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A New Freedom (Part 2 of 3)

Rodger F.

Co-founder of Nicotine Anonymous

This is the conference-approved version of Rodger's Story. It will appear in Seven Minutes in three parts. This is part two.

In 1977, I began a spiritual journey of recovery in another 12-step program that continues to this day. Unfortunately, my smoking increased, often surpassing four packs a day. The meeting rooms were smoke-filled, and people told me not to worry about my smoking that there were more pressing problems. Thus I smoked incessantly. During a meeting I could finish a pack. If I went to lunch or dinner, I smoked up to the arrival of my salad, and then had a couple quick ones before my entree arrived. I became a life support system for a cigarette.

After I had been in that program for about a year, I was talking to a newcomer who did not smoke. I started telling him that it got better, but was stopped by a spasm of coughing. The newcomer looked at me as if I was crazy, like I was killing myself. I had a moment of clarity and realized that I was crazy; that I was killing myself, and that my recovery was far from complete.

I had had a cough since my teens. I had heard the doctor's warnings for a decade. Still I could not quit. Each year I made a New Year's resolution to quit by the end of the year. Each year I failed.

About that time, I went to marriage counseling with my first wife. At one emotionally threatening point, the counselor asked me a question. I paused, began drawing a cigarette from my pack. Then the counselor put her hand on my arm and asked, "Can you wait with your cigarette until after we've talked about this?"

I replied, "Of course." I hid the rage I was feeling. I wanted that cigarette, I wanted the time it would buy, the relief it would provide, and

the nicotine-induced comfort. I responded curtly, and then excused myself to go to the restroom. There I smoked several cigarettes in resentment against the therapist who was sitting in the other room making a dollar a minute. Again, there was a moment of clarity when I realized that nicotine really did something for me emotionally.

I had always heard that smoking was a nasty little habit. With willpower anyone could quit. But if it was just a little habit, why did I seem to always be, minute by minute, obsessed with smoking? I began to realize it was not a little habit but a major addiction.

A good program friend of mine, Al B., called me at work one day. I liked Al because he smoked like me. I never had to hide the extent of my smoking from him because he was as badly addicted as I was. We talked for a while before he told me he had some material on a smoking cessation program and would I like to go to one of their sessions with him. I don't know why but I said yes, and off we went.

At the first session, facilitators described their smoking cessation program and afterwards, prompted by Al, I signed up. After six weeks of classes and a fairly earnest effort, I quit smoking. I graduated. I took up running and became obsessive about that. Then there was food. In the next months, my fiancée and I moved to a distant town in Southern California where I started a new job. We were going through many changes and one day we argued.

My reaction was to drive to a little market and buy a pack of cigarettes. I began to chain smoke. I drove into Los Angeles and met Al for

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<info@nicotine-anonymous.org>

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

Your trusted servants,
Gary M., *Publisher*
Catherine C., *Editor*
Joe S., *Subscriptions*

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 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 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.

From the Chair . . .

Robin L., Atlanta, Georgia

My name is Robin L. and I am a grateful recovering nicotine addict. Since the last issue of *Seven Minutes*, I attended two retreats hosted by local intergroups; Chicagoland's Working the Journey and NYMAI's Clean in the Catskills, both of which were very powerful. Because I am immersed in the hustle and bustle of my daily routine, I often get too busy and forget to maintain my conscious contact with my Higher Power and get side-tracked in working my recovery program. These retreats helped me renew my connection with HP and reminded me how important it is to work the Steps of this program.

I was also reminded of why I love this fellowship. I was reminded that I have a connection to each and every person in this fellowship. We have similar histories—some are more traumatic, some less. Some people are further on their path; some are just starting their journey; some have prior Twelve Step experience, some had never heard of the Twelve Steps before walking into the rooms. But we all are addicted to this cunning, baffling and powerful drug called Nicotine.

I found a place where I belong.

I am sure that many of you feel the same. I have so much love for this fellowship, for the people I have met, and for the friendships and relationships that I have been able to develop. My gratitude for the ability to live life nicotine free and on God's terms (not mine) is immeasurable. Each time I walk into a meeting, in my home group or on my travels, there is someone who says something that I need to hear. That's how this program works. We are there for each other. We support each other, sometimes directly, sometimes indirectly.

