



Seven Minutes

The Nicotine Anonymous Quarterly: A forum for nicotine users who don't use

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Chairperson's Report

Greetings fellow sojourners on the recovery journey. Just as our recovery takes twist and turns, so does service work. As a result, I will update our readers on changes that have taken place.

Sharon C (that would be me) is now the NAWS Chairperson, Bill H is Chair Emeritus and George V is Treasurer Elect for the NAWS Board. Aimee C and Marian D are Co-Coordination of the NAWS Website Improvement Committee (WIC) and the Conference 2023 website.

Speaking of the WIC... Wow, we are moving along with a major update to our website. The WIC has been meeting and gathering information from our fellowship as to what may improve our website. Compiling those suggestions into action items and delegating tasks to people providing service can be challenging. The WIC has been working in tandem with our Web Coordinators, Chris F and Paul W. Together they have done an amazing job and made giant strides towards the new website-build.

The planning for our *Nicotine-Free in '23* NAWS Conference is in process. The conference will be held April 21-23, 2023 at the Maritime Conference Center in Baltimore, MD. This year we are excited to offer a one price fee for accommodations, lodging, parking, all meals, and snacks. Registration for the conference is separate from accommodations.

A suggestion: Start saving the money you would have spent on nicotine products and use that saved money to attend the conference in person. There are no words to appropriately describe the difference between attending in person and

attending via video conference. While our conferences will now be hybrid, we are hoping for more in person hugs, reunions, walk 'n talks after or before meetings, chats in between meetings and having meals together.

If you would like to serve on the NAWS 2023 Conference Planning Committee, please contact nicawsc@gmail.com. The conference is where delegates meet to vote on things pertaining to our fellowship, such as new literature, new Outreach ideas, changes to our structure and more. Delegates are the voice of the fellowship and are so important to carry on the work of NAWS. If you are a delegate, thank you. If you are not a delegate, you may want to consider becoming a delegate. Talk to your local home group or Intergroup to see who the delegates are and let them know you would be interested.

The conference is also where new board members are elected. There are three positions open each year: Chair Elect, Treasure Elect and Secretary Elect. Serving on the NAWS board is a three-year commitment. The first year as an elect is to learn the roles and responsibilities of that position. The second year is being in the role and the third year is an emeritus year. The board meets for 5-6 hours four times a year, a shorter meeting at the end of the conference and a shorter meeting specific to the conference. Most of the meetings are video conference meetings and a couple are in person. If interested, please contact:

chairperson@nicotine-anonymous.org

Most of the Nicotine Anonymous in-person meetings have closed due to the pandemic. Opening meetings again

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The Twelve Steps of Nicotine Anonymous

1. We admitted we were powerless over nicotine—that our lives had become unmanageable.
2. Came to believe that a Power greater than ourselves could restore us to sanity.
3. Made a decision to turn our will and our lives over to the care of God, as we understood Him.
4. Made a searching and fearless moral inventory of ourselves.
5. Admitted to God, to ourselves, and to another human being the exact nature of our wrongs.
6. Were entirely ready to have God remove all these defects of character.
7. Humbly asked Him to remove our shortcomings.
8. Made a list of all persons we had harmed, and became willing to make amends to them all.
9. Made direct amends to such people wherever possible, except when to do so would injure them or others.
10. Continued to take personal inventory, and when we were wrong, promptly admitted it.
11. Sought through prayer and meditation to improve our conscious contact with God as we understood Him, praying only for knowledge of His will for us and the power to carry it out.
12. Having had a spiritual awakening as the result of these steps, we tried to carry this message to other nicotine users and to practice these principles in all our affairs.

The Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions reprinted and adapted here with the permission of Alcoholics Anonymous World Services, Inc. Permission to reprint and adapt the Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions does not mean that A.A. is affiliated with this program. A.A. is a program of recovery from alcoholism—use of the Twelve Steps in connection with programs and activities which are patterned after A.A., but which address other problems, does not imply otherwise.

The Twelve Steps of Alcoholics Anonymous

1. We admitted we were powerless over alcohol—that our lives had become unmanageable.
2. Came to believe that a Power greater than ourselves could restore us to sanity.
3. Made a decision to turn our will and our Lives over to the care of God, as we understood Him.
4. Made a searching and fearless moral inventory of ourselves.
5. Admitted to God, to ourselves, and to another human being the exact nature of our wrongs.
6. Were entirely ready to have God remove all these defects of character.

7. Humbly asked Him to remove our shortcomings.
8. Made a list of all persons we had harmed, and became willing to make amends to them all.
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11. Sought through prayer and meditation to improve our conscious contact with God as we understood Him, praying only for knowledge of His will for us and the power to carry it out.
12. Having had a spiritual awakening as the result of these steps, we tried to carry this message to other alcoholics and to practice these principles in all our affairs.

The Twelve Traditions of Nicotine Anonymous

1. Our common welfare should come first; personal recovery depends upon Nicotine Anonymous unity.
2. For our group purpose there is but one ultimate authority - a loving God as He may express Himself in our group conscience. Our leaders are but trusted servants; they do not govern.
3. The only requirement for Nicotine Anonymous membership is a desire to stop using nicotine.
4. Each group should be autonomous except in matters affecting other groups or Nicotine Anonymous as a whole.
5. Each group has but one primary purpose - to carry its message to the nicotine addict who still suffers.
6. A Nicotine Anonymous group ought never endorse, finance, or lend the Nicotine Anonymous name to any related facility or outside enterprise, lest problems of money, property, and prestige divert us from our primary purpose.
7. Every Nicotine Anonymous group ought to be fully self-supporting, declining outside contributions.
8. Nicotine Anonymous should remain forever non-professional, but our service centers may employ special workers.
9. Nicotine Anonymous, as such, ought never be organized; but we may create service boards or committees directly responsible to those they serve.
10. Nicotine Anonymous has no opinion on outside issues; hence the Nicotine Anonymous name ought never be drawn into public controversy.
11. Our public relations policy is based on attraction rather than promotion; we need always maintain personal anonymity at the level of press, radio, TV, and films.
12. Anonymity is the spiritual foundation of all our traditions, ever reminding us to

place principles before personalities.

