

VOLUME LX | ISSUE I | JAN - FEB 2023

SERENITY MESSENGER

FOR RELATIVES AND FRIENDS CONCERNED
ABOUT ANOTHER'S USE OF DRUGS, ALCOHOL,
OR RELATED BEHAVIORAL PROBLEMS



THE NEWSLETTER OF THE FAMILIES ANONYMOUS FELLOWSHIP

SERENITY MESSENGER

Newsletter of the Families Anonymous Fellowship

EDITOR'S NOTE

Though you're reading this newsletter in the month of February, this is our first issue of 2023. So, we are taking this opportunity to wish you a year filled with serenity and strength. May you find the help and community you need to carry you through the rest of the year.

Addiction, whether we are dealing with it actively or are in a more peaceful place, can affect our ways of thinking. We may have forgotten to dream as big as we used to, or to hope at all. After having many of my own hopes for what my future would look like destroyed by the dysfunctionality and chaos around me, I often find it difficult to envision nice and beautiful things.

The FA program has taught me to slowly reclaim what addiction took away: my ability and courage to dream and hope for better times to come.

It is OK to hope that everything will be fine anyway. The future might not be fixed in the exact way we'd like. But the sun will rise another day, the birds will sing again each morning. We all need this reassurance and hope. Not that our problems will disappear, but that we can dream in the midst of it all. After a few years of a lull, I took the brave step of writing down my goals and dreams for the year.



Our own lives have taught us that we have no control over the future. But this doesn't mean we must resign ourselves completely to inaction. It is when I came to the FA program that I learnt that the opposite of the fear and helplessness I was feeling was taking action. Taking action does not mean coercing

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others to change, but rather paying attention to myself, being mindful of my own experiences and feelings, and trusting my instincts that were overridden by incredible self-doubt for so long. We slowly regain our confidence, knowing when we need to act or need to take a step back, draw boundaries and care for ourselves.

The only thing we can do about tomorrow is make small changes today that affect tomorrow. This means changing ourselves and taking control of our peace. Being in charge of our inner lives is especially important when we are riding the unpredictable waves of addiction in our families. Anything can happen, and we are powerless over the actions of others. But determining that we will be in control of what we allow to affect us means we can go a long way toward alleviating our own suffering and turmoil.

There's a saying in the FA program: "Easy does it." Whether we want to change our day or our year or our life, the best approach is to be self-compassionate and to recognize that, for most of us, we have tried to do our best using the wisdom that we have. Now, with the fellowship, we have the gift of collective wisdom to move forward. We may not be close to the finish line yet, but we can relax and enjoy the ride.

**IN FELLOWSHIP,
ELIZABETH S.**

THINKING OF SUBMITTING AN ARTICLE OR ANNOUNCEMENT TO THE SERENITY MESSENGER?

For our upcoming issue, the deadline to submit announcements is March 23rd.

We gladly accept submissions of original articles, letters, poetry, or artwork at any time!

Email us at
newsletter@familiesanonymous.org.
We'd love to hear from you!

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Serenity Messenger

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COMMITTEE CONNECTION

Sarah T., a member of the WSB and the Public Information Committee, Shares her FA Experience and How She Believes Video Vignettes Can Help Grow and Support the Fellowship

The WSB has a number of standing or special committees that work on matters of importance to the fellowship, including Literature, Long-Range Planning, and others - yet many FA members may know little or nothing about them. That's why we're introducing COMMITTEE CONNECTION, a recurring feature column about a selected committee's purpose and/or goals, or a special project they may be undertaking. We hope you find these COMMITTEE CONNECTION articles both enlightening and inspiring!



“

That fall, as he went through multiple court hearings, his drug use intensified like never before. It seemed so much worse this time. I had never imagined it could get any worse, but now I was in hell again.

”

It would be five years into my son's substance abuse before I found FA. He started using and selling marijuana in middle school, expanding to using and selling other drugs in high school. He also started failing classes, becoming violent toward me at home, stealing, overdosing. I did everything I could think of in the early years of his substance abuse to get him help. I took him to social workers and psychiatrists, got him a Big Brother, signed him up for private tutoring, found ways to promote any hobby or sport he expressed interest in (private soccer lessons, for example), but his decline continued unabated.

By the spring of his sophomore year, he was in free fall. He faced charges in juvenile court for possession with intent to sell on school property. I decided he would die of an overdose

or be killed in a drug deal gone bad if he stayed in the area. So I pulled him out of school and sent him to a therapeutic boarding school far from home. I spent that year taking care of myself—exercising, returning to hobbies, dancing—knowing that he was safe and sober and feeling proud of myself for having fixed the problem.

Three months after he returned, after only the third day of school, he relapsed. The police picked him up for selling marijuana and drug paraphernalia on school grounds. Now that he was eighteen, the legal consequences were far more serious. That fall, as he went through multiple court hearings, his drug use intensified like never before. It seemed so much worse this time. I had never imagined it could get any worse, but now I was in hell again. His overdoses landed him in the ER several times. At one point, someone found him passed out on the side of the road. And those are only the events I was aware of.

