



SEVEN MINUTES

The Nicotine Anonymous Quarterly

A FORUM FOR NICOTINE USERS WHO DON'T USE

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FOURTH QUARTER, 1998

A THIEF NAMED NIC O. TINE

Kris K., Anaheim, CA



For twenty-two years my best friend Nic stole from me right under my nose. Other times my friend would do harm to me and make trouble with my family and my other friends. The sad part was that I always forgave him and always allowed him to do it again and again. Like a battered spouse, I was so desperate to keep my friend that I repeatedly overlooked his transgressions and always came back for more. Among the things that I know can be ascribed to my buddy Nic are:

- ▶ He stole \$2.00 - \$3.00 a day from me, day in and day out, 7 days a week, 365 days a year, for a total of over \$24,000 over the course of our friendship.
- ▶ He made me miss 1 or 2 innings of almost every Dodger game I attended with him.
- ▶ Nic generated the ill will of countless people by filling the air with his smelly smoke. Then, when the offended parties started looking around for the culprit there he would be...pointing his filter at me.
- ▶ While hanging out with a friend of my brother's, Nic started a fire that completely gutted my bedroom in my parents' house.
- ▶ While driving to an amusement park on Long Island, he snuck underneath the back seat and lay there smoldering until the back seat was on fire.
- ▶ He weakened my lungs and immune system to the point that I'd always get the flu each year and usually get bronchitis every year as well.
- ▶ Nic made me miss between 5 and 10 minutes of every movie I attended.
- ▶ He made me cut short or interrupt countless recreational activities with friends and family members and play times with my 6 year-old son.
- ▶ He made holes or burn marks in clothes, tables, rugs, car seats, and counter tops.
- ▶ He convinced me to break the rules by smoking in countless "no smoking" areas so that his addicted needs would be met.
- ▶ When it looked like we'd be late for work, he talked me into driving 70 miles per hour on rain slickened city streets just to get another pack of cigarettes at the only gas station that would allow cigarettes to be put on the Unocal gas card.
- ▶ Nic got me into trouble at work by making me take unscheduled smoke breaks. When my boss was looking for me I was with Nic and not at my desk.
- ▶ He made every road trip that much longer by forcing me to pull over at least once an hour to feed his need.
- ▶ He greatly increased my chances of stroke, heart attack and countless other diseases by putting his daily drug dose into my body.
- ▶ He robbed me of oxygen to the point that physical fitness was impossible and smoggy days made me ill.
- ▶ Nic made me and my family worry every day about the next set of possible consequences that hanging out with an undesirable friend like him would bring.

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Our Preamble

Nicotine Anonymous is a fellowship of men and women helping each other to live our lives free of nicotine. We share our experience, strength and hope with each other so that we may be free from this powerful addiction. The only requirement for membership is the desire to stop using nicotine. There are no dues or fees for Nicotine Anonymous membership; we are self supporting through our own contributions. Nicotine Anonymous is not allied with any sect, denomination, political entity, organization or institution; does not engage in any controversy, neither endorses nor opposes any cause. Our primary purpose is to offer support to those who are trying to gain freedom from nicotine.

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Your trusted servants - Kim J., editor
Mike K, subscriptions/distribution

THE TWELVE STEPS

1. We admitted we were powerless over nicotine--that our lives had become unmanageable.
2. Came to believe that a Power greater than ourselves could restore us to sanity.
3. Made a decision to turn our will and our lives over to the care of God, as we understood Him.
4. Made a searching and fearless moral inventory of ourselves.
5. Admitted to God, to ourselves, and to another human being the exact nature of our wrongs.
6. Were entirely ready to have God remove all these defects of character.
7. Humbly asked Him to remove our shortcomings.
8. Made a list of all persons we had harmed, and became willing to make amends to them all.
9. Made direct amends to such people wherever possible, except when to do so would injure them or others.
10. Continued to take personal inventory, and when we were wrong, promptly admitted it.
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 it out.
12. Having had a spiritual awakening as the result of these steps, we tried to carry this message to other nicotine users and to practice these principles in all our affairs.

