



SEVEN MINUTES

The Nicotine Anonymous Quarterly

A FORUM FOR NICOTINE USERS WHO DON'T USE

VOL. X, ISSUE NO. 3

THIRD QUARTER, 1999

THE HISTORY OF MY NIC-AFFLICTION

Checko M., High Falls, NY

At conception,
mom's cord delivered it
with each drenched puff.

In our house,
heir to my parents' air,
I breathed their gray blues.
From television,
electrified heroes lit fantasies,
ads jingled tingled satisfaction.
In my mind,
questions never were whether,
only which will be my brand.

By wooded backdrop,
tracked trains moved audiences,
as we boys debuted "Boro's".
Teen toys,
Zippo, Flip Top,
Crush Proof Box.
It was tap tap,
pull red, undress delight,
lift foil to display the rack.
Select scented stem,
slide from crowd,
lay it on the lip.
Scratch wheel cross flint
sparks spurt to fire burst,
flame's entrancing dance.
Ignite the power,
draw acceptance,
slow glow cool.
Suck anger into silence,
smolder pain away in ashes,
hailing my consolers by the pack.

Nicotine fang bite,
venom craved demands
numbed senses into drug denial.

Years puffed out decades,
detoured dollars, wasted wallowing,
as endless butt piles dumped.
Doctor's foregone forebode gone by,
New Year's, birthdays passed away,
deafened to scathed self-riptides.
Cartoned walls, withdrawn world,
with caustic curses hacked up,
as sputum swallowed in spite.
Midst tar wreaked stale stench,
choking on towels thrown in,
I writhed at my bottom.

By miracle of grace,
found Fellowship,
lifted me to letting go.
Each day asked anew,
help, humble, hope,
let me not inhale smoke.
Dignity raised inspiration,
lofted on clear pulsed air,
savor this, my grateful breath.

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Our Preamble

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

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THE TWELVE STEPS

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

The Twelve Steps of Alcoholics Anonymous

1. We admitted we were powerless over alcohol--that our lives had become unmanageable. 2. Came to believe that a Power greater than ourselves could restore us to sanity. 3. Made a decision to turn our will and our lives over to the care of God, as we understood Him. 4. Made a searching and fearless moral inventory of ourselves. 5. Admitted to God, to ourselves, and to another human being the exact nature of our wrongs. 6. Were entirely ready to have God remove all these defects of character. 7. Humbly asked Him to remove our shortcomings. 8. Made a list of all persons we had harmed, and became willing to make amends to them all. 9. Made direct amends to such people wherever possible, except when to do so would injure them or others. 10. Continued to take personal inventory, and when we were wrong, promptly admitted it. 11. Sought through prayer and meditation to improve our conscious contact with God as we understood Him, praying only for knowledge of His will for us and the power to carry it out. 12. Having had a spiritual awakening as the result of these steps, we tried to carry this message to other alcoholics and to practice these principles in all our affairs.

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

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Articles may also be sent by E-mail to <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 - Kim J., editor
Mike K, subscriptions/distribution

NEWS FROM NAWSO

Dear Friends and Fellow Addicts,

My name is Martha and I am powerless over nicotine. On behalf of the Board I am pleased to submit this summary of the business accomplished at World Service Conference XIV held this past April in Orange County, California.

First, though, I would like to acknowledge the hard work of our host, the Southern California Intergroup and in particular, **Joe S.** and **Matt T.**, Conference co-chairs. Their organizational skills and preparedness, coupled with our two-day business format, allowed for careful examination and meaningful discussion of the many business items brought before the membership for consideration. Our deepest appreciation to the many SCINA members who manned literature tables and ran the marathon meetings, just to name two examples of the many services provided during the conference.

