

NorCal Nar-Anon Messenger

Spring 2024

Letter from the Editor

Hello All,

Welcome to our newest edition of the NorCal Nar-Anon Messenger. In this issue, our topic is **An Attitude of Gratitude**. We have several great articles on this very topic.

Also, please notice the meeting **“Take-Backs”** below, it’s important to share with your groups. If your groups have a Group Service Representative, they will share. If your group does not have a GSR, please step up and share!

We are pleased to publish an article from a member on gratitude in Spanish and its translation!

Please enjoy our NorCal groups’ spring Birthdays, followed by the region sponsors listing and how to get on the list and how to get a listing for yourself or your group.

NorCal Convention Registration – Please register early it helps the planners. Next is the Visalia Convention Registration Flyer.

Next issue’s topic, **Growth in Recovery**. Please submit your shares regarding your experience, strength and hope as a grateful member of Nar-Anon Family Group by April 8, 2024 to newslettercoord@naranonnorcal.com

Inside this issue:

Letter from the Editor	1
Take-Backs From Assembly	1
Querido Grupo Nar-Anon & its translation to English, Dear Nar-Anon Group	2
An Attitude of Gratitude...Especially for the Bad Times	3
New Blue Book Readings	3
My Family’s Personal Journey	4
Cultivating Gratitude	5
Group Birthdays	6
How to access region sponsor	6
NorCal Convention Registration	7
Visalia Convention Registration	8

Respectfully submitted, Newsletter Coordinator, Tracy C.

newslettercoord@naranonnorcal.com

Feb. 18th 2024 Assembly ‘Take Backs’ for Your Meetings:

The region assembly is a vital link between the groups’ service representative (GSR’s) and the region

1. Our Region is looking for volunteers to work on a Narateen AdHoc Committee in California. Please contact your delegate for more information at delegation@naranonnorcal.org
2. Santa Clara Convention, March 30th, Santa Clara Convention Center. For more information, please visit our Website at naranonnorcal.org. (see registration form on page 7 of the newsletter)
3. Visalia Convention, May 31 – June 2, Visalia Convention Center. For more information, please visit our website at naranonnorcal.org. (see registration form on page 8 of the newsletter)
4. Our Region is looking for officers: Chairperson, Vice Chair, Secretary, Treasurer. If you are interest in service at the Region level, please contact Ed H. or Linda T. at delegation@naranonnorcal.org
5. GSR’s are asked to share the Common Welfare Topic Poll with your groups. Arrive at a group conscience and rank these 22 Topics into your group’s top 3 choices and return your Poll to Delegation@naranonnorcal.org by March 18th.
6. The Assembly voted to donate all monies over and above region’s prudent reserve to World Service=\$707.00
7. Meeting Changes? Notify NorCal webmaster at meetingupdate@naranonnorcal.org and WSO at <https://www.nar-anon.org/edit-group>. This includes both public info that appears on the website and also private info including GSR, Alt GSR and private group contacts.
8. The World Service Office (WSO) will accept donations in any amount. You can donate by scanning the QR Code with your camera to arrive at the donation site, or by going to www.nar-anon.org, or send a check to WSO 23110 Crenshaw Blvd. Suite A, Torrance, CA 90505.
9. Latest News: A snapshot of the latest financial information can be found on the Nar-Anon.org landing page. <https://www.nar-anon.org/naranon>



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

Querido Grupo Nar-Anon

Mi nombre es Gloria. Me dirijo a todos para compartir sobre mi experiencia de pertenecer a este maravilloso grupo. Cuando llegué por primera vez a la reunión fui cordialmente bien recibida por todos los miembros de la familia de Naranon. Yo tenía la esperanza que aquí alguien me iba a decir cómo resolver todos los problemas que tenía con mi hijo para salir de esa terrible enfermedad que lo ha afectado a él, a mi familia, y a mi persona.

