



The Serenity Connection

Countdown to Conference!

“Strength Through Service”
April 29 to May 2, 2016
Torrance, CA

Has your group scheduled its CAR/CAT workshops?

Dates to remember...

March 29, 2016

Agenda for WSC 2016 distributed to all attendees.

April 28, 2016

Pre-conference orientation.

Inside this issue:

| | |
|-----------------------------------|---|
| Our Members Share | |
| • Meetings—I keep coming back | 2 |
| • The Double Yellow Line | 2 |
| • Tradition Three | 3 |
| Responsible use of Nar-Anon Funds | 4 |
| What’s Worked for You? | 5 |
| Committee Corner | 6 |
| | 7 |
| Events | 8 |

WSO saddened by loss of long time staff member

Nar-Anon WSO is saddened by the loss of a long time staff member, Norma M. She fought a valiant battle and on January 22, 2016, surrounded by family members, she passed away. She started volunteering in June of 1995 and in 1996 started working part-time as back-up shipper, answering phones, and putting literature packets together. She was instrumental in getting the newsletter (folded, stuffed, and mailed) out in a timely manner. She always had a smile. She helped those looking for Nar-Anon meetings and, if no meeting was available, she would send them free literature. She will be dearly missed.

Nar-Anon WSO Staff

Our Own Nar-Anon Prayer!

The World Service Conferences of 2008, 2010, and 2014 had motions with prayers from other fellowships submitted for approval. Our Seventh Tradition states *Every group ought to be fully self-supporting declining outside contributions.* Wouldn't writing our own prayer be self-supporting?

This request is for our members' support and contributions to the development of a truly Nar-Anon prayer, a prayer created by our members for our members. For those interested, please click www.nar-anon.org/prayer-submission or go to www.nar-anon.org to submit your suggestion along with a release form found at [Copyright Release Form](#). Remember, all submissions must be original. Any use of non-original literature, in part or in full, even with wording changes, constitutes plagiarism and can result in public controversy for Nar-Anon. Submissions will be accepted through **April 15, 2016**.

During the 2016 World Service Conference, **Strength Through Service**, a workshop will be held to take all submissions and develop a prayer for Nar-Anon. Once the prayer is developed, it will be submitted to the floor as a motion to go out to the fellowship for approval at the 2018 World Service Conference.

Keep these thoughts in mind for your submissions:

- All work must be original
- Submissions should be three or four sentences, something members can easily memorize
- Submissions can be spiritual but should not reflect any religious beliefs
- Submissions should reflect a worldwide spirit of unity
- It is preferred that submissions be gender neutral

Experience • Strength • Hope

Our Members Share

“When I attend meetings regularly, I am reminded that every day my Higher Power offers me a new way to face my challenges.”

SESH, July 31



Meetings - I keep coming back

I first walked into a Nar-Anon meeting over nine years ago. I was like a deer in the headlights, having no idea what Nar-Anon had to offer me. I was desperate and came hoping that someone could tell me how to stop my addict son from using drugs. I didn't realize I was in for a rude awakening.

After several meetings and struggling with enabling, I learned there is a better way to live. I learned that NOT enabling doesn't mean I don't love my son, but I can detach with

love and cease trying to change him.

I have come a long way in nine years. I have learned about self-care, the concept of a Higher Power, sponsorship, Nar-Anon literature, the phone list, participating in step studies, and attending meetings regularly. I have never attended a meeting and wished I had not gone. I always come away with wisdom and strength from others and gratitude for being a part of this amazing program. It saved my life, and today is one more

day of recovery for me. I can take what I want, what I feel is helpful, and leave the rest. My recovery is mine and I can allow myself to go at my own pace, just as I have learned to allow my addict to go at his own pace, in his own time, and in his own recovery.

Thank you Nar-Anon for giving me the tools I needed to get my life back. I will keep coming back. It's a huge part of my recovery and the journey of a lifetime.

The Double Yellow Line

Staying on my side of the street is a phrase I have often heard in recovery. It refers to keeping the focus on myself, working my own program, letting recovery from this family disease begin with me, and doing the next right thing (God's will). This all helps me to detach from others' choices and compulsions in order find my way and my peace.

