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Your trusted servants,

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NAWS Chairman's report . . .

I hope all of you had a wonderful summer. Every season is great when we're smoke free. I have to let you know that daily I thank my Higher Power for this opportunity to serve, for each and every one of you, and for our wonderful Fellowship. What a time in our history to be part of this – for ALL of us.

I've signed up for Give and Live – have you? It's easy and a great way to give back in kind to the Fellowship that has brought us life. I tried it . . . I like it.

We've just finished a highly successful Board meeting in Columbia, MD hosted by the NicaMar Intergroup. And host they did. Dale, you outdid yourself. If this is an indication of what we have ahead of us for the 2011 Conference, we're in for a major treat! I swear we had the best crab cakes on the planet! Our all day Board Meeting at the Serenity Center was jam packed and productive.

Serving as your Chair has been an incredible growth experience, and there is no question that two things stand out above all else. The power of prayer as I turn over decisions and ponder issues, knowing that our Group Conscience prevails, and an ever

increasing admiration for, and love of, our Traditions.

And then there's your wonderful World Services Board. What a cohesive and hard working group! We are all mentoring each other without being asked and it's a joy to watch this unfold. It's as if we all instinctively know that we have to pass it on to the future generations of our fellowship and, while we're on a strong footing, we're putting down strong roots. Everyone's so enthusiastic and just brimming with ideas. Committee positions are filled and, once again, everyone is more than willing to step up to the plate and pitch in.

I'm on VONR (*Voices of Nicotine Recovery, an online NicA group—Ed.*)! Way Cool! Got my welcome email and by the time you read this I'll probably have spoken at a Saturday night meeting. I am SO impressed with the site. She who's admittedly hard copy, hugs and face to face, is having a blast as a VONR member.

Just know, in quiet peace and assurance, that our beloved Fellowship is doing beautifully right now. Meetings are growing both face to face and online, contributions are coming in, literature is selling well and is extremely popular and, all around, we are blessed. It does not get any better than this.

Until next time,

Jan S

The Twelve Steps of Nicotine Anonymous

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

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

The Twelve Steps of Alcoholics Anonymous

1. We admitted we were powerless over alcohol—that our lives had become unmanageable.
2. Came to believe that a Power greater than ourselves could restore us to sanity.
3. Made a decision to turn our will and our lives over to the care of God, as we understood Him.
4. Made a searching and fearless moral inventory of ourselves.
5. Admitted to God, to ourselves, and to another human being the exact nature of our wrongs.

6. Were entirely ready to have God remove all these defects of character.
7. Humbly asked Him to remove our shortcomings.
8. Made a list of all persons we had harmed, and became willing to make amends to them all.
9. Made direct amends to such people wherever possible, except when to do so would injure them or others.
10. Continued to take personal inventory, and when we were wrong, promptly admitted it.
11. Sought through prayer and meditation to improve our conscious contact with God as we understood Him, praying only for knowledge of His will for us and the power to carry it out.
12. Having had a spiritual awakening as the result of these steps, we tried to carry this message to other alcoholics and to practice these principles in all our affairs.

The Twelve Traditions of Nicotine Anonymous

1. Our common welfare should come first; personal recovery depends upon Nicotine Anonymous unity.
2. For our group purpose there is but one ultimate authority—a loving God as He may express Himself in our group conscience. Our leaders are but trusted servants; they do not govern.
3. The only requirement for Nicotine Anonymous membership is a desire to stop using nicotine.
4. Each group should be autonomous except in matters affecting other groups or Nicotine Anonymous as a whole.
5. Each group has but one primary purpose—to carry its message to the nicotine addict who still suffers.
6. A Nicotine Anonymous group ought never endorse, finance, or lend the Nicotine Anonymous name to any related facility or outside enterprise, lest problems of money, property, and prestige divert us from our primary purpose.
7. Every Nicotine Anonymous group ought to be fully self-supporting, declining outside contributions.
8. Nicotine Anonymous should remain forever non-professional, but our service centers may employ special workers.
9. Nicotine Anonymous, as such, ought never be organized; but we may create service boards or committees directly responsible to those they serve.
10. Nicotine Anonymous has no opinion on outside issues; hence the Nicotine Anonymous name ought never be drawn into public controversy.
11. Our public relations policy is based on attraction rather than promotion; we need always maintain personal anonymity at the level of press, radio, TV, and films.

12. Anonymity is the spiritual foundation of all our traditions, ever reminding us to place principles before personalities.

The Twelve Traditions of Alcoholics Anonymous

1. Our common welfare should come first; personal recovery depends upon A.A. unity.
2. For our group purpose, there is but one ultimate authority—a loving God as He may express Himself in our group conscience. Our leaders are but trusted servants; they do not govern.
3. The only requirement for A.A. membership is a desire to stop drinking.
4. Each group should be autonomous except in matters affecting other groups or A.A. as a whole.
5. Each group has but one primary purpose—to carry its message to the alcoholic who still suffers.
6. An A.A. group ought never endorse, finance or lend the A.A. name to any related facility or outside enterprise, lest problems of money, property and prestige divert us from our primary purpose.
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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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MY QUIT JOURNAL . . .

(Editor's note:- Below is a post from the online message board of Voices of Nicotine Recovery, an online NicA group. As ever, the author has kindly given permission for her story to be published in Seven Minutes)

My journal ramblings tonight seemed pretty significant to me... I don't know that they would be helpful to someone else, but considering the length if you read this and do not smoke you will be smober for the next 5 minutes....

