

FAN & FANonline

voice of the families anonymous
fellowship



Summer 2014

Gratitude
is not only
the greatest of virtues,
but the parent of all the others.
- Cicero

**At times our own light goes out and is rekindled by a spark from another person.
Each of us has cause to think with deep gratitude of those who have lighted the
flame within us.**

[Albert Schweitzer](#)

**As we express our gratitude, we must never forget that the highest
appreciation is not to utter words, but to live by them.**

[John F. Kennedy](#)

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 ?

- GRATITUDE.... in Families Anonymous is an attribute which we do our best to foster in order to counter-balance possible negative feelings that we may be experiencing and because we so often feel it anyhow
- Contributions from the Groups, the **most important input** to this Newsletter – *your* response to the editor's requests for individual or group efforts
- BoardWalk – what is going on with the FA Board
- Convention and AGM corner
- How do we get Newcomers to Keep Coming Back?
(National Convention 2014 Workshop)
- FAN's abridged FA UK Service Board 2014-2015
- 'Being Grateful' – as seen by some *Twelve Step Rag* readers
- Still in search of more Board members
- Selected Quotes, Poetry and Clip Art

Dear All,

It is my pleasure to address you all for the second time in FAN as the Chair of FA UK, this time for 2014/2015, following the vote at the AGM in Birmingham in April. I thank all those who voted for me and continue to regard it as a privilege to be Chair of our fellowship in the UK at this time of particularly positive change.

In last year's Summer FAN, I reported about the extra tasks the Board was going to have to face up to in order to enable it to maintain its Charity status. It is with relief and satisfaction that I can say now that, due to effort put in by my colleagues, the first Trustees' Report was established in due time. We quickly recognized that the first attempt was going to be the most problematical and demanding, and that Trustees' Reports in the future are not going to have the same unchartered and difficult feel about them. Hopefully we will just take them in our stride, the initial learning curve being firmly behind us.

2013-2014 FA year has been one in which we had two Conventions – a National one this spring in Birmingham and one in Glasgow at the very end of last summer. It is pleasing to know that this formula will be followed in the present 2014-2015 year, thanks to volunteers who make this all possible; we

hope to see as many of you who can make it at either or both of these events. In FA we are very recognisant of the reasons which prevent this being possible in many cases. To those who would like to come but cannot, we will spare a thought when the time comes.

What about our recovery, you may ask or think! Well, for this edition I have chosen as the main theme: **GRATITUDE**. As you are aware, February has a special role in showing our gratitude for our Fellowship and we thank all those who dug deeper into their pockets this year to strengthen our funds. I am writing these last lines of my greetings after the deadline date of this FAN. This sometimes is a difficult time, waiting for my higher power to come up with a fresh and different contribution from the membership. My patience has been rewarded with an interesting report about an FA initiative concerning a prison in Worcestershire.

Do remember that your views about FA and FAN can be made known on these pages. Simply email richard.jones813@ntlworld.com or contact the Office. Happy Summer!

WLITF Richard – *Chair & outgoing FAN Ed.*

Gratitude as seen in 'Today a Better Way'



I am truly grateful for my brother's addiction, painful though it was, because it helped me see the incompleteness and inner chaos of my own life. For years I expended tremendous energy, worrying about my suffering parents, covering up for and protecting my brother, carrying messages back and forth between all members of this chaotic household, trying to fix everybody and everything. When my brother entered treatment, turned his life over to a Higher Power, and started getting well, and my parents started working for their own recovery, I suddenly had a lot of time on my hands. I had to find a new role as our family slowly put itself back together, Today I am grateful for the pain that showed us how much we need one another. I am grateful to those who work with addicts and their families, showing us a better way to live. I am grateful for the opportunity to become the person I was intended to be. I am grateful to the founders of Families Anonymous and for my friends in the fellowship who accept me and help me grow.

TODAY I WILL remember where I come from, with gratitude for where I am.

[November 23 reading in *Today A Better Way* © Families Anonymous]



Gratitude may or may not come naturally. It is a phenomenon that can always be nurtured to counteract less positive feelings, and is a suitable partner to serenity. As an ideal, we can try to replace anxiety and fear with gratitude and serenity, bringing improvement to our lives. Before being grateful, it could be that we need to run that extra mile to check that what we are being offered has no manipulative strings attached, and if it has, gratitude might not be an appropriate feeling. A beautiful sunset and wonders of nature do not, however, harbour any such hidden agendas and are pure to enjoy and feel grateful for. Gratitude is an excellent antidote for resentment and we know that pent up resentments are likely to cause us more harm than the person or persons whom we resent. TABW recommends that we release our resentments to make room for gratitude in our hearts.

