



# Seven Minutes

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

Volume XXX

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Number 1

### Interested in contributing to Seven Minutes?

Send letters, articles, stories, poems, artwork, or other material to:  
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#147-817  
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[SevenMinutesEditor@nicotine-anonymous.org](mailto:SevenMinutesEditor@nicotine-anonymous.org)

*All submissions may be edited as necessary for grammar and content.*

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### Chairperson's Report

Another three months have passed and my serenity, thanks to Nicotine Anonymous, continues to expand. We've been busy with multiple aspects of this program, even during the normally quiet months of October through February.

November was the month that we've deemed Gratitude Month. Our Outreach Coordinator, Jeff M, continues to lead this charge and the month definitely did not disappoint. Marathon meetings on the phone and internet occurred and outreach activities at local levels were going on around the world.

One of the primary activities I continue to be involved in, along with about seven or eight other NicA members is the Service Structure Committee. We have had several intense discussions around how to best serve the Nicotine Anonymous members and the still-suffering nicotine addict. Some possibilities have been generated and we hope to discuss these further at the upcoming World Services Conference in May.

Speaking of the conference, the Conference Committee continues to move forward and is putting finishing touches on the event. Registration is up and available for anyone who would like to participate. (See registration flyer on page 9.) Southern California Intergroup of Nicotine Anonymous, or SCINA, will be hosting the event which will take place in Fullerton, California. New literature will be introduced and edits to existing literature will be voted on. I am excited to see my friends from the program and to discuss ways in which we can be an even more effective program for all.

Last but not least, I continue to interact with NicA members across the globe regarding the work they are doing for this program. Translations, new meetings and even donations of literature have been the hot topic lately. I am amazed at the work that goes on and the time that is donated to be of service.

The service and the connection with my higher power are what continue to keep me free of nicotine. I am grateful to be a member of this program and hope everyone continues to do what they can to help themselves, and the still-suffering nicotine addict.

In Service,  
Chad O  
NAWS Chair



We are still looking for a host city for Nicotine Anonymous World Services Conference 2020!



If your intergroup is willing to step up and host the conference, please contact:

[chairperson@nicotine-anonymous.org](mailto:chairperson@nicotine-anonymous.org)

*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.
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 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.
7. Every A.A. group ought to be fully self-supporting, declining outside contributions.
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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.

*Reprinted for adaptation with permission of the A.A. Grapevine*

## Keeping the Flame Burning...

My name is Sharon C and, by the grace of God and our fellowship, I have been smober since 1987. I was a single mom of 4 kids, working full time and going to college, smoking about two packs of cigarettes and drinking about 10 cups of coffee a day. Perfectly normal, right? I was having some health issues that I equated to stress. However one night at work, I had chest pains, rapid heart-beat and trouble breathing so was sent to the emergency room.

After several tests, the doctor said I was fine to go home, but if didn't want the next episode to be the real one, I needed to quit smoking and drinking coffee. Oh, my dear God. I can still feel the initial panic. How could I ever function without my friends to help me?

My heart rate was 210. A wee bit high! Pretty scary, so I was not looking forward to a "next episode" and I was worried about my children. What would happen to them if something happened to me? After serious contemplation it occurred to me, I could use the 12 Steps and a one day at a time philosophy from a program I attended. Just maybe those principles could help me with this.

I was petrified it wouldn't work and petrified it would work. My social network all smoked. In my 12 Step meetings everyone smoked. We all had the cavalier thinking "you got to die of something." I was under a great deal of stress and felt very alone but decided to try again.

Having several prior quit attempts, I set out to do what I had not been able to do before. I could not do it for a whole day, so I broke the day into chunks. I won't smoke now. Now was waking up, after breakfast, morning break, lunch, drive to school, homework, supper, bed-time, whatever time. Whew, I made it through the day and caffeine and nicotine were not part of it.

I was not feeling the greatest physically or emotionally. I persevered and made it through another "not now" day, and another and another. Then I heard

about Nicotine Anonymous. There were no meetings in my area, so I set out to start one. It took a while before we were able to get one going.

I fell in love at my first meeting. We were all new to NicA and I was the only one with some clean time or prior time in another fellowship. It was such a wonderful gift. Many people have come and gone from those meetings and it makes me sad that few currently attend.

