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Gary M., Publisher  
Susan K., Editor

Catherine C., Editorial Advisor  
Joe S., Subscriptions  
Kim F. Proofreader  
Cathy M. Proofreader

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## Leigha ...

**M**y beloved cat, Leigha, died three months ago. I can't believe I am writing this, but I know I need to. I know my life would be a serious mess if I were using nicotine, and I am so grateful for this program and my recovery!

I am richer for having had Leigha in my life, and for having this program of recovery to help me learn how to feel. I need to celebrate my cat's life, grieve the loss and somehow, welcome her into my life in new ways: the sadness and the joy together. I knew I would be going on an adventure this past summer, yet I didn't expect this. I was, however, having a hard time deciding whether I should go across the country to study or not. I worried that my old cat would get sick when we got to California and that I wouldn't have a support system/meetings around me yet. I also worried about not having a familiar place to bury her if she died out here. Her passing while we were still in NY is both profound and extremely painful.

Leigha was probably born in 1990 or 1991, and came to live with me in December of 1993. I was twenty-five at the time, and very attached to my nicotine, already using it for twelve years. I used nicotine for the first eight of the years I spent with my cat. It's funny, if you would have told me when I got Leigha that I would be celebrating four and one half years of freedom from nicotine by the end of her life, I would have thought you were out of your mind. (Even four and one half days away from nicotine seemed like a wide stretch of my imagination!)

When my beloved cat friend and I first met, she crawled right into my jacket. I assumed she was seeking comfort, and seemed so at home. That was such a sweet feeling. I guess I, too was seeking comfort, the com-

fort I had been trying to ironically get from my poison, nicotine. Inviting Leigha into my life was probably also an attempt to break out of the isolation that my active nicotine addiction kept me in. She certainly was a creature to interact with, one who didn't talk back. Well, generally.

My nicotine addiction sometimes put Leigha in danger. For the first three years that Leigha and I were together, I used

Continued on page 4...

# F

rom our chair...

### A privacy statement...

Nicotine Anonymous World Services Office does not share contact information with any other source, including other groups in our fellowship, and it will be used exclusively for the purposes authorized by individual members. Each member will have the opportunity to authorize the use of their email address for specific purposes such as: Seven Minutes subscription, notices of national or regional conferences, minutes of officer's meetings, announcements of items posted to *What's New* on our web site.

The data base of contact information will be kept in a secure manner off line. Subscribers will have the option to use an outside secure payment service to avoid having credit card information in our data base.

Kate W.  
Chairperson

## The Twelve Steps of Nicotine Anonymous

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 and Twelve Traditions reprinted and adapted here with the permission of Alcoholics Anonymous World Services, Inc. Permission to reprint and adapt the Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions 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 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 Traditions of Nicotine Anonymous

1. Our common welfare should come first; personal recovery depends upon Nicotine Anonymous unity.
2. For our group purpose there is but one ultimate authority — a loving God as He may express Himself in our group conscience. Our leaders are but trusted servants; they do not govern.
3. The only requirement for Nicotine Anonymous membership is a desire to stop using nicotine.
4. Each group should be autonomous except in matters affecting other groups or Nicotine Anonymous as a whole.
5. Each group has but one primary purpose - to carry its message to the nicotine addict who still suffers.
6. A Nicotine Anonymous group ought never endorse, finance, or lend the Nicotine Anonymous name to any related facility or outside enterprise, lest problems of money, property, and prestige divert us from our primary purpose.
7. Every Nicotine Anonymous group ought to be fully self-supporting, declining outside contributions.
8. Nicotine Anonymous should remain forever non-professional, but our service centers may employ special workers.
9. Nicotine Anonymous, as such, ought never be organized; but we may create service boards or committees directly responsible to those they serve.
10. Nicotine Anonymous has no opinion on outside issues; hence the Nicotine Anonymous name ought never be drawn into public controversy.
11. Our public relations policy is based on attraction rather than promotion; we need always maintain personal anonymity at the level of press, radio, TV, and films.
12. Anonymity is the spiritual foundation of all our traditions, ever reminding us to

place principles before personalities.

## The Twelve Traditions of Alcoholics Anonymous

1. Our common welfare should come first; personal recovery depends upon A.A. unity.
2. For our group purpose, there is but one ultimate authority—a loving God as he may express Himself in our group conscience. Our leaders are but trusted servants; they do not govern.
3. The only requirement for A.A. membership is a desire to stop drinking.
4. Each group should be autonomous except in matters affecting other groups or A.A. as a whole.
5. Each group has but one primary purpose—to carry its message to the alcoholic who still suffers.
6. An A.A. group ought never endorse, finance or lend the A.A. name to any related facility or outside enterprise, lest problems of money, property and prestige divert us from our primary purpose.
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12. Anonymity is the spiritual foundation of all our traditions, ever reminding us to place principles before personalities.

## 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.

*Reprinted from adaptation with permission of the A.A. Grapevine*

*Smoking room...*



Sent in by Claudette B.  
Author unknown.

## Leigha...

Continued from page 1...

nicotine in the house. When I found out she had a heart murmur, I don't think I ever consciously made the connection that my nicotine use could have anything to do with it.

When I started using it outside instead of in the house, I did feel relief that I wasn't hurting her anymore. Although there were times she'd stare longingly at me from a windowsill inside as I stood outside using my drug. The first time I found a tick on Leigha, I didn't know what to do, so I first used nicotine, of course! I thought it would somehow help me know what to do! Oy! I now know that what I was looking for was a "breather," ironically. It's true that my decisions are often discerned best when I stop and listen first. Only now I don't need nicotine to do that. I am so grateful that, as far as I know, my cat never developed Lyme's Disease from that tick! I know sometimes I took my cat for granted. I'm not perfect. I think she understood that.

At the beginning of my recovery, my cat and I lived in a sweet little cottage. With her insistence that she become an outdoor cat, Leigha taught me a lot about freedom, balance, and overcoming fear. My cat was a grounding force in my life. Accepting her loss is possible because of another, even bigger grounding force, my HP, who is always with me.