The Twelve Traditions of Alcoholics Anonymous

1. Our common welfare should come first; personal recovery depends upon A.A. unity.
2. For our group purpose, there is but one ultimate authority--a loving God as he may express Himself in our group conscience. Our leaders are but trusted servants; they do not govern.
3. The only requirement for A.A. membership is a desire to stop drinking.
4. Each group should be autonomous except in matters affecting other groups or A.A. as a whole.
5. Each group has but one primary purpose --to carry its message to the alcoholic who still suffers.
6. An A.A. group ought never endorse, finance or lend the A.A. name to any related facility or outside enterprise, lest problems of money, property and prestige divert us from our primary purpose.
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Our Preamble

Nicotine Anonymous is a fellowship of men and women helping each other to live our lives free of nicotine. We share our experience, strength and hope with each other so that we may be free from this powerful addiction. The only requirement for membership is the desire to stop using nicotine. There are no dues or fees for Nicotine Anonymous membership; we are self-supporting through our own contributions. Nicotine Anonymous is not allied with any sect, denomination, political entity, organization or institution; does not engage in any controversy, neither endorses nor opposes any cause. Our primary purpose is to offer support to those who are trying to gain freedom from nicotine.

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A Grateful Recovering Nicotine Addict...

I have 6 years and 3 months nicotine free as of June 8, 2022 because of this program. I share my story in hopes it will be a help to fellow nicotine addicts.

What it was like...

I grew up in a home with a smoker, my dad. That was my first exposure to cigarette smoking. I thought highly of my dad. My mother would criticize him when he smoked and made him go outside to smoke. She hated it and would not allow him to ever smoke inside. At the time, I thought that was cruel of her but now I am grateful that I was not breathing in that secondhand smoke during my growing up years.

My home life was very dysfunctional and as a result, I grew into adulthood with a lot of emotional baggage. Even though I did not smoke until my adult years, I used other unhealthy ways to cope before nicotine. I was constantly in survival mode, using unhealthy coping skills to get through life. My smoking career started in my early 40's. I tried smoking when I was in high school, but got sick from it. It ended there until several years later, when attending a therapeutic workshop with my soon-to-be best friend and smoking partner. I picked up again. It was during a break in the inner child workshop we were both attending. I asked her for a cigarette as we were walking outside in the cold because I was trying to calm down. I was emotionally a wreck. She was hesitant at first. She told me it's a terrible habit to get into. I told her I didn't care so she gave me one. That was the beginning of my smoking career.

I loved it from the very start. I found smoking relaxing, comforting, a stress reliever and a way to calm myself down. It seemed to take the edge off things. I had found another way to not feel, to not deal, to not live. Another way to push down my feelings. To not cope with my emotional pain and to do damage to myself. I also loved the action of smoking. I was hooked. I went from two to

three cigarettes a day to a whole pack to a pack and a half on the emotionally hard days. I was a chain smoker.

They became my constant companion, my closest and faithful friend. I could not go anywhere or do anything without them. Initially, I was a closet smoker because I knew my husband and kids would be very upset if they knew I was smoking. Hiding my smoking was very challenging at times. I became very good at using air fresheners, perfumes, gum, breath mints and mouthwash, to name a few.

Working outside the home made it a lot easier to conceal my smoking. The weekends and evenings were the most challenging, but I always found a way to get my fix. Getting my fix was more important to me than family or anything else. Nicotine was my God. I would do anything to get my next fix, though at some point, the guilt I felt living two lives started to wear on me — the deception, the dishonesty. I also started to worry about what I was doing to my body. But it still was not enough for me to stop.

Then the day came that I never wanted to come. My husband and kids found out I was smoking. My husband could not believe it. I felt so ashamed but also relieved in some ways because the secret was out. My husband came across loud and clear how much he disapproved of my smoking. Knowing how much he disapproved made me think about quitting. I entertained the idea but that didn't last long.

I couldn't stop, so I kept hiding my addiction from him by not being honest with him or myself, saying I smoked only one, not how many I really smoked, or that I was cutting back, or denying that I even smoked that day when, of course, I did. I continued down this path until a couple weeks later, when my husband started to see through my lies. He could not understand why I was still smoking and lying to him about it. He reminded me of the damage it was doing to my lungs, and reminded me that it makes my asthma worse and

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at

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***A helpful tool for
working the
Twelve Steps***

can cause cancer. He could not understand how I could keep doing this to my body, given all these facts. He knew the facts well as a professional in the field of respiratory therapy. I also could not explain why I was causing myself physical harm, or how those facts were not enough for me to quit. All I knew was that I enjoyed it and it's what got me through my day. So I continued to smoke, and my husband continued to harass me about it. This went on for months, until one day, the reality of possibly dying from cancer finally was sinking in and the thought that I could cause my own death started to really bother me. I then became willing to stop but I found out very quickly that I couldn't just stop. I didn't realize at the time what I was really dealing with: an addiction, not a bad habit.

