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Freedom to Live

The Tuesday night meeting of Nicotine Anonymous

Hi, my name is Carol and I am a Nicotine Addict.

Our group asks a member to be the "speaker" on the first Tuesday of the month. I was asked to be the speaker on the anniversary of my one-year off cigarettes. I was too nervous to speak without note so I wrote it down. I would like to share it with you.

How it was

I was visiting a friend who made me nervous, switching from talking to TV and back again and I wanted something to do with my hands, not knowing anybody who did handwork: so I went out and bought a package of menthol cigarettes. I had never bought cigs before and I took the easiest thing. I didn't inhale so the workers where I worked made me aware of that fact and taught me how. I remember coughing. I was 20 years old.

Then in 1988 I quit because my father offered me a bribe of \$100 dollars if I could quit. I used herbal cigarettes. During some of my quit time I smoked the herbal, convinced that somehow they were better for me.

I started up again in 1998, with the myth of "just one" and continued until my doctor started getting on my case. I spent two years and sixteen tries with the patches off and on. I tried to quit over a two-year period. The first fourteen times I quit "cold turkey" but could never stay quit. I was starting to think I couldn't do this thing. Then for two tries I stayed on the patch but when I got to the 7 mg patch I'd rip it off

Carol, Seattle, Washington

and smoke "just one." The doctor kept on me. When you're diabetic doctors have the tendency to get excited about things. You've got to die sometime but it might as well be later than sooner. It took me sixteen times to realize I was only "just one cigg" away from two packs a day. Trying and relapsing over and over made me feel like a failure: why couldn't I succeed at something I was trying so hard to do? One day I heard about Nicotine Anonymous, but it was in Ballard, about one hour away by bus from downtown Seattle and I never went out on the bus at night after 7 p.m. As I became more desperate I heard about another 7 p.m. meeting near where I live on Capitol Hill. Since it was close I broke my own rule about going out after 7 p.m. and went to my first meeting.

The first time I took a bus it was dark and I was shaking in my shoes and afterward I was shaking worse as it was after 8:00. Once off the bus I walked rapidly to my apartment and when my back hit the door I breathed a sigh of relief, I was home safe.

I kept going to the meeting. There were four people at the meeting: Patty, Alice, Lisa and me, and it grew from there. I started going in September of 2001. I was glad I could still smoke when I joined the group or else I wouldn't have come. I set my quit date for January 8, 2002 because I had another doctor's appointment and knew she would be on my case yet again unless I could tell her I quit and about Nicotine Anonymous.

Artwork to come

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

Seven Minutes

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

Subscription requests, circulation additions and deletions may be sent to the same address, or go to www.nicotine-anonymous.org to subscribe online.

Material 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,
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 nicotine addict. It is because of the grace of my Higher Power and the people in the rooms of Nicotine Anonymous that I have not needed to use nicotine one day at a time since January 6, 1996 and for that I am very grateful. I am also your active chair for this coming year. We have just completed another marvelous World Service Conference – this time held in Santa Monica, California. Jan F., chair emeritus, will share the conference update elsewhere in this issue. I want to personally thank SCINA for hosting and making us all feel welcome. And that is what it is all about – making the nicotine addict feel welcome and not alone.

For this issue of *Seven Minutes*, I want to briefly tell my story and in the process share my goals for the coming year. Like many of us, I started using nicotine as a teenager. I was looking for a place to belong. The group of people I wanted to hang around with, tolerated me, but I never really felt accepted. I often describe the feeling as being on the outside looking in. No one ran me off, but no one really let me into the inner circle. Sometime during 8th or 9th grade, I found a group of girls that let me into their inner sanctum. They smoked. I could hang out with them, but I had to smoke. It was easy. I was hooked. The addiction took hold immediately. I continued to use my drug of choice for years. Quitting was never an option. Why should I quit when I had friends? My social life was defined by who smoked and who didn't. Why should I quit when I had my drug to insulate any pain? Why should I quit when I could put up a smoke screen between you and me and not

really connect and let you know me?

