



Send letters, articles, stories, poems, artwork, or other material for *Seven Minutes* to:

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Your trusted servants,

Gary M., Publisher

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A Brief History of Nicotine Anonymous

The roots of Nicotine Anonymous first took hold in the Southern California living room of one of the cofounders, Rodger F. in February of 1982. The group consisted mostly of Alcoholics Anonymous members who realized their need to focus on their nicotine addiction and to stop smoking. Since anything but alcohol is an outside issue for Alcoholics Anonymous, a separate group was necessary.

With permission from Alcoholics Anonymous, the founding members of our fellowship adapted the Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions. Although there is common ground in the use of the Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions, these fellowships are not affiliated.

Alcoholics Anonymous also gave us permission to adapt their preamble. Our Preamble became the following:

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.

Maurice, a member, authored an article for *Readers Digest* in May of 1985. Thousands of letters poured in from people wanting to know more about this new Twelve

Step fellowship known then as "Smokers Anonymous." Within a year there were a hundred meetings identified.

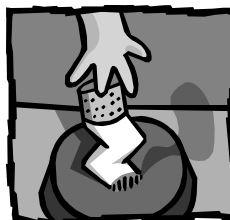
In May of 1988, the fellowship's first World Services Conference was held in San Francisco. Thanks to a well-documented chain of events the fellowship was renamed Nicotine Anonymous in Phoenix, Arizona at the 1990 World Services Conference. As with most organizations, it becomes typical to use an abbreviated name. For our common

welfare and unity a vote at the 2000 World Services Conference in Scottsdale, Arizona decided that "NicA" would be the one abbreviation the fellowship would use.

We hold an annual conference in the spring and all members are invited to attend. Each year the conference is held in various parts of the United States, depending on members who volunteer to host the event. The conference serves to strengthen us in our path to freedom from nicotine and as an official meeting to address fellowship business.

As of 2005, Nicotine Anonymous World Services serves a worldwide fellowship with over 500 meetings. These face-to-face meetings have been supplemented by both online and telephone meetings. There is a well-managed web site and literature fulfillment service available to the membership. The elected all-volunteer board consists of nine members and meets four times per year. There are also numerous coordinators who volunteer to provide specific services that help World Services fulfill our fellowship's primary purpose—"to offer support to those who are trying to gain freedom from nicotine."

The rest of the story can be read in our literature. Please feel free to learn more about us to see if you want what we have. A warm welcome awaits you!



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 of 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.
7. Every A.A. group ought to be fully self-supporting, declining outside contributions.
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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.

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Changes to our literature...

At the World Services Conference (May, 2005), a board-approved text for a long form of the Twelve Traditions of Nicotine Anonymous was submitted for approval and discussed in a workshop. A number of edits were suggested and the delegates voted for the following: to accept the revised material as a work-in-process, to post the full text of the Twelve Traditions of Nicotine Anonymous on the Nicotine Anonymous World Services web site (click What's New on home page), to request members of the fellowship to forward their valued comments to the chairperson by October 1, 2005 (this will give the literature committee time to process the comments before the 2006 Conference), and to also publish the text for one or two of the Traditions in *Seven Minutes* and intergroup newsletters.

Send comments to:
chairperson@nicotine-anonymous.org

The Twelve Traditions

Whenever a society or civilization perishes, there is always one condition present; they forgot where they came from.

- Carl Sandburg

Introduction

The Twelve Steps, based on ancient and universal spiritual principles, describe a personal path for our recovery. The power of individual recovery is in one member carrying the message to the next, without any thought of personal gain or financial reward - and it works.

The Twelve Traditions are to recovery fellowships what the Twelve Steps are to the individual. They have spiritual significance separately and as an equal partner to the Steps. Groups are encouraged to give adequate time to discuss the Traditions while sponsors can emphasize this wisdom to newcomers. If the Traditions are watered down, diluted or abandoned, a group's survival or an individual's recovery may be placed at risk.

Bill Wilson (co-founder of AA) first drafted the Traditions as a distillation of the shared experiences of the early AA groups. They are the result of trial and error, sometimes-serious error. He expanded them into their present form and they were adopted in 1950 at the AA In-

error, sometimes serious error. He expanded them into their present form and they were adopted in 1950 at the AA International Convention held in Cleveland.

The Traditions have withstood the test of time. They provide a tried and true guide for groups while still allowing for individuality. As Wilson poignantly notes in AA's first tradition - "On anvils of experience, the structure of our Society was hammered out."

The Traditions were developed over time in response to problems as they arose. They are based on experience particular to the common welfare of Alcoholics Anonymous. Our fellowship has adopted them because they have served AA well.

Our fellowship is non-commercial and non-professional, our leaders but trusted servants. No member can tell another, "You can't do that," or "You must do this." If a group fails to observe the Traditions, it risks the possibility of confusion and conflict. Confusion and conflict may turn newcomers away; depriving them of the benefits Nicotine Anonymous has to offer.

The Traditions provide form and unity to our entire fellowship. They help guide local groups in a way that has worked at bringing recovery to many people over many years. They gently keep the focus on our primary purpose and ensure that any member of our fellowship can go to any meeting and find the same basic spiritual principles at work. They foster a safe place for each individual by stressing the importance of group unity. Humility is the foundation on which the Traditions are built. The Traditions protect our fellowship from our individual shortcomings; they protect us from ourselves and keep us right-sized, just like the Steps.

May we all continue to deepen our understanding of these principles so that our recovery and our fellowship continue to grow and serve all those who seek freedom from nicotine.

Tradition One

"Our common welfare should come first; personal recovery depends on Nicotine Anonymous unity."

Does this mean that the individual must conform to all aspects of our program? Certainly not! The sentence in the "AA Big Book" that introduces the Steps reads - "Here are the Steps we took, which are *suggested* (italics our emphasis) as a program of recovery." Similarly, the Traditions use the word "ought" and "should" as guidelines, offered from experience.

Our First Tradition reminds us that our common welfare comes first. To put our common welfare first, individuals should put themselves second. Each individual member of Nicotine Anonymous is a part of the whole. Nicotine Anonymous needs to live as an entity so that we, as individual members, may continue to live - free of nicotine. We come to understand that each of us needs to internalize the principles of recovery because our lives depend on our adherence to spiritual principles. Individually, we are "one for all"; as a group we are "all for one." As a fellowship we remain united on core issues of recovery. If not, we jeopardize personal recovery and risk weakening the bonds of our fellowship.

One of our core issues was addressed by group conscience at the 1988 World Services Conference, which established a clear understanding for our definition of abstinence. Since 1988, we define abstinence as "a state that begins when all use of nicotine ceases." Although our name was Smokers Anonymous at the time, we collectively agreed that abstinence from nicotine was our primary purpose, not any method of delivery. In 1990, our name became Nicotine Anonymous, which broadened our awareness and outreach as a program to include nicotine addiction in all forms.