Traté sin éxito de resolver y reparar todas sus acciones buscando excusas y algunas veces culpándome a mí misma de sus malas decisiones. Gracias a Dios y al grupo Naranón he aprendido mucho; los 12 pasos, las 12 tradiciones, y toda la literatura. Lo más importante que he aprendido es que no puedo cambiar a nadie. No tengo control sobre ninguna otra persona más que yo, Gloria. Que solo puedo amarlos, no cambiarlos, y que no soy responsable de las decisiones de otros. Qué alivio tan grande! Este principio también lo aplico no solo con mi adicto, si no también en mi día-a-día con otras personas.

En este grupo me siento cómoda de exponer y compartir mis experiencias porque sé que todos los miembros de este grupo estamos en similares situaciones. Sé que nadie me va a juzgar o darme malos consejos. Todo el grupo es respetuoso y compasivo con el sufrimiento de los demás.

El pasado mes de Mayo mi hijo tuvo una sobredosis de droga que por poco pierde la vida. Estuvo en cuidado intensivo por una semana. Gracias a Dios se recuperó. Gracias también a las oraciones de mi familiares y amigos y también al grupo naranón que me brindaron apoyo. Vi en cada miembro de la familia Naranon la consternación y la solidaridad a mi persona.

La mala y terrible experiencia que sufrimos hizo que mi hijo buscara ayuda y se recuperara. Asistió a un programa de desintoxicación. Estuvo tres meses en Addiction Treatment Center.

Estoy completamente agradecida con Dios y todas las personas que me apoyaron. Ahora vive en un sober-living house. Está asistiendo a los programas de trabajando en un restaurante y tiene planes para el futuro. Ha dado un cambio radical.

Quiero hacer énfasis que el programa Naranón. Me ayuda mucho a aplicar todo lo que he aprendido, a poner fronteras, detach with love, a tener confianza en que mi hijo tiene un poder superior que lo cuida y protege, pero que al final - él toma sus propias decisiones. Yo estoy aquí para apoyarlo siempre.

El grupo Naranon es de mucha sabiduría. Todos los días aprendo mucho y cada vez me convengo que es para sumir codependencia. Si quiero un cambio yo tengo que cambiar mi actitud. Vivir y dejar vivir es otro de los sabios consejos yo recomiendo a cualquier persona que esté en esta situación. Busque ayuda. La familia Naranón es gratuita y está aquí para ayudar. También ofrece sponsor que Consultar y generosamente están para ayudar.

**Gracias a todos.
Con cariño, Gloria**

Dear Nar-Anon Group

2

My name is Gloria. I was asked to share about my experience belonging to this wonderful group. When I first arrived at the meeting I was warmly welcomed by all members of the Nar-Anon family. I was hoping that someone here was going to tell me how to solve all the problems I had with my son to get out of this terrible illness that has affected him, my family, and myself.

I tried unsuccessfully to resolve and make amends for all of his actions by making excuses and sometimes blaming myself for his bad decisions. Thanks to God and the Nar-Anon group, I have learned a lot; the 12 steps, the 12 traditions, and all the literature. The most important thing I have learned is, I can't change others. I have no control over anyone other than myself, Gloria. I can only love them, not change them, and I am not responsible for the decisions of others. What a great relief! I also apply this principle not only with my addict, but also in my day-to-day life with other people.

In this group I feel comfortable presenting and sharing my experiences because I know all members of this group are in similar situations. I know no one is going to judge me or give me bad advice. The entire group is respectful and compassionate towards the suffering of others.

Last May, my son experienced a drug overdose and almost lost his life. He was in intensive care for a week. Thank God, he recovered. Thanks also to the prayers of my family, friends, also to the Nar-Anon group that gave me support. I saw in each member of the Nar-Anon family their consternation and solidarity with me.

The terrible experience we suffered made my son seek help and recover. He attended a detox program and spent three months in an addiction treatment center.