I have gotten so much from this program that I wanted to give back. One of the axioms of the program is "You can't keep it unless you give it away." We end meetings with, "Keep coming back – it

works if you work it." We must work it. The First Step states, "We admitted we were powerless over nicotine and that our lives had become unmanageable." Step One reminds us that this is a we program. Although each of us works our own individual recovery program, we can't do it alone.

The Twelfth Step states, "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." How do we carry the message? How do we practice these principles in all our affairs? Do you do all you can to carry the message? Do you practice these principles in all your affairs? I am not writing to take anyone's inventory. I am asking that you take your own inventory. Ask yourself, "Am I doing all I can to help this fellowship? How can I give back?"

We are a very small fellowship. I have never heard a member say, "We have too many members. We are sooo big." Rather, I hear, "Why don't people know about us? We need to get the word out. We can't seem to get people to do service." We have many wonderful individuals who have put hours and hours of service toward this fellowship at the local level and at the World Services level. Many have been doing this tireless service for years. We need fresh ideas and people. This is not new, but it is becoming more urgent than ever before. The gifts that we receive from service work are enormous; they are spiritual and tangible.

Serving as a World Services officer, I have been able to travel. I have met people from all over; I have new friends in NY, Chicago, California, Maryland, New Jersey, Massachusetts, Texas, Georgia, and elsewhere.

On a recent trip to Orange County, California, I had some extra time prior to my return flight to Atlanta, so I went to the

beach for a few minutes. I love the water and was able to spend a few moments connecting with my Higher Power at a beautiful spot. Spiritually I have learned how to "Let Go and Let God," and deal with life on life's terms (even though those few minutes became a 22-hour delay!). I can now communicate my thoughts and feelings without taking things personally. The gifts and benefits I have experienced through service are truly too numerous to count.

I believe going to meetings is very important, but that alone is not what keeps me sober and in Nicoverry. Being of service and giving back helps me to practice the principles, become a better person, and find the miracle of recovery. We Need You. If you have gratitude in your heart for this fellowship, put it into action! Have an attitude of gratitude. Will you join me?

What can you do? Here are some ideas:

At the meeting level

- Chair a meeting
- Set up the meeting
- Make the coffee
- Be the chip/birthday person
- Coordinate the literature
- Be the meeting's Intergroup Representative
- Sponsor others
- Maintain the phone list
- Great the newcomers
- Be the meeting contact person
- Attend or chair a meeting group conscience

At the local level

- Start an Intergroup
- Start a new meeting (hospitals, prisons, churches, etc.)
- Get the word out
- Volunteer to contact newspapers and get meetings listed

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A Service Story

—Ramona F., San Jose, California, World Services Treasurer, Emeritus

Hi, my name is Ramona and I am a nicotine addict. I am extremely grateful for having had the opportunity and privilege to serve as a Nicotine Anonymous World Services treasurer and board officer. As I reflect on my recovery from Nicotine Addiction, I can tell you that when I first dropped into a Nicotine Anonymous meeting, becoming a World Services Officer was the furthest thing from my mind.

I had been “clean and sober” for a little over eight years before I really made “the decision” to quit smoking. Up until that time, I had made empty promises, mainly to myself. I felt I had given up my addictions and was doing well. One day, as I was smoking, outside a different twelve step meeting, I noticed all my friends with substantial recovery time were not outside with me. They were actually fellowshiping inside, while I was engaged in my nicotine addition, huddled with newcomers, who barely seemed able to communicate. It was then that I had my “moment of clarity.” I realized that I really wasn’t clean and sober. Smoking was more than just a bad habit. It was getting in the way of my being able to form or maintain meaningful friendships.

Having experience in utilizing the twelve steps, I pretty much knew what I had to do. Watching others try to quit, I knew that quitting and staying quit was

not going to be easy. I felt I needed some incentive along the way. So I set a quit date that would allow me to pick up a twenty-four hour chip immediately. As I smoked my last cigarette in the garage, at about 11:45 p.m, I uttered a small prayer to my higher power. “God, if you are really out there, I am going to turn my nicotine addiction over to you. You are going to have to really kick down some big time help.” In hindsight, I can really relate to the phrase; “Beware of what you ask for because you might just get it.”