Years into my smoking, I finally began to see that nicotine was no longer working and my circle of smoking buddies was shrinking. I was the last of my family members who still smoked. Friends were quitting. Smoking was no longer a cool thing to do. But I was still holding on to the dream that the cigarette was my best friend. In December of 1995, the pleadings of family and friends were getting to me. But denial being what it was, I refused to stop. I was an addict in the height of my addiction. Then God did for me what I could not do for myself. My Higher Power put the local newspaper in front of me. There as a one liner in one of the sections of the paper. It said "Nicotine Anonymous" and then listed the phone number for the Dallas Hotline. I called it and went to my first meeting. There were people there who were enjoying life and were NOT smoking. WOW. I walk away from that meeting with the hope that I could not use nicotine and still enjoy life. There was a solution.

What was that solution? The solution is in the practice of the 12 Steps of Nicotine Anonymous. In addition to going to 3-4 meetings a week, I read everything I could get my hands on that related to the 12 steps. I was constantly in bookstores looking at the Recovery/Self Help section. (I don't think I read a novel for 2 years.) I listened to all the previous Nicotine Anonymous Conference tapes that I could find. I listened to 12 Step recovery tapes from both our program and other programs. I got a sponsor. Admitting that I needed someone and

then listening to the experience, strength, and hope that she had to offer was essential for my recovery. I needed to know how I could get what everyone else had. I *was* willing to go to any length to get it. It was my priority. I had to find recovery. I became involved with step studies. It actually took me three different attempts at a step study groups before I finally completed all 12 Steps. But I did. Today it is the 12 Steps that guide my life. If I have a problem, I apply the steps and see where I am stuck. If I have a resentment or if I get triggered by an issue, I apply the steps and call my sponsor or someone in the program.

This brings me to the focus of my message to the fellowship. I often wonder why our fellowship is so small compared to other fellowships. We see many people who walk into the rooms of Nicotine Anonymous - quit using nicotine and then leave. We never see them again. I don't know the real reason, but I believe it is because people come into the rooms to quit but they don't stay long enough to find recovery. They don't stay to find the miracle of learning to live life differently. My belief is that we need to go back to the basics. We always close my meeting with "It works if you work it." I encourage everyone to work it:

- Work the Steps, and not just the 1, 2, 3 dance but all twelve
- Start a step study
- Find a sponsor
- Sponsor people or co-sponsor if you can't find someone with more time than yourself.

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From the Chair

continued from page 3

In a survey was sent out to the fellowship during this past year, one of the priorities of the fellowship was to develop new literature, specifically a Step Study Guide. Members of our fellowship have written and/or used a variety of guides to work the steps. At the conference, three individuals from the Palm Desert area of California, volunteered to help organize the development of this Step Guide. We have already received some material that was used early on in the history of Nicotine Anonymous as well as information that was used in Dallas, Texas and in Northern California. If you have any material that could be used in this guide, please send it to Nicotine Anonymous World Service, 419 Main Street, PMB #370, Huntington Beach, CA 92648.

With the theme of going back to the basics and working the program, I am reminded of the Tradition that says, "Our primary purpose is to help

the still suffering nicotine addict." Many newcomers have asked, "How does this work?" There are a number of unapproved "Nicotine Anonymous How It Works" floating around the fellowship. At the conference in Philadelphia, let's have consistency

Artwork to come

around the fellowship and *approve* one version. If you have a version, please send it in so we can review it and eventually bring one version to

the conference for approval.

The 12 Traditions are the guiding spiritual principles of all 12 Step meetings. John O. and others started writing long versions to the Traditions. We still have some work to do on this project. I would love to see this finished so we can include them in our book, *Nicotine Anonymous, The Book*. Traditions 3, 5, 8, 11, and 12 still need to be written and the others need editing. Dan P., our Book Coordinator will be working with John O. to completing the Traditions. Please contact John, Dan or World Service if you would be willing to work on this project. I don't know if we can finish this by next April, but let's have high expectations.

The last focus I would like to bring to the fellowship, is one that has been controversial in the past. That is the issue of gender neutrality. At the conference in Brooklyn, NY, in 2002, the proposed changes to the Steps and Traditions were defeated because they did not have the 2/3 vote from the delegates. It

Service, Serenity and Perspective at the Conference

Ani M., Berkeley, California

As my friend and I pulled into the garage of the DoubleTree Hotel in Santa Monica, I felt the excitement inside me stir: I was about to attend my second NicA conference! My first conference was in Berkeley and I helped to put it on. I had six months sobriety then and now I have 2½ years and much has changed. This time I understand more about the power of service in my life—I keep it by giving it away. Service is gratitude in action. By being co-secretary of my home meeting and Intergroup Chair, my

life is enriched with wonderful new friends who share their experience, strength and hope with me. I was a voting delegate at this year's conference and so proud to be one.

