

Chairperson's Year-End Report

Dear Friends,

The most significant item to report is that our **financial condition** appears to be very solid. Thanks to the efforts of **Joe S.**, who has completely revamped our accounting procedures, we are able to realistically compare our numbers from last year and observe some growth in literature sales and a decline in our expenses. The latter is mainly thanks to the paid service of **Mike K.** in the areas of literature production and fulfillment.

GMK continues to serve as our **contracted secretarial and administrative service** accepting literature orders, keeping our books, updating the Worldwide directory and handling some correspondence by regular and electronic mail. The one area that has been problematic has been in regards to the timeliness and accuracy of the WWML. In an effort to correct this, our annual mailing to the groups this year included a **new confirmation letter** in place of the traditional add/change/delete form. In addition, **Jim L.** of Minnesota and I will be double-checking the quarterly updates to prevent further errors. **Gail** and **Robert** are exceptionally gracious and helpful. I am certain that with continued cooperation between GMK and Nicotine Anonymous these problems will be resolved.

Efforts to get the word out about "**Delegates-Only**" voting at this year's conference included notifying our members in the annual mailing to all groups, SevenMinutes, NAWSIG News, on our website, and via email to those in my address book which at this point numbers approximately 250 members.

I am delighted to inform you of two exciting changes. First, thanks to the efforts of **Scott J.**, we now have a **toll-free number** for our fellowship! In order to keep costs to a minimum while having the benefit of this outreach tool, the Board voted to have a one-minute outgoing message which announces our mailing address, phone number and website address. At present we are not publicizing this number but hopefully we will issue a press release to help get the word out post-conference.

The other news is that we are now able to accept **literature orders by credit card**. Originally, this system was established to reduce the discrepancy in cost for our members overseas for whom making purchases using US funds was significantly more expensive. However, this will also make it easier for all of us to purchase literature and SevenMinutes subscriptions using Visa and Mastercard by fax and regular mail. (Look for ordering information on our revised literature order form in your packets.)

In keeping with the motion from last year's conference, surveys were sent out to members asking for feedback on whether we should formally **adopt an**

abbreviation of our name. I am very pleased that so many people responded. (Results are included in your packets and will be discussed at the workshop.)

Other highlights from the year....

- Thanks to **Clare M.**, our **website** now includes a list of all Intergroups. In addition, our Starter's Kit is posted on the web which not only makes starting a meeting more accessible to people, but reduces costs for World Services since this is an expensive item we do not charge for. Thanks to **Stefan L.** we now have the Preamble, Steps and Traditions in Swedish; there is a Spanish page which includes "The Serenity Prayer for Smokers;" and **Yves L.** recently translated our two new pamphlets into French which will be posted shortly.
- Our appreciation to **Bob F.** for his service on integrating the changes suggested by the workshop participants last year on "**Facing the Fatal Attraction.**" They were then given to **Checko M.**, literature coordinator, who has once again done a fabulous job with this pamphlet and will also be leading the two workshops to inform us of **other proposed changes to our literature.** We will have a chance to look at **a new pamphlet** originally suggested by **Gary M.** and his wife entitled, "Are you Concerned about Someone who Smokes or Chews Tobacco?"
- **Mike K.** has recently sent out a mailing to lapsed **SevenMinutes subscribers** yielding good results. (Do you subscribe to SevenMinutes or is your subscription up? Feel free to sign up or renew before you leave this weekend! The order blank is at the bottom of the literature order form.)
- **Robin L.** is leading a committee to **revise Nicotine Anonymous: The Book** which has completed its first round of editing Parts I and III. The workshop she will be leading at the conference will seek to get more input from members and further direction with tense and style, among other things.
- Thanks to the efforts of **John O.**, Emeritus Chair and Acting **Teleservice Coordinator**, our phone system has been entirely revamped. We now have a mailbox system so callers can access information about our program by region. He has also assembled a group of approximately 30 servants who are each assigned a particular day of the week for each region and World Services requests. As a result of this streamlined process, we can handle more telephone inquiries and direct them more appropriately. (**Teleservice Coordinator is a position we MUST fill** by the end of the conference. Would you like to assume this job? Please see John O. for more information.)
- The **Written Traditions** Committee, also headed up by **John O.**, has submitted a first draft of six traditions. Copies are included in this packet for your review.

- The Board voted to have **business cards** printed and sold by World Services. In NY and S. California, for example, the local Intergroups print such cards. But in smaller areas that cannot afford this, we are hoping to make this outreach tool accessible.
- A request for members to **post their email addresses** on our website and/or for distribution to email and teleservants has yielded approximately 20 volunteers. If you are interested in making your email address available for this purpose, please see Scott J. or me.
- **The Board approved policy in the following areas:**
Established an annual prudent reserve of \$20,000; Instituted a cap on the dollar amount any one individual may make of \$2,000 per year; Resolved that financial statements be included in each issue of SevenMinutes; Instituted procedure for extending credit on literature orders; Eliminated links to any outside groups or entities from our webpage or from email responses; Decreased from three to two times a week the number of times our mail is picked up and forwarded from San Francisco; Voted to formally trademark our logo; Adopted a policy for literature reprints.

