

The meeting started at 9:00 AM on December 3, 2023

Recitation of The Serenity Prayer.

ROLL CALL: Chair: Robert P., Secretary: Barbara S., Delegate: Sunny J., Outreach Subcommittee: Mary O., Technology Services Subcommittee: Larry B.

Officers Absent: Les P.

Subcommittee Chairs Absent: Alijah M., Stephanie K.

Mary announced that the Co-Chair of the Outreach Committee, Kim K., had passed away on Thanksgiving. Mary gave a brief explanation of the circumstances regarding Kim's passing. Mary noted that Kim was a cherished member of Naranon. She did a lot of service, holding many different positions. One of her strengths was doing panels. Kim was at peace with her loved one. Kim will be missed, she gave everybody hope. We will miss her and commemorate her at a later date.

Introduction of visitors: Anne L. – GSR from Sunday Step Study; Sue C. – Ontario Region Chair and a Facilitator; Trudi – Delegate from So CA; Ken K. – Vice Chair of WS Narateen Committee and Chair of So CA Narateen Committee; Karen M. - Chair of WS Narateen and a Facilitator for the PNW Region; JT W. – Member of CCR, and Co-Host from Technology Committee

Robert explains the format for this meeting. We have speakers today so that we can learn. They have experience with the topic of Narateen. We will try and follow the Agenda. There may be a need to follow up on the subject at our next RSC meeting to be held on December 13, 2023.

B) World Service Narateen Guidelines – Ken from WS Narateen: Ken knows there has been some problems regarding Narateen. Launching a new program is challenging, especially when dealing with minors. WS Narateen Committee does not take anything lightly. There has been conflicts regarding rules and policies. There have been several new members that have joined the WS Narateen Committee last year and earlier this year. Questions about age restrictions and the number of Facilitators were being brought up. Either the 2016 or 2018 Conference brought up many questions regarding Narateen in the GLS. There was a suggestion that the WS Narateen Committee revise the GLS and the Narateen handbook. A former BOT worked hard on the handbook and rejuvenated the Narateen program. A new Committee was formed and former BOTs were involved as well as Ken. There were many meetings to grow and protect the NFG as a whole. The Committee wanted to vote on the Handbook for the 2020 Conference but there was a holdup at the BOT and it didn't make the deadline for the 2020 Conference, and then Covid. Literature Committee did get the approval of the guide and it is available for review. There is a new copy being reviewed and it should be up for a vote. There have been two changes in leadership since this began. Doris had been elected and then had to leave. Karen was then elected and she came into a firestorm because of challenges. WS Committees are in place to set standards and policies for the entire fellowship. Each Region or Group then works to set what's right for them based on the main policies. The Trusted Servant's role is to be a guardian to protect the fellowship. Things can seem strict but these are usually suggestions. When dealing with minors there is more risk regarding legalities.

C) No Preteens – Ken from WS Narateen: There are two things 1. How young should a child start Narateen? When should they be finished with Narateen? What is the legal age in their area or Region, different ages are legal in various areas. Thirteen is the appropriate age for Narateen, it is possible that a

