

Newsletter of the Nar-Anon Family Groups'

2020 World Service Conference is Coming

Let your voice be heard!!

- *Did you receive your copy of the WSC 2020 Conference Agenda Report (CAR)?*

The CAR is distributed 150 days prior to the opening day of the conference. It contains the motions to be considered by the fellowship at the WSC plus operating procedures for the conference. It is distributed to delegates and alternate delegates, region chairs, the Board of Trustees, and World Service Committee Chairs. (See [Guide to World Services](#), pages 10-18.)

- *Do you know where to find it if you did not receive a copy from the World Service Conference Committee?*

Not part of the distribution list above? Contact the WSC Committee at wscconference@nar-anon.org. Check the [World Service Conferences](#) web page after Dec. 3 to download a copy of the WSC 2020 CAR.

- *Do you know where to receive the literature that is part of the WSC 2020 motions?*

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Growth Through Service

May 1-4, 2020

Literature for consideration at the 2020 Conference can be obtained by emailing wscconference@nar-anon.org

- *How is the CAR reviewed/discussed?*

Nar-Anon Family Groups around the world meet to review and discuss the CAR. The group's vote is then given to the delegate who will compile the votes for their region and vote the region's conscience at the conference.

Everyone has a voice and a vote regarding the CAR at the group level. Let your voice be heard!

Upcoming Deadlines

Dec. 3, 2019	Conference Agenda Report (CAR) available/distributed to regions
Dec. 31, 2019	Deadline to inform WSC Committee of region's intention to participate
	Deadline for BOT members and WS committee chairs to confirm attendance
Feb. 1, 2020	Conference Approval Track (CAT) material available/distributed to regions
Mar. 2, 2020	Deadline for WS Committee reports, regional reports, regional assembly minutes showing election/endorsement of delegate/alternate
Apr. 1, 2020	WSC Agenda distributed to attendees

THE SERENITY CONNECTION





Our
Members
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Dumpster Diving

There was a time before my Nar-Anon recovery when I took great pride in my abilities as an amateur detective, a real sleuth. I was dedicated to finding what I was looking for; essentially, proof that I was right and the addicted loved one of the moment was wrong!!! Have you ever heard the inventory-provoking question, “Do I want to be right, or do I want to be happy?” It took a while for that question to make sense, I must admit. But more than that, it took a lot of pain, a choice, and Nar-Anon’s Twelve Steps to reveal my self-sabotaging behavior.

Now, moving forward after several 4th steps and some “aha” moments, I have identified my previously-valued talented activities (amateur detective, sleuth extraordinaire) as “dumpster diving.” Let your imagination run with that for a second. What would you expect to find in a dumpster? Nothing good. Even the dive itself, before the find, is filled with TRASH = Terror, Resentment, Anger, Sadness, and, to encapsulate the whole experience, Hell!

Just for the record, I have never gone dumpster diving and found anything pleasant, or anything that gave me relief. However, I did locate “stuff,” none of which was comforting for sure! I have found drug dealer’s contacts, addresses where to meet for the next “hook up” or “fix,” and many

forms of betrayal. As much as I thought dumpster diving would warn me and allow me to get in front of a potential crisis, it never did. I was always, always too late. It had already occurred and most of the time telling evidence that I could use to oust them with the almighty PROOF had already expired. So, my “being right” held little satisfaction, especially in comparison to the TRASH I now had gathered. I was covered in TRASH!!

TRASH =
Terror, Resentment,
Anger, Sadness, and
Hell!

What is dumpster diving, you may be wondering? Well, it’s my very eloquent description of searching my addicted loved one’s possessions such as cell phones, social media, wallets, pockets, car, shoes, tool boxes, ceiling tiles, closets, anywhere and anything I thought would reveal the actual proof of his using, going to use, or past use of drugs. I searched for validation of my sanity, a tangible confirmation of my suspicions. Sometimes I found the damning evidence, sometimes I didn’t, but every time I found TRASH. After some time in Nar-Anon, some step work, lots of meetings and phone calls, I finally was persuaded that

dumpster diving was not productive at all. It did not forewarn me, it validated mistrust, and it encouraged a victim mentality, all which did nothing to restore my sanity, self-confidence, or self-esteem.

Finally, my step work and Nar-Anon study awakened in me the finest of all finds! I am the star of my show and I must redirect my search for MY needs and desires that are buried within my own being. I must shed the mistaken sense of responsibility to another human being, and the mistaken belief that only there will I find my happiness.

