

**'Gimme Shelter in the Times of Storm'**  
**Assembly Speaker, Ruth M**  
**Presented during the 4<sup>th</sup> Annual Assembly, Midwest Region**  
*October 19, 2013*

**Gimme shelter in the times of storm- A place of hope and daring greatly to be ourselves...**

I recently was sent to a conference where I heard Lee Woodruff share her story. She is the wife of the journalist Bob Woodruff who suffered a serious brain injury several years ago in Iraq. She wrote a book entitled In an Instant. As she described the fear, helplessness, uncertainty and trauma she and her family went through it was not unlike the extreme emotions and experiences we as loved ones of addicts experience. Her story was truly not unlike ours. A sane life turned upside down from trauma or in our case a disease of the brain. A person loved suddenly changed in ways we cannot control, a future unknown...

As Lee shared her story she said what got them all thru were the people she encountered who:

Were able to just be there in the moments with kindness and compassion

Those who generously shared their stories of hope

Those who encouraged her to have faith in God

Those who helped bring laughter into their lives

Those who reminded her that "what we see in the moment is not always what the outcome will be"

When we have seen our lives turned upside down, experienced our hearts being turned inside out by this disease of addiction the place we go for help and healing is a meeting; the fellowship of others who have traveled this road as well. We learn we are not alone and we discover there is always hope. We learn we cannot make another person be OK but we can choose to seek health and healing ourselves in ways not unlike those Lee Woodruff's and her family experienced.

**Hope- Hearing Other Peoples Experiences**

Nar-anon Meetings are to be a place of respect, safety, courage, change, freedom, fellowship- we are not alone anymore

They are the place where we learn to:

Turn the focus to ourselves and our response to the disease of addiction.

Live a spiritual way of life based on working the 12 steps of Nar-anon

**Change our attitudes:**

"To have the wisdom and courage to see ourselves and we really are, to do something about ourselves with the help of a Higher Power as we understand this, and for the grace to release our addicts with love and cease trying to change them." *Newcomer Welcome- Blue Booklet*

**Let go: respect ourselves and give others respect:**

"negatives change to positives, fear to faith, contempt for what he does to respect for the potential within him; rejection to release with love; not trying to make him fit a standard or image, or expecting him to

measure up to or down from that standard, but giving him the opportunity to become himself, to develop the best within him whatever that best may be..." *Helping- Blue Booklet*

### **Fear is transformed to faith:**

"Dominance to encouragement; panic to serenity; false hope, self-centered to real hope, God centered; the rebellion of despair to the energy of personal revolution; driving to guidance; and self-justification to self-understanding" *Helping- Blue Booklet*

"Carry the message of hope by letting others know they are not alone"- we share ourselves- our experience, strength and hope. *Blue Booklet*

"We do not give advice, we merely suggest by sharing how we solved similar problems through our experiences." *Blue Booklet*

**Progress not perfection:** "The very essence of Naranon is that the whole program is merely suggested. We have no creed, charges, obligations, nor anything that would tend to hinder you' your progress may be made in your own time in your own way. We merely invite your attendance in a common cause." *Blue Booklet*

### **Faith:**

#### **Tiny Seeds of Faith SESH March 10**

Many people come into recovery frightened and insecure. I did. I felt weak and alone. I was uncertain of my direction and did not know where to go for help or answers. In Nar-anon, it was suggested that if I could find some faith in a Power greater than myself, I would find security and guidance. I wanted that feeling of safety, and strength. However, for me, the faith did not come overnight; it took time and effort to grow. When I ask my Higher Power for help and then acknowledge the source of that help. I see the benefits brought about by planting my tiny seed of faith. I nurture that tiny seed of faith with my daily prayers and my faith grows. It is a reward for living life on life's terms. One day, I find that my faith has become similar to a huge, spreading tree. It does not stop the storms of life but I know that I am safe in its shelter.

### **Thought for today:**

Just for today, I know that faith in my Higher Power will not calm the storms of life, but it will calm my heart. I will let my faith shelter me in times of trouble.

