

FAN & FANonline

voice of the families anonymous
fellowship

Spring 2012



ASKING FOR IT AND GIVING IT !

There is no use whatever trying to help people who do not help themselves. You cannot push anyone up a ladder unless he is willing to climb himself. ~Andrew Carnegie

Families Anonymous is a self-help organization for relatives & friends
concerned about another's use of drugs or related behavioural problems

£1



Greetings!

Dear All !

What have I included in this edition ?

- The Main Theme of this Edition is 'Asking for and Giving Help'
- FAN online is born
- All set for the 2012 UK Convention in Birmingham
- BoardWalk
- Members' Contributions. Our thanks to them!
- Something about FA in Italy

All with selected Quotes, Poetry and Clip Art.

Hallo to Everyone and belated a Happy New Year to you All!

So, we have come through another year-end holiday season, hopefully unscathed. For people in our position, holiday periods can often be very trying times. Even for so-called normal people and families, they can be the cause of stress. Who to invite and who not to invite, we ask ourselves treading on egg-shells. If our relatives do not know what our son or daughter is up to, we can suffer over-powering anxiety that this addicted loved one will let the cat out of the bag as the turkey is being served! Maybe after being in FA for some time, we might even wish secretly to ourselves that our ALO would, in fact, spill the beans for our relatives to know what we are going through. One thing is certain – that, without the FA way of thinking helping us to deal with the situation, things would be more difficult. It is not all bad news, though. Some of us will have had the best holiday for some time and we can

really appreciate the smallest of mercies. This is the one thing that we probably do better than most of the population.

This edition of FAN last year was called the Winter-Spring Edition. A good idea at the time, I thought, covering all four seasons. Again I am starting to prepare this edition in the drab days of winter but have decided, with resolve, to call it simply the Spring Edition. This allows me to include above the bee and flowers image. It is the time of year that also makes me feel a Convention and AGM coming on, with all that these events entail. Like a renewed round of volunteering pushes. As I write, we have been advised by our Office Assistant, Pia, that she wants to stand down after some seven years of service. We are extremely grateful for all that she has done for FA., But meanwhile a solution has been found through a kind and willing volunteer to fill the large void! More about that in the following pages.

Do remember that your views about FA and FAN can be made known on these pages. Simply email famanon.faneditor@yahoo.co.uk or write to the Office. Happy Easter! WLTF, Richard – FAN Editor.

Asking for Help” as seen in ‘Today a Better Way’

Children go through a stage that is all too familiar to a parent: “I can do it by myself!” We watch them struggle to climb the stairs, tie their shoes, button their buttons, and do all the other routine tasks of living. When a parent takes over and does these tasks for the child, the jobs may get done in half the time, but the child’s dignity suffers. Testing our knowledge and skills is the only way we grow in self-esteem, self-reliance and self-discipline. A steadying hand at times is very important, but most of the time, joy and self-confidence come only after one has accomplished a task primarily by one’s own resources.



I need to allow my youngsters to do as much for themselves as they can, lest I rob them of an opportunity for growth. A few failures along the way teach more than any amount of effort on the parent’s part

Doing it by myself is *not* a good idea, however, when I am struggling with the family disease of addiction. I am blinded by denial and my own defences. Asking for help is all-important. When I found the courage to name my family’s problem and ask for help, the situation began to turn around.

Doing it by oneself is essential for the child learning to live. Doing it by oneself is bad medicine for anyone who wants to learn the skills of recovery.

TODAY I WILL acknowledge that it’s OK to ask for help.