About 10 years ago I went to my first World Service Conference. It was not the best experience and yet, I knew I wanted to be part of service beyond leading a meeting or putting out literature. I went to the next conference and had an amazing experience which has been the case for each conference I attended since then. My enhanced network of support and fabulous people I have gotten to know through service and the conferences has enriched my life beyond measure. I love this fellowship, the people in it and am eternally grateful for those who give service so we can keep the flame of smobriety burning.

Sharon C  
Ephrata, PA



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## Seven Minutes Meditation

Today I take time to express my gratitude to my Higher Power.  
Thank you for easing my cravings and giving me the opportunity to experience life today.

- from 90 Days, 90 Ways



**Nica literature**

 available on Kindle at Amazon.com

**Nicotine Anonymous:  
The Book - \$7.99**  
**Our Path to Freedom - \$4.50**  
**A Year of Miracles - \$9.99**  
**90 Days, 90 Ways - \$4.50**

## Romancing The Cigarette...

Temptation is a fact of life. I don't need to tempt temptation though. At meetings I hear from recovering nicotine addicts with long-term quits that they avoid romancing the cigarette.

I have had a few passing thoughts about smoking again. I very quickly put the thoughts out of my mind. I cannot afford to go back there in more ways than one. I would lose the health improvement, financial improvement, greater spiritual connection and improved quality of life I now have.

If I were to think about how great it would be to smoke, I would be believing a lie. For me there was nothing good about using nicotine in any form. The things I once believed like "smoking relieves stress" are all part of "the grand hoax" referred to in Our Promises.

The truth is the only thing smoking does is set up a craving for more. We all know what that means — that we will be using nicotine again. I try to associate all the misery of smoking with that first puff which would take me back to full blown addiction immediately, no matter how long I had been quit. This fact is summed up in the slogan "A puff away from a pack a day."

To me, romancing the cigarette is stinkin' thinkin' and I hope to keep avoiding it for a long time - one day at a time...

Margie L  
Savannah, Georgia

## Step Three Does Work...

Step Three: "Made a decision to turn our will and our lives over to the care of God as we understood Him."

Such a tall order! It was particularly so when I first came into the program. I couldn't imagine giving up control like that. What would life be like? Wouldn't everything just fall apart without me managing things? Sure, it's fine to ask HP for help when desperate, but to turn EVERYTHING over to Him? That seemed extreme.

And so I started with baby steps. I asked for the willingness to attend Nicotine Anonymous meetings and to really listen to what members were saying. I was still smoking, but I could do that much. As I heard the truth each week - about nicotine, and smoking, and quitting - I started to change, ever so slowly. I started to see the folly of continuing to smoke and expecting it wouldn't impact my health. I started to see that lighting up really did shut down my ability to feel emotions. I began to believe that even though I hadn't been able to quit on my own, a Higher Power could help me, if I stopped trying to take over.

So after some months of meetings and failed attempts to quit, I was finally so demoralized that I just gave up. At last I understood that the drug nicotine was far more powerful than me. I completely surrendered and gave it to the God of my understanding. What happened next completely shocked me. I woke up the next day and didn't smoke! All day I didn't smoke. The next day too. And the next. Before long I had weeks, then months, and finally a full year without using any nicotine. I was shocked, relieved, blown away, and very very grateful. My Higher Power really had done for me what I could not do for myself. And that continues to be true today, 26 years later.

Was it easy? No, but it was doable. Yes, I had cravings at times. Yes, I was emotional and anxious many days. That's when the program tools really helped - talking to others who had clean time, working Steps, reading the literature, and of course praying, praying, praying.

It was my first experience with having to rely on something outside myself to make it through. Amazing how that actually works...!

And so began my journey of living in the present, knowing that it's all we really have anyway. Learning to live in spiritual ways, communicating with HP on an ongoing basis, accepting the fact that life simply works better when I don't try to run the show has made its way into my very marrow. An amazing turnaround for a buttoned-up, image-managing smoker like me!

So does Step Three actually work? Why yes! Once I made the fateful decision to turn my will and my life over to the care of God, things really did start looking up. First with the smoking, then with everything else - my work, my family, my friendships, everything. I feel sure that I would not have had such a spiritual awakening without Nicotine Anonymous and the Twelve Steps. God really did use my addiction to shake me awake and show me a better way to live. It truly is a miracle.