My cat Leigha was who I came home to after getting free of nicotine! She watched me learn how to live in the world moment by moment without that deadly 'crutch.' I recently thought how funny that must have looked to her. Then again, if that looked funny, then what she saw in years prior must have looked absolutely ridiculous. Me going outside repeatedly in below freezing weather, even with a 101-degree fever to inhale something that was killing me!

As a recovering nicotine addict, decisions have been hard for me, and the weeks prior to my cat's passing were no different. It was confusing. I fluctuated back and forth between trying to 'save' her at almost any cost and being concerned that I was interrupting what seemed to be a natural process. I know part of my intention was selfish. I did not

want to bear the burden of a cat who needed so much attention at this point in my life. Am I responsible for Leigha's life ending earlier than it would have had she gotten more fluids more regularly? Maybe. I feel guilt about that. I hope Leigha forgives me. Feeling my feelings is an amazing thing! While Leigha was living her last days, I had made some of my amends with her, something I could never have done without this program.

Leigha died early in the morning, and I felt terrible that I wasn't awake to be with her when she went. I felt she thought I didn't care because I went to sleep. I know she knows I care, and it has helped to remember that there is a Higher Power that is always with her, too. Interestingly, belief that we are alone is part of what seduced me into smoking. With nicotine I had an instant companion, or so I thought! Now I know that there is always a *Loving* Power greater than myself with me.

It was strange driving Leigha's beautiful body from Queens to Woodstock, NY to bury her, since driving back up there on weekends during the last two years was such a joy for me. This time, though, I was bringing my beloved cat upstate to bury her. It was such a contrast to exactly a year before, when I drove her, vibrantly alive, upstate for the summer. That last car ride was so hard. Yet I was not alone during that trip. Besides my Higher Power, I also took another gift- a copy of Seven Minutes from about two years ago. In it was a piece written by a woman, also from NY, whose cat had passed away. In the piece she told how she drove her beloved cat in her car for the last time. Somehow, that back issue of the newsletter found its way back to me right when I needed it, during the last days of Leigha's life two years later. During the weeks surrounding Leigha's passing, I kept that issue nearby, and read it over and over, to remind me that I am not alone. It was a great comfort to me, as were the many phone calls during that time. I am so grateful for that article and this fellowship.

Leigha was named after Leo Buscaglia, who wrote numerous books on love. I want to continue to keep that focus even with her death... I know I have

a better chance if I'm free of nicotine and working on my recovery than if I were to use nicotine and numb myself out. I am so glad I can feel, even though it hurts. The blessing of feeling, for my feelings had also helped me feel a profound love for my sweet companion who I will always love.

Thank you, all of you in Nicotine Anonymous, for sharing this journey with me!

Judi D, NY

(In California for the moment)

## A share from Kathy K.

**H**i, I thought I'd share to give encouragement to all those starting the journey of recovery. I came here not wanting to quit, but the quit found me. As I look back there were many reasons to quit: COPD, asthma, sick and tired of being sick and tired of smoking, afraid to quit and what would I do with out my best friend.

As I walk this path of smoke free living I find many interesting people here at Nicotine Anonymous. I find faceless people willing to always be kind, share of themselves, lend an ear, pour coffee, hold me up with laughter and share themselves freely so I can learn lessons in being just me. I have poured my heart out to some and guess what-they heard, they even at times poured their heart out to me, and guess what-I cared.

Living life to it's fullest is so awesome who would have known way back on day one I'd still be here 533 days later. It has been doable for this girl, so if you are thinking of quitting the walk is so worth it.

You can be amazed also. The days have come and gone and I still remember day one. It is fresh in my heart and I hope I never forget that day. My journey has just begun and I am still in a state of constant change. Twelve Steps have given me a road

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# This & That...

Continued from page 4...

map of what's in me that needs to be changed and also gives me courage to change the things I can. And in some Steps I find the knowledge (wisdom) to choose which direction fits my life and me. My best advice is to be easy on yourself and take baby steps each and every day. Read *The Book*, follow the Steps, go to meetings and most of all be honest with yourself. Find a sponsor who can show you the way, this has been what has worked for me. NicA has saved my life and I owe so much that each day I pray, "keep me fresh in the ways of NicA and allow me to pass it forward to all I meet."  
Kathy K.

**I** have not seen a Seven Minutes issue since December, 2005 and if it is not too late, I would like to comment on the issue of rewriting the Steps.

I understand that the Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions of Nicotine Anonymous are reprinted and adapted with the permission of Alcoholics Anonymous World Services, Inc.

The A.A. Service Manual contains a resolution that was offered and adopted at the 20th Anniversary Convention of A.A. in 1955 which included the following – "and it is understood that neither the Twelve Traditions of Alcoholics Anonymous nor the warranties of Article XII of the Conference Charter shall ever be changed or amended by the General Service Conference except by first asking the consent of the registered A.A. groups of the world. (This would include all A.A. groups known to the general service offices around the world.) These groups shall be suitably notified of any proposal for change and shall be allowed no less than six months for consideration thereof. And before any such Conference action can be taken, there must

first be received in writing within the time allotted the consent of at least three-quarters of all those registered groups who respond to such proposal."

"Resolution: It was resolved by the 1976 General Service Conference of Alcoholics Anonymous that those instruments requiring consent of three-quarters of the responding groups for change or amendment would include the Twelve Steps of A.A., should any such change or amendment ever be proposed."

Nicotine Anonymous is founded on the same principles as our parent program, Alcoholics Anonymous and I am so grateful that these resolutions protect the Steps, Traditions and warranties from me. It is because these resolutions have retained the original wisdom of these instruments that I was able to come into Nicotine Anonymous in 1994 when I discovered that after ten years of being smoke free, I wanted to smoke again in order to be part of a group that smoked even though I had become allergic to second hand smoke. My wisdom/ego told me that everything would be all right if I just smoked with them. And I also did not like the God word in early recovery and wanted to change the terminology every time I progressed. I accepted that ego can stand for "Easing God Out" and GOD can stand for "Good Orderly Direction" (as Checko noted in a letter). Now I find that God is a word that stands for something that is inspiring, an amazing transformation of my soul and spirit and personality that is enhanced every day as long as I practice the principles in all my affairs. It is so progressively tremendous that there is no one word that can capture its essence as I cope with this wild, wacky, wicked, weird, wonderful world in sobriety.

Thank you for letting me share.  
Namaste,  
Alice B.