[page 179 of *Today A Better Way*, © Families Anonymous]



- The quotation on the front-page of this FAN was written by the Dunfermline-born American steel industrialist, Andrew Carnegie, thought to be second only to John D. Rockefeller in his wealth. He became a large-scale philanthropist and, at his death in 1919, he left behind many successful projects, including Carnegie Hall in New York and a pension fund for his employees. During his lifetime, the US Civil Service Retirement System did not exist, making Carnegie a true force for good and a front-runner.
- Like Andrew Carnegie, members of Families Anonymous learn that trying to help someone who has no intention of helping him or herself, simply does not work. Whether it is getting to the top of a ladder or abandoning a drug habit, the situation is the same. The only person who can help is, in fact, the person that we consider needs help. We ourselves are powerless.
- Having thought of the main theme for this edition of FAN, I set about looking for quotations based on giving and receiving help. To my surprise, whilst there are quite a few quotations about giving help, it is nearly impossible to find any quotations from people, famous or not, who have made notable remarks about receiving help. Maybe this tells us something about human nature ; perhaps it is thought that helping is a noble activity but that asking for help is belittling and needs to be swept under the carpet. Who knows ? Whilst progressing with this latest edition of FAN, I will continue to look. If you have anything to say about this, or any other matter, do send me views for publication, anonymously or not, to famanon.faneditor@yahoo.co.uk

A way for you to offer your help is to find the flyer in this edition called FA SHARERS FORM.



Filling it out could give a boost to your own recovery as well as to the recovery of those to whom you share your experiences. It is the collective memory of bad and good experiences, perhaps in that order, which gives FA wisdom its depth. Families Anonymous UK Service Board, motivated admittedly by our new Office Manager Jan, is once again compiling a list of FA members who feel that they are able to give a positive share to other FA groups. Please volunteer your details if you feel you could do this.

The completed list will be sent to all FA UK groups so that any group can invite an FA member to give a share at their meeting, if the group wants to. It is suggested that the host group offers to pay the travelling expenses to the visiting member where appropriate. It would be great to get as many people involved as we can, and as we are such a small fellowship, our survival in no small part depends on our groups being healthy & interesting for both newcomers and old timers alike. Please complete the following sign-up list while you're at the Convention, or use the enclosed flyer FA SHARERS LIST to complete and send to the Office Thank you. [Jan wrote most of this piece, Ed.]

FANonline seems to be here to stay!



The choice as to whether you order a hard-copy FAN in black and white or enjoy the colours, albeit not too many of them, seems to have come to stay. Well, at least we are trying to keep up with the Ipod generation. In the spirit of cloud-computing [if you do not know what that is, turn to page 9], I am going to have to be responsible for all things about FAN on the FA website. And quite

rightly so. I have my written instructions on how to announce future FANs and their contents on the website without bothering Michael or Jan each time.

Helping or Controlling?

How easy it was for me to take over and direct someone I regarded as sick and unable to function! Even after my daughter was in recovery, under the guise of keeping her on the right track, I continued to try to engineer her life. I thought it was not only my right but my duty. Otherwise what kind of a parent would I be?

The key words are 'helping' and 'controlling'. Through participation in Families Anonymous, I have found that there is a great difference between help and control. The notion of keeping someone on track denotes control. But I know now that I have no control over any other person.

I took a long, hard look at myself and realized I needed to change my attitudes and actions. To help my daughter, I had to let her go, with love.

My daughter does not need my lectures, threats, promises of rewards, or protection. She does need encouragement, my faith that she can succeed, and my acceptance of her right to manage her own life.

TODAY I WILL let FA help me distinguish between help and control.

[page 108 of *Today A Better Way*, © Families Anonymous]

Never look down on anybody unless you're helping them up.

Reverend Jesse Jackson - American Civil Rights Leader

Tough Love Works - at least in Sevenoaks!

Imagine a large well-functioning family with just one person in that family who starts causing discord, regularly starts arguments with other members and threatens to cause the family to fall apart.

That is the situation that the Sevenoaks group of FA had last year. One long-standing member – let's call her Mary – regularly put forward thinking that was not in line with FA thinking. She was tolerated but more and more she would pick a fight with one person after another. She was never wrong! People were leaving meetings feeling angry. The last straw came when a newcomer attended for the first time. Mary insisted in putting her views forward, would not stop talking when asked. The meeting descended into a shambles. The result was that the newcomer left confused, never to be seen again.