Chris H  
Phoenix, AZ



### Upcoming Phone Marathon Meetings

April 1 - *Spring Fling*  
and  
May 28 - *Service is the Key*

Hosted by the FreeBridge  
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: **218-339-2933**  
Pass code: **944982#**

See [nicotine-anonymous.org](http://nicotine-anonymous.org)  
for information on  
all regularly-scheduled  
NicA phone meetings

### Nicotine Anonymous

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

#### Meeting Options:

Face-to-face meetings  
Telephone meetings  
Online meetings

#### To find face-to-face meetings:

Go to [www.nicotine-anonymous.org](http://www.nicotine-anonymous.org)  
Click on **Meetings** and search by state.



#### For phone meetings:

Go to [www.nicotine-anonymous.org](http://www.nicotine-anonymous.org)  
Click on **Meetings**, then  
**Telephone Meetings**.



#### For online meetings:

Go to [www.nicotine-anonymous.org](http://www.nicotine-anonymous.org)  
Click on **Meetings**,  
then **Internet Meetings**.



In this section are live links to two sites offering the ability to post messages and receive responses. Both require the individual to join the site in order to take advantage of some of the extra services, such as searching for specific posts or files.

**Unofficial Nicanon** has "Type Share" meetings. It can be found at: <https://groups.yahoo.com/neo/groups/unofficialnicanon/info>

**Voices of Nicotine Recovery (VONR)** has "Voice Share" meetings using a free chat service that can be downloaded.

VONR can be found at: <http://voicesofnicotinercovery.com>  
This site also has other helpful information about nicotine addiction and links to prior speaker shares.



## NicA Limericks

from the 2018  
NAWS Conference  
"Un-Talent Show"

There once was man from Metropolis  
Who thought his nicotine habit  
was bottomless  
Until Providence stepped in  
He was ready to begin  
And now he's an eternal optimist

\*\*\*\*\*

There once was a kid from Madrid  
Who asked if he could bum a cig  
I told him, "No way, Jose!  
I'm a member of NicA  
And now I'm no longer on the skids!"

\*\*\*\*\*

There once was a man name Sue  
He eventually got the flu  
Smoked even in bed,  
Feared he was dead  
He now has hope in Step Two



- Amy C of PA  
Christine H of NY  
Glenda H of AK

### **Nicotina Anónimos: El Libro**

A Spanish translation of  
*Nicotine Anonymous:  
The Book* is now available  
in the NicA store at [www.nicotine-anonymous.org](http://www.nicotine-anonymous.org)



\$10.50 plus shipping

*This translation was provided by a  
Nicotine Anonymous member.  
Nicotine Anonymous World Services  
accepts it in good faith as the  
member's best effort to stay true to  
the original content and intent of  
**Nicotine Anonymous: The Book.***

Spanish translations of  
NicA pamphlets are also

## Upcoming Nicotine Anonymous Event

### **Voices of Nicotine Recovery (VONR Online Group) 2019 Gathering**

Little Rock, Arkansas  
June 14 - 16, 2019

*For details, see registration  
flyer on the NicA website at  
[nicotine-anonymous.org](http://nicotine-anonymous.org)*

ery, about planning for that first day free of nicotine...Plan? Surrender? Celebrate?

And so I planned to rid my home of any ashtrays, lighters or anything related to my nicotine habit. I sorted and planned to wash the clothing I would wear the first few days of my quit. What day would it be? I was one of the addicts who set a quit date. In meetings, when I announced the date, I was applauded and told to "stay in the middle of the herd" and "take us with you in your pocket." This was reassuring. I had support, which I planned to use by using the tools of the program.

I learned about doing things differently and about changing routines. I planned that first morning to shower, brush my teeth, dress, have a protein drink, and head out the door. In the car on the way to work, I had mints and gum. I drove a different route. At work, I jumped right in. I planned my breaks and what would happen after work. I made it 24 hours! I read *The Serenity Prayer for Nicotine Users* pamphlet, and asked my Higher Power for help, attended meetings, kept myself busy, and lived through the cravings. Being proactive worked, and the support of my fellow nicotine addicts carried me through the first weeks and months.

Now I am celebrating many years nicotine-free!

Aimee C  
Little Rock, Arkansas

## From the *SevenMinutes* Archives

*The article below first appeared in our  
June 2016 issue.*

### Being Proactive...

After a bajillion failed attempts at quitting, I was in a Nicotine Anonymous meeting and it finally dawned on me that to successfully put the nicotine down, I would have to plan ahead. And so began my journey into recovery. How did it begin? With Step One, admitting I was powerless over nicotine. Then came the awareness of just how powerless I was. The more I attended meetings, the more I came face to face with the fact that I could not control my addiction.