**A** poem from Scott A.

2006-11-02

Little Carrots and Baby Cigars

my addiction,  
shame and resignation  
a lost sap I am

searing cool smoke  
yellows musky fingertips  
alveoli tar sacs  
swim with insanity

smoke-quit a love-hate dance  
want to stop-  
when?  
tomorrow  
at fifty  
at twenty-six  
next week

red ash tickles  
then claws my brain  
spiders take over my skin  
give me valium, lock me away

found friends, love  
forgiveness  
listen, share and hope

mad patient reads  
cellophane whispers  
emotions  
fighting life and God  
meditate peace

night triggers  
fear, let it go  
tomorrow opens my lungs  
the path becomes prayer  
weeks move on

free,  
my addiction

## Acknowledgments

I would like to thank Kay and Witt at Splash Hall Poetry Forums for their helpful critique and support.

## *Can you answer any of these questions?*

What is your nicotine addiction like? What is working for you?

What are you grateful for today, either being free of nicotine or having found Nicotine Anonymous?

Do you remember your first days free of nicotine? What helped you?

Have you felt fear of doing something new that reminds you of your active addiction?

How have you dealt with anger since being free of nicotine?

How do you work the Steps in your life?

How has a Step-study helped you?

Do you have a Nicotine-free anniversary or special occasion coming up?

Are you looking for some service to do for the Fellowship?

Do you want to contribute to your recovery and contribute to the recovery of others as well?

Do you ever feel great after sharing at a meeting?

Do you like to write?

Do you NOT like to write? Can you record yourself sharing about your freedom from nicotine, and then transcribe it onto paper?

## *If you answered ANY of these questions, then YOU HAVE A SHARE FOR OUR NEXT MEDITA- TION BOOK!*

You do not have to think you are "writer." Basically, if you are a member of Nicotine Anonymous, then you have a tidbit to share! If I waited till the moment I thought I'd speak eloquently I'd never have opened my mouth at a meeting and I never would have eventually gotten free of this deadly addiction! Similarly, if 365 times, some of us would have felt stuck in our fear that the meditation we wrote is not good enough, our fellowship would not have a whole book being published!

Send your short piece to

[dailymeditations@nicotine-anonymous.org](mailto:dailymeditations@nicotine-anonymous.org)

World Services

419 Main Street, PMB# 370

Huntington Beach, CA 92648

FAX (714) 536-4539

## *Letter from the editor...*

The above also applies for Seven Minutes. We always need articles: poems, stories, jokes, art or just a buzz for your home group or online meetings to print in Seven Minutes.

Readers tell us what you want to see in Seven Minutes. More sharing about the Traditions, Steps, Promises, service work, starting a meeting, chairing a meeting, Higher Power, intergroup, resentments, thirteenth stepping, Twelve Step calls, carrying meetings to jails and prisons, attraction rather than promotion, relapse, sponsorship, online meetings, etc. Anything related to Nicotine Anonymous and nicotine addiction.

All these subjects are important to our recovery. A great way to carry the message is through Seven Minutes.

You can send your articles to [sevenminuteseditor@nicotine-anonymous.org](mailto:sevenminuteseditor@nicotine-anonymous.org) or Seven Minutes Editor c/o NAWSO 419 Main St., PMB#370 Huntington Beach, Ca. 92648

I'll share these articles with the Traditions board and the officers at World Services for approval.

Susan K.

## *Give Back!*

You Can't Keep it Unless You Give It Away

Nicotine Anonymous World Services is seeking servants for a variety of positions within the fellowship. Please see the contact information below if you would like to learn more about these service opportunities. Please share this flyer with your group. Remember, you have to give it away to keep it.

E-Mail Volunteers-Share your experience, strength and hope with people around the world who email us. Help them find meetings and answer questions about NicA. Provide about thirty minutes a week from your home or office computer.

Telephone Servants-Respond to telephone calls from people taking their first step on the journey. One day of service per week from the comfort of your own home.

Email/Penpal Coordinator-Responsible for receiving email requests for pen pals; adding names to the email pen pal list; and sending out the list.

For further information about any of these service positions, please contact:

*E-mail:* [info@nicotine-anonymous.org](mailto:info@nicotine-anonymous.org)  
*Write:* Nicotine Anonymous World Services  
419 Main Street, PMB#370  
Huntington Beach, CA 92648

*Looking to do Twelfth Step work? Help wanted  
in NicA cyberspace office!*

### *E-mail Volunteers*

Duties: Share your experience, strength and hope with people around the world who email us. Help them find meetings and answer questions about Nicotine Anonymous. Provide about thirty minutes a week from your home or office computer. Qualifications:

1. Nicotine free for at least ninety days. That means free from nicotine in all it's forms including smoking, patches, gum, inhalers, chewing, etc.
2. Member of Nicotine Anonymous - meaning you attend meetings and belong to a person-to-person group or are a member of our on-line chat group or communicate via mail or email with other members if meetings are not available where you live.
3. Have an email address and are willing to accept and transmit messages to people around the world who will be writing to us.
4. Some computer literacy - Familiar with using email and know how to access web pages for information. (If you haven't seen our Web Pages yet, take a look!) [www.nicotine-anonymous.org](http://www.nicotine-anonymous.org)
5. Willing to give back - what can I say?

That's about it. Join other volunteers who are doing this rewarding Twelfth Step work. Training provided (it's rather simple.)

For more info contact Alan, Email Coordinator, NicA World Services at:

**[info@nicotine-anonymous.org](mailto:info@nicotine-anonymous.org)**

## Newcomer's Corner

**H**ello my name is Suzi and I am a nicotine addict...

and this is my story. Let me give you a little background on how I got started. When I was young I lost my whole world. I lost my dad to bowel cancer. I was six years old when that happened. And then when I was age seven with no parents my aunt and uncle adopted me. They were never good parents; all they cared about was their drugs and alcohol, smoking and so on.

So when I was nine I decided I wanted to try smoking and see what it was like. I found out I didn't like it at all but a couple of years later I did go back to smoking and remained a smoker until now. I was a young smoker and thought I'd have to steal cigarettes from my aunt but then one day she caught me smoking and told me I would not be able to stop. From then on she gave them to me.