In accordance with Tradition Ten, we have "no opinion on outside

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issues” such as any product used for a withdrawal aid. While each individual determines his or her nicotine free date, the fellowship as a whole and, by extension, each group, provides a structure and a unity of purpose, which allows us to welcome all, without judgment.

The group’s sole objective is recovery for the individual. Individual and group survival depends on friendly relationships between group members. In our meetings, members share their personal experiences about recovery while other members listen. While each member has a right to express his or her views, an individual member may have to accept the group’s majority voice graciously. An open mind is helpful when listening to other members’ ideas or opinions.

Spiritually healthy groups usually have members who feel some “ownership” of their “home” group through active participation. They willingly volunteer to take on the responsibilities of running the group. They serve as chairperson, secretary, or treasurer. They take a literature or meeting setup commitment. Generally, these members have benefited from our program of recovery and share that experience in a service role clearly visible to the newcomer.

On the other hand, what happens when an individual member refuses to accept a group decision? Each member has to decide for himself or herself as to how to respond to such a situation. Some may feel the issue is important enough to them that it’s best to leave the group, others may decide to simply agree to disagree. A majority vote does not necessarily mean it is “right.” Anyone has the option to start a new meeting. It can also occur that a member remains in the group, but becomes resentful, and this may have a negative influence on the group. If other group members become uncomfortable or are scared away, the group may eventually fold. What to do?

No member of Nicotine Anonymous has authority over another. But the group, speaking out of a group conscience does have authority. However, this is an essential reason for members

to study the wisdom in all the Traditions in order that they may better fulfill the group’s primary purpose (Tradition Five). Being guided by this unified wisdom, the group has a better opportunity to know what the common welfare is and to put it first. Then, by speaking with one voice, this strengthens the unity of Nicotine Anonymous. If we adhere to our name, Nicotine Anonymous, then we can Keep it Simple and make it easier for the newcomer to understand and practice our program of recovery.

Tradition Eleven

Our public relations policy is based on attraction rather than promotion; we need always maintain personal anonymity at the level of press, radio, television, and films.

As nicotine addicts our lives were out of control and unmanageable. We used nicotine to the extreme. One was not enough; thousands were not enough. We saw no problem in the extremes we went to in order to get and maintain a daily supply of nicotine. Our behavior with nicotine, whether inhaling it or chewing it, lacked boundaries as our smoke, butts, or spit polluted the environs wherever we went.

Like many of the principles of our program, Tradition Eleven guides us in our recovery to have appropriate limits when we “carry the message” to those outside of our fellowship. The integrity and longevity of our fellowship depends on this time-tested principle. Certainly we want people to know about what we offer. However, it is essential that the focus remain on the program rather than the personalities within the fellowship. We want people attracted to our program because of its principles, not because of who is in it. Anonymity not only protects the individual, it protects the program from the human shortcomings we all have.

Anonymity is not a matter for each member to determine for himself or herself. If a member were to think: “I don’t care if the public knows I am a Nicotine Anonymous member, I have nothing to hide” this would be overlooking that this is a “WE” program, not a “ME” program. Nicotine Anonymous’ spiritual principles include humility, which is essential to our recovery. Consider if one

member grabs the spotlight, then others may become jealous or try to compete. This would erode unity. Additionally, Nicotine Anonymous members ought to remain mindful that, although we are not affiliated with Alcoholics Anonymous (and other 12 step fellowships), we are part of a recovery community sharing this program and we need to show our respect and gratitude by honoring this Tradition for the sake of all.

The media is filled with advertisements using celebrities to make personal endorsements of products. The ads may be effective for those corporations, but there are risks. If that personality “falls from grace” or one’s “pedestal” becomes a target for the press, the situation could reflect poorly on the company or product. Nicotine Anonymous acknowledges relapses are a reality from which no member is immune. Nicotine Anonymous accepts the wisdom learned by Alcoholics Anonymous- promotions highlighting “the person” are not the best way for us to carry the message.

Many newcomers hear about us by word of mouth from other members or by local meeting notices inviting anyone with a desire to stop using nicotine to come to a meeting. Publicity in various forms has also been an important way for the nicotine addict who still suffers to hear about Nicotine Anonymous. Early in our organization’s history, a member wrote a *Reader’s Digest* story about our program and the article significantly raised public awareness of our existence. Also, a *Dear Abby* column referring to our fellowship caught many an eye. These were not examples of self-promotion because they kept the focus on the fellowship.

There are many ways to appropriately publicize what we offer. Nicotine Anonymous World Services has pamphlets suitable for outreach efforts such as “Introducing Nicotine Anonymous,” “To the Newcomer and Sponsorship in

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Nicotine Anonymous,” and “Introducing Nicotine Anonymous to the Medical Profession.”

Nicotine Anonymous World Services also has CDs with a public service announcement that members can ask local radio stations to broadcast. Some other examples are as follows: local meeting announcements placed in newspapers and on palm cards; information provided to local chapters of national health organizations; Nicotine Anonymous literature presented at health fairs or offered to the offices of health professionals and hospitals.

If a member were to write a book or be interviewed by public media there are some appropriate options. Individuals can use their full name if they forgo mentioning they are Nicotine Anonymous members and simply identify themselves as nicotine addicts. If individuals are identifying themselves as Nicotine Anonymous members, the other option would be to conceal their faces and use first names only.

Many of our members did not show up to a meeting the first time they heard about it or work the steps the first time they read them. They could not be sold this program, they had to become ready. The best way we carry this message is by our sharing our experience, strength, and hope at meetings, serving in outreach efforts, by frankly explaining what Nicotine Anonymous is about, and by living the results of our spiritual awakening by practicing program principles in our daily lives. If what nicotine addicts see and hear attracts them, they will find our warm welcome.

Out of respect for others, we do not tell people that they need our program or what they should do. We do not ensure everyone a “guarantee of success.” We are not selling, we are showing.

Faith and humility are spiritual principles, and to remain a spiritual program, we need to practice faith and humility in our public relations policy.

Smoking kills.

If you're killed, you've lost a very important part of your life.

From Kathy K., your new chair...

Hi my name is Kathy K and I'm a recovering nicotine addict. I've been nicotine free for eighteen and one half years and in Nicotine Anonymous for about nine years.

When I first joined another twelve step program twenty years ago it took me two years to share more than a couple of sentences. I was very quiet and fearful and I avoided speaking in groups. But as time went on I started to talk and then I was sharing. In sharing on a weekly basis, people got to know me and I started to become comfortable with myself. Then I began to do service work and my self confidence began to slowly build. I felt service was a way to keep coming back to the meetings. But it also became a way to achieve a sense of belonging. What you say and do in these rooms becomes the things you say and do outside these rooms.

