent mailing address
- Notifies WSO of any change in mailing address
- Notifies WSO when there is a change of group officers
- Keeps a current list of members' telephone numbers
- Makes announcements at meetings including WSO's appeal for contributions
- Orders conference approved literature (CAL) for the group (this may also be done by the treasurer or a literature chair)

Treasurer (may also be Group Secretary)

- Passes the Seventh Tradition basket at group meetings
- Reports expenses paid and donations collected to the group secretary to be entered in the group's record book
- Collects and disburses funds as necessary
- Announces the current balance in the treasury and donations made to the area, region, and WSO
- Keeps a record of the group's expenses which may include rent; literature; contributions to area, region, and WSO whenever the group is financially able; and miscellaneous items, such as refreshments
- Monitors/maintains other expenses as listed on pages 8-3 and 8-4, "Use of Group Funds" in the *Guide to Local Services*

Group Service Representative (GSR)

- Becomes familiar with the Nar-Anon Guides for Local and World Services
- Attends all area meetings and region assemblies, and reports to the group on the proceedings of these events
- Votes their group's conscience at area meetings and region assemblies
- Completes and submits the GSR registration form to the Regional Service Committee (RSC) secretary
- Brings the group's viewpoint on any situation or problem concerning Nar-Anon to the area meeting or region assemblies

Meetings follow an adopted format. They usually open with a moment of silence followed by the group reciting the Serenity Prayer. The chair or leader then reads the Preamble or the Newcomer's Welcome to the group. Volunteers, or members going around

the room, read About Addiction, the Twelve Steps, Twelve Traditions, and Keeping Our Meetings Healthy. They may also choose to read The Family, Changing Ourselves, Helping, or other selections as decided by the group for its format. Most readings are found in the *Nar-Anon Blue Booklet*.

VISION STATEMENT

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

We 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.



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NO NAR-ANON GROUP IN YOUR AREA?

You Can Start A Group!



Nar-Anon Can Help

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.

***Nar-Anon is a twelve step program
for families and friends of addicts.***