The staunch anti-Nazi dissident Dietrich Bonhoeffer wrote: "In normal life we hardly realize how much more we receive than we give, and life cannot be rich without such gratitude. It is so easy to overestimate the importance of our own achievements compared with what we owe to the help of others." His experiences were certainly different to ours, other than the fact that he followed the same process as recommended in our FA programme, replacing all the resentment that must have plagued him with gratitude. That is some achievement for someone who was going to meet the most unpleasant end.

"As we express our gratitude, we must never forget that the highest appreciation is not to utter words, but to live by them."

— John F. Kennedy

Being Grateful

Savoring a big, bright, glorious bowl of gratitude today.

Gratitude for the peace and presence that steadily grows to fill my mind and disposition after so many, many lost days of fear, anxiety and despair.

Gratitude for my loving husband who has stayed beside me, especially because my son is not his son, and addiction came into my husband's life like a tsunami.

Gratitude for my son, who has navigated his way out of homelessness and unemployment with a new job today, and a safe place to live, all of which he accomplished on his own, because he had to, and because he wants to live.



So, this week was busy. Really busy. Month and quarter end close, deadlines, spreadsheets, etc. Today I was tired and cranky, feeling a bit sorry for myself for feeling so tired and cranky. At noon I changed my clothes and started my daily two-mile walk around the area where I work. I was stressing about the very few things that were going wrong with the close (minimal, but just where my mind went because it could, because I allowed it). And then I stopped dead in my tracks. It hit me like a 2 x 4. What am I grateful for? Look at these beautiful fall trees, the "Carolina" blue sky (in Ohio), the cool, refreshing breeze, my health, my children, my

Over the years off and on I have kept a gratitude journal. I was never very consistent with it until recently. I would do it for a bit and then stop. A couple of months ago I was at Staples and they had leather covered journals on sale. I picked one up and it felt so good in my hands and was a beautiful teal color. I immediately thought this could be my gratitude journal. I held it for a bit and then put it down because I thought I did not need to waste \$3 on it (it was marked down from \$9) because I have some other journals (not so nice) that I can write in. I walked around the store picking up the things that I was actually there to get and I went back and picked up that journal again. There was something about it that was speaking to me. Well, who would have known that this teal leather journal would

Gratitude for my health, now 18 years cancer free. I am grateful for each day that I awake feeling well, strong and free to live without fear of dying.

Gratitude for the simple eloquence of the Serenity Prayer, whose words have comforted me in the darkest of nights and pulled me back up, when I have fallen off my path to recovery.

Gratitude for the unquantifiable power to affirm, support, and care that is alive in this fellowship.

To the new members tormented, crushed and weary, to the practiced members reaching down from the 12th step to extend a hand of compassion, "follow me, there is a better way." I extend my heartfelt gratitude for making this a place of experience, hope, and strength. **Serenity Seeker.**

loving husband, the fact that I even have a job, my nice home, my good friends, my amazing FA program... I did an about face with my thinking right then and there- I just tossed all the negativity right out of my head - all of it. This is what everyone has been trying to teach me.

BE GRATEFUL. There are ups and downs in life - okay - that's life. If I turn all of my attention to what is good in life, well, I just feel better. It works if you work it, and I'm worth it. This was the best walk I've ever had - ever. Thank you FA for reminding me to be thankful. I think over these past few years I forgot to do that. **Kathy L**



make a difference in my life? I have been the most consistent that I have ever been with writing about 5 good things that happen to me each day. I keep it next to my bed and every day when I make the bed, I lay the journal on my pillow so it's there as a reminder to write in it just before I go to bed. It helps me on those days that I am feeling not so great.... sometimes the things that I list are very important things and sometimes smaller blessings like, "I am thankful for the beautiful moon that we had this evening!" It really does help to think about what we have in our lives to be thankful for! **Connie/NH.**

BoardWalk

BOARD MEETING HELD AT BATTERSEA OFFICE ON 17th. MAY 2014



The absence of rotator-off Michael, who was unable to attend the hand-over to the new Board, was strange indeed, but in his place we were pleased to welcome our new Board colleague Audrey from Aberdeen/Fraserburgh to the first meeting of the 2013/2014 FA Year, As did Michael, Audrey used the telephone-link to attend, thus avoiding a long journey and considerable cost. Michael is warmly thanked for his service.