I'd like to extend our deep appreciation to several outgoing servants: **Clare M.** (Web); **Stan B.** (Networking); **Gina F.** (Email Coordinator); and **Amy C.** (Email Penpal) and welcome **Bill H., Bob W., Alan K.** and **Brenda F.** with much gratitude. Our appreciation to those who have been serving and continue to do so: **Checko M.** (literature); **Bill C.** (Traditions Coordinator); **Kim J.** (SevenMinutes Editor) **Mike K.** (SevenMinutes Publishing); **Pat L.** (Penpal Coordinator); **Ed T.** (2001 Conference Chair); **Jim L.** (Web/html); and **Robin L.** (Book Coordinator). Kudos to **Kent B.** and the rest of the Conference XV Committee for their inexhaustible energy, patience and commitment. Our deep gratitude to the many other servants on email and teleservice, translators, and other committee members too numerous to list here who are involved in World Services. My deepest gratitude to my fellow officers: **John O., Cat H., John N., Donna E., Joe S., Scott J., Michelle S.** and **Jack R.** for their support. It has been a privilege to work with this team and I am humbly grateful for the opportunity to have been of service.

Martha K.
Chairperson
Nicotine Anonymous World Services

Literature Coordinator Report

The following pamphlets have been revised, submitted to the NAWS board, and approved for Conference vote:

1. *To The Newcomer and Sponsorship in Nicotine Anonymous*
2. *Slogans - To Help Us Be Happy, Joyous and Free - Living Without Nicotine*
3. *Introducing Nicotine Anonymous*
4. *Introducing Nicotine Anonymous to the Medical Profession*

The board will vote at the Friday, April 28th board meeting whether to approve for Conference vote or only submit as a work in progress for workshop discussion, the following revised pamphlet: *Facing the Fatal Attraction*

Wrote a new pamphlet, which the board approved for Conference vote, (and Mike K. has formatted and fit into a pamphlet) titled: *Are You Concerned About Someone Who Smokes or Chews Tobacco: For the Friends and Family of Nicotine Addicts*

Asked (and received some) that members write down and send me their experience, strength and hope (3-5 succinct sentences) as a contribution toward material for a new pamphlet offered to newcomers titled: *Climbing the Walls To Freedom - The First 90 Days*

The following pamphlets were revised and submitted to the board, but it was decided not to bring them to the Conference at this time:

1. *Tips For Gaining Freedom From Nicotine*
2. *A Nicotine User's View Of The Twelve Steps*
3. *The Serenity Prayer For Smokers*
4. *To The Dipper or Chewer*

Thanks for letting me serve,
Checko M

Penpal Coordinator

Apologies for the delay. I had hoped to be attending the conference, even fly down w/Bill, but alas ~ perhaps next year..... boo hoo! Anyway, during this last quarter I have responded to 5 requests for penpals. In addition, my service as the weekend teleservant for the east coast has provided me with an opportunity to pass the penpal list along to those folks as well.

In humble service,
Pat L.

Traditions Committee Report

As the year began, the committee members included Reggie R, Mike K, Ken S. and myself as coordinator. We were primarily responsible for reviewing a pre-publication draft of *SevenMinutes*. Kim would send a copy to Reggie R. and

myself via snail mail while Mike K. and Kenny S. got theirs by E-mail. I coordinate with Reggie in NY and then call Kim with our combined review and ask about the other members comments or concerns. Mike and Kim are always discussing the latest publication and this method has been working. Overall, the articles submitted were well written and did not require much editing due to traditions.

In July, discussions about registering on-line meetings and other electronic entities began to raise questions about traditions and each item was handled on an individual basis as it surfaced. Since new and revised literature was not as significant as it was last year, there was not as much activity for the committee this year as compared to last year.

As we moved into October, Michelle S. was welcomed as the committee's fifth member., Except for *SevenMinutes*, I had ventured into the E-mail world. Kim was still snail-mailing me and I responded by phone. Since I was now entering my third year on the committee and second as coordinator, I made a request that some other member take over that role.

More questions and opinions were cropping up as a result of our expansion into the electronic world. It began to get a little hectic sometimes when a controversial topic came up and the five-member committee needed to give one opinion. Since E-mail allows instantaneous questions and multiple comments and opinions, at times one member was asked to give a response. As an example, much time was spent drafting an opinion in answer to an inquiry that involved Tradition Seven and the suitability of a group's offering of certain materials. There were times I personally had difficulty keeping track of the issues, much less the varied opinions or the applicable Traditions. At times conclusions remained elusive. In late November I responded to Martha and Scott with my thoughts on some of the issues and what I believed were the appropriate Traditions.

As we entered the new millenium, we were listing all registered Internet meetings, just the same as any traditional meeting. Concerns with traditions caused us to change our policy to not link to anything, including Intergroups, to avoid having to police those sites. However many concerns and questions continue to surface with respect to our role in the electronic world.

As a result of the concerns raised and still being raised, a workshop on "The Traditions and Our Electronic Fellowship" will be available at the Conference to address these topics. Next stop Scottsdale!

In service,
Bill C.