12-year-old could be in the group. Verbiage suggests you could have a 12-year-old group conscience to bring in a 12-year-old if there is accurate information. It has been said that the WS Narateen Committee doesn't care about children. It's been said that you don't understand what it's like to have children struggling with addiction. There is no truth to this. The Nar-Anon literature is designed for the 10th-grade level. What is the children's interest? 2. When legal age as an adult is reached they should move into adult meetings. Some young adults feel uncomfortable moving into the regular meetings. There is help to move them along. Friendships happen in Narateen and it isn't appropriate to have children bonding with adults. Everyone needs to be protected. When you have a group sitting for 1 ½ hours you have children that aren't understanding recovery. Then recovery can become counseling or rescuing. This is not what Narateen should be. I am not a member of Al-Anon but I have heard when they tried having younger children it didn't work it seemed to be more of a daycare. Laws regarding children are different for different regions, states, and countries. These laws need to be followed. Sharing about physical, sexual, and death traumas is not appropriate with a small child. Unsafe for children because of topics, such as suicide. Some children may not understand the topics. It's also not fair to put censorship on the children. It should be a safe place. The legalities of younger children in Narateen, what is Narateen really about? It's about the 12 steps, 12 traditions, and 12 concepts. People understand the program but, 8-year-olds will not understand the program. The topic is above the intellection level. Fear that the meetings can become a counseling session. We don't say to adults your kid doesn't matter, there are other resources for children. Alateen may be available, they have a larger fellowship. They have a different availability of resources. We have to deal with what's available to our organization. When coming up with the Safety Handbook many issues came up, legal and insurance issues that concerned us. When writing the Safety Handbook Narateen, one of the active members of the committee was Cathy K., she was the Executive Director of Narateen, works in Torrance in the WS Office, and has served as a sort of parliamentarian. She would help but was not an expert and said that this was not her expertise. Cathy went to the BOT and asked permission to speak to the lawyers and the insurance companies. She needed permission because of the cost of the consultation. She came back to the meeting and said both of them strongly said we have to have a minimum age group and that the younger you would go the more difficult the laws get. The lawyers said this is a bad idea. Cathy said the insurance company said before we do this we were going to have to let them know so they could evaluate the insurance policy. With her advice, we trusted her after she spoke with the lawyers. As a trusted servant we trusted her interpretations and that the policy should stand 13 to legal age or 19 at the latest. Not willing to change the under 13 policy. The Policy Handbook for So Cal was approved by the RSC and passed through the assembly and finally WS said they have been approved. When CCR began the process CCR reached out to So Cal to see their Regional Safety Guidelines. CCR is within the same state and has similar issues. CCR's Narateen Committee received the Handbook and was told you probably don't need to change anything at all because it passed through the process already. It's been a year and there are still people trying to change things. WS will not approve the CCR Narateen Guidelines if they violate the WS guidelines. One of the Ontario meetings had to be removed from the WS website because of violations within the meeting.

D) Two (2) facilitators required – Ken from WS Narateen: Ken is up on these subjects because he's been in these conversations in committee. Challenges in Rocky Mountain as well and it is due to two members that are trying to change a lot of the current handbook. Recently had a Panel for existing adult facilitators with no objections to this. Most Regions find it challenging, but it's necessary for various reasons. Since two facilitators are necessary for each meeting the Region should have extras available.

The state of California has now implemented Mandated reporting for this type of meeting. If in-person you have two adult witnesses to see and hear if there are any problems. When there are two accountable facilitators they can be accountable to each other and the committee. Two can protect each other, when you are a mandated reporter you have to be trained through the state of California. You must report to the state of California if there is something to report. Previously if not mandated you didn't have to report. This is why the law is in place. Report only to appropriate authorities. When there is only one facilitator in a room it puts too much pressure on the adult. With two you will have a witness.

Questions: Mary: can you please clarify, after RSC approves then it goes to the assembly is it the WS Narateen Committee that would pass it? Ken: Yes. What happens is there is an Ad hoc committee set up and they receive the guidelines, they will advise, then the assembly reviews, then review WS Narateen Committee reviews again, and then they advise the process of making policies.

Trudi: Do you think that some info regarding the mandated reporters should be in the Handbook? Policy needs to address local legal issues. Ken: In California we will need to update our handbooks because of AB506 Mandated Reporting, simply when you become a facilitator you become a mandated reporter.

Larry: Does World Service see a difference in the in-person versus Zoom meetings? Ken: Parents are restricted from attending either meeting.

Sunny: There is a risk, either way, you need two adult facilitators Ken: Yes, 2 adults are needed. Pennsylvania asked about sharing facilitators. Sounded like a good idea. Ken heard the information at the WS Narateen Committee meeting and found out that it wasn't a good idea. Each state has different laws. Can't share over state lines because of laws. California uses Livescan for fingerprinting. Not all states do. This complicates things further.