Two new pamphlets were approved by the fellowship. They are entitled "Nicotine Anonymous: The Program and The Tools" and "What Do Nicotine Anonymous World Services and Intergroups Offer Me and My Group?" Both pieces of literature are excellent summaries of our program and its structure, respectively. In addition, the members voted to accept the proposed changes to the following pamphlets: "Introducing Nicotine Anonymous," "Tips for Gaining Freedom from Nicotine," "Our Promises," and "To the Newcomer and Sponsorship." The conference also approved a name change for one of our pamphlets, which will now be known as "A Nicotine User's View of the Twelve Steps." Lastly, members disagreed with the Board's recommendation to permanently delete "Facing the Fatal Attraction." Instead, we will likely resubmit this piece of literature with revisions at next year's conference. Thank you, again, **Checko M.** for all of your work in creating and revising this literature. *(You may obtain copies of these new and amended pamphlets by using the enclosed literature order form.)*

Also of great significance is the approval of the proposed Bylaws amendments. Our deep appreciation to **Steve M.**, **Cat H.** and **Rodger F.** who worked so diligently to create a long awaited succession policy in the event of a Board member's death or resignation. Additionally, our bylaws now state that Intergroups and non-affiliated groups are eligible to send one delegate for every three recovery meetings, instead of ten, as was previously the policy. Work will continue on further revising the bylaws, and future amendments will be submitted at next year's conference. Please remember the fellowship's group conscience to no longer suspend our bylaws regarding voter eligibility. As of Conference XV, only registered delegates will be recognized for voting. *(Please see more in this issue*

on how to become a registered delegate.)

There was much discussion on the possibility of creating a toll-free number for Nicotine Anonymous World Services. The consensus of the workshop participants was that we proceed with the project in spite of the potentially high costs associated with it. The Board will continue to research the feasibility of instituting a toll-free number.

With regard to officially adopting an abbreviation for our fellowship, the conference approved a motion that groups and Intergroups be solicited for their opinions on whether an abbreviation should be adopted at all. Further, we will be asking for members to select one choice from the several available options. *(Please see the accompanying flyer in this issue on Abbreviation Adoption and submit your thoughts.)*

The Board received excellent feedback on our revisions to the Starter's Kit, which has been expanded and updated. We extend our appreciation to **Bill C.** and **Checko M.** who authored those changes.

Our quarterly Board meetings will be held on July 24 in New York, October 16 in Chicago and January 15, 2000 in Southern California. If you are interested in attending a Board meeting or have any thoughts on business items that you'd like considered, please contact me. My full name, address, phone number and email address appear below.

I cannot end this article without acknowledging the changes in the composition of the Board. First, we welcome **Michelle S.** of New York/Indiana, Secretary-Elect; **Jack R.** of Southern California, Treasurer-Elect; and **Scott J.** of New York, Chair-Elect. They will be serving with **Donna E.**, Active Secretary, **Joe S.**, Active Treasurer, **Cat H.**, Emeritus Secretary, and **John N.**, Emeritus Treasurer. I must make special mention of **John O.**, Emeritus Chair, who tirelessly worked to streamline and improve the many functions of World Services over the course of this past year and who conducted the business of the conference with seemingly inexhaustible energy. My deepest gratitude and respect to the three outgoing officers, **Rodger F.**, **Steve M.** and **Camille S.**, who have worked so hard over the years and have been there to guide us with their wisdom and expertise.

In gratitude,
Martha K., Chairperson

*Martha Kahan,
19 Central Avenue,
East Quogue, New York 11942
516-653-3483 MOF316@peconic.net*



PRAYERS FROM A NICOTINE ADDICT

Don U., Long Island, NY

Dear God,

I thank you for all that you have given me. My soul has been freed, and I am not sure how, but this I know, that you Lord, have been my guide. It is you who have always been there for me and shown me the way. Although there was many times that I had been tossed about in the stormy sea, I have been lifted up in gentleness through the strength of your grace. What is most important? What is most important is that which cannot be touched. It must be felt with the human spirit and within the heart. The spirit of God is within each and every one of us. We need only acknowledge it's existence. I thank you for my wonderful life. I thank you for my strong spirit. I thank you for healing my lost soul. Right now in this moment I thank you and affirm in your ever-lasting strength that runs through my veins