Networking Coordinator

Greetings from the East End my friend. The info you require on the networking besides getting it all on disk and going through the papers and making sure it all checks out is about all that I've done besides making a few inquires and return E-mails to our new friend Betul in Turkey, Nice seeing you the other nite as always hope all is well

Love+Service

Bob

Secretary-Elect Report

The Policy and Procedures Manual has been expanded and updated over the last year reflecting many changes made by the Board. The officers worked diligently to bring the P&P as up to date as possible. However, there will never be a "final" copy of the P&P because the program is constantly growing and changing. Updates will continue to be made after each board meeting. I will have my most recent copy at the conference for those who would like to look it over. I look forward to serving as your active secretary this upcoming year. I will have more time to devote to service because (God willing!) I will no longer be a student! (please pray for me to do well on my finals next week! thanks!)

Peace,
Michelle

Email Coordinator

As email servant from 9/3/99 - 2/18/00 I answered 28 inquires.

During the month of March, 2000, my first full month as email coordinator, there were 167 responses from servants or about 5 a day as an average.

Alan K.

Email Coordinator

Gina F.

	January 1999	February	March	April	May	June	
Volunteer	13	7	5				
Meeting Changes	10						
Admin	1					2	
Regular	258	154		125	152	134	
Meeting Starter Kit		9	3	4	3	4	
TOTALS	282	170	8	129	155	140	884
	July 1999	August	September	October	November	December	
Volunteer	4	1	2				
Meeting Changes		3	4				
Admin	6	17	9	15	9	4	
Regular	143	119	117	107	178		
Meeting Starter Kit	6	12	10	4		1	
Translations	4	4	2	11	1	2	
Pen Pals		47	23	10	2		
Undeliverable Msg		1		1			
Literature	3						
Chips	1						
Overseas	1	2					
Often Asked Question		4	1				
TOTALS	168	210	168	148	190	7	891
	January 2000	February 2000	March 2000				
Volunteer							
Meeting Changes	2	4	3				
Admin							
Regular							
Meeting Starter Kit							
Translations							
Pen Pals							
Undeliverable Msg							
Literature							
Chips							
Overseas							

Fulfillment Report

This year has gone screaming by and much of what I had hoped to accomplish has not been attended to. The Fulfillment Operation and SevenMinutes Publications has been accomplished and without too many snags. I have attempted to get specifics of printing equipment with the hopes that a separate publishing part, within Nicotine Anonymous could be established. What I keep running into is the old business principle of outgrowing what we have, but not quite ready for the next step. At any rate if it were possible to establish the publishing entity, trying to get people committed to keeping it in operation is the major drawback. For this reason I have stepped back and tried to refine the operation that I have, in hopes that maybe the membership will present some new members that are willing to get their hands dirty and make a commitment to do so. Barring that I have made a potential commitment to continue what I am doing for one more year. At that point if nothing has come forward it could be that the only alternative to what I am doing is to go back to contractors and hope. As the current board knows this is not to promising, but as always, possible. You are going to have to keep your eyes open for any possibility. The reason for this problem is that it takes me about 4-12 hours in any given week to do what is needed. This is not enough work for a full time employee and in contracting it out, not enough to be profitable to a sub-contractor. Consequently people go in with high hopes, but are soon discouraged and it goes downhill from there.

Your NAWS officers are in the process of further upgrading certain literature, more of which will be revealed at the conference. Getting these changes to our membership as a whole has been my primary focus. Some of the changes will be a little more difficult if you resort to printing as you will have to print in volume to get any kind of affordable price. I have contacted some printers, with bad results. The pamphlets would more than double in cost and possibly more. This is not to say that there isn't a printer out there, more favorable to our needs, just that so far I haven't connected with one yet.

Since I started doing this I have registered at least 200,000 pamphlets on my printer, much more when you consider starter kits, 7 Minutes and other things that I have produced. October 1999, the page count on my printer was 70,000. Recently it was over 350,000. The only problems during the year was due to failure on the part of myself or someone along the line. Other than that we have really produced some astonishing results. GMK, Kim Jannati and your NAWS committee members deserve so much credit for this accomplishment as they did most of it. The real statement is that it IS possible, and together we can do some impossible things. The major part of complaints through the year has usually been due to the impatience of the purchaser. For this reason, recently we started shipping totally by way of the United States Mail. Using a rate chart

favorable to us, we are able to guarantee shipment in equal or less time that United Parcel Service at half the cost or less. The major reason behind staying with UPS, being able to track shipments didn't make sense at the end as in the year and a half that I have been doing this I have tracked maybe 6 shipments. None of these were actually a problem and I usually received an e-mail stating that the goods arrived the next day. Also, if it is necessary it costs \$.30 to put a tracking order on a package if it is felt to be necessary through the USPO. Personally it would be cheaper to reship all 6 shipments that were questioned than to continue paying the UPS charges.

SevenMinutes (Publishing)

SevenMinutes is the same. We have increased the subscribers by almost 100 in the last quarter. That is very encouraging and I know all of us that are involved with SevenMinutes feel better. Kim continues to provide a good Newsletter. This quarter it is a 12 pager. It won't cost that much more I don't think and might be a key to getting more readers. The mailing that was done in March is really working and I believe it might be practical to send a card or even that letter that I sent. I go for the letter because it has a subscription blank which won't be on a card. It makes it a little easier for someone. If they don't have a subscription blank it is too easy to not do it and then it just doesn't happen. I believe that if you were able to check on the mailing, that was probably the major reason behind the results we have gotten.