Karen: I want to say it sounds too complicated and it is best to err on the side of caution. Not my call it's for the World Service to decide. An example of following our concepts is being fully self-supporting. There's a lot of work that goes into having a Narateen meeting. Maybe if you don't have enough facilitators you're not ready yet. There are not enough teens at the meetings we have. Our region sought a lot of legal advice. A lot of discussion regarding reporting. Teens are often not in the same state in virtual meetings. When looking into the local laws and criminal background checks as well as facilitating a meeting it is very important to remember we're not professionals, we are volunteers. The Handbook was designed as a format, using the WS policies, to help regions come up with their own Narateen Guidelines. Not to change the policies. It takes a long time to make changes and if an individual wants to change the Narateen policies we have to follow the process in the GLS and GWS.

E, F) Sunny: AB506 ties into the EIN. When she was Narateen Chair the committee received So Cal Safety Guidelines and in July 2022 the region received approval from World Service Narateen. Need revision for two topics. AB506 was passed because of the huge amount of cases that were brought against Boy Scouts having volunteers who were hurting youth. Now requiring: 1. must take mandated reporter training online by the state of CA. 2. Need fingerprint check through Livescan. Must be authorized through the DOJ and that's why we need a nonprofit EIN. 3. Must be at least two facilitators, now it's the law. 4. Not a requirement on organization. Could lose insurance if you don't comply with AB506. Complying with the law, not doing a workaround by having a lot of volunteers. We would need an attorney to go forward. So Cal already has a nonprofit EIN. The NTPP needs to be confirmed by the DOJ as the custodian of the Records, current Narateen subcommittee Chair does not understand the laws.

She is providing a form to the region that isn't legal, she has shared the form with Sunny as well. Sunny has done some research on the form. The current Narateen subcommittee Chair is trying to use a records review form that anyone can get to review their record. This isn't meant to be used to give a copy to an unauthorized third party.

Ken: Part of the struggle is Livescan and Sunny has things so clearly researched. They have things set up, but the NTPP in So Cal was supposed to become the custodian of records but she has been locked out of the online account. The DOJ hasn't been able to figure it out. There may be an application process so we will have to wait and see.

I) Robert: Our region and So Cal are all using the same tax ID number of Nar-Anon. Now WS says it no longer does this. Then Rocky Mountain was formed, and they needed to get their own EIN. They hired a lawyer and spent about \$2000 and it took about 2 years and now they are a nonprofit organization. Nor Cal tried to do this back in 2016 and they have had many problems, now they are a federally recognized nonprofit organization, but not in California yet. CCR could find out about becoming a separate nonprofit. Robert recommends forming a committee to look into that and hire a lawyer to get advice. Right now, we are not an independent entity. We are the same legal entity as So Cal because we have the same EIN. We can work with So Cal to get background checks.

Jt: are Narateen predominantly virtual or in-person: Ken says: Start with virtual but finding that adults are sick of virtual meetings. There are reports from other regions that attendance is down with virtual meetings. Teens are comfortable with gadgets and the thought was that they would like virtual but they are tired of virtual too. We will probably start with virtual. May move to in-person, but the vastness of our region makes this difficult.

Mary: didn't we purchase a taxpayer ID? Robert explained that we did, but it was the wrong kind. Because we are under the WS we are a nonprofit and don't have to pay taxes. If we switch to the new ID we could have a tax responsibility and have to pay taxes.

Ken: Were the other members invited to this meeting, the Narateen Chair and NTPP. Robert: Yes and also missing is our treasurer. Ken: are they based in California. Robert then explained what his knowledge is around their living area, he believes it is in California. There is also discussion about Home Groups.

Mary: I did receive a memo from the NTPP. Mary read the memo which stated she wouldn't be attending. Perhaps combining regions would be okay and there are no mistakes in HP world.