.Amen

Dear God,

How can I ever thank you for all that has come to be in my life. Words cannot seem to express the overwhelming feeling of gratitude in my heart. A spirit once asleep, has awoken. A soul once chained has been freed. A life once lost has been found. A Love never known has come to me. A place called home where peace permeates the air. I thank you for my inner calm, for serenity carries no price. I thank you for clarity of thought, for selfless words and selfless deeds. I thank you for my life. How blessed am I, to live two lives in one lifetime? Most of all, dear Lord, I thank you for the opportunity to love.....for this...by far...is.....the greatest gift of all.

Amen

WEEKEND RECOVERY

Michelle S., Muncie, IN

One week after moving from New York to Indiana, I had the privilege of attending the first annual "Working the Journey Weekend" in Wisconsin. The weekend began by sharing a little about what brought each of us to Nicotine Anonymous. I saw the beginning of a bond that was to form between us all over the course of the weekend.

In the Step One workshop, many people shared about the unmanageability of their lives while using nicotine, the illnesses we acquired due to smoking and the powerlessness we felt, knowing we were hurting ourselves and being unable to stop.

In the Relationships Workshop, we spoke about our relationships before and after entering Nicotine Anonymous, about relationships with others and with ourselves. By sharing I was able to see how my relationships in "Nicoverly" are so much closer and more real than those I had while still smoking. The smoke screen between myself and others has been lifted and I am actually letting people get to know me and to love me these days. And to my surprise, it feels great.

The meeting about service was very useful as people were able to share their frustrations and joys about doing service with each other. Experience, strength and hope was passed around the room.

Saturday evening, I began to feel incredibly homesick. It was starting to hit me that I had picked myself up and moved 800 miles away from home. I missed my meetings, my friends and my family terribly. Part of the consequences of letting people into my life is missing them when they are not around. I was feeling pretty bad. Then the people at the retreat opened up their arms and their hearts to me. It was not the same as being with people who have known me for years and years but, it was as close as I could possibly come. This showed me that Nicotine addicts in recovery are the same everywhere. We all have a commonality in our pasts and in our desire to to live nicotine free.

I found myself opening up to a woman I'd just met and I began to cry. As I was feeling the pain of separation from the people I love, this woman said to me, "Isn't it wonderful that you are feeling your feelings today?" I was filled with gratitude. Even though I was feeling pain (and some fear), I was feeling!! Something I had spent most of my life trying not to do. I felt quite vulnerable at this point but I was so taken care of. It was as if my Higher Power had led me to this retreat, so I would be able to feel my feelings in a place filled with love and acceptance. I felt embraced by the people at the retreat and I felt safe.

Saturday evening I was asked to lead the campfire meeting. Sitting around a campfire in the dark always seems to increase the intimacy of a meeting for me. I love to watch the flames and listen to people share themselves with the group. The highlight of the campfire meeting was when a couple of people shared that they had made it through Saturday without smoking. This was as awesome as the star filled sky we were sitting under. Sunday morning some of us woke up extra early and headed down to the lake for a meditation out in nature. It was so peaceful, the sun was shining and the air was fresh. It was here that I felt my Higher Power's love radiating down on me.

At the closing meeting, we shared about our gratitude for Nicotine Anonymous and for the experience of the weekend. The love in the room was intense. We passed around 24 hour chips to be given to the people who had acquired 24 hours nicotine-free over the weekend. As each of us received the chip we held it in our hand and sent love and prayers into it for the person receiving it. Then each person with 24 hours went around the room and was hugged by each one of us. We were all so overwhelmed with love that we all decided that no one could leave the room until they hugged everyone else in the room.

After taking pictures and saying our last goodbyes, we all headed out on our separate ways. But, we did not leave there the same people we were when we had arrived. Each of us had been touched and had touched each other in a very special way.