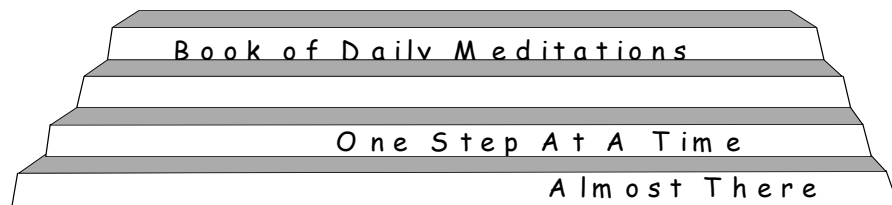
The first position of service I did in Nicotine Anonymous was to chair a meeting at my home group. Since then I have filled many positions within NicA. I accepted the position of World Services Chairperson in May of this year. It was truly out of my window of comfort to run for chair. Not only was I afraid I might win but also for three years I would need to be a responsible member of World Services (and not smoke).

I need to believe principles over personality are more important than my own agenda and I don't have power over people, places and things and in the course of being the World Services chair if I am wrong to promptly admit it.

I've learned important personal skills from being an active part of this program. I've learned many people have my same fears and feelings of inadequacy, many more people have much to offer and they are truly caring and kind people. How I act and react is in proportion to how they act and react.

Going out of my comfort zone reminds me of the first time I drove alone. I was fearful and cautious: afraid to change lanes, make left turns, or go even close to the speed limit. I wondered if I would get into a difficult situation and not know what to do or if I could do it fast enough in order to avoid an accident. Little by little I drove. The saving grace was I didn't have a car of my own and I had to borrow my father's car which wasn't very available. I slowly became confident, and I started getting familiar with the roadways and the car. I became a little more self-assured with my abilities and stopped thinking so much about how to drive the car, but more on getting to where I needed to go.

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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?

How has your life improved?

Nicotine Anonymous World Services

Attn: Daily Meditation Coordinator

419 Main Street, PMB 370

Huntington Beach CA 92648 Or email:

dailymeditations@nicotineanonymous.org Reference BODM in your subject line

Getting the word out...

Hello, my name is Patty and I am a nicotine addict.



I started the Capitol Hill group in the spring of 2001. I recently moved back to Seattle from a job that kept me traveling around and knew if I wanted to quit smoking and “boy did I want to quit,” I couldn’t do it alone.

I had some experience with Nicotine Anonymous. I quit in 1990 with the help of the program. It was a place I could go where people would understand when I said I was so afraid I was going to have to die hooked up to an oxygen machine because I could not quit smoking. Non-addicts would say, “just quit” – if only it were that easy. I did quit in 1990, lasted one and one half years then took the job that moved me out of the area, away from recovering addicts and into a place where, when the voice said “smoke a few now, you can quit later,” I listened. I had that first one, then another and another – for over ten more years!

As another member of the program once said – “I started trying to quit as soon as I started.” That’s me. I tried for the first time when I was sixteen and then many times after that.

I was so afraid of the withdrawals. I was afraid of becoming a monster. I would lose my job, not be able to pay rent, be out on the street where it would be so stressful, I would be sure to start smoking again and then what would it have all been for? On and on and on.

This is a nasty drug that is so addictive the fears pop up just thinking about withdrawal and keeps so many of us using up to the nasty oxygen-dependant end.

So I started this meeting and kept coming back each week no matter what, even as a smoker, for over three years before this current quit happened. I haven’t smoked a cigarette since November 16, 2003. I have had many stressful real life happenings since then,

mostly about the challenges of relationships with family, friends and co-workers. It’s the first three and one-half steps that have helped me get through the toughest times. You might wonder, three and one-half years? Ask me, I will tell you what I mean by that.

A Nicotine Anonymous meeting is a place where I can learn self-acceptance about the trials and tribulations I go through as a recovering addict.

It is a place where I can practice patience and tolerance whenever I listen to another member go on and on about issues I can’t relate to. And I can discover for myself the lies this addiction has been telling me and move through the fears as I see others stay away from that first cigarette.

Higher Power? Yeah, I had to consider that question big time. I am still considering it. There are priests and nuns who are nicotine addicts, alcoholics, etc. They have a higher power so why can’t they just stop? Somehow, in Twelve Step programs, it’s the power of the group and the Twelve Steps that help us overcome our addictions and grow. I plan on coming back forever.

This isn’t a program where we graduate. I only have to remember the racing heart, shortness of breath and obsession to quit, knowing that one hour a week is a small price to pay for personal freedom.

I am not great on the phone but I welcome messages and will set aside time to talk to you when you need it. I will be a sponsor to those who ask.

That’s another part of our program; we only get to keep what we are willing to give away so I offer this to you. Keep coming back – You WILL get free and we will help each other stay free.

**seattlepatty@comcast.net or
phensley@hysecurity.com
This is from a packet the Capitol
Hill group hands out to newcomers.**

Asking for help...

By Regina F.

Unofficialnicanon was started in 1999 and was the only source of online nicotine anonymous meetings after AOL closed down. Fortunately with the grace of Higher Power it grew to be an awesome support group for those wanting to stop using nicotine.

At that time all we had was type share meetings and we had many meetings a day with members from all around the world, covering most time zones. Getting ninety meetings in ninety days was easier.

As the Internet grew, Roz and John introduced voice meetings. These are wonderful meetings that are closer to face-to-face meetings where we can hear emotions, which makes it easier to communicate. Saying “I am addicted” out loud makes addiction more real to me. With the voice meetings, a new group Voices of Recovery, was started which gives everyone the opportunity of choice. It’s wonderful to see Nicotine Anonymous grow.

Now it’s time to embrace this new concept more readily, however, we need to remember the limitations of other people’s computers and lifestyles. We have Macintosh members, who have a difficult time getting into voice chat.

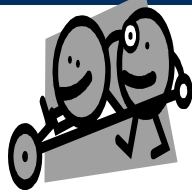
There are also those who need type share meetings for whatever reason...no speakers, no microphone, they feel more comfortable typing; they may be deaf or they can’t do voice because of a loud household.

Meetings and attendance at unofficialnicanon are down to the lowest it’s been since starting the group in 1999. People have stopped chairing, some doing only voice chairing and have lost sight of those who need the type share meetings. This leaves most meetings without a chairperson. In the hopes of carrying out Step Twelve which states, “having had a spiritual awakening as the result of these steps, we tried to carry this message to nicotine users and to

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This and That...

Anyone having trouble with step three? This was posted by Dorrie on the Voices of Recovery message board and with permission submitted by Roz. The original author of the wheel-barrow story is unknown.



Dear (((Family)))

Early in my AA recovery, I was having difficulty with Step Three. It wasn't that I didn't believe in God but they kept telling me to turn my will and my life over to the care of God. That confused me as I couldn't see who to turn it over to and so I went to my very wise sponsor.

Her name was Margarita, twenty-eight years sober in AA, and sixty-eight years old. I told her of my dilemma with understanding step three and that I was getting hung up on where it said "faith alone avails us nothing." And that you could keep your Higher Power out of your life because you didn't trust Him. Well, that really confused me because as far as I was concerned, faith and trust were the same thing, and my HP wasn't giving me what I was asking for.