Trudi: I would not personally be agreeable to working with members outside California if we were to combine. There was an article in the newsletter about members joining different regions and it was not a good idea. That would be a bad idea. If there was a committee becoming a nonprofit, there are a lot of requirements. In So Cal we have trouble when people are missing.

Robert talked about the threshold of donations. If tomorrow there wasn't a functional region the monies would transfer to the WSO.

Karen: another reason for not sharing facilitators is we and the NTPP don't know the facilitators because of a lack of communication. I don't know who they are and I would have to take their word for it.

Trudi is not comfortable with out-of-state members working together. Robert said the article has not been posted on the WS website yet.

Robert has asked the NTPP and the CCR Narateen subcommittee chair about their home group and what region they belong to. They do reside in California and said they belong to CCR.

Ken: I could not recommend that our committee work with a member who has been removed from the WS Narateen committee or has influenced other regions to break the law.

Robert: our CCR Narateen subcommittee chair was very involved with the issues in Ontario. Our Narateen subcommittee chair was removed from service from the WS Narateen.

Karen: WS has done a lot of work to have Narateen. If there is so much controversy they may just throw it up in the air. No formal guidelines about removing a member.

Ken: I believe it's up to each region to find their path on how they can remove a member. It becomes difficult when the member goes from one region to another. The CCR subcommittee Narateen chair shared documents that weren't supposed to be shared among other groups and there was a lot of concern about that.

K) What happens when things go wrong – Sue from Ontario, Canada: Serenity Narateen started in Ontario Region about 2 years ago. Registered as a teenage group and run as a regular teenage group, attendance was low and wondered about the day and time of the meeting, it was on Saturday morning. Sue approached the Ontario Narateen chair to move the meeting to a weeknight and was told adamantly no. Then Sue became a facilitator with the Ontario Narateen Chair. The meeting went on for another 6 months with no kids attending. It was then decided that there would be a three-month trial of one meeting on Wednesday at 6:00 PM and Saturday at 3:00 PM, to see which time worked better. A couple weeks in, the Ontario Narateen Chair announced at the end of the meeting that starting next week the meeting would be for 8-12-year-olds. Breaking anonymity here to say that the meeting was created for the Narateen Chair of the CCR for her children to attend. The only people that attended the meeting were people that the CCRs Narateen Chair knew. Sue objected and said she would not facilitate the meeting. Ontario Narateen chair facilitated the meeting, working around the rules. There were 5 kids under the age of 12 that had never attended a Nar-Anon meeting and they took a group Conscience, "do you want children under 12 in the meeting?" they said yes, and "are you okay with one facilitator?" and they said yes. Working around guidelines or rules. It would never have been registered with WSO if they had tried to register it as it was breaking the guidelines both with Ontario and WSO. Sue C. approached the problem like if she ignored it the problem would go away. But then a flyer inviting teens to this "preteen" Narateen meeting was sent out, which caused chaos. Sue did attend a meeting when the Ontario Narateen chair couldn't sign in. It turned out to be more of a counseling session with the facilitator explaining the meaning of the words in the readings. They called her teacher and didn't acknowledge Sue. The children had turned their cameras off, one was wearing a mask and rolling

around on his bed. Sue received an email about the flyer and it came from an email that said "Narateen Chair". This turned out to be sent by the CCR Narateen Chair. Sue asked the Ontario Narateen Chair and was ignored. We had an emergency Narateen meeting with WS Narateen Committee and there were 3 main things: 1. The Meeting was investigated already, and the RSC could be held responsible if it didn't comply and we could lose the region status. 2. Then withdrew support of the meeting. Then that person stepped down as Narateen Chair. The meeting would no longer be supported by Ontario. The meeting was removed from the WS online meeting guide. 3. Then they were told they could no longer use their Zoom license. Sue did her own research and was told that this meeting shouldn't be happening because the content was too much for that age group. The one meeting Sue attended, the daily reading was about a mom who committed suicide. The kids didn't understand.

