

NorCal Nar-Anon Messenger

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Letter from the Editor

Hello everyone,

I am Tracy C. from Roseville, CA. I am the Northern California Region's Literature Rep. I am committed to be of service and taking this 3 year position to the next level. As part of the process, we have revived the newsletter.

Welcome to our first newsletter! I would appreciate you sharing it by making copies and/or emailing it to your members. (Remember to keep the anonymity of your members). I encourage people to submit articles, feedback on the articles and letting me know what kinds of things you would like to see in the newsletter.

Possible ideas to include:

- 1) Meetings that need support;
- 2) Kudos to whomever is deserving;
- 3) Feature stories that could help others;
- 4) Recourses, documentations, podcasts;
- 5) Things that make your group unique and could help other groups; and
- 6) Upcoming Events (workshops, unity days, conventions, etc.)

Your input will help me make the newsletter relevant and hopefully assist the groups in our region.

I feel that sharing my background is important. Most of you probably do not know me. I had a 19 year relationship and marriage with a wonderful man who suffered a fatal heart attack. I then met and eventually married a man who was one of my first husband's co-workers. He is a great guy and has taught me a lot about giving back and thinking about others, i.e. the homeless. I taught him how to live and enjoy life, what it is to be present in our lives. When we met, he had six years clean, which is great! However, we were not prepared for the issues we would need to work through.

When I began attending Nar-Anon approximately 13 years ago, I was totally unfamiliar with the world of addiction. I met an awesome lady who taught me about the program. She became my sponsor, taught me so much about me, the person I was and the things I needed to change about me. I also learned that the only person I have control of is me.

After a couple of years with her group, I felt the need to give back in another way. I started the second meeting in the area. The Nar-Anon of Roseville Family Group has been going strong for about 11 years. Since then, we have greatly

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expanded the number of meetings in our area. I am so proud to be a part of a wonderful organization. I look forward to meeting you at our upcoming events and receiving your input so that we can make the newsletters relevant and hopefully assist the groups in our region.

I look forward to being of service to you and meeting more of you at workshops, conventions, meetings and other events.

Tracy C.
Literature Rep, Nor-Cal Region

If you would like to contribute a story or inform our community of an upcoming Nar-Anon event, please email: litcoord@naranonnorcal.org

For meeting updates and to find virtual meetings, go to www.naranonnorcal.org/meetings

Current Events

Northern California “U Asked 4 It” Workshop



“U Asked 4 It!” Nar-Anon Workshop

on

Helping vs Enabling and Boundaries

Sponsored by the Northern California Region Nar-Anon Family Groups

Video Teleconference Meeting May 30, 2020

10:00 AM to 10:50AM PDT — Helping vs Enabling

Speaker: Scott N., Santa Barbara (Central California Region)

Breakout Session – split into small discussion groups

10:50 AM to 11:10 PM PDT — Break – Open Mike Chat

11:10 AM to 12:00 PM PDT — Boundaries

Speaker: Marilyn C., Oakland (Northern California Region)

Breakout Session – split into small discussion groups

Must login to Zoom to join the meeting. Accounts are free. | 100 participant limit

For meeting ID or more information please email: ConvCoord@naranonnorcal.org

For meeting updates and to find virtual meetings, go to www.naranonnorcal.org/meetings

Current Events (cont.)

Rocky Mountain House Party,
4/18-19

Zoom to the Rescue

With the new shelter in place orders all over the world, all of our lives have been altered. We are finding new ways to connect, go to meetings, reach out to newcomers, and continue our journey for serenity. We have found all of this and more using Zoom!

In April, I was excited to see that the Rocky Mountain Region was going to host a Convention type "House Party" using Zoom. There were people from all over the world scheduled to speak. I was intrigued. I had never participated in a global Nar-Anon function before, and now I had the opportunity to do so in privacy of my own home!

As I sat and listened to this House Party I was encouraged, uplifted, empowered, serene, motivated, renewed, and most of all I was a part of something bigger than myself. I was no longer alone, but surrounded by fellow members from all over the U.S. and the world who understood me.