It was at this time—late September of his eighteenth year—that my sister, a long-time AA member, said to me: “There must be groups for families.” I was so out of my mind with worry, fear and exhaustion that I don't recall exactly how I found the FA group that I have now been attending for five years. From the very first meeting, the Monday night group became two of the most important hours of my week. When I joined, pre-COVID, all our meetings were in person. That meant, with travel time, a nearly four-hour commitment on a work night. But I knew I had to go.

I cannot put into words the amount of relief I felt being with people who were experiencing or had experienced the same issues with their children. At one meeting, I really needed help processing an event with my son from the past week, but I struggled to get it out because of embarrassment. I thought what he had done was so unspeakably awful. When I finally told the group, one member instantly let out a laugh and said, "Oh, Sarah, of course he did that!" It might be counterintuitive that a laugh would produce such relief in me, but it did. His response relieved me of my embarrassment because I realized I was not alone in my experiences. I was able to move forward.

“

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”

Since being with the group, I have been through many more hills and valleys. My son continued to decline, as did I. I struggled with setting boundaries, trying and failing repeatedly. Then he went through two years of sobriety, but I continued to enable. He relapsed again and turned to oxycodone laced with fentanyl. He was on the street, living moment to moment in search of his next fix, doing whatever he had to do to get it. I tried to help him get into treatment, but he wasn't ready and I went into debt.

In September 2022, I finally said, "No more!" It felt different this time. I knew at that moment that I was entering recovery. I felt disgusted with myself at first when I looked back at the extent of my enabling. Now I feel profoundly grateful to be in recovery. I know it's a fragile existence, such a short time. So I journal, I meditate, I exercise, I do the work. We say at the end of our meetings, after the serenity prayer, "Keep coming back, it works if you work it."

Last March, I took on the role of secretary for our group. Our longtime secretary wanted a break, so I said, "I'll take it on for a year." Then, a few months later, I joined the WSB (World Service Board), while also looking forward to staying on as secretary of our group. I think, like everyone else on the board, I serve because I want to give back.

My specific role on the WSB is as a member of the Public Information (PI) Committee. I hope to use my documentary filmmaking experience to figure out ways to reach parents who are in the same state of panic, fear, sadness, disappointment and embarrassment that I had experienced, but who don't know that FA exists, as well as to connect with current FA members who are searching for more support between meetings. So, I'm now working with the PI Committee to put together short, two- to five-minute video vignettes of individual family members talking in a very personal way about one aspect of the FA program, such as enabling, boundaries, or codependency. We're hopeful that sharing such stories can help grow the FA fellowship and bring welcome relief to family members suffering daily from the effects of this dreaded disease.

— “

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— ” —

We conducted a pilot via Zoom with no special equipment, and while the video and audio are rough, the stories are powerful. The PI Committee and the WSB are still working out how we'll adhere to our FA traditions as we produce, distribute, and spread the word about these videos. Stay tuned, as they say.



—“

I've worked for years in the production of documentary films, and I'm hoping I can use that experience to figure out ways to reach parents who are in the same state of panic, fear, sadness, disappointment and embarrassment...

—”

You may have a particular life skill or work skill that could help make this project a reality. For instance, if you have knowledge of or experience in any phase of the process from preproduction to dissemination—for example, constructing interviews, remote recording, video and audio editing, translation, closed captioning, posting to social media—we would be keenly interested in speaking with you. Also, please consider sharing a piece of your own story.

The Twelfth Step encourages us to carry the FA message to others. What better way to do that than to donate your time and skills to this exciting and worthwhile project? If you'd like to be part of this exciting new venture, please reach out to saraht@familiesanonymous.org. We'd love to hear from you!

SARAH T.
MEMBER OF WSB, PUBLIC INFORMATION COMMITTEE



Want to learn more about how your FA group can thrive and grow? Go to familiesanonymous.org, click on "Members" and go to "Group Materials," where you'll find an array of helpful, informative publications concerning group dynamics and management.

Still have questions? Send an email to the Group Outreach Committee at GO@familiesanonymous.org.

Have a great meeting!



FOCUS: GROUP

Clive W., an FA World Service Board member from the UK, takes us through an FA group in rural England

Stonehouse is a small town in rural Gloucestershire in the west of England. It lies around twelve miles south of Cheltenham and twenty-five miles north of Bristol, in the vale of the river Severn. Our FA group is well established, having run for about ten years, historically drawing members from a fifteen- to twenty-mile radius, and meeting every Tuesday evening. We typically have anywhere from twelve to eighteen attendees from a pool of around forty active members. As with most groups, we have some longtime members as well as an ebb and flow of members who join, draw from the fellowship, and then move on as their lives become more manageable.

The disease of drug addiction is as much an issue in rural communities as it is in towns and cities. Our members come from all backgrounds. While most members are those whose addicted loved one is a child, some of our regular members have partners, siblings or even parents who are struggling with addiction, in all its stages, ranging from relapse to recovery, both long and short term.

This broad spectrum of conditions and situations adds greatly to the dynamic of the group. It also allows for a wide range of experiences, both positive and negative, to be shared during the meetings.