Many people spoke to Mary privately, putting the point forcibly that she was disruptive and would no longer be welcome at meetings. Eventually she realized she could no longer attend. That was five months ago.

We at Sevenoaks are once again a healthy FA group with an average attendance of ten, with numbers steadily increasing and able to help the finances of FA nationally. But without Mary!

Public Information – a challenge!



How are we going to get the FA message across to the people who really need it is what we all ask ourselves. But for one of our newer Board members, Susan, the way is clear. Having had the experience of drug-abusing family members, Susan first came to FA about three years ago. Passionate about spreading the word, at least initially, in her home city of Liverpool, she is now coming up to completing one year of service on the FA Board. Susan attends the Wednesday and Friday FA meetings in Liverpool and hopes that her efforts will allow her to start a Saturday morning meeting in the city before long. She believes in getting out to places where she can help to spread the FA word, like a dry-bar in the city centre where smoothie-drinking is the order of the day. The logic must be that, if you can't identify the suffering families directly, then you do so by getting the ones who may have been the cause of the suffering in the first place to carry

the message to them, in the hope that it will stick. And it seems to be doing just that! With all this in mind, Susan also goes singing in the national *Raucous Caucus Recovery Chorus* around North West England, including its prisons, to promote non-addictive life-styles. This is Susan's imaginative fulfilment of her dual role of PI + Prisons on the FA Board. Ed.



How about you volunteering to offer Lone Support to someone ?

BoardWalk

BOARD MEETING HELD AT BATTERSEA OFFICE ON 3rd. MARCH 2012



- The most satisfying news imparted at this Board meeting was Diane's explanation of how our progression to coveted Charity status is advancing. It is now hoped that our aspirations are seriously on the way to achieving our aim. We have made an agreement with a firm of reputable London solicitors specialized in the Charity field to take us through the process of FA becoming a Limited Company by Guarantee and a Charity totally free of charge. We were reminded that all FA Board members at present are personally legally and financially liable for what could go wrong in FA. Our solicitor is starting the process of protecting present and future Board members and giving us the same status as other fellowships, such as NA and Al-Anon, by forming our own Company Limited by Guarantee.
- Knowing what we know now, the Board asked itself how it could morally entice people to join the Board without telling them openly about their potential personal liability, thereby frightening them off! Of course, the Board had to impart to the membership facts about which previous Board members had been unaware. Having said that, protection is not absolute. Any Company Director who engages in misconduct might find that his/her liability called upon even in a company with limited liability.
- The membership will, at the end of the day, decide whether we take this step from an unprotected fellowship to a listed Charity organization. This will allow FA to receive charitable donations from its members, plus payments for FA Literature from members, groups and the public through PayPal on our website. A further advantage of becoming a Charity is that we will be on a more secure and recognized footing with HMRC, being allotted a tax-exemption number to allow us to claim gift-aid and any other pertinent tax relief. As I write, our lawyers are drafting the Memorandum and Articles of Association for the proposed company. These new constitutional documents will reflect our existing By-Laws as much as possible.



FA Chair, Louise has decided not to stand for re-election. The Board thanked her for her service and gracefully respected her difficult choice. It was unanimously voted that the Board's candidate for Chair, and the candidate with most nominations in general, is present Board member Chris from the Cardiff group who rotates-off the Board at the imminent AGM. Obviously it is the membership who will ultimately decide through its delegates' vote at the AGM.

Remember ! You are encouraged to ask for a Board discussion on any preoccupation you may have!

Future Board meetings:

9 June 2012, 23 September 2012, 1 December 2012, 3 March 2013

AGM: 22 April 2012

ALL SET FOR THE 2012 NATIONAL CONVENTION & AGM

**Hilton Metropole, National Exhibition Centre,
Birmingham.**



The final virtual meeting of the Cross-Group Convention Committee was held recently and now all is set for the 2012 National FA UK Convention on Saturday 21 April and AGM on Sunday morning 22 April.