In desperation, I started to look outside of myself for help. I started with smoking cessation classes with the friend who I had started my smoking with. Of course, we smoked going there and on our way home after each class because the addiction was so strong. I tried other cessation programs but nothing worked. I tried hypnosis, cutting back, restricting where I smoked and only smoking in certain areas. I quickly found out my cravings were stronger than my will to stop. I lost hope and eventually came to the conclusion that I was going to die a smoker. That's all there was to it, until I heard about Nicotine Anonymous.

In November 2008 I attended my first Nicotine Anonymous meeting on
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the internet through Voices of Nicotine Recovery (VONR). After several months, I also attended the NicA phone bridge meetings during my lunch breaks at work. While attending these meetings, I started to feel hope that I was no longer alone, and I began to realize I suffered from an addiction, not just a bad habit. I followed the suggestions of the program by getting a sponsor, going to as many meetings as I could, sharing at meetings, being honest in my shares with myself and others and working the Steps.

I came to terms with the problems my nicotine use was causing me, and saw how powerless I was over nicotine and that my life had become unmanageable. I was relieved to find out I was no longer alone, that it wasn't because I wasn't strong enough. It wasn't about will power. I was addicted to a powerful drug, nicotine. Understanding that helped me to get out of my cycle of shame and guilt over smoking and to be open to the possibility of quitting with help from other nicotine addicts. It was a relief to know that others understood how this addiction works and how hard it can be to quit. I attended several meetings before I set my first quit date – Feb. 21, 2009. It was approximately three months after coming to the VONR meetings. My second quit date was August 6, 2009. My third quit was November 23, 2009, and my fourth was November 26, 2009.

The next quit was February 5, 2010 and lasted 6 years. Then on March 8, 2016, I picked up again. I remember my thoughts were, "I don't care. I want to and I will." The relapse happened way before I picked up that day. During that year I was not attending Nicotine Anonymous meetings or calling my sponsor on a regular basis. That day I was extremely upset about what was going on in my life, had a lot of stressors and my husband was away. I started romancing the cigarettes. I figured my husband would never know; he was away and would not be back for a week. All the more reason to seize the opportunity to smoke. So I bought my favorite brand at the shop

where I used to always buy them. I sat down and smoked the whole pack. I remember loving that first one but not so much the rest. I started to feel extremely guilty, but still kept smoking till the pack was gone.

I felt terrible afterwards and worried about how hard it might be to put them down again. I called my sponsor later on to tell her I had picked up. We talked and talked. I committed to putting them down again that night. I told her I would not buy any more that night or the next day, and even though it was extremely, extremely hard, I kept my word to my sponsor and myself. By the grace of God, I was able to get right back on the horse. Therefore, as of March 2016, I have had no nicotine in my body, one day at a time. I accepted the fact that I had to start over counting my nicotine clean time. At first I really resisted that since it was only a one day slip, but I eventually realized that I had to because I did have nicotine in my body on that day. So the count began again in 2016 to the present.

What has helped me stay nicotine-free is growing in my understanding and knowledge of this program; being opened to learning a new sobriety-centered way of life based on the principles of Nicotine Anonymous; accepting outside help from other members and my Higher Power; asking for the courage, strength and hope to stay quit; relying on other members of the program to show me how they continue to stay nicotine-free and then take the necessary action in my recovery; practicing old behaviors that didn't work and replacing them with healthier, more effective ways of coping with life's problems.

What my life is like now...

1. I am living life free of nicotine, one day at a time.
2. I have changed and continue to change on an emotional and spiritual level because of this program.
3. I am learning to live life. No longer in that survival mode.
4. I have had spiritual awakenings and am looking forward to experi-

encing more along the way.

5. I do service because it helps me and because it helps others.
6. I come from a place of wholeness rather than from a place of lacking.
7. I experience interconnectedness with others, rather than feeling separate and isolated from them.
8. I practice the principles of recovery that I have learned through the Twelve Steps, striving to practice them in all my affairs; the principles of surrender, humbleness, tolerance, patience, willingness, openness, love, hope, faith, trust, and joy; reminding myself it's progress not perfection.
9. I use the very powerful recovery tools of prayer and meditation to improve my conscious contact with my Higher Power. I have also shared these with other members of the Free Bridge phone meetings by leading silent, guided and breathing meditations and prayer time as part of the meeting format when I chair.
10. I do things I feel led to do, like prayer and meditation, and leave the outcome to my Higher Power. I had no idea how members would respond to doing this together in a meeting but I felt led to do it, starting with meditation and then later on introducing group prayer time. After practicing these tools together for a short time, we took a group conscience and members voted to keep them both. We have found a spiritual experience when we meditate and pray together as fellow nicotine addicts on a weekly basis. Members are loving these tools and often share how the tools keep them from picking up.
11. Lastly, I strive to love others as myself. I strive to carry my message of recovery through acts of love because after all, Love is the most powerful force in the universe.

I am grateful to be free from nicotine, one day at a time, and for a Higher Power that does for me what I cannot do for myself. I am grateful for Nicotine Anonymous that has saved my life.

Sue O

Free Bridge member from upstate NY



Actively Practice Recovery Every Day...

Hello, family. My name is Danelle and I am a nicotine addict. I have been nicotine-free since November 3, 2013. I owe this recovery to my Higher Power and you.

My recovery looks much like it did when I quit in 2013 and that may be the most important part of my story. Please, read that again.