I immediately reached out for help and asked someone to sponsor me. I chose a small NicA group as my home group. Into my third week of recovery from nicotine addiction, I became the group’s treasurer, as the treasurer at that time wanted to rotate out of service. Since I had served as treasurer for other meetings, and there wasn’t an experienced member available to become treasurer, my sponsor suggested I could serve. I really hadn’t planned to do service work so soon. I just wanted to not be noticed and quit quietly. That of course, turned out not to be what was planned for me. The group waived the recovery requirements and I was involved in service.

I am grateful that I understood that service could provide insurance against relapse. I was taught that it would be helpful to stay quit if I had to be accountable

to more than God and my sponsor. I found it beneficial to “feel I was a part of” rather than just sitting along the fringes, “perhaps” participating in my recovery.

At about 5½ months of recovery, my sponsor suggested that I go to a Northern California Intergroup conference planning meeting. I thought I was going to learn how to be a delegate. I had no idea I was actually attending a conference-planning meeting. As I was listening, the committee members kept referring to the treasurer that had just recently resigned. Since they had no treasurer to advise them on financial matters, I would occasionally offer some tips.

I didn’t have any intention of making myself available to the NC Intergroup Conference Planning Committee as treasurer, but it appeared my higher power had other ideas. Suddenly someone spoke up, “What is our problem? We have no treasurer. What is our solution?” In unison, about five heads turned and looked at me. Early in my recovery, it had been brought to my attention that I had always said “yes” to my addiction, so when I was asked to serve I should say “yes” to service, and I did. Besides, this could provide even more insurance against relapse.

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Discussion Corner

Gender Issues

Last issue we asked readers to respond to us in regard to how they feel about gender issues in our Nicotine Anonymous literature. We received *TWO* responses!!! Here are their responses.

“Hi. Thanks for doing this and the

newsletter in general! I personally prefer the word ‘God’ to ‘Him’ and ‘He.’ I have also often had a hard time connecting to the words ‘Higher Power.’ Thanks.”

“Hi NicA and all the fine folk who do the commitments there, thanks! Regarding gender issues I find that some meetings I go to I’m at a Bible study. Everybody is saying the Lord’s Prayer. [This program?]

has nothing to do with the Lord’s Prayer. I just do not want to smoke!!! Therefore take him, he’s, her’s the hell out of there!!!”

Do you have feelings about this issue? Send your response to me at SevenMinutesEditor@nicotine-anonymous.com, or write Seven Minutes Editor, NAWSO, 419 Main St., PMB #370, Huntington Beach, CA 92648.

A New Freedom

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lunch. He was surprised to see me smoking and told me to throw the remaining half pack away, which I did. What occurred to me was that after six months of not smoking, when a certain situation had come up, I had absolutely no defense against the first cigarette. There had been no thought about it. I drove, I bought, I smoked.

However, the next day my mind started working. What it told me is that I had smoked a few, but then had thrown away the rest of the pack and not smoked anymore since. Maybe I could control my smoking. That day I smoked a couple. Four days later, I told myself I could still go six hours without a cigarette. A month later I was smoking a couple packs a day. It was another hard lesson. With the first cigarette, I was a hooked again. It wasn't the first pack; it wasn't after the first week. It was that first cigarette that made me a smoker, when I traded non-smoking for renewed addiction to nicotine.

Years later I remember a conversation with a friend who had quit smoking and become a runner. However, he admitted to me that recently he had started having an occasional cigarette. I said, "Oh, so you've become a smoker again?" He contradicted me saying that I didn't understand that he only had a cigarette once and awhile. He wasn't a smoker. I replied that my belief was that he definitely was a smoker again. It came with the first cig-

arette. Several months later when he was smoking a pack a day, he agreed with me.

After my slip, I smoked heavily with a maximum amount of guilt. One friend, Dan H., asked me to help him quit smoking. I waved a cigarette at him and told him it hadn't worked. Stephanie S. told me I should start a Smokers Anonymous meeting. I replied that she must not have noticed I was smoking again. Finally, Betsy, an older woman, asked me if the smoking cessation program ever sent me their newsletter. She would like to see it. When it arrived, I took her the literature. She was so happy that she insisted that we both go to the next session. I was too much of a people pleaser and liked Betsy too much to disappoint her. We went. Betsy railroaded me into signing up again.