The double yellow line that separates traffic going in opposite directions keep us safe in our own lane. It creates a boundary that defines the area which is mine and that which is

not. It is not a wall; it is more of a suggestion.

I was recently travelling in a rural area where there were bumps under the lines to warn of the danger of crossing into the opposing lane. However, the bumps were only a suggestion to keep travelers safe; I still had the choice to stay on my side of the street. We all have that choice.

God is like that double yellow line between lanes. He is neither closer nor farther from either side, ever present to provide guidance, protection, and

help. Through my recovery, I have learned to stay in my own lane and accept the loving guidance that keeps me safe, free, and at peace. That guidance is available to us all. I am not a danger or distraction to others when I stay in my lane. With God's help, I am able to safely navigate my side of the street and not take responsibility for fellow travelers.

Just for today, I will be grateful for the ever-present double yellow line that allows me to keep moving, and guides me to understand what is mine and what is not.

“If I mind my own business and work on improving my self control, I will be an example for others around me, possibly even someone I care about. Today I am neither a controller nor a contolee.”

Sharing Experience, Strength, and Hope, Nar-Anon Family Groups Daily Reader, May 31

The Nar-Anon Traditions

Tradition Three — the only requirement for membership

The relatives of addicts, when gathered for mutual aid, may call themselves a Nar-Anon Family Group, provided that as a group, they have no other affiliation. The only requirement for membership is that there be a problem of addiction in a relative or friend.

We gather together for mutual aid to share with one another our personal stories, experiences, and hope. We are all affected by the same disease of addiction. We have all felt the despair and isolation. We have experienced the frustration of powerlessness and the mistaken sense of personal responsibility for managing the unmanageable lives of others. Like the life guard, we have rushed to the rescue of others who are drowning in the consequences of their disease, only to find ourselves caught in the undertow. We have uncomprehendingly observed the rescued jump back into dangerous waters. We are all powerless over the disease of addiction and the desperate struggles, unmanageability, and reactive emotions and actions it induces.

In Nar-Anon, we learn to stop the struggle against this disease and those affected by it. We learn, with the help of others in similar circumstances, that with help, it is possible to learn to

think and respond differently and to find peace. With this spiritual program, we gain serenity and the wisdom to stop the struggle against addiction.

We learn to reduce the unmanageability in our own life and the negative downward spiral of our disease. Step by step we climb out of the fear, criticism, negativity, anger, and despair. Our Nar-Anon family group is with us as we struggle to find the courage to change and keep the focus on ourselves. The seeds of hope and recovery begin to grow in our broken hearts and wounded souls.

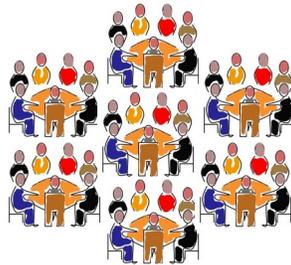
I have learned that to struggle against does not help to encourage positive change and growth in me or in others. I have learned I do not belong entwined in another's struggle. I can learn to love, let live, and let be as others have done for me. I accept that the struggles I am encountering today are an opportunity for change and growth. In every circumstance, I am no longer alone. As we gather, I am learning to choose, to grow, to be me. I am a part

of a fellowship of love, kindness, and compassion, not alone anymore.

Identification is a magnetic force that gathers us together. It creates a safe place and holds us. There is no blame, shame, or judgment in this place where we gather. Our program is suggested; we are free to take what we need and leave the rest. Sharing ourselves, our thoughts, our experiences, and our feelings with honesty creates powerful moments of identification. I am no longer alone; I have hope.

As I receive this gift of recovery, it overflows to others and we keep gathering because this program frees our souls, fills us with love for the struggler, and gives us hope. The isolation is gone; the mutual respect is profound as we support each other's recovery.

I heard a very spiritual woman once say, "struggle is a holy word, for it is in our struggles that we meet God". I have found this to be true for me through my recovery.



Our Members Share

Healthy Meetings

- What does your group do to encourage healthy sharing?
- How do you personally keep the focus on yourself when sharing? Why is this important?
- How does your group welcome the newcomer?
- How does your group keep the program spiritual while not being affiliated with any specific religion or organization?