I am completely grateful to God and all the people who supported me. Now he lives in a sober living house. He is attending a work program. He is working in a restaurant and has plans for the future. He has made radical changes.

The Nar-Anon program helped me to apply everything I have learned; to set boundaries, to detach with love, to have confidence that my son has a Higher Power that cares for him, protects him, but that in the end - he makes his own decisions. I am here to always support him.

The Nar-Anon group is very wise. Every day I learn a lot and each time I convince myself that I'm overcoming codependency. If I want a change, I have to change my attitude. "Live and Let Live" is another of the slogans I recommend to anyone who is in this situation. The Nar-Anon family is free and here to help me. It also offers sponsors to consult and they are generously there to help.

**Thank you all.
With love, Gloria**

I truly believe there is power in waking up and listing the big and small things I am grateful for. I once heard of a recovering addict who would call his sponsor every day. He would begin every call listing three things he was grateful for. This set the tone for the conversation. Listening to fellow addicts name the things they're grateful for can be humbling. They list clean air, warm sheets, moments of relief from wanting to use, and getting support from their groups.

It took me a long time to extend beyond *I'm grateful for my family* during really bad times. Before recovery, I woke up and would approach my day with horrible dread. What was I going to find out today? Would I be coming home to a lonely house, and another day of him using and denying it repeatedly like I was dumb? I had plenty to complain about and at the time my viewpoint was *how can I be grateful when my husband has relapsed and disappeared?* I'll start being grateful if he recovers.

My husband is still using and he is homeless. He has told me he doesn't want to quit. Yet, I am a completely different woman from the one who used to beg and manipulate him to come home and enter rehab. In October 2020, I attended my first Nar-Anon meeting. My view of everything slowly shifted into one of gratitude and compassion.

As a human being, I am imperfect and sometimes slip up. I have moments of complete sadness for the loss of the life that I thought I would have. However, because of my program, my heart has expanded tenfold. I am now deeply grateful for my experiences of heartache and pain in order to appreciate where I am now. Before my recovery I was trying to save him and our marriage by overlooking things and trying to control his addiction. It took time to learn patience and that I can only control myself.

I accept that he is choosing a different path. I can be sad yet grateful for where he and I are now. I do not wake up with the weight of carrying all his stress and mine. He makes his own mistakes and decisions the same as I do. I now have the ability to be more present with my son and parents. I am grateful I still have my parents and realize that others do not have such good fortune. I find myself complaining about rent being raised or having to pay bills. It may take a little time, but my recovery grants me the ability to stop complaining and appreciate my apartment and the job that allows me to be self-supporting.

Learning how to appreciate everything has been the biggest reason I am able to regard my addict with compassion and offer forgiveness. Oprah Winfrey said, "True forgiveness is when you can say *thank you* for that experience." Three years ago, no one could have convinced me that I would be grateful or that I would forgive my ex-husband for cheating and stealing from me. It is only because of the work I've done in my meetings, working my Twelve Steps, and working with my sponsor, that I have realized focusing on myself is the least selfish decision I've ever made.

Putting my oxygen mask on first allowed me to breathe deeply for the first time in a long time. Resentment crowded my heart but gratitude has now stepped into its place. It's why I keep coming back and for that I am forever thankful for Nar-Anon. "I am grateful for what I am and what I have. My thanksgiving is perpetual." -Henry David Thoreau

~Samantha K

Updated version of *The Blue Booklet* now available

Page 3: Prayer for the Trusted Servant:

Page 13: Prayer for the Growth of Our Fellowship:

Does your group need to update their Blue Booklets and/or reading cards by purchasing new blue books or downloading the new electronic Blue Book?

www.nar-anon.org

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

Nearly thirty years ago, I was speeding through life like a freight train, controlling everything and everyone in my path, or so I thought. I was married to a man with a history of addiction, and I was raising two young sons. At first, I ignored all the glaring signs. Then, when reality tapped me on the shoulder, I was devastated. After the initial shock of confirming the crippling truth, I found my determination. I knew that if he'd just listen to me, I could fix this for all of us. I knew exactly what to do...only I really didn't. I refused to believe that I was powerless and my life was unmanageable.

