

# NorCal Nar-Anon Messenger

1

Summer Edition 2022

## Letter from the Editor

Welcome to the Summer Edition of the Nor-Cal Nar-Anon Messenger. In this edition, we have a variety of articles for you to enjoy: Spring Convention Wrap-up, Fifth Tradition, Prayer to my Higher Power, Memo From Board of Trustees, Relationships in Recovery, a poem; Life of a Codependent, and most importantly, for our sustainability, below, an appeal for donations to World Service.

We hope you enjoy this edition as much as we have enjoyed putting this newsletter together for you.

For our Fall Edition, the topic is Humility. Here are a few examples for topics:

- Spending time listening to others;
- Practicing mindfulness, and focusing on the present;
- Being grateful for what we have;
- Asking for help when we need it;
- Seeking feedback from others on a regular basis; and
- Reviewing our actions against the language of pride.

### Inside this issue:

Letter from the Editor	1
WSO Appeal for Contributions	1
Poem/Life of a Co-Dependent	2
Fifth Tradition Article	3
Prayer to My Higher Power	3
Relationships in Recovery	4
Update Region Assembly	5
Spring Convention Wrap-up	6
Memo: Nar-Anon Board of Trustees	7

We are requesting articles regarding topic of humility. Deadline for submitting articles will be Oct. 13th, 2022. Please email your stories to me at

[newslettercoord@naranonnorcal.org](mailto:newslettercoord@naranonnorcal.org)

Thank you, Tracy C.  
NCR Newsletter Coordinator

## An Appeal for Contributions to World Service

**Please Contribute to Nar-Anon:** With literature sales down 50% during the height of the pandemic, due to about half of groups shutting down at least temporarily. Currently, World Service Office, (WSO) staff has more to do and 1/2 the operating funds needed to keep doing it. If each of us contributes an anniversary or birthday donation – in the amount representing each year of your personal recovery, for example, \$5 per year of recovery, if we can afford it, this would go a long way to resolving Nar-Anon's cash shortfall. Currently, WSO staff has voluntarily cut back to a 32-hour instead of 40-hour work week.

The 40-hours of work a week still needs to get done. We need to publish an audio Blue Booklet for the visually impaired and to upgrade our website to a multi-lingual program, we're a worldwide fellowship. However, these items aren't even in the budget as we can't meet all our monthly expenses and pay our bills on time. Nar-Anon needs our help to get through the rebuilding of our meetings after the pandemic shortfall. **Please send what you can, as soon as you can.** Join me in sending \$5 for each year of your personal recovery!

Go to (click link) [Contribute-to-Nar-Anon](#)

-OR-

Scan this QR Code



For meeting updates and to find virtual meetings, go to [www.naranonnorcal.org/meetings](http://www.naranonnorcal.org/meetings)

# The Life of a Codependent

2

*Codependency,*

*One word,*

*Five syllables,*

*And a lifetime of pain.*

*Such as an addict is addicted to drugs,*

*We codependents are addicted to our addicts.*

*Our high is the illusion that we have control over another human being.*

*That if we nag, cry, yell, berate, plead, manipulate, and so on, our loved ones will change their ways.*

*But as Einstein once said, "Insanity is doing the same thing over and over again and expecting different results."*

*As the threads of our illusions begin to unravel, we too fall apart.*

*You've heard that addiction is hard.*

*But it has also been said that being the loved one of an addict is even harder.*

*To sit in a room full of mothers, fathers, brothers, sisters, sons, daughters,*

*Husbands, and wives all with sunken eyes and trembling lips.*

*You'll hear stories being told between echoed cries and broken sobs.*

*Stories of arrests, DUI's, relapses, homelessness, thefts, betrayals, infidelity.*

*Runaways, prostitution, murder, abandoned babies, divorced spouses, sickness.*

*Suicide attempts, and both accidental and intentional overdoses.*

*A room full of lost hopes and grieved dreams of what we thought our addict's lives should be.*

*A room full of people who are giving everything they have and then some in a futile attempt to save the people we love from themselves.*

*We are mere people bearing the excruciating weight of mourning the loss of someone who is still alive.*

*To watch the person you would give your last breath for, deteriorate right in front of you.*

*They become a fragile, hollow shell of who they once were.*

*Begging and pleading on our knees with God that if we could switch places, we would take their burdens and free them from their pain.*

*Watching as the joy they once had for life, slowly draining from their eyes like the sand falling out of a punching bag that's been hit one too many times.*