The Twelve Steps of Alcoholics Anonymous

1. We admitted we were powerless over alcohol--that our lives had become unmanageable. 2. Came to believe that a Power greater than ourselves could restore us to sanity. 3. Made a decision to turn our will and our lives over to the care of God, as we understood Him. 4. Made a searching and fearless moral inventory of ourselves. 5. Admitted to God, to ourselves, and to another human being the exact nature of our wrongs. 6. Were entirely ready to have God remove all these defects of character. 7. Humbly asked Him to remove our shortcomings. 8. Made a list of all persons we had harmed, and became willing to make amends to them all. 9. Made direct amends to such people wherever possible, except when to do so would injure them or others. 10. Continued to take personal inventory, and when we were wrong, promptly admitted it. 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 it out. 12. Having had a spiritual awakening as the result of these steps, we tried to carry this message to other alcoholics and to practice these principles in all our affairs.

The Twelve Steps reprinted and adapted here with the permission of Alcoholics Anonymous World Services, Inc. Permission to reprint and adapt the Twelve Steps does not mean that A.A. is affiliated with this program. A.A. is a program of recovery from alcoholism - use of the Twelve Steps in connection with programs and activities which are patterned after A.A., but which address other problems, does not imply otherwise. The original Twelve Steps of Alcoholics Anonymous are reprinted above.

NEWS FROM NAWSO



It was a long, hard, exhilarating officers' weekend here on Long Island. Thanks to all in the New York Intergroup for providing all the accommodations, food and fun. While it was "the most fun officers' weekend ever" according to **Steve M.** (the speaker at our Sunday beach meeting), we busted our tails at the "most productive officers meeting" **Roger F.** has attended (and that's more than a couple). The productivity can be attributed to an extremely active group of officers, and the largest group of NAWSO volunteers in our history.

In fact we have added a few new volunteers in key positions. **Gina F.** from Georgia is our new NAWSO e-mail answering coordinator and she has a great crew of e-mail answerers. **Rob R.** from California and **Clare M.** of New York have take over the web page from its creator Bill P and have brought a great deal of enthusiasm. **Zulma H.** of Pennsylvania is our e-mail pen pal coordinator, and she is been getting lots of new members from **Stan B.**, our networking coordinator. (By the way, she could use some help; e-mail to her attention at info@nicotine-anonymous.org.) **Joe S.** and **Matt T.** are co-chairing the 1999 conference in Orange County, CA, which should be comparable in cost and hotel rates to the fabulous conference in Dallas. Speaking of the Dallas conference, **Robin L.** submitted her final 1998 conference report, and we had a \$1500 surplus at the conference! Great job! Furthermore, we sold lots of copies of our new *Our Path to Freedom* book and had a good ol' time to boot.

There's lots more good news from the officer's meeting. Here's just a sample:

- **Rodger, Steve** and **Cat** are "customizing" the by-laws to better suit our fellowship.
- Hazelden is adding both our books to their fall catalog.
- Our new preamble has been officially authorized for adaptation by the AA Grapevine
- **Martha K.** is working on a book-on-tape version of *Nicotine Anonymous - TheBook*, which should be available in late 1998.
- Outreach efforts are being developed with various health organizations and cessation programs. If you have an organization or program we should be contacting, please forward it to **Steve M.** at NAWSO via e-mail or mail.
- The board is working on a drastic revision of our conference format that should be in place for the 1999 conference.

One of our goals is to expand our *SevenMinutes* newsletter. Since this is our "meeting in print" we need our "members" (that's you), to give us more input. It's kind of like a meeting where nobody raises their hand to share - it doesn't make for much of a meeting. Please let us hear your stories, your frustrations, your comments on what NAWSO is doing, your questions or comments on *SevenMinutes* articles. This newsletter, like our fellowship, will give to us exactly what we put into it. We would love to hear from as many of you as possible.

In spiritual service,
John O.
Chairperson on behalf of the NAWSO officers

**SEVEN MINUTES
DEADLINE:**

Don't forget - the deadline for
the next issue (January) is
NOVEMBER 1



NICOTINE ANONYMOUS INVITED TO ONCOLOGY CONVENTION

Mary D., Anaheim, CA

What an exciting and fun time we had tending the booth at the American Society of Clinical Oncology convention! This was an international meeting that included over 16,000 attendees from all over the United States and other countries from all over the world. The convention was held May 16- 18 at the Los Angeles Convention Center. You may wonder how in the world we wound up in a booth there. Well, it was probably another one of those miracles God performs, wishing to remain anonymous!! It came about because we were invited there by Dr. Carl Atkins who was chairman of this convention. He knows of our program because one of our members, **Martha K.**, Alternate Chairperson of World Services familiarized him with this movement. He was enthused and asked if we would like to attend this convention!