We took the elevator up to the hotel lobby and there was Nick V., Conference Chair, to greet us. Later I learned how much he had given to the conference and how wonderful his humor, caring and generosity are.

As I unpacked and got ready for the Gratitude Meeting on Friday night, I thought more about the

ways I had changed since my first conference. My sobriety has given me a new relationship with myself which made my conference experience more, bigger and better. I worked in therapy on how I could best take care of myself and on what would really be good for me and my serenity at this gathering. I looked back at the Berkeley conference and recalled that I had rushed through my gratitude share (did I think I was not worthy of the time I needed?) and sang my gratitude song from a tender new relationship with my

did however, have a narrow majority. I would like to open a dialogue in the fellowship about this issue. There are passionate views on both sides. One of the suggestions from that conference was to use *Seven Minutes* as a forum for this discussion. I am asking Catherine C., our *Seven Minutes* editor, to make a new column for this debate. If you would like to be heard on this subject, briefly submit your view. She will print both pro and con. The more submissions, the more the fellowship has the ability to be more informed. The one thing that I would like to ask is that the opinions are written with the following Traditions of the fellowship in mind:

- The common welfare should come first; personal progress depends on Nicotine Anonymous unity.
- For our group purpose there is but one authority, a loving God.
- Nicotine Anonymous has but one primary purpose, to help

the nicotine addict that still suffers.

- Anonymity is the spiritual foundation of all our Traditions placing principles before personalities.

In closing, once I started doing service, I was told, “You can’t keep it unless you give it away.” I invite you to give it away. Find away to give back to the fellowship. There are a number of service opportunities on the World Service Level. We need you. If you do not know what is available, here are a few suggestions.

- We need a Literature Coordinator who would help organize any new literature such as a Step Study Guide, possibly a Newcomer’s handbook, new literature on for the teen and/or dually diagnosed. This person would also help making sure there is literature for the visually impaired or non-English speaker.
- Teleservants to help answer

phone calls from around the country and world

- Email Servants to answer emails from people who are looking for support or information
- Pen Pals to communicate to individuals who do not have a meeting to go to in their city.
- Individuals to write/edit the Traditions
- Webservant who would post information to the website (with approval) but also someone who would monitor the website, determine what work orders might be need and communicate effectively with our webhost.

Not everyone is cut out for service work on the World Services level. Just give back—it can also be at your local meeting level or intergroup level. For me, it has been the most rewarding work I have ever done. I hope you find it as gratifying as I have.

Artwork to come

voice and lungs. I also didn’t look around the room as I spoke. This time I did and I saw the faces of friends and folks committed to healing from nicotine addiction who were smiling at me and giving me their support! I didn’t rush and I spoke and sang with a new, deeper connection with my voice and my body.

Without my lifelong smoke-screen, I am available, open and happy to connect with life. I am

available to myself, to listen to what my body tells me: what is good, comfortable, positive and healing for me and what is not. I am available to my NicA friends. This is a program of “we” and the first word of the steps is “we.” I connected with many people from all over the country at the conference and I didn’t hide—no slyly escaping to smoke. I took time with myself to recharge and so I was more available to connect and share. A woman shared that she no longer uses her hands to roll cigarettes and play with lighters and that’s true for me too. I now use my hands for writing and making art and NicA business and caring for me! This conference showed me the wonderful ways I’ve grown and the true gift that service is.

The workshops, business meetings and voting were full of humor and solid communication. NicA for me is a functional family that is a pleasure and an honor to be a part of. I get to be a part of the creation of a 90-in-90 Book of Daily Meditations that is now almost a reality and it started as an idea of Jennifer M.’s at the Berkeley conference. I got to hear our founder Rodger’s funny and inspiring story of the beginnings of NicA and to vote for that story as conference-approved literature. I was present and open to the celebration and victory (as one speaker called it) that this 18th Annual NicA Conference is. It is a celebration of serenity, hope, and joy. Thank you NicA, and thank you to all the Southern California members who made it happen.

