

# NorCal Nar-Anon Messenger

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Spring 2022  
Volume 1, Issue 7

## Letter from the Editor

This edition addresses some of the principles of the Twelve Steps along with other topics. We have several members sharing their reflections of Steps One (Honesty) and Two (Hope). See page vii, second column of the **Nar-Anon 36** workbook for the list of principles of the Twelve Steps. Another member pens a poem entitled Serenity Lost.

We have three members reflecting on the Galt meeting's five-year birthday and what the meeting means to them. We have another member sharing what Nar-Anon means to them.

A contest was created. The names of people who submitted an article were entered. Sue M. is the winner for this edition. She received a copy of *Sharing our Recovery -The Serenity Connection Vol.* and *Our Traditions*. Think about submitting an article for the Summer edition. You

could be the next lucky winner!

Check out the attached registration/information forms for the upcoming conventions. The Northern California Region is presenting an online-only convention **"TAKING MY LIFE BACK"** occurring April 16, 2022, beginning at 10:00 a.m. Modesto is presenting its in-person convention, **"NO LONGER ALONE"** occurring on June 10-12, 2022. Registration/information forms are also available on [www.naranonnorcal.org](http://www.naranonnorcal.org) website.

Finally, check out the group birthday list. Is your group's start date between January - March and not listed? Let us know the month, day, and year by emailing us at [newslettercoord@naranonnorcal.org](mailto:newslettercoord@naranonnorcal.org).

The Summer edition will focus on Our Spiritual Journey. Also, let us know how your group is navigating the changes in COVID protocols, in-person/hybrid

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meetings. Please submit your articles by May 6, 2022, to [newslettercoord@naranonnorcal.org](mailto:newslettercoord@naranonnorcal.org).

Remember, this is your newsletter. Want to be on the committee? Do you have a topic you would like to see discussed? Other ideas? Let us know by emailing us.

Make it a great day!

Respectfully submitted,

Linda H.  
on behalf of Tracy C.  
Newsletter Coordinator

## A Member's Poem

### Serenity Lost

It can make my heart stop  
or skip a beat,  
pound out of control  
or fall down at my feet.

Fall deeply in love,  
passion comes first,  
it's sweet, then it's sour,  
yet I don't know it's cursed!

No peace, it's chaos,  
no rhythm, no rhyme,  
but it still draws me in closer,  
again whispering, "Try one last time."

Now tied up and twisted,  
with ropes at my feet,  
my wrists are bound tightly  
but my mouth still discreet.

Just watching and waiting,  
afraid for what will come next,  
without even realizing that  
this love is tortured and hexed.

My mind says to go,  
my heart says to stay.  
I'm at odds with myself,  
but I'll say I'm ok.

I put up my walls  
when I want to be saved,  
when they come to the rescue,  
it's really the insanity craved.

So I dance with the guilt  
and sing my betrayals,  
then do it again,  
it's the drug of my tales.

Too late to step back  
and take a deep breath,  
feels like I'm drowning  
and it's a slow death.

Because once it seems it's over  
I'm tired and spent.  
I'm not thinking clearly  
and my morals were bent.

The silence creeps into  
empty voids that are tense,  
emotions pull me dark places,  
my thoughts don't make sense.

I sit in that darkness  
where there is no light,  
not wanting to be saved  
but still wanting to fight.

Thanks to Nar-Anon, all the members I have met along the way, and the tools I have been given, I have learned how to sit in this darkness. How to breathe. Find peace. Grow from it. The light is still there when I'm ready to let it back in.

- Sara J

## Step One

**We admitted we were powerless over the addict – that our lives had become unmanageable.**

I had to let go of the illusion that I had the power to change someone else. I tried everything possible to get the addict to stop. When I came into Nar-Anon, my life was so out of balance. I could not see my part in the disease. I blamed my family for ignoring my pleadings, my crying, my giving them the silent treatment, my slamming doors, and my constant checking up of where they were going and how long they would be gone. Of course, nothing I did changed the chaos that occurred in the family.

At times, I made threats that I was unwilling or unable to carry out so my word was not trusted by my family or sometimes even by me. I was so focused on the behavior of others that I was not taking care of myself and unable to enjoy my life. I was critical of others and myself and

could find nothing that was good in my ordinary day, not even the sky. I was unable to relax when on vacation and worried what was going to happen instead of staying in the moment.

I have learned to be honest with my sponsor as I work the steps. My attitude has changed and the focus is now on how my Higher Power can help me change my life. I am no longer looking for others to make me happy or to make my life meaningful. I am using my Conference Approved Literature (CAL) each day at bedtime, attending multiple meetings and sharing my experience, strength and hope. My attitude has changed and I know that I am grateful for my new Nar-Anon family that has helped me to change the only person I can, me.