Welcome to the fellowship

New Meetings as of June 7, 1999

CA	Ojai	Sat	9:00am	Alano Club of Ojai Valley	575 W. El Roblar Drive	Pete M.	(805) 646-0050
	Downey	Wed	7:15pm	Kaiser Permanente Bldg	9449 Imperial Highway IC21 Bldg D, /2nd Flr	Della N.	(562) 906-0550
MA	Lowell	Tue	6:00pm	St Joseph's Health Care Ctr	220 Pawtucket Street Conf Room/1st Flr	Sandra D.	(978) 970-2931
GA	Atlanta	Tue	6:30pm	Galano Club	585 Dutch Valley Road	Robin L.	(404) 244-8444
	Atlanta	Sat	6:30pm	Galano Club	585 Dutch Valley Road	Robin L.	(404) 244-8444
MD	Columbia	Wed	6:00pm	The Serenity Center		Kathy J.	(410) 290-8152
WA	Ferndale	Tue	7:00pm	Ferndale 7th Day Adventists	2488 Mt. View Road	Chris C.	(360) 671-3345
FL	Jacksonville	Wed	6:00pm	Jacksonville Health Care Grp	9090 Regency Square Blvd. N.	Scott M.	(904) 743-3218
SC	Florian	Thu	8:00pm	Ednica Belvedere	239 Hospital de Caridade	Lizzie	(048) 222-4218

YOUR OPINION COUNTS

In the last issue of SevenMinutes we published a letter from a member asking that we provide contact names and numbers on the new meeting list that is published in SevenMinutes. We asked for your thoughts on the matter. Here is a letter we received since then:

My opinion on listing contact names and phone numbers is - first, there is a big difference between SevenMinutes and the web page. The web can be accessed by anyone, even those who are just "surfing." I wouldn't want my name and phone number there. However, someone who subscribes to SevenMinutes, but is outside the fellowship, has an interest in who we are and what we do. I think here we should be friendly to our friends in carrying our message. In other words, let's not be so anonymous that the newcomer can't find us.

Further, when someone starts a meeting and fills out the form to have the meeting listed in our Worldwide Meeting Directory, it states that the group contact person and phone number are "publishable." However, information for the World Service contact, mailing address, and phone number is said to be "confidential." Both SevenMinutes (\$7.00) and the Worldwide Meeting Directory (\$1.00) can be ordered from us on the same order form, so why have different rules.

I currently serve as the meeting list coordinator for the NJ/PA Intergroup. A few years ago I helped in an effort to verify all of the meetings listed in the Worldwide directory. I found that the contact person was the best qualified to give me accurate information about the meeting. If the number had changed or been disconnected, I would try to contact someone at the facility where the meeting was held. That was always difficult and when I finally did reach someone, they either did not know much about the meeting or that it even existed. Since that was frustrating for me, think about how a newcomer would react. Our intergroup meeting list has a note that says to call before attending any meeting, times and locations change.

Lastly, having the contact person and phone number included would be a big help to all the intergroup meeting list coordinators. Recently, I saw several new meetings in Pennsylvania that were listed in SevenMinutes. With some difficulty, I was able to get the contact's name and phone number. Like so many others I have contacted over the years, not one person asked me where I got their number. I think they understood they had listed it to get calls. More importantly, they found out there was an intergroup and we would include their meeting on our list. So far, everyone has provided the personal data to begin receiving our Intergroup mailings and stay informed. This is how the new meeting becomes part of the fellowship. Let's make it easy for the newcomer.

Bill C., Fort Lee, NJ

HOW TO BECOME A WORLD SERVICES CONFERENCE DELEGATE

Each year at the annual World Service Conference, we have voted to allow all members of the fellowship in attendance the opportunity to vote on the various business items put before the conference for consideration. This practice will be ending next year in Scottsdale, Arizona in keeping with a group conscience that was taken some years ago that held that by the year 2000 we would no longer suspend that portion of the bylaws. The purpose of electing delegates is to ensure that the group conscience is served through equal and fair representation of our membership. In addition, registered delegates will receive packets of information concerning the voting items being presented, enabling them to review the materials in advance in order to learn their home group's conscience prior to the conference.