I remain free because I go to meetings, have a sponsor, sponsor others, work the Steps, am of service, and have regular conscious contact with my Higher Power. I also take care of my outside issues (of which there are plenty) with help outside this program. I do all of this imperfectly and have made a lot of progress in those brief eight (going on nine) years. Whew! What a ride...

I never thought I would be a non-smoker and I am still pleasantly surprised that I am here, upright, on this journey with you. What I am learning through the program is that there is nothing authentic about being a smoker. Much to my surprise I am not hard-wired through my DNA to smoke! But I am an addict and the care I place on my recovery fulfills that part of me...along with chocolate.

I don't recall when I started dabbling with cigarettes; I was young. I became a full-blown smoker by thirteen. I am still in that phase where I have smoked more years than I haven't. But I am also officially cleared from the high-risk list for lung cancer from my doctor, so there's that.

I'm sure our stories are similar so I won't bore you with the gory details. There was a lot of abuse and trauma in my childhood along with mental illness and other addictions. Regard-

less of the details, perhaps our common bond is in what we thought we got from smoking.

For me, it was escape. I veiled every emotion and experience with smoking. Smoking allowed me to be physically present but not emotionally or spiritually connected. I lived my life behind the smoky veil and was okay with it. Until I wasn't.

I started to get cleaned up and more spiritually grounded in 2006. Around 2012, I was unable to get something I thought I wanted and quitting smoking was a deal I was finally willing to make with my HP. So, there you have it. My quit started out conditionally. My Higher Power knew I needed divine intervention with my addiction, played along with my condition and gave me my quit date after a brief slip.

In my second round quit I surrendered to a group who taught me how to love myself. They showed me I was worth it. I just kept crying and making coffee through my first year of recovery from nicotine. Quitting smoking was one of the hardest things I have done to date. I get to invest equal energy into my recovery though, and for that I am grateful.

My freedom requires a discipline from me and that is why I maintain the same program that got me here. Trust God, clean house, go to meetings.

For me, this is a slippery addiction and while I don't think about smoking every day, the thought still comes, and I want...need...to make sure I have every penny of recovery insurance saved up to protect me from that first drag.

I live free in my daily reprieve. In this moment. In this gift of precious breath.



I never got that thing I tried to deal with HP for, but I got so much more. I got you. I spent the first few years of recovery focused begrudgingly on what I "had" to do. Now I practice gratitude (most days) for what I "get" to do. My tough and wise sponsor reminds me to actively practice recovery every day and it keeps me free.

We are warriors of the light meant to help others. May you go forward on this courageous journey with gratitude.

Danelle R
St. Paul, MN

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Twelve Steps?

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Anonymous
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at
www.nicotine-anonymous.org





From the Free Bridge Telephone Group...

Several curious members from the Free Bridge phone group decided it would be interesting to gather from Free Bridge members at large, their experience in regards to quitting nicotine use. It was decided to present the information in a poll consisting of three questions requiring a simple yes or no answer.

Here are the poll questions and results:

Did you set a quit date?

- 30% of the participants set a quit date.

Did you use nicotine replacement therapy (NRT) before your quit date?

- 40% used NRT's to help get to the quit date.

Were you able to keep the quit date?

- 10% quit on the quit date they set.

The first thing we discovered as pollsters, however, was that there is no simple yes or no answer when it comes to quitting the drug nicotine. We all have our own wonderfully unique experiences. The joy, humor and gratitude could be heard and felt when the Free Bridge members spoke beyond the yes and no question.

Here's a sampling of some of the responses:

"I set a quit date of 'today' every day. I did not use NRT's. Cold turkey, baby."

"I didn't set a quit date. I quit cold turkey. When I realized that I would never get the same high I got from the first puff, I stopped."

"I knew I was lying to myself when I verbalized to the group that I set a quit date."

"I never gave myself the option. Do or die. I joined the 'no matter what' club."

"Many quit dates, and sometimes I quit on 'the day.' The final quit was a day before the quit date after lunch. I liked that because then I only had to get to bed and the next day; by noon I had 24 hours. I then felt more invested, and challenged myself to just 12 more hours. Now it's 4 years free from the worst drug EVER!"

"I set a quit date. No, I did not use NRT's in the process. I didn't stop until two days later."

"I set quit dates but usually quit before that date. I quit a lot, sometimes with a quit date and sometimes without. I don't think setting a quit date helped much. I did use NRTs - the patch and the inhaler."

* * * * *

Upcoming Phone Marathon Meetings

**November 17th
"Turn Over a New Leaf"**



**November 24th
"Attitude of Gratitude"**



**December 25th
"Holiday Marathon"**



All meetings are hosted by the Free Bridge Telephone Meeting group

On each date meetings begin at 8 am EST and run at the top of every hour. Last meeting starts at 11 pm EST.

A different topic for each meeting

**Phone: 667-770-1474
Pass code: 207490#**

See nicotine-anonymous.org for information on all regularly-scheduled NicA phone meetings

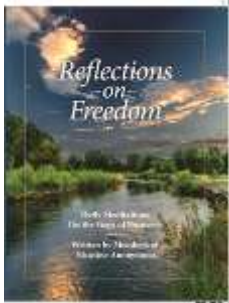




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**Reflections on Freedom:
Daily Meditations on the Steps
of Recovery**

written by Members of
Nicotine Anonymous (NicA)



Our latest conference-approved meditation book contains 366 entries and an Index of recovery topics.