"I am grateful that Nar-Anon is a program of choices... The program allows me to choose my own path to recovery, yet gives me a structure within which to work."

Sharing Experience, Strength, and Hope, Nar-Anon Family Groups Daily Reader, March 1

The Nar-Anon Program

Responsible Use of Nar-Anon Funds

Imagine, if you will, what would happen if no one answered the phones at the World Service Office (WSO). What if the website was not maintained or the utility bills at the office were not paid? Just like at home, we all have overhead and bills to pay. Those of us in business understand staff must be paid, plus taxes, insurance, and other expenses are simply the costs of doing business.

Nar-Anon depends on its members to support all of its services. Seventh tradition baskets around the world collect donations to keep us self-supporting. The basket pays our rent and helps groups buy literature. But what happens beyond the group? Does our group use funds for other endeavors not related to Nar-Anon?

Before we decide to spend group funds, we should consider the services that are provided for Nar-Anon as a whole and how those ser-

VICES are paid for. Does our area or region have expenses for a website, a helpline, or outreach activities? Do we benefit when our areas, regions, and WSO help inform others that our meetings exist?

Without WSO, we could never even have started a meeting. We placed an order for a new group packet that a staff member had to pull together, package, and send to us. When we registered the group, it was listed on the website. A

staff member had to input the information. A service was provided and we didn't give it much thought.

When someone in our city needs a meeting, they check the website or pick up the phone and call WSO to get information.

Still we don't give it much thought. When our group takes a group conscience and decides to donate, do we consider the actual cost of the services provided? Many members look at group funds as money the group can do

with as it likes; but should they?

Concept Two tells us, as groups, we have the final responsibility and authority for Nar-Anon services. Do we understand what that means? Our groups are responsible for every service provided by Nar-Anon. Does our group use funds for outside endeavors such as holiday parties, helping recovering addicts, treatment center donations, or other activities?

We as groups are responsible for ensuring the phones get answered and salaries are paid at WSO. We might look at the literature sold by WSO and assume it will cover all of the costs. Can it? If we think about how often our group buys literature and how much we buy, can the sales of literature really be enough? In fact, literature sales cover only a portion of the costs of the organization.

According to Tradition Six in Nar-Anon, our funds are never to be used to support outside causes.



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

SESH, July 17



SHARING RECOVERY *The Serenity Connection Collection*

The Newsletter Committee is delighted to announce that a booklet of personal stories of recovery and service taken from *The Serenity Connection* is almost ready for publication! We are pleased to once again share these wonderful stories of experience, strength, and hope, and we're planning to update this booklet as new stories appear in the newsletter. Thank you to all of our contributors!



What's Worked for You?

Last Issue's Question

What should we do when a newcomer brings their small child to a meeting and the child is so disruptive that another member has to leave the meeting to entertain the child so the newcomer can participate in the meeting?

A group conscience discussion could be held during the monthly business meeting to brainstorm solutions to this issue. No one can offer a perfect solution for every situation and the group will find its own solutions through open discussion. Some ideas may be:

- Another member asks to take the child out so the parent can get help. (This could be a safety issue and a responsibility the group's members may not want to take on).
- Offer to make phone contact with the parent between meetings.
- A child's coloring book and crayons could be added to the meeting supplies.
- The newcomer could be informed that they can stay with the child as long as the child's activities are not disrupting the meeting.
- The group may decide to have a portion of the meeting open to members with children.



This Issue's Question

What does your group do to keep newcomers coming back?

Never Surprised Prayer

Higher Power, help me remember you are never surprised by my struggles.

Help release me from clinging to my will and my way.

Loosen in me the open-mindedness, willingness, and honesty I need to accept your guidance, and the courage I need to do my part, be myself, walk in your will and your ways, and find the inner quiet and peace to move on with YOU.

Teach me to trust as I take small steps of change and faith in your direction.

Help me learn to ask for your help and listen for your answers.

TM

The Nar-Anon Program

"Each morning I pray to my Higher Power. This reminds me that I have made a decision to turn my will and my life over to the care of my Higher Power who I believe knows what I need."