At each meeting we start with the daily reading from **TABW (Today A Better Way)** and share on this before moving on to the scheduled topic for the week. Topics are set at the beginning of the year and cover the Steps, the Traditions, and themes from FA books, booklets, leaflets and bookmarks. The group also runs a monthly, online, Twelve Step study group, starting each year in January.

The recent COVID-19 epidemic has changed the make-up of the group. As with most but not all groups in the UK, our group meetings went online; this has now become a comfortable space for most of us. In moving online, we collected new members from a much wider area. As during the lockdown, our UK volunteer-manned helpline continues to offer callers a range of online meetings, listed by day and time. Our group now has members from areas without a nearby in-person group who would otherwise be unable to attend a meeting.

A Few Words on Our UK Helpline

The UK fellowship does not have any full-time staff, and our office in London is only manned intermittently by volunteers who have undertaken administrative work and process literature orders. We do, however, have a telephone helpline which is supported by volunteers and operates 365 days a year, being open 6 hours a day from 1pm to 4pm and 6pm to 9pm. The primary purpose of the helpline is to direct callers to a meeting near them or to an online meeting on a day and time convenient for them. The volunteers also have information on other resources toward which they can direct callers if FA is not appropriate based on their inquiry or situation. In line with FA traditions, the helpline does not give advice – beyond ‘get to a meeting and see if the programme works for you’ – but it does offer an empathetic ear, and we are often the first people the callers have spoken to who understand and relate directly to their pain.

This, in itself, can be of great benefit to the caller.



We have set up two WhatsApp groups: one for announcements and any service-office information, and the other as a “well-being” group to share our thoughts, feelings and aphorisms. These groups also make it easy to contact other members for support between meetings and have now taken over the “telephone number sharing” of the past.

“ In moving online, we collected new members from a much wider area. As during the lockdown, our UK volunteer-manned helpline continues to offer callers a range of online meetings. ”



Our remote members are an integral part of our group. Many of them would not have any alternative face-to-face group to attend, so we are committed to continuing to meet online in some form. This has given us a bit of a dilemma due to the members who want to resume in-person meetings for the more personal connection they provide. We tried hybrid meetings once a month using a laptop that the group acquired; however, the experience was underwhelming, did not feel inclusive for those online who could not see all those attending in person, and came with sound issues. We persevered for a while but finally decided it was not working.

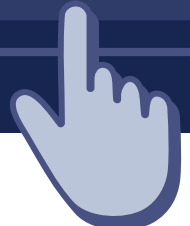
At present, we have a single monthly in-person meeting, with a parallel online meeting at the same time for those who cannot travel or for whom travel is impractical. While this has the potential to split the group in two, something the group wants to avoid, it is working well at this point. It remains to be seen how this will pan out if we try in the future to increase the number of in-person meetings to more than once a month. This is, perhaps, one for the group’s Higher Power.

CLIVE W.
FA WORLD SERVICE BOARD MEMBER
STONEHOUSE, GLOUCESTERSHIRE, UK



WE ARE FAMILIES ANONYMOUS!
LET US ALL PULL TOGETHER TO **STOP**
FAMILIES ANONYMOUS FROM BEING A
“BEST KEPT SECRET!”

REVEAL SECRET



FA IS A GPS

Bob S. writes, “As we work the Steps, the program guides us to our destination: serenity.”



We often speak of the Families Anonymous program and the Twelve Steps as providing roadmaps to recovery. For example, the Today A Better Way reading for December 31, entitled “Having a Destination,” relates how the author “found a tried-and-true map—the Twelve Steps—and many reliable guides in the group” to help them find “serenity and sanity.” With FA, the author writes, “I could relax and trust my Higher Power to prepare a way that would take me just where I needed to go.”

That entry was written long before the advent of GPS systems in cars, in online map services such as Google Maps, and in crowd-sourced traffic information such as Waze. But the analogy still holds true.

When using a paper map, you start by considering the end points: where you are and where you want to go. Then you trace out the route you want to take.

The same is true of FA. The starting point is a question, but not the one we expect. It’s not, “How do I help my addicted loved one?” but rather, “Why do I respond to my loved one’s disease with anger, preaching, or harmful enabling and rescuing behaviors, and how can I do better?” The destination is sanity and serenity. We know the route, too: the Twelve Steps and the changes we’ll need to make in ourselves.

Unlike a paper map, however, it’s not simple to follow that route without help, because the paths we travel with our addicted loved ones are circuitous and confusing. They’re often dark and dangerous, too.

Most of us, having never confronted anything like this, are overwhelmed by the emotional, financial and psychological effects of this baffling and powerful disease. Without guidance, we lurch—sometimes for years—from terror, to rage, to confusion, to hopelessness and despair. But our FA meetings, and the caring members of this fellowship, help us find serenity by encouraging us to live the Twelve Steps every day.

—“ —
It’s not, “How do I help my addicted loved one?” but rather, “Why do I respond to my loved one’s disease with anger, preaching, or harmful enabling and rescuing behaviors, and how can I do better?”
—” —

As with the Twelve Steps and the sharing at our FA meetings, the GPS or online map function will tell you, turn by turn, how to get where you want to go. But sometimes the GPS will tell you to go one way, and you go another. Maybe you think you know a better way, or you’ve simply made a wrong turn.