I never really had one drug of choice. I had a few. Over the years I dropped alcohol and drugs. I'm an epileptic and can't do those things without having serious consequences to my actions. I would have multiple seizures when I drank and was sent to a place that helped me to get clean from alcohol and drugs.

I don't remember a lot of my recovery. I was very sick and was indeed in need of some major changes at that point.

But with smoking it's been different and also harder. I can say "no" to booze and drugs but it's been hard for me to say no to nicotine, but with the help of Nicotine Anonymous, at last I'm able to say "no" to nicotine.

In the first days of my quit I was very agitated, moody and had a problem with everything and everybody. I was very uncomfortable. I stuck to my NicA meetings as much as I could,

sometimes making four to six meetings day.

For the first three weeks I took part in my meetings and my home group. I bought *Nicotine Anonymous the Book* from the Nicotine Anonymous web site and read up on that and when I hit one month I decided I wanted to get into service work. That is also when I found Lobbyville and Kathie K. She's a sweet heart and would help anybody. She did then and she is still helping me. I just sat back and watched her and I talk with her often. She's a very wise woman and I owe any success to NicA and her. Nicotine anonymous is the reason I'm still quit and have a desire to stay quit. I truly believe that the Twelve Steps of Nicotine Anonymous and the Traditions of NicA has helped me in my quit. I also owe a big thank you to my quit buddy, Goldie.

She's been there for me right from the start even before she quit smoking. I thank my Higher Power for Goldie.

Also I had no clue Nicotine Anonymous was here for me and if it were not for my Higher Power I would still be smoking.

I have been smober for three months, one week and I have saved one week and three days of life due to Nicotine Anonymous.

Thank you Nicotine Anonymous for saving my life.

**Suzi D.**

**G**ood-bye Cigarettes...  
A recent book I've been reading directed me to write a letter to say "good-bye to my cigarettes" – so here goes...

I can't start with "Dear Mr. Cigarette" because there's certainly nothing dear about you. And I won't honor you with the salutation "Mr." because you're certainly not honorable. In fact, you don't really exist, as a person.

My cigarette career began after I was fifty years old! Big surprise, huh? No one in my family smoked, so I never even thought about it. Many years ago, I met a sixteen-year old smoker and married him

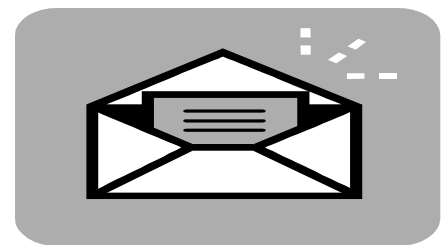
sometime later. I didn't consciously pay much attention to his smoking. It was really of no consequence to me. I suppose I just saw what I wanted to see and little else.

After our three children were grown and out of the home, I guess I began to open my eyes and see a little more. I saw we were having a couple of drinks every night and smoking together. I remember asking if I could "have a puff" off his cigarette a night or two? Then I wanted "one of my own." Before long, I was wanting "one of my own" all the time. I don't remember my partner being sad or glad. I guess he was only seeing what he wanted to see. Anyway, after a great many years, he and I went our separate ways, each taking our own booze and cigarettes. I joined AA and have some fourteen years clean and sober. I heard that John has quit smoking after all these years. Hooray!

Well, so much for past history. Seven years ago, my doctor's nurse told me about Nicotine Anonymous. It made all the difference for me. (I had tried everything else.) Right away I got five good years of smober living. Then I fell flat on my face on the relapse sidewalk. I smoked the longest, most expensive ones I could find for a year and a half. Once, someone from NicA called me. I thanked her for her call but told her I was enjoying my smoking and wasn't coming back to my meetings.

Then, a few months ago, the word addiction slammed into my consciousness and I flat out knew I wasn't in control of anything. I headed straight for NicA. Now, five minutes at a time, I have thirty-seven days free of this wicked addiction.

Most gratefully yours,  
Lindy B.





## *A little share from Carol...*

**L**et go and let God. It seems easy to say and it seems easy to do until I am 'tested' to do it, day in and day out, calling my own bluff. For me 'letting God' is not only walking with Him but also allowing Him to carry me during the walk. To trust a Power that I have never seen to care for my every need, to carry me every day and not want my own feet to touch the ground.

**Revelation number one...**God does take better care of me than I ever could. I have swallowed a lot of Pride Pie and Humble Hotcakes on this journey so far.

It's hard to 'let God.' I am no longer a child in the womb. I have seen so much of the world, a vast tree of knowledge; I have had so many independent experiences that have shaped my world and my perceptions. In other words, my humanness gets in the way of letting go and letting God more than I want it to because I still think I know more than I do. Oh no!

**Revelation number two...** you mean I don't know it all? Are you sure?

I came to believe that God could restore me to sanity, and come to find out that I stepped into a complete job, a total overhaul. God doesn't do anything half-baked apparently. I started this journey with a need to have my sanity restored after years of insanity with addiction. As it turns out, I am recognizing I am powerless over many things, not just nicotine. My sanity is being restored on many levels and countless layers, one day at a time and in God's time, not mine.

This walk with God and understanding where I need to be and what I need to learn continues to be an eye-opening, very humbling, soul deepening experience. It is also allowing me to see how much God does care and wants me to come out of this better than before. But it's not going to happen overnight either. My own separate journey to understand God's time (and not mine) is yet another matter I am learning about.

**Revelation number three...** patience is a virtue and now I understand why it's a virtue and I finally get it.

I have wired myself to be so independent and figure life out on my terms. I've been that way out of pure need and survival since I was a teenager. With that independent choice, I end up wallowing in my own self-doubt and frustration much too often. Being overly independent is like asking God to put me down and no longer carry me so we can just walk together, but then I zigzag on and off the path like a toddler, flinging open doors, and just not straying too far.

**Revelation number four...**God wants me to have cake and eat it too, but it's not up to me to decide where to get it or when I eat it. Everything is revealed in time, just not the way I would want it to happen and when I want it.