A big shout out to Rocky Mountain Region for hosting this life changing event.

-Linda T.

Finding the Silver Lining

As I "stepped" into the Nar-Anon Zoom House Party Twelve Step Speaker Conference, I was overwhelmed and inspired by the number of attendees.

One of the speakers shared her challenge in defining her higher power as she first embarked upon her step work. Her sponsor pushed her to answer the question: "What do you want your higher power to be for you?" Listening to this speaker's story prompted me to ponder the higher power of my understanding. What do I want my higher to be for me? How can I differentiate my will from my higher power's will for me? I continue to work with my sponsor and friends in recovery to deepen my understanding and strengthen my relationship with my higher power.

When I take a step back from the devastation caused by COVID-19, I can see that all this time at home has given me ample space to focus on my recovery in a way that wasn't possible pre-pandemic. It is easy to get sucked back into old patterns of thinking when the world around me has shrunk to the size of my computer, but Nar-Anon allows me to find serenity amidst the chaos. I am grateful for all the virtual meetings and conferences available now.

-Rebecca B.

Keeping The Focus on Our Health

"Because the disease turns our loved ones into master-manipulators, with the ability to instinctively hone in on our worst fears, we stop being rational and lose our intellect. Our emotions and fight or flight responses ramp way the hell up. Then, the master-manipulator has us in a judo strangle-hold until we do the diseases bidding. Let's call the disease-manipulator "COVID-19" and self isolate until we flatten its power and are out of its sights!"

- Anonymous

Update from WSO

In Memoriam

A Letter from Cathy K.

For anyone interested in making donations to Nar-Anon "in memoriam" - include the wording in the obituary: "In lieu of flowers please send donations/contributions to Nar- Anon FGH, Inc. 23110 Crenshaw Blvd. Suite A, Torrance, CA 90505", and be sure to include the loved one's name.

When a donation has been received in memory of someone, we do acknowledge with a letter and receipt to the donor. Hopefully there will be information about the family, as we will also send them a letter with information regarding receipt of donations in the loved one's name.

If you need anything else, please let me know.

In Gratitude,

Cathy K.
Nar-Anon WSO

For meeting updates and to find virtual meetings, go to www.naranonnorcal.org/meetings

PESH – Personal Experience, Strength, and Hope

The Myna Bird's Song

The addict that I loved used to whistle beautifully and melodiously. Not while he was in the throes of his disease, but before addiction took hold of him. He had his own melody that he would absent-mindedly whistle while he worked around the house or in the garden. I didn't recognize it right away, but gradually as his addiction took a stronger grip on him it drained the joy out of him and he stopped whistling.

It had been about two years since he last warbled his own made-up tune when new neighbors moved into the building next door. They had a Myna bird, which mostly squawked but occasionally would sing. We could hear it from our bedroom window. The morning after the addict died, I woke up in the early morning to find his little buddy, Rufous the cat, sleeping on top of me. It was late June so the sun was already bright in the sky despite the early hour.

The Myna bird was shrieking away when suddenly it burst into song. It was singing the addict's melody. I don't know how the bird knew the song since the addict had stopped whistling it long before it had moved in next door. It was so striking that Rufous the cat raised his head and listened until the Myna bird finished the tune and began squawking again. With a sigh and a look of utter dejection Rufous lowered his head. However, I recognized the song for what it was. My Higher Power was letting me know that the addict was finally free of his disease. It was a song of hope that my Higher Power gave me as a gift to let me know that all was well. It wasn't for me to save my addict, but it was up to me to go on living my life and to see the miracles that my Higher Power gave me. I never heard the Myna bird sing that song again. A few months later the people next door moved out and took the bird with them.