May this book provide insight and inspiration to help members achieve their freedom and practice the Nicotine Anonymous program in their daily lives.

* * * * *

I Needed Allies...

To find strength to stop smoking, I needed ALLIES to give me positive reinforcement. I needed to be around people who could imbue me with confidence and who could love me when I was naked without my smokes. I found those allies in Nicotine Anonymous.

It worked. After 30 years of quitting and repeatedly going back to my crutch, I finally beat the habit with the help of the fellowship and my Higher Power.

Gwynn A
Florida



**NAWS Current
Service Opportunities!**

Service is a great way to give back to the Nicotine Anonymous fellowship. We have several service opportunities available right now.

Are you a WordPress expert? We need you! Plans are underway to convert our current website (on ZoHo) to the WordPress platform. We need reliable people to migrate information to the new site, and potentially stay on to help maintain the site once it's up and running. Meticulousness required.

On Demand E-Book Coordinator: We need someone to organize efforts to translate our literature into downloadable formats such as Kindle and NOOK. As NicA becomes more international by the minute, we need affordable options for people outside the U.S. to purchase our literature. Shipping costs are prohibitive, plus on-demand publishing is a green alternative and quite possibly the wave of the future. This position may involve researching companies, getting quotes, presenting plans including budgets, priority list, and timeline to NAWS Board for approval, and working with our graphic artist to format documents so each page matches our printed literature. If you can wrap your head around this, you are in demand!

We need volunteers to help verify how groups on our list are meeting: in-person, temporarily via video conference, permanently virtual, or hybrid. Jorie M is organizing this effort but would like to split the list up. This may take some detective work, as listed meeting contacts may no longer be connected but we don't want to take meetings off the list without talking to someone first. This may become a yearly task.

Name and Logo Protection Coordinator: This person will become familiar with NicA trademark policies and investigate complaints about outside entities using our name and logo. This

would involve contacting said parties and diplomatically resolving potential conflicts.

Archives Coordinator: If you like detective work, we have a job for you. On our current website, under "About Us" in the "Archives" section, you can see what type of information we want to save for posterity. Once familiar with this site, you can identify gaps and work towards preserving our legacy for future generations. This may involve scanning documents, if only hard copies of older materials exist.

If none of these positions excite you, please consider serving as a committee member on other existing committees such as Public Outreach, Literature Committee, or returning messages sent to the 1-877-TRY-NICA phone line. Many hands make light work.

For other service opportunities, see *Service is the Key* on page 14.

A reliable person with a good work ethic is more important than experience, as we are happy to train you in all but the WordPress opportunities. For that, experience is also important.

**If interested, please contact
chairperson@nicotine-
anonymous.org**

“ Quote
Corner

*No one is as capable
of gratitude as one
who has emerged from
the kingdom of night.*

- Elie Wiesel

A Farewell Letter...

Dear Nicotine,
It is extremely difficult for me to do this. We have been together so long. You are one of my oldest and dearest friends, and my closest friend of all time. I knew you since shortly after I was born, as you and my mom were close, and you were at my house every day. We first became best friends when I was thirteen years old, and we have been together ever since, almost thirty years together!

When I look back on my life in these past 29 years, and think of all my friends, family, and lovers, there has not been a single soul who has been with me through so much as you, my love. Every heartache, every adventure, every celebration, goal achieved, failure, dream, trip, loss, illness, success, move, each and every night, every single day – you were there by my side. Unlike everyone else, you never abandoned me. You were always there when needed, even when everyone else let me down.

But despite my unconditional love for and dedication to you, and your unrelenting devotion to me, I knew in the back of my mind, in the bottom of my heart, and in the pit of my soul, that you were trying to kill me, that you were a scam, a hoax. You had me fooled that this was true love, but I was in an abusive relationship. I knew you were harmful, hurting me, dangerous. I tried to leave many times, and sometimes, I actually managed to get away from you for a while, but you never worried about losing me. You patiently waited because you knew I would come back, unable to live without you, and you were right. I always have, like a battered partner with Stockholm syndrome going back to my abuser.

I have so many fond memories of us together, on the stairs late at night, on so many nights, through the divorce, through the early years of becoming a mother, a single mother. When I felt so deeply alone, I was grateful to have you with me so it did not hurt so badly. Oh, and the two of us traveling the world together! You have accompanied

me on multiple continents, and I have tried your different styles and flavors in so many countries.

It hurts deeply to say goodbye to you. So many times I knew I would be better off without you, finally on my own, able to be okay with being alone, not having to be in this never-ending codependent, toxic, abusive relationship. But I never imagined I could get all the way there. Something terrible or something wonderful would happen, and I would need you. I would have to share these experiences with you. Yet here I am, without you since March 20, 2022, and for the first time I truly believe we are not going to be together again. I honestly feel more complete and happier without you. I no longer feel there is an emptiness I need you to fill. In fact, I think you were a huge part of making me feel empty. That was always part of your plan, your manipulation, your control, your power over me. Not anymore. I have found new means of support that will help me remain free from you. I will no longer allow you to trick me into loving you while you secretly betray me.

Goodbye Nicotine – farewell.

Wendy E
Los Angeles, CA



SevenMinutes Meditation

My Higher Power,
I place myself in your hands
and humbly ask that
my character defects be
lifted from me so that
I may help others.

Please grant me willingness,
courage, and strength
so that through my actions
I may reflect your love
and wisdom.

- Nicotine Anonymous
7th Step Prayer

Outreach projects allow us to carry the message in a variety of ways. Literature and financial assistance are **available** for your project, for up to \$500.