Does the GPS belittle or berate you for having made a mistake? Not at all. It promptly “recalculates” and tells you what route you now must follow to reach your goal.

Along our road to recovery in FA, we’ll also make mistakes. We’ll take a wrong turn into the deceptive comfort of old habits and start enabling our addicted loved ones again, or we’ll wallow in self-pity and anger rather than working the Steps in a healthy way. But if we’re sticking with our program,

“As with the Twelve Steps and the sharing at our FA meetings, the GPS or online map function will tell you, turn by turn, how to get where you want to go.”

we'll recognize that we need help, and we'll share our troubles with our FA group.

And just as the GPS does when we've gone astray, our FA group will "recalculate." The group hears us without judgment, accepting what is, and it helps us adjust our route. Like the other drivers reporting hazards or backups in the Waze app, our fellow FA members will point out how we might avoid pitfalls they know await us along the way. They won't dwell on the fact of our having "relapsed," but instead will focus on the positive.

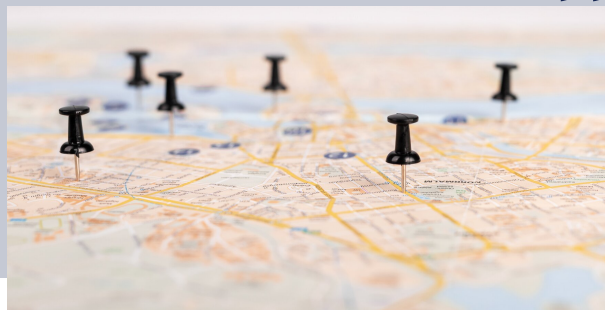
Someone might make an encouraging observation about the progress we've made and about how, earlier in our recovery, we might not even have recognized that our behavior was harmful.

We'll take solace and guidance from the stories our companions in recovery tell about their own failings and how they've found their way back to the path of recovery. Someone will remind us that

the goal is progress, not perfection, and we'll move on.

No matter how many times we may stray, as long as we keep the GPS system in our car or computer turned on, it will keep recalculating and guiding us back to the recommended route. If we keep coming back to FA, the same thing will happen: Our group, and the Twelve Steps, will recalculate for us the best route to our goal of serenity.

— “**And just as the GPS does when we've gone astray, our FA group will "recalculate." The group hears us without judgment, accepting what is, and it helps us adjust our route.**” —



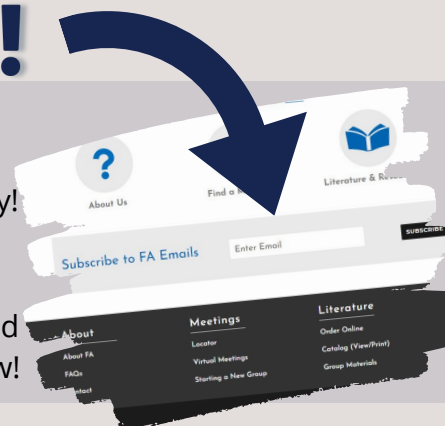
BOB S, BRADENTON, FL, GROUP #2056
(WITH THANKS TO KAREN FROM FORT MYERS, FL, GROUP #1996, FOR THE SHARE THAT INSPIRED THIS ARTICLE)



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TOUGH LOVE - FOR WHOM?*

FA member JoAnne M. learns to set boundaries with her son that are firm yet compassionate.



“I took that to heart, because I was so exhausted and depleted. I hear this in many FA members and can relate because of my experiences.”

I was never one to suffer in silence about my son who has a substance use disorder (SUD). Friends without the same issues could not relate. I frequently vented to one friend who did have two sons in recovery from SUD, and she kept inviting me to an FA meeting. I finally went, and that's when things began to change—for me. (Changes for my son came years later.)

Nothing changes if nothing changes. I took that to heart, because I was so exhausted and depleted. I hear this in many FA members and can relate because of my experiences. Prior to FA, I would take a break ... back off ... restore ... then dive back into the madness. I was glad that I was married because when I'd back off, his dad would often step in, just enough that I wouldn't feel guilty that our son might feel abandoned. Today? I might tell you that such antics may have delayed our son's

changes. But that's in the past, and I'm no longer in the business of rehashing the past or predicting the future.

There's no telling why our son smoked marijuana, or why it led him into a path of depravity with untold substances that told him he couldn't live without his next high, but it did. That's the definition of addiction. The why is not important. The disease takes over the brain, and he was not aware of and/or denied it (until he reached his own point of desperation).

His disease had taken over my brain as well—and just as I wanted something different for him, I had to do something different to manage my own life. I had reached my point of desperation and said, “Enough!” Given a choice of “out or rehab,” he chose to go to rehab for the first time. After twenty-eight days, the facility suggested a halfway house, but SuperMom (me!) stepped in and researched/financed a long-term step-down program for young adults (he turned twenty-one there). At the end of that program, he ignored their assignment to make a plan, despite being given an extra month to do so. I steeled myself, and others in FA said, “No plan is a plan.” I did not step in. He stayed in that town 3,000 miles away. “Doing much better,” because he'd already been clean for over a year. He continued to “do well” for six more months.