We MUST insist that all information is in by 15 days prior to the day the newsletter is set to go out. At present it is the 10th of April and it is still in the making. Due to holding for information that we never got I was unable to print it until April 1. However since then I went into the shop on the 3rd with every intention of producing the newsletter, only to find that my computer had crashed over the weekend. (I leave it on in case GMK wants to fax anything.) Anyway I got that solved and since then have had problems at the shop with personnel that has taken all that I have to get through it. I thought I was going to be able to finish it today, and I went in and 2 people didn't show up so I got nowhere. Hopefully it will be in the mail by the 15th.

Part of maintaining your readership, is to be timely so that they can anticipate it being in their mailbox. When I first started in 1992 subscribers were dropping like flies, saying don't order SevenMinutes you never get anything. It is a far cry from that but can be better, but only if we diligently do what should be done. If there are any questions let me know and I will try to answer them before the conference. Thanks for letting me be of service.

Yours in Smobriety,
Mike Kerrigan

Seven Minutes (Editor)

SevenMinutes is really going strong these days. Thanks to our wondrous chair's solicitation we had plenty of articles of experience, strength and hope to include in the last two issues. The very last one (April) was 12 pages long and we had several articles that we had to save back for the July issue! The January issue was 10 pages long!

Thanks to a mailing from **Mike K.**, our subscriptions are up as well. We send *SevenMinutes* out to over 350 people each quarter!

Some of the problems we encounter deal with getting reports from other people or groups and many of those are because they are on a different schedule from us. Here is our production schedule:

<u>Issue</u>	<u>Deadline</u>	<u>To Traditions</u>	<u>To Print</u>
JANUARY	November 1	November 10 – 15	December 1
APRIL	February 1	February 10 – 15	March 1
JULY	May 1	May 10 – 15	June 1
OCTOBER	August 1	August 10 – 15	September 1

Kim J.

Committee Report for Nicotine Anonymous: The Book

Various e-mail requests were sent out by Martha K. as World Service Chair, followed by a request from Robin L. coordinator of The Book revisions. Approximately 30 people responded and offered their assistance. Individuals were sent a copy of either a Step or Part One and asked to correct for grammar and to add or expand on the information already provided. Recommended revisions were then compiled into one document and 6 volunteers from the original committee reviewed the revisions and made additional revisions and recommendations. When a group consensus has been taken by the fellowship at the conference and all recommendations are collected, these recommendations will once again be compiled into one document and individuals will be asked to choose their preferred changes. It is a goal of this committee to have something for the fellowship to vote on for the 2001 conference in California. In March, the committee was asked to also begin work on Part 2 The Questionnaire. Beginning work was done by Barbara D. No additional revisions on this part have been completed as of yet.

Issues

A number of issues have come up in the process. These will be discussed in the workshop at the conference

Change of the Steps to refer to God as God and NOT Him in Steps 3, 7, and 11. This would possibly require getting approval from AA.

Step 3 Made a decision to turn our will and life over to the care of God as we understood God (Him)

Step 7 Humbly asked God (Him) to remove our shortcomings.

Step 11- Sought through prayer and meditation to improve our conscious contact with God as we understood God (Him) praying only for the knowledge of God's (His) will for us and the power to carry that out.

- * Referring to God as God or Higher Power only within the text of the book.
- * Using the term Nicoverly when appropriate not only Sobriety. We need to be inclusive of all Nicotine addicts without chasing away the addicts that refers to themselves as Smokers only.
- * The addition of specific prayers, within the text, of each step that an individual can say.
- * Past vs. Present Tense this stirs up a lot of emotions among members of the fellowship. Any change would be ONLY for the text of The Book, and NOT impact the Steps themselves (although that is something that could be discussed). A compromise that was suggested and can be discussed is to keep the book in the past tense, but to write a Nicotine Anonymous 12 and 12. (The AA 12 and 12 is written in the present tense.) A detailed review of this issue will be available on Friday 4/28, if not sooner.

Submitted respectfully by Robin L.

Webservant Report (Bill H.)

As for my quarterly report, I can say only that I changed a few words, added an announcement and am about to add some French translations to the website. Mainly, what I did was to volunteer (or did everyone else step back one pace?) to take over for Clare as Trusted WebServant.

Email Penpal Coordinator

I'm Brenda your new Email Penpal Coordinator. I was honored when I was asked to take on this position in March 2000. Having celebrated my 1st non-smoking birthday after 43 years @ 21/2 packs per day, I am extremely grateful, and would like to pass on the gift of Smobriety I've been to lucky to receive.

So far, I've responded to every inquiry that I've rec'd, each time sending a cc to NAWSO SERVANT. Then in a couple of days, I follow up with those persons, to make sure they have rec'd the Email Penpal List.

At that time I ask them if they'd like to be included on the list. I also ask for some input regarding some ideas that have been brought up such as separating the list into sections i.e. persons who are willing to sponsor, persons that would like to find a sponsor, and persons who only want email friends . I then ask them NOT TO GIVE UP ON THEMSELVES and share a little about my miracle as it unfolds.

