**2020 MIDWEST REGION ASSEMBLY - Saturday October 17th Regional Report**

**Pandemic 20/20: Clarity through the Eyes of Recovery in Times of Change**

***“Practicing the Principles in All Our Affairs” 12th Step***

This has been a year of unprecedented change and unknowns in most of our lives. The Covid 19 pandemic has swept through the world forcing change, causing isolation, and stirring up fears. There is a lot of reacting happening as we react to forced and unexpected upheaval in our personal lives and communities. We in the community of recovery have a unique perspective on upheaval and change in that we have a program of recovery that equips us, in principle with practice, to deal with life on life’s terms. We are affected by change like everyone else but we do have tools, one another, and most importantly a Higher Power who will guide us through these waves of change. Clarity and guidance are possible when we connect to our Higher Power and one another.

To me clarity is a part of our program of recovery that is a gift of our Higher Power. I have found that in my recovery it usually is experienced as I work/apply the steps to myself or my circumstances in order to connect with wisdom and guidance for a calming of my emotions and thoughts.

It was about this time in 2009 that my loved one had the experience of “clarity”. He saw where he was going with his life, had an awareness that he could not stop, asked for help. He willingly stepped onto the suggested path of recovery. Within days I had experienced my own true moments of clarity about myself. Knowing very little about recovery, I read the suggested stories and “how it works” from the big book of AA. I personally was attracted to the guidance of recovery that was spoken of in those pages.

I have come to believe that when the spiritual touches the reality in a person’s soul and circumstances clarity happens. Somehow a true reality-based honest awareness happens inside one’s mind and heart.

It is that gift of desperation that has a person being sick and tired of being sick and tired. The inward circling thoughts “I can’t keep doing what I am doing” pain is the point of change in how we live our lives and decide to try recovery or minimally consider a different perspective.

“Easy does it “says to me, start at the beginning, where I am today. “Keep it simple” assures me the process of recovery is orderly and kind.

Connection to a Higher Power is a personal choice; it is present in every moment for me to learn to hold onto as I climb the steps into a different life with the God of my understanding. I also gain a new understanding of myself.

Today through the process of recovering I am in relationship with a Higher Power who is real, respectful, and cares for me and those I love and care about…

When others share their experience strength and hope with me, the growth from the seeds of faith planted along their path provide hope for me. My fellowship is a safe resting place to breathe and not be alone anymore.

Each Nar-anon group has a single purpose found in our 5th Tradition:

“***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.”***

Our region exists to support the fellowship of recovery here in our states. The region also provides the structure to support the fellowship of Nar-anon as a whole by financially supporting the sending a delegate and alternated delegate to the biannual World Service Conference.

Our region is made up of groups in 6 states; Arkansas, Illinois, Indiana, Kansas, Missouri, and Wisconsin. In 2009 there were 20 groups in 3 states (IL, IN, and MO) that formed our region.

Arkansas – 1 (at request of that group)

Illinois - 32 + 1 Narateen

Indiana - 16

Kansas - 15

Missouri - 15 + 1 Narateen

Wisconsin – 19

Total - 98 Nar-Anon Meetings plus 2 Narateen Meetings.

The Wisconsin area contacted the Midwest Region to inquire about possibly joining the region in November 2019. After their investigation and through following our regional process to join the region, the WI area was voted in and welcomed into the Midwest region on April 18th 2020. WI is our region’s first official area. The WI Area Chairperson, Mary S has joined the RSC.

This past year, 4 new meetings have opened: Chicago, IL, Covington, IN, Indianapolis, IN - Tues, and West Baden, IN

This past year 5 regular meetings have closed plus 1 Narateen: Brazil, IN, Eldorado, KS, Van Buren, AR - Sun, Sikeston, MO plus Palos Hills, IL (Narateen)

Currently there are:

25 virtual meetings listed on the mid-west website as a direct result of the pandemic. (During the shutdown of all physical gathering, there were additional phone/virtual meetings which are currently meeting in person again for a total of 28 to 30 at the peak.)

There are currently 2 virtual step classes in process based out of the fellowship in MO.

There is a virtual weekly area meeting in WI.

Narateen meetings in our region are not currently meeting in person.

There are and have been multiple virtual workshops and speaker meetings listed in other regions under “Events” on the Midwest website.

This past winter, the Delegate, Theresa C. and Alternate delegate, Cathy C held conference calls and distributed information re the World Service Conference (WSC) motions and related business. They tallied the group votes on motions and the literature priority list to bring to the WSC. In April the decision was made by the WSC committee to postpone the WSC until next year. At that time Theresa and Cathy will carry the vote be the voice of the Midwest region to the conference in CA.

Recovery is still happening in the Midwest Region.

The Nar-anon family groups in the region are all autonomous in their responses to the closing of in person meetings. As a result of moving to phone or virtual meetings, geographical distances and/or physical limitations have been circumvented allowing persons to attend meetings who may have moved away or been unable to attend in person. There have been park, forest preserve and parking lot meetings so groups are able to connect. Some meetings have chosen to open again as well as continue with a simultaneous virtual meeting or have an additional virtual meeting on a different day. In the beginning of the sudden loss of meeting places the RSC assisted with the change to phone or virtual meetings. Information, assistance, and troubleshooting on phone and virtual meetings were gathered and distributed. Members of the RSC assisted groups with setting up or navigating conference calls and virtual meetings. April through June there were additional GSR meetings focused on getting back to the basic tools of the program, sharing group struggles, and solutions.

The recent move from conference call GSR meetings to practicing virtual meetings was a precursor to having a virtual assembly. The GSRs voted to have an abbreviated assembly this year as we are cutting out baby teeth in a new virtual world of recovery. As always, the wonderful people in our individual groups are only a phone call away. New souls are joining our meetings and becoming a part of the healing that is happening here.

A final quote that describes the change that happens in recovery recently shared by a recovery friend.

There is a saying that goes; “hurt people will hurt people”. But I really never hear the opposite. “Healed people will heal people” Get healed, then go heal…

Gratefully a part of the fellowship of the Midwest Region of Nar-anon.

In service,

Ruth M. Chairperson, Midwest Region of Nar-anon

***“Higher Power, guide me on my journey to peace and serenity. Help me let go of self-will and turn my life over to your care.”* Nar-anon Prayer**