Would God rather carry me? Absolutely. I believe so, just as a mother cradles her child in the womb. God knows that He is everything I need and will care for me the best way. Yet, I do succumb to my own humanness, the mental, emotional and yes, even physical setbacks. As if walking by myself so I can wallow in the circumstances of my life, get frustrated, get down, or throw a tantrum is going to change anything. It doesn't, obviously. It often makes things worse. After all, "life happens whether we smoke or not." So wallowing, smoking, drinking, whatever "the mental poisons," is not the answer. So then I find myself humbly asking God to carry me again because it works, every time, no exceptions.

**Revelation number five...**recognizing and asking God for help and letting Him carry me has been a big part of my journey so far.

When I walk with God I do feel safer and more at peace. When I let go and let God, I literally float, true serenity. Yes, there is definitely a difference. 'Letting God' is like living in a ball of extreme slow motion energy for me where material things are merely the molecules and atoms and are to be solid or liquid. The 'physical world' is just something to bounce off of, like the metal ball in a pinball game. The physical world can change my direction; it can confine me and release me. It can imprison me if I let it. The spiritual world,

however, transcends all of that. It allows me to float above it all, see the physical world for what it really is, just matter, simple matter, intricate yet logical, disconnected yet cohesive and a perfect puzzle in constant yet imperfect progress.

I love 'the float' and being carried by God, but my own humanness has this dastardly way of wanting to walk on my own at the same time. So the cycle is what it is as a human, progress not perfection. With every step I take on my own while walking with God, I learn. I learn that I can lean on God, I learn to believe, I learn to trust, I learn to pray and I learn about miracles. Then when I truly let go and let God and He carries me, I rest, I deeply love and take care of myself too, I know that I am not alone, I know that asking for help is what God wants me to do, I know that everything will work out the way it is meant to, that everything happens for a reason and that God truly does want to care for my life if I 'let' Him. And by truly letting go and letting God, I just don't learn about miracles, I experience them, I become one.

May 9, 2006 seems like yesterday, and at the same time I feel I've lived an entire lifetime in 5 months since quitting. I experience being one of God's miracles every day by staying nicotine-free. I am learning more each day how to not only walk with God but also let Him carry me more in life, not just with my addiction. Being a using addict sure did stunt me for a lot of years and in a lot of ways. Life is just so much more calm and peaceful now. I am one grateful woman.

Thanks for letting me share. Carole, nicotine addict, smoked for twenty-eight years. Quit 5M 1W 4D 16h 40m, 164 days total. Cigs not smoked: 4,940. Life saved: 2W 3D 3h 40m. Choose not to smoke, one day at a time.

### **Overheard...**

**"You know, lady, you don't actually smoke. The cigarette does all the smoking, you are just the sucker!"**



# Recovery by the Bay

Nicotine Anonymous World Services Conference XXII

April 20-22, 2007 Novato, California

**Inn Marin** is approximately 20 miles north of the Golden Gate Bridge and is easily accessible from the San Francisco and Oakland airports. If you are not planning to rent a car, we recommend you use San Francisco for your travel plans, as shuttle service from Oakland only runs once every 2 hours. Inn Marin will pick you up from 7:45 a.m. to 8:00 p.m., at the Marin County ground transportation centers for both airports, with at least 24 hours advance reservation. Call the Inn with your flight information and they will schedule your tentative shuttle and give you instructions for your arrival.

**DEADLINE TO REGISTER WITH THE HOTEL IS MARCH 20, 2007**

**HOTEL RATES (PER NIGHT):**

The Inn Marin has given us a special price of

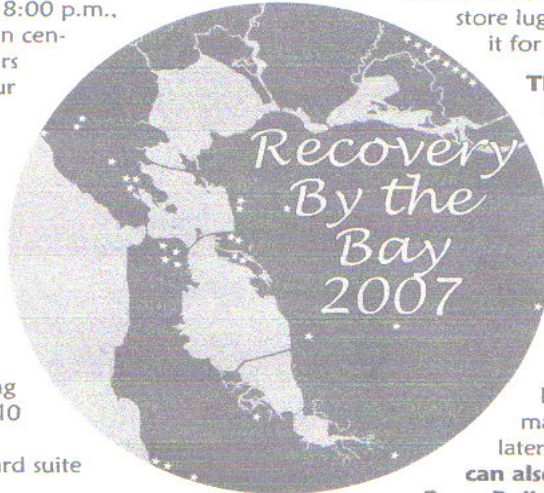
- \$95.00 for a single or double standard room (one king bed)
- \$125.00 for a standard suite (includes living room with pullout bed) (It's an extra \$10 for each additional adult.)
- \$140.00 for a jacuzzi suite (same as standard suite with a jacuzzi in the bedroom)

(Prices do not include taxes or gratuities. Rates will be honored three days before and after the conference, so stay awhile! Rates do include a continental breakfast.)

Register with Inn Marin by phone at 800-652-6565 (or

415-883-5952), or by fax at 415-883-5058. The group block code is NICA, and the group name is Nicotine Anonymous. To register online go to: [www.innmarin.com](http://www.innmarin.com), and enter the promotional code NICOTINEA under rate information.

**CHECK-OUT TIME** is 11:00 A.M. If you can't store luggage in your car, the hotel can store it for the day.



**THE AFTER-CONFERENCE ACTIVITY**

will be a ride on the Golden Gate Ferry to San Francisco. We will board the ferry in Larkspur (10 minutes from the hotel) at 3:30 and return on the following ferry to arrive back at Larkspur at 5:20. The ferry provides snacks and parts of it are covered in case of rain. Transport to and from Inn Marin will be arranged (if you have a car, your help will be appreciated). Pre-registration is not necessary. You may also wish to stay in SF to return later. The last ferry leaves SF at 7:00. **You can also catch the BART train near the Ferry Building to get to either airport.**

Those returning to the hotel after 5:20 will be responsible for their own transportation. Parking at the ferry is free, and there is public transportation to the hotel. Get more details at the registration desk when you arrive.

Please complete one form per person. Send payment and forms to Northern California Intergroup Nica; 2215-R Market Street, #229, San Francisco, CA 94114. Make checks out to Northern California Intergroup.

**You can also register online at [www.nica-norcal.org](http://www.nica-norcal.org) using a credit card.**

Please contact Conference Chair, Catherine C. at [ConferenceChair@nicotine-anonymous.org](mailto:ConferenceChair@nicotine-anonymous.org) for more information.