My husband was diagnosed with a painful blood disorder and issued a license to "use" by his doctors. As his condition worsened, amputations followed, and his dependency on pain medications increased, I felt so isolated. Sadness, hopelessness, and fear consumed me. I was bitter and angry. Why me? It wasn't fair. I felt like I'd been singled out to experience this and felt utterly alone. I rarely shared my problems with anyone. I kept our secrets...*his* secrets. Shame was my best friend, and we were inseparable.

My self-will overpowered my ability to give up. I was going to fix this no matter what it took. I fought with him. I screamed, cried, and did *the dance* with him repeatedly, for more than twenty years. I tried manipulating him into doing what I thought was best for him. When that didn't work, I bargained with God. I begged God to show him what he was doing to our family. When my prayers were not answered, I took back my perceived control.

Acceptance was foreign to me. No one could have convinced me I was wrong. None of this was *my* fault. I was the one working consistently, paying our bills, home at night caring for our sons, and holding things together. I knew whose fault it was, and I pointed the finger of blame plenty of times out of pure resentment. I had loads of expectations, anger and impatience built up like an impenetrable fortress.

This period of my life was devoid of a spiritual connection. My relationship with the God of my understanding was laced with shame, bitterness, and disappointment. I felt abandoned by my faith. I couldn't understand how such a powerful source could not answer this one prayer for me. I was unable to admit to myself, let alone anyone else, that I had any responsibility for the current condition of my life. Defects? What, me? This was all *his* fault.

I eventually became aware that he had been giving his opiate medications to our sons, and my bad dream became a mother's worst nightmare. How could this happen? How could I be so oblivious to what was happening right under my nose?! How could a father do this to his children? My sons were addicts before the age of twenty. I felt utterly powerless. I tried, unsuccessfully, to save my sons from their long, painful journey through addiction. I didn't yet know the only one I could save...was me.

In December of 2013, I made the difficult decision to leave. I begged my sons to follow and to get help but sadly, they were unable to make that choice. They were too deeply addicted and very loyal to their addicted father. It would take several more years and time in jail for both sons to find recovery. The truth is that the only one that could save them was them. It took me a very long time and the experience, strength and hope of Nar-Anon, to accept this.

In February of 2019, I walked into the rooms of Nar-Anon, feeling out-of-control and broken. I had been seeing two therapists simultaneously, and one insisted I find a meeting. I am forever grateful for that recommendation. My life has changed drastically in the four years since. I now know that the only person I can change is me.

Thankfully, both of my sons are now in recovery. Each of my sons made their way through the federal court system. Fortunately, the judge had the wisdom to sentence them each to a 90-day recovery program. Even before my sons found recovery, I found myself incredibly grateful for my journey through addiction. Don't misunderstand, it was the darkest time of my life. But my journey taught me so much about myself and so much about empathy and acceptance and how to emotionally separate the person from the addiction. The Nar-Anon program gave me hope. It helped me to understand that addiction is a disease and that I also have a disease, which compels me to try to control others and their outcomes. Nar-Anon saved my life.

~Sue R.

My husband brought me into Nar-Anon when the consequences of drug abuse forced him to his knees. He admitted on a Wednesday he had a drug problem and on Thursday admitted himself to a chemical dependency recovery program. I joined the family codependency program at the same facility. My main reason for joining was to make sure he stayed on the right path and never used drugs again. I read his literature, studied the principles of his program, and wrote letters to his primary therapist telling her all the things he was doing wrong. I was expecting to be her partner in keeping him clean. Never hearing back from her, I thought she was rude, lazy, or just too busy.