The confidence, hope, and sanity I’ve been looking for has always been within my reach. I just had to remove a bunch of accumulated distortion to allow it all to surface and it truly has! In my search, I’ve found that I am actually a spectacular human being. I found my strength, my courage, my kindness, my laughter, and lots of love, confidence, and hope.

My search will never end and more will be revealed as time passes and I heal. I will always be searching for my rights and responsibilities in life. Thank you, Higher Power, for redirecting my search and letting me know that what I search for will never be found through Dumpster Diving.

Newsletter eSubscriptions

Click here for your **FREE** e-subscription to [The Serenity Connection](#). Subscriptions to date: **>5000!**

Our
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Hope for the Holidays

Holidays may be an especially emotional time when there is a struggle with the disease of addiction, or when changes in recovery are taking place. Holiday traditions and addiction can create a lot of angst. Holiday traditions and expectations often go together. Unmet expectations can be painful and hurtful. Recovery in Nar-Anon has taught me that sometimes a different pathway through the season can bring relief and provide everyone room to breathe.

Here are a few of the things I do to take care of myself during the holidays:

- Keep celebrations and decorations simple. Focus on what is especially meaningful to me and encourage others to do the same.
- Focus on the message of the holiday, not the things that require a “to do” list.
- Take time to be quiet and release my loved one into the care of a higher power. Know that their Higher Power is with them as my Higher Power is always with me.
- Plan ahead and step away from a group situation if I am feeling emotional or stressed.
- Accept that I may have made plans but once others are involved, I am powerless over the way the circumstances unfold.
- Give myself permission and a way to leave an event if it becomes unsafe or hurtful.
- Take a special reading or quote with me in my pocket if I need a booster shot of recovery.
- Carry a message of recovery knowing that I don’t need to share it out loud with people who are not seeking recovery or help.
- Take care of myself emotionally, spiritually, and physically. Use a slogan, or call or text a recovery friend when I feel stirred up inside.
- Be in the moment, not in the past or in an unknown future. Enjoy the positive; let go of things I am powerless over.



A Celebration of Hope

Holidays are often the celebration of stories of hope, hardships, and struggles that over time worked out for the best. That is life. Let holidays also be transformed by recovery. Miracles, gratitude, timing, and serendipity are all there and a reason to grow hope in my own life. Let the holidays be occasions to focus on hope and celebrate the stories of hope that have unfolded through our recovery. There is such hope in hearing other people’s experiences.

Consider writing down the start of your own story of hope, a story that is still unfolding. Personally, I need to remember the times when I had no control and how they impacted my story and gave me hope. My story is still evolving. My hope is growing and I am learning to trust that my Higher Power’s will for me is enough. I can practice one day at a time.

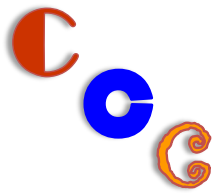
Outreach Committee



Holiday Outreach

The holiday season and ringing in the new year are joyous occasions for most. In our fellowship however, the season sometimes brings challenges - family members missing from celebrations, family dynamics out of kilter due to addiction. Outreach within your area can be a valuable tool for reaching families and individuals in need of Nar-Anon and the support it offers.

Consider stepping up outreach efforts during December. Places of worship and professionals dealing with family members are great places to start. Visit the Outreach landing page at <https://www.nar-anon.org/outreach> for cover letters, download-able literature, and suggestions to guide your outreach work. Questions about this initiative or other outreach-related concerns can be emailed to outreach@nar-anon.org.



The Three C's

"I didn't cause it. I can't control it. I can't cure it."

When I joined Nar-Anon, I came with a lot of guilt. The three C's helped me. I learned I had not caused my friends and relatives to become addicts. I learned I was wasting my time trying to control their behaviors. I learned that my vision of a wonderful future was an illusion because I was not capable of curing their disease.

Newcomers and old timers get relief from this simple slogan. Our choice of words shapes our view of the world. By choosing the right words, we help repair our past, bring joy to our present, and set our future on a hopeful path. Not all slogans, however, have such power.

For example, I contrast the three C's with the three U's. You may not have

heard of the three U's. I cannot find them in our literature but I hear it in some of our meetings. It goes like this: "Your using caused my enabling. Your using controls my life. Your recovery is the only way I can be cured."

It took time in Nar-Anon for me to get over the guilt that the three C's helped relieve. It took even longer for me to get over the blame and anger I then projected onto my addicted friends and relatives. Eventually, my guilt, blame, and anger turned into joy. I am grateful there was a crisis in my life which led me to Nar-Anon.