After six weeks, I quit again. This time it was different. The first time had been easy, a honeymoon. This time it was difficult. It was a nightmare: cravings and obsessions coupled with physical problems. I had narcolepsy, falling asleep uncontrollably, especially behind the wheel of my car. I could barely drive.

Over the years I had learned some lessons in my attempts to quit, especially in my other program. I had no defense against the first cigarette, nicotine was cunning, baffling and powerful, and, most importantly, I had to give it away if I wanted to keep it.

I tracked down Dan and Stephanie and told them they were going to quit. I served up a mixture of the smoking cessation class

and a twelve-step program. We met in restaurants once a week. Sometimes we had a few people. Sometimes I was the only one who showed up. After a few months I was feeling great. I was feeling liberated from my obsession with cigarettes. I found that God could do for me what I could not do for myself.

I was running. As a smoker, I had always assumed that you ran until your breath was gone. I soon learned that I could run until my muscles said stop and still have plenty of breath. That was a tremendous point of gratitude for me, coming into contact with, and appreciating, a body that I had abused for so many years.

Significantly, I decided to commit to giving it away, to help others quit smoking. After several months, four of us were together on a Sunday afternoon on Venice Beach. Dan, Rob K, and I had quit while Stephanie was trying. We decided to start a meeting and call it Smokers Anonymous. The next week, late June 1982, we met at my apartment in Santa Monica. There were maybe a dozen people. Two weeks later Maurice Z. came and quit. He was to be one of the most important people in the early years of our fellowship. Others came to our discussion meeting where we ate popcorn and drank sparkling water. Soon it was too big for my living room and we moved to a room in Roxbury Park in Beverly Hills.

*This story will continue in the next issue of
Seven Minutes.*

From the Chair

continued from page 3

- Start or answer a phone line
- Serve as an officer – Chair, Secretary, Treasurer
- Organize literature distribution to a larger area
- Volunteer to contact local associations and make sure they know there is a NicA meeting in the area
- Come to the annual World Services conference

- Be a delegate and represent your Inter-group at the conference

At the World Services Level

- Serve as an officer (Chair, Secretary, or Treasurer)
- Be an E-mail Coordinator or an e-mail servant (answer e-mails from our website)
- Become a teleservant (return phone calls from our phone number)
- Serve as Literature Coordinator – coordinate new literature or write new pieces

- Serve as the Outreach Coordinator – put your great outreach ideas to work on the World Services level.
- Become the *Seven Minutes* Editor – gather, organize, design and lay out our quarterly newsletter
- Write about the Traditions for inclusion in a future edition of *Nicotine Anonymous – The Book*

If you would like more information about service opportunities, please contact me at chairperson@nicotine-anonymous.org.

*Celebrate Your Freedom from Nicotine
in the City Where Freedom Was Born!*

Philadelphia Freedom in '04 Our

*World
Services
Conference XIX*

April 23-24-25, 2004

Radisson Plaza Warwick Hotel

1701 Locust Street

Philadelphia, PA 19103

Single, Double Rooms: \$145 plus tax & parking

Call toll-free for reservations: 800/333-3333

Local number: 215/735-6000

website: www.radisson.com/nica2004

- **Deadline** to make reservations and get the preferred rate: March 22, 2004
- Join the meetings, speakers, sharing, and fellowship.
- Delegates will vote on new officers, the 2006 conference site and other conference issues.
- Philly Block Party on Saturday Evening, Sunday Gratitude Brunch.
- "Ride the Ducks" post-conference activity on Sunday. See the city and cruise the river! All that Historic Philadelphia has to offer.
- See the web site for updates! **www.nicotine-anonymous.org**

Call for other information: Jan S.: 610/933-9181

or Maureen M. 610/647-0996

Advance Registration \$25 Deadline April 10, 2004 (Registration after April 10: \$35.00)

Checks payable to: CONFXIX Mail to: 333 Lancaster Avenue #316, Frazer, PA 19355

Registration	\$25.00 (\$35 after 4/10)	No. _____	\$ _____
Sat. pm Philly Block Party	\$31.00	No. _____	\$ _____
Sunday Gratitude Brunch	\$27.00	No. _____	\$ _____
Ride The Ducks	\$30.00	No. _____	\$ _____
Golf Shirt (M,L,XL,XXL) \$15.00ea. Size(s) _____		No. _____	\$ _____
<input type="checkbox"/> Red <input type="checkbox"/> Navy			
Optional Donation to WSO			\$ _____
Delegate? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No		TOTAL	\$ _____

NAME _____
Address _____

Phone _____
E-Mail _____

A Service Story

continued from page 4

At the World Services Conference in Berkeley, I was asked if I would make myself available as a nominee for the position of World Services Treasurer. Being someone who would rather be invisible I can't believe the word "yes," came out of my mouth again! Immediately after responding, I wished I had said "no," something akin to buyer's remorse, I guess.