In any case I just thought it best that I share my journal entry tonight, as it's very humbling for me. Hope it helps others, and if not, you know the drill...delete. .. love you all and wish you a wonderful day of recovery.

Jeannie

Journal Entry, Day 71:

More and more, I hear others talk about how they had a 2 month quit and went back to smoking. I am now past that point, so there's one relief (whew). Another person in my life made it to 90 days and rewarded themselves with a smoke! I hear tell that it supposedly takes 90 days to break a habit, which is all well and good, but how is it that at 8 months people smoke again? Or after a year? I even know a person who never went to any NicA meetings in her life, who would smoke a few years, quit a few years, and go back to smoking again. I think her longest quit was 6 years.

I used to think the best possible option would be a 3 month smobriety detox program, where they lock me up in a mental institution, keep me from smoking, work me with a therapist, put me on some magic drugs formulated just for me, and then send

me home all fixed up and a brand new person. Never thought about what I would do when they let me out -- LIGHT UP! --because the treatment would not fix the daily living issue. I had these mental images of opening one of these centers myself to help others, one day when I got smober. I figured I would use all the money I saved from not smoking to go toward this program. I thought the best options would be to offer choices in the size of programs: 30 day, 6 week, 3 month, and 6 month programs. If only I could find a place like that to help me . . . but then I would think, what of my children? Oh no, no, no, no. Nope, I can't do this. Guess I'll just keep smoking for now... for THEM. They NEED me.

Do they really need me dead in a few years, as opposed to crazy and somewhat distant for a few weeks? Everything I ever thought of was a cop-out. I wanted to put somebody else in charge of my smobriety, and if they weren't going to accept responsibility for it then I wasn't going to bother trying.

So many questions plagued me. How can I quit with a spouse who is not supportive (because 5 years ago we weren't on the same page)? How can I FUNCTION without being able to relax? How can I get through THIS stressful time (as there is always something stressful going on) without a smoke? How can I see my family and not smoke?

Then I would get smober, for a few weeks at most. I'd start feeling superior to "them", those who still suffered. I decided I had a choice of smoking or not. I decided I could choose to have one once in awhile. Perhaps socially. I chewed nicotine gum with a frenzy at times, sucked on NRT lozenges 'til I had heartburn and hiccups, and wore the patch at all times (even smoking). The nicotine gum and lozenges were just in those times when the patch just wasn't

enough. So, in addition to patches, I used other NRT and was on prescription drugs as well to help with anxiety, weight gain, blood pressure, and pain (had a bad back injury). So I began to have one every few days. "Hey, I'm doing great. Look at those poor suckers having to run outside every 20 minutes to smoke! Puh, so glad *I'm* not like that!".

Then something would happen. "You mean my baby needs heart surgery?" Blammo, back to 3 packs a day in an instant. That particular incident came at the end of a 3 week quit, and was coupled with a big bottle of drink to drown my sorrows. I spent the night with my toilet . . . and my phone. I talked to my sponsor for most of the night. That person stayed on the phone and would scream my name from time to time, just to make sure I was still living. Kept me on the phone and awake 'til my hubby got home. I don't remember if he peeled me off the floor or left me there. Either way, I'm sure he was disgusted.

Coping skills? Yeah right. None, whatsoever! Many times in our life we have fallen apart and away from each other, where we began hating each other. On the verge of divorce, we buried ourselves in a nicotine fog, which pateted and comforted us, said it's all gonna be okay "cough" "hack" "wheeze".

So here I am today, having this grand epiphany, or NOT, just that it is for me. I have A FEAR of one puff. It's a huge fear; I am SCARED to take a puff. When did this happen? I remember in the beginning of this quit, seriously believing I would reward myself after two weeks' smobriety with a nice cig. I didn't. I have a FEAR of leaving this group. I am scared to get away for fear I will be back to my old smoking self . . . and JUST WHO might draw me back? Well, the nicademon

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(through my loving family, or any other means possible) of course. Those who were meant to care about me and my well-being are the ones who shut off every time I mention it's been another cig-free day. Their demeanor goes flat. They don't want to hear it. Plus, admitting that I'm doing something good by quitting smoking is like saying they are doing something bad by continuing it so they will not do that. I have not heard one good word from my loving mom yet. They then begin talking down about addicts, their opinion of addicts. To these people, smoking is a choice, not an addiction, and is not comparable in any way to an alcoholic or someone addicted to hard drugs. THOSE are the ones with a problem, or so they believe. The addiction speaks! Any other possible excuse that can be, will be used against me. The same person rolled her eyes when I said I could use a drink after having been smober for several weeks. The urges to use alcohol hit, and I have not had a drink since Sept 1st, 2006.

How did I used to prepare for a quit? Geez, that was easy. I hid cigarettes. They were hidden for those "just in case" times. I left a pack in my car once, about two weeks before this quit, and thought it would help me cut back. I found myself trekking out to my car every 20 minutes. Surprised? Not really. Then there were the old cig butts from God knows who - that I found God knows where. Often times located in ashtrays for who knows how long, months, years? And if that wasn't good enough, why not go ask that stranger for one? They will understand, and if I look pathetic, who cares? I see them shaking their head at me. After all, this is a maternity ward! And if that didn't work, why not just steal them when the owner

isn't looking? After all, they don't need to be attached to the person at all times, just as long as they know they've got 'em. They won't watch all the time.

I also had tons of lozenges and gum and patches strewn all over my house from previous failed quit attempts.