I've composed a letter asking the above questions. Next step is to get it out to everyone that is already on the list, including, if they still want to remain on it.

I've rec'd exactly 9 request to date. So, shall we say 1 per week ? I've spoken to folks here in the USA of course, but also Korea, England, and Turkey. How exciting !!! I'm so blessed.

Glad to be in SERVICE,
Brenda

Teleservice Coordinator's Report

This has been a true learning experience for me. Setting up a totally new teleservice system has been a much larger task than I could have ever imagined. While our old teleservice system was serviceable, we needed a new system for the new decade. We also wanted something that could handle the increased call volume once we put our toll-free number online. We certainly have that now.

Our new system now has four mailboxes, all tied into our existing 415-750-0328 phone number. The first mailbox is our general mailbox. The message currently gives our website and mailing info, and gives the option to dial into each of 3 regional mailboxes for the Western, Central and Eastern United States. General World Services messages (starter kits, literature order info, general information) can be left in this mailbox.

Each of the regional mailbox messages lists 3 to 5 intergroup hotline numbers. Many callers are then calling the intergroups directly. Callers from areas not

served by an intergroup can leave a message and someone from their own region of the country will return their call with meeting or contact information.

We currently have nearly 30 teleservants. Each region has 6 active teleservants (one for each weekday and one for the weekend) and one or two subs. We also have 6 servants for our general mailbox. Each region has its own coordinator, currently Martin from San Francisco, Cat from Chicago and Richie from Atlanta. At this point, I am coordinating their efforts, along with the general mailbox servants. The National Coordinator distributes information through the regional coordinators and maintains the mailbox messages. Although the total staff is quite large, the task is actually quite simple.

With a staff this large, we are always in need of more teleservants. We are also in need of a new, national coordinator. I took this position over while I was the active chairperson in order to stabilize the service and revamp it for the 21st century. It is now a very workable situation.

After some monitoring of the World Service general mailbox, it is my feeling that it may be useful to have our office servant retrieve these messages as 90% of these are administrative. They are usually about lost literature shipments or requests for starter and information kits. It is redundant to have these retrieved by a volunteer to forward to the office. The stray message left for meeting info could be forwarded to the appropriate regional coordinator if a call back is necessary. I would suggest we try this on a trial basis for a few weeks and ask our general mailbox staff to stand by in case we want to use volunteers again. This is an issue for the next coordinator and a new board.

Thanks for the opportunity to serve.

In nicoverly,
John Ottaviano

Written Traditions Committee Coordinator's Report

To be honest I had hoped to be further along at this point than we are today. I have received 6 tradition drafts so far, including my own which was only completed days ago. Except for tradition four, we have made no effort to edit these so we are not yet ready for feedback. I hope to be there by October. These are merely to show what we have accomplished so far. Since I will have eliminated both my board and teleservice commitments, I will have more time to devote to getting this accomplished as soon as possible.

My thanks to all that have sent in their tradition work. I will be canvassing all committee members before the conference to see if I need any replacements. While I think a committee of 12 is the maximum size, I may need some replacements on the committee as some members are having difficulty fulfilling the commitment. If you have experience in our fellowship and are very interested in the traditions, please contact me. Our interest is to have written traditions that each stand on their own and come together to give a good understanding of the guidelines of our fellowship. If the conference approval of the traditions (hopefully 2001 or 2002) is done before a new draft of the Book is ready, then it could be published as a stand-alone item. Hopefully, they can both be published together. Thanks to all the committee members for their efforts, and thanks to all for their support.

In recovery,
John Ottaviano
Written Traditions Committee Coordinator

TRADITION ONE

Tradition One – Our common welfare should come first; personal recovery depends on Nicotine Anonymous unity.

Carl Sandburg wrote, "Whenever a Society or Civilization perishes, there is always one condition present; they forgot where they came from." With permission from Alcoholics Anonymous we have adapted The Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions for our use. If we look closely, we find the Traditions are not rules and were not written in advance of future problems. They were developed over time in response to problems as they developed. The Traditions were first written in 1946 as a distillation of the shared experiences of the early AA groups. They provide a tried and true guide for groups to operate, while still allowing individualization. Simply put, the Traditions are to group survival what the Twelve Steps are to personal recovery.

While the Twelve Steps describe a personal path to our spiritual recovery, the Twelve Traditions provide form and unity to our entire fellowship. They help guide local groups to follow our program that has worked at bringing recovery to many people over many years. These guidelines keep the focus on our primary purpose and ensure that any member of our fellowship can go to any meeting and find these same basic principles at work. They encourage a safe place for each individual by stressing the importance of group unity. In other words, they protect us from ourselves. As Bill W. poignantly notes in AA's first tradition - "On anvils of experience, the structure of our Society was hammered out."

Does this mean that the individual must conform to all aspects of our program? Certainly not! There are no "musts" in any twelve-step program. The sentence in the "AA Big Book" that introduces the Steps reads – "Here are the steps we took, which are suggested as a program of recovery." The Traditions have a lot of "We ought" and a few sprinklings of "should". There are no musts!