Chairperson's Report on Conference XVIII

Jan F., Chairperson Emeritus

My name is Jan F. and I am a nicotine addict. My higher power through this program has done for me something which I could not do for myself. During the very first moments after I arrive at a conference I am reminded that these conferences have had a very significant impact on my life. I am sure this is also true of many other members. My first conference was in Woodland Hills in 1993. I had nine months of abstinence from nicotine. I considered it an absolute impossibility at that time. My personal life for several years was pretty unstable and it wasn't until the 1999 Conference in Santa Ana that I really caught the "Conference Bug" and decided that I never wanted to miss another one. (Fear of financial insecurity might have been a big part of my reticence but I would never have the nerve to say that in public.) I will be going to all the future conferences as long as I am physically capable.

Even before the conference officially starts with the Friday night Gratitude meeting there is a World Service Officer's meeting, which is open to the public. Attending one of these meetings is a real education on how the business matters and fellowship efforts of the World Service Office are conducted. It's not impossible to leave one of these meetings with a determination to get more involved and work towards a goal of one day serving on that very same board.

The Gratitude Meeting Friday night was as powerful as ever. If the only meeting one could attend was the Gratitude Meeting it would make the conference worthwhile. The mood of this year's Friday night meeting was melancholy as we reflected on the fact that one of our member's from New Jersey had passed away that morning. This seemed to trigger powerful feelings among other members who reflected on others who died in recent years. It was very touching. As usual,

the gratitude expressed at that meeting just leaves one with a special feeling that permeates one's experiences for the rest of the weekend. When you come to a conference, please don't miss the Gratitude Meeting.

Saturday morning started with the reports by our trusted servants and various committee chairs. I want to mention three items. First, our financial position remains stable and the reduced level of

Artwork to come

income this year reflected the officers' willingness to spend our extra funds on Public Outreach. We completed several projects this year in Atlanta, Chicago, and Los Angeles. We even supported a Stop Smoking Campaign at several YWCA's on the East Coast, the South and Southwest. We did a mailing to all of the AA offices in the United States. Second, the WSO completed the review of the work on *Nicotine Anonymous The Book* and we recently published

the second edition of the *Book*. It took a very determined effort by the board and other members who actually stuck it out at a couple of very, very long board meetings. Third, we paid a professional web site company to redo our website. The fellowship owes a debt of gratitude to this group of World Service Officers for having the intestinal fortitude to vote for spending the necessary funds to accomplish this task. It would have been very easy for them to sit back and say we simply cannot afford to spend the money. I hope you all share my enthusiasm for our new site and the possibilities it presents for the fellowship in the future.

During the morning voting items were presented and nominations were opened for the three World Service Officer positions that open up each year. In addition, the delegates officially ratified Catherine C. who had volunteered during the year to fill the empty Secretary-Elect position. After lunch we had six workshops on the following topics: Rodger's Story, Outreach, Speakers Bureau, Website Demo, Book of Daily Meditations and Step Study Guide. Then the leaders of the workshops presented reports from the workshops.

The Saturday night banquet presented a couple of unforgettable speakers: Mary P. and Carrie W. both hailing from Southern California. Both speakers demonstrated the fact that you can abstain from nicotine and live life with an incredible sense of humor. (This is a fact of life that most of us would have doubted before we came to this program.) Both speakers demonstrated a very real knowledge of how their lives and attitudes have changed since they came to this program. I think the dinner was delicious; all I remember is the Chocolate.

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What happened

I had done patches before. I lost faith in my ability to quit. I signed up with Free and Clear. I also connected with a phone support counselor who sent me patches and my daughter sent me patches from Tennessee. So, instead of doing it the way I was supposed to, I doubled my time on each step of the patches and each time I stepped down I'd go through withdrawal. Then I went on the gum in July. I stayed on the gum withdrawing slowly and finished with the gum the day before Christmas 2002. And now I am completely nicotine free. I've had a few bad moments. December is a bad time of year for me and last year I smoked because of it. Not this year. The feeling of wanting "just one" came again. I saw other people smoke and remembered the euphoria from the first one. I also remembered smoking time and time again to try to recapture that feeling but it never happened unless I'd go a little time without and then start up again, then that feeling came. Two days before I was supposed to have Christmas with my son I had a health scare and thought I was going to die. Boy, did I want "just one." Talk about a cigarette moment! But I managed to stay smoke free. Fortunately the health scare turned out to be nothing. Alice says, even after you've accumulated some time nicotine free the times still come when you want "just one." So I am forewarned. I can't become complacent thinking I've got it made.