I didn't think I stood much of a chance at becoming a World Services Treasurer. I had "only" six months of recovery from nicotine addiction. I was sure I was safe from being elected! To my immediate dismay, the other person nominated was "only" three days nicotine free. I cannot begin to describe how uneasy I felt. After six months of no smoking, I started to feel quite a number of feelings I had never felt before. It looked like I might become the Treasurer after all. Even though I was afraid, I said a few prayers and asked God for the strength and courage to follow through. I had been taught that God never gives you more than you can handle. But this time I was afraid God had me confused with someone else.

My term as a Nicotine Anonymous World Services treasurer and officer started

on the final day of the Berkeley World Service Conference in April of 2001. Amazingly, I wasn't intimidated by the length of the term (three years). Thank God for the "one day at a time" concept. I didn't look at the position from a perspective of how much time I had yet to go, but rather how much time I had to give to it for that day. By this time I could see that my life seemed to be unfolding right before me. I began to have a sense that there was something definitely larger than me running this show. Since I felt I had more people to be responsible to, my insurance against relapse became bigger—global, you might say.

The first year of my commitment was as treasurer-elect. During that time, I was able to learn about Nicotine Anonymous and see what the Active Treasurer's duties are. In order to feel some sense of comfort in making decisions or offering suggestions at board meetings, I read through every piece of literature that was available. I also relied on the experience, strength and hope of other board members. Normally I would not have asked for help so soon, but I felt it was very necessary.

In my nicotine filled days, smoking had enabled me to be more of an introvert because I could hide behind a veil of smoke and repress all my feelings. I never

expressed any thoughts for fear of being wrong. I had always been a shy person who lived in fear of what other people thought of me. Contributing to discussions and making decisions about NicA has been a gradual coming-out process. I have been able to walk through that fear of what other people might think. Being on the board is enabling me to be a little less fearful and become a little more assertive than I had been before. My personal I joke is, "When I first became a World Services Officer, I would only say a couple of words at the officer meetings; now I say at least three."

I have come in contact with some wonderful people along the way who have provided the spirit of hope and also demonstrated acts of courage. I am more able to have meaningful personal relationships because I am aware and honest about my feelings. My self worth has grown, especially with the realization that I have stepped through doors previously marked "fears," without having to light up. I remember my sponsor telling me, "As I perform esteem-able acts, I will build upon my self-esteem." As far as I am concerned, service has indeed been of benefit and helped enriched my relationships—and my life.

Service Positions Available

Literature Coordinator · Available Now!

Responsible for new literature idea development. Receives, edits, and reviews literature submissions. Presents, make recommendations on new, and revised literature to officers at quarterly meetings.

Web Servant · Available Now!

Regularly monitors and tests our World Services website for up-to-date information and ease of use, and provides improvement ideas to the Chairperson. Posts updates to current events, public outreach, and archives sections, and pro-

vides approved work orders to the web hosting company.

Teleservice Coordinator · Available Now!

- Seeks abstinent, committed members for a year's service.
- Sends new Teleservice members full Teleservice kit, including instructions on use of code and message retrieval and quarterly meeting updates.
- Responds to inquiries from Teleservice members on how to handle calls and consulting with or referring to an officer as appropriate.
- Handles service interruptions and repair and coordinate with Office Manager.

Seven Minutes Editor · Available April 2004

Edits and produces the quarterly newsletter, *Seven Minutes*. Gathers material from World Services and NicA members. Approximately 10 hours, 4 times a year. Writes report for quarterly Officer's meetings.

Outreach Coordinator · Available April 2004

Selects and communicates ideas to promote public awareness of NicA. Develops and/or collect material to assist outreach, work with project leaders on existing outreach projects.