- As always at the first meeting after the AGM, we needed to establish which Board members would represent which groups. The results of our deliberations are set out on the page following this Boardwalk. If you are reading this FAN online, you will easily be able to see **in red** those Board posts which are not filled because of a shortfall in volunteer numbers. Although the situation is better than last year, we discussed the fact that we still have gaps in our line-up. Obviously, our readers are welcome to contact any Board member they wish having obtained the relevant details from the Office.
- As far as our finances are concerned, we discussed the possibility of having a franking machine in the office which could cut our postage costs. For the first time, we talked about the fact that we now have a budget specifically for the purpose of Fellowship PI and how we might most wisely spend it. It was agreed that PI should be a standing item on Board meeting agendas. We unanimously voted to make a donation to the World Service Board.
- Jan reported how the new website with its e-shop is coming on and said that the Terms & Conditions to be displayed on it needed clarification at the September Board meeting. At the time of this page being written, the Ts & Cs are ready to be uploaded and readers of the Autumn 2014 should be able to regard all this as history.
- It was a relief not to have to spend more time at the Board meeting on the question of the 2013 Accounts, as the finished article was made available to us by our Chartered Accountant shortly after the AGM as part of our Trustees' Report for the Charity Commission. Armed with this documentation our Treasurer, Simon, will be able to file our first Annual Report to the Charity Commission by the October deadline.
- All members of the Fellowship are reminded that they are more than welcome to come along and observe any Board meeting. This would entail a discussion with a Board member about the possible reimbursement of travel costs by FA to the person attending.

WLITF Richard - Chair and outgoing FAN Editor.

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

Future Board meetings: 27 September 2014, 6 December 2014, 28 February 2015

AGM: Sunday 19 April 2015

FA SERVICEBOARD 2014/15 *showing group allocation*

Phone numbers. further details given or queries answered at the Office – 0845 1200 660. Your Board Member is there to help!

Name	Office or Name	Office	Groups represented
Richard (Horsham & Brighton) 2015	Chair		Barnstaple, Bournemouth, Bristol, Chelmsford; Harrow,
Phyllis (Sevenoaks) Co-opted 4/13 2016	Fellowship Secretary		Chelsea, Tower Hamlets, Walsall, Wolverhampton ,
Simon (Gants Hill) Co-opted 11/13 2017	Treasurer		Horsham, Glasgow Tues., Thurs., and Sat.
Jan (Cheltenham) 2015	Office Manager & Vice Chair		Birmingham Tue., Hitchin, Leeds, Sevenoaks
>>>	Paul (Gants Hill) 2015	Eve/weekend Phone Rota	Bermondsey , Borehamwood, Brighton, Westminster
Volunteer sought	PI Chair (Standing Comm. By-Laws Clause.2)		
>>>	Volunteer sought	Website Chair	
>>>	Toni (Bermondsey) 2015	Prisons & Fellowship Liaison	Aberdeen, Bexley&Erith, Chiswick, Inverness,
Cassandra (Chelsea) Co-opted 5/13 2016	Literature Chair (Standing C'omm. By-Laws Clause 3)		Cambridge, Liverpool Weds., Swansea, Swiss Cottage
>>>	Volunteer sought	FAN Editor	
Audrey (Aberdeen/ Fraserburgh) 2017	Groups Co-ordinator Chair (Standing Comm. By-Laws Clause 4)		Birm.Shard End, Cardiff, Coventry , Fraserburgh, Mansfield, West Bromwich
>>>	Non Board Member Kate	New Group Liaison	
Bev (Westminster/Chelsea) Co-opted 9/13 2016	FA World Service Board		Cheltenham, Edinburgh; Edinburgh (Bathgate), Gibraltar, Gants Hill

Second Issue 19 May 14



& CONVENTION CORNER



SCOTTISH CONVENTION

Glasgow, Saturday 20 September 2014.

Venue: St Peter's Church Hall, 46 Hyndland Street, Glasgow G11 5PS

This is the same venue as used in 2013 and it is wheelchair friendly. Details and registration forms for booking have been sent to all Group Secretaries in the UK for distribution. Registration with tea/coffee will start at 9.30 am but the meeting proper will start at 10.30 am.

The day will finish with a raffle around 5 pm.

Then it's all return to the same Hall for what is called night time fun and disco with byo bottle. We look forward to seeing you there!