*They are becoming unrecognizable.*

*Staring at their brokenness, wondering where things went wrong and what I could have done differently.*

*But one day, I will realize that it was never my fault, And there is nothing I can do for them.*

*While I was busy getting bumps and bruises trying to climb the tree, the cat I was trying to save, I discovered, was just napping, waiting to come down when it decides to.*

*All those days lost to stress, obsessing to the point of overdosing on my own anxiety and fear.*

*I've come to the realization that I was being killed by an addiction that wasn't even mine to begin with.*

*Learning that I didn't cause it, that I can't control it, and that I sure as hell can't cure it finally got me off the addict's emotional rollercoaster.*

*I walk out of the park, and throw away my season passes.*

*Codependency,*

*One word,*

*Five syllables.*

*And a lifetime of creating new peace.*

~ Jessica G.

I want to express my gratitude for all members who have been willing to share their experience, strength and hope with me when I came into the rooms of Nar-Anon. I was welcomed with unconditional love and acceptance.

It has taken my working the steps to gain the understanding of how much I wanted others to change. Thankfully, I have learned that the only person I can change is myself. Working on my program has helped me to recover my mind and spirit beyond what I expected. Working Step 5 with a trusted sponsor allowed me to share my fourth step inventory.

Growing up, I had been guarded and fearful and never wanted to be seen as less informed and knowledgeable. I was afraid of being laughed at in school if I was to give an incorrect answer. I felt unloved, alone and didn't believe that I was worthy.

When I'm telling my addict how badly they are behaving, that is not acceptance. But rather, I am trying to control them. I needed to learn acceptance

for my addicted loved ones and remember that they are sick in body, mind, and spirit. They are numbing their feelings with substances and unable to love themselves.

The Fifth Tradition is about welcoming and giving comfort to families and friends affected by addiction. I have come to let go of my ego and trust enough to share in meetings and with a sponsor. I have accepted that my Higher Power is a loving presence in my life and is essential to my serenity. If I let go of my ego and lack of faith, my fears diminish as time goes on.

I know now that I am loved, and I am willing to share my recovery with others on this journey. I want to take the meeting outside the rooms and into all of my affairs. I want to put what I've learned into action with others in my life by making a living amends and helping others who are new to the fellowship.

~Anonymous

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### Prayer to my Higher Power

**Dear Higher Power**, whom I choose to call Lord of heaven and earth, I am told that you have known me before my birth. It has been told to me that you are the greatest love that I can and will ever know.

Dear Lord, how do I let my guard and my ego defenses down, so that I can be vulnerable and trusting of your love? It has been challenging for me when I have difficult experiences with humans, who have broken my heart and spirit on my life's journey.

Dear Higher Power who I call Lord of my life and my heart, I am told you will love me forever and ever if I trust you and surrender my love to you above all else.

Dear Lord of heaven and earth, I do love you and I am humbly grateful for being your child.

I believe your love will be forever, no matter how broken my life has been. I accept your gift of love, grace, and mercy.

~Anonymous

When I pray with my son every night I pray for my husband's and my sister's recovery. I also make it a point to add a prayer for my own recovery. I want my son to know that while my addiction may not be alcohol or drugs, my recovery is just as important as my husband's and my sister's (who suffer from alcohol/drug addiction). Years ago, you could've never convinced me this was true; that I was important enough to pray for.

When I first met my husband, his words were simple and direct about his past addict life: "That's not who I am anymore." I was naïve and idealistic in thinking that he would never go back to that life simply because I didn't know him at all as an addict. His family remembered it well and would often call me his "reason" he was sober...that I saved him. I felt very hurt and confused when my husband relapsed two years ago because I did indeed start to feel responsible for his sobriety; so now that he has relapsed was I responsible for his using?

When he was in rehab, I attended Nar-Anon, which allowed me to see how sick I was with the family disease of addiction. I was addicted to my addict. I had to learn and accept the 3 C's: I did not **cause** his addiction; I cannot **control** my husband and I cannot **cure** his addiction. Just as I am responsible

for my own actions, my grown husband and sister are responsible for their own actions.

This is something I struggle with every single day, just as addicts struggle with their own disease. That is why I make sure I include myself when praying with my son every night. I must learn not to diminish my own struggles due to my toxic thinking that my struggles are not as important as my husband's. Before my Nar-Anon Program I would often think to myself, "Don't even bother anyone with your stresses, they're not as important as the addict's. They're the ones who really need help!" This was my avoidance tactic that I learned in order to survive the family disease of addiction and my codependency. If I could help someone else, it would make me feel better and I wouldn't have to look into my own faults and shortcomings.