Nope, not this time. All my nicotine replacement had expired. I threw it out. Geez, I have never thrown out nicotine, let alone something as expensive as that stuff was! And in ALL my many quit attempts before, some (if any) of my ashtrays made it into the cabinet. Very rarely even clean! Would I be desperate enough to taste the ashtray?

But this time, all ash-



trays except a couple went into my trash. I typically make the smokers go smoke in their car these days. At times, however, they will light up in my back yard, hence those couple of ashtrays. Their presence sends a clear message that I don't want their death litter strewn about my yard for my children to find. And if they don't get the message? I WILL deliver it! A few days ago, I was loaded for bear as one nicotine addict was finishing his smoke and went to put it on the ground . . . in MY yard . . . near my kiddies' pool! To my surprise, he put it out and placed it in his pocket of all

places. Yep, been guilty of that too. Yuck!

And my sweet hubby, he's always there though I've been a raging bitch at times. We've had a few disagreements, but it's mostly been being irritable on my part. He stays kind and loving. I wouldn't have been as kind . . . he's a gift. More supportive in this than I've ever seen, and we're constantly in NicA meetings for each other it seems. I used to feel like a bad parent. I have 4 kids, smoked during each pregnancy (even carrying twins) and how lucky I am that they all turned out ok! All were full term, good weight. They do have some problems. One of the things I regretted was my resolve to not smoke around them. That was another cop-out for me. That made smoking ok as long as the kids weren't around. That decision came about after accidentally burning my oldest when he was maybe 12 months old as he was sleeping in my bed, followed by smoking while nursing my second-born. But the decision to not smoke around my kids? Yeah, I only saw my children about an hour a day. The older two spent most of the day at school, and then I only saw them for 10 or 15 minutes here and there. I would then go smoke for 45 minutes at a time MINIMUM. Then there were the times my family was here to play games and we'd smoke for 4 hours or more.

Now, I am the mom I've always wanted to be. I am not perfect. I have a mountain of laundry threatening me (since it's taller than me) on my couch where I cannot sit. The floor has only been mopped maybe 4 times in these 71 days, and the bathroom has been cleaned about once a month. So, YES, my chores have been what I call relaxed! This is great coming

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from a neat freak! But it's hard to clean to perfection when you need that cig to prepare for it lol. That's a trigger for me. I have had to surrender my housekeeping for now. So I do take it easy on me, and have been training the kids to help out a little more instead of griping about their lack of help around here, doing it ALL myself, and carrying resentment. It's more of a family event, so it takes longer. I am working on the issue where I have been expecting perfection out of others and myself. There's just no need for it; when it's good enough I just need to accept it.

I now have 71 days in and I'm still hanging on. I'm learning now that I must live spiritually. And this is not a theory, as our promises tell us. If not for the grace of my HP, I would not be here Nicotine FREE and I'm humbly grateful to Him, whom I choose to call God, for the kindness of my hubby, for this program and each of the people here for doing for me what I could not do for myself.

Thank you all for being here.

Jeannie C

Gratefully Recovering Nicotine Addict

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*Geez, Why'd ya do it!!!!*

Hey Gang, not sure what I'm gonna write here but sure need to write so here goes. A great couple of days in recovery and sometimes conversation within myself as I reflect back some on these last 20 month. Had a great meeting yesterday mid-day and read an outstanding commentary on "The Mystery of the Present Moment" (may post that later) and today has been a wonderful Father's Day having talked to all my kids, grandkids and some family mem-

bers. The house seems a shambles getting ready for this trip so I did my 2 mi walk to DVD inside and then the weather wasn't bad so decided to listen to some tunes and walk the neighborhood some. Of course if you're listening to Stevie Ray Vaughn and Albert King you ain't walking slow and I had a good clip going. All of a sudden I started having a conversation with myself and probably forgot half of it by now but I'm gonna attempt to put it down - it'll stick with me longer. It may not be a coherent conversation but what the heck has been coherent about the last 20 months - especially the first year - here goes!

Other: Man you sure are walking a fast clip here - you sure them ankles gonna be alright - don't they hurt?

Paul: Of course they hurt but they hurt all the time and I feel good doing this!

Other: You mean you enjoy pain and sweating - what's the matter with you?

Paul: Well, I've learned in the last 1 ½ years that, if I keep moving, I can almost walk through the pain - still hurts but I'm not concentrating on it.

Other: Ya know, you seem a little short of breath - you OK?

Paul: that ain't nothin' - I was short of breath before I started walking like this - this is a good short of breath.

Other: Hey, didn't you used to smoke - seems to me you quit - didn't you used to like to smoke?

Paul: Like ain't even the word

for it - I loved to smoke - if I did it right now I'd probably still love it - did for over 40 yrs!

Other: Then why the heck did you give it up? All them health benefits and Promises and all that stuff they force feed ya? Why - why did ya do it!

Paul: Ya know, let me look at those Promises you're talking about and see if there was a reason there; I still had cravings, was on an emotional roller coaster for longer than I can remember. Physical improvement WAS not immediate and any improvements I have experienced I can't feel. Smell and taste was the same - still is! My self-esteem was even worse for awhile - man I just wanted to be the guy I knew before this quit - I can be pretty unpredictable right now. I still don't assert myself like I should - heck, sometimes I even have a problem talking! I haven't forgot was I was a nicotine user and I'm still an addict - seems like I gave up my whole life as I knew it! I think I'm grateful that I don't smoke. People keep asking me what made me quit - I DON'T KNOW - didn't know but did!