UK NATIONAL CONVENTION AND AGM 2015

The 2015 National Convention & AGM will be held at The Hilton Metropole at the Birmingham NEC, according to the vote at this year's AGM. The event is set for 18 and 19 April 2015. Our thanks go to Michael for his Convention organization in the recent past but the 2015 event will be organized by Sue from Chelsea & Westminster Groups. Sue, who has generously volunteered to organize the 2015 Convention, will be looking to members to volunteer for the Cross-Group Convention Committee which plans and runs this event. Please complete the flyer enclosed or simply tell the Office by phone of your willingness to give service. It's never too early to declare your readiness to give Sue your support!

We include here Sue's personal message to all FA members and interested parties, encouraging them to take the opportunity to attend the FA UK 2015 National Convention

Sue writes: 'We need help with the arrangements for Convention day Saturday 18th April 2015. What has to be sorted? The theme for the Convention, four shares, two workshops, raffle, the evening dinner quiz, and last, but not least, the disco. This is done via email and by phone starting in November. All can be done from the comfort of your own home and no one will know if you are still in your dressing gown enjoying a cup of tea whilst decisions are made! We look forward to your ideas, suggestions and thoughts to make our Convention another memorable occasion. If you would like more information please contact me, Sue (Chelsea) through the office'.

Families Anonymous Convention 2014 Public Information Workshops

The workshop split into 4 groups and chose at random one or two fictional but realistic scenarios to work on. Each group presented their ideas to the other attendees.

The results are shown below.

This document can be used by groups in their PI locally, to spark ideas of ways to spread the word and to generate discussion about what is most effective / appropriate for your group.

As well as reproducing the group ideas below, here are some other points that came out of the session:

What is the difference between 'attraction' and 'promotion' as guided in Tradition 11?

Someone suggested that attraction is when we do the PI ourselves, promotion would be if we hired an agency to do it. Another idea (borrowed from another fellowship) is that we attract by telling our story and being an example of recovery in our communications, we don't use gimmicks or freebies as that would be promotion.

The subject of costs was raised, as although leaflets and flyers are free to groups doing PI, they do cost money to print, and should not be wasted. Spoken words and physical presence is worth a 1000 leaflets – better to use our personal resources of time and energy where possible as they are more effective.

Scenario One.

You attend al-anon because there's no FA group in your town. Yourself and 2 other al-anon members decide to start an FA meeting. You have a venue and a starter pack from the office. How will you plan to 'Spread the Word' of your new group?

Put up FA notices anywhere that people are sitting waiting – doctor's, dentists, hospitals, bus stops, police stations, swimming pools, local drug services, supermarkets.

- Advertise on website
- Send out letters to local organisations using samples in PI pack.
- Arrange meetings with practice managers
- Put posters in libraries, dentists, etc. – with permission
- Put posters in churches, chemists, children's centres – with permission
- State on posters where and when the meeting is
- Advertising in local press and parish magazines / newsletters
- Let local services know about meeting e.g. probation, drug services etc.
- Publicise in NA 'Where to Find'
- Let schools know about the FA meeting
- Put a flyer in the jobcentre?
- Handout flyers in public places e.g. town centres, stations etc.

Scenarion Two

You are a member of a large FA group and have agreed to take on PI for the group. How will you plan PI activities for the year ahead, making sure the group shares the load?

- Identify PI activities for the year ahead
- Delegate PI tasks and responsibilities
- Arrange FA package visits at agencies, treatment centres, e.g. CRISIS (homeless charity) (be aware of the costs of 'free' leaflets)
- Access council and other local websites for links
- Press adverts (or letters or articles) – protecting anonymity
- Personal visits to local organisations, spreading the word in person, uses time effort not excessive costs.

Scenario Three

Your FA group is struggling – the 3 remaining members who meet every week barely cover the rent. You could give up but decide to have one last try at a PI push in an attempt to breather new life into the group. What is going to be the most effective approach and how do you get going?

Have a business meeting, decide together the best way forward.

Distribute FA posters

Network with local support groups, GP practices, rehabs, police, etc.

Contact outside agencies e.g. social work departments and drugs workers, also other fellowships, AA, NA, at conventions and by word of mouth, but letting them know we are not affiliated.

Scenario Four

Your group has been asked by the local drugs treatment centre to visit a team meeting and talk about FA. What will you say? Who will go? What will you take with you? How will you follow it up?

- Share reason for joining FA.
- Take someone else from the meeting
- Ask head office to send representatives
- Take info packs, posters, FA cards
- Call back the centre – keep in touch.