Margarita asked me "if faith and trust was the same thing."

"Yes" I said.

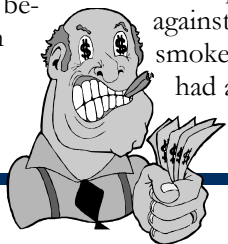
She said no. Guess who won? Then she told me a short story I've carried with me for the twenty-three and one half years I've been sober in AA and the three months I've been smober in Nicotine Anonymous. And here is the story...Hope it helps someone as it has me.

"Dorrie, if you saw a blind man, pushing a wheelbarrow, across a tightrope, across Niagara Falls, with no net, and he does this everyday, back and forth, and never falls, and you watch him for months, and he starts out on this one particular day....would you have faith that he would make it without falling?"

I said, "Yes, I've been watching him do it for months."

Margarita then said, "Well trust is when you get in the wheelbarrow and take a ride with Him."

Hmm...guess there is a difference between faith and trust and I need both of them to have my Higher Power really in my life.



Denial

by Cathy M.

The lie hasn't changed
Its face is only re-arranged
Hoping it won't be misplaced
Or sadly used and then replaced
The lie hangs around
Lurking silent without sound
Sending out a thought or two
Makes believe it's a part of you
The lie masquerades
Without belief not knowing shame
In the end you'll know its name
You'll only have yourself to blame
The lie will use you till
You're hopeless and dishonest still
Tell me have you had your fill
Time to wake up for the kill
The lie will laugh at you
Leave you lying black and blue
You'll hardly know you've been used, A
centerpiece that's been abused
The lie can be deceived
Turn around what you believe
You will be spared of grief
Accept the truth and be relieved

From John N.

Anniversary date (3-17-1985)

My freedom from nicotine use hangs on accepting total abstinence. My abstinence hangs on receiving direction and power which I do not possess. I have found my direction and power in the fellowship of Nicotine Anonymous.

I now get a burst of energy with every new twelve step member. How can this miracle be? May the source of all power grant our fellowship continued direction and power to carry this simple message "You don't ever have to smoke again if you don't want to and I promise you a comfortable smobriety if you practice the Twelve Steps of NICA."

A little Smoking?

A North Carolina man, having bought several expensive cigars, insured them against... get this... fire. After he had smoked them, he then decided that he had a claim against the insurance company and filed. The insur-

ance company refused to pay, citing the obvious reason that the man had consumed the cigar normally.

The man sued.

The judge stated that since the company had insured the cigars against fire, they were obligated to pay.

After the man accepted payment for his claim, the insurance company then had the man arrested . . . for arson.

Speakers with three months or longer smobriety are needed for the Saturday night online meetings.

Contact Roz at :

rhoskie67501@sbcglobal.net .

Reference Speaker Meeting in the subject line

From your chair

Continued from page 5...

This is how I feel about my growth in Nicotine Anonymous. The more service I do, the more comfortable I become doing service work. Now it's developed into an issue of not wondering how I'm going to do the service but more about the growth I will get out of doing service work. The challenge is to start and continue beyond my fears.

In 2006 many of the positions in World Services will need to be filled aside from the chairperson elect's position. The positions of secretary elect and treasurer elect will be available. The opportunity to do service always exists at all levels of Nicotine Anonymous. World Services is a very important part of Nicotine Anonymous. I wish to applaud the hard work all the current officers have done & are doing. These people are not only dedicated to Nicotine Anonymous but also to their own recovery as addicts. Remember you have to give it away to keep it. To completely appreciate the immense tasks performed by World Services you need to attend a World Services Conference.

In 2006 the World Service Conference will be held in Chicago and will in-

Continued on page 14...

Newcomer's Corner

All it takes is a desire...

Hi people,
I quit and lasted eleven days, slipped, then stopped again, then slipped again. I have been smoking regularly since the eighteenth with one smoke-free day last Friday. One change though- no smoking in the house around my cat. Just because I am an addict doesn't mean he has to feel sick too.



I plan to get back in the saddle in a week when I return from visiting family.

For the past week or so I have felt tired, depressed, stinky, out of breath...all the things I once again want to be free of. It's so weird- I gave up feeling good in order to satisfy cravings. That should feel good- to satisfy cravings, but it doesn't work that way does it?

I am lurking and will try to check in while at the old homestead. I will return and then it will be time to start the day by day posting that helped so much during the last quit. Looking forward to quitting again,
Peter J.

A story on Step Eight and making amends as told by Ken M....

There once was a little boy who had a bad temper. His father gave him a bag of nails and told him that every time he lost his temper, he must hammer a nail into the back of the fence. The first day the boy had driven thirty-seven nails into the fence.

Over the next few weeks, as he learned to control his anger, the number of nails hammered daily gradually dwindled down. He discovered it was easier to hold his temper than to drive those nails into the fence.

Finally the day came when the boy didn't lose his temper at all. He told his father about it and the father suggested that the boy now pull out one nail for each day that he was able to hold his temper.

The days passed and the young boy was finally able to tell his father that all the nails were gone.



The father took his son by the hand and led him to the fence. He said, "You have done well, my son, but look at the holes in the fence. The fence will never be the same. When you say things in anger, they leave a scar just like this one. You can put a knife in a man and draw it out. It won't matter how many times you say I'm sorry, the wound is still there.

A verbal wound is as bad as a physical one. Friends are very rare jewels, indeed. They make you smile and encourage you to succeed. They lend an ear, they share words of praise and they always want to open their hearts to us.

Please forgive me if I have ever left a hole in your fence.

The Hummingbird

By Susan S.

I am so sad right now. I have a very large garage, more like a small barn, with a tall peak. All across the peak is a skylight to let light in when the doors are closed. I feed the hummingbirds near our house and from time to time one will get in there when we have the large overhead doors open. We had two in there this afternoon and one found its way out but the other is dying in there.

How like the hummingbirds we are as nicotine addicts. We keep looking up and trying to get out the skylight, and when that doesn't work and we begin to come down lower we suddenly see the sky and head for it and become free!

Even though this one little hummingbird in its exhaustion landed on the bed of the pickup truck, it still didn't head for the sky out the door but back up into the skylight and certain death. Our Higher Power can speak to us in so many ways! Today, I choose to be the free Hummingbird!

Later on...

When I left the garage the last time I could see the little hummingbird desperately seeking its solution in the skylight, I saw it clinging to a wooden brace not quite able to fly high enough to reach the



skylight.

When I returned it had fallen but was still alive. I took the little bird outside where it could see the sky. I gave it a bit of sugar water and it revived enough to take its spread wings and place them back along its sides. It was in God's hands now. Sadly, it sat very still, opening its eyes and looking about but never trying to leave again, just accepting it's soon to be death. I like to think that being free of the garage and able to see the sky it was peaceful in its death.