Other: Well it sure doesn't sound like you got much in return for quitting something you loved so much! You look like you're at the point of tears!!!

Paul: Dang, I just need to walk faster - push these ankles - man I sure hope I live longer than I woulda if I hadn't quit. BUT - wow - a 61 yr old pilot dies of a massive heart attack

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while piloting a plane and his wife says, "He was in perfect health!" Well, I hope I ain't that healthy! Wait, I'm not guaranteed tomorrow - heck I'm not even guaranteed the next keystroke - what am I gonna tell people I quit for??

Other: Looks like you got took man! You gotta go to all these meetings, admit your weaknesses, do this stuff they call service work and you don't even know WHY!! Now, to me THAT is the height of insanity and you think you are in RECOVERY - do you even know what that is?

Paul: Wait, wait - man, it's so simple I almost forgot (as a tear comes to my eye) - I'M FREEEEEEEE!!! That's all that matters - I'm NOT a slave anymore - my Higher Power through this group has done for me what I could not do for myself! Wait a minute "Other" I don't think that's your real name - wait - Nico - what - get outa here, but thanks for the talk - it made me remember just how grateful I need to be!

Thanks to ALL my friends here in Nicotine Anonymous!

Yfir

Paul E.

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Thick Headed or What?

. . .

I was a reluctant attendee at Nicotine Anonymous meetings. I had recently been hospitalized with a respiratory crisis and was required to attend weekly Nicotine Anonymous meetings while receiving outpatient pulmonary rehab. I faithfully went to the local hospital's Monday night meetings but they couldn't make me like it. I did not engage in sharing nor stay for conversation after the meetings. I had been a pack a day smoker for 43 years and had never even tried to stop. Nothing, not even my daughter withholding visits from my grandsons would prevent me from "lighting up". I was a defiant smoker. I had even watched my husband die from the terrible affects of nicotine some 11 years earlier. I felt that smoking had gotten me through my loss and would be with me always, unlike him and others.

After I had completed the rehab and the required attendance of meetings, I made my final exit as quickly as possible but a woman, who was to become my future sponsor, grabbed me before I could scoot out and confronted me. During that intervention, I found that the members of this group cared about me. I didn't even care about me, why them? Emotionally I broke down and was then able to identify and associate with some of the others in the group. I started making the group my social outlet. In introspection I had taken the first step. I began reading or rather devouring the reading materials. I had just received a fresh cool drink of water after surviving the drought of my life. I had been withdrawn for such a long time I didn't know what to expect.

I continued to smoke and attend meetings for another six months before I was prepared to take the second step. My mind had been storing up all the pertinent information that I would need when I was ready for the third step. In the miraculous manner that our higher power works "I" decided to visit my daughter out of state for one month while my condo was repainted, carpeted and my car was detailed. All in preparation for the "miracle". I took no cigarettes with me. The first few days were okay, because my entire environment had changed. No triggers to set me off. But on the fourth day my daughter asked me if I would like to drive my grandson to school. Without hesitation I agreed. I drove right past the little local grocery store, dropped the kid off and returned the same way this time stopping at the store. I went in and purchased a pack of my favorite cigs. Since no matches were available I had to buy a stinking lighter as well. Total cost for my first cigarette after four days \$5. Ah, bliss. I took three drags but knew I had to get back to my daughter's house because the school was just minutes away. That pack lasted me several days. I sneaked around smoking half a cigarette when I could until finally the day of 'reckoning' had come. I strolled back into the house after a quickie and she simply asked



what I had been doing outside, being January it was chilly. Then and there my higher power stared at me in the face of my first born. I confessed what I had been doing; she asked me to hand them over, I complied. The loss so great I could hardly contain myself. I asked her what she was going to do with the 3 or 4 cigarettes left in the pack. No response. I watched with bated breath as she left the room. A moment passed. It was then that I was given "the gift". I felt relief. The weight was gone I had no more secrets. Thank god.

It has been two years since I have been on this marvelous journey finding myself, finding friends and finding self worth. Nic A offered me a chance to have a full life. A life I had been afraid to live. I am now a person who is alive and proud to share my experience, strength and joy with others.

By Jill O

Baltimore, MD

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### *Samuel's Story . . .*

My name is Samuel and I am a nicotine addict. I am grateful to be smober today. I smoked for 16 years continuously and today I have a temporary reprieve based on the maintenance of my spiritual condition. In other words, I must participate in Nicotine Anonymous for as long as I want to stay smober.

I started smoking when I was 18, because I wanted to be one of the adults. My peers smoked, and I had grown up in a house full of smoke. I also began using chewing tobacco at an early age. I tried nicotine powder that I inhaled up my nose (*known as snuff - Ed.*) but that was rather unpleasant.

I knew smoking was terrible for my health, but I had told myself that I would stop using tobacco before it did me any real harm. I tried to stop smoking a few months later but found I could not stop. I was

hooked!

So began my journey to really trying to stop using nicotine. I tried the patches twice. I tried the gum once. I bought the lozenges but never opened the box after I found I couldn't drink any liquids while using them. I tried sucking on toothpicks, straws, pens, licorice sticks, pretzels, suckers and hard candy. I tried jumping up to exercise every time I had a craving. I tried eating on purpose the second I had a craving. I bought a book on self-hypnosis and managed to hypnotize myself, but I continued to smoke. Snapping a rubber band on my wrist every time I wanted to smoke didn't stop me either.

