



SEVEN MINUTES

The Nicotine Anonymous Quarterly

A FORUM FOR NICOTINE USERS WHO DON'T USE

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SECOND QUARTER, 1999

ANY DAY NOW

Oscar C.

Oscar C. passed away in December. But before he left us, he submitted his story to the NYMAI New, which is reprinted here. Remembrances of Oscar are on page 4.

Joann came home from a meeting and woke me up and told me she wanted to start a 12-step group for people who wanted to stop smoking. Joann asked me to help her for two weeks to get a meeting started. In the meantime, we had accumulated a closet full of literature and posters from various cancer and lung organizations and we were keeping our eyes out for a place to meet. Our friend Jan, who knew a woman named Winifred across town who had the same ideas as Joann, had written to "Smokers Anonymous" of California and had obtained all the information as to how to start a group and who also found a place to meet at the Great River Episcopal Church in Great River, NY.

After many a phone conversation between Joann and Winifred, it was decided to start a group. After it was agreed on the night of the week, Friday, the amount of the rent to pay and other details, we were unsure of the name "Smokers anonymous." Joann wanted to call the group "Nicotine Anonymous" but was outvoted and so there came into being the first "Smokers Anonymous" group on the East Coast and Long Island. At Great River, NY, our first meeting was held on Friday, September 13, 1985 at 8 p.m. We devised our own meeting format as we did not agree with all the things the way they were in the California format.

There were meetings where Joann and I sat alone, waiting and ending up feeding the basket ourselves, putting out the lights and going home. It wasn't until the 46th meeting that we finally had ten people at one meeting. From there on we began to grow. We had P.O. Box #163 in Islip to handle our correspondence, etc. On January 8, 1987, we opened our second meeting at the Islip Public Library on Thursday at 7 p.m., which is still going today. From January 8, 1987 until May 15, 1987 when we closed Great River, we ran two groups. Four months and one week 600 people attended the 83 meetings. Our success rate was small but we planted the seed and as we always say, "We will mess up your smoking." ANY DAY NOW!

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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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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.

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All articles accepted for publication may be reprinted in outside publications in their entirety at the discretion of the chair and editor.

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NEWS FROM NAWSO



I am writing this column with a great mixture of emotions. I am excited for the amount of work we have accomplished and for all that we have to bring to this year's World Service Conference. I am somewhat nervous, as there is still much preparation left before April 16th. Lastly, I am somewhat saddened as I realize that this is the last time I will write to you on behalf of the board.

There is much to be excited about at this year's conference. Our delegates (I hope you all have registered) will be voting on the adoption of two new pamphlets, the first regarding World Services and Intergroups and the second concerning the "Tools of the Program." *Checko M.*, our literature coordinator, has tirelessly revised several other pamphlets which will also be put before the conference for approval. Our newly revised proposed bylaws have now been completed and distributed to the intergroups and delegates. They also are to be brought in front of the conference for ratification. We will have a number of very interesting workshops for the conference. Each of the above voting items will be focused upon in the form of a workshop. In addition, we will have workshops delving into the following:

- 1- Adopting an Acronym for Nicotine Anonymous;
- 2- The Ingredients of our new and approved Meeting Starter Kit;
- 3- How can Nicotine Anonymous incorporate a toll-free number as an outreach tool.

The first topic may be somewhat controversial, but many people already abbreviate our name in various forms (Nic A, N A, Nicanon etc.) and it may be time for us to adopt an official acronym. The second topic will address the changes *Bill C.* has made to our Starter Kit, which has not been updated in a number of years. The last question may be a little confusing. Obviously a toll-free number would be a great outreach tool for us. The problem is that, at this time, we cannot afford this. The question we are asking is how can we come to afford this powerful outreach tool. This is something to think about before we get to the conference.

At the conference, we will hear business reports from our many coordinators and servants. Several committees have really done some amazing things to improve our outreach to the still suffering nicotine addict. *Clare M.* of New York has done an amazing job with our web page. It has many new features including *SevenMinutes* articles, an intergroup corner, and downloadable and printable pdf files which offer easy to read and print versions of meeting lists and order forms. *Michelle S.* of Indiana has created a great recovery resource with our e-mail pen pal program. Many people, with little or no access to meetings, are actually achieving true recovery through this and the old-timers involved are really enjoying it. Lastly, *Gina F.* and her staff of e-mail answerers are responding to an average of 20 e-mails a day looking for information on our fellowship, and they are doing a great job!! Both *Michelle* and *Gina* could use more volunteers to help them. If you are interested, please e-mail-mail them c/o info@nicotine-anonymous.org.