As already announced, the theme of this year's Convention is **"I CAN Change Myself"** and at the time of writing, we are looking for FA members who are willing to give a Share on this theme at the Saturday Convention. As in previous years, you could be a Parent, Partner or a Sibling speaking share at different points of the proceedings during the day. If you would like to give some service back to FA by being willing to give one of the Shares, please contact the FA Office in London and they will contact the Convention Committee. As reported on page 4, our new Office Manager, Jan – backed by the Board – has decided to refresh the fellowship's ailing FA Sharers List. You will find a flyer-form in this FAN for you to declare your willingness by completing it and sending it to the Office. Thank you!

The Convention will have its unofficial kick-off on Friday evening when a fair number of members, who are local or coming from a distance, have opted to have dinner together, either just for the pleasure of doing so, or where it would not be practical, nor desirable, to travel very early on the Saturday morning, resulting in an unrelaxed and finely timed arrival. The Convention Committee urges those staying at the hotel on Saturday night, and all other voting and non-voting members, to attend the AGM on Sunday morning. The AGM is the opportunity for the FA membership to meet the Board and hear what they have been doing on FA's behalf. It is also the members' opportunity to tell the Board if they doing a good job or not. They are, after all, only your trusted servants. But most of all, the AGM is the time for the membership, represented by it Group Delegates, to decide future policy and appoint the future Chair and Board members. Those who do not actively vote or make known their preferences to their Group Delegates, have no grounds for complaint at what is decided at the AGM.

Here follows a list of Proposals to be voted at the AGM. Let your Group Delegate know how you would like him/her to vote! Your Group Secretary/Delegate has more detail should you want it -
Proposal 1: by the FA UK Board: That FA should apply for Charity status and become a charitable Company Limited by Guarantee.

Proposal 2: by the FA UK Board: That the 2013 Convention be held at the Birmingham Metropole Hotel in April.

Proposal 3: by the FA UK Board: That Article XI: Meetings should be modified: Details with you Group Secretary.

Proposal 4: by Bermondsey Group: We propose that we give some support to struggling groups to prevent them from having to close.

Proposal 5: by Queens Park Group: The Queens Park Group propose that a Board member must have worked Steps 1 to 5, as they understand this. We propose that this comes into effect from (AGM) April 2013.

Proposal 6: by Queens Park Group: The Queens Park Group would like to propose that some fellowship funds be put aside for the purpose of financially supporting regional mini Conventions. The funds would need to be applied for in advance by the Groups to the Board.

Finally, this is YOUR Convention & AGM, so do please come along and enjoy the experience! *Ed.*

I CAN Change Myself "

A MOTHER REFLECTS.....

Step One:

*We admitted we were powerless over
drugs and other people's lives – that our lives
had become unmanageable.*

Very soon after attending a weekly meeting in a nearby town I realized that what this step said was true – despite all my efforts I was powerless. This was such a tremendous shock to me – I had believed that the idea was to make things right – as a mother, wife, woman – as a caring human being!!!

Despite feelings of total failure, rejection and guilt there was something akin to reassurance in the words being read out. This was despite my own 'bad' attitude at the time. I had done everything I could think of in an effort to change my addicted son, but to no avail. In truth it soon became clear that my own obsessive behaviour had probably made things worse. I had, it seemed, spent almost all my waking moments on him and his problems. One word from him and I REACTED – now I realize – BADLY; to the detriment of myself and younger son. It is worth noting that this so called **child** was in fact a young person – NOT A CHILD. What I was now hearing suggested that somehow it seemed my behaviour had allowed/enabled him to duck responsibility for his actions.

The first significant result of listening and reading this step was that I began to sleep at night. No more did I lie in bed willing my son to come home; or listening for the police to arrive at the house. Nor did I lie awake imagining what he was doing; was he alive or dead, or maybe caused someone else's death ... the list was endless.

The first step states that ... My recovery had begun ...