Attending meetings totally wrecked my smoking. I no longer enjoyed — no, I hated — smoking. Clearly it was robbing me of me life. As I continued to show up at meetings, the agony of my unrelenting addiction continued. I straddled that fence of appeasing the cravings and hating myself for giving in.

It appeared the only way out was to go through it and face the cravings, emotionality and turmoil. I had the unconditional love and support of the god of my understanding, my fellow nicotine addicts and my sponsor. They understood what I was going through. I heard about surrendering, about celebrating recov-



### Quote Corner

"Through trust in our  
Higher Power,  
we found that we were  
taken care of in  
surprising and simple ways."

- *Nicotine Anonymous:  
The Book*

## Life Is Good...

### How it was...

I was born into a household of smokers, and believe my mother smoked while carrying me. I was a 6-pound baby, the fourth and last child and only daughter. My parents told me I cried for the first six months after being born. I've always wondered if I was in withdrawal from nicotine.

My mother was clinically depressed and both parents drank and smoked quite a lot. The family was pretty dysfunctional, so I was an unhappy child, always believing that there was something else out there, but never for me.

### Some memories from childhood:

- When I was about 10 years old my father gave me and my brother small packs of cigarettes that were given out on an airplane. We went off to smoke them. I have no memory of what happened. I believe he was hoping we would get very sick and never smoke again.

- I loved paper and would go through the wastebasket next to the desk to get unused paper so I could draw on it or make stuff with it. My mother emptied the ashtrays into the wastebasket and I remember the papers were covered with butts and ashes. I thought nothing of brushing that off; that was normal in our house.

- Many of the pieces of wood furniture had circular dark spots on them. I now know that these were cigarette burns when they fell out of ashtrays, or hands....

- Occasionally my parents had parties. My job was to fill all the containers with cigarettes for the guests from my parents' cartons of cigarettes. They also had individual silver ashtrays for each person at the dinner table.

- I was told not to smoke by parents. My mother showed me the tar deposit behind her lower teeth, which I thought was gross. I also remember wondering why she didn't quit. She told me she couldn't.

- I had a boyfriend in high school who smoked. He gave me drags from his cigarettes. I thought his smoking was very cool and romantic. And I loved the taste of cigarettes when we kissed.

- At 19 I went to France for a third-year-abroad and was far enough away from home that I finally picked up cigarettes. I started with blonde tobacco, but quickly graduated to very strong French cigarettes that turned my teeth black. I've wondered if I was already addicted to cigarettes, having lived with the smoke all my life, and now that I was away from home, missed them. Maybe homesickness, maybe addiction, were the reasons I started to smoke.

I moved in with my non-smoking boyfriend at age 25. I smoked in the house, in bed, everywhere without thinking of him or considering his feelings. He didn't like it, but he didn't nag me about quitting. I knew smoking was "bad" and that I "should" quit. I continually tried to quit, planning to have my last cigarette at night before bed, and thinking that the next morning I would just wake up and not want to smoke. Of course I couldn't handle the withdrawal and immediately picked up again. I didn't believe I had a choice.

I did quit for 3 months at one point and after that my boyfriend didn't want me to smoke in the house any more. I agreed. Plus, I enjoyed smoking outside alone in the dark. I enjoyed smoking on breaks with other smokers. I liked the image of being an outcast. I liked the isolation. That lifestyle fit with my discomfort at being alive.



### What happened...

I got to a point where I hated myself for smoking. I woke up every morning with a horrible cough; I lived with someone who did not like it; it was more and more vilified socially. I continued defending myself, saying I preferred hanging outside with the smokers. I knew it was bad but I enjoyed it. I was also depressed, so smoking fit in

with my whole self-image of someone who wasn't worth being alive anyway. (And I was unaware that I was medicating my depression with nicotine.)

My parents died one year apart when I was around 35. My father went first with esophageal cancer. I was fortunate to be able to see and talk to him before he died, however I wasn't present for his death. My mother died the following year of diverticulitis complicated by emphysema. Watching her go through an excruciating month of not being able to breathe, being on a respirator, and not being able to survive without it, and after being one of her children who participated in the decision to take her off life support, I decided that I didn't want to end my life that way, so I started trying in earnest to quit.