Finally, I cannot sign off without saying that serving the fellowship in this capacity has been the most rewarding thing I have ever done. I may never again in my lifetime get the opportunity to positively affect so many people in such a brief time. I am honored to have served with my fellow board members and volunteer staff, and am constantly amazed by their energy and commitment. I know that our future after the conference is extremely bright. The new officers, including our extraordinarily capable new chairperson, *Martha K.*, are all very gifted and marvelously devoted to our fellowship. It will be a pleasure to continue serving with them, as it has been a pleasure serving all of you this past year.

In spiritual service,
John O.

Chairperson on behalf of the NAWSO officers

P.S. This would be a great time to consider joining the board. We will be electing new officers at the conference, and it is a rare and wonderful opportunity to serve and expand one's life.

Remembrances of Oscar (continued from page 1)

Dear Friends,

I am writing because last night our good friend Oscar C passed away. He had more nicoverery time than anyone in the fellowship at 37 years. More importantly, he saved my life and the lives of hundreds of people on Long Island who attended Nicotine Anonymous meetings.

Oscar and his wife Joann began the first Nicotine Anonymous meeting on Long Island 13 years ago in a town called Great River. They did this shortly after Joann gained her own freedom from nicotine. Both had a lot of experience with the 12 steps and decided to apply these to the addiction to nicotine. Oscar only came along to help out for the first few weeks to get Joann started. Suffice it to say, they have still been coming around 13 years later.

Oscar's favorite expression was "Any Day Now". This was his answer to his wife Joann when she asked, "when I am going to stop thinking about picking up nicotine". It was the same response he would give to those who struggled with this addiction who could not figure out when they would free themselves from nicotine. Oscar was a wise, old sage who gave strong but gentle love to all in the group. He treated everyone with respect and was very encouraging to newcomers. He was my hero.

It was because Oscar and Joann sat through many nights alone in Great River, and then Islip that we have all the meetings we have on Long Island today. This group is still one of our strongest meetings and has many, many members with long term nicoverery. It was the first meeting I ever attended. It was where I got my first chip for being nicotine free for 24 hours. It was where I felt the grace of God and first understood that this fellowship could provide me with the kind of recovery that I had been seeking for years.

One of my greatest thrills was when Oscar or Joann would ask me to speak at the Islip meeting. To me, this was like being asked to decorate for Martha Stewart or being asked to play for Miles Davis. Oscar always treated me like an equal and I know he always felt very proud of the service I have done for the fellowship. This always made me feel really good.

From what I understand, Oscar took his death like he took life; serenely and with acceptance. He knew where he was going and was ready to go there. He

had great faith that his Higher Power has wonderful things in store for him. I am sad today only for myself and Oscar's family. I know that Oscar is in a wonderful place today, and I feel fortunate and honored to have known him, and to know that he has touched my life.

My thoughts and prayers go out to Joann and her family. Please know that if you ever need to find Oscar, he will be here in a little place in my heart.

John O

Dear Friends,

We lost ourselves a "great" one. Oscar was the sweetest, most gentle man I've known. If it weren't for him, I never would have found the fellowship and who knows where I would be today. I wouldn't have my daughter Leighann, that's for sure. I think of Oscar whenever I see the movie, "It's a Wonderful Life." Everyone's life touches another and we will never know exactly how, but does.

For me, Oscar met my dad (who is a printer) and kept giving him pamphlets to print for the Islip group when it first started. My dad in turn kept shoving the pamphlets in my pocketbook, trying to plant the seed. It worked. Then of course Scott "recruited" me to do service and it was at Intergroup when I met "Mike" who then introduced me to my husband. Today, I have a beautiful daughter as a result of all this. Oscar basically is the one who started this chain of events in my life.

I am so heartbroken for Joann (and us). However, his love for Joann was truly the most powerful I have ever seen or felt and I'm sure it will be with her until she can be with him again. P.S. An image just entered my mind: Charlie and Oscar up there starting a meeting, discussing whether it should be open or closed!

Peace to you all,

Karen



*Nicotine Anonymous in Cyber-space...
Spanish Speaking Nicotine Addicts
Share Experience, Strength & Hope!*

Hello Kim,

Thanks for your message. As you may know in the last few months the NAWSO web site received a lot of e-mail messages from people asking information on the Nicotine Anonymous program, on literature and on groups. Many of those messages came from people who speak Spanish: people from many Latin-American countries as well as from Spain and even from Africa. Unfortunately in most of those areas there are no Nicotine Anonymous groups.