This is probably the most significant opportunity to date for outreach to the medical community and as far as I know the only one of such magnitude to date. The exposure is invaluable. As is always the case with outreach, we have no immediate or calculable evidence of what value our attempts may bring. But it is through this sort of exposure that we hope to be "a household name" to the public, just as Alcoholics Anonymous has become over the years!

There is no way to describe completely the kaleidoscope of happenings we experienced, but I want to try so that you can share in the excitement that we who were there felt.

Those of us who worked in the booth did four hour shifts, either the 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. or 1 p.m. to 5 p.m. We distributed the two pamphlets "Introduction to Nicotine Anonymous" and "The Medical View". We also distributed the "800" Hot Line card for the Los Angeles basin and a new card which was produced with this convention in mind. **Matt T.** did a great job as usual getting it done for us. The new card shows the web site, e-mail address and the World Service phone number as well as the World Service address. This card no doubt will be used all over the world. The new card was viewed with great enthusiasm by the doctors to whom we spoke because they can now check out the web site!

We spoke to doctors from all over the world, including the United Kingdom, Canada, France and many others. And, of course, many from all over the United States.

We had a World Meeting Directory in the booth and must tell you, those countries where we already have meetings were thrilled to see that Nicotine Anonymous has already been established there. The same held true with the cities in our country.

I loved what one of the doctors from the United Kingdom said to me. As he gazed out across this vast hall (maybe a mile wide), with all of the many elaborate and beautiful displays, his comment was, "You know, of all there is to be seen here, I have a feeling the most important thing going on is right here!!" Wow! He was talking about our humble little 10' X 10' booth!! I have to tell you, I was very proud of our little booth and the members in it. Likewise the great banner **Mike K.** created for us!!

One other little miracle God performed was to put a young girl by the name of Arlene in the booth next to us. When she saw what we were about, she revealed to us that she had two days off nicotine! (and I guess you know, don't you, how she was feeling about that two days!) Happily (as you also know, don't you?) she got 12-stepped big time for the next three days! We even brought her a packet of literature and a newcomers chip! She was delighted and plans to attend meetings in Virginia when she gets home.

One day Doctor Atkins came by the booth and very graciously thanked us for attending, imagine that! We thank him! Also Judy McDonald, who manages these conventions for the Oncology Society, came by and thanked us for coming and invited us to attend next year in Georgia!

I want to thank everyone involved, without your help, it would not have been possible: **John O.**, Chairperson, World Services, for his advice and for ordering and shipping the literature to us; **Matt T.** for creating the new cards and seeing they got printed; **John N.**, World Services treasurer, for playing "pack mule" and getting it all into the convention hall; **Carol F.** for playing "pack mule" at the close and getting the boxes out of the hall. Also to **Jack C.** and **Carol F.** for hauling it about in the trunks of their cars (not the mule, the literature). Also, all of the members who worked in the booth carrying the message. We all shared a great feeling of elation to be a part of this truly momentous occasion! A very special thanks to **Martha K.**, of N.Y., for getting and passing the opportunity along!

I DIDN'T FIT IN

Bill P., Carrollton, TX

I didn't think I fit in.

I had a friend who told me he had quit smoking in "Smokers Anonymous." That was in January, 1990. In February, I came up with enough courage to go there and ask if I could use their program, even though I wasn't a smoker (I dipped snuff). I arrived at the meeting, listened, and when it came my turn, I nervously explained that I knew I didn't qualify for real because I didn't smoke, but could I stay anyway in order to try to quit dipping? I was received with open arms, and minds. On March 10th, I quit dipping. On April 6th, I began dipping again, then was fortunate enough to be able to quit a second time April 7th.

About a week later, somebody held up a flier the group had received from Smokers Anonymous World Services announcing the Conference in 1990. It was to be in Phoenix, AZ on April 27-29, 1990. Having nothing better to do, I went with 20 days sobriety under my belt. At that Conference, I again spoke and ask to be included, even though I wasn't a smoker. Nobody objected. Whew!

On the agenda for that conference was an issue involving the name, Smokers Anonymous. It seems that a guy in New York state had copyrighted the name and was attempting to rent it back to us (for \$5000 per state per year), or he was going to sue us. Well, since we didn't have enough money to pay for even one state, and since we had "ceased fighting anyone and anything", the conference decided to change our name. To make a long story short, the name was changed to "Nicotine Anonymous" and all of a sudden, I fit in!