SESH, March 17

Have you ever imagined that your personal story might make a difference in someone else's life? When you share your story of recovery, chances are pretty good that someone reading it will identify with where you've been and gain strength and hope from the changes you've made in your life. Your words of encouragement just might make the difference between continued suffering and hope for the future.

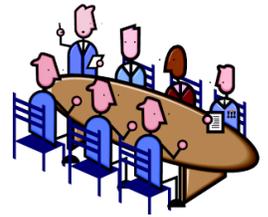
Click on the button at the right to send us your thoughts. You can express them in an article, a poem, a "just for today," or even a few words of wisdom. Thank you!



Committee Corner

World Pool Committee

Conference Facilitator for WSC 2018



The World Pool Committee is searching for qualified members to apply for the Conference facilitator position for the 2018 World Service Conference (WSC 2018). Qualified members will have been active in Nar-Anon service for a minimum of four years and have served as an area/regional officer, delegate, or alternate delegate. It is also preferable that they have attended at least one WSC. Once appointed, the conference facilitator may not serve on any world service committee.

The following qualifications for nomination and election are written to express the variety of skills and experience necessary for a conference facilitator. These 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 of the Board of Trustees or World Service Conference Committee, as needed.

Application forms in pdf are available on the [World Pool Committee page](#) of the World Service office website. Application forms in an interactive Word document are available upon request by contacting the World Pool Committee at worldpool@nar-anon.org.

Website Committee

Nar-Anon Events!

Did you know www.nar-anon.org has an [Events](#) page that includes flyers? Does your group, area or region have an event coming up and want to get the word out? We welcome all your events and registration flyers.

During the WSC 2010, a motion was made to grant authority to the World Service Website Committee over the content of the www.nar-anon.org website with the exception of group meeting information. As the committee strives to assure that content on the website adheres to the principles of Nar-Anon, the committee would like to offer some useful tips to consider when developing event flyers to be posted on the website Events page:

- Use only the conference approved Nar-Anon logos. See GWS page 28 for conference approved logos and guidelines or contact [WSO](#).
- Refrain from using logos belonging to outside entities, such as other fellowships' logos and hotel brands' logos, as this might imply affiliation.
- Refrain from including links to outside entities.
- Refrain from using trademarked or copyrighted graphics to which you do not have rights.
- Original graphics, such as event-themed graphics, are acceptable

Committee Corner continued on page 7...

"Today, I will go to meetings, be of service, and work my steps to keep my life in balance."

Sharing Experience, Strength, and Hope, Nar-Anon Family Groups Daily Reader, June 25

Committee Corner ...continued from page 6



Narateen Committee

Thirty One Days in Narateen... Needs 31 Writings

Write about YOUR experience - how your life was before Narateen, what happened in recovery, and how life has changed for YOU, not the addict.

Share your experience, strength, and hope. Write about your recovery from the effects of living with addiction, simply sharing from your heart what worked for you. It might bring a sigh, or a tear, or a smile, or help someone identify with your story. Others learn about recovery from reading your stories, which gives them hope. Pick a topic or slogan you like.

Other ideas for topics to write about:

- one of the Steps
- a change in your attitude as a result of the program
- sponsorship
- what serenity means to you
- respect
- resentment
- self-respect
- thinking before you act
- using the tools of the program
- trust
- willingness
- not judging others
- hope
- humility
- learning to say no
- manipulation
- patience
- acceptance

Check out SESH or other CAL literature for more topic ideas.

If you have something to share, you or your sponsor can send it to narateen@nar-anon.org. (All Narateen writing is anonymous). Please include a filled-out scan of our copyright release form when submitting. If you prefer to submit a physical letter and form, you can mail it to Nar-Anon WSO.

Ask your Facilitator to hold a writing workshop. Contact the [Narateen Committee](#) for ideas.

Narateen Members Share

Here are some of the stories of hope that other Narateen members have shared (from the [Nar-Anon website](#)):

“It’s no fun to be mad... before I came to Narateen, I was always mad at everyone, but mostly myself. I blamed myself for my dad not being home anymore. I miss him and want everything to be like it was. By going to Narateen meetings, I feel different. They help me know that it wasn’t my fault.”

“I like not being alone... I like Narateen because I’m learning how to deal with things without getting angry. I love and respect my mom and dad anyway. When I listen to other kids with the same problems I have, I don’t feel alone.”