My Relapse

Last night it happened so fast. I found myself into a stressful situation and lit up. I wasn't thinking about it at all. It can hit the best of us, can't it? Rich, poor, black, white, and it hits hard no matter where we are or what we are doing.

I need to look at this as a growing experience and try again. It is true that there is no greater power than God and a sponsor to help you through the trying times.

P.J.

Little Wrinkled Man

A woman walked up to a little wrinkled up man rocking in a chair on his porch.

"I couldn't help noticing how happy you look", she said. "What's your secret for a happy life?"

"I smoke three packs of cigarettes a day," he replied. "I also drink a case of whiskey a week, eat lots of fatty foods, and never ever take any exercise."

"That's amazing," the woman said. "Exactly how old are you?"

"Twenty-six," he said.

Author unknown,
submitted by Susan S.



A Story of Experience, Strength and Hope

Ann started smoking at a slumber party when she was a teen. All the older girls were doing it. And Lauren Bacall looked so suave. Ann continued to smoke through college and on into her early married and motherhood years. Her husband smoked, too. Ann smoked when she was pregnant. There was no surgeon general's report then. She continued to smoke up until it was no longer acceptable – and even a while after that – even when her doctor detected the beginnings of emphysema.

But she did attempt to quit. She went through one program through the church. But she and her friend smoked on the way home. She tried another program which used aversion therapy. People in that program were encouraged to smoke until they were sick. They were shown pictures of people whose faces were eaten up with cancer. It upset her so much she had to smoke and then she went with her daughter to acupuncture. Her daughter was addicted from the womb. She had always had a cloud of cigarette smoke encircling her head. Of course she would pick it up. Like mom, like daughter, right? After the acupuncture treatment, it was her daughter who suggested a cigarette. Ann agreed. Sick? Crazy? No, just addicted.

Finally, at sixty years old she found Nicotine Anonymous, a twelve-step program based on Alcoholics Anonymous. She knew about AA. Her ex-husband had quit drinking in AA. And she had been active in Al-Anon. So she knew it would work. She went in June of that year and found a lot of friendly faces and a lot of hope. Her daughter went with her so she had a buddy in this effort. And this time they didn't spur each other on to sneak a smoke. However, soon after that she met a nice guy. He was a nice guy – but he smoked. She started bumming cigarettes from him here and there. He didn't know she was trying to quit. So for a while she was

kind of straddling the fence of nicotine. She wasn't completely quit – obviously – but not completely into the addiction either. If she wasn't experiencing new love, she'd be completely miserable. Then in October Ann lost her mom to heart disease. It was devastating. She totally quit quitting.

But in time she was ready to deal with her addiction again. And she was comfortable enough to talk to her boyfriend about his smoking, too. In January, she introduced him to Nicotine Anonymous and they both dove in. They came to as many meetings as they could. They shared their struggles and listened as others talked about their experiences with combating nicotine and coming out victorious. They not only attended but also got involved in a step study, where they studied the Twelve Steps and used the principals to deal with the reasons they were addicted. They dove into service right away, helping where they could. They understood the saying, "Service is the key." Members say that you have to give it away to keep it. They attended a national conference that was being held in their town and were totally inspired by the "Old-timers" in the program, who came to share their experience, strength and hope. When an opportunity to open a new meeting came up, they jumped at the chance to be part of the core group. They were there week after week, month after month, year after year – first to open the door and make the coffee, last to clean up and lock up. Many people looked at Ann as a rock to cling to. She remembered her first difficult year and could understand how hard it was for them.

About four years ago, Ann started forgetting things – little things at first. She repeated her stories two and three times in a single night. Finally it became clear that something was wrong, Alzheimer's. I don't know if nicotine is one of the causes for that debilitating disease. We've seen many in our program who do not quite escape the ravages that the substance causes to our bodies. Ann doesn't clearly remember all the people she helped and

loved so much. But when she talks to her daughter, there is a vague recollection of the meeting that did so much for her. In January, her daughter brought Ann her eleven-year chip. She smiled. There was a glint of remembrance in her eyes. Just for a moment her daughter felt like she knew what it was all about.

Even if Ann doesn't remember the group, she is free from nicotine. And many that knew her appreciated her strength and friendly smile when she would say, "Keep coming back, it works if you work it."

Nicotine Anonymous is a twelve-step program to assist people who are trying to gain freedom from nicotine in any form. There are no dues or fees. You don't have to have already quit to come. The only requirement for membership is the desire to be free of Nicotine.

Kim J.

For more information, go to <http://www.nicotine-anonymous.org>

Sunday E-mail Servant needed...

Please contact Alan K. at: Klein2000@verizon.net

Two old ladies were outside their nursing home, having a smoke, when it started to rain. One of the ladies pulled out a condom, cut off the end and put it over her cigarette, and continued smoking.

Lady 1: What's that?

Lady 2: A condom. This way my cigarette doesn't get wet.

Lady 1: Where did you get it?

Lady 2: You can get them at any drugstore. The next day, Lady 1 hobbles herself into the local drugstore and announces to the pharmacist that she wants a box of condoms.

The guy, obviously embarrassed, looks at her kind of strangely she is, after all, over 80 years of age, but very delicately he asks what brand she prefers.

Lady 1: Doesn't matter son, as long as it fits a Camel.

The pharmacist fainted.

Author unknown



Conclusion...

Tom and I moved to MA in 2001. I brought my cigarettes with me. We lived with his sister and brother-in-law and I continued my smoking outside in freezing weather, sleet and snow! I went to any length to keep my cigarettes.

We bought a mobile home and have lived here one and one half years. I brought my cigarettes with me. I kept trying and failing to kick the smoking habit. I went to the American Cancer Society and to counselors. I tried switching brands, how many I smoked per day, having Tom hide his cigarettes only to find them and smoke up the whole pack. I was up to about thirty plus cigarettes a day.

I burned holes into the seat in the driver's side of the car. I emptied my share of ashtrays in parking lots and threw lit cigarettes out of the window, while driving the car. I smoked putting on makeup, after a shower, doing the dishes, preparing a meal, burning holes in clothing, furniture, and carpet. The list goes on ad infinitum.

Then, in June of this year I came upon the *unofficialnicanon site* on the *Internet*. I quit June twenty-second, 2004 and found out so much more about myself. I'd done a lot of inner healing in AA—working the steps with a sponsor going to therapy and finally being balanced in my Manic-depression and Post Traumatic Stress Syndrome with the help of the newer medications they have out today.

My first week was sheer hell. I guess that's why they call it *hell week!* I stayed glued to my computer the first few months and made ninety meetings in ninety days. I got a sponsor, who was a Godsend to me. I became of service and started chairing meetings. I realized I was in the grips of an addiction and was an addict. I couldn't quit alone, because I needed the fellowship and the twelve steps of Nicotine Anonymous. This is a WE program. Of course, God had to be number one, before anything in my life.