Shortly after my mom died, I bought a business and knew that with the stress, I couldn't quit right away. Eventually about a year later I joined the quit-smoking class at a hospital, went through their 10-week program and quit. I stayed nicotine-free for about 6 months. Then I started bumming cigarettes while hanging out with my friends, figuring that I could smoke just one.

Pretty soon I was engineering visits to my friends who were only too happy to let me have some of their cigarettes. Eventually in addition to bumming cigarettes, I started driving across town to buy one or two for 25 cents each. This went on for quite a while. Meanwhile I was in therapy dealing with all my family of origin issues, and the issue of smoking came up. Once I told my therapist, "I'm not really smoking, I just cheat once in a while." She said, "Catherine, you are smoking." So after the session I went to the store and bought a pack of cigarettes. And my smoking began again.

I started hiding my smoking from my partner rather than be honest about it. I smoked outside when he wasn't around, holding the cigarette above my head so the smoke wouldn't get on me, then rinsed my mouth and washed my hands with soap each time. I hid the butts in a coffee can I kept outside.

*continued on page 7*

When I ran out of smokes, I pulled butts from the can — or I rolled new cigarettes from the tobacco in the butts. This was where I believe I was really hitting bottom. I was also willing to snag butts on the street that were long enough. Or, if I was near a sand ashtray outside an office building, I often found good ones there.

I think about the lengths I went to in order to avoid dealing with the fact that I was smoking again, and the lengths I went to hide it. Every time I picked up a smoke I hated myself. I told myself I was weak and that if I couldn't quit, I was a horrible person and a loser. I had no idea about addiction, and certainly I couldn't be addicted. That was for losers. (Someone once told me the saying, "Only an addict can look down on you from the gutter." That definitely applied to me.)

My brother was a drug and alcohol addict, and after a couple of stints in jail, he got into AA and got sober. My aunt was also an alcoholic and smoker and she had gotten sober through AA. She had led my parents to AA. I was amazed when my mother made amends to me. (They eventually started drinking again.) Seeing how well my aunt was doing as well as the dramatic change in my newly-sober brother, I decided to check out an AA meeting (even though at the time I didn't consider myself an alcoholic. It took me another 19 years before I joined AA). A friend of mine took me to an AA meeting at what was then the Mandana House in Oakland, a building that housed many Twelve Step meetings. The meeting blew me away. I felt like I had found my people. However, I knew I wasn't an alcoholic. I found out there were also Nicotine Anonymous meetings though and there was one in that building. I also discovered there was another meeting closer to my house. I went to that meeting on a Friday night. It was very small, and all men. That scared me but I decided to try the meeting at Mandana House the following Monday to see if I felt more comfortable there.

That day, February 9, 1999, I had my last cigarette at 3:00 pm and never had another. I know now that I was really ready to quit, and I knew that I would

be able to with the support of that Monday night meeting, a big meeting with lots of women. While I was there the first night, the secretary sent a "Promises" brochure around the room and everyone signed it with their name and phone number. I wasn't sure what that was for. At the end of the meeting Bonnie, who was sitting next to me, handed me the brochure. I said, "What's this?" She said, "That's for you." I had hoped that I was invisible in that meeting and that no one could see me or my pain. I was not only seen, but told I was supported by everyone who wrote their number down. I feel very fortunate that I didn't slip, that I was able to maintain my sobriety from that day on.

Because I wanted to do the Steps and hadn't been successful in finding a sponsorship relationship that worked (there were very few women with time when I was coming up in NicA), I decided to see if any others wanted to participate in a Step Study workshop. I got 5 volunteers, and we were 3 men and 3 women. We met once a month at someone's house, read the Step, and then shared what was going on with us, as well as having conversation. It was a great group and I really enjoyed going through the Steps that way. I'm glad NicA now has a Step Study Workbook to help others go through the Steps.

I found the following tools in the program were particularly helpful:  
- The *Serenity Prayer for Nicotine Users* pamphlet. As soon as I realized that I *could* choose not to smoke while feeling the pangs of withdrawal, I felt empowered to take a little more control of my life, and power through those cravings. This was key for me.

- "The craving will pass whether you smoke or not." This was also key. I think I believed I couldn't live without cigarettes. And in some way since I was using them to medicate my feelings and experience of life, I can understand why I was so afraid of quitting, even though I desperately wanted to. But I was able to make it through each craving. And they lessened, the longer I was off cigarettes.