How it is now

I have temper tantrums and can stay mad for days, weeks at a time. I'm not the type who blows up and it's over. I've never had to deal with anger before. I wouldn't admit I was angry mostly because I didn't let myself feel anger. That's over, now I blow and often! I am in touch with my feelings like never before. Someone from the smoking quit line recommended a book on anger management which I will get soon as I can afford it. I get angry at people. I

Artwork to come

get angry at God who failed to prevent all my illnesses, all my doctors, all my many pills I have to take every single day. One has a drowsiness effect and with my extra weight I don't have a lot of energy. I can't drink coffee because coffee makes me nervous and I'm high strung, anxious and prone to depression anyway.

I found a self I'm not too crazy about. So when I got bogged down and couldn't go on with the steps I found a book called *Simple Abundance* that says I can find an authentic self that I can actually like. It suggests that maybe some of the crud I've accumulated over the years could be shucked off and I could find the enthusiastic curious self I was as a child. I might find peacefulness, serenity, calm, patience and cheerfulness inside myself in spite of what is going on outside of me. I have hope instead of dread about my life.

I have better self-esteem. I may be a slave to my illnesses but not a slave to nicotine anymore—thank God!! I don't have to be embarrassed at gatherings of non-smokers or go outside in the wet and windy weather to smoke thinking my friends are thinking "can't she control herself?" I don't have to get twitchy because I need a nicotine fix and for some reason can't immediately satisfy it.

Christmas turned out to be a good time after all. I got a package from my daughter, spent the day with my son and on Christmas day itself I was with a friend who really put on a food spread and there was fellowship all around. I've learned I can't always have it my way but sometimes there are really good days that I can enjoy without being a slave to a thing that will kill me.

Thank you Nicotine Anonymous.

World Services Officers

Congratulations to the new officer's for Nicotine Anonymous and a big thanks to all the emeritus officers for a great year of service!!!

Current officers

Chairperson – Robin L.
Secretary – Catherine C.
Treasurer – Jeff C.

Elect officers

Chairperson – Jean L.
Secretary – Kelly C.
Treasurer – Joyce D.

Emeritus officers

Chairperson – Jan F.
Secretary – Kate W.
Treasurer – Ramona F.

Conference location for 2004

Philadelphia, Pennsylvania
April something

Conference location for 2005

Atlanta, Georgia
May 6–8, 2005
(Note the date is in May to avoid conflicting with Tax Season and Passover)

Sunday morning the delegates made quick work of the business at hand. The motions on the floor to publish Rodger's Story and the Daily Meditations as conference-approved literature were approved. The delegates also voted to direct the officers to change the home page on our Web site to reflect the fact that we have materials available in other languages. Atlanta was chosen as the site of our conference in 2005 and was confirmed by the WSO at their meeting.

Please join me in congratulating and welcoming the following individuals as the incoming World Service Officers: Jean L., Chairperson-Elect, Joyce D., Treasurer-Elect, and Kelly C., Secretary-Elect. A special thanks goes to those officers who completed their term of service: Kent B., Annette L., and Jennifer M. You all have served the fellowship well.

Sunday brunch rounded out the Conference. Rodger F. was the speaker. Listening to Rodger speak about the early days of the fellowship makes me realize how the effect of our actions may radiate out in a manner we never anticipated. We take the action; our higher power determines the outcome. My thanks to the Southern California Intergroup for hosting the Conference and to the committee lead by Nicholas V. as Chairperson along with members Gary M., Marc S., Jenny M., Mary P., George L., Jean L., Doug H., Stella P. and Joe S.

After the Conference, several of us enjoyed a cruise of Marina Del Rey. Rarely have so many been so impressed by boat slips—ah, the wonders of Southern California sites.

By the way, we have t-shirts for you (go to the Web site).

Thank you for allowing me to be of service.