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_

CITY \_\_\_\_\_ STATE \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP \_\_\_\_\_

PHONE \_\_\_\_\_ E-MAIL \_\_\_\_\_

I will be a registered delegate.\* My group name is \_\_\_\_\_

I would like a roommate\*\*     Male     Female

I will need transportation to the Larkspur Ferry (after conference activity) and back (see above for more information).

I can provide transportation to and from the ferry for \_\_\_\_\_ people

Special needs \_\_\_\_\_

FEES			
\$25	Early Registration <b>OR</b>		\$ _____
\$35	Late Registration (after 4/13/06)		\$ _____
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\$25	Breakfast buffet		\$ _____
<b>T-Shirt</b> Quantity			
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\$15 ea	Med.	# _____	\$ _____
\$15 ea	Large.	# _____	\$ _____
\$15 ea	XLrge.	# _____	\$ _____
\$18 ea	XXLrge.	# _____	\$ _____
<b>Optional NAWS donation</b>			
<b>TOTAL Enclosed</b> \$ _____			

\*Delegates must be registered with World Services by **no later than March 20**. NAWS Secretary, 419 Main St., PMB #370, Huntington Beach, CA 92658; e-mail [secretary@nicotine-anonymous.org](mailto:secretary@nicotine-anonymous.org). Include name, address, phone, e-mail and group represented.

\*\*Every effort will be made to help you find a roommate. However, you will be responsible for contacting each other and making arrangements for your stay at the hotel.

Write to:  
**Nicotine Anonymous**  
**PO Box 1516**  
**LONDON**  
**SW1H 9WT**

Tel: **020 7976 0076** (please leave a message)

Web: **www.nicotine-anonymous.co.uk**

United Kingdom meetings...

This message was posted on the online message board about meetings in the United Kingdom. To check out the NicA UK homepage go to this link. <http://www.nicotine-anonymous.co.uk/>  
If you want to start a meeting in UK call 020-7976-0076 for a starter pack.

### *A share from Jackie...*

**W**hen I wrote the story titled "Jackie" I was off nicotine for twenty-one months. I am now nicotine free more than four years and as we say, "more will be revealed" so here goes.

I stopped asking anyone to call me Jacqueline on my third Nicotine Anonymous birthday. It was no longer necessary to keep insisting as I was getting nowhere with it. So it was back to Jackie and that's fine today.

What I began to uncover was an even deeper understanding of myself by freeing my body and mind from this powerful drug. Sometimes I did not like what I found but I pressed on nonetheless. It has been worth the effort every step of the way.

I did all the things people do that smoke cigarettes. I went out at all hours (in Los Angeles there are lots of places open twenty-four hours) to buy cigarettes. I stole from my boss knowing there were cigarettes in her drawer at work. I pieced together butts from various places, sometimes from the garbage. All the while, I realized I was feeding my addiction to

nicotine. I would use scotch tape to try to get one butt long enough to smoke. I fell asleep on my couch in my new place and the cigarette that was in the ashtray fell on the carpet. Luckily, I woke while it was just smoldering, but my whole place could have gone up in flame. I have burnt holes in clothes where the ashes fell, probably while I was driving. I drove in my car while smoking; passengers who didn't smoke had to endure the discomfort.

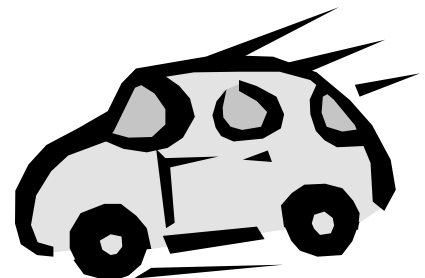
I threw out pack after pack meaning not to pick up that cigarette one more time - and then did it anyway. I lied to my husband (at that time), who was in the hospital, telling him that I didn't just have a cigarette, (I had brushed my teeth and thought he couldn't smell it!) What I didn't realize was that he could smell it on my hair, clothes, and skin. I would go out to lunch on one of my jobs and lie to someone who said I had just had a cigarette. I thought no one saw me, but who cared anyway? I was on a crash course to killing myself. I honestly believed I was trying to fulfill what I'd uncovered - that I didn't belong in this world. These were the messages given to me since I was born in various subtle ways.

Today I have a new outlook in life due mainly to the Twelve Step programs. Over twenty years ago I was taken, by a friend, to an Overeater's Anonymous meeting and when I looked at those Steps and Traditions and then said "are you kidding?" Amends, they owe me amends! And I didn't go back. I had to break up a marriage, find and fall in love with a man whose drinking bothered me enough to force me to find Al-Anon and from there to finally take a look at myself. I was beginning to really look at myself and I saw my addiction to nicotine. Thank God for Nicotine Anonymous!

I believe everyone can benefit from a Twelve Step program. I don't know anyone that doesn't have an obsession with something. In the meetings I can almost always relate to something someone says.

Thanks for listening to me.

Jackie



**NAWSO**  
**Profit & Loss**  
 January through September 2006

Jan - Sep 06

Ordinary Income/Expense Income	
4000 · Donations	4,449.79
4100 · Literature Sales	31,394.91
4290 · Shipping & Handling	4,572.49
4299 · Conference Profit (Loss)	<u>1,540.89</u>
Total Income	41,958.08
Cost of Goods Sold	
5000 · COGS	<u>17,748.30</u>
Total COGS	<u>17,748.30</u>
Gross Profit	<u>24,209.78</u>
Expense	
6000 · Office Expenses	17,152.85
6600 · WSO Expenses	<u>8,373.95</u>
Total Expense	<u>25,526.80</u>
Net Ordinary Income	-1,317.02
Other Income/Expense	
Other Income	<u>408.00</u>
8000 · Interest Income	<u>408.00</u>
Total Other Income	<u>408.00</u>
Net Income	<u>-909.02</u>

**Service is the Key...  
 Only You can tell your story.  
 What was your life like as an active addict?  
 What happened to get you in the door?  
 What were your breakthroughs?**

**Personal stories, articles, poems, art, jokes or adds pertaining to nicotine, nicotine recovery and Nicotine Anonymous can be sent to Susan K. at [SevenMinutesEditor@nicotine-anonymous.org](mailto:SevenMinutesEditor@nicotine-anonymous.org) or snail mail to *Seven Minutes* c/o NAWSO 419 Main St., PMB #370 Huntington Beach, CA 92648**

***Claudette B. shares her love and gratitude...***

**I** realized as I was reading through the message board, trying to "catch up" that I do not often take the time, if ever, to share what is happening in my life. I thought I'd take a minute here with your indulgence.