“With time (and practice on my part), he came to learn that our line of communication was open if he interacted with words and behaviors that were rational and self-managed.”

TOUGH LOVE - FOR WHOM?*

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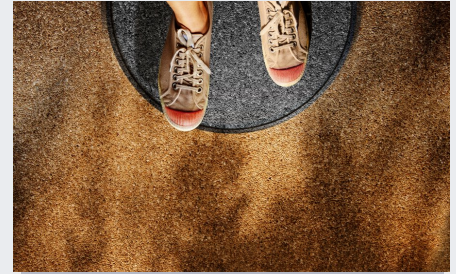
After years of struggle, the next two and a half years may have been the “worst” in my son’s story. Phone calls (and a lack of them) were very difficult during that time, and I continued to make an annual trek (a seven-hour flight plus a four-hour drive in a rental car) that amounted to a meal and a walk or bowling. As time went by, I accepted my reality. My beautiful boy was not so pretty. I prayed that he might be healthy some day. I needed to be “well” for the rest of my family, for my marriage, and as a model to this unwell child. I did not abandon my son; he came to know that I would not tolerate what I could not tolerate (boundaries, expressed). With time (and practice on my part), he came to learn that our line of communication was open if he interacted with words and behaviors that were rational and self-managed. I was always there with a hug if needed (even if over the phone). A hug or kind word does not require a cheerleader or a financier (I retired those hats).

Some people call the FA program “tough love.” I balk at that because I don’t like being tough (in word or deed). What this program taught me was that I could walk my walk (with head held high); maintain my boundaries; and say what I mean, mean what I say, but not say it meanly. In the process, I also learned to respect my son’s rights, too: He had the right to live his own life—however he chose to do that, with me in it or not. He, too, is allowed boundaries. He had the right to use or to quit—without my constant vigilance and without any of my money or assistance. If he called, I had to keep my focus on myself, to stay in my own lane—and that was hard! I often went to AA meetings to hear their stories—to remember that my family was not unique, and to see that many found recovery, in their own time and way. For our son, it was only when he accepted his reality that things changed—for him.

We are not alone; so many families struggle with addiction. With FA, we can have hope that we will survive, no matter what.

JOANNE M, GROUP #134

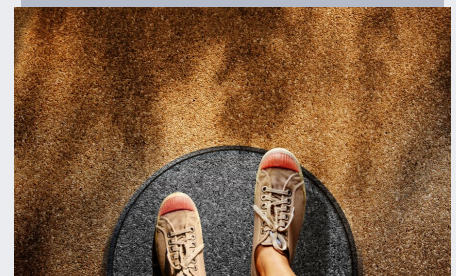
(*THE TITLE IS TAKEN FROM FA BOOKLET #1029 (AVAILABLE ON FA WEBSITE AT THE ESTORE)



“

He, too, is allowed boundaries. He had the right to use or to quit—without my constant vigilance and without any of my money or assistance.

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LITERATURE SPOTLIGHT



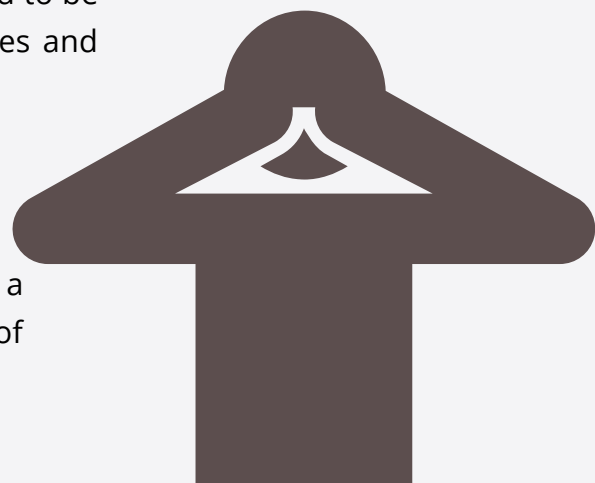
Dealing With Denial (#1030)

***Denial* can be an intimidating word.**

What does it actually mean, especially from a Families Anonymous perspective?

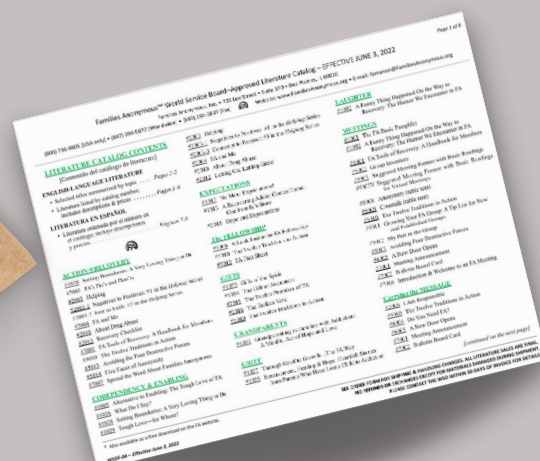
Denial is a common symptom of codependency, whereby we prioritize another person over ourselves and allow our mood to be continuously influenced by that person's problems, attitudes and actions. (Just think about how often we gauge our emotional well-being not by how well we are doing, but by how well or how poorly our addicted loved ones are doing!)