Today, when someone asks who "qualifies" me for Nar-Anon, I simply say, "I am in Nar-Anon because I need Nar-Anon."

Unity

Growing up, I was a typical, not-bothered-by-much boy who could handle "stuff." Playing sports, I heard, "deal with it – now go out and play." Showing emotion or needing someone's help? Nope. Boys don't do that. Later, men definitely do not do that!

Then my life became crazy. Out of control crazy. Addiction struck someone I loved deeply. I was hurting and alone.

Enter Nar-Anon. In Nar-Anon, I learned the power of unity. After many meetings, although still deep in the middle of being crazy and acting

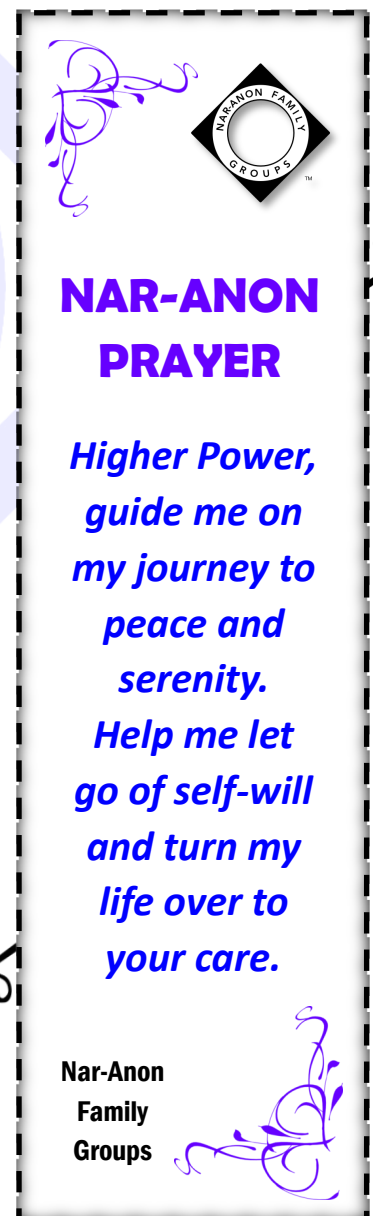
worse, I began to sense that I was NOT alone. My wife was right beside me. I just had to learn how to let her inside. Okay, a big "just"!

I gradually began telling my wife what I was really feeling. I may even have shed a tear (not a lot – that behavior is very deep!). I learned that it is easier to stand when there is someone right next to me. Unity.

We began talking about our lives, our feelings, our frustrations. I surprised her! It began to work; our unity grew stronger. Don't get me wrong, I was not an open and sharing person, but I

Nar-Anon Prayer Bookmark!

Just print on card stock or heavy paper and cut out!



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Our
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Share

PRINCIPLES

PERSONALITIES

Thoughts on Tradition Twelve

“Anonymity is the spiritual foundation of all our traditions, ever reminding us to place principles above personalities.”

- I attended a workshop on the motions for the next World Service Conference. One member suggested we could work through the motions a lot faster if we simply voted in favor of the ones from one source and voted against the ones from another source. Tradition Twelve reminds us to focus on principles rather than personalities.
- I was in a meeting one night when a visitor from out of town joined. Once she was recognized, the tone of the meeting changed. No one wanted to say or do anything that might not pass inspection. We allowed the service position held by this person to influence our sharing. After the meeting we talked and she reminded us that she goes to meetings to find recovery. She is not there to inspect or judge.
- Have you ever noticed the signs on public buildings? Plaques commonly list the names of the officials in office at the time the building was built. University, hospital, and religious buildings are named after wealthy donors. Using names violates our traditions of anonymity. Nar-Anon literature is published by Nar-Anon. We do not list the authors. Dozens of members may contribute to a booklet. Dozens more will edit, review, and revise that booklet. Then it is published, listing only the name and contact information for Nar-Anon. Members serve out of gratitude for all that Nar-Anon has given them. We do not serve in anticipation of recognition or honor, although an occasional “thank you” is always appreciated!
- I often give newcomers my phone number. I also suggest they get phone numbers from other members. I do not want them to think I am the person with all the answers. I hope they connect with the group. I hope they learn that when one of us is unavailable, someone else might be instead.
- One new member struggled with aspects of our program. When members shared about powerlessness, the disease of addiction, or faith in a Higher Power, she objected and wanted to correct them. We would typically respond to her crosstalk by saying “keep coming back.” A few times I talked with her after the meeting and explained that every one of us is entitled to work this program in our own way. We can disagree without saying the other person is wrong.
- A member said some things that hurt. I had resentments to work through. I released those resentments and looked at myself. I remembered how angry and bitter I was when I first got into Nar-Anon. Later this member offered to do service work and I spent time working with her. She had changed. She had worked with her sponsor and was slowly transitioning from anger to serenity. If I had held a grudge, I would have lost the opportunity to meet the real person that had been hiding inside.
- I visited a meeting one night and there were only a few of us there. The meeting leader went off topic and began complaining about the small turnout. She blamed the small size of this group on another member who had a different group, some distance away, on a different night. Most of the remainder of this meeting was focused on complaining about the poor treatment in recovery centers, the poor judges we elected, and the conflict between groups. I thought about all the times I had wrongly blamed the addict for choices I made. I go to meetings to focus on what I can do to change my life. When I focus on the flaws in someone else’s program, I take the focus off my own recovery. Resentments and antagonism can lead me off the path to serenity. The Nar-Anon principles changed my life. I find recovery in meetings that focus on our principles and avoid blaming. My recovery is strengthened when I focus on the solution rather than reliving the problem.