Our First Tradition reminds us that our common welfare comes first. Therefore each individual member of Nicotine Anonymous is a small part of the whole. Nicotine Anonymous must continue to live so that we, as individual members, may continue to live – free of nicotine. We have come to understand that each of us needs to conform to the principles of recovery, since our lives actually depend on obedience to spiritual principles. Therefore, as a fellowship we need to remain united on such core issues as our baseline definition of recovery, or we put personal recovery at risk.

These are the core issues of Nicotine Anonymous. Our definition of abstinence – "A state that begins when all use of nicotine ceases" was established by group conscience at the 1988 World Services Conference in a debate about Nicorette gum. Even though we were known as Smokers Anonymous at that time, we collectively agreed that abstinence from nicotine was our primary purpose. Since we have become Nicotine Anonymous, we have increased our awareness and outreach as a program for nicotine addiction in all forms. This is about addiction to the drug NICOTINE, not about the behavior of smoking or the replacement of one form of the drug with another.

To achieve abstinence, Nicotine Anonymous endorses a program of recovery, to first gain and then maintain freedom from nicotine. It consists of the Twelve Steps and Traditions along with five tools – meetings, sponsorship, literature, the phone list and service. All other methods are, from the perspective of Nicotine Anonymous, outside issues. It is difficult to remain focused on our simple program when there are so many varied ways to ingest nicotine. The most common is by cigarette, followed by cigar, pipe and chewing or dipping. There are also withdrawal aids such as the patch, gum and inhaler. Regardless of an individual's method for gaining freedom from nicotine, the group should welcome all, without judgement, who have the desire to gain and maintain freedom from this subtle and powerful drug.

While it is up to each individual to determine their quit date, the fellowship as a whole and, by extension, each group provides the structure for making that decision. An example to emphasize unity would be, suppose all members in a group are smokers. So, instead of using the fellowship definition of "abstinence" the group decides to use the quit smoking date as the anniversary date of recovery, even though some members continue to use nicotine in another form, such as the patch, gum or snuff. Other smokers in the group who became abstinent from all use of nicotine when they stopped smoking, would probably

feel different from other members who were not abstinent. The resultant discord would not encourage unity, either in the group or the fellowship as a whole. If we adhere to our name, Nicotine Anonymous, then we can Keep it Simple and make it easier for the newcomer to understand and practice our program of recovery.

WS Tradition One 2-16-00

TRADITION THREE

Tradition Three - The only requirement for Nicotine Anonymous membership is a desire to stop using nicotine.

Those of us who are part of Nicotine Anonymous want to include every nicotine user who wishes to join us. We have been freely given the precious gift of recovery from the deadly disease of nicotine addiction. And all that was asked of us was that we have some small desire to stop using nicotine. How could we now presume to deny this gift to others? We may not share a newcomer's beliefs. But there are those among us who found it necessary to shed all our old beliefs to find peace in our recovery.

You don't have to have already stopped using nicotine to join us. Some of us did not even feel we had a desire until day after day, week after week, meeting after meeting we finally got it and finally got free. There is only ONE requirement for membership, a desire to stop using nicotine. You don't have to belong to any other group, believe in God, donate money or work the steps in a certain way to join us. We are not afraid of the emotions you may express when you stop using nicotine. You are not required to be rational or lucid or say all the correct things at meetings. We've been there. We do not wish to exclude you from our program for reasons that might prevent you from joining some other groups such as your race, reputation, creed, sexual orientation, gender, disability or place of origin. If you only have the smallest desire to stop using nicotine, you are welcome here.

Most of us lived in the well of denial, alienation and pain that is caused by nicotine addiction for many years. We would not leave a suffering addict at the bottom of that well alone now that we have the rope of recovery that we can toss down to them. Granted, they must be willing to take hold of the rope in order to climb out and join us. But, that is all we require. Some of our members feel they were actually pulled up out of their addiction by the simple act of asking for help. Others find that the gift of recovery from nicotine was more difficult to accept, having to struggle up that rope and slip back down many times before becoming fully free of their addiction. There are those of us who have been through the worst of our addiction and come out free on the other side. We are not only aware of the dangers of nicotine addiction but also very grateful for the spiritual gift of recovery that makes our freedom possible. So,

we keep showing up at meetings and tossing down the rope of our truth, our experience, strength and hope to others.

Sometimes, there was a problem with the word desire. We did not want to give up our drug. Perhaps we feared that we could not live without it. Despite attending many meetings or possibly abstaining from nicotine use for periods of time, we felt sure that we had no honest desire to stop. However, once we discussed this issue with other members, we found that in the beginning others also did not necessarily feel a tremendous desire to stop. Some had even repeated in meetings that they did not want to put down nicotine at all. Some of us only wanted to live and were afraid we would die if we continued to use nicotine. Some only had a desire to find our Higher Power's will for us. Some wanted to improve our health.

And many of us wanted to want to stop using nicotine. We have come to understand that any of these or even the simple willingness to show up at meetings can be defined as a desire to stop using nicotine. Also, there have been those who had difficulty with the word nicotine. While they felt they had a desire to quit smoking or chewing tobacco, they may not have felt ready to give up some other nicotine delivery systems. We have found that this also is a good place to begin and that a desire to stop using nicotine in all forms will follow in time.