- The meetings. Wow. The meetings. Hearing other peoples' shares, and being able to share in a room where no



one would laugh at me, tell me I was wrong, or make me leave! The meeting I attended once a week (there weren't all that many - and still aren't - in the Bay Area) had lots of variety. We studied the Steps once a month, did a writing meditation once a month, read various literature and had a speaker. The variety made the meetings interesting. I often found that even though some evenings I really didn't want to go, when I did, I felt renewed and more committed.

- Service. Service kept me going to the meetings. I started as treasurer, and moved on from there. We had a conference in Berkeley very early in my recovery (about a year after I quit), so I joined Intergroup and volunteered to help with the conference. At the conference I volunteered to edit *Seven Minutes*. The editor had stepped down and I had some skills through my job. I also continued to do service for the Intergroup and my meeting. I went to a Board meeting that was held in my area and volunteered to fill in as secretary when someone else had resigned. All these experiences strengthened my program, helped me meet lots and lots of ex-smokers and share our experience, strength and hope with each other. And I saw the Traditions in action at the Board meetings. That was really fun. I enjoyed my time on the Board, and recommend it to anyone who wants to solidify their sobriety. And going to a conference and attending the gratitude meeting is an amazing experience. You get to meet people from all over the country who are nicotine-free and doing service for you, your Intergroup, and your meetings.

- The Steps. Although I didn't work the

*continued on page 8*

Steps, I found that they have helped me in my daily life. The experience of examining how I was leading my life, making amends, looking inward and making changes to be a better human being has been a strength I carry with me to this day.

#### *How it is now...*

It's been a long time since I quit. My husband tells me that I was not very much fun to be around. I barely remember what it was like. I do remember that when I smelled another smoker I was alternately repelled and so attracted that I wanted to grab him and sniff him to death.

One of the first physical things that happened was my clinical depression that I was self-medicating with nicotine hit me with a vengeance. I sank into a very deep black hole. I was convinced by friends and health-care professionals to see a doctor; I got on anti-depressants which really made a huge difference in my life.

Secondly, my sense of smell came back, but also with a vengeance: every odor was overwhelmingly powerful and not always pleasant. That evened out, however. I also seemed to have an upsurge of allergies after quitting, but these are now mostly under control. All these physical symptoms indicate to me how powerful nicotine is, and how I used it to mask not only emotional feelings but physical feelings as well.

Eventually I realized I felt good, and healthy. My morning cough went away. I could hike and take long walks without being winded. I do have asthma, however, which I attribute to smoking for 20 years. And studies have shown that children who grow up in smoking households are more likely to develop asthma.

I remember the day I woke up and realized I was happy to be alive. That was an incredible day. I credit this feeling to quitting smoking, joining NicA, and through NicA turning my life around. Going through the Steps, attending meetings, doing *lots* of service over the years has kept me sane and close to the support I have needed.

My life has become worth living. NicA gave me the tools to face my issues, apologize when I screw up, and live ethically and with integrity. I try to look at my side of the street and have stopped telling others to clean up theirs. I have tried to be honest and work out issues instead of carrying resentments which eat away at me and make me unhappy. I will admit it took me a long time to get to AA, but that's another story. Suffice it to say, I'm glad I finally stopped alcohol. I do have to say that I am happier at this point in my life than I have ever been. I'm not saying that challenges and issues don't come up - I am alive, after all - but I am more able to deal with them without getting all bent out of shape.

Life is good. Thank you, NicA.

*Catherine C  
Berkley, CA*

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## Help Wanted

### *Nicotine Anonymous World Services is in need of your assistance!*

*We are looking for devoted individuals  
who would like to bring their  
recovery to the next level.*

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

#### Seeking the following help:

**Teleservices Coordinator:** Responsible for receiving messages left to 1-877-TRY-NICA and forwarding messages to team members for follow-up. Requires email address and computer skills.

**Graphic Designer:** Responsible for working with literature team to design and update our new and existing materials. Should have knowledge of Adobe InDesign®.

**Logo and Trademark Protection Committee:** Responsible for ensuring the Nicotine Anonymous name and logo are being used as directed. Requires computer skills to track and contact those using our name/logo.