TELL ME ABOUT IT

How do you handle a difficult situation without smoking? Particularly, what do you do (or what did you do in that difficult first year) when you go out of town and are out of your own familiar environment? Your answer may help someone about to face that. You can e-mail me at <NAWSO@hotmail.com>. Or send me your ideas at NAWSO, P.O. Box 591777, San Francisco, CA 94159-1777.

A POEM TO SHARE

TO THE EDITOR,

This is a real nice poem I found. I thought you could use it for *SevenMinutes*. I found it in a Smokers Anonymous (our former name) package that a lady from Chattanooga gave me back around 1987. I've been saving it, hoping one day I would make it. The poem was on these little sheets (about 5 X 7) that they passed out to the members. I don't know, I just thought it was real special.

Gina F. , Jackson, GA

To meet life one day at a time, one step at a time;

to have the strength and the will to keep on keeping on;

to have the wisdom to handle the affairs of my life;

to have the ability to make right and good decisions;

to have courage to let the past go, and forge ahead resolutely;

to have the faith to know there is no loss or separation in God,

that in Him I am forever one with those I love;

to have the vision to see the good in all things;

to increase our awareness of God's presence, close and abiding;

to know that "underneath are the Everlasting Arms" and

God will never fail nor forsake us. Let this be our earnest prayer. AMEN.



IT WAS TOOL TIME IN PENNSYLVANIA AT THIS YEAR'S FUNWEEKEND *Jan S., Phoenixville, PA*

While still in the afterglow of our wonderful Funweekend, I want to thank everyone who came and everyone who helped to make this such a memorable event.

From the very beginning out on the deck of the Fitzwater Station overlooking the Schuylkill Canal, the dreamlike quality of the weekend took effect as we dined, fellowshipped, watched children in paddle boats out on the canal, and set ourselves up for a blessed time. Our walk along the canal was inspiring and informational, and next year we plan to visit Fricks Locks Dam Village. Special thanks go out to Bob Elmer of the Phoenixville Iron Canal Trailways Association for his guidance and companionship.

Bright and early Saturday morning we readied the YMCA community room for our guests ... bagels, coffee, fruit galore ... what a spread! "Tool Time" was a big hit and took off with a mind of its own, with helpers adorned in carpenters' aprons donated by Phoenix Lumber. Anita from Recovery Works had her shop's wares on display and our guests were anxious to browse and buy. Anita commented again and again on the quality of our sharing and the depth of recovery which I have always already felt is specific to Nicotine Anonymous.

Although our numbers were down a bit this year due to the Fathers Day weekend, our spirits certainly were not. **Lee** gave a terrific talk straight from the heart as our featured speaker. Our workshops were well attended and **Brad** even enjoyed sharing his bazooka-style squirt gun as he chaired the Beginners Meeting! I was personally delighted by the participation of "The Pennsylvanians" this year ... our beloved friends from New York and New Jersey could truly enjoy a well deserved weekend with R & R. And R & R we got! Bio-feedback from Dr. Eric Miller and Marina's ever-popular Traiger body works massages. It doesn't get any better than this!

As we celebrated **Michelle's** first anniversary with a special cake after lunch, we couldn't help but stop to appreciate the contrast between this year and last.

We also had the chance to congratulate the YMCA's own **Susan G.** who recently celebrated 90 days. After helping us set up the Funweekend all these years, a little rubbed off on her ... after all, it's a program of attraction!

WHERE does all that good food come from?? A bountiful lunch from Buon Appetito was really appreciated, and the pot luck barbecue lived up to its reputation once again. Who will ever forget **Neal's** Sloppy Joes or **Eileen's** sweet potato salad?

Many really enjoyed the increased free time this year, and **Scott** and **Eileen** had a long dreamed-of chance to visit the Brandywine River Museum, home of **Scott's** favorite artist, Andrew Wyeth. More and more, our Funweekend guests are spreading out around the area and taking in all that we have to offer here. Afterwards, **Bill C.** ventured out to Johnstown to learn more about the famous flood.

Flash bulbs popped in abundance as **Zulma** and I took our curtain calls for our play entitled "The Tools Of The Trade" which required two command performances. I looked a little like Minnie Pearl and **Zulma** outdid herself as the shopkeeper, and we really had a ball doing this skit.