Outreach Committee

Reaching Out... Spreading the Message of Hope

We are into a new year and the Nar-Anon message of hope is needed more than ever. The addiction problem worldwide is staggering. Those with loved ones suffering from the disease are out there too. Nar-Anon Family Groups can be a haven for them.

Is your home group doing Outreach? Are you working to spread the Nar-Anon message? If yes, tell us about your successes so we can share them with the larger fellowship. If no, think about giving it a try. Start with the basics. Post your meeting information in the local newspaper; most offer free space for community announcements. [CLICK HERE](#) for the print version of Nar-Anon’s Public Service Announcement (PSA). Posting can usually be done by email. Need help navigating your Outreach effort? Email outreach@nar-anon.org

World Service Office

- Make sure newcomers can find your meeting! Visit www.nar-anon.org/edit-group to let WSO know if you’ve changed meeting day, time, location, contacts, etc.
- *Questions on Sponsorship* is now available as an eBook in both English and Spanish. Go to www.nar-anon.org/ebooks to place your order.
- Nar-Anon literature racks are now available from the [Nar-Anon web store](#).

Upcoming Events

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

[Eastern Pennsylvania Region's 11th Nar-Anon Convention](#)

March 11-13, 2016

"Peace Amid The Storm"

Crowne Plaza

Trevoze, NY 19053

Nicole S. nikkischu@outlook.com

[Staten Island Nar-Anon 2nd Spirituality Breakfast](#)

March 19, 2016

"Sharing Our Experience, Strength & Hope"

Hilton Garden Inn,

Staten Island, NY 10314

Tom 646-549-3206 Linda 917-992-2109

[CCR Narathon 2016](#)

March 19, 2016

"Freedom with Serenity and Gratitude"

Trinity Lutheran Church

909 N La Cumbre Road

Santa Barbara, CA

[New England Region Nar-Anon Convention 2016](#)

April 8-10, 2016

"The 4 Hs: Honest, Humble, Happy & Healthy"

Courtyard/Marriott Downtown Waterbury

Waterbury, CT 06702

Suzy 860-558-6547 sae881@comcast.net

[Northern California Region Convention Nar-Anon Family Groups](#)

June 10-12, 2016

"NRCNFG XXVIII"

Visalia Convention Center

Visalia, CA 93291

Ruth B. 559-364-6309

The Back Page

Board of Trustees

Did you know...

The Nar-Anon Board of Trustees is responsible for Nar-Anon Family Group Headquarters, Inc., a California non-profit public benefit corporation. In accordance with the Nar-Anon Twelve Concepts of Service, the BOT acts as guardian of the Nar-Anon Traditions, provides support for the administration of Nar-Anon world services, and has legal authority responsible for managing Nar-Anon affairs worldwide. You may contact the Board of Trustees by writing to bot@nar-anon.org.

Mission Statement

The board of trustees is dedicated to the growth of Nar-Anon Family Groups. In cooperation with the world service committees and the World Service Office, we will support the worldwide fellowship by developing the services necessary to carry the message of Nar-Anon. (from the [BOT page](#) of the WSO Website).

Joining the Board

"Nar-Anon members who meet the criteria to serve on the World Service Board of Trustees may submit a [candidate application](#) to the World Service World Pool Committee (World Pool Committee) at worldpool@nar-anon.org. An interactive form is available by contacting the World Pool Committee, or a pdf form is available on the Nar-Anon World Service website. Applications may be submitted to the World Pool Committee any time, but to be considered for a vote at conference they must be submitted by October 31 in the year prior to the WSC." (see *GWS*, p. 20)

Newsletter eSubscriptions

Click here for your **FREE** e-subscription to

[The Serenity Connection](#)

Subscriptions to date: **4023!**



Newsletter Submissions

Articles are welcomed from all Nar-Anon members. Please focus on the Nar-Anon program and share your experience, strength, and hope from the perspective of a Nar-Anon member. Submit articles to newsletters@nar-anon.org. Each submission must be accompanied by a signed [release form](#) before it can be published.

**** Next Issue Submission Deadline: April 20, 2016 ****

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