The first five months I had two losses and a difficult situation to contend with, regarding my husband.

My first two weeks smober a dear friend of mine died and her daughter told me, by mail. She lived in Norwich, NY and we'd had a very long-term relationship. I was deeply grieved and sad.

Then, Tom relapsed in his disease of alcoholism. He had to go to Ohio and he came off the plane, drunk. The girl I sponsor in AA was with me and she had taken his cigarettes. We got him home and I took his cigarettes and put them in a drawer in the kitchen and put him to bed. I didn't even think of smoking that night. Nobody can tell me that God wasn't doing for me what I couldn't do for myself. The next day when the shock wore off, I was craving very badly and called my sponsor. She saw me through a difficult time and to her I am forever grateful.

Then, in my 5th month of smobriety another dear friend died. I took this death really hard and went into a deep depression that lasted a little over three weeks. I had not had a depression like that in a long time and felt I was in a dark abyss, with no light. I was not functioning well and just rode it out. One thing I have learned in my depressions is that there will be an end in sight. I finally was relieved of this dark time.

The longer I stayed stopped the shorter the time span between my cravings. I still get cravings, but have made friends, can go to the message board or grab someone online in an IM, go to a meeting and use the phone list I have made of fellow members.

I have found that I had been smoking to cover up deep, deep hurt from the wounded inner child, and the adult part of me that took some hard knocks from life. And I had character defects and shortcomings to deal with, also. Thank God, for the Twelve Steps!

I learned that the cravings were going to be there whether I smoked or not. Each person has given me some insight into my past and present. I learned that I can stay smoke free,

six months and twenty-four days.

I am just starting out on this journey of freedom from the bondage of cigarettes. I am looking forward to more peace and serenity in my life.

By the way, Tom is going on six months of sobriety.

I believe the biggest forces in this world are forgiveness and love. I have never felt the unconditional love I have experienced here, in these rooms. The love, understanding and forgiveness keep me coming back, and it has spread to all areas of my life.

I have been a born again Christian since March ninth, 1985. I owe everything to my Higher Power, *Jesus Christ*. This is *His* story of the restoration in my life. There is hope and a new freedom to be experienced trudging the road of happy destiny. May God bless us and keep us, until we meet again.

Thank you for making a Twelve Step call on me tonight. I showed up for the meeting this evening and did not bring my cigarettes with me! GA.

Words of Hope...

I am quickly coming up on sixteen years without the use of nicotine. I can't think of anything in life I am more grateful for except perhaps the actual breath of life itself.

I came into the program because I had stopped smoking and I thought it was what God wanted me to do, and I guess it was. But I was having a very hard time handling life, because I had never really tried going without my nicotine before, at least not in my adult life.

I hoped Nicotine Anonymous would be able to teach me how to live comfortably without this awful drug but NicA gave me much more than that. It taught me how to be truly happy and free from nicotine and that is a gift I had never even dreamed of. Some of the newer members who still attend the meetings in my area sometimes tell me that when they spoke with me for the first time I told them

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Words of Hope...

Continued from page 10...

that life without nicotine was wonderful. It doesn't surprise me. I really do feel that way.

Nicotine Anonymous taught me how to be honest, not just with my checkbook and with others, but with myself as well. The program gave me hope that there was a way to feel okay without my drug of choice and showed me that my faith was more real than I had ever known. I went from believing there was a God and trying to do what God wanted me to do, to knowing there is a Higher Power who is with me every moment and I relish the presence of that Power in even my most mundane daily tasks.

Nicotine Anonymous helped me have the courage to face my own shortcomings without forgetting that I have assets as well. I began to learn integrity by sharing with other members who I really am and they accepted me and loved me through it. As the members accepted me, I also began to accept myself and to know that I am exactly who I was created to be.

I finally see my real place in this world, and that's beside each of you on this marvelous journey. I am also starting to develop enough humility to ask for help when I need it, every time I need it, even with the little things I think I should be able to do on my own. I am beginning to believe it is about all of us. It never really was about me after all.

Now that I see my own place a bit more clearly, I have started to know real compassion for others. However, I still make mistakes and fortunately you have helped me learn how to clear up my messes as I go along, so my life is clean, and up to date most of the time now. But, I still check every day. One lesson that sticks with me is to try to leave each room just a bit better than it was when I entered it. If I keep that in mind through the day (I always practice in the bathroom at work) and every day it helps.

I am still asking my Higher Power what I should be doing. The big difference now is that I spend time seeking

the answer to that question each day. And the answers are out there, just waiting for me, every time I look.

Yes, I believe life without nicotine is wonderful. Life in general is wonderful and magical and juicy and made to be lived to its fullest. When I was using nicotine I couldn't feel it, see it or taste it. I was numb. That was a good thing for me at first, when all I really had in my life was pain. Breathe deep, life is good. In service,
Lenna M.

A Short History of the Telephone Meetings of Nicotine Anonymous By Scott Johnston – former Chair Person of NAWS

As with many things in life, necessity is the mother of invention. As the chairperson of the NAWS Teleservice Committee I had been aware of an on-going problem that needed fixing. Whenever we were contacted by a person looking for a meeting where there was no meeting, we had nothing to offer the person looking for help. Some members had made a valiant and successful effort to establish on line meetings which we were able to offer people. The problem was many folks did not have the technology to attend those meetings. This left us with the frustration of not having, for example, a single meeting in the whole city of Detroit, Michigan to offer a lady who called in looking for help.

My wife is a long time member of another twelve-step fellowship that deals with the issue of addiction to food. Because they were also very short on face to face meetings in many areas of the country and the world, they came up with the idea of using the telephone. Telephone bridges, used mostly by business people, were used to create meetings that could be attended by people from around the world at any time of the day or night. Some of their members took the lead and contracted with a commercial company to start setting up the meetings. Upwards of fifty people could be attending a meeting from places as far away as Australia and England. One downside was the cost

of the telephone bridges which could average twenty dollars per hour for the service. Asking people to send in donations was tacky and cumbersome but somehow the meetings developed and prospered.

One day I was telling a woman from Oshkosh, Wisconsin and a man from Edgewater, Florida that there were no meetings for them to attend in their respective areas. It occurred to me that if I were to set up one of those telephone bridges that I could create a place where these two and many others could meet and share their experience, strength and hope with each other. The only problem was the infamous challenge of time and money. When, within my busy schedule could I put time aside to open a meeting and how would I pay for the telephone bridge expenses? The bridge problem was the first challenge that our higher power solved. One of our members was using a service called Freebridge to put together family conference calls when trying to plan family events. I had been talking up this bridge idea for a while at meetings when somebody remembered the Freebridge service and who I needed to contact for details. I gave our member a call and she gave me the very simple directions to contact and set up the service (Call 775-533-8315 and use a password 4567891) and just as its name says, it was FREE! In terms of the traditions this did not create a conflict because the service was free to all that used it and any funds we did collect could be donated to NAWS. The only cost involved was incurred by the individual members calling into the bridge. This kept the whole thing self supporting, declining outside contributions. Problem number one solved!