Also, very soon into fellowship, I stopped visiting a nearby Young Offenders' Institution – this visiting had been virtually on a daily basis at the time that my son was on remand awaiting sentencing. This was truly amazing. I very quickly realized that I was in fact visiting for **myself** – this had little to do with whom I was visiting; it was yet another part of my obsessive patterns of behaviour. Was I trying to offset my feelings of failure as a mom? The need to fix things was paramount.

It is, perhaps, worth looking at the three red book (Today a Better Way) readings under the heading of *fixing*. [pp. 16,192,328 Ed.]

I did write an honest letter to my son – explaining that now I had started attending FA meetings I was beginning to understand that my way of dealing with 'his' situation was wrong. What is even more incredible is that he took on board this change and was able to write letters to me – Wow! He also said that it was NOT my fault; that he had made these decisions for himself.

I had also heard at meetings that there was no magic wand! But, in these early days the relief and difference in how I now felt certainly seemed 'magical'. To be with people who understood how I felt was wonderful. To hear it said that **I** hadn't caused how the addict behaved was truly amazing. As this new thinking sunk in I was able to see how unmanageable **my** life was. How dangerous, in some instances, my crazy actions had become – all in a **futile attempt to change someone else.**

These new feelings of relief and subsequent feelings of 'freedom' were so empowering I simply had to tell others about it!

What a leap of faith ... all this from Step 1 and there were still 11 more steps to take.

..... an FA member.

CHANGE AT THE OFFICE - FAREWELL TO PIA

In my opening letter to this edition of FAN on page 2, I announced that, after a long stint as our Office Assistant in Battersea, Pia has decided to call it a day. I invited to say a few words for FAN:

I worked at the FA office for about 7 years, and of course it was very hard deciding to let go. When I started it was a step, a good sized step, which to be specific was a small step, into working again. I've always been proud to be working for the fellowship. In those years it has been a steady backdrop while I did just what we are meant to do in recovery: develop our own lives. So now I have let go of working at the office, because I am working at what I'm better suited to. It has been a healthy handover. The office is in strong hands. Hands more suited to technology, rather than mine which shall be stitching and other luddite endeavours!

I have met some dear people, and of course the fellowship will always be with me, not just in memory, but all the time. Thank you...it's been a such a pleasure.

Pia x.

I am sure that all our members will join me in wishing Pia all the best in the next phase of her life, whilst thanking her for all the committed years that she gave to our mutual cause. Hopefully not goodbye but - *Au revoir*, Pia!

..... - AND HALLO TO JAN

If you have been in FA any amount of time you are bound to know, or at least, to have heard of Jan, at present the Secretary of our Cheltenham group, amongst other FA activities. So maybe the heading 'Hallo Again to Jan' would have been more befitting. Having joined FA some 14 years ago, Jan's experience in the ways of our fellowship is huge! So, what a wonderful surprise it was to hear that Jan was interested to take on the job of Office Manager. So, I have been able to erase that unfilled vacancy from the call for Volunteers on the next page. Let us express our gratitude to you, Jan! Even better: Jan has explained that with careful planning, with the sharing of tasks, and with the use of ever-modernizing soft-ware, she might well be able to carry out much of the Office Manager role remotely at home. For those into computing, Jan is talking of recent developments to help us on our way, called 'cloud computing', in which all our records would be kept, not in our PC at Battersea but ,yes, you've guessed it – in the clouds! This way we could all access them from home. There are still some issues to be sorted but we are hoping that this is the solution for us. After all, Cheltenham-London is a long ride!

"Cloud computing refers to any situation in which computing is done in a remote location, rather than on your desktop or portable device".



**Good luck,
& thanks, Jan.**

Volunteers!



BE INSPIRED TO BUILD ON YOUR
F.A. EXPERIENCE AND FULFIL
YOUR POTENTIAL ON THE
BOARD!

The friendly UK Service Board would very much like to welcome YOU into our midst.