Our
Members
Share

A Family Vacation

My daughter, spouse, and I went on a vacation. Going on vacation was something I was not prepared to do even a month ago. Why? Because I could not bear the thought of going away without my son. These are some of the thoughts that swirled through my head:

- What kind of mother goes on vacation with her family and excludes her son?
- He is not using; why can't he come?
- How will I tell him?

I was full of guilt. With all my attention focused on my son, I had forgotten that my daughter and my spouse are right here. And they have been all along.

Thanks to Nar-Anon, my weekly attendance at meetings, and doing my own step work with my sponsor, I am learning. I am learning how to live a life filled with serenity. I am learning to let go of what is not mine to carry. I am learning to trust in my Higher Power. I am learning how to detach with love. I am learning acceptance. I am learning to be present. I am learning about myself. I am learning progress over perfection.

One day a couple of weeks ago, my daughter and I went to a travel agency and booked a five day trip to Vegas. Why Vegas? I needed somewhere easy, a no brainer. This trip was not about culture; it was just to get away. We slept in everyday and walked till the wee hours every morning. Vegas

is a crazy place full of materialistic consumerism at it's best. Lights, music, hotels, and people watching at its finest. Five days was the right amount of time. We were ready to come home.

Before we had left, I was having a really hard time accepting that my son could not come, especially since he is



clean. My wise daughter said, "We don't even hang out together, how can we go on a trip together." She was right. She also said I had to tell him we were going away. I was internally dreading this.

One day the right opportunity miraculously appeared. I texted my son, "I would love to see you." His response was, "I've been busy. Maybe later in

the week or something." I replied, "Okay. We will be away August 5th to 9th." And that was it.

I spend a lot of time worrying about his feelings and thoughts. But are they really his? Here is what I know for sure:

- My son is living at his best friend's family home. They are good people who care about him.
- My son is continuing with his high school.
- My son is working.
- My son has a support system, which includes a social worker and a counsellor.
- My son has a youth agreement.
- My son is clean.

I am proud of my son and all the positive things he is accomplishing in his life. What do I need to do to help in this process? Get out of the way and detach. I am happy to be home. I have so much in my life to be grateful for. Today I am grateful to be here at my Nar-Anon meeting because it keeps me grounded and helps me combat my stinkin' thinkin'.

Newsletter Submissions

Articles are welcomed from all Nar-Anon members. Please focus on the Nar-Anon program and share your experience, strength, and hope from the perspective of a Nar-Anon member. Submit articles to newsletters@nar-anon.org. Each submission must be accompanied by a signed [Copyright Release Form](#) before it can be published.

**** Next Issue Submission Deadline:
January 20, 2020 ****

World Service Committee Corner



Literature Committee Tradition Eight



The Recovery Literature Priority List includes The Twelve Traditions for the Nar-Anon 36. The World Service Literature Committee is asking for text and personal shares on your experiences with Tradition Eight: *“Nar-Anon Twelfth Step work should remain forever non-professional, but our service centers may employ special workers.”*

Here are some thoughts to consider when writing on this tradition. Using the questions below, please describe your personal experiences applying Tradition Eight as a member, in a group, in service, or in relationships.

- Our fellowship doesn't need professionals to carry our message. Why not?
- What is it we have to offer in our rooms that a professional can't provide?
- What are “special workers”?
- What are some tasks that would require employing special workers?
- How does anonymity fit into this tradition?