Once, I made it to 3 days without smoking, sobbing the entire time because I felt so sorry for myself. ON the fourth day, I smoked because I had to leave my apartment and stop crying. I also tried telling myself I didn't want to smoke and cigarettes really weren't that interesting to me.

At one point, I let myself run out of money and run out of tobacco. I left myself with no way to get any tobacco either. I made it for several hours, then I had to make an emergency phone call to a family member, to rush over to my place late at night to give me cigarette money. How humiliating!

Then I found the NicA phone bridge. I started chairing a meeting in the hopes that it would get me smober.

I was a three-pack-a-day smoker. Now I am a no-packs-a-day recovering nicotine addict. By the grace of God, and the love of my friends on the bridge, I have been smober for 7 months (*as of the date of writing - Ed.*) *Seven Minutes* is my middle-of-the-night meeting when I can't call someone on the phone. *Seven Minutes* is also my on-the-bus meeting. *Seven Minutes* is my meeting-at-any-time meeting!

Thank God for *Seven Minutes*, the phone bridge and all of NicA.

I am grateful

Samuel C

Omaha, NE

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LIFE ON LIFE'S TERMS . . .

My mother died two months ago. In some ways it was a relief. She'd been increasingly ill and frail for the past several years, and in her last year was hardly able speak.

I started my smoking career by stealing my mother's discarded butts from her ashtrays and sneaking into the bathroom to smoke. I'm not exactly sure how old I was at the time, but by the age of 16 I was already addicted, and lying to myself that I could "stop whenever I wanted to." My mother finally discovered I was smoking the following year when she caught me trying to switch my assigned seat on an airplane I was about to board to visit my relatives. Of course I denied it when she confronted me about my smoking. By that time, she'd already quit and was horrified that I'd taken it up. (Eventually, being the practical person she was, she offered to buy my cigarettes at the PX because they were so much cheaper.)

My father never smoked. He absolutely hated cigarettes and he hated the fact that I inhaled all these poisons every day, twenty or more times a day. I knew that it must have hurt them to see me smoke, but I was powerless over my smoking and always defensive whenever they asked me to consider quitting. I smoked for 15 years, hurting them and hurting myself. And then my Higher Power led me to the rooms of Nicotine Anonymous.

I'm so grateful that my parents were alive to see me put down nicotine. I know they were very proud of me for being involved in the fellowship and doing service. The concept of "Tikkun Olam" is one I was brought up with. It literally

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Service is the Key

Nicotine Anonymous World Services is in need of volunteers
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For further information about any of these service positions, please contact
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419 Main Street, PMB #370
Huntington Beach, CA 92648
Or e-mail *chairperson@nicotine-anonymous.org*

Nicotine Anonymous World Services

419 Main Street, PMB #370 Huntington Beach, CA 92648 USA

Shipping 714-538-4639 Email: info@nicotine-anonymous.org Internet: www.nicotine-anonymous.org

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If form is older than 6 months, write to us for an updated one or visit our website to download a new version. Rev. 11/01/08

NAWSO
Profit & Loss Prev Year Comparison
January through June 2009

	<u>Jan - Jun</u> <u>09</u>	<u>Jan - Jun</u> <u>08</u>	<u>\$ Change</u>	<u>%</u> <u>Change</u>
Ordinary Income/Expense				
Income				
4000 · Donations	4,013	3,076	937	30%
4100 · Literature Sales	26,132	18,681	7,452	40%
4290 · Shipping & Handling	3,037	2,455	583	24%
4299 · Conference Profit (Loss)	858	3,868	-3,010	-78%
Total Income	<u>34,041</u>	<u>28,079</u>	<u>5,961</u>	<u>21%</u>
Cost of Goods Sold				
5000 · COGS	12,660	11,412	1,248	11%
Total COGS	<u>12,660</u>	<u>11,412</u>	<u>1,248</u>	<u>11%</u>
Gross Profit	21,380	16,667	4,713	28%
Gross Profit % to Income	63%	59%		
Expense				
6030 · Merchant Account Fees	1,320	591	730	124%
6000 · Office Expenses	11,398	12,117	-719	-6%
6600 · WSO Expenses	6,596	6,089	507	8%
Total Expense	<u>19,314</u>	<u>18,797</u>	<u>518</u>	<u>3%</u>
Net Ordinary Income	2,066	-2,129	4,195	197%
Other Income/Expense				
Other Income				
8000 · Interest Income	5	872	-866	-99%
Total Other Income	<u>5</u>	<u>872</u>	<u>-866</u>	<u>-99%</u>
Other Expense				
8030 · Interest Expense	0	12	-12	-100%
Total Other Expense	<u>0</u>	<u>12</u>	<u>-12</u>	<u>-100%</u>
Net Other Income	<u>5</u>	<u>860</u>	<u>-854</u>	<u>-99%</u>
Net Income	<u>2071</u>	<u>-1269</u>	<u>3341</u>	<u>263%</u>

(Continued from page 7)

means "repairing the world" and the idea is that we should leave the world in better shape than we found it. I know they were proud of me for helping the still suffering nicotine addict as my contribution to repairing the world.

I can honestly say that the farthest thing from my mind when I received each of the calls telling me my parents had died was a cigarette. When I was active in my addiction that would have been the first thought, and the first thing I reached for. I have immense gratitude that I could be fully present to feel my feelings and to mourn their passing, not to injure myself as my way of coping.