Scenario Five

Your FA group is in a rural location and the members are spread out, travelling some distance to meet each week. However village life locally is very active, with many interest groups and a healthy network of churches and 2 local papers. How can you ensure your meeting is known about locally?

Hold an awareness day – have an open meeting. Invite professionals - including churches. Put information in local information booklets / papers.

Scenario Six

The death of a well-known actor from a drugs overdose is headline news in the tabloids, reported with all the usual lifestyle and moral judgements. You feel moved to challenge the stigma associated with drug addiction and want to paint a truer picture that others could identify with. List some things you / your group could do to achieve this.

None of the groups chose this one but it's in here for completeness.

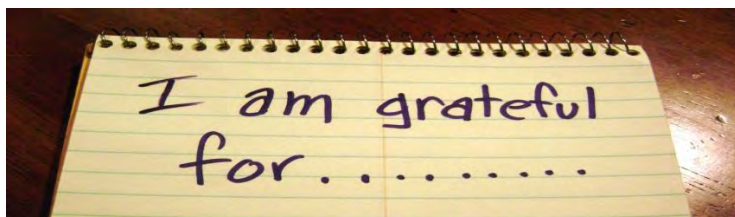
Scenario Seven

A local drugs treatment centre runs a 6-week Family Support Group of their own for their service users family members, and it's coming to an end. They have contacted FA head office asking for help with starting up an FA meeting to follow on when their Support Group funding runs out. They have offered their offices as a free venue. What could be your response and what are the issues to be aware of here?

Arrange to visit the support group to let tem know about FA and what it does for loved ones.

Contact head office for free and paying literature, making starter packs.

Support in starting the said group with regard to our traditions plus established members to share and support the group. Adhere to Tradition 7 with regards to rent.



FA 2014 National Convention Workshop Output.

How do we get Newcomers to Keep Coming Back?

All too often newcomers attend a meeting or perhaps a few meetings and then don't come back. This raises the question of why not. I have been involved in many discussions over the years trying to understand why people come a few times then stop.

We know that the program will not suit all, some people may come and quite shocked when some more experienced members share how they dealt with situations, ie Tough Love.

Do we phone them, assuming they have left us a contact number, that in itself raises issues, what are their home circumstances, if another family member answers what do you say, will the call cause problems for the person in question. For our fellowship to survive and grow we need to try and understand what we can do to encourage the newcomer to return to the meeting.

Group 1.

- Different meeting format for newcomers, more informal.
- Encouraging newcomer to share openly.
- Shares from other longer standing members.
- Chat with a longer standing member at the end of the meeting.
- Give the newcomer the phone list, but let them decide when to add their number.

Group 2.

- Conduct the meeting according to the Group Handbook.
- Encourage newcomers to attend at six meetings.
- Gift of desperation?
- Regular group conscious meetings.
- Regular rotation of leaders.
- Emphasise with own newcomer experience.
- Keep programme consecutive.
- Leaders to choose meeting subject.

Group 3.

- Produce a leaflet introducing the meeting format, a short explanation that would hopefully make those early meetings easier to follow.
- Personal connection to new member?
- Quality not quantity, briefly "How are we feeling".
- Change the present meeting format.
- Explain "God/Higher Power", try not to scare away newcomers who may feel we are a religious/spiritual organisation.
- Take telephone number for texting/phoning to give a gentle reminder of the next meeting.
- Bring a friend to your first meeting.

Group 4.

- Allow newcomer a specific space?
- Use simple pamphlets for first timers, do not push TABW
- Are we last port of call?
- What happens if the person contacted is in a state.
- Newcomer the most important person, are we too careful about everything.
- FA valid in good and bad times, not just in a crisis.
- Everybody's meeting, need to be listened to.
- Business meetings, members thoughts on newcomers?
- Phone or text newcomers

NEW WEBSITE COMING SOON

Yes, this is going to be the last edition of FAN before the new FA website is launched, incorporating our new e-commerce facility where you, groups, individuals and anyone in the UK will be able to buy our FA Literature, CDs and DVDs by debit/credit card or PayPal at the listed free-delivered prices.

Or download the order form for the cheque-in-the-post method, if preferred.

The new website will naturally have its recognisable features, including the links to the Forum and to the FA World Service Board in the USA.

For technical reasons the lay-out has had to change. There will be an area for downloads where, for instance, current and old FAN editions will be found.

Not too long from now, the old website will be switched off, after which we will technically enter the 21st century giving cards equal rights with cheques.

Watch this Space !