What questions would you suggest when discussing Tradition Eight? Send your original recovery writings along with a signed Copyright Release Form found at www.nar-anon.org/literature-submissions to Litcom@nar-anon.org. Please share our request with your groups, areas, and regions. We look forward to receiving your submissions.

Narateen Committee



Greetings from the Narateen Committee!

The committee is happy to report that we have completed a draft of the *WS Narateen Handbook*. We designed it to be a one stop shop where pertinent information can be found to assist a region to develop a Narateen program from the ground up. It will be submitted using the service document

process in [The Nar-Anon Family Groups' Guide to World Services](#) and hopefully be out for fellowship review and comment at some point during this process. Once approved, it will supersede the [Narateen Safety Policy and Guidelines \(S-332\)](#). The committee has submitted four motions for WSC 2020.

The 2018 World Service Conference approved revisions to the Narateen Safety Guidelines which included changing its name to Narateen Safety Policy and Guidelines. Conference also approved addition of a new Narateen Section (pp. 7-1 through 7-6) in [The Nar-Anon Family Groups' Guide to Local Services](#). These documents taken together provide requirements for developing regional guidelines and a certification process for Nar-Anon members who wish to participate in service to Narateen. Please review these documents and incorporate the latest changes.

Please pass the word - We are looking for experienced Narateen facilitators, Narateen service members, or anyone who may be interested in Narateen. We are also eager to expand participation on our committee to include more international members.

Please contact us at Narateen@nar-anon.org if you have any questions and for any help you may need in creating or revising your local guidelines.

Website Committee



The WS Website Committee plans to host a quarterly phone call for Nar-Anon members who want to discuss the administration of Nar-Anon websites. We plan the first call on Sat. Apr. 4, 2020 at 9:00 am EST (6:00 am PST). Thereafter, we propose to host a phone call on the first Saturday of each quarter (July, October, January, and April). Sessions will be limited to 60 minutes.

If you are involved with a Nar-Anon website or want to be, and you want to join this phone call, please send an email to WebCommittee@Nar-Anon.org with your name, email address, and the URL(s) for the Nar-Anon website(s) you work with.

Coming Events

Click on event titles for details or go to the [Events page](#) on the WSO website.

[Nar-Anon Convention of the Central California Region](#)

2020 Vision for Serenity

January 17-18, 2020

Monterey Conference Center
One Portola Plaza
Monterey CA 93940
Mary marmarodo@gmail.com

[2020 Nar-Anon South Texas Area Convention](#)

January 17-18, 2020

Omni Hotel at the Colonnade
9821 Colonnade Boulevard
San Antonio, TX 78230

[2020 Nar-Anon South Texas Regional Convention](#)

January 31 & February 1, 2020

Same location as above

[ECC7 Nar-Anon East Coast Convention 7](#)

On the Road to Recovery

March 20-22, 2020

Wyndam Philadelphia—Bucks County
4700 Street Road
Feasterville, PA 19053
ecc7register@gmail.com

[Nar-Anon World Service Conference 2020](#)

Growth Through Service

May 1-4, 2020

DoubleTree Torrance – South Bay
21333 Hawthorne Boulevard
Torrance, CA 90503

Share Your Events

Did you know there is a page on the Nar-Anon website where you can share information about upcoming events? Go to <http://www.nar-anon.org/events> to see a list of upcoming events. Or send a PDF to events@nar-anon.org if you have a flyer you would like to share.



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Unity

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was growing. Anger and resentment were not consuming me from the inside.

Meetings. I went to many without speaking. However, I began to share in my home group. Not well, but a trusted Nar-Anon friend shook me up and got me to share my feelings.

As I began to really share, I realized I was also building unity with people like me. These people understood the kinds of situations I faced! And, telling them how I felt, sharing my emotions (okay, only a few – but more than before!) worked. I began to see us standing together. Unity.

Literature. As I grew, I started reading more Nar-Anon literature. Amazing how these authors understood my life! I talked with my Nar-Anon friends about different readings and more bonds grew. Unity.

Conventions and Spiritual Breakfasts. As I grew, it was easier for my wife to convince me to go to conventions and special breakfasts – even join a step group. I met more people. More people like me. More people I could learn from. More people I felt unity with.

Service. I began to do service. First, I worked only with my home group, but then with my region. I discovered more people. Like me. More unity.

United we CAN stand. Divided we WILL fall.



Nar-Anon Family Groups

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