NAWS Balance Sheet

	12/31/02	12/31/01	\$ Change	% Change
ASSETS				
Current Assets				
Checking/Savings				
1000 · Wells Fargo Checking	25120.59	23644.01	1476.58	0.06
1010 · Wells Fargo Prem Market	27993.29	27641.25	352.04	0.01
Total Checking/Savings	53113.88	51285.26	1828.62	0.04
Accounts Receivable				
1200 · Accounts Receivable	3.00	1189.49	-1186.49	-1.00
1205 · Advances to Conference	2000.00	1500.00	500.00	0.33
Total Accounts Receivable	2003.00	2689.49	-686.49	-0.26
Other Current Assets				
1209 · Advance to Fulfillment	400.00	500.00	-100.00	-0.20
1120 · Inventory Asset	7029.29	7358.36	-329.07	-0.04
Total Other Current Assets	7429.29	7858.36	-429.07	-0.05
Total Current Assets	62546.17	61833.11	713.06	0.01
TOTAL ASSETS	62546.17	61833.11	713.06	0.01
LIABILITIES & EQUITY				
Liabilities				
Current Liabilities				
Accounts Payable				
2000 · Accounts Payable	2495.64	2582.42	-86.78	-0.03
Total Accounts Payable	2495.64	2582.42	-86.78	-0.03
Other Current Liabilities				
2200 · Sales Tax Payable	650.60	612.72	37.88	0.06
Total Other Current Liabilities	650.60	612.72	37.88	0.06
Total Current Liabilities	3146.24	3195.14	-48.90	-0.02
Total Liabilities	3146.24	3195.14	-48.90	-0.02
Equity				
3200 · Unrestricted Net Assets	54758.31	54758.31	0.00	0.00
3900 · Retained Earnings	3879.66	3.00	3876.66	1292.22
Net Income	761.96	3876.66	-3114.70	-0.80
Total Equity	59399.93	58637.97	761.96	0.01
TOTAL LIABILITIES & EQUITY	62546.17	61833.11	713.06	0.01
Ordinary Income/Expense				
Income				
4000 · Donations				
4020 · Individual	3418.10	3399.27	18.83	0.01
4040 · Group	4398.16	4862.52	-464.36	-0.10
4060 · Intergroup	1064.35	891.27	173.08	0.19
Total 4000 · Donations	8880.61	9153.06	-272.45	-0.03
4100 · Literature Sales				
4120 · Book Sales	27920.90	25648.75	2272.15	.09
4140 · Pamphlet Sales	11187.50	10668.96	518.54	0.05
4160 · Seven Minutes Subscript.	2595.00	2106.75	488.25	0.23
4170 · Books on Tape Sales	760.00	460.14	299.86	0.65
4180 · Other Sales	457.00	335.00	122.00	0.36
4190 · No Charge Sales	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
4201 · Sales Adjustments	-133.49	-344.40	210.91	-0.61
Total 4100 · Literature Sales	42786.91	38875.20	3911.71	0.10
4290 · Shipping & Handling	3218.64	3074.19	144.45	0.05
4299 · Conference Profit (Loss)	1136.43	82.83	1053.60	12.72
Total Income	56022.59	51185.28	4837.31	0.09
Cost of Goods Sold				
5000 · COGS				
5020 · Books	7772.03	5287.70	2484.33	0.47
5030 · Path To Freedom	1046.61	776.04	270.57	0.35
5040 · Pamphlets	5296.35	5694.38	-398.03	-0.07
5050 · Book on Tape	390.00	267.73	122.27	0.46
5060 · Seven Minutes COGS				
5062 · Postage	928.11	1491.63	-563.52	-0.38
5064 · Printing	1985.49	1292.56	692.93	0.54
5069 · WW Meeting Lists	50.00	50.00	0.00	0.00
Total 5060 · Seven Minutes COGS	2963.60	2834.19	129.41	0.05
5070 · Starter Kits	272.34	672.84	-400.50	-0.60