Robert asked if things were peaceful now. Sue said they are trying to tighten the Narateen guidelines to say there must be two facilitators and that a twelve-year-old would be the exception. Also adding that a region can remove groups and facilitators for failure to comply with the guidelines.

Sunny said that the Central California Narateen Chair was not facilitating but she was sending emails and making flyers. She was not registered in Ontario. The CCR Narateen chair was trying to get other Narateen members to attend that particular meeting.

Karen: As a new Narateen committee member it was discussed in several meetings that they could not have preteen meetings. There were other options given but they were not acceptable. The CCR Narateen Chair knew that she couldn't send her children to a Narateen meeting. She had been told before the meeting that it was not possible. Ken: One option given to the member was that she could start an ad hoc committee to pursue the possibility of a pre-teen meeting. She did not attempt to start an ad hoc committee. When asked not a single person wanted to work with her or work on the idea. It was an option though. When a committee member causes drama that affects every aspect of the program. Sue: There is a proper way to do this, design a program at the level the children can understand.

Karen: After discussing in several emergency meetings where she was in attendance it was explained to her about the unsanctioned meetings. She wanted Karen to facilitate a meeting. Karen spoke to her for 2 hours.

Robert: Now discussing the taxpayer ID, we could either work on getting our own or we could work with So Cal region in what's called a metro. N.A. does this. We could form a committee to explore ways to work with So Cal. Or we can explore how to become a separate nonprofit. These are two ways to move forward. I believe were at a dead end. Trying to find ways to go around the law is not beneficial to anyone. Two paths to take to stay in compliance with the law.

Mary: I wonder if So Cal would welcome us? Or would they want to work with us? Would we need to make a committee? It's good to combine resources. Unfortunately, we have problems in the region. I would put our hand forward to work with another region.

Ken: My viewpoint would be for the regions in the state to work together. With the new AB506, we need a lawyer, I've heard it's better to split the cost of moving forward with Narateen. An ad hoc committee to explore this and I would be interested in being a part of this. I think it should be put on the RSC and

assembly for the region. My interest would be based on who is involved on the committee. This should be what's best for the fellowship and not for the individual.

Trudi: I would agree with Ken making sure everything is covered, and who we would want to be involved? WS has an attorney they use and I'm sure they could be used, there would be a cost.

JT: Just for clarification, if the current CCR Narateen chair is part of the ad hoc committee are you suggesting that it would not be a good idea to combine with So Cal? Robert: I believe it would be difficult to form an ad hoc committee if the current Narateen Chair is included.

Sunny: I stepped down from being on the committee because it wasn't possible to work with the current Narateen Chair. I was unaware of the chair's agenda, I tried to work principals before personalities and I'm still trying to. I was not able to work with the committee. If people are argumentative we can not work with the current chair. Robert asked me to be the ad hoc committee chair. Not able to with the current CCR Narateen chair as part of the ad hoc committee. I would if the RSC asked that of me.

Barbara: I couldn't be part of Narateen because of the CCR Narateen chair.

Ken: For clarification one reason of knowing the home group of a committee member is that the Policy Handbook states that any Narateen committee member or adult facilitator should be part of a home group and working a program. If it's unclear we don't know if they are working a program.

Trudi: a region can remove someone from a position. Can you consider that before we decide to explore anything?

Robert: it's been suggested that we take it to the assembly to remove this person from service. It would be dragging the whole assembly through a lot of stuff that they have no exposure to. I think it blocks the pathway for everyone however misguided might have that spiritual awakening and come back and be active in service at some point in time in the future. Trying not to say one person is a problem but that, we have a problem and what are our solutions? I think we should suspend our CCR Narateen committee. Every month at the RSC I ask have you revised the guidelines and we're told that they haven't been revised because there is always something else to look into. As long as the committee tries to find loopholes the committee isn't good for