A grateful member of Nar-Anon  
- Marilyn Z.

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## On Honesty

Almost a year ago when I started the Nar-Anon program, the only thing I admitted to myself was that I was miserable. I needed to find a way to “fix” my meth addicted son and I needed to find it fast because I was spiraling out of control. There had to be someone out there who could tell me what I hadn’t yet said or what I hadn’t yet done that would give me the solution. I believed that I could influence and control his decisions. I just needed to find the right combination of words and actions.

This past year has been an awakening for me about how much I did not know or understand about addiction. Prior to my first meeting, I did not know that addiction is a disease. I saw it as a character flaw, something that should be easily controlled. I could not cry hard enough, please the addict enough or threaten him enough, he would NOT stop using. Nothing I did EVER worked.

First step for me was honesty. I admitted that my

life was out of control and only I had the power to get it back. I truly was powerless over my son’s addiction. Hearing other members’ experiences and reading the literature has helped me to come to this realization. I have good days and bad days. The valuable tools that I have learned help to get me through those bad days. My goal is to continue to *work it, because I am worth it!*

- Anonymous

# One Step At A Time (Cont.)

## Facing The Truth

Addiction is a disease; I hear it at every Nar-Anon Family Group Meeting. It's not like chicken pox or even COVID nowadays. It's a disease of the mind, body and spirit and warps not only the reality of the user/addict but also the minds of the loved ones who experience the chaos that whirls around the addict.

Sadly, the disease is self-inflicted, but no one wakes up on any given day and says to themselves, "today is the day I start a new addiction." I must be honest with myself, the reality I live in today isn't the same reality that existed prior to my loved one's addiction. What I focus on and what I spend time thinking about affects my reality, it shapes it and permeates all aspects of my life. Just as the addict needs to get sick and tired of being sick and tired, I too, must get sick and tired of the reality I choose to share with the addict.

This might sound harsh, but I learn, relearn, and relearn again that I can only control myself. No matter how many times I ran into the other room to make sure he was ok and not doing drugs says more about me than the user. The user is going to use until they don't. I never know when, and even if, the addict will stop using. Will it be divine intervention, or will he wake up out of the drug-induced stupor and realize life is passing him by? Or will it be the 4<sup>th</sup> time he goes through treatment? The truth is addicts never recover. When looking at all potential outcomes, I must be honest with myself that no change in the addict's behavior is probable. The questions I must answer are, when do I stop letting the addict's behavior affect my life? My choices? When do I choose to focus on day-to-day?

There are days I hold firm to my decisions and other

days I attempt to rationalize my decisions to focus again on him. I'm still learning how to put myself first. It's a tough lesson because I was taught not to be selfish and to put others first. If I don't put myself first, who will? The addict? Highly unlikely. I need to start being my own advocate.

Now, I take moments each day to focus on me: watch a new show, listen to new music, experience my life as though I'm looking at it for the first time. For me, my newfound serenity comes from being out in nature, breathing fresh air and spending time thinking about absolutely nothing. This allows me to reinstate the peace I had before my partner became addicted and the peace I know I will have again if just breathe and focus on me.

- Grateful  
Newcomer

Share your experience working the Steps Three & Four for our next edition!

Email us at [newslettercoord@naranonnorcal.org](mailto:newslettercoord@naranonnorcal.org)

## Step Two

### **Step 2 - Came to believe that a Power greater than ourselves could restore us to sanity.**

I was raised in a religion. My first spiritual experience was after my First Holy Communion, I was seven years old. I had so much love in my heart it overflowed, I ran, spun around in circles, and it felt as though my Guardian angel was right there with me.

As I entered into my teenage years, I was more rigid and less spiritual. I was quite self-righteous. At nineteen I fell in love. I felt complete once again. As it turned out, my new love was addicted to legal pain pills and very accident prone. Shortly thereafter, I became pregnant. Our baby was born with brain damage; I felt alone, abandoned by the religion of my childhood, and completely underwater. My addict's disease progressed to street drugs and all that goes along with that.

Fast forward fifty-six years. Although I have lost track, I believe I have been in Nar-Anon for over

30 years. I also returned to my church. I cried when I walked through those doors. I surrendered. I soon learned that my controlling ways had no power over the disease of addiction. I got a sponsor, I worked the Steps, I did service and I met lifelong friends along the way.