Now, what about time? The only time slot I had available on a predictable basis was Sunday nights after my face to face meeting in East Hampton, New York. I finally made a commitment to open and chair a meeting on Sunday nights at eight pm Eastern Standard Time. I would stay with it for a year and if it was successful, we'd go

Continued on page 14...

Letters to the Editor...

Dear Editor,

I was bothered by a recent request to write a chapter to the agnostics in the NicA book that is modeled after the "To The Agnostic" chapter in the AA Big Book. I find this chapter to be blatantly religious proselytization along the lines that one has to believe in an all-powerful loving Creator deity. And it insults anyone whose higher power is anything lesser, like the group, the Program, and such.

Meanwhile, I almost never go to twelve-step meetings because they foist this propaganda about believing in a favor-dispensing deity. Fortunately in my neck of the woods, they don't say Jesus or Jehovah or Mohammed or The Bible in meetings. But what the Steps on the wall describe is a favor-dispensing deity plain and simple.

Please look at the steps and wherever it says "God" or "Higher Power," substitute some other concept besides favor-dispensing deity. No other concept fits all the steps.

What else besides a favor-dispensing deity is going to restore me to sanity and take care of me and remove my shortcomings and give me the power to carry out its will (Steps two, three, seven, eleven)?

What besides a deity can I pray to and seek knowledge of its will for me? (Step eleven) What besides a deity am I reasonably going to turn my will and my life over to?

(Step three) What besides a favor-dispensing deity is going to be a loving entity and ultimate authority that expresses itself in the group?

(Tradition two) And the simple fact that they use the word "God" over and over is rank hypocrisy in a program that claims to be non-religious.

By the way, when someone tells you that they got sober or smober using a tree or the Second Law of Thermodynamics or some such nonsense as their higher power, they are pulling your leg. Nobody got sober or quit smoking as a result of contemplating a tree or a light bulb. Atheists and other free-thinkers in twelve-step programs are forced to say that kind of garbage in order to get along and go along. Its time we stopped pressuring people to mouth this junk. Especially confused vulnerable newbies.

The Steps are NOT merely spiritual. They are religious, as they present a very concrete concept of a particular kind of God. It may not be a particular religion like Christianity or Judaism, but it is still religious (check your dictionary -- it does not require adherence to a particular religion to be religious).

As a life-long atheist, I used to agonize over how to "Work The Steps" when I could find no concept for God, Higher Power, or Some Entity that fit the steps. As a member of a number of recovery message boards and participant of many regular twelve-step groups, I have known many others who have had a similar long and difficult struggle with this.

How would you feel if you went to some quit-smoking group where all of the literature was about a concept of a god that you found abhorrent? Such as a satanic god whose temptations had to be resisted? And you didn't believe in a "Satan" and it was all baloney to you? And they told you that all you have to do is come up with your own concept of Satan? And all that people talked about was about how Satan tried to get them to smoke last weekend etc.? Satan this and Satan that meeting after meeting?

Even though it may be emphasized that you could come up with any concept of Satan that you wanted, such as a tree or lightbulb or cosmic force or George Bush or Hillary Clinton, would you feel like you are in the right place? Would you say it was "not religious" because they let you come up with your own concept of Satan?

Well, that's how I feel when confronted with twelve-step literature about a favor-dispensing supernatural loving deity that I need to talk to, pray to, turn my life over to His care and do His will and all of that. (And not to ask any hard questions like why would He do favors for me and not for the starving millions?)

I abhor a favor-dispensing deity that finds parking spaces for wealthy addicts -- while letting millions starve -

- as much as most of you hate Satan.

OK, OK, nothing in the literature says God finds parking spaces for the wealthy, but I hear things this ludicrous in almost every meeting I've ever gone to, and I've never heard anyone offer a gentle corrective.

And no wonder -- the Steps are full of claims for what God will do for us like restoring us to "sanity" and providing care. As is AA Big Book literature like this: "We had a new Employer. Being all powerful, He provided what we needed, if we kept close to Him and performed His work well." (p. 63). Hmm. Screw-ups need not apply!

Its an outrage. Have you seen the pictures of all the starvation from southern Niger? And then one sits in a twelve-step meeting and listens to morally thoughtless people talk about how God found them a parking spot. Sheesh. Like God is busy hunting down parking spots for wealthy white people while letting millions of people in Africa starve or die of malaria (for want of a seven dollar mosquito net).

I have no problem at all with a religious program, like Alcoholics Victorious, that specifically states they are religious. But I do have a big problem with religious programs like AA and NicA that claim not to be religious, but then proselytize endlessly about a loving caring God that will take care of you etc. etc. I came to NicA to quit nicotine (and AA to quit alcohol), not to get pressured to believe in a favor-dispensing deity.

(Incidentally, I've been abstinent from alcohol for eleven plus years, and from nicotine for nearly eight years. So thinking this God and H.P. stuff is a bunch of bunk and majoritarian tyranny has been no obstacle to my recovery).

And what's with The Lord's Prayer, an explicitly Christian prayer (Matthew 6:5 and Luke 11:1-4), being used in so many meetings? Whenever I hear,

Continued on page 14...

BIRTHDAY CONGRATULATIONS!

CONGRATULATIONS AND THANKS FOR YOUR DONATIONS

TO: Margaret M. F. She celebrated nine years on 02/14. Way to go Margaret!



~ Birthday Gratitude ~

Name: _____

The above-named member of Nicotine Anonymous stopped using nicotine on _____,

and has _____ years of freedom!

Amount Enclosed \$ _____ From: _____

If you wish to remain anonymous, put "anonymous"

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419 Main St, PMB#370
Huntington Beach, CA 92648 USA.

SUBSCRIBE TO SEVEN MINUTES !

Seven Minutes is a quarterly publication of NAWSO 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 will also receive a Worldwide Meeting Schedule. You may pay by check or money order (in US Funds), or Credit Card.

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Regina...

Continued from page 6...

practice these principles in all our affairs," We're asking for help.

It would be nice to see one meeting a day at unofficialnicanon with more attendance. Not only to carry out the twelve steps, but to keep unofficialnicanon alive. So we're calling on anyone who has a free hour and is willing to chair a meeting, even if you can only do it temporarily, please volunteer for this vital service work.

Aimee's meetings are going well and mine on Thursday at 7:30 PM Eastern Time is starting back up again. If you would like to chair and don't know how, please ask and someone will help you get started.

If you have an idea that could help, please let us at unofficialnicanon know. Thank you, Regina F.
twistedmom99@yahoo.com.

A Short History of the Telephone Meetings...