E-mail Coordinator ·

Processes all e-mail received at Nicotine Anonymous to appropriate recipient. Forwards to E-mail Servants, Nicotine Anonymous Office Coordinator, Chairperson, Outreach Coordinator, etc., for their response. Selects, trains and provides support services to E-mail Servants.

For more information or to volunteer, please contact Robin L.,
NAWS Chairperson,
Chairperson@nicotine-anonymous.org

Jeff C., Huntington Beach, California, Outreach Coordinator

What “being of service” has done for me

Four years ago from today (10-30-99), I discovered that I could live free of nicotine. In fact, I was relieved by a sudden spiritual experience and I have not had the desire to return. I immediately plowed into service work out of gratitude and fear. In practicing the 12 steps, in which I had originally learned from another 12-step program, I understood that service work is what step 12 is all about (Having had a spiritual awakening as a result of these steps, we tried to carry this message to nicotine users and to practice these principles in all our affairs). I became our local group secretary, participated in local intergroup meetings, and went to my first NicA conference where I became the World Services Outreach Coordinator. Since then, I have been voted in as a World Services

Treasurer and I am serving my second of a three-year commitment.

Four years ago, there was no real world services level outreach program. Since then, we have accomplished a great deal including: created a user-friendly web site; created a comprehensive outreach ideas list (posted on the web under outreach – www.nicotine-anonymous.org); created outreach projects supported by project leaders (Project leaders created detailed “how to’s” for each project (posted on the web under outreach)); installed a grant program to appropriate funds from world services toward individual and group outreach efforts (request forms on web under outreach).

Currently, we are in the process of producing a CD for the distribution to radio stations that give free airtime for charity spots.

Service has been a terrific mechanism,

which provides me with insurance from using nicotine again. Furthermore, it has helped me to grow as a person, including learning to give selflessly, listening to others, and allowing the group conscious to dictate my actions. Finally, and most importantly, being of service has further taught me how to live the program in my daily life. The benefits of that has been a great relationship with a very beautiful woman both inside and out, a compounding effect on achieving my professional goals, and most of all, finding a peaceful place within my own spirit.

Therefore, with great reluctance, I will be resigning my post as Outreach Coordinator at the next conference. I “suggest” that you might consider being of service yourself. However, this will not be concluding all my service work, as I know from experience: “You need to give it away to keep it!”

Thank You! For letting me be of service!

How Smoking Has Controlled My Life

Sometimes I can't get to sleep at night and I think it may be related to smoking in the evenings, at least partly. Especially because sometimes I start to feel sleepy and it would be best for me to go right to bed but I think I'll just have one more cigarette which wakes me up and then I'm up for several more hours.

Also, smoking subdues and masks my feelings. I believe my right leg pain (which also contributes to keeping me awake) is where my negative emotions deposit into my body and smoking relates to that particular pain.

Often smoking also contributes to my nose and sinuses being blocked, which interferes with sleeping as I can't breathe right. Coughing has often kept me awake.

Other times I have burning watery eyes and a runny nose. I have had bronchitis and pneumonia which I know are related to smoking.

I feel smoking prevents me from becoming

closer to people and may have prevented me from meeting a man for a special relationship. The type I might like usually doesn't like smokers.

Smoking makes me lazy because I do not



Diane D. Mableton, Georgia

smoke when I am typing on the computer, reading, watching TV, talking on the telephone or doing any other constructive activity. I also will not smoke in my car or in my house, only in my carport. I have begun not taking my cigarettes with me to meetings so I won't smoke, and drink water instead.

My nicotine habit is one where I strictly stop everything I'm doing to “relax” with a smoke. I do nothing else but sit and smoke — sometimes two or three cigarettes in a row. I reward myself for accomplishing tasks such as completing a project, finishing some house cleaning, etc. with a smoke break. My smoke breaks average 10 minutes or more so that I am wasting a great deal of my day, in a non-constructive activity and I'm less productive overall.