Denial is also a stage of grief. It can spring up, unbidden, as a natural self-defense mechanism. We use it as a way of protecting ourselves from the shock of a too-painful reality.



Many of us in FA have found ourselves in a position of having to address our natural feeling of denial. This, then, was the impetus leading to the creation of ***Dealing With Denial***.

Interested in our full literature catalog? Download your own copy [here](#), or check out our [eStore](#) online!



Dealing With Denial begins by expanding on the definition of *denial*, as seen in the context of substance use disorder. It then goes on to cover issues such as:

- **Recognizing Denial – Understanding when and why denial exists**
- **Resolving Denial – Learning how to put denial aside and replace it by acceptance**
- **Reaching Acceptance – With acceptance, the opposite of denial, comes our willingness to recognize reality and to allow reality to be what it is, without any need to change it, and without any need to give it our approval.**

In the concluding section of ***Dealing With Denial***, you will find seven bullet points, each offering additional insights on the general topic of denial and ways to acknowledge it and effectively address its presence.

All of us in FA struggle with denial, which can come in many forms, including:

- **Denial of our powerlessness over our addicted loved ones**
- **Denial of the facts of their substance use disorder**
- **Denial of our need to disengage from their issues in order to achieve some personal serenity**

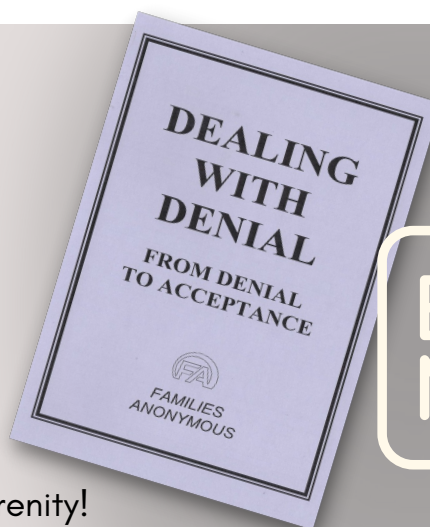
Yet, as we learn in FA, while we cannot change others, we do have the power to change ourselves and to choose whether and how we will deal with denial.

why wait?

There's no better time than today to start
Dealing With Denial (#1030).

Just \$2.00 a copy

Such a small price to pay for so much wisdom and serenity!



WHY YOU SHOULD WRITE FOR THE SERENITY MESSENGER



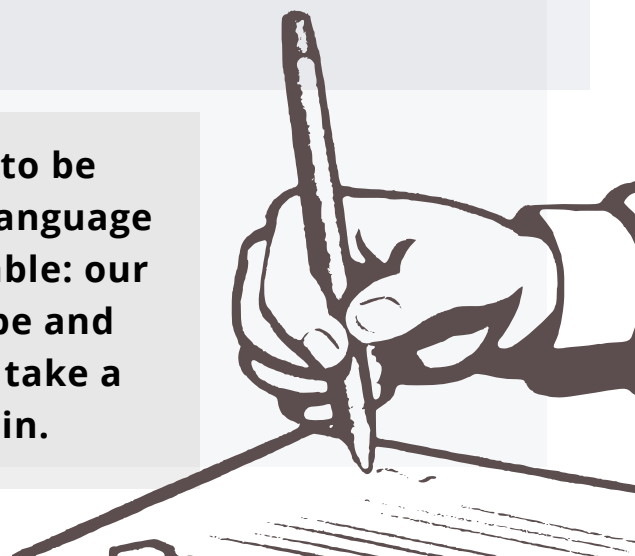
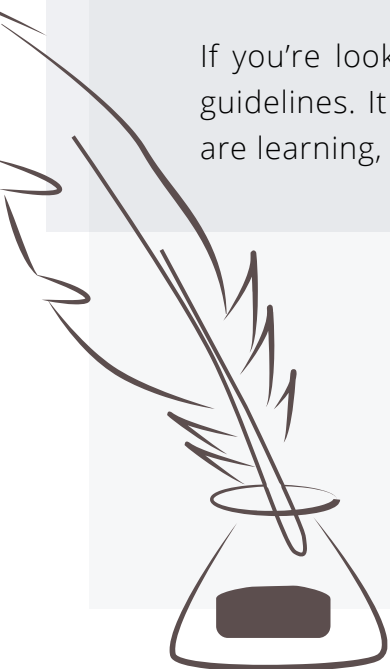
Many of you may have experienced the relief and healing that comes with sharing your stories. Sometimes it's just talking to friends; at other times, when you sit down and write something in a journal, you feel as if a load has been taken off you. The thoughts you did not know you could articulate make their way on their own. All you need to do is just sit down and write.

Sharing our stories is an integral part of being in the fellowship. We do it each week when we have our meetings. Our newsletter is an extension of this sense of community. It provides a platform for being heard in a safe space. When we share our stories and learnings with one another through the newsletter, we are encouraging other people in ways we might not have thought possible. Our stories impart valuable insights and words of wisdom that others can learn from for years to come.