Once clear of the smoke screen nicotine placed between our true desires and our thoughts, we realized that we do indeed have a great desire to stay free of this cunning and dangerous drug. Most of us not only now have a desire to remain free of nicotine but we also have a great desire to really live our lives. For many of us going back to using nicotine would mean giving up wonderful new joys that have been added to our lives. Things such as hiking, aerobics, sharing time with friends, intimacy in our relationships, our new found health and even the ability to sit still through a movie or a plane ride would be taken from us if we returned to our addiction. Our desire to continue with our new lives now far outweighs any desire we may still have for our drug.

So, if you wish to become a Nicotine Anonymous member, come join us. If you are willing to call us or walk into our rooms, we have faith that the desire to stop is within you. No matter who you are, no matter how many other addictions you may have, no matter what your trouble are, you will find we have them too. And we want you here with us. We are keeping you in our thoughts and hope you will choose to join us in the wonderful life and freedom we have found after nicotine. Welcome to Nicotine Anonymous!

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TRADITION FOUR

Tradition Four - "Each group should be autonomous except in matters affecting other groups or Nicotine Anonymous as a whole."

According to the history of our fellowship, Nicotine Anonymous groups (then known as Smokers Anonymous) existed autonomously without even knowing of each other's existence. They each were able to help addicts achieve recovery. They practiced the Twelve Steps and provided each other fellowship. A group is any 2 or more nicotine addicts gathered together to achieve abstinence who have no other association. While our intergroups and World Service office perform valuable functions, they only exist to support the groups and their members. The groups are the heart of Nicotine Anonymous. It is here that recovery and abstinence are attained, sponsors and sponsees are united, and miracles occur. These groups can and have conducted their own matters since before our fellowship officially came into existence.

This is why we can confidently allow our groups today to continue to make all their own decisions without interfering in their affairs. We do encourage all groups to confer with other groups, their intergroup, and World Services whenever they embark on something which may affect other groups or the fellowship. A case occurred many years ago when the chairman of an intergroup was contacted by the maker of a new alternative nicotine product. The company offered to finance and staff a toll-free number for them if they would provide support for their customers and include their pamphlets on the groups' literature tables. After conferring with members of other groups, the offer was wisely declined. Besides damaging the reputation of any groups involved, such an endeavor would surely harm the entire fellowship.

Even with so many temptations to go astray, we still understand that groups must make their own decisions, and their own mistakes. As we see later in Tradition Nine, the fellowship has little but advisory authority over the groups in most matters. We can often only pass on the experience of other groups in similar situations. Ultimately, we have need to have faith in our Higher Power who has guided our groups through many tough choices such as the following:

Many of the New York City area groups evolved from old "A.A. for Non-Smoker" meetings. These were A.A. members who came together to address their addiction to nicotine. Some of these groups changed their name to Nicotine Anonymous, while others kept their old A.A. for Non-Smokers name. The New York Metropolitan Area Intergroup had a very brief meeting list and many were eager to list as many meetings as possible. It was voted that these groups could not be listed because of their outside affiliation. Since then, many of these have decided by group conscience to become Nicotine Anonymous meetings. This decision had to be made by the individual groups themselves.

Perhaps the freedom that we offer our groups is part of the attraction of our fellowship. It allows each group to create meetings that best serve its membership. While it is comforting to go to meetings around the world and see the same Twelve Steps and Traditions, the varied formats, readings, stories and customs make for a wonderful variety. This serves to keep things interesting and to help us learn to approach our recovery with an open mind.

TRADITION SEVEN

Tradition 7: "Every Nicotine Anonymous group ought to be fully self-supporting, declining outside contributions."

Like all 12 Steps and Traditions, Tradition 7 has a number of elements to it which connects it with our Primary Purpose, as well as our spiritual foundation. On the surface, this tradition is straightforward, in that it deals quite clearly with accepting monetary contributions from our members as opposed to accepting outside contributions, no matter how well-meaning those offers may be. In order for each group to maintain its autonomy, as well as our Fellowship maintaining its independence, it is vital that we do not accept any outside contributions, lest we become dependent on that outside individual or group for our survival. If we are to survive, we must do it through our own contributions, otherwise we will become involved in outside issues and politics, which would surely destroy us. Early in the life of the "Out of the Ashes" Group of Nicotine Anonymous, we were very graciously offered a meeting place free of charge. Several of our members argued that we were a small group, and that our survival as a group depended on us accepting this offer. Through a Group Conscience it was decided that in order for us to maintain our autonomy, we would have to decline this very generous offer, and we decided to give a monthly "donation" in return for a meeting room. We knew that this was a vital decision for us in order to carry our message of recovery, and that if we were unable to survive without outside contributions, then we would accept that.

If we look more deeply into this tradition, I don't believe we can be totally self-supporting without each of us contributing service to our groups and to Intergroup and World Service as well. If each one of us is content to sit back and let "someone else" take commitments, then each group, and eventually Nicotine Anonymous itself will cease to exist. Self supporting in this sense means attending group meetings on a regular basis, sharing at meetings, working the steps, sponsoring people, setting up for meetings, cleaning up, taking on commitments, and in general, "just contributing". This, as much or more than monetary contributions will insure our continued survival. Our Primary Purpose will be served, and our service to others will constitute our spiritual foundation upon which our Fellowship is based.