Your FA depends for its survival on continued service. We are looking for members like you who would like to consider one of the open options listed below. If you feel overwhelmed by the idea, why not express an interest in sharing a post? Talk to us about it without any commitment. We meet on Saturday mornings just four times a year. Hardly onerous! Positively enjoyable and supportive!

We need members to fill just two Board positions in order to keep functioning. We suggest that you – without commitment ! - phone the Office on 0845 1200 660 to register your possible interest and to receive more information:

Office Phone Coordinator: Ability to send and receive e-mails vital. Chris of Cardiff Group has fulfilled this task for three years. She makes sure of Office coverage by volunteers with her monthly lists.

Fellowship Liaison - Responsibility for FA's liaison with other 12-Step fellowships, but especially with NA. Mandy of Birmingham Group was the last holder of this post.

If you feel that you could offer service on the Board in another relevant capacity, do let it be known. As a flyer to this edition, there is an important message from our World Service Board Chair, Marc M., looking for those willing to give service. Although at first glance this request seems to be directed solely at Americans, it is not. If being a link in our world-wide fellowship is your call, let it be known first to the UK Board so that the possibilities of this post can be properly explained and explored.

Needless to say, the UK fellowship is always thirsty for all sorts of volunteers. Every hour given repays what FA is doing or has done for you! Why not stay at home and answer the FA phone – if it rings - between 6 and 10pm, or 2 and 10pm at weekends? Or 1-4pm weekdays when no one is available to come into the Office? Or if you live within sensible distance of London, why not give an afternoon or two each month to your fellowship. Your travel costs are naturally reimbursed. And finally, think of our Lone Support service receiving requests with no new volunteers coming forward to sustain our supply of volunteers. Or worse still, imagine yourself with not even phone or email FA support. And remember, if you are computer-literate, Jan needs you to share her Office tasks !

TODAY I will do my part to keep Families Anonymous alive and well, so that others who need this program can recover, too. TABW, page 81.

Are you doing you bit, however small ?

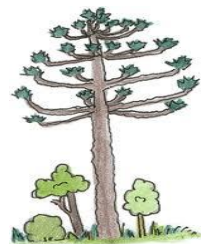
by Paul

The only qualifications required are regular attendance at FA meetings and, preferably, one year as a member.

by a volunteer

The second guest speaker was a medical consultant: he briefly explained the *professional* notion of the illness of alcoholism and referred to some graphs which indicated the magnitude of this disease. He further pointed out his own view in respect of alcohol

Thank you for reading this and if you can help e-mail me at kisspw57@ntlworld.com , contact the office or call/text me on 07941 531 286



For my part, as a grateful member of the 12 steps of Families Anonymous, I found the time spent there more than worth the effort.

Thank you Al-anon for the invitation.

FA Italian National Assembly in Florence 2011

Marco from Genoa recounts his experiences at the National Assembly in Florence last May.

FLORENCE 5/6/2011: 'Impressions of an out of the ordinary day of recovery'

Mindful of the exciting experience of Pescara in 2010, I would not have missed the 2011 event for anything in the world. Coming up against and comparing ourselves with people outside of our own group is always enriching. It is true that each case is different but the issues are always common and recovery times are long, so we always tend to stagnate a little within our own group. Hearing different shares and experiences always brings a breath of energy, ideas and insights that we otherwise might never experience. As a friend from Brescia said- "it is in these comparisons that I measure my recovery".



And so here I am in Florence, in an old convent for cloistered nuns who have understood the importance of hospitality and have opened the doors of their cloisters. The first meeting has as topic "My Recovery". I lose count of how many people are there. Lots! Many are already familiar, but some are new to me. Everyone is full of enthusiasm.