In recent years, as the submissions to the newsletter have dipped, we have republished some very old stories from the archives. Our readers are finding that these stories, regardless of when they were written, still resonate deeply within the fellowship.

If you're looking for what to write about and how, we have some pointers in our guidelines. It could be what brought you to the fellowship, what you have learnt or are learning, your thoughts on stepwork, etc.

Your story doesn't have to be perfect. Nobody's is. Your language doesn't have to be impeccable: our editors will help you shape and fine-tune your ideas. Just take a deep breath and dive in.



HOW TO SUBMIT ARTICLES TO THE SERENITY MESSENGER

Original articles, poems, photographs or artwork can be emailed to the Serenity Messenger at newsletter@familiesanonymous.org.

Even if you don't think so, your story and experiences are unique and important and can help someone else in ways you can't imagine. Write down your thoughts in whatever way you can, and send them to us. Our editor will work with you to help you tell your story!

Below are some of the formats that we usually publish. You can also read older issues of the Serenity Messenger on our [website](#) to know what kinds of stories we publish.

Cover stories: Personal essays between 700 and 800 words. If you have a story idea in mind and want to work with our editor while you write it, feel free to send a few lines explaining what your essay will be about.

Articles: Shorter articles between 300 and 450 words. These can be on any subject of interest to FA members. Some of the themes we often include are –

- Reflections on the 12 Steps
- How you came to FA
- How FA has impacted your life
- Your relationship with your addicted loved one
- Reflections on self-awareness
- Gratitude



Think of something you may have shared at a meeting that you felt seemed particularly enlightening or interesting, and explain that in a few simple paragraphs. If you need ideas to awaken your creativity, open and browse through some past issues of our Newsletter under the archived section of that page.

Focus:Group: This section gives a different FA group in each issue the opportunity to tell the fellowship what's special about its approach to meetings and/or the 12 Steps. If you'd like to volunteer your group, or if you know of a group you think would like to write a Focus:Group article, please let us know.

We welcome your poems, too.

SUBMISSION SPECIFICATIONS

- Articles must be typed in Word.doc (preferably in the font Times New Roman, size 12 pt, single-line spacing) and attached to your email.
- Mention your group if you're comfortable.
- Scanned artwork and photographs (originals only!) must be attached to your email. They should be in .jpg or .png format and no greater than 5 mb in size.
- Include a line or two in your email explaining the context of your submission, and mention your group if you're comfortable.

We encourage you to think about answering this call TODAY!

DONATIONS

COMMEMORATIVE DONATIONS

- In honor of Theresa B., on behalf of Michael B.
- In memory of Lucy Y., on behalf of Chris Y.
- In honor of Fabizia B., on behalf of Ruthanne O.
- In memory of our Loved Ones, on behalf of Group 177
- In honor of Daniel D., on behalf of Audrey D.
- In memory of Erik W., on behalf of Brooke Z.
- In memory of Ruth Jefferies, a dedicated member for more than 20 years; on behalf of Group 1191
- In memory of Michael P., on behalf of Group 1561
- In honor of Terri T., on behalf of Suzanne M.

\$250 donation representing get well wishes to Linda B from the members of Group #2056, Bradenton, FL.

GROUP DONATIONS: August - November 2022

Over \$500	\$101 to \$500	Up to \$100	Up to \$100
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• GR0173 IL, Park Ridge• GR0494 IL, Winnetka• GR1806 OK, Oklahoma City• GR1974 NY, Syosset• GR5004 Spain NSB	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• GR0134 FL, So Miami• GR0171 IL, Arlington Heights• GR0746 IN, Evansville• GR0976 NJ, Colts Neck• GR1301 NY, Syracuse• GR1345 NJ, Cherry Hill• GR1391 TX, McKinney• GR1522 IL, Chicago• GR1615 MI, Birmingham• GR1811 MI, Clinton Township• GR1849 TX, Plano• GR1906 GA, Roswell• GR1949 VT, Morrisville• GR2056 FL, Bradenton• GR3001 IL, Chicagoland• GR5005 Italy NSB	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• GR0121 CA, Torrence• GR0270 NY, Massapequa• GR0279 NY, Amityville• GR0288 OH, Pepper Pike• GR0478 IL, Glenview• GR0554 NJ, Rockaway• GR0641 CA, Redlands• GR0780 NY, Harrison• GR1096 VA, Richmond• GR1097 KS, Shawnee Mission• GR1187 CT, Bloomfield• GR1191 CA, Culver City• GR1196 IL, New Lenox• GR1318 FL, Boca Raton• GR1382 IL, Schaumburg• GR1416 NY, Baldwinsville	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• GR1561 VA, Charlottesville• GR1618 NY, Endicott• GR1651 E-Meeting• GR1751 NY, Endicott• GR1773 WI, Madison• GR2038 CT, Suffield• GR2105 PA, Lafayette Hill

As per the Seventh Tradition, each group should be self-supporting. Your donations also help support the activities of the World Service Office. For more information on how to donate, please [click here](#) or visit www.familiesanonymous.org and click **DONATE!**

Thank you for supporting the many activities of FA World Service.

Your contribution is tax-deductible.