In the last few weeks a major Venezuelan newspaper published in his Sunday edition an article on "stopping to smoke" mentioning, among other resources, the Nicotine Anonymous web site. As a result of this, we were reached by six people from Venezuela asking for groups and literature. Since there are no groups in Venezuela, we answered those messages asking each remitter if he was interested in exchanging e-mail addresses with the other remitters. Most of them agreed. Thus we proposed the creation of an e-mail "group". The idea was to exchange E., S. & H.-seeking for recovery and supporting people who have no live-groups in their area, as well as stimulate the creation of "f2f" (face to face) groups in those areas. With this idea in mind, I sent a message to thirteen people who were in contact with the Nic Anonymous web-site in Spanish language in the last months, inviting them to join this e-mail list. As a result nine of them answered asking to join the group. The group was created on January 1, 1999 and has today (January 21th) ten members from five countries: Venezuela, Mexico, Spain, Brazil and Africa.

As a new experience, we don't know exactly what we can expect from it. I think no e-mail group could replace the effectiveness of face to face meetings. Anyway, it seems that this e-mail group could be an effective way to reach out, and it's really wonderful to keep in touch with people seeking recovery all around the world.

We are asking our HP to guide us in this experience and I am very grateful to be part of this.

By the way: every one interested in take part in the Spanish e-mail list could send a message to companyero_nican@hotmail.com asking to be included in the list. (The only requirement is to adhere to our third tradition.)

If you need any additional information, please feel free to ask us. I'm forwarding your message to our members asking them to contact you about the experience.

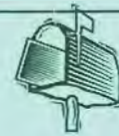
Hugs from Brazil, *Pierre*

IT'S TRADITIONAL

Back in SevenMinutes, 4th quarter, 1998 issue, we committed a faux pas regarding some of our traditions. In the spirit of the tenth step, please allow us to make amends. The article in question described the activities of a very successful recovery weekend sponsored by one of our intergroups. At the weekend, several members put on a recovery skit, using props "donated by (John Doe) Lumber." While each and every group is autonomous and the intergroup must make its own decisions regarding the traditions, it is not appropriate for us at World Services to offer tacit approval. Our sixth tradition specifically states "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." I am sure that it is a wonderful store that donated the props, but as we are noting the lumber business, we must stay away from endorsing any outside enterprise. Our seventh tradition states "Every Nicotine Anonymous group ought to be fully self-supporting, declining outside contributions." This means that we must always offer compensation for what we receive, whether that is rent-free meeting space, free copying at the office copier, or small items donated by well-meaning merchants. We keep the integrity of our organization beyond reproach when we stick steadfastly to this credo. By always paying our own way, we leave no opportunity for financial influence from outside our organization. What all of this points to is a glaring need to constantly and consistently address the traditions in our fellowship. At this time, we still do not have any literature dealing with the traditions. Perhaps this will inspire some of you to help fill this void and write to us with your experiences with traditions issues in your home groups, intergroups and World Services. Please also feel free to let us know when you see something at World Services that may not be fully in line with these principles. We apologize for the error we made in our earlier issue, and ask your help in keeping us honest in this respect.

In service, *John O.*
Chairperson, NAWSO

LETTERS TO SEVENMINUTES . . .



Hi Kim J.

You're doing a fine job. The "in house" newsletter has never been better. Keep up the great work. I don't attend a new meeting without calling the contact person first. However; unlike "Worldwide Meeting Directory," there is no contact person or telephone number to call. The "Directory" only comes out once a year; but, I would like to see the contact person and telephone number listed. To save space, the group number can be omitted and the state can be reduced to the two letter abbreviation as in the "Directory." I hope this can be done. If not, so be it.

In "Smobriety,"
Dan O.

Dear Dan -

Thanks so much for your kind letter. When we (the NAWSO board and myself) decided to include quarterly updates of the meeting list, we felt it best to leave off names and numbers. The reasoning behind this is, like our web page, SevenMinutes goes to so many places outside our fellowship. We felt like those kind enough to list their names and numbers for contact may not want just anyone having access to their number. This could very well be the wisest course as a safeguard to our volunteers. OR, perhaps we are being too prudent and not helping our readers get to those new meetings. I'd love to hear more opinions on this issue.

- Kim



NEW NAWSO ADDRESS HELPS SPEED REQUESTS

As many of you may know, our office in San Francisco was closed in September of 1997. Shortly thereafter, we contracted with an office service in Harrisburg, PA, to serve many of the functions that were handled in our former office. This relationship has proved to be very successful. Since we see no change in this situation for the foreseeable future, we have decided to create a new address in Harrisburg in order to alleviate delays caused by forwarding mail from our P.O. Box in San Francisco. Our new address is as follows:

Nicotine Anonymous World Services
P O Box 126338
Harrisburg, PA 17112-6338.

