Q of the Month Sept 2018

**Tradition 9: “Our groups, as such, ought never to be organized, but we may create service boards or committees directly responsible to those they serve.”**

This may seem a contradictory tradition. Clearly, we require organization to be effective. Our meetings are held on specific days, at specific times, in specific places. We create and maintain meeting schedules, teleconferences and websites. We organize our service efforts and event calendars. We have service positions and committees from the local family group through to the Board of Trustees.

What is never organized is the part of Nar-Anon that matters most. One member helping another. One person reaching out to another and sharing heart to heart. The language of empathy and understanding that says “you are not alone” using no words at all. Nar-Anon binds us together like the air we breathe. It flows between us and surrounds us. We cannot keep recovery to ourselves any more than we can keep oxygen by holding our breath.

We do not organize what people say. We don’t direct who speaks to whom. We don’t assign sponsors, mandate step work, or require attendance. There is no pass/fail exam regarding Nar-Anon knowledge. Our membership is not determined by how much or how little work we do. We never know who will say or do something that will strike a chord in another and lead them to an A-Ha moment.

The services we provide as individuals to Nar-Anon ought to always be done in the spirit of unity. As individuals, we surrender to the will of the group we serve so that we are not distracted by personalities. We rely on the principles of communication, open-mindedness, patience, humility and anonymity, among others.

Very few people like to have their family meeting time taken up with business. In order to stay focused on our primary purpose, to help families of addicts, most groups turn over other tasks to service volunteers and elected position holders.

Group responsibility, however, does not end after elections. Groups have a responsibility to be attentive to their service bodies. The work is getting done by volunteers for the benefit of the family groups. Active GSRs bring current, accurate and timely information from Nar-Anon Midwest region and from Nar-Anon World Office to our local groups. How does the Family Group receive that information? Does the FG receive it at all?

We need methods to communicate, to challenge, to consent to and to change our plans. While those systems look different from place to place, the question we must ask ourselves is whether the system we use is working? The ultimate authority lies with the NFG itself. That said, the NFG itself must be willing to devote time, energy and thought to learning about Nar-Anon and participate in decision-making, however that occurs. Being involved in local service is a choice for some groups and a true challenge for others.

We have over 60 groups in the Midwest region and less than 20 active GSRs. The very worst reason for doing something is because that’s the way it’s always been done. The real question for your NFG is:

1. **What is working and what is not working in how you receive and deal with regional and world news and business?**
2. **How do you vote in your NFG?**

Has your NFG discussed through Group Conscious “how to do” your business meetings?