For details go to
www.nicotine-anonymous.org
or send an email to
outreachcoordinator@nicotine-anonymous.org

Chairperson's Report

continued from page 1...

provided some obstacles, however we have more video conference meetings now which are well-attended. Location does not matter anymore which affords the opportunity to meet people from all over the world. Some meetings I attend have people from 5 or 6 different countries. We are continents apart and yet on the same path of recovery. Some members have days, weeks, or years of being nicotine-free and others have a desire to be nicotine free. It does not matter. What matters is we all want to live free of addiction.

We could not have such a wealth of meetings if we did not have people using the recovery tool of service - service in setting up the meeting, leading the meeting, reading at the meeting. It is heartwarming to know that on a daily basis we have so many people willing to give back, willing to provide service, willing to provide support along the recovery journey.

The second Step Study Group, as of this writing, is working on Step 6 this week. Again, so many wonderful people providing service so that each week we can meet, break into small groups and have a facilitator in each group to lead the discussions about the Step we are working on that week and what that Step means to us.

I wish each reader the best on the journey of recovery.

Sharon C
NAWS Chair

A Much Better Version of Myself...

I always felt different from others at an early age. I was afraid around my peers when I joined the so-called in crowd and started smoking cigarettes. I was so excited to have found a niche in the world. Cigarettes soon became an all day, every day companion and a gateway to other drugs.

It took me many years to find out what price I would have to pay for my use of cigarettes. I needed cigarettes to be cool, to fit in, overcome the fear and anxiety. Cigarettes stunted any mental, emotional, and spiritual growth I could've had. My mental health got worse and I had a breakdown at the age of 24 and was hospitalized in a state psychiatric hospital.

I quickly learned new avenues and skills to feed my ever-growing cigarette addiction. The more my mental illness grew, the more my nicotine addiction grew. I became a chain smoker. In my 20s and 30s I smoked three packs of cigarettes per day. In my 40s I smoked four to five packs per day.

I started paying the price physically. Because of cigarettes, I almost blacked out several times. I began to think about quitting. I tried on my own without any help and failed several times. Each time I tried to quit, anxiety would flare up immediately.



Then I found my first Nicotine Anonymous meeting on the website. I started going to phone meetings, and there was a chance I could quit and stay quit of nicotine. I had many relapses because my anxiety and mental health would drive home the idea that cigarettes would calm me down. I was scared to keep smoking and scared of the thought of not smoking.

I kept on attending meetings and reading the Nicotine Anonymous literature.

I learned about the five Ds including delay, do something else, deep breathe, drink water. Also, I used techniques I learned in therapy on how to use senses to combat the cravings and the obsession to smoke. I used my sense of smell - when I smelled someone smoking or lingering cigarette smell, I reminded myself of how much it irritated my wife when I smelled like that. I ate pickles or green olives, or something very tangy to change my taste. I used the sense of touch by taking several cold showers a day. I used my sense of hearing by listening to solutions at meetings and learning it was possible for me to have continued sobriety. Dance music put me in good moods. I used my voice to let people at meetings get to know me and where I was in my program. And I learned I can have friends—real friends who support me, not using friends, friends who share in the love of this program. I added exercise and eating healthy. Prayer and meditation is an everyday part of my life. Making meetings, reading the literature, talking to other addicts helps me with my journey and my sobriety, and has definitely helped lessen the mental illness I've suffered with for many years.

Praise be to my Higher Power. I never knew I could stay nicotine-free, one day at a time, and stay healthy mentally, physically, emotionally, and spiritually if I do the work of this wonderful program. Thanks to this program and fellowship, I've greatly expanded my tools for contented sobriety and all-around healthy living. I thank God daily through prayers and meditation and working the Steps of Nicotine Anonymous. Also I get to help other nicotine addicts. The Steps and the Tools help me change into a much better version of myself and be willing to be of service to others. I share this new found love with my wife and with others. So to all who are struggling, remember that if I can get sober, so can you. Let the program wash over you because your miracle is just around the corner! God bless you all!

Shawn
Free Bridge member from Dallas, TX

Nicotine Anonymous Third Step Prayer

Relieve me of the bondage of self.

Help me abandon myself to the spirit.

Move me to do good in this world
and show kindness.

Help me to overcome and avoid
anger, resentment, jealousy
and any other kind of
negative thinking today.

Help me to help those who suffer.

Keep me alert with courage
to face life and not withdraw from it,
not to insulate myself from all pain
whereby I insulate myself
from love as well.

Free me from fantasy and fear.

Inspire and direct
my thinking today;
let it be divorced from
self pity, dishonesty
and self-seeking motives.

Show me the way of patience,
tolerance, kindness and love.

I pray for all of those to whom
I've been unkind and ask
that they are granted
the same peace that I seek.



Service is His Key...

I am a nicotine addict and my name is Dale. I am from Oregon. It is good to be smober and it is good to have a desire to be free of nicotine. I have to cultivate that desire to be free every day. At this writing I am 2 years and 2 months free of nicotine.

I remember the stress and pain of being born and the stress and pain of youth. I remember feeling different and separated from everything and everyone around me.


I ended up in the hospital for a week when I was seven for some surgery. That was also stressful and painful and I ended up feeling even more separated and different from everyone and everything.

When I was 13, it was the summer of 1972 and I encountered drugs and alcohol and sex. I found what I thought was the answer to the stress and pain of living. I became a seeker after all the million dollar pleasures in life. I became a pleasure addict.