We will continue to forward mail from our old post office box in San Francisco for some time. However, orders sent there will experience a 3-4 day delay, even more if they come from the East. Please use the above address for all correspondence. With the new fulfillment arrangement we have made in Los Angeles, members ordering with the new address should receive their orders promptly. Although it has been a difficult process, we now have an extremely cost-efficient and responsive system for processing member requests. We greatly appreciate your patience and look forward to serving you further in the future.

FROM THE EDITOR



Much of this issue is in remembrance of a founding father in our program, *Oscar C.* from New York. I never met Oscar but I heard a lot about him and his wife, *JoAnn*. Someone with so much smobriety and so much service work behind him will certainly be missed and remembered. In our own little group, here in Dallas, we recently lost one we loved very much, *Sherry*. Sherry was only in our program two years. But in her two years she added a lot to our group. She never missed a meeting. And she always came in smiling, even when she had to start carrying her oxygen with her. Her cheerfulness and willingness to give were her gift to us.

The nature of our addiction dictates that we may have some more early goodbyes in store for us. Looking at it on the surface, some may say that the villain Nicotine won in the end. But that's not true. When we were in Nicotine's clutches we were angry and afraid, among other things. But those that have the privilege to walk in these doors and experience the Twelve Steps walk away with something more - they are able to leave here with serenity and joy and freedom from fear, even with a contentedness that they never knew existed. We will surely miss Sherry and Oscar and all those we've had to say goodbye to but we can feel assured they left having experienced all the fullness life has to offer them.

WELCOME TO THE FELLOWSHIP

New Meetings as of December 28, 1998

CA	Kenwood	Tue	8:00pm	St Patrick's Episcopal Church	9000 Sonoma Highway 12
	Pasadena	Mon	7:45pm	St Luke Hospital Share Unit	2632 East Washington Blvd
	Petaluma	Mon	7:30pm	Church of Christ	370 Sonoma Mountain Parkway
	Prunedale	Fri	7:00pm	Prunedale Library	17822 Morro Road
	Santa Maria	Sat	5:00pm	Unity Church	1165 Stubblefield Road
	Sonora	Wed	6:00pm	Sonora Alano Club	11600 Wards Ferry Road
CO	Denver	Wed	8:30pm	Mt High School	9079 W. Alameda Lakewood
	Denver	Thu	7:10pm	O. A. Club	3103 E. Colfax
	Fort Collins	Sun	2:30pm	Rocky Mountain Serenity Club	705 West Prospect
FL	Largo	Tue	7:00pm	Tierra Pines Health Care Conference	7380 Ulmerton Road
GA	Marietta	Sun	7:30pm	St. James Episcopal Church	161 Church Street
IA	Clearlake	Sun	3:30pm	A. A. Club House	12th Street and Main
	Clearlake	Thu	3:30pm	A. A. Club House	12th Street and Main
IL	Geneva	Wed	7:00pm	First Congregational Church	Corner of 4th & Hamilton, Downstairs
KY	Lebanon	Mon	6:00pm	The Coffee Club	120 Depot Street
	Ft Thomas	Thu	Noon	St Luke East Hospital	85 N Grand Avenue
LA	New Orleans	Thu	7:00pm	Activities Bldg Rm 203/Mulholland	1201 Metarie Rd Methodist Church
	New Orleans	Tue	7:00pm	Touro Infirmary - Prytania Room	1401 Foucher
MA	Cambridge	Sat	Noon	Mt. Auburn Hosp Cafeteria/Dining Rm 2	330 Mt. Auburn Street
MD	Bel Air	Wed	7:00pm	First Presbyterian Church	224 N. Main Street, Room 7
NC	Chapel Hill	Wed	8:00pm	Chapel of the Cross Episcopal Church	304 E. Franklin Street
OR	Medford	Wed	6:00pm	Downtown Gourmet	410 E. Main Street
TN	Madison	Mon	6:30pm	Neely's Bend United Methodist Church	1605 Neely's Bend Road
TX	Austin	Sat	10:30am	Twin Oaks Library	2301 S. Congress
WA	Seattle	Mon	7:00pm		6300 Phinney Avenue North
	Seattle	Wed	6:00pm	Capitol Hill Alano Club	1222 E. Pine Street/Room 1
	Bremen	Sat	8:00pm	Haus der Familie	Fehrfeld 7