Despite it being a year since the last gathering and sometimes the emotion having the upper hand, my voice cracks as I bare my soul to talk about my gruelling recovery and my daughter ... but I see it happening to many others, and the atmosphere of national meetings does not escape this rule. Tears and laughter in different dialects and inflections, against a background of serenity, punctuate the shares of us all. Some friend starts off in Italian but then uses a dialect word or two and ends up in the Verona dialect, causing a smile for the outspokenness that comes from what he says and how it says it. Spilling the beans, offloading what you have inside of you, just as it is, with expressions that are natural to you, with the certainty of being understood and the knowledge that no one will judge you for what you've done or haven't done, all these things aid our recovery.

And then, with the shares all over, we go out into the Sisters' garden, with the spectacle of the Florentine Hills there, in front of us! Some backdrop, carrying on what we had left in abeyance from last time when we had free-range produce... even this helps our recovery. At dinner we drove the lady who runs the restaurant mad: "we are in ... but someone's eating somewhere else and hasn't arrived ... or perhaps two too many if they make it in time ...". And the lady looks at us with disapproval: schoolchildren at the table alongside seem to be a group of little Lords, so are composed and ordered compared to us rowdies, relaxed because we put our loved ones out of our minds and are just experiencing simply living, something that we haven't done for ages. >>

And this also helps our recovery. After dinner our irrepressible bunch departs in a minibus for a flying-trip to Florence. There's the Cathedral and Baptistry; then the Piazza della Signoria with a rock-concert going on in the Loggia dei Lanzi Building. A really expensive ice-cream and on the Ponte Vecchio, a group of guys are improvising a chorus in Spanish, with dancers thrown in. And then we need to hurry to the mini-bus in order not to miss the last coach. It's like being in another world and our loved ones are brought back to mind only sporadically when some addict is seen diving around the history-crammed alleys. For a moment I think of my daughter and how good it would be to share this magic moment with her. But she is not here; she has made her choices.

The day is coming to an end and the result is positive. One day at a time! Tomorrow we will still be in Florence. And if these things offer me so much..... Marco, FA Genoa.



Familiari Anonimi Italia



**Abruzzo - Emilia Romagna - Lazio - Liguria
Lombardia - Puglia - Toscana - Trentino-Alto Adige - Veneto**

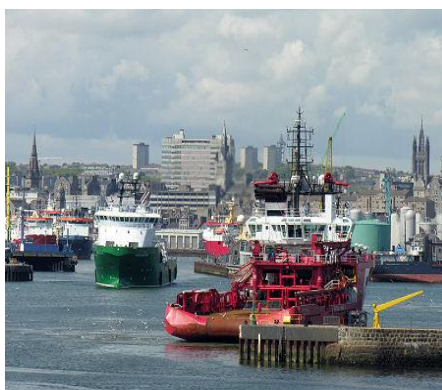
This issue has focussed on Asking for and Giving Help

The content, unless specifically identified as from another source, is written entirely by FA members and represents each author's personal experience, strength and hope as part of their individual Twelve Step journey. Every editorial effort is made to ensure that the articles present a positive attitude "in spite of unsolved problems". Once again, if you read something that does not agree with your viewpoint, please try to apply what we read at meetings: "take with you that which you can accept and leave the rest. As before, active feedback is welcomed about any changes you, the membership, would like to see in this newsletter. You may, for instance, want the focus to be on particular aspect of our recovery?

In the next Summer issue

The focus will be on **Strength**. All contributions will be more than welcome! They certainly do not have to be about our focus subject. The more topics on offer the better! Write a letter to the Editor, get something off your chest, or offer - perhaps the most valuable and important element in our fellowship – a share.

And, as usual, I will ask specific groups to take their turn to contribute – using the alphabetical system, starting with the first and last in the alphabet and two groups in the middle. My calculations make this, for the Summer issue: Blackpool, Norwich, Camden and Gants Hill. If you can't think what to write about, I'll give you some suggestions. Together, we can work it out!



A BUSY PORT SOMEWHERE! WHERE?