Smoking gives me the excuse not to do anything and encourages my procrastina-

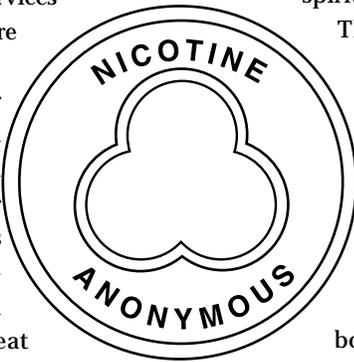
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Highlights from the October Officers' Meeting

Catherine C., Secretary

The October meeting of your World Services officers was again held in Southern California, where three members of the board live, and was hosted by the Southern California Nicotine Anonymous Intergroup. Thank you SCINA! Here are some of the highlights of that meeting. For more information, or to volunteer your services, please contact World Services.

- Donations to World Services is down, as are literature sales.
- Outreach: requests for grants for Outreach projects have dropped off. In the last quarter there were no requests for funds. It was suggested to remind groups of the Great American Smokeout, and to plan outreach projects in conjunction with that.
- The Teleservice committee is finding it difficult to get servants. They need more people to answer phone calls from interested parties.



- The E-mail Coordinator is resigning his position. We will need to replace him as soon as possible.
- The Step-Study Guide is in progress. Suzanne and Teresa are using the questions from the *Book*, and assigning them to the Steps.
- 2004 Conference: A strong and dedicated committee has been meeting and spirits and anticipation are high.

The flyer is complete and on the Web site. Hotel arrangements are well in place. The Ride the Ducks in Philly after-conference activity is still going on as planned.

- The *Book of Daily Meditations: The 90 Days, 90 Ways* book is being prepared to be printed. Jennifer M. resigned as Coordinator, and Kate W. accepted the position. Kate expects to bring at least 60 more meditations to the next conference.
- The Outreach committee has cut 4 30-second spots, out of which were two

that the officers liked. There were questions as to which phone number was used, and it was agreed to use the 877 number (toll free).

- We are losing money on U.S. subscriptions to *Seven Minutes*. We will have to raise the U.S. price to match the Canada price.
- It was discussed that we consider sending out *Seven Minutes* via e-mail at a reduced subscription rate. It will be further discussed at the next meeting in January.
- A "Newcomers Booklet" that had been submitted by one of the meetings was reviewed and recommended that it be further revised by the meeting in regard to the traditions and the use of "nicotine vs. smoking."
- There was discussion about the meeting literature, "How it Works" and "Welcome," and whether they can be combined. There will be a workshop at the next conference regarding creating a new, official, "How it Works."
- The next officers meeting will be January 24, 2004 in Northern California. All Nicotine Anonymous members are invited to attend.

The Guiding Hand

Gwynn A., Canada



Another e-mail request comes in on Tuesday—this time from 18-year-old Eric looking for the nearest Nicotine Anonymous meeting in San Diego. Eric has lived in the streets and other places, for but the time being he is staying with some people while he puts his life back together. Early Tuesday, he sends his request to our web site at info@nicotine-anonymous.org, and Alan, NicA World Services e-mail supervisor, forwards it along to me, Tuesday Gwynn.

I check through the world list of Nicotine Anonymous meetings for ones in San Diego, California, and send Eric the addresses and telephone numbers of a few.

(I'm a Canadian—I have no idea whether the meetings I mention to him are close to where he's staying.)

Within a short time, I get a joyous thank you by e-mail from Eric. One of the meetings I told him about meets in a church basement a few blocks from where he is staying. Since he has no car or money, it is the only one he can get to. And he is going.

That's one of the reasons I'm Tuesday Gwynn. Someone reaches out, I do my best, but there is a Guiding Hand who makes it happen.

Tuesday Gwynn is an e-mail servant and non-smoker since 19 August 1998.

continued on page <None>

How Smoking Controlled . . .

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tion on activities I need to be doing. Also, I will think of something I need to do and hesitate long enough to get in another cigarette first and thus interfere with God's timing of my life activities.

When I am with a non-smoker, they want to sit in the non-smoking section and I want to sit in smoking. They usually acquiesce.

Smoking is an expense I cannot afford and yet I am powerless to stop buying cigarettes, which money spent could go toward my obligations or eating better. In fact, many times I do not have the energy to fix myself a good meal because smoking zaps my energy at the same time that it gives me a temporary pick-me-up so that I just don't feel like making the effort to cook something nutritious.

I have been embarrassed by a hacking cough during business meetings such as arbitration hearings.