I had my first few cigarettes in my teens but did not become addicted. I had a few packs of cigarettes in my 20's but did not become addicted. I went through a divorce when I was 30 and madly searched for relief that would counter the pain of divorce. I started hanging around a crowd that listened to a lot of Grateful Dead, snorted a lot of cocaine and smoked cigarettes. I became addicted to nicotine.

Since I had thirty years previously without being addicted to nicotine, I was never a comfortable smoker. I tried to quit almost as soon as I became addicted. I smoked for 32 years, from age 30 to 62.

I heard of Smokers Anonymous in the early 1990's but did not attend a meeting until February 2020. By then the program name had changed to Nicotine Anonymous. My



**Heard it at
a meeting**

"I looked for God in the
big things, I found him in
the little things,
in a place where I never
looked before.
I looked for God
on the mountains,
I found him in the valleys,
and in the eyes of my
neighbor next door."

life was a chaos of quitting and using, using and quitting. I tried to quit thousands of times. I had many one day and one week and two week quits. I retired when I was 62 because I did not think I was going to be able to quit as long as I worked. My smoking career had paralleled my working career and I could not get over that craving for the first cigarette of the day.

I found the Free Bridge phone meeting groups of NicA just a month after I retired and I attended a face-to-face meeting that same week. I had an intuition that if I stayed with Nicotine Anonymous, I would get free of nicotine. During my first 80 days in NicA I had a 17 day quit and an 11 day quit but I did not have the proper tools to sustain either quit. "Quick doesn't stick." During those first 80 days I volunteered to chair meetings on the Shamrock group of NicA and the Free Bridge groups of NicA and the Primary Purpose groups of NicA.

My first day of nicotine freedom came the day after I smoked my first cigarette during an actual meeting of Nicotine Anonymous. I could not believe that I could be so double-minded and in denial of my powerless condition. I had a desire to use nicotine and I had a desire to

be free of nicotine and I had a real need to feed the good dog only. I needed to cultivate the desire to be free of nicotine.

I cultivate the desire to be free of nicotine by "Pausing When Agitated." It is an old 12 Step slogan. I pause and recline and close my eyes and repeat the Serenity Prayer or repeat the first three Steps until the craving subsides or goes away.



Service has been the key for me. Service to my fellow nicotine addicts is the work that my Higher Power has designated for me. Service cuts into selfishness and self-centeredness. Service also keeps me accountable. It is hard to smoke a cigarette when I have a service commitment to Nicotine Anonymous the next day.

I try to go to a NicA meeting every day. I cannot do this alone.

Dale P
Oregon

* * * * *

Upcoming Nicotine Anonymous Event

Clean in the Catskills 29
Sponsored by the New York Metropolitan Area Intergroup (NYMAI)



October 14–16

This year's theme is
"Dealing with the Feeling"

See flyer for details at
Nicotine-Anonymous.org

Connections

Nicotine Anonymous invites you to connect with our



Penpal Program

Who: Someone like you, who is interested in service work.

What: These are examples of our requests: "I am a suffering nicotine addict and I am addicted to chewing tobacco. I would appreciate any help I can get." Another might be from a person wanting to help others: "I have been smober for a year after smoking for 42 years, and the one-day-at-a-time program worked for me." Or, "I am having a hard time staying quit, and I also have COPD." They provide their e-mail address and a brief blurb about their situation.

When: As soon as possible, and whenever you can provide some support. The e-mails and letters are sent out to connect with them as soon as members request to join. This is about once a week.

Where: E-mails are sent to...

PenPalCoordinator@nicotine-anonymous.org

Coordinates and connects penpals who want to communicate via snail mail.



EmailPalCoordinator@nicotine-anonymous.org



Coordinates and connects pals who want to communicate via email.

Why: Not everyone has access to meetings. This is a great way to connect with other addicts from around the world.

How: Contact either email address above to begin connecting.

NAWSO
Profit & Loss YTD Comparison
January through June

	<u>Jan - June</u> <u>2022</u>	<u>Jan - June</u> <u>2021</u>
Ordinary Income/Expense		
Income		
4000 · Donations	9,344.71	8,962.30
4100 · Literature Sales	13,009.06	16,289.72
4290 · Shipping & Handling Income	3,624.49	4,187.24
4185 · 2021 Conference	—	3,730.27
4186 · 2022 Conference	1,688.44	-1,000.00
4187 · 2023 Conference	-1,500.00	—
Non Profit Income	101.50	35.50
Miscellaneous Income	6.03	7.69
Sales of Product Income	1,445.00	2,260.63
Total Income	\$27,719.23	\$34,473.45
Total Cost of Goods Sold	\$7,082.41	\$9,964.84
Gross Profit	\$20,636.82	\$24,508.61
Expenses		
6000 · Office Expenses	15,085.46	13,796.39
6600 · WSO Expenses	3,325.33	-361.96
6900 · Other Operating Expenses	76.36	61.59
Total Expenses	\$18,487.15	\$13,496.02
Net Operating Income	\$2,149.67	\$11,012.59
Other Income		
8000 · Interest Income	3.86	2.58
Total Other Income	\$3.86	\$2.58
Net Income	\$2,153.53	\$11,015.17

BIRTHDAY CONGRATULATIONS

Carol R – 2/4/98 Alan K – 9/7/94 David W – 10/5/17 Robert S – 10/08/15

David – 10/15/17 Carol B – 9/9/09 Miguel K – 11/16/21

Post your Nicotine Anonymous birthday in **SevenMinutes!**
Send in your first name, last initial and nicotine quit date.