Sharing is always a big step for me, having always wanted to 'hide' my creativity now I seem to be more comfortable with whom I am. And that is what I wanted to write about.

Quitting nicotine, my choice was cigarettes, on January 22nd 2005, has given me an incredible number of blessings I had never expected or imagined. A freedom resides comfortably and warmly within me, a freedom brought on by ever increasing faith that all is well and that I and all my loved ones are in good hands. The fog has lifted. I have not only been able to let go of this poi-

sonous habit since I joined Nicotine Anonymous, I have been able to let go of great emotional & spiritual pain, many tears, letting go of great expectations and insane control in all facets of my life.

I have been blessed in being in a Twelve Step program, A.A., since December 26th 1991 and I have been very blessed with not having to pick up a drink since the day I went through those doors.

Yet I wasn't happy, not really. I'd have bursts of happy moments but most days it was more about just keeping up, making up and acting up.

God has guided my coming into these rooms, to this group and I have surrendered a little bit more each day. God guided me to the sponsor I have who has and continues to be one of the most powerful example of what real sobriety is and I have also been blessed with many more wonderful people I have met online at Voices of Recovery that I can call friends today. People

I feel close to, brothers and sisters in recovery, striving to gain freedom from pain and continued spiritual growth, an absolute blessing.

My son who was estranged from me, has started calling me more and more, just to say 'Hi' and see what's up, and say he loves me. I cherish those conversations now. I used to take them for granted.

Tomorrow I go pick up my grand daughter who is going to have a 'sleep over' at her Pama's (me) house.

I can breathe better, I feel better. Mina paints my eyes 'lellow' because she says she sees the sun in them. This you have given to me and life is good.

Ups and downs there will always be, it's up to me to choose to go down with the downs, pick up junk on my way, or... or stay up, inhale deeply, take another wonderful deep and freeing breath.

I try to always choose the latter and it is thanks to all of you. I wanted to say merci.

With tremendous love and extreme gratitude, Claudette B.



# BIRTHDAY CONGRATULATIONS!

*BARRY AND JANE K. 7-13-2004*

*BILLIE S. 9-12-2004*

*GARY M. 11-25-1998*

*JANINE C. 7-18-2005*



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## *Birthday Announcements*

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

The above-named member of Nicotine Anonymous stopped using nicotine

on \_\_\_\_\_ and has \_\_\_\_\_ years of freedom!

Mail to: Nicotine Anonymous World Services  
419 Main St., PMB#370

OR Huntington Beach, Ca. 92648 USA.

Email to: [sevenminuteseditor@nicotine-anonymous.org](mailto:sevenminuteseditor@nicotine-anonymous.org)

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*Seven Minutes* is a quarterly publication of N AWSO news, articles and letters; it is - "a meeting on a page." Your subscription will help *Seven Minutes* continue as the official conduit of this fellowship of recovering nicotine addicts. You may pay by check or money order (in US Funds only), or Credit Card.

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Try visiting our website at: [www.Nicotine-Anonymous.org](http://www.Nicotine-Anonymous.org) You can contact us by email at: [info@nicotine-anonymous.org](mailto:info@nicotine-anonymous.org).

(Revised 07-08-05)

**I** was looking in my files and stumbled across this one.

**Roz is doing great and she spoke at my eight year anniversary this last November.**

## **CAROL'S STORY**

My name is Rosalind and I'm a nicotine addict. I wanted to share with you a story about Carol. Carol was my friend and she was a smoker. We spent many a day having coffee, smoking and discussing the difficulties of life. I guess Carol was my best friend and in my early recovery in alcoholism I would have those days where it would feel like nobody loved me. On those days I would call or go see her and ask...do you love me? She would tell me how much she loved me and we would both end up laughing, me feeling so much better and her always being there for me. I adored her; one of my favorite memories was how she would kiss me on the cheek and leave a pair of red lip marks. That never embarrassed me or made me feel funny. It was more like a badge of honor.

At that time we attended meetings together, she was an Alanon married to an alkie and I was an alcoholic. Those were the good days. Life was fun, we were getting well in our Twelve Step programs, things were turning around in our lives and heck, life was good. Well as things happen, Carol and I grew apart. One day the news came that she had lung cancer. Now I don't know if she quit smoking the day she got the news, but now every time I saw her she would beg me to stop smoking. For the longest time I remember her going around with a bandana on her head as the chemotherapy had taken her hair along with many other things in her life. She would visit sometimes when she wasn't feeling too bad and we would drink coffee and I would smoke right in front of her as she begged me to stop. But my denial was like a cement wall and nothing could penetrate it. I hadn't found my

bottom as she had hers. She quit smoking but it was too late for her, she died. It wasn't pretty or quick. None of that looking classy or smooth, you know, those reasons most of us start smoking in the first place. Tied to the bed she thrashed around in her pain and didn't even know where she was or what was going on with her illness. She had tubes running in and out of her body one with morphine being pumped through her veins to dull the excruciating pain she was in from the cancer. It didn't quite do the job and she continued to feel pain. That was not a fun time in the life of her family or friends. And still I left her room to go out for a smoke and smoked years after until I developed COPD with emphysema.

And you know what? The fear was with me constantly that one day I would get cancer and die the horrible death of my friend Carol, but it never stopped me. The only thing that did was the fact I couldn't breathe any longer. There's a joke in another program that people laughingly say. I didn't just wake up one morning look in the mirror and say, "I think I'll quit drinking to day." Well the odd thing is...that's exactly what happened to me. One morning that little thought came into my mind. "I wonder if I could not smoke anymore today." And that was the beginning of my quit. I was able to hang on to that quit for seven days and then found an online Nicotine Anonymous group. Now I knew before I found this group that it was only a matter of time before I picked up.