"Faith is the bird that feels the light and sings when the dawn is still dark." ~ R. Tagore

### **Winds of change are blowing through our lives:**

Hurricanes- experiencing peace- like being in the eye of the storm-focus-where you are right now this present moment

Tornados- seek shelter- boundaries- learning to discover our true choices, take care of ourselves, stop trying to force solutions: fighting against the uncontrollable damages me and those I love

Thunder storms- powerlessness- practice detachment- staying out of the storm- taking a loving step back- the Power is restored to live our own lives, our ability to see our choices

Gentle breezes- conscious contact- stop be quiet and still- keep it simple

Spring showers- gentle change and growth- changing the things I can

**"If you will chase the hope the way you did the dope you will stay clean and your life will get better"**  
**NA Speaker**

**My experience has taught me that if I will choose to chase the hope with the same passion that I want to chase my loved one who does dope I will experience serenity and our lives will get better.**

**Carrying the Message, Not the Addict**      February 17

Just for Today Narcotics Anonymous

***"They can be analyzed, counseled, reasoned with, prayed over, threatened, beaten, or locked up, but they will not stop until they want to stop."***

*Basic Text, p. 62*

Perhaps one of the most difficult truths we must face in our recovery is that we are as powerless over another's addiction as we are over our own. We may think that because we've had a spiritual awakening in our own lives we should be able to persuade another addict to find recovery. But there are limits to what we can do to help another addict.

We cannot force them to stop using. We cannot give them the results of the steps or grow for them. We cannot take away their loneliness or their pain. There is nothing we can say to convince a scared addict to surrender the familiar misery of addiction for the frightening uncertainty of recovery. We cannot jump inside other peoples' skins, shift their goals, or decide for them what is best for them.

However, if we refuse to try to exert this power over another's addiction, we may help them. They may grow if we allow them to face reality, painful though it may be. They may become more productive, by their own definition, as long as we don't try and do it for them. They can become the authority on their own lives, provided we are only authorities on our own. If we can accept all this, we can become what we were meant to be - carriers of the message, not the addict.

***Just for today: I will accept that I am powerless not only over my own addiction but also over everyone else's. I will carry the message, not the addict.***

**Just for today I work a spiritual program of recovery with my Higher Power and the support of my fellowship of recovery's help and encouragement. This is not a "self-help" program.**

**One day at a time I live in the:**

**3 A's: Awareness (me/inside) Acceptance (you/outside) Action (response)**

**3 P's: Pause (breathe) Pray (conscious contact) Proceed (unstuck)**

**Gratitude will transform my attitude...**

**One day at a time my prayer for others:**

**3 P's: Presence (not alone) Peace (serenity) Perseverance (going through)**

**"Hope can always exist in all circumstances. Miracles do happen; faith/God is as real as the air we breathe"**  
**Lee Woodruff**

## Twelve Traditions of Nar-Anon

1. Our common welfare should come first; personal progress for the greatest number depends on unity.
2. For our group purposes there is but one authority — a loving God as He may express Himself in our group conscience. Our leaders are but trusted servants — they do not govern.
3. The relatives of addicts, when gathered for mutual aid, may call themselves a Nar-Anon Family Group, provided that as a group, they have no other affiliation. The only requirement for membership is that there be a problem of addiction in a relative or friend.
4. Each group should be autonomous except in matters affecting other Nar-Anon Family Groups, or NA as a whole.
5. Each Nar-Anon Family Group has but one purpose; to help families of addicts. We do this by practicing the Twelve Steps of Nar-Anon, by encouraging and understanding our addicted relatives, and by welcoming and giving comfort to families of addicts.
6. Our Family Groups ought never to endorse, finance or lend our name to any outside enterprise, lest problems of money, property and prestige divert us from our primary spiritual aim; but although a separate entity, we should always cooperate with Narcotics Anonymous.
7. Every group ought to be fully self-supporting, declining outside contributions.
8. Nar-Anon Twelfth Step work should remain forever non-professional, but our service centers may employ special workers.
9. Our groups, as such ought never to be organized, but we may create service boards or committees directly responsible to those they serve.
10. The Nar-Anon Family Groups have no opinion on outside issues; hence our name ought never be drawn into public controversy.
11. Our public relations policy is based on attraction rather than promotion; we need always maintain personal anonymity at the level of press, radio, films, internet and other forms of mass media. We need guard with special care the anonymity of all NA members.

12. Anonymity is the spiritual foundation of all our traditions, ever reminding us to place principles above personalities.

[Nar-Anon Twelve Traditions PDF](#)