TRADITION NINE

Tradition Nine - "Nicotine Anonymous as such ought never be organized; but we may create service boards or committees directly responsible to those they serve."

At first, this statement may propose a dichotomy about our program. If we have no organization, then how is it that we have our intergroups, World Service office, board and committees? Are these not examples of organization? Without organization won't we have anarchy?

Well, yes, we do have anarchy. Anarchy is the absence of government, and we certainly have no government. What we do have are servants, staff and volunteers who serve the entirety of our fellowship. Whether we speak of a telephone volunteer, a board member or paid office assistant, each works to serve the needs of the fellowship in general and individual members as required.

There is actually great comfort to be derived from this lack of structure. The leaders of each group, committee or board are there to serve the members, not to dictate or impose their will. No one can tell any member or group what they must do. Like the steps, our guidelines and traditions are suggestions. In the experience of many of our members, not working the steps has had extreme consequences, often leading to relapse. The same is true of our traditions. We have often seen non-adherence to the traditions lead to a group's demise. Even so, we can only make suggestions based on our experiences of how other groups dealt with similar situations. There is no enforcement or judicial branch of our fellowship. In fact, it is the servants and leaders who must answer to the members and groups of Nicotine Anonymous.

Groups, intergroups and the World Service conference each set their own parameters for choosing its servants and leaders. There may be a simple rotation of commitments or a formal election of officers. Those elected or chosen derive their authority solely from those who have selected them. They are charged with the task of serving the fellowship in line with the principles of the program and to uphold the traditions of Nicotine Anonymous.

In the early days of our fellowship, groups existed without regional intergroups or a World Service office. Today these regional committees provide essential services such as printing meeting lists, printing and distributing literature, answering phones and correspondence, and spreading the message of our fellowship wherever possible. Over the years these services have proved essential to our existence as a fellowship and our general recover. Most of us could not imagine the program without them.

When our volunteers embrace the principles of service, fellowship and selflessness, there is no need to concern themselves with power, wealth and prestige. A spirit of cooperation and a singleness of purpose are all that is necessary to provide Nicotine Anonymous with its unique structure of service, fellowship and recovery.

TRADITION TEN

Nicotine Anonymous has no opinion on outside issues hence the Nicotine Anonymous name ought never be drawn into public controversy.

The 10th Tradition, like many of the others, helps to remind us to fulfill our primary purpose. Our primary purpose is to carry the message to the Nicotine addict that still suffers. Therefore, Nicotine Anonymous should not involve itself in outside issues or public controversy.

As recovering nicotine addicts, many of us believe that the use of nicotine is harmful. Many of us believe that it should be banned, controlled or limited. Therefore, it is tempting to say that we should support suits against tobacco companies, or take out ads supporting outlawing nicotine, or try to participate with groups that wish to outlaw smoking, or attempt to support politicians who wish to limit places where people can smoke. Perhaps we should write treatises depicting the ills of using nicotine?

Tradition 10 tells us "No!". We have no opinion as a group about tobacco companies, smoking or using nicotine. True, we as addicts may have differing opinions on these subjects. But, as a group, as Nicotine Anonymous we must not.

Smoking, dipping, chewing... these are things that we all enjoyed at one point while using nicotine. How we stopped using, how we came to believe, how we gained freedom from this powerful addiction ... these are the things we must share in order to help the person who is still suffering.

No member should express an opinion, at the public level, on outside controversial issues, particularly those of politics, religion or nicotine reform. Nicotine Anonymous neither endorses nor opposes any cause. We do not even oppose the manufacture, sale or use of nicotine products. We have no opinion on government subsidies to tobacco farmers or when, how, and where nicotine is packaged or consumed. We have no opinion on religion or politics. Many of us come from various religious and political backgrounds. To insist that any member support a particular religion or political cause would not only destroy our fellowship, but would violate the first tradition that our common unity comes first.

Should we attempt to involve ourselves in these issues, our primary purpose will be hindered if not made impossible. How much would we devote financially to fighting the tobacco companies. Can we even come close to hurting them. Why do we want to?

The founders of the Alcoholics Anonymous program wisely decided not to take on the alcohol manufacturers or participate in a temperance movement to ban alcohol. They realized that such a move would be futile and would likely destroy the foundation of their recovery.

Similarly, as nicotine addicts we must remember not to divert our primary purpose to rail against the tobacco companies or attempt to participate or legislate how and when people may smoke, dip or chew.

In addition, many nicotine users have chosen to stop the use of nicotine by the use of nicotine withdrawal aids - such as the nicotine patch, nicotine gum or the prescription Zyban - to name a few. Again, use of such substances is individual and should not be legislated or criticized by the group. We have no opinion on such issues. Remember, quitting the use of nicotine is our primary purpose, not how an individual member may chose to do so. Having an opinion at the group level about the use of such substances, or attempting to tell a newcomer when and/or how he must count his abstinence is not our job. Our primary job is to be helpful and not to take on such outside issues.

There is no doubt that this Tradition is difficult to live by. We all have opinions on such issues. However, remembering our primary purpose - to stop the use of nicotine and to be helpful to the newcomer - should encourage us to avoid entering into public debate on all of the above issues which are likely to involve this fellowship in controversy.