One day he came home from his outpatient program and said, *"this is so funny, my primary therapist thinks that you are addicted to me."* He thought it was adorable. It put me into a cold-sweat-panic. Her statement rang true, I was stone-cold addicted to him. It shook me, seriously disturbed, and possessed me. Worse, when I got into my own program of Nar-Anon, hearing the shares and reading the literature, all the messaging applying to him or others and with nothing applying to me ramped up my panic and feelings of being a truly crazy person. I found myself forced to my knees.

I was grateful he was finally not using drugs, grateful that two of my grown kids were healthy, grateful I had a good job. Each of these gratitudes ended with a *"but."* He wasn't using drugs but he was a jerk to me. Two of our adult kids were healthy but one was in active addiction. I had a good job but I had a terrible boss. When my husband would bring me a milkshake, I would take it and be momentarily grateful. While, in the back of my mind, ticking off how many milkshakes he owed me, which soured it. It was no longer a good milkshake, it was terrible. I read about verbal abuse and thought he was verbally abusing me. But I had excuses; he's an addict, he deserves my anger. I was waiting - that painful exhaustive waiting. Waiting for HIM to come and make me feel better. HE needed to do whatever it took to make me happy. That never happened and I was always angry. I went to NA meetings with him and heard that *"addicts don't have relationships, they take hostages."* Aha! That's what he is doing. I was gathering ammo.

Finally, when I started working the steps with a sponsor, by-the-way it took me years to decide I was ready to DO THE WORK, it became clear to me each time I point out the wrongs someone else was doing, the God-of-my-understanding held up a mirror to show me that I was doing the same things! I saw my own acts of verbal abuse and holding others hostage.

In working the steps, all that stuff I was doing such as gathering ammo has fallen away. I do not know how that happened. It happened as I worked the twelve-steps. A long-time member came to my home group meeting to share and talked with us after. I asked her where did these built-up resentments go? She said she did not know how it works but it does when we do the work.

The step-work allowed me to take a fearless, honest look at myself, who I was and who I wanted to be. I saw my old personality as the *expert of all things*. I knew what everyone else needed to do but had zero knowledge of what I needed to do. My work has changed me into a new person with a new personality. The new me has a beginner's curious mind with a practice of improving my conscious contact with the God-of-my-understanding.

Worries from Christmas past: did I spend enough money? OMG my sister's boyfriend is going to needle my husband and make him leave. My other sister's husband is drunk and grabby. My daughter will fight with my mom. When my addicted son arrives, I pray he will put on a good show of being a good father to his daughter. My dad is not talking. My Mom is talking too much. I pray that Mom does not repeat something terrible I said about my husband in front of him. I need to make everyone laugh.

Christmas present: I did not spend too much. My husband and I had a plan for the possibility of our son's arrival. We are one-year into a three-year restraining order of protection put into place due to violence, son to father. This is the second time we had to protect ourselves with an order of protection from our son. He arrives. He appears like a wisp of smoke. Everyone is happy to see him. I looked for my husband, he winked at me and quietly left.

It was one of those marvelous Christmases. Why? I don't know except to share; now I rest in the peace of God. During times of chaos, I cultivate this restful place. I practice meditation and I choose what I meditate on. This morning I am grateful I had hot coffee while in a warm bath and drank a sweet milkshake with my husband.

~Anonymous

SPRING_BIRTHDAY SHOUT-OUTS

Nar-Anon Group Birthdays

January 3, 2019	Pacifica, 5 years in 2024
January 7, 2017	Galt United, 7 years in 2024
January 12, 2012	Elk Grove United, 12 years in 2024
March 5, 2020	Wyndham, Sacramento, 4 years 2024
April 7, 2022	Lodi, 2 years old in 2024
May 17, 2019	Oakland, Thursday, 5 years old in 2024

Let us know when your meeting has an upcoming birthday!

Email Tracy at newsletter@naranonnorcal.org

Did you know that our region has a list of available Sponsors?