OUR FA TREASURER'S THANK-YOU FOR REGULAR DONATIONS

For all those who give regular contributions to FA through Bank Standing Orders or Direct Debits.

Once again a heartfelt thank-you, your regular contributions make a huge difference to our finances.

For those who wish, making a regular contribution to our Bank is a convenient way of helping FA, its members and newcomers. You only need to get in touch with your bank to arrange a SO or DD made out to our Lloyds account (Account number: 27765868 and Sort Code: 30-90-69).

Donations can also be Gift-Aided. If you would like to Gift Aid your donation, please contact the office and we will send you a form. If you are a UK tax-payer, paying more tax than your donation to FA, FA can claim a percentage of your donation from HMRC.

If you need any help or advice, please get in touch with me, you're national Treasurer, through the office: office@famanon.org.uk

WLITF - Simon



The next three pages cover Board vacancies which need Volunteers! Has your time come to give service? Michael has pointed out that out-of-the-ordinary computing knowledge or skills are not required to take on the role of Website Chair.

FAMILIES ANONYMOUS UK

ROLE DESCRIPTION – PUBLIC INFORMATION [PI] CHAIR

This is an opportunity for an FA-member to become our PI Chair and for the applicant to repay what FA has done for him/her. A chance to find fulfilment and support as an FA Board Member!

Useful Skills and Attributes Useful Skills and Attributes

- Enthusiasm, imagination, commitment and belief in self to do the job, given support and help until confident.
- Efficiency in email and general electronic communications.

Location:

- There is no requirement to attend the office for this role, although see below under general duties. As PI opportunities occur anywhere in the UK, delegation and follow-through with local members is important. The PI Chair might only be expected to attend when circumstances call for this and it is economically viable.

Role details:

- The FA Board appoints the PI Chair and the PI Sub-Committee which currently includes Fellowship Liaison and Prisons, two areas where FA needs to extend a public face. There is generally no requirement specific to these roles to attend the office.
- The PI Chair role entails fostering the awareness of the Families Anonymous programme to the general public and to professionals working in the area of drug abuse and related behavioural problems; developing awareness of Families Anonymous to public agencies, the medical and legal professions, schools and school counsellors and other personnel at the local levels who might refer families or friends to Families Anonymous. The Committee will prepare announcements for newspapers, radio and television, maintaining anonymity of individual members, some of which will be appropriate for individual group use in their particular areas. All national announcements and national public speaking engagements shall be cleared through the PI Chair. They would include review of manuscripts written for national publication.

Getting started: At present there **is** no PI-specific volunteer on the Board and this function is being covered by other Board members. The induction of a new volunteer will therefore be looked after by other members of the Board.

General duties of Board members:

- *Attendance at 3-hour Board meetings at our office in Battersea about 4 times a year, normally on Saturday mornings. Phone-conferencing available, if appropriate.*
- *Participation in general Board business, mostly by email, as and when necessary, and occasional contact with groups allotted to you.*
- *FA will repay all agreed outlays that are necessary to perform all Board functions*

Duration of Service: A satisfying three-year period, a chance to serve The FA Fellowship and to be an integral part of its decision making process. For the duration of service, an invitation will be extended for the applicant to become a Trustee of the FA charity and a Director of the FA company limited by guarantee.

Could be interested?: If you could be interested and would like to know more, why not get the phone the Office and have an informal chat without obligation? The reality of learning a new skill can be pleasing and is much less daunting and demanding than this role-description might suggest! Surprise yourself!

July 2013

FAMILIES ANONYMOUS UK

ROLE DESCRIPTION - WEBSITE CHAIR

Purpose – To manage the Families Anonymous website, such that it is in a fit for purpose condition and meets the needs of the fellowship.

Method

- Implement any upgrades or changes to the Website or forum that are agreed by the UK Service Board.
- Liaise with the software engineers who designed the Website and Forum to carry out the above, or other such activities, for instance, security upgrades.
- Produce a rota for the website volunteers to give a continuous cover for the site.
- Along with the other volunteers carry out the tasks detailed below.
 1. Monitor the persons registering for use of the forum.
 2. Carry out the agreed registering procedure for the above.
 3. Monitor the forum for inappropriate posts.
 4. Update the WTF on the website as required.
 5. Update the website with news items etc., as required.