My husband found his own 12 Steps program as well. The most important thing in my life was given to me by the 12 Steps and that is a God of my understanding that restores me to sanity. My Higher Power knows what I need before I do. As the Big Book says, *you will not regret the past and cease trying to change it.* I pray and meditate every day, I use Zoom to attend my Nar-Anon meetings and I attend services six days a week. I pray myself to sleep at night. God gave me my husband back and a peaceful loving finish to our 50 year marriage. Thank you Nar-Anon for the love and support.

- Norene M.

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## Galt Celebrates Five Years!

### **Members Share: What does this meeting mean to me?**

#### **Galt Celebrates Five Years!**

When a member thought about expanding the number of meetings in our area, she began to share with members that Galt (part of Southern Sacramento County) would be a good place. Word of mouth spread, and two other members were looking for service commitments. The meeting was born on Saturday, January 7, 2017. At a recent meeting, I suggested that members jot down what Nar-Anon and the Galt meeting means to them. Below are the comments:

#### **Cindy G. shares:**

I started Nar-Anon during the pandemic. All meetings were held online. When in-person meetings resumed, I wanted to find a regular meeting that was easy to get to. I tried another meeting, but it did not fit me.

## Galt Celebrates Five Years! (Cont.)

When I found the Galt Meeting, I felt welcomed, heard, and safe. The energy of an in-person meeting is definitely different than a Zoom meeting. The laughter, tears, and camaraderie made the journey more real for me. I appreciate the respectful discussion.

There are still no magic answers, or advice given, but having someone share how they handled something similar, a slogan, or reminder for me to “keep coming back” is so helpful. I appreciate those who make this meeting possible, and I will “keep coming back!”

### **Annette R. shares:**

I have been attending Nar-Anon for 8 years. I wish I could say, I perfected all 12 Steps, but I can't. Thankfully, it's “progress not perfection,” right? So, what has Nar-Anon taught me? It's taught me that I am not my qualifiers' Higher Power and to “let go and let God”. I have my own Higher Power who can give me direction, and peace if I'll only be open to the possibilities. I have learned that I cannot change my qualifiers or anyone else, only myself. I need to respect them for who they are and to respect their journey. Knowing and accepting this takes a big weight off my shoulders.

Nar-Anon has also taught me to live in the moment and to stop future casting. This has been a lifelong struggle for me, but I have made real progress. It's easy for me to get caught up in imagining the “worst case scenarios”. When I do this, I try to remind myself that I really don't know if those bad things are going to happen and maybe they won't! I can then switch my thinking to focusing on what I do know about today and find hope for a better tomorrow, without expectations. I love the slogan, “expectations are premeditated resentments”. It is so true!

I am thankful for the Galt Nar-Anon Meeting. I know I can come here to share my feelings, acknowledge my shortcomings, and know that I am not judged for what I have or have not done. I appreciate listening and learning from all the Galt members as we share our struggles and triumphs. They are wonderful teachers. It gives me a great deal of comfort to know that I am not alone in my journey. I have the love and support of my Nar-Anon Family.

### **Sue M. shares:**

Nar-Anon has been my saving grace. I don't know where I would be without the experience of those who share their wisdom and strength with our group. I felt at ease from the very first moment I walked in. I felt a part of the group. Before these meetings, hope was not something I dared have, peace was something I dared not to hope for, and serenity was unachievable... at least that is what I thought. My life has dramatically changed since my first meeting two years ago. I went from letting chaos rule me to setting boundaries and sticking by them. I am incredibly grateful for those who kept me coming back. It works if you work it and I feel that I am worth it!

It is incredibly gratifying to those of us who had the original vision. With the help of our Higher Powers and the members of this group, we intend to continue this meeting indefinitely.

## What Brought Me to Nar-Anon

It was very obvious to me that my family needed help. I wanted information on how to fix my qualifier so in October 2014, I attended my first meeting. We tried everything but nothing worked so seeking help from Nar-Anon seemed to be the answer. It was at that first meeting when I heard the words “you can’t fix it, he has to fix himself”. When I left the meeting, I was disappointed that I didn’t get the answers I wanted but decided to continue attending the meetings.

My journey with Nar-Anon went from fix the addict to fix me. I had to learn how to deal with the challenges of addiction, and somehow find peace and serenity while I was in the chaos of living with an addict. It certainly wasn’t easy but by continuing to attend the meetings and listening to others share their stories gave me strength, energy, and hope

for better tomorrows no matter if the addict went into rehab or not, or if he is using or not. Of course, there were and still are the disappointments that come along, (and that includes life in general), but I now have tools that get me through those moments.