## "Thoughts" from the Free Bridge Telephone Group



"There's nothing either good nor bad but thinking makes it so."

- William Shakespeare

In active addiction, I was always mentally obsessed with nicotine. My every waking thought was consumed by using nicotine, or how to get nicotine. For example, I might think, *"All I can think about is smoking. I'll never stop missing cigarettes."*

I have learned that the life I want begins with my thoughts. I try not to buy into a negative, self-defeating mindset. I discovered I could train my thoughts.

My mind believes what I tell it, so I pay attention to what I'm thinking. When I hear a self-defeating thought pop up, I replace it immediately with one that is beneficial. I replace words like *I can't* with statements of **I can** and **I am**.

- I talk to myself with love and compassion.
- I self-soothe.
- I say the Serenity Prayer over and over.
- I say to myself, "I'm a puff away from a pack a day" over and over and over.
- I use one of the 5 Ds - in particular, "Delay." I can smoke in 20 minutes if I still want to.
- I flip the thought and ask God to help me.
- I stop the war in my head and I return to the breath.

If I want to change my life,  
I change my thoughts.



**Nicotine Anonymous World Services  
34th Annual Conference  
Fullerton, California May 3rd-5th, 2019**

Howard Johnson Hotel and Conference Center  
222 W. Houston Avenue, Fullerton, CA 92832  
Phone: 714-992-1700

Mention "Nicotine Anonymous" when making reservations  
via phone for group rate \$92 (+ taxes and/or fees).  
Must reserve before April 20, 2019 to get discounted rate.  
Rates not guaranteed after this date.

Closest Airports: LAX or John Wayne (SNA)

**REGISTER WITH CREDIT CARD OR PAYPAL!**

NicAWSC.homestead.com

For questions or information, Call (800) 642-0666

OR COMPLETE AND MAIL TO: Mary P. 700 East Lake Drive #78, Orange, CA 92868  
Make checks payable to SCINA with "Conference" in the comment section.

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_

CITY, STATE, ZIP CODE: \_\_\_\_\_

PHONE: \_\_\_\_\_ E-MAIL: \_\_\_\_\_

Early registration is available before April 1st, 2019	Before 4/1	After 4/1	Total #	Total
Registration	\$35	\$40		\$
Saturday Night Banquet	\$40	\$45		\$
Sunday Spirituality Brunch	\$30	\$35		\$
Special! All-In-One Package: (Registration, Saturday Banquet, and Sunday Brunch)	\$95	\$105		\$
NAWS 2019 Conference Total Registration Amounts:				\$

Optional Donations

Nicotine Anonymous World Services	\$		
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# 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

PenPal Coordinator - Paper: [PenPalCoordinator@nicotine-anonymous.org](mailto:PenPalCoordinator@nicotine-anonymous.org)

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

Email Pal Coordinator: [EmailPalCoordinator@nicotine-anonymous.org](mailto: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.



## Write a Meditation for a Future Nicotine Anonymous Daily Meditation Book!

Please submit your daily meditation for consideration in an email or Word file to:

[DailyMeditations@nicotine-anonymous.org](mailto:DailyMeditations@nicotine-anonymous.org)

Subject line 'Nicotine Anonymous Meditation'

or mail to:

Attn: Daily Meditations Coordinator

Nicotine Anonymous WSO

6333 E. Mockingbird #147-817

Dallas, TX 75214

Please include your telephone number, email, and snail mail address — to be used only in case we have questions. Please also include your nicotine quit date so your meditation can be placed on or near that date in the book. (All contact info and authorship will be kept confidential in accordance with the 11<sup>th</sup> Tradition.)

The format for new daily meditations follows the format used in the book *A Year of Miracles*. The text can contain 100-200 words, including the quote, the member's share, and the concluding statement, "Today, \_\_\_\_\_."

Nicotine Anonymous daily meditations are best when related to the personal experience, strength, and hope of a member and/or supported by principles of recovery based on the Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions of Nicotine Anonymous, Our Preamble, or text from our literature.

The quote can be from a Nicotine Anonymous member (to be cited as "Nicotine Anonymous member") or from what is considered as "in the public domain for Fair Use" and citing the author.

*Please note:*

- Contributors waive their right to financial compensation and grant all rights to Nicotine Anonymous World Services.
- Meditations submitted may be edited as necessary for grammar and content.

Thank you for your service!