Outlined for your convenience is the two-part process required for representatives to become duly elected conference delegates. Please note that completing this process will be required in order to have a vote at the next conference. According to our newly revised Bylaws, each Intergroup is entitled to send one delegate for every three meetings it represents and one additional delegate for any portion thereof. Groups that are not affiliated with an Intergroup are also eligible to send a delegate using a similar system. If there are between one and three groups not affiliated with an Intergroup, those one, two or three meetings may elect one delegate collectively to represent them. If there are more than three, those groups again may collectively send one delegate for every three meetings and one additional delegate for any portion thereof.

Sound confusing? Here's an example: At the time of this writing, the New York Metropolitan Area Intergroup represents 36 meetings. We are therefore eligible to elect 12 delegates. In addition, the seven Nicotine Anonymous meetings in upstate New York that are unaffiliated with an Intergroup would be eligible to collectively elect three delegates to represent them at the conference. Delegate election is done the way any other business is conducted at your local group or Intergroup. Some Intergroups reimburse their delegates for a portion of the conference expenses, but both of

these aspects of delegate service are outside of the scope of World Services in keeping with our fourth tradition.

What is required for the second part of this process is that all delegates register with Nicotine Anonymous World Services, Attention: Secretary, PO Box 126338, Harrisburg, PA, 17112 or via email to <Info@nicotine-anonymous.org>. The following information must be provided: Full name, mailing address, telephone number and the name of the group(s) or Intergroup that delegate is representing. This registration must be completed no later than 30 days before the conference. In this case, registration must be completed by March 28, 2000.

Looking forward to seeing you in Scottsdale!

May We Pray

Checko M., High Falls, NY

May we pray,
each and all
as One,
in our "moment of silence,"
more will come forth
in gratitude
to serve,
so silence
is not all suffering addicts
will hear.

May we pray,
more will nurture
seeds into deeds,
recovering the power,
dignity and hope
of growth
through action.

May we pray
and real-eyes the wisdom,
with Response-ability,
we dance with the Grace
that serves
each and all
as One.
May we pray.

Are you a giver or a taker

Have you ever wondered how your World Service Board operates. What are their goals?

At present NAWS is attempting to establish an 800 number for communication to the nicotine addict who still suffers. This is one of the ideas that they have wrestled with in the past 12 months, plus many more.

How do they handle the expenses involving these various means of carrying the message.

This is accomplished through group and personal donations and the sale of the literature and books that you use in your groups. Actually in spite of popular belief, donations are a small part of NAWS income. It mostly comes from the literature that they sell. If there were an increase in donations it could mean a decrease in the cost of this literature.

Recently NAWS has instituted a Shipping & Handling charge with all orders that are processed. The reason being is that quite often, it costs more to process an order that the consumer is paying.

So what's the problem?

PROBLEM

Many purchasers either neglect to send in or ignore the shipping and handling charges, which result in a pretty good loss to NAWS. This happens either using old photocopied order forms, or not seeing the box on the bottom that says S&H. Quite often it costs more to process an order than the purchaser has sent in.

NAWS has thought of withholding orders, Calling people and attempting to get them to send in the additional funds and various other means of collecting these funds. However this is a voluntary program, and your World Service board would rather be trusted servants, than demanding overseers. We hope that all members feel as we do that carrying the message is our first and primary objective. Won't you please help.

In this newsletter is the most current order form. It includes the newest of our literature. Please copy this order form and make every effort to get it into the hands of your local groups and members. Spread the word that we need your support to carry the message of Nicotine Anonymous.

Thanks to all of you
Mike K (Fullfilment services)

Isolating is a dark room where we develop our negatives!

FROM THE NEW CHAIR-ELECT!