My personal favorite is the candlelight sharing. As the glow from the candle illuminates our faces in the misty dusk, the words of our sharing illuminates our hearts. And yes, at this meeting, we DO share from our hearts. What gratitude. What encouragement. I strongly believe that if you share here, you will not smoke for the coming year.

And then there's breakfast at the Manor House! **Harriet** was superlative again this year. Not only gourmet, but global. I could live in Malaysia if that's how they eat breakfast there! **Alice** gave us an inspiring, encouraging, prayerfully-prepared talk complete with visual aids. A perfect finale for a perfect weekend. We've already picked the dates for next year ... June 11, 12, and 13. Mark your calendars and plan to attend. The Funweekend awaits you!

WELCOME TO THE FELLOWSHIP

The following are new Nicotine Anonymous meetings as of August, 1998. Good luck in your growth and outreach to the nicotine addict who still suffers!

STATE	CITY	DAY	TIME	LOCATION	ADDRESS
CA	Apple Valley	Fri	6:00pm	Victor Valley Alamo Club	11085 Central Avenue
	Chico	Thu	6:00pm	Butte County Mental Health	592 Rio Lindo Avenue
	Modesto	Sat	Noon	Memorial Hospital / Ivy Room	1700 Coffee Road
	Walnut Creek	Wed	6:30pm	Unity Center of Walnut Creek	1871 Geary Road
	Joshua Tree	Mon	7:00pm	Joshua Tree Community Center	Conference Room 1
	Ft. Bragg	Wed	5:45pm	Eagle's Hall - Room 449	
	Monterey	Mon	6:30pm	Monterey Public Library	625 Pacific Street
	Grass Valley	Tue	7:30pm	Northern Mines Alamo Club	10656 Alta Street
CO	Denver	Tue	7:15pm	231 Buckley Club	15210 E. 6th #1
FL	Miami	Sat	1:00pm	UTC Church	21310 N.W. 37th Avenue
ID	CoeurD'Alene	Tue	Noon	The Place	10th & Best
MA	Taunton	Wed	7:00pm	Greater Taunton Council on Alcohol	42 Count Street, rear
MI	Royal Oak	Mon	7:00pm	St. John's Episcopal Church	26998 Woodward Avenue
MI	Spring Lake	Tue/Thu	7:00pm	Christ Community Church	225 E. Exchange Street, 49456
MN	Redwood Falls	Thu	7:00pm	Redwood Falls Hospital Education Dept.	100 Fallwood Road, 56283
NY	Carmel	Tue	7:30pm	Carmel High School - Room 207	Fair Street
	Poughkeepsie	Tue	7:00pm	The Nazarene Church	292 Vassar Road
OH	Cincinnati	Thu	7:00pm	Hyde Park Methodist Church	Grace & Observatory Avenue
SC	N. Charleston	Mon	7:30pm	Roper North Hospital /Nurse Admin Room	2750 Speissegger Drive
AB	Edmonton	Thu	7:30pm	St. Lukes Anglican Church	8424 - 95th Avenue
BC	Courtenay	Mon	7:00pm	St. George's United Church	505 - 6th Street



FROM THE EDITOR - ACTING AS IF

When you're in the throws of withdrawal, your chest is tight, your throat is thick, your emotions are dancing all over you - don't forget "as if." When life gives you lemons *and no sugar* - don't forget "as if." When simply waking up seems to hurt the very most - don't forget "as if."

"As if?" yes, as if! Act *as if* you're already alright. Act *as if* everything is fine. Do that long enough and gradually it becomes true. Sometimes it takes longer than others but it happens. This is one of the things I've learned in this program. At first it seemed silly . . . and a little fake. But I tried it and found it really helped. Now it's almost five years later and cravings come as only passing thoughts. But life still caves in on me once in a while. "*As if*" helps when I remember to use it.

I once heard in a sermon, "You can't feel your way into an action but you can act your way into a feeling." Put another way, "Fake it 'till you make it!" Try it, it works!



Don't forget that "Service is the Key!" Here are a few opportunities to help on the National level:

Teleservant - someone to check phone messages and return calls on a designated day of the week.

Outreach Coordinator - works with referring agencies that want more information about Nicotine Anonymous.

Publications Coordinator - oversee distribution and printing of Nicotine Anonymous publications.

Translators - translate existing Nicotine Anonymous literature into other languages.

E-mail Pen Pals - Correspond with newcomers and others to help further recovery.

Writers - to submit stories, poems or articles for *Seven Minutes*.

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