Continued from page 11 ...

from there. To get the word out that the meeting was there I changed the outbound messages on the NAWS information line offering this meeting as an alternative if a meeting could not be found in the area where a person lived. The first meeting was held on the first Sunday in January of 2004. There were about six people on the bridge and our first speaker was my sponsor which got us off to a good start. One of our first members, the fellow from Edgewater, Florida joined the group and now has over one year of sobriety. Many more from all over the country have since followed in his footsteps and there is a small but solid community of people who attend the phone meetings on a regular basis.

Growth has also occurred. Members wanted to start focusing on the steps. I suggested that they start an additional meeting on a different night but keep everything else the same. The focus, of course, would be on the steps. We have been most fortunate to have a trusted servant from New Paltz, New York who took on the chairperson position of this Wednesday night meeting and has guided

guided the meeting for quiet some time. She has even cared enough to make sure responsibilities are shared and that service rotation occurs. It is a good healthy meeting and fills a valuable need. If that were not enough, another meeting has started on Fridays. It is hoped that it will become a meeting focused on beginners needs as time goes along. In this case a lady from White Plains, New York is leading this effort with the able bodied assistance of other members from Massachusetts, Wisconsin, and Florida.

Our member from New Paltz was also our first bonafide delegate to the World Services conference this year in Atlanta, Georgia in April. She gained many insights into how our fellowship works at the World Service level and came back well connected and inspired from the event. In the not too distant future we hope to form an intergroup to address the specific needs of the telephone meetings of Nicotine Anonymous. There are, as usual, special idiosyncrasies to phone meetings that need to be addressed to keep things running smoothly.

It has been a pleasure and honor to help get the telephone meetings of Nicotine Anonymous up and running. It has also been a great experience chairing the Last Chance meeting on Sunday nights at eight PM. I've tried to pass the chairmanship on but so far there have not been any takers. The time and expense are not a problem so I'll stick around until my relief team comes along. Aside from that if I truly believe that the only thing keeping me from that first cigarette is staying attached to this fellowship, I might as well stick around and be useful.

Thanks for letting me share and be of service.

Letters to the Editor

Continued from page 12...

"Thy Kingdom Come, Thy Will Be done", I think, "I sure as hell hope not." Narcotics Anonymous years ago asked its groups to stop using it at meetings.

It isn't just me. At least four federal courts have ruled that AA is religious

(and not just "spiritual").

As for some solutions to this problem, first there needs to be a recognition of the problem. We're sick to death of hearing about trees and lightbulbs.

Also, twelve-step programs need to drop their claim of not being religious.

Finally, there needs to be a recognition that The Steps, as worded, do not fit the belief systems of atheists and deists that don't believe in a god that is involved in human affairs. AA has given recognition of "We Agnostics" groups that have their own secular wording of the twelve steps. (Ahh, secular, what a beautiful word). NicA should do likewise.

Jim L.

Golden Valley, Minnesota
Recovery Without Proselytization About
Supernatural Loving Personal Diets

From your chair

Continued from page 7...

volve an incredible amount of work and a tremendous number of volunteers to carry it out.

We would love to see all the wonderful people who make Nicotine Anonymous the great program it is at the 2006 Conference. I look forward to a successful year on the board of World Services.

In service,
Kathy K.



Message From Our New Outreach Coordinator and a Chance to Serve!

Hi, my name is Judi, and I am a very grateful recovering nicotine addict. I'm still wondering how I ended up in this role, but when asked, I had a feeling deep down that it would be good for my recovery. So, hopefully it will be. So far, I have been able to focus on just that, my recovery, as opposed to my stinking thinking, which can creep up on me. It also prompted me to write something for *Seven Minutes*.

Why outreach? I was enlightened about Nicotine Anonymous and am so grateful. Perhaps you saw an ad or read a flyer or were referred by a doctor, and that's what got you here. I see how important it is that we continue to make sure our program is known out there, while adhering to our Eleventh Tradition and attracting rather than "promoting."

Here are some current outreach projects from across the country. The NJ/ PA Intergroup has a large traveling fold-up board display that members have taken to health fairs a couple of times a year with pamphlets for distribution provided by their intergroup. Northern and Southern California intergroup have both applied for funding for outreach projects. As California has gone smoke-free, NicA members have been there to help people struggling by starting meetings in the prisons. What a great way to help someone be happy, joyous and free versus just not smoking and miserable. It sounds like a great project for other groups to take on, too!

Up to \$500 is available to any Nic A group for attracting those still struggling with active nicotine addiction. I am sure so many of your

groups have undertaken great steps, however small they may seem, to reach out and attract newcomers, be it flyers or ads in the local paper or penny-saver. The outreach section of our Web site has been fortified with a great smattering of ideas that groups have found successful. If you have any questions, would like to tell us about what your group has done, or would like to know more about starting a project, please contact me at outreachcoordinator@nicotine-anonymous.org.

Our Chair Kathy K. has suggested expanding our array of template letters to include colleges, high schools, religious organizations, prisons, etc. We would not have to reinvent the wheel, as we have a basic template for the medical profession; it would just require some tweaking for each specific organization. Volunteers for revising the template letter to fit each are being sought. If you have a particular area of interest or expertise, and can spend an hour or so using an existing template to produce such a letter, please let me know. If you prefer to edit, that is very welcome as well.

Thank you to all who have played a part in outreach to date: Kathy K. for taking time to talk with me about the role, and seeing that our fellowship continues to get traditions-based exposure out in the world; Annette A. to providing support and ideas from the conference workshop; Jan, Jeff, Frank and all who have served in this role in the past; Pat L. for getting me a copy of the template letter to health care professionals; the Traditions Committee for all of the discernment and keeping us a unified fellowship. It's obvious that this is a we program! I'm so grateful that NicA has been here for me. If we

continue to spread the word and affect others' lives, one at a time, it's worth it.

I look forward to hearing from you about an outreach project soon...

In gratitude,

Judi D, NY

outreachcoordinator@nicotine-anonymous.org

Nicotine Anonymous World Services Office

Balance Sheet

As of June 30, 2005

ASSETS

Total Checking/Saving	\$45,743.76
Accounts Receivable	\$(49.29)

Other Current Assets

(Inventory of Literature)	\$16,578.89
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Fixed Assets

Computers	\$1,452.74
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Total Assets	\$ 63,726.10
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LIABILITIES & EQUITY

Liabilities

Accounts Payable	\$ 3,328.44
Sales Tax Payable	\$375.61

Equity

Unrestricted Net Assets	\$58,466.27
Retained Earnings	\$111.73

Total Liabilities

& Equity	\$63,726.10
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United Kingdom meetings...

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.

Contact Information: Write to: Nicotine Anonymous, PO Box 1516, London SW1H 9WT

Tel: 020 7976 0076 (please leave a message)

Seven Minutes

NAWSO

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

Publication Dates and Deadlines for Submissions for 2005

Publication Date	Deadline Date for submissions
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March 1	February 5
June 17	May 20
September 1	August 1
December 1	November 6

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