Scott J.,

The LA World Service Conference was a very special moment in time for me. As of two weeks before I was considering running for Secretary of the Board. Each time I would express that thought I was told that I should consider running for Chair. I didn't have too many doubts that I could do the job but wasn't sure I wanted all of the work and commitment that it would take to get the job done.

Then someone pointed out to me that there was an additional benefit to being the Chair. I would have the opportunity to work with people who, as fellow addicts, would not always agree with plans I will lay or decisions I will make. This would give me the ever so painful experience of learning to work with people that I might find to be a challenge. Through challenge comes growth and therefore it was almost my responsibility to say yes to God if He offered me the job.

When *Matt T.* told me he felt that this was my time to do this job for our HP and this fellowship, it was with a great sense of humility and responsibility that I finally agreed to say Yes to 'you know who'. During this time in my life I am growing and continue to need to grow if I am going to be everything that my Higher Power wants me to be. So with a deep breath and a big dose of gratitude I start down this new path on my journey. May God be with us every step of the way. In Love and Service, *Scott :)*

SERVICE IS THE KEY

Being involved in Nicotine Anonymous can be very fulfilling. Many have found service to the fellowship to be one of the most important aspects of their own recovery. All service is on a volunteer basis. Some areas where service is needed on a worldwide level are:

E-MAIL ANSWERERS - URGENTLY NEEDED!!

World Service E-mail Answerers - To answer questions forwarded to Nicotine Anonymous through the web site. Should be knowledgeable about the program. Service would be one day a week or as occasional substitute.

Non-English E-mail Contacts - We receive requests from people who would like to communicate with members in their native language, rather than English.

TELESERVICE

World Service Teleservants (Especially West Coast) - To respond to callers from around the country looking for meetings and information. Should have knowledge of the program of Nicotine Anonymous. Service would be one day a week.

Coordinator - to coordinate our staff of telephone service volunteers. The volunteers pick up voice mail messages and return calls or mail information. The coordinator supports them in these functions and arranges reimbursement for their expenses. We also need the coordinator to create a procedure manual. Currently the service is staffed by six volunteers, future plans include an expansion to twenty-one volunteers, a regional mailbox system and a toll-free number. Former teleservice coordinators would be available to help the new coordinator in an advisory capacity. The ideal candidate would have at least one year of recovery from nicotine, and have some experience in working with other addicts.

OUTREACH

Staff - Help spread the word about Nicotine Anonymous through the media, health organizations, professional community etc. on a national level. Develop press releases, audio and

visual public service announcements, etc.

Outreach Coordinator - Coordinates outreach staff.

"NICOTINE ANONYMOUS - THE BOOK"

Staff - Help edit the Book, add to Steps, write History, traditions etc.

Editor - Coordinate efforts of Book Staff.

SEVEN MINUTES WRITERS

Contribute and solicit articles for our quarterly newsletter on fellowship activities, recovery stories, step work, etc. in written or graphic form.

SPANISH TRANSLATORS

Translate existing Nicotine Anonymous literature into Spanish.

ARCHIVIST

Person to store and catalog Nicotine Anonymous correspondence and documents and help chronicle our history and group conscience.

To volunteer in any of these areas, just let us know! E-mail - <Info@nicotine-anonymous.org>

Chicagoland Intergroup of Nicotine Anonymous (CINA) presents:

WORKING THE JOURNEY WEEKEND

What: a weekend to focus on recovery

When: August 20 - 22, 1999

Where: St. Benedict's Abby Retreat Center
Bennett Lake, Wisconsin

Who: Nicotine Anonymous members, their spouses, and prospective members.

Cost: \$125 per person for the entire weekend. Price includes your room plus dinner on Friday, 3 meals on Saturday and 2 meals on Sunday.

Contact **Lynn H.** (847)808-1008 for more information. To register, send your name address and phone number and your payment to **CINA Weekend Retreat, P.O. Box 784, Northbrook, IL 60065.**

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