I haven't had to do that as a result of the NicA program and awesome people. The Nicotine Anonymous meetings I attend are online and there were no face to face meetings in the state of Kansas. The first meetings I attended were all type shares but eventually we got a voice meeting going where we can talk by way of speakers and a microphone just like in a face to face meeting and it's pretty awesome. Nicotine Anonymous is growing in the cyber space arena due to the lack of face to face meetings and I must

tell you, it's working well. I attended face to face A.A. meetings around twenty-seven years before coming here and really didn't expect the online meetings to measure up. What a surprise! They not only measured up but surpassed my wildest dreams.

Want to finish this by saying, I grieve the passing and loss of my friend Carol, I miss her to this day. And somehow I feel I'm honoring her with this quit. I expect to see her someday on the other side and that's a happy thought, but I'm not real rushed to do that or I'd still be smoking. I smoked for forty six years and now haven't had to smoke one cigarette for thirty seven months and two weeks. Here online folks get quit meters and keep track of all the money saved and life given back by their quits. Really puts it in black and white. Yep it's pretty awesome. Came here to save my life and got so danged much more. Well that's all I'll say today. Will write more on the actual experience of my quitting later on. For all of you who want to stop smoking or using nicotine I can tell you this. Just go to meetings, that's all you got to do. Don't worry about rushing the quit, just go to meetings and wait for the miracle to happen. If you really want to quit, it's going to happen. If you don't have meetings close by, then go to online meetings. We have them several times every day. The address is <http://health.groups.yahoo.com/group/voicesofnicotinerecovery/> and you can put that in a search and find us. We will be here waiting for you and ready to help anyway we can. Roz here a nicotine addict.

**The quickest way to make a red light turn green is to go searching for your cigarette lighter in the glove compartment.**

*~~ Gary Doney*

## *FROM CRISIS TO CRISIS...*

### The Insanity of Nicotine Addiction...

I am the second of four children, all of whom have been chronic smokers until very recently. My two brothers both have COPD (chronic, obstructive pulmonary disease). Our sister died in March of 1992 due to cancer of the throat. We are all retired as a result of our physical disability. Certainly, the genetic predisposition to lung disease is as much a part of my family history as is our last name.

My paternal grandfather had tuberculosis and died in his forties. My father had one cancerous lung removed but he continued to smoke after surgery. His two brothers, my uncles, both had chronic bronchitis and emphysema with associated heart involvement. My aunt had cancer of the throat and had her voice box removed.

I started smoking fifty years ago at the age of fourteen. This was the start of World War II, "your big war," as Archie Bunker described it. The Lucky Strike Hit Parade was the most listened-to radio show on the air. After the United States entered the war, much was made of the new packaging of my brand of cigarettes, "Lucky Strike Green has gone to War."

Look at World War II film footage or movies of the period and it is difficult to see anyone without a cigarette dangling from a hand or being puffed on. Magazine ads pictured smoking doctors with claims that recent polls showed that doctors preferred one brand 'two to one' over another."

As an adult professional engaged in a confrontational and stress filled field, I live from crisis to crisis. My secretary once pointed that I had finally succeeded in having four cigarettes lit at once: one at my desk, one in the library, one at her desk, and one in the conference room.

The Surgeon General's report came out and warnings began to appear on cigarette packages. My response was to change brands to low-tar, filter ciga-

rettes, which caused me to smoke more in order to maintain the nicotine level required for my addiction. Eventually I realized that my health, career, and ultimately my life were threatened by this habit.

I first looked for a way to stop during the early 1970s. I enrolled in a six-day withdrawal program and stopped for nearly two months. I went through that one a second time with even less success. Over the years I tried hypnosis, chewed nicotine gum, played smoking aversion tapes during the day and at night. I even enrolled (without success) in a \$300 program to quit smoking. I attended it with an addicted friend who died of lung cancer three years ago.

It goes without saying that every lapse, every failure, took its toll physically, emotionally, and spiritually. My self-esteem sagged; guilt soared, and it finally became an effort to walk a block. I was hospitalized twice and was given oxygen in my room. The insanity of addiction was illustrated when I disconnected the oxygen in order to smoke without blowing myself up!

Then Surgeon General Koop said that nicotine addiction was harder to "kick" than heroin and that the recidivism rate was enormous.

It was about that time I first heard about Nicotine Anonymous. The meetings were being held nearby in Metairie. So, without much hope, I decided to attend one. On the way I stopped at a bakery to buy my daughter a Mardi Gras King Cake. After arranging the shipping, I asked if there was a men's room I could use before getting on the Causeway. When I entered I saw a pack of cigarettes on the toilet top. Like watching someone I didn't know, I saw myself pocket two of the cigarettes from that pack and compulsively smoke them crossing the Causeway to my first Nicotine Anonymous meeting!

In thinking about all my failures to deal with this addiction, and my cur-

rent three plus years of living smoke-free, I attribute the difference to the spiritual underpinning of Nicotine Anonymous. I do not wish to denigrate any other program; I am supportive of any group or program, which helps addicts deal with this cunning, baffling, and deadly substance, nicotine.

The late John Huston said that he never knew the meaning of courage until he developed emphysema. Today, as I write this story, I look at my list of medications, which I write down and initial as I take each one. Nearly all drugs have some side effects so some of the medications are taken to counteract others. Prednisone (a steroid) produces eye problems, loss of potassium, candida albicans (a fungus which forms on the tongue), skin rash, etc. I use a machine called a nebulizer, which blows medication into my mouth and lungs. I keep tanks of portable oxygen available for the really bad times.

This horror story would have meant nothing to me twenty years ago. Now, for me, at least, I have found a way that works, twenty-four hours at a time. That way is Nicotine Anonymous. I personally take no credit for these months and years of freedom. I give it to what we call the "Higher Power" and the brotherhood of women and men who meet and help one another to live in a new and healthy way.

Ed.B

Nicotine addiction is like an itch. If you itch, it's nice to scratch it. But it's better to have no itch at all. ~ ~ *Dali Lama* (adapted)

*Seven Minutes*

**NAWSO**

419 Main St., PMB #370  
Huntington Beach, Ca 92648

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**Publication Dates and  
Deadlines for Submissions  
for 2007**

Publication      Deadline Date  
Date              for submissions

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**March 15      February 1**  
**June 15        May 1**  
**September 15      August 1**  
**December 15      November 1**

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