Tomorrow my sisters and I begin the overwhelming task of dismantling their home of 60 years. I am not looking forward to it, but I know it's what I have to do. I take life on life's terms now, the good with the bad, the comfortable with the uncomfortable and the pleasant with the unpleasant, without drug-ging myself as a means to get through it. Thank you God and Nicotine Anonymous for giving me a life I can be proud of and for helping me to live that life in time for my parents to feel proud of me, too.

Martha K.
East Quogue, NY

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### *What friends are for . .*

*(The exchange below is typical of such exchanges on the boards of Voices of Nicotine Recovery, an online NicA group. It is published with the approval of the two persons concerned - Ed.)*

Hi Beth,

My name is Paul and I am a RECOVERING nicotine addict!!!! Yes, RECOVERING - I emphasize that word because that's what you are experiencing - and what I am experiencing - living with these damn emotions - who asked for them??

This is life - this is the life that I avoided living every time I lit up! Many in these room will tell you how I shared that I didn't like myself anymore - that I wanted to be the way I was - I was angry - I was angry for months and months and people in these rooms promised me that it would get better, that there **WOULD** be light at the end of the tunnel. I believed them - why would I believe them? - because I didn't really want to smoke - it had been months - I didn't want to have to go through it all **AGAIN!** What I live today is "Life after the quit" - there are a lot of positives to it and there is still a lot of "uncomfortable" to it - learning things I should have learned decades ago - instead I smoked for 42 yrs!!!!!!! Am I supposed to be cured in 20 months??? I don't think so and that's why I keep coming to these meetings. I have made many friends here and support is just a keystroke, email or phone call away! I'm so glad that you decided to vent and vent while in a meeting - there are so many tools in this program to help us. I'm glad you found us and hang in there and I can almost promise you that as time progresses you will have many more good days than what we might call "bad day". I don't even look at them as bad days though because that's when I'm learning more about living life - life after the quit.

Yfir (*Your Friend In Recovery* - an online NicA salutation - Ed.)