January–December, 2001

Ramona F., Fremont, California

	12/31/02	12/31/01	\$ Change	% Change
5080 · Inventory Adjustment	120.05	-20.87	140.92	-6.75
Total 5000 · COGS	17860.98	15512.01	2348.97	0.15
5700 · Fulfillment	2079.00	2109.50	-30.50	-0.01
5710 · Storage	360.00	700.00	-340.00	-0.49
5720 · Shipping	5924.90	6665.24	-740.34	-0.11
Total COGS	26224.88	24986.75	1238.13	0.05
Gross Profit	29797.71	26198.53	3599.18	0.14
Expense				
6345 · Software	768.30	0.00	768.30	1.00
6000 · Office Expenses				
6060 · Bank Service Charges	855.75	807.19	48.56	0.06
6230 · Legal & Professional	162.00	1386.45	-1224.45	-0.88
6160 · Licenses and Permits	10.00	135.00	-125.00	-0.93
6310 · Office Supplies, Etc	897.90	819.07	78.83	0.10
6400 · Postage				
6410 · Box Rental	223.00	235.00	-12.00	-0.05
6420 · Mail Forwarding	290.00	324.85	-34.85	-0.11
6430 · Postage - Admin	377.51	116.33	261.18	2.25
Total 6400 · Postage	890.51	676.18	214.33	0.32
6450 · Printing and Reproduction	263.91	22.14	241.77	10.92
6710 · Repairs	300.00	0.00	300.00	1.00
6350 · Secretarial Service	10200.00	9600.00	600.00	0.06
6800 · Telephone				
6835 · Internet Access	279.70	0.00	279.70	1.00
6830 · Fax	441.31	0.00	441.31	1.00
6840 · Office	1475.78	1669.18	-193.40	-0.12
6860 · Servant	876.26	638.56	237.70	0.37
Total 6800 · Telephone	3073.05	2307.74	765.31	0.33
Total 6000 · Office Expenses	16653.12	15753.77	899.35	0.06
6700 · Board Expenses				
6500 · Projects				
6560 · Internet Expense	356.84	770.87	-414.03	-0.54
6510 · Public Outreach	1002.80	140.13	862.67	6.16
6540 · WW Mtg List/Group Mailing	1806.87	1316.14	490.73	0.37
Total 6500 · Projects	3166.51	2227.14	939.37	0.42
6900 · Travel & Mtg Exp-Board				
6930 · Meeting Costs	167.00	203.88	-36.88	-0.18
6820 · Conference Calls	354.06	282.80	71.26	0.25
6920 · Meals	49.88	193.81	-143.93	-0.74
6940 · Board Transportation	8254.77	5335.74	2919.03	0.55
Total 6900 · Travel & Mtg Exp-Board	8825.71	6016.23	2809.48	0.47
Total 6700 · Board Expenses	11992.22	8243.37	3748.85	0.45
Total Expense	29413.64	23997.14	5416.50	0.23
Net Ordinary Income	384.07	2201.39	-1817.32	-0.83
Other Income/Expense				
Other Income				
7010 · Interest Income	377.89	1675.27	-1297.38	-0.77
Total Other Income	377.89	1675.27	-1297.38	-0.77
Net Other Income	377.89	1675.27	-1297.38	-0.77
Net Income	761.96	3876.66	-3114.70	-0.80

OPERATING ACTIVITIES

Net Income	761.96
Adjustments to reconcile Net Income to net cash provided by operations:	
1200 · Accounts Receivable	1186.49
1205 · Advances to Conference	-500.00
1209 · Advance to Fulfillment	100.00
1120 · Inventory Asset	329.07
2000 · Accounts Payable	-86.78
2200 · Sales Tax Payable	37.88
Net cash provided by Operating Activities	1828.62
Net cash increase for period	1828.62
Cash at beginning of period	51285.26
Cash at end of period	53113.88

Note from the Editor

Catherine C.

Seven Minutes Arrives Late

The last issue of *Seven Minutes* apparently was not received on a timely basis by many of our subscribers (including your lowly editor), in fact, it arrived *after* the conference. Our apologies for this and I want to assure you that we are working diligently to correct this problem. We have changed our mailing procedures with this issue, and are now mailing the issue first class. Hopefully you will be reading this soon after it was mailed from Southern California. If not, please e-mail me at SevenMinutesEditor@nicotine-anonymous.org or notify the main office. Thanks!

A big thank you to Gary M. in Southern California for volunteering to take over the publishing and mailing of the newsletter. Service works!!!

Artwork to come

Step Three

Ladd, Long Island, New York

"In [God's] will is our peace."
—Dante

Made a decision to turn our will and our lives over to the care of God as we understood Him.

Someone wiser and more experienced than I once said to me, "Whatever you put in front of your Higher Power will become your Higher Power." At the time, I had been going to NicA meetings for several months, but I had yet to give up a single cigarette. Not one! He was referring to the fact that I was still hooked on cigarettes.

I wanted to kick him in the teeth. This was playing dirty. This was bringing in the Big Guns. I regarded myself at the time as a good, sober individual—but how could I be if I was in thrall to this insane drug?

What happened in time was that I began to absorb that magic word in Step Three, *Willingness*. Within months, I came around, I relinquished my ground, I let go. I gave up. I surrendered.