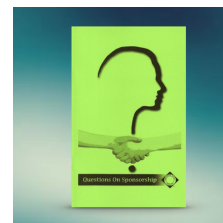
See email below from September 2023 sent to all Group Service Reps, Group Contacts and Region Officers

Dear Group Service Representatives (GSR's), Group Contacts, & Officers of NorCal Region,

From the booklet, **Questions on Sponsorship, WHAT IS A SPONSOR?** *A sponsor is a member of Nar-Anon with whom you can share intimate thoughts and feelings about how you have been affected by a loved one's drug addiction. A sponsor will guide you through the Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions so that you can apply them to your daily life.*

The Northern California Region has been maintaining a list of people willing to sponsor other members. This list is available to members, and groups may make copies to give to their members.

- Some of us keep the list handy to place in chat during virtual meetings.
- Some in-person meetings print and place on literature table.
- Some groups fold and place listing into newcomer packets.
- BTW: Please let me know if YOU are willing to be placed on the list.



The email above is an FYI regarding our NorCal Region's Sponsor Listing. If you want the listing emailed to you, please email your request to sponsorship@naranonnorcal.org! Thank You

UNITY: OUR COMMON WELFARE



Nar-Anon Family Groups
Nor Cal Regional Convention XXXIV (In Person)
In the spirit of cooperation with NCCNA (norcalna.org)

March 30, 2024 10:00 am – 4:00 pm

**Santa Clara Convention Center
5001 Great American Parkway Santa Clara, CA 95054**

Early Bird Registration \$20.00

Registration will be \$25.00 after March 15, 2024

Please mail your payment and registration form to:

**Linda H.
P.O. Box 232812
Sacramento, CA 95823**

For Registration questions email:
registerconv@naranonnorcal.org

Payment options:

1. Cash (in-person registrations only).
2. Check (mail-in registrations).
Make payable to: NCRNFG
3. Venmo by Scanning the QR code in box to the right.



Linda T.
@Linda-Takahashi-1



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 **AND**, please mail or email your registration form.

(See form below)

Tear off registration form below and mail to Linda H. with your check or Venmo payment transaction ID

Your name(s): _____

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

of years in Nar-Anon (on March 30, 2024): _____

Your email address: _____

Phone number: _____

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

Write in check number or Venmo transaction ID: _____

Want to volunteer? Registration _____ Outreach/Literature/Information _____

"Carrying The Message of Hope"

Nar-Anon Family Groups Northern California Regional Convention

Hosted by Central Valley Area of Nar-Anon Family Groups

in the spirit of cooperation with Narcotics Anonymous



Visalia Convention Center

303 E. Acequia Ave. Visalia, Ca

May 31st – June 2nd, 2024

Suggested donation for Pre-Registration will be \$20.00 if paid before May 18th, 2024. After May 18th, registration will be \$25.00. You are encouraged but not obligated to be registered to attend.



Melea P
@Melea-P



venmo

Scan this code to pay

- Please print or download and the registration form below and return your completed form it to Melea P. at Melea P. 4864 N. Diana St. Fresno, CA 93726. Or email it to meleaaa@icloud.com
- When paying with a check, please Mail your payment and completed registration forms to: Melea P. 4864 N. Diana St. Fresno, CA 93726.
- When paying electronically, use the Venmo QR code to the left. Please be sure to indicate the following information: "Registration", "Visalia Convention", "your name", "your group", or "your city", so we can log you as registered. **When paying with Venmo, please remember to also email (or send USPS mail) your completed registration form to Melea.

.....Please fill out and send this Registration Form to Melea

Your Name:

Your Home Group: (City or location, day and time, etc):

of years in Nar-Anon program as of June 1st, 2024:

Your Email Address:

Your Phone Number:

Indicate which form of payment you used (*circle Or Highlight one*) Cash Check Venmo

We need volunteers! Are you interested in being of Service during the Convention?

Circle or Highlight one: YES. NO.