As I wrote this down, my addicted loved one had been dead almost seven years. I had been thinking about writing up my experience strength and hope of this incident for a long time but I kept putting it off. The night I wrote it, I felt compelled to do so. The next morning one of my Nar-Anon friends emailed me to let me know her nephew who had been in recovery for years had suddenly and most unexpectedly died the night before. I knew then that the compulsion I felt to write my story down was the working of my Higher Power and that I needed to share it with her.

-Sara R.

Guide to Local Service

Group Structure – Duties of Group Officers: Chair/Leader, Secretary, Treasurer, Group Service Representative (GSR)...

Did you ever wonder if this stuff was in writing somewhere?

There is a lot of useful, FREE information! Just visit:

- www.nar-anon.org
- click "Members" tab
- scroll down to "Service Literature"
- click "Guide to Local Service", page 4-1 and 4-2

Meeting Spotlights

*Want us to spotlight YOUR meeting?
Does your meeting have an upcoming anniversary?
If so, please email litcoord@naranonnorcal.org*

OAKLAND MONDAY NIGHTS

Our Monday night meeting is held at Oakland's Summit Alta Bates Hospital. Upon the ban on in-person meetings in mid-March, several people stepped up, got educated and set up Free Conference Call shortly thereafter. After learning about Zoom, we changed to it. This allows people the option to call in, people who want to can see each other and more security and anonymity. This is offered by having a waiting room and

members are invited in. In late April, the three Oakland groups joined to share one Zoom account to divide the cost. There has been a learning curve.

Prior to the meetings, our members help others set up Zoom, teach people about muting and unmuting their microphones, (the new reply vs. reply all) and uncovering the camera for those who have covered it for

safety! This format allows people to drop in and out as time and internet access allows. It has also allowed people who have not been able to join us personally to do so. Our average attendance is 15-20. We appreciate the opportunity to be able to hold our meetings, offer support and share joy! Thanks to all who got us up and running!

-Karen S.

DANVILLE MONDAY NIGHTS

Danville Monday night ZOOM meetings are like a box of chocolates!! You just cannot get enough of them. During this pandemic I found myself panicking and experiencing anxiety I had not had before. I thought I had my recovery after almost 13 years under control. Never even thought of a pandemic. I knew something had to change and it did as we found Zoom which would give us the ability to grab hold virtually online and share our experience, strength and hope once again.

In our first ZOOM meeting, we had 15 members join. Stories began to flow and smiles along with a few chuckles shared on the screen. Something about seeing and hearing our people. The second meeting, we had 1 more and a newcomer. Our third meeting, we hosted our first NA/AA Speaker. He gave so much hope during this dark and sheltered time. Our fourth meeting, people were beginning to feel comfortable and secure with ZOOM. We had 20 members 8 newcomers! Our meeting

is available to those who are struggling. We have had people join us from Michigan, Texas, and the Netherlands. They found us on the Nar-Anon World Service site. It is working!!

Thank you Nar-Anon and ZOOM for saving lives!! We look forward to another 4 weeks of Sharing Experience Strength and Hope on ZOOM.

-Debora K.

NEW LOSS GROUP

Those who have experienced the unique grief of losing a loved one to addiction may find serenity at a new Nar-Anon Family Group meeting; the "Hope After Loss" Online Meeting began in April by several NorCal Nar-Anon members who lost their qualifier to addiction. Meetings are at 11am PST Saturdays on Zoom, modeled after the (pre-coronavirus) monthly New Jersey Nar-Anon Loss meeting.

Weekly readings will come from the Nar-Anon booklet "Continuing Our Journey After Loss" available from WSO. The virtual group has already decided to remain online post-pandemic, with hopes for monthly in-person meetings planned for Marin County, CA and Fresno, CA after the COVID-19 restrictions have passed.

For more information, please contact Michelle, at:

lossgroup@naranonnorcal.org

Let me know if you need more info or have questions!

-Michelle L.

NEW MEETING IN FAIRFIELD

Hope for Today on Friday, 7-8pm. City Church, 743 Tabor Ave., Fairfield, CA 94533
Located in the conference room. Check naranonnorcal.org for updates.