US mail: Nicotine Anonymous World Services
6333 E. Mockingbird Lane
#147-817
Dallas, TX 75214

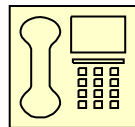
Email: **SevenMinutesEditor@nicotine-anonymous.org**

Nicotine Anonymous Meeting Options

Tradition Three: The only requirement for membership is a desire to stop using nicotine.



Face-to-face meetings



Telephone meetings



Video Conference meetings



Internet meetings

To access NicA meeting information, visit
www.nicotine-anonymous.org
Click **Find Meeting**

Service is the Key

Nicotine Anonymous World Services needs volunteers
for the following open positions:

OUTREACH COMMITTEE

Works on ideas and project development for public outreach
to help carry the message.



AUDIO RECORDINGS COMMITTEE

Creates audio files of NicA literature. Need proof readers and listeners,
sound editors, and narrators with access to a recording studio.



Contact outreachcoordinator@nicotine-anonymous.org

TELE-SERVANTS – ESPECIALLY NEEDED!

Responds to phone calls to share hope with those seeking freedom from nicotine.

TRANSLATORS

Helps us spread the word by translating our
literature, or when non-English inquiries come
to our attention.



INTERNATIONAL GROUP COMMITTEE

Serves to enhance the relationship between NAWS and international groups.
Bi-lingual skills are an asset.

NAME & LOGO PROTECTION COMMITTEE COORDINATOR

Manages the protection of Nicotine Anonymous - its name, logo, and
associated trademarks.



ARCHIVES COORDINATOR

Organizes Nicotine Anonymous materials in order to
preserve our history.

To volunteer, please email chairperson@nicotine-anonymous.org

♥ My Gift of Gratitude ♥

GIVE A "GIFT OF GRATITUDE"

Nicotine Anonymous has always been about helping addicts and saving lives. But it has come to the point where the heart of our organization needs our help. Nicotine Anonymous World Services needs our help to meet its monthly operating expenses. In addition, our contributions would help reach even more addicts through outreach and distribution of Nicotine Anonymous literature.

CONSIDER GIVING BACK TO THE ORGANIZATION THAT HELPED YOU GET FREE OF NICOTINE

Your *Gift of Gratitude* is another way you can work the Steps by carrying the message to nicotine users who still suffer! It also allows World Services to continue functioning through the Seventh Tradition.

HOW WORLD SERVICES SERVES THE NICOTINE ADDICT:

- ♥ Maintains the worldwide meeting list
- ♥ Distributes literature
- ♥ Distributes free Meeting Starter Kits
- ♥ Maintains the web site
- ♥ Publishes our quarterly newsletter, *SevenMinutes*
- ♥ Conducts necessary business of the Fellowship at quarterly Board meetings (three of which are conducted via web conference to conserve our resources)

GET A FREE SUBSCRIPTION TO SEVENMINUTES NEWSLETTER!

And if you give the gift of \$10 a month you will receive a complimentary subscription to our newsletter *SevenMinutes* which includes Fellowship news and member shares.

THINK YOU CAN'T AFFORD IT?

Think of the money we used to spend on tobacco! Just a little of it can go a long way to help us continue to operate. Here are some ways you can give back:

- ♥ Every week, put the cost of one pack of cigarettes in a container
- ♥ Set aside each day's loose change and save in a gratitude jar
- ♥ On your anniversary, send \$10 for each year of freedom (or as much as you can spare!)

4 EASY WAYS TO DONATE!

All gifts are tax deductible as 501(c)3 donations.

1. Click on the button on the homepage of www.nicotine-anonymous.org to donate using PayPal or your credit/debit card (Make a one-time donation, or click on "make this recurring" to set up a monthly donation)
2. Send your donation by paper check to:
Nicotine Anonymous
World Services
6333 E. Mockingbird Ln.
Suite 147-817
Dallas, Texas 75214
3. Set up online monthly bill pay at your bank. (You determine the amount and date of payment. Follow your bank's instructions for setting up recurring payments to payees with no account number.)
4. Make a one-time donation at store.nicotine-anonymous.org

Why members and groups donate to Nicotine Anonymous World Services

Nicotine Anonymous World Services is a member-supported non-profit organization guided by the Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions. We realize there are both practical and spiritual purposes for us to remain a self-supporting fellowship to carry our message of recovery. Honoring our responsibilities is an aspect of our spiritual awakening.

Learn more about contributions & self-support at www.nicotine-anonymous.org



SevenMinutes

NAWS Office
6333 E. Mockingbird Lane
#147-817
Dallas, TX 75214



Publication dates and deadlines for *SevenMinutes* submissions:

Publication Date	Deadline Date for Submissions
March 20	February 1
June 20	May 1
September 20	August 1
December 20	November 1

Need to hold a virtual Intergroup or Committee meeting?

NAWS can assist by using our video conference account to set up NicA-related meetings and providing a link to be emailed to attendees.

Contact
nicahost@nicotine-anonymous.org

This format can also be used internationally.

<p>My Address Has Changed! Don't miss an issue! Complete this form and mail to: NAWSO, 6333 E. Mockingbird Lane, #147-817, Dallas, TX 75214 USA OR Email the information to nicaofficemanager@gmail.com</p> <p><i>My new address and phone is:</i></p>		
NAME		PHONE (WITH AREA CODE)
ADDRESS		
CITY	STATE	ZIP CODE
<i>My old address was:</i>		
ADDRESS		STATE ZIP CODE