Impending Developments

FA UK plans to enhance its website to allow the Fellowship to enter the field of e-commerce, enabling members and public to buy FA literature online by PayPal or debit/credit card, whilst also maintaining the cheque through the post option. Testing should start this November 2013, meaning that this activity will fall under the portfolio of the incoming Website Chair in conjunction with our website designers, SKDA. *[July 2014 update: this developmement is in its final testing stages]*

General duties of Board members:

- *Attendance at 3-hour Board meetings at our office in Battersea about 4 times a year, normally on Saturday mornings. If travel to London is not practical due to distance, Board members can dial in to the meeting.*
- *Participation in general Board business, mostly by email, as and when necessary, and occasional contact with groups allotted to you.*
- *FA will repay all agreed outlays that are necessary to perform all Board functions*

Duration of Service: A three-year period. *For the duration of service, an invitation will be extended for the applicant to become a Trustee of the FA charity and a Director of the FA Company limited by guarantee.*

Could be interested?: If you could be interested and would like to know more, why not get the phone number from the Office of the present role-holder and have an informal chat without obligation? The reality of learning gradually can be pleasing and is much less daunting and demanding than this role-description might suggest! Surprise yourself!

Autumn 2013

FAMILES ANONYMOUS UK

ROLE DESCRIPTION - FAN NEWSLETTER EDITOR

This is an opportunity for an FA-member to become our next FAN-editor and for the applicant to repay what FA has done for him/her; a chance to find enjoyment, creativity and support as an FA Board Member.

Useful Skills and Attributes:

- Above all, enthusiasm, commitment and belief in self to do the job, given support and help until confident.
- Basic computer skills will be needed from the start but willingness to learn is paramount. Familiarity with Microsoft WORD 2010 an advantage, but not a requirement.
- Production of three editions of FAN per year, in spring, summer and autumn.

Location

- Where the applicant lives is not particularly relevant, especially as we have taken to printing the small number of hard=copies in-house. Access to a Post Office, large envelopes and sellotape might be necessary - but are on hand in the Office in Battersea. MostFAN distribution is now done on-line.

Role details:

- The role falls into two more or less natural parts – firstly the **editing and printing** of each FAN with members' contributions, fellowship news and the like, and secondly the **administration** of FAN-orders, physical distribution and FAN-matters on the FA website.

Role-sharing option: Because of the natural division of tasks just mentioned, it might be possible for two volunteers to share the FAN role. However, in the absence of a role-share arrangement, familiarization with the administration role before actual editing and printing, can make the total take-over more gradual and manageable. Familiarization with software in the months before taking on the editing and printing is possible.

General duties of Board members:

- *Attendance at 3-hour Board meetings at our office in Battersea about 4 times a year, normally on Saturday mornings. Possibility for phone-conferencing for those living far from London.*
- *Participation in general Board business, mostly by email, as and when necessary, and occasional contact with groups allotted to you.*
- *FA will repay all agreed outlays that are necessary to perform all Board functions*

Getting involved in FA activities and becoming familiar with the membership and groups induce thoughts as to what might go into the next FAN. Persuading members to write something for FAN takes some time but an effort has to be made in thinking what the main theme of the next edition will be and, subsequently building-up the document, page by page. This is an on-going process, ideas coming at unexpected times, such as in the shower, doing the shopping and the like. Because of this, the use of the virtual FAN-template is advisable, filling in the new edition, as and when ideas develop. Imagination will come into play, trawling the internet for relevant quotations and images to fit in with the emerging contents of the next FAN. It may also be the bringer of new and different editorial ideas.

Duration of Service: A satisfying and creative three-year period, equal to nine editions of FAN, a chance to serve The FA Fellowship and to be an integral part of its decision making process. *For the duration of service, an invitation will be extended for the applicant to become a Trustee of the FA charity and a Director of the FA company limited by guarantee.*

Could be interested?: If you could be interested and would like to know more, why not get the phone number from the Office of the present role-holder and have an informal chat without obligation? The reality of learning gradually can be pleasing and is much less daunting and demanding than this role-description might suggest! Surprise yourself!

and now **FROM ACROSS THE ATLANTIC!**

Having missed the Spring FAN, this item has missed the boat, so to speak! *Many of us are looking forward to attending the Families Anonymous 2014 World Convention May 30 through June 1 in the Chicago area. As has been our tradition for many years, these conventions are hosted by member groups (or intergroups) rather than by the World Service Board. Our Chicago intergroup #3001 is hosting the 2014 convention – We, from the European side of the Atlantic hope that our North American friends had a successful and enjoyable Convention!*



We are very pleased to see that the new WSB's Website with e-shop is back on-line in a new and attractive format after the devastating crash the old site suffered. That must have taken guts and patience to fix. Well done!