My journey with Nar-Anon continues. I still gather so much strength from listening to others share their story, and that includes the newcomers. I remember that I too was once a newcomer and there were folks who welcomed me as I walked through the door. I’m thankful to those who welcomed me, and now I want to be one who welcomes the newcomers. It feels good to let them know they are not alone, to share my journey living with drug addiction, and that we can have peace, serenity, and most of all, hope.

- Anonymous

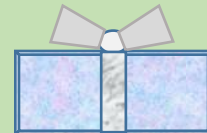
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## NorCal Nar-Anon Family Group Birthdays

- ⇒ January 3, 2019 Pacifica Nar-Anon Family Group (3 years)
- ⇒ January 7, 2017 Galt United Nar-Anon Family Group (5 years)
- ⇒ January 12, 2012 Elk Grove United Family Group (10 years)
- ⇒ March 5, 2020 Wyndham Nar-Anon Family Group Sacramento (2 years)

### When does your group celebrate its birthday?

Email us at [newslettercoord@naranonnorcal.org](mailto:newslettercoord@naranonnorcal.org) to have your meeting’s birthday included in an upcoming edition of the NorCal Nar-Anon Newsletter!



Northern California Region Nar-Anon Presents  
An Online Convention

# TAKING MY LIFE BACK

*Changing the only one I can...Myself!*

**Saturday, April 16, 2022**

10:00 am PT / 11:00 am MT / 12:00 pm CT / 1:00 pm ET / 17:00 UTC

\*Help us with content for the “*What Would I Do?*” activity. Please answer some of the questions on this survey: <https://ncrnfg.org/conv22>



- 10:00 AM PT **Newcomers Welcome & Intro to Nar-Anon** (Galt & Novato)
- \*10:30 AM PT “*What Would I Do?*” **A Progress Not Perfection Interactive Activity**  
(Convention Committee)
- 11:30 AM PT **Who is a Member?/Grief in Nar-Anon** (Hope After Loss Group)
- 12:30 PM PT **Break**
- 1:00 PM PT **Find a Sponsor/Be a Sponsor** (Mt Diablo Area)
- 2:10 PM PT **Fellowship Input on Screen Sharing Nar-Anon Literature**  
(WS ad-hoc Committee)
- 2:45 PM PT **Recovery Countdown** (Convention Committee)
- 3:00 PM PT **From Abuse & Trauma to Recovery & Safety** (Various)
- 4:00 PM PT **After Meeting**

Zoom ID: [886 1826 6830](https://zoom.us/j/88618266830)



(No Passcode)

Nar-Anon Registration: <https://ncrnfg.org/reg22>



The suggested 7th Tradition donation is \$10 to the WSO at:

<https://ncrnfg.org/give10>

Please enter “**NCR 2022 Convention**” as the “**Group**” during checkout.

**Newcomers:** you need not donate, this convention is our gift to you.





# “No Longer Alone“



Nar-Anon Family Groups  
Nor. Cal. Regional Convention XXXII (In Person)  
In the spirit of cooperation with CMSRCNA (cmsrcna.org)

## June 10-12, 2022

At the DoubleTree by Hilton Hotel Modesto 1150 Ninth Street, Modesto, CA 95354  
209-526-6000

Hosted by Central Valley Area

For more information please contact Linda T. at 559-905-7217 or at lindat5776@gmail.com

**Early bird Registration \$20.00, now until May 15<sup>th</sup>, 2022**

**No Refunds on Pre-Registration unless Convention is canceled due to COVID.**

**Registration will be \$25.00 after May 15th, 2022**

Please mail your payment and Registration form to:

**Jasmin H.**  
**3556 S. Harding Ave.**  
**Fresno, Ca 93725**  
Text or call: (559) 776-8291  
(texting is Preferred)  
h\_jasmin01@yahoo.com

Payment options:

1. Cash (if in person),
2. Check (if by mail), or
3. Venmoby Scanning the QR code in box to the right.



Jasmin H  
@Jasmin\_Z2020



**venmo**

Scan this code to pay

**When paying with Venmo**, please

remember to include your name and indicate “Convention Registration” in the comment section on Venmo.

**Also**, please ‘mail in’ or ‘email in’ or ‘text in’ your registration form/info. separately, when paying with Venmo.

(See form below).

Tear off registration below and mail in to registration chair, even if you pay electronically with Venmo

Your name(s): \_\_\_\_\_

Your home group (City, location, day, time, etc.) \_\_\_\_\_

# of years in Nar-Anon (on June 11): \_\_\_\_\_

Your email address: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone number: \_\_\_\_\_

Indicate which form of payment you used: (cash, check, or Venmo) \_\_\_\_\_

Write in check number or Venmo transaction Id: \_\_\_\_\_