I devised a simple quit program, and, on one day's notice, after 37½ years, I quit smoking. I used the patch for half a day. I removed it at midnight, that Saturday, November 4, 2000. I've been nicotine-free since. It's a miracle! I still cry sweet tears at this incredible recollection.

The decision to give up didn't happen overnight. It took me eight months of coming to the rooms to find my way to this decision. Looking back, I see that all I had to do was to let go. Give up. Surrender. Turn it over. No heavy lifting, no cinching up of my belt, no gritting of teeth. I just let go.

I had seen Step Three in another 12-Step program. It seemed at first a huge mountain to climb. "Turn our will and our lives over. . ." As it says elsewhere, but "What will become of me? I'll look like the hole in the doughnut!" For a long time, I wrestled with the phrase, "Let go, let God." Oh, it was so enticing! Little by slowly, the very idea of the steps worked their magic on

me. I began to realize that I didn't have to leap tall buildings at a single bound after all. I could take it a little at a time. Baby steps, even. "By the inch, it's a cinch. By the yard, it's hard."

I've been told that if I have a hard time with one of the steps—and "they're in order for a reason"—to go back to the previous one. "Came to believe." Check. I had come to believe. "Higher Power"—Yes, yes, yes! I'm *not* the center of the universe. I'm "one among many, a friend among friends, a worker among workers"—or, at least I'm trying to be. If I don't get humble, I'll go right back to my Disease of More—more smoking and all manner of other kinds of instant gratification. I wanted a release from that. Step Three has been called the keystone to the arch of the steps. It makes me realize that I must see myself as "lesser"—or humble—in order that I believe in a "higher" power. I must be humble—or I will be humbled. "Either I get on my knees to pray, or I'll be brought to my knees." And the other side of the coin of humility was a belief in a Higher Power. Just a belief that it isn't me. It could be the rooms of NicA; the people in NicA; the program of NicA; all of the above, or more, and maybe *much* more.

They first put the hook into me with the steps at a Third Step meeting where somebody explained that "God" is an acronym for Good Orderly Direction. Oh, wow! No fancy many-tomed theology. I could put away the revered 25-foot totem I figuratively took out for special occasions. Then another acronym—Group of Dissolutes or Delinquents. There's no required dogma. And, since it's free, Grand Old Design. And, finally, the short form of "good"—or "good" is the long-form of "God."

So—there are the rudiments of my NicA theology. Just for me. "As I understand [my Higher Power]." Nothing fancy. The way I get to my Higher Power is to pray. And to listen—in the rooms of NicA and elsewhere. The formerly unimaginable

business of "turning my will and my life over to the care of my Higher Power" is accomplished—when I'm not taking my will back—by putting one foot in front of the other. By doing the next right thing. By seeking and taking advice from my sponsor. By sharing my experience, strength, and hope in the rooms, and by listening to the Group Of Dissolutes I see and hear in NicA. By remembering "I row—he steers." I'm chastened by the saying, "Let go—or be dragged." Been there, done that. I'm told that the system never runs out of pain for those who don't follow the suggestions. "The program is free—we only pay for the suggestions we don't take." Thy will be done—mine sucks.

I didn't come to NicA because it was a nice sunny day and I didn't have anything better to do. I came because I *wanted* to *want* to quit smoking, as a woman named Arlene, I think, put it so eloquently. Only part of me thought it would be a great idea to quit smoking. I wasn't yet committed in my heart when I first came to the rooms. But I kept coming around. Week after week, I heard these warm, wonderful, welcoming people speak of their freedom and peace. I wanted their serene joy of nicotine-free. I wanted what they had!

Life is a symphony, and I am but one of players. I'm either in sync and on pitch, and contributing to this vast, beautiful work of art, or I'm fighting it, scratchy, off pitch, and out of rhythm. For me, Dante put Step Three—and the whole program—in one line: "In His will is our peace" (*The Divine Comedy*).

Artwork to come

Birthday Congratulations

*Congratulations and
thanks to:*
William D., whose anniversary
date is 6/12/00:
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~ Birthday Gratitude ~

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Seven Minutes

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**Publication Dates and
Deadlines for Submissions**

Publication Date	Deadline Date for submissions
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March 1	January 15
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June 1	April 15
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September 1	July 15
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December 1	October 1
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