DONATE

thank you thank you thank you



Families Anonymous would like to offer a special thank you to those of you who participated in our year-end matching opportunity. **With your help, we met our goal!**

Your generosity makes it possible for Families Anonymous to share our experience and encouragement with concerned friends and family members. Your gifts bring resources and real connection to people anxious about another person's use of drugs, alcohol or related behaviors. **We couldn't do it without your support, and we hope you realize how much we appreciate and value all your contributions** - financial and in service to the fellowship.

We would also like to take this opportunity to express our gratitude to the following **individuals who donated directly to the World Service Office of Families Anonymous in 2022**. Your support allows us to offer helpful recovery resources to people who reach out to us and makes it possible for them to find online or in-person groups to attend and workshops to further their own recovery. We, of course, are also grateful to those of you who give back to your local groups.

Abby N	Brooke Z	Deborah S	Giovanni N	Juliana D	Marcia C*
Alexander M	Bruce D	Debra A	Greg C*	Juliette M	Margaret O
Amy D	Bruce S	Denise B*	Greg R	Karen S	Marge B
Andrea D	Carmen O*	Dennis S	Harry L	Karin N	Maria N
Anita B	Caroline D	Diane G	Hector R	Kathryn C	Maria S*
Anne F	Carrie K	Diane M*	Ina G	Kathy A	Marianne S*
Annette G*	Catherine N	Don B	Jack S	Kenneth M	Mark S
Anonymous	Cathy R	Donna D	Jake S	Kenny G	Mary O
Anthony R	Cheryl K*	Donna M	Jane H	Kimberle G	Mary F
Antoinette B	Chittaranjan D	Doreen B	Janet B*	Kimberly N	Mary M
Ardie R	Chris H	Doreen R	Jeanne G*	Laura E	Mary W
Bahram Y	Chris Y*	Dorothy F	Jeanne M*	Lauren C	Mary Ann W
Barbara C	Christine A*	Dorothy P	Jeanne S*	Laurie D	Mary Ann Y
Barbara E	Christine G*	Eileen H	Jeff M*	Linda H	Meryl M
Barbara M	Cindy C*	Eileen L	Jeff S*	Linda M	Michael B*
Barbara S	Collene R	Eileen L	Jeffrey S	Linda S*	Michelle C
Barbara S*	Coren G	Eileen M	JoAnne B	Lisa M	Michelle S
Barbara Y*	Cynthia S	Eric R	John D	Lisa M	Miriam O
Bernie B	Dave C*	Erin A	John S	Lizette P	Miriam S
Beth F*	Deb C	Eva A	Jonathan G	Lori B	Nancy B*
Bob S*	Deb S	Gerald W*	Jorge D	Lorraine R	Pamela M
Brian N	Deborah M	Germaine M	Julia C*	Madelyn M	Patricia S

Patricia T	Renee S*	Ruthanne O	Sherry H	Suzanna S	Valerie D
Paul H	Richard O	Santi B	Sondra L	Teri T	Valerie E
Paul R	Richard S	Scott A	Stacy K	Tiffany B	Veronica K
Pearl B	Robby S	Shannon K	Sue T	Tom J	Victor T
Peggy H	Robert G	Sheldon S	Susan F	Tracey L	Victoria S
Priscilla H	Robert M	Shelia G*	Susan T	Valarie D	William V
Rae C*	Rosemarie B	Sheri R	Susan T	Valerie B	Wilma S



Finally, we would like to thank all who participated in our first virtual convention this year. Your attendance made for a successful event, and we are **especially thankful to those who made the event possible for everyone by donating**

to the Families Anonymous Convention. In addition to the donors noted with * above, the following groups and individuals also contributed to the convention - thank you for your generous support and your service!

Alan B	Colleen H	Gerry M	Lisa D	Peter K
Alex C	Dale H	Harry K	Liz L	Renee B
Amy G	Darlene C	Hope A	Lynn M	Robert B
Ann P	Dave C	Howard P	Marci G	Robert G
Anne C	David R	Jennifer W	Margaret G	Robin T
Anne F	Deb R	Jim B	Margie B	Rubiela M
Anne H	Debbie A	Joanne B	Marie C	Sandra V
Annie L	Deborah C	Joanne M	Mark M	Sharon D
Ashli S	Diana H	Johanna H	Matt B	Sheryl R
Becky O	Diane C	Julie V	Matt C	Shirley N
Bob M	Diane F	Karen B	Michelle B	Shlomo H
Bud V	Eileen	Kathleen C	Michelle M	Stacy D
Carla B	Eileen S	Kathleen R	Monica H	Stewart H
Carol O	Elena N	Kathleen W	Norine M	Susan F
Charles S	Felicia K	Ken S	Pam H	Susan K
Chris Z	Gail G	Laurie P	Pamela W	Susan S
Cindy	Gary D	Lenore R	Patricia G	Teresa F
Cindy G	Georgia B	Lila I	Patricia S	Tracy S
		Linda W		

Group #478 - Glenview, IL

Group #494 - Winnetka-Northfield, IL

Group #746 - Evansville, IN

Group #2056 - Bradenton, FL

Wish to make a donation? It's quick and easy ...

CLICK HERE



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