Paul

~~~~~

Hi,

My name is Beth and I am a recovering nicotine addict who has been free of smoking for nearly 5 weeks. Today was the worst day, emotionally. During my quit I have come to realize how I used cigarettes as a means to avoid my emotions, all emotions. However, today I realize that nicotine was really my best friend when I am sad, mad, etc. These are my emotions right

now and I feel like I am running into a brick wall not having, or wanting, a cigarette. I'm kind of freaking out because I don't know how to deal with my emotions right now. I'm not going to smoke and I will not . . . I'm listening to the 6pm meeting right now - something very calming in hearing the voices of my friends.

My friends . . . I am so crying right now - maybe I am making myself a victim, but I don't know what to do. Nicotine was my one and only friend in moments like these. I have your voices, but . . . There is no one else I can call, feel comfortable to call. Perhaps I will just keep typing, but it may be more painful and create anxiety knowing all of you will read it. I am consumed with panic and shame right now . . . smoking would make it so much worse - Thank you so much for preparing me for moments like this - **NOT SMOKING IS THE ONE GOOD THING I HAVE RIGHT NOW** to be proud of and keep me sane in order to work through this emotional tornado. Smoking eased these emotions - numbed me emotionally - made me "strong" and kept my thoughts thinking "no problem. Wow . . . perhaps times like this is why there are such things as sponsors . . . perhaps I should look into that. I'm really feeling alone and worried, vulnerable and intensely disappointed. I am full of despair. I have never drunk (never cared for it) but I do have a bottle of alcohol that is a few years old and I have thought of taking a drink but I don't want to start using it as a crutch. This is my first experience of living life without a crutch. Why do I need a crutch anyway - to induce pain to make my current pain feel less, to hurt someone else even though they will not even know I am trying. Crutches are pointless and only damning to the self. I'm really having a shock of seeing myself who I really am or as others have reason to see me - very different than how I view myself. There are many co-dependent issues right now that I

(Continued on page 12)

am happy to recognize – keeping me sane and helping me be calm. I am so ashamed and I don't have nicotine to make it go away for me but not for others. This ignorance (the smokescreen) is part of my shame – the avoidance helped me be where I am today – perhaps I am being too difficult and judgmental with myself (I do have that tendency) I'm just "I don't know". I'm just so blessed to have a clean body, mind, and heart; and I know I am so fortunate to know all of you and have your experience, strength & hope to lean upon this evening.

Beth

~ ~ ~

Letter to the Nicademon . . .

Dear "Nicademon",
You have caused me much grief and aggravation each time I've given into your demands to smoke.

Because of you I've experienced difficulty breathing and many bouts of Bronchitis. I'm locking you away and throwing away the key which means that you will not be able to torture me today.

You pretended to be a friend, but a friend doesn't lead someone to their early death. You were not a friend, you are a parasite sucking the life out of those who let you out of your cell. I'm sentencing you to a life with no possibility of parole.

Linda Q.,
Philadelphia, PA

~ ~ ~

My Friend Patsy A.

A grateful recovering Nicotine Addict from Southern California Intergroup –
What a bright soul!

It is with great sadness that I write about the passing of Patsy A of Southern California Intergroup. I first met Patsy A. when I moved from New York to Southern California. We met at a Southern California Intergroup of Nic A Thanksgiving event. When I showed up for another Intergroup event months

later, Patsy remembered me. I can just hear her cooing, "Hi Sugar!" What a bright soul she was! She was such a sweet presence in my life. I have been serving as Intergroup Rep for my Sherman Oaks group for the last year and a half, and although I have difficulty getting time off work to attend the meetings, every time I was able to make a meeting, Patsy's face has lit up and I felt immediately at home.

I know Patsy loved this fellowship. She served as the Intergroup chair for more than one term. She did so much for the fellowship: serving on the Intergroup level, chairing the Intergroup, and stuffing envelopes to get the word out to the still suffering nicotine addict. And, as many of our dedicated, awesome Southern California Intergroup Representatives have done, out of necessity, Patsy often took on more than one position at a time.

I miss Patsy. It is hard for me to imagine Intergroup without her. I did not want her to go. And, because of my recovery, I know that I cannot control that. I also know that Patsy's presence and service will somehow always be a part of Intergroup. Therefore, her presence will also be a part of Nicotine Anonymous as a whole.

Patsy was a very special person- I hope she experienced the love she shared with me and others she served in the fellowship. I have indeed felt a very special connection to her. Perhaps I have seen Patsy as a sort of surrogate auntie or grandma.

This is not the first time I have watched a beloved member of our fellowship make their transition. Is this a sign that I've been in my recovery for a while? Maybe. Feeling the sadness about a recovery friend dying is one of the profound prices I pay for freedom from nicotine. I get to feel the feelings, including love and sadness. Ironically, the same freedom from nicotine that allows me to feel the pain is also the freedom allows me to feel love. I wouldn't trade it for anything! Similar to the bind I share with other

nicotine addicts, Patsy and I shared a special bond that will always be there.

As I am grateful for *all* nicotine addicts I have met in the fellowship: You help me grow. And, I am grateful for Patsy. I am glad she found this fellowship, was freed from nicotine, and had such a positive influence in me. We do this together! Thank you, Patsy!

In gratitude,

Judi D

Sherman Oaks, CA

~ ~ ~

The Roving Reporter . . .

Question: What is your favorite thing so far about Conference XXIV in Akron, OH?

Lenna, Houston, TX: For me it's seeing the love in everybody's eyes. It's good to be back with my family again. I love the dedication I hear in people's stories about what they're doing. These members have an incredible level of dedication to their program and helping other people to live. I keep hearing people say they are "saving lives." Lenna added, "Each and every one of the Conferences has its own special gifts."

Chris H., Phoenix: It's great to be with "my peeps" in recovery.

John L., Downingtown, PA: I'm enjoying meeting people face to face. I was very impressed with how prepared and well organized our Conference was. Really, really first class, as shown by the greeters, the hospitality suite, the skit . . . everything. They were prepared for us. The location they selected was good. Tell people to be sure to come to the next conference, in Phoenix. Members can get better educated about how their program works. It's good to see how dedicated the people in the program are.

Tom S., Youngstown, OH: I want to send a special hello to Catherine C. from California. I met her at the Conference in Novato, CA. She was the first person I met as I walked in the door. She had such a

great smile and a nice hug and it made me feel very welcome." [Editor's note: You folks from Ohio did the same for us.]

Bob N., Chicago: I appreciate that the conference is extremely well organized. Everything really ran smoothly. All the workshop rooms were appropriate to what we were doing. Hotel amenities and staff were very nice. The decorations, posters and all that were really beautiful. It really enhances the purpose of why we are getting together. Of course there is a wealth of things to draw on in this area of Ohio.

After our Sunday brunch, the Serenity Singers serenaded us. When they sang "All that Jazz" from the musical *Chicago*, Ed T. from San Francisco recalled "All That Jazz was the theme from the New Orleans Conference in '92." We all felt touched as they sang "Amazing Grace."

In one word, this reporter would say that this Conference was "inspired." I know I left with a renewed commitment to living my program better than ever before.

Compiled by Annette A

~~~~

### "Ramblings #3"

(From a series of poems posted to the board of Voices of Nicotine Recovery, an online NicA group—Ed.)

Got the grateful gratuses and the grateful gratitunes. Singin' a song of praise for my HP. Oh what he's done for me! The past is the past and I ain't cryin' no more over spilt drink. Ain't cryin' no more over what I can't change and never could. And the future don't look too bad to me. Got one day at a time and my seren-i-tee. Those demons in the closet don't exist. Just figments of my imagination from the distant past.

Ain't fearin' relapse neither. Thanks to all your posts I got fever. Fever to be free of the Nicademon. Fever to be healthy and not be

leavin'.

God bless this day and every one of you. If it weren't for VONR I'd be in a stew. A big pot of self pity and cigarettes would have been my lot. And now I got love and help and smobriety so thanks a lot.