I am addicted to nicotine because I am powerless over the amount I smoke. I cannot smoke just one or two a day. Once I

have one, I am off and running until I have smoked a pack and a half or more, depending on how late I remain awake. If I have any cigarettes around, I smoke them until they're gone and when I'm out, I feel afraid that I can't survive without them.

Sometimes I'm not satisfied with just one cigarette at a break but must have two or three to be satisfied, thus again I am powerless.

I have no ability to choose not to smoke by myself and have no willpower against it. I am powerless by myself. I need the help of a Power Greater than myself to be able to quit and stay quit.

My skin is more scaly and dry and yet clogged and blemished by smoking. I've burned holes in good clothes and in the carpet from flying ashes. My teeth become smoke stained and ugly shortly after I have had them cleaned and have a yellow tinge from the years of smoking I have done.

My joints are achy due to smoking and sometimes I gag and choke on the phlegm that is constantly in my throat.

My lungs are not strong so I am a prime candidate for emphysema.

I have lost the power of choice over

whether and when to smoke. Nicotine cravings keep me powerless.

I believe smoking stunts the growth of my fingernails so that my nails on the right hand break easily and are ugly due to their lack of strength.

When I am stressed out, I smoke which masks my feelings instead of my having to feel them and deal more ably with the stressful situation.

Each day begins the same. Tired, lacking energy, groggy, hung over and drugged from smoking. I have a great deal of trouble getting moving in the morning, plus a nearly immediate and overwhelming craving for nicotine. The insane ritual of coffee and cigarettes before I do anything else makes me powerless over nicotine.



NAWS Profit and Loss

January–September, 2003

Jeff C., Huntington Beach, California

	Jan–September '03		Jan–September '03
ORDINARY INCOME/EXPENSE		EXPENSE	
INCOME		6710 · Web site	200.00
4000 · Donations	5,629.51	6000 · Office Expenses	15,853.78
4100 · Literature Sales	32,599.35	6700 · Board Expenses	9,960.08
4290 · Shipping & Handling	3,793.28	Total Expense	<u>26,013.86</u>
4299 · Conference Profit (Loss)	(860.17)	Net Ordinary Income	<u>(3,216.61)</u>
Total Income	<u>41,161.97</u>		
Cost of Goods Sold		Other Income/Expense	
5000 · COGS	11,223.72	Other Income	
5700 · Fulfillment	2,121.00	7010 · Interest Income	207.21
5710 · Storage	180.00	Total Other Income	<u>207.21</u>
5720 · Shipping	4,840.00	Other Expense	
Total COGS	<u>18,364.72</u>	7040 · Interest Expense	15.00
Gross Profit	<u>22,797.22</u>	Total Other Expense	<u>15.00</u>
		Net Other Income	<u>192.21</u>
		Net Income	<u>(3,024.40)</u>

Birthday Congratulations

Congratulations and thanks for your donation to:

Jim M., whose anniversary date is 9/21/93
10 years nicotine free! and

Judi D., who stopped using nicotine on 1/8/02
1 year nicotine free (almost two)!!!

Nina P., who stopped using nicotine on 9/11/94
9 years nicotine free!

~ 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"

Mail to: Nicotine Anonymous World Services,
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, money order (US funds only) or credit card. **Mail to:**

NAME _____ PHONE (WITH AREA CODE) _____

ADDRESS _____

CITY _____ ST ATE _____ ZIP _____

Please find my (*check one*) check money order enclosed. Or, please bill my credit card (*check one*): Mastercard Visa American Express Discover Card

NAME ON CARD _____ SIGNATURE _____

CARD NUMBER _____ EXPIRATION DATE _____

BILLING ADDRESS _____

Send payment, in US funds only, to: NAWSO, 419 Main St, PMB#370, Huntington Beach, CA 92648 USA. *Thank you!*

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 Address change

Seven Minutes

NAWSO

419 Main St., PMB #370

Huntington Beach, CA 92648

**Publication Dates and
Deadlines for Submissions**

Publication Date	Deadline Date for submissions
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September 8	August 4
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December 9	November 3
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March 8	February 2
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June 13	May 9
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CITY

ST ATE

ZIP

ADDRESS

PHONE (WITH AREA CODE)

My old address and phone was:

CITY

ST ATE

ZIP

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