PICTURED IS ABERDEEN – LOCATION OF WHAT WAS THE NORTHERNMOST F.A. UK MEETING

Whichever part of the country we come from, the challenges that we share are the same

Families Anonymous
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London SW11 5HD
Tel: 0845 1200 660 (Lo-Call)
Fax: 020 7498 1990
E-mail: office@famanon.org.uk
Web: www.famanon.org.uk

and in USA (HQ), Australia, Canada, China, Greece, Honduras, India, Italy, Kenya, Mauritius, Mexico, Panama, Portugal, Russia, Spain, Sweden, Venezuela, South Africa.



famanon.faneditor@yahoo.co.uk

Help! Help! Help!

Some people do need our wonderful fellowship,
but at the present there are no meetings within easy
reach of where they live.

Families Anonymous can offer help to such people in the
form of: Lone Support.

Consider doing a Step 12?

*It is also worth noting that we keep what we have
only by giving it away!*

Please let the office know if **you** feel ready to
help someone who isn't able to get
to a meeting ... at least at the present.

Thanks Kate - wlitf



FA SHARERS LIST

Families Anonymous UK Service Board is once again compiling a list of FA members who feel that they are able to give a positive share to other FA groups. Please volunteer your details if you feel you could do this. The completed list will be sent to all FA UK groups so that a group can invite an FA member to give a share at their meeting, if the group wants to. It is suggested that the host group offers to pay the travelling expenses to the visiting member where appropriate. It would be great to get as many people involved as we can, as we are such a small fellowship, our survival in no small part depends on our groups being healthy & interesting for both newcomers and old timers alike. Please complete the sign-up list while you're at the Convention, or ask the Office to send you a copy of the FA SHARERS LIST to complete. **Thank you.**

March 2012

This page is a flyer in the hard-copy version with the FA Sharers List on the reverse

An Important Message from Marc M., Chair - FA World Service Board

Dear Sisters and Brothers in the fellowship:

Each year, around this time, World Service Board Chairs and FA [USA] Nominating Committee members continuously look at our mailboxes hoping and praying that this year will be different. The prayer is that “this year we will receive applications from members who are moved to give back to the fellowship their experience strength and hope by answering the call to service in the form of becoming members of the FA World Service Board of Directors”. However, as the deadline approaches for the committee to consider candidates, we only have two members who are so moved. I must conclude that the reason others have not answered the call is because we have not done enough to explain the job of a WSB member and not because members don't care. I know that members are grateful for the program and have found peace and serenity in their own lives, even though there maybe chaos and insanity surrounding them.

I am asking this message be shared in every group so that we can continue to move FA from strength to strength. The FA World Service Board are those trusted servants who ensure that there is someone to answer the calls, produce and distribute quality recovery literature, register and help guide new groups, and most importantly, keep the fellowship growing so that those who suffer with a loved one who is affected by addiction or related behavioral problems of living know they are no longer alone. Our FA [USA] By-Laws require that the World Service Board have a minimum of 10 members. We are authorized by those same By-Laws to have as many as 24 members. This year, we have a number of members who are stepping down after giving service and following the principles of rotation of leaders. They have been amazing stewards of the trust and will be missed. Yet, if others don't step forward, then their efforts and energies will be for naught. This is where YOU come in.

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Please take a few moments to pray and meditate on how service can help you in your personal recovery, as well as others in the fellowship. Show your gratitude by saying “yes” to becoming a trusted servant and working as a member of the WSB.

The World Service Board meets monthly, except for December. The meetings last approximately 2 hours, and are held via teleconference so no travel is required. In addition to the monthly board meetings, members of the WSB also serve on various committees to help strengthen the fellowship and handle the day-to-day business of FA. There are no special skills necessary and the only requirement is that members have been in the fellowship for at least one year and have a desire to serve. This year we are seeking Board-Members-at-large to serve for two years.

Please make 2012 different. Please help the members who give so freely of themselves by pitching in and helping us. You will find the rewards to be immense and the experience second to none. You owe this to yourself and your recovery.

To answer the call or obtain further information, please contact me at wsb_chair@familiesanonymous.org.

With love in the fellowship,

Marc M., Chair
FA World Service Board

[March 2012]

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