Jan

~~~~

Free and healing . . .

Good Morning

Today is day 1yr 4 months 3 weeks + for me free of nicotine! Wow, it is amazing! I never imagined I would ever get that much time away from the nasty little sickerettes. But, look, here I am! I often look at my past life and think, "how did I do that?"

I love to smoke.

Well, I love life more. I love that my grandkids will not learn by my example, to suck on those nasty cancer sticks. I love not having to worry, "how much is this pack going to cost me?". I love knowing that I will not wake up hacking like an invalid every morning.

I love that I wake up, because. had I not come here, I might not be waking up. I may have been dust in the wind. I want to remember that life is precious and short, that no one has the promise of tomorrow. I enjoy knowing just for today that I am free and clean. (I am on day 3 in another program by the way). I know in my heart that there is a place where folks know what I am feeling, that they understand how it is to want so badly to give up a life-long "friend" who has been there through thick and thin. An emotional crutch, an escape from someone I really didn't care to deal with, a way to not deal with life when it was rotten and a "nasty little habit".

Well, those things are gone; I am free of the guilt, the knowledge deep inside that I don't care if I live or die. I know for me, deep inside I

have this need to escape the past. There are many times that death would have been a welcome friend in light of the nightmares and memories that chase me. I often feel I am running to no avail. Then I stop and remember the fellowship and realize I am not really alone. There are those who know my pain, know my circle, understand how it is.

With this, I kick me in the butt and try to work my way out of my pity party. Now, I don't know about others, but I do pity parties well! I can wallow in my own self-doubt and misery better than a pig wallowing in slop.

This program lets me turn these negative emotions and worries over to a higher power. A power unequal to any other in my life. A power that says I can handle it, I will worry, I will fret over your mistakes, I will feel your pain, I will be here if you only seek and ask me. What an awesome thing that is! I am grateful to those who have gone before, for their experience gives me hope and guidance. I am grateful to those behind me; they give me reminders of where I come from and an opportunity to be of service. In serving others, we serve ourselves; we need to give of ourselves to gain. So thanks VONR (an online NicA group – Ed.) just for being here. Thanks to everyone for your service from the newcomer to the old timer; we all have our service in the fellowship. I think most of the folks that have been here would agree that, as a newcomer, you are being of service; your service is your struggle, and the reward those of us with time is the vision of freedom, new and fresh. You keep us humble and willing. You give a special aura to the fellowship.

I am just seeing the underlying beauty of this and am very grateful to all here.

Love and Hugs

YFIR (Your Friend In Recovery – an online NicA salutation – Ed.)

Cindy B.

NICA AROUND THE WORLD

UK Meetings

Write to:
Nicotine Anonymous
PO Box 1516
LONDON
SW1H 9WT
Tel: 020 7976 0076 (please leave a message)
Web: www.nicotine-anonymous.co.uk

United Kingdom meetings...

This message was posted on the online message board about meetings in the United Kingdom. To check out the NicA UK homepage go to this link.

<http://www.nicotine-anonymous.co.uk/>

If you want to start a meeting in UK, call 020 7976 0076 for a starter pack.

Service is the Key...

Only you can tell your story.

What was your life like as an active addict? What happened to get you in the door? What were your breakthroughs?

Personal stories, articles, poems, art, jokes or adds pertaining to nicotine, nicotine recovery and Nicotine Anonymous can be sent to

SevenMinutesEditor@nicotine-anonymous.org or by snail mail to

Seven Minutes c/o NAWSO
419 Main St., PMB #370
Huntington Beach, CA 92648

NICOTINE ANONYMOUS

Nicotine Anonymous Offers Help to All Nicotine Addicts; Support Available to Those Who Wish to Stop Smoking 365 Days a Year

Nicotine Anonymous is a non-profit, 12-step fellowship of men and women helping each other to live nicotine-free lives. Nicotine Anonymous welcomes all those seeking freedom from nicotine addiction, including those using cessation programs and nicotine withdrawal aids. The primary purpose of Nicotine Anonymous is to help all those who would like to cease using tobacco and nicotine products. The fellowship offers group support and recovery using the 12-Steps adapted from Alcoholics Anonymous.

For the millions of people who will try to quit smoking this year, Nicotine Anonymous offers ongoing support to all those who desire it for an unlimited time. Their sole focus is helping the still suffering nicotine addict 365 days a year. There are no dues or fees for Nicotine Anonymous membership as the organization is self-supporting through member contributions. The only requirement for membership is a desire to stop using nicotine.

Founded in 1983, Nicotine Anonymous has over 600 meetings throughout the United States and 35 other countries. A full list of meetings and other information is available on the Internet at <http://www.nicotine-anonymous.org>. Or write: Nicotine Anonymous, 419 Main St., PMB #370, Huntington Beach, CA 92648. Or email: info@nicotine-anonymous.org

Their toll free phone number is 877-879-6422. Books, pamphlets and other literature can be ordered at a nominal cost.

BIRTHDAY CONGRATULATIONS!

Kris T 5-22-07

Birthday Announcements

N A M E _____

The above-named member of Nicotine Anonymous stopped using nicotine
on _____ and has _____ years of freedom!

Mail to: Nicotine Anonymous World Services
419 Main St., PMB#370
Huntington Beach, Ca. 92648 USA.

OR

Email to: sevenminuteditor@nicotine-anonymous.org

Give Back!

You Can't Keep it Unless You Give It Away

Nicotine Anonymous World Services is seeking servants for a variety of positions within the fellowship. Please see the contact information below if you would like to learn more about these service opportunities. Please share this flyer with your group. Remember, you have to give it away to keep it.

E-Mail Volunteers-Share your experience, strength and hope with people around the world who email us. Help them find meetings and answer questions about NicA.

Provide about thirty minutes a week from your home or office computer.
Telephone Servants-Respond to telephone calls from people taking their first step on the journey. One day of service per week from the comfort of your own home.
Email/Penpal Coordinator-Responsible for receiving email requests for pen pals; adding names to the email pen pal list; and sending out the list.

For further information about any of these service positions, please
contact: E-mail~: info@nicotine-anonymous.org

Write: Nicotine Anonymous World Services
419 Main Street, PMB#370
Huntington Beach, CA 92648

Seven Minutes

NAWSO

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

Publication dates and Deadlines for Submissions For 2009

Publication date	Deadline Date for Submissions
March 20	February 1
June 20	May 1
September 20	August 1
December 20	November 1

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