**NAWSO**  
**Profit & Loss YTD Comparison**  
**January through December**

	<u>Jan - Dec</u> <u>2018</u>	<u>Jan - Dec</u> <u>2017</u>
<b>Ordinary Income/Expense</b>		
<b>Income</b>		
4000 · Donations	13,504.08	12,108.53
4100 · Literature Sales	25,844.79	24,790.54
2018 Conference	1,614.38	-1,000.00
2019 Conference	-1,250.00	—
4290 · Shipping & Handling Income	4,090.16	4,023.72
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>\$43,803.41</b>	<b>\$42,252.03</b>
<b>Cost of Goods Sold</b>		
<b>Total COGS</b>	<b>\$11,146.39</b>	<b>\$11,039.72</b>
<b>Gross Profit</b>	<b>\$32,657.02</b>	<b>\$31,212.31</b>
<b>Expenses</b>		
6000 · Office Expense	25,056.46	25,534.98
6600 · Officer Travel & Meeting Costs	5,378.48	5,669.32
6700 · Projects	564.35	590.00
6900 · Other Operating Expense	91.37	—
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>\$31,090.66</b>	<b>\$31,794.30</b>
<b>Net Operating Income</b>	<b>\$1,566.36</b>	<b>\$-581.99</b>
<b>Other Income</b>		
8000 · Interest Income	52.01	47.68
<b>Total Other Income</b>	<b>\$52.01</b>	<b>\$47.68</b>
<b>Net Income</b>	<b><u>\$1,618.37</u></b>	<b><u>\$-534.31</u></b>

## BIRTHDAY CONGRATULATIONS

**Mary L – 3/1/92    Jeff F – 3/25/92    Guenevere K – 4/1/02**  
**Robin S – 4/1/12    Sylvia D – 5/15/94    Lisa L – 5/6/02    Stefanos G – 5/1/07**

*Post your Nicotine Anonymous birthday in **SevenMinutes!***

*Send in your first name, last initial and nicotine quit date.*

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

Email: [SevenMinutesEditor@nicotine-anonymous.org](mailto:SevenMinutesEditor@nicotine-anonymous.org)



**@nawsoutreach** is the new Twitter presence for Nicotine Anonymous. We are looking to use social media to stay in touch with those involved in helping nicotine users everywhere. Got ideas for using social media to help us carry the message? Call Jeff at [760-401-6503](tel:760-401-6503).

HAVE AN IDEA FOR A PUBLIC SERVICE ANNOUNCEMENT? Draft the text for a 15 or 30 second audio PSA, or create your own audio file! For more information, contact: [chairperson@nicotine-anonymous.org](mailto:chairperson@nicotine-anonymous.org)

Is your group in need of newcomers? Try an Outreach project to get the word out! For more information, send an email to [chairperson@nicotine-anonymous.org](mailto:chairperson@nicotine-anonymous.org)

# Service is the Key

Nicotine Anonymous World Services is in need of volunteers to take on the following open positions:

## **OUTREACH COMMITTEE**

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



## **TELEPHONE SERVANTS—ESPECIALLY NEEDED!**

From the comfort of your own home, you can respond to telephone calls from those who are just starting out on their path to freedom.

## **PEN PAL COORDINATOR**

Coordinates and connects with penpals who want to communicate via the postal service.



## **TRANSLATORS**

Help us spread the word by translating our literature, or when foreign-speaking inquiries come to our attention.

## **INTERNATIONAL GROUP COMMITTEE**

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

**All service positions information is in the Policy and Procedures Manual (P&P)**

The P&P is posted on our web site under the "About Us" tab, then click on "Archives."

To volunteer or get more information about any of these service positions, please contact

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

Or e-mail [chairperson@nicotine-anonymous.org](mailto:chairperson@nicotine-anonymous.org)

Rev. 11/2017

# ♥ 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](http://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](http://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](http://www.nicotine-anonymous.org)



# Seven Minutes

**NAWSO**  
6333 E. Mockingbird Lane  
#147-817  
Dallas, TX 75214



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## 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

Nicotine Anonymous has a venue to conduct Board Meetings, Intergroups, and Committee Meetings online, with or without telephone capabilities.

If you are a member of a group that is helping Nicotine Anonymous and want to utilize this technology, contact Chick at [nicahost@gmail.com](mailto:nicahost@gmail.com)

Individual training is available to learn this venue.

*This online meeting format can also be used internationally.*

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