Greetings from the WSO!

PDFs of the newest Twelve Step Rag and the most recent quarterly World Service Board (WSB) Newsletter are available on the FA website. In order to avoid the expense of renewing/replenishing our bulk-mail account through the end of 2014, the decision was made to mail the complimentary copy of the Rag to our group secretaries.

Reminder: As of January 2015, we will no longer be distributing a paper version of the Rag. We already have PDFs of several issues available for download on the website - including the most recent.

NA (Narcotics Anonymous) West Country Convention

NA is holding its West Country Convention on Aug 16/17 2014 at Bournville Primary School, Selworthy Road, Weston Super Mare BS23 3ST.

FA have been invited and will have a stall there, and possibly FA open meetings too.

They always make us very welcome at Weston and this is a great opportunity to meet FA members and also hear some great NA shares of recovery.

Gratitude bestows reverence, allowing us to encounter everyday epiphanies, those transcendent moments of awe that change forever how we experience life and the world.

[John Milton](#)



HMP Hewell**

Amongst the membership of Families Anonymous I'm sure many of us have visited loved ones in prison. But this day was different. I had volunteered to accompany Kate as a representative of Famanon, to what is known as a "Resettlement Fair" at HMP Hewell in Worcestershire. For prisoners who are approaching the end of their sentence, and making plans for what they will do when they are released, it is an opportunity to gather information, and talk to representatives about their hopes for the future, and sometimes their regrets about the past.

We had been invited to arrive at 8am to go through security and set up our stand in the prison gymnasium. Having initially presented ourselves at the wrong building we were redirected to another part of the institution. As we drove back along the drive we were obliged to stop and wait for several minutes whilst a large herd of jersey cows crossed the road in front of us, their bulging udders indicating that they were going to be milked. Some prisoners are employed on the prison farm, and I have often purchased delicious organic tomatoes, carrots, potatoes, and other vegetables from the prison farm shop. After that delay we eventually arrived at our destination where we presented our ID documents.

The security checks ran smoothly and we were accompanied by a prison officer who led us through a number of locked gates and open-air walkways to the gymnasium. Observing the bolted grilles on both sides of the walkway reinforced the feeling of "no escape" which must undoubtedly be

experienced by everyone who passes that way.

The gymnasium was spacious and airy. It allowed prisoners, dressed in their grey jogging suits, to view all the stalls as they walked around, some alone, some in pairs or groups. A few individuals approached our table and sat down with us for a chat. One young man talked about his partner and daughter and how much he was looking forward to spending more time with them. As well as the lure of drugs he spoke of his focus on bodybuilding, and his habit of stealing money to give to his family and friends. Another spoke with shining eyes of his new-born baby who had recently been brought in to visit. He expressed a desire to be a better father than his own whom he had never known. Another spoke of the grief he had caused his father through his drug addiction and was glad to know about Famanon. It was good to be able to offer leaflets and information about the 12-step programme and fellowship, and to share as well the experience which had brought us into it.

Sandwiches were provided for lunch, and we welcomed the opportunity to network with other volunteers and agencies several of whom took our leaflets. Kate and I had time to talk and get to know each other better. I really valued her 15 year experience of being involved with Famanon, and her enthusiasm for the programme which she says saved her life. As we emerged into the beautiful afternoon sunshine, I felt it had been a valuable experience for me, and hopefully for those we tried to help as well.

WLITF Susan from Birmingham Group.

*** For non-UK readers, HMP means Her Majesty's Prison*

This issue has focused on Gratitude

The content, unless specifically identified as from another source, is written entirely by FA members and presents 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 Autumn issue

The focus will be on our Meetings. 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.

.For the oncoming Autumn issue, the following groups are asked to make a special effort: Bermondsey, Hitchin, Bexley&Erith, and Chiswick. The old alphabetical system of choosing contributing groups has now been superseded and those who have not been approached for about three years might expect an invitation..

If you can't think what to write about, I'll give you some suggestions. Together, we can work it out!



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Hilton Metropole, National Exhibition Centre,
Birmingham.

FAMILIES ANONYMOUS

UK CONVENTION & AGM 18-19 APRIL 2015

Cross-Group Convention Committee Volunteer Nomination Form

*Please complete this form if you are interested in giving valuable service for this event
Alternatively telephone or email the FA Office to declare your interest*

Member's Name (first name only) _____

FA Group Attended _____

E-mail Address _____

Contact Phone number _____



2014

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