Addiction is often a symptom they say, a byproduct, of someone feeling low self-worth so they choose a substance, object, person, etc. to consume themselves with, to distract. As much as addiction seems to destroy trust and respect, I have also borne witness to what it can restore. The greatest relationship I found in my recovery was the one I always discounted: the one with myself.

~Samantha K

## BIRTHDAY SHOUT-OUTS

April 7<sup>th</sup> 2022 – Lodi Began  
(6 Months)

August 2017 – Walnut Creek  
(4 Years)

September 2, 1980 – Concord  
(42 Years)

September 2, 1997 - San Francisco Tuesdays  
(25 Years)

September 7, 2009 – Roseville  
(13 Years)

**Congratulations on another year!**

Let us know when your meeting has an upcoming birthday! Email Tracy at [litcoord@naranonnorcal.org](mailto:litcoord@naranonnorcal.org)

*If you would like to contribute a story or inform our community of an upcoming event, please email [litcoord@naranonnorcal.org](mailto:litcoord@naranonnorcal.org)*

## NorCal Region's Assembly of Group Service Representative, GSR's

On July 17<sup>th</sup>, 2022, we held an Assembly of our Nor. Cal. Region's Group Service Representative's (GSR's). Thank you to all the GSR's who attended and brought their group's conscience to this Assembly. Below is a summary that Assembly

Regional Service Committee, (RSC) Officers were voted in for a 3-year term (2023-2025)

- Michael S. - Chair person
- Renee L. - Secretary
- Creig S. - Website Subcommittee Coordinator
- Tracy T. - Newsletter Subcommittee Coordinator
- Ed H. – Delegate
- Linda T. – Alt. Delegate

Being in Service is a great recovery tool. We encourage members to get into service at all levels. If you are interested in volunteering at the Region Level, we encourage you to attend one of our Regional Service Committee meetings, which are scheduled for the 2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday of each month on Zoom #627 627 2666 at 5:00pm. **All Nar-Anon members are welcome to join.**

### **We need several important positions filled for the next term (2023-2025)**

- Vice Chairperson
- Treasurer
- Convention Subcommittee Coordinator
- Literature Review Subcommittee Coordinator
- Outreach Coordinator

If you are interested in servicing in one of these positions, please contact our chairperson, Michael S. [chair@naranonnorcal.org](mailto:chair@naranonnorcal.org) or our current Secretary, Linda T. [secretary@naranonnorcal.org](mailto:secretary@naranonnorcal.org) for more information. Description of these duties may be found in our Guide to Local Service, (GLS) on our website at <https://www.naranonnorcal.org/business.htm>.

At the Assembly on July 17<sup>th</sup>, we also held a group conscience to support a variety of motions for the Conference Agenda Report, (CAR) at the World Service Conference (WSC) in 2023. These and other Motions will be in the CAR and available to our members for review by November, 2022 on the World Service Website Nar-Anon.org.

10:00 AM **Newcomers Welcome & Intro to Nar-Anon - Presented by:** Linda H. from Elk Grove/Sacramento meeting. We welcomed our Newcomers with the intention to let them know that *we've been there* and understand the feelings of being new. Many resources for our newcomers were given.

10:30 AM **“What Would I Do?” A Progress Not Perfection Interactive activity - Presented by:** Convention Committee. Participants enjoyed the online polling which offered 8 common situations of families who live with addiction and 7-8 reactions or responses for each. Participants were asked to choose their answers twice; 1st) before Nar-Anon recovery & 2nd) after Nar-Anon recovery. Many commented and were surprised that some of the situations presented had happened to them almost exactly. We truly are no longer alone!

11:30 AM **Who is a Member?/Grief in Nar-Anon - Hope After Loss (HAL) - Presented by:** Michelle L. – *Hope After Loss (HAL)* was born in April 2020 during the pandemic as a virtual group. The group provides support and healing to Nar-Anon members after having lost a loved one through the disease of addiction. It has expanded its fellowship-reach to include the US, England, Canada, and other parts of Europe. *HAL* now has 4 weekly Nar-Anon virtual meetings, one of which was started primarily to provide those members in other countries a chance to participate at a time of day which is more in line with their time zone. The virtual world, with all its limitations, has brought the Nar-Anon world closer together – and *HAL* was delighted to spearhead the creation of the first “Virtual Region” in early 2021. The new “Global Online Region” (GOR) now has eight online GSR’s representing their groups at their assembly In April.

1:00 PM **Find a Sponsor/Be a Sponsor - Presented by** the Mt. Diablo Area, of NorCal Region. Area volunteers, both new and long-time members, shared their own experience, strength and hope and answered questions in a rotational panel as follows: Why the need for this workshop? Why get a sponsor? How to find a sponsor? Why become a sponsor? How to be a sponsor? How to handle crises and maintain safety while living with the disease of addiction. They distributed list of resources including:

- Questions on Sponsorship Booklet (available on Nar-Anon.org Website)
- List of Recurring meetings on sponsorship
- Available Sponsors contact listing
- Sponsor-mentor contacts listing

2:10 PM **Fellowship Input on Screen Sharing Nar-Anon Literature - Presented by:** Two designees of the World Service Board of Trustees (BOT,) ad-hoc committee on Screen Sharing. They presented information about what they are doing which is gathering fellowship input on screen sharing of Conference Approved Literature, (CAL)to create a report for BOT. Why? Because they were asked by the BOT to help identify the fellowship group conscience on screen sharing. They used an anonymous survey and had over 500 responses as of convention presentation!

2:45 PM **Recovery Countdown - 40 years to 1 week of Nar-Anon recovery.**

3:00 PM **From Abuse & Trauma to Recovery & Safety. Presented by** member-volunteers, doing courageous service. This was a novel agenda topic, not seen on any convention agenda previously.

Topics covered:

- Trauma is different for everyone. It is personal, we do not downplay it or over dramatize.
- How to take care of ourselves and support others in meetings.
- Boundaries on sharing at meetings.
- Growing up with abuse, using tools to take care of ourselves.
- Learning when you are in danger. Types of traumas. Responses to trauma and recovery.
- Abuse, minimization vs. recognition of danger. Use of outside resources to create safety.

A huge thank you to our member-volunteers who bravely shared their experience, strength, and hope. They courageously shared their message of coming from abuse & trauma to recovery & safety. They provided a rare service to convention participants who related and responded with their own shares. It was a much-needed accomplishment.

**P.S. Regarding violence:** In Nar-Anon, we learn that addiction is a family disease and at times replaces safety and security with worry and uncertainty threatening our physical, emotional, and financial wellbeing. If the threats become an abusive reality, our safety may depend on our readiness to protect ourselves and our family. Some situations are too complicated for simple answers but “Safety First” always applies as we balance risk to the family’s safety against the shame of drug use, a tense confrontation, or someone’s arrest.

**[ NorCal Convention Committee; Creig S., Ed H., Nacho S.P., Paula L., and Sara R., (Coordinator) ]**



## Board of Trustees (BOT) Announces:

# A VIRTUAL WORLD SERVICE CONFERENCE !

7



## Nar-Anon Family Group Headquarters, INC.

WORLD SERVICE OFFICE

Date: July 5, 2022

To: Nar-Anon Regional Service Committees

CC: Regional Delegates/Alternates  
National Service Offices

From: Nar-Anon Board of Trustees

Subject: WSC 2023 – “Progress Through Worldwide Unity”

The Board of Trustees looks to our Nar-Anon principles in our decision making. The First Tradition tells us our common welfare should come first. The Third Concept of Service states “The Nar-Anon Family Groups delegate to the service structure the authority necessary to fulfill the responsibilities assigned to it”.

To fulfill our responsibility to the Nar-Anon fellowship a decision has been made to conduct the WSC 2023 by means of virtual technology. Restrictions on travel and our current financial situation make this the best decision for the fellowship.

The virtual conference will have a cost and the WS Conference Committee will be sending out a letter to all the regions with the cost of the equalized expense. Because many face-to-face meetings are still shut down, donations are down, as well as literature sales. WSO is still working and mailing out literature and helping families of addict looking for meetings.

The worldwide regions which plan to have a delegate and/or alternate delegate attend conference, should send the payment as detailed from the WS Conference Committee. The Board of Trustees is asking the regions to consider a motion and a conscience of your assembly to donate funds in the treasury over your prudent reserve to Nar-Anon Family Group, Headquarters Inc.

23110 Crenshaw Boulevard, Suite A | Torrance, CA 90505 | Toll Free (800) 477-6291 | Local  
(310) 534-8188 For the families and friends of addicts. | 501(c)(3) Non-Profit

*For meeting updates and to find virtual meetings, go to [www.naranonnorcal.org/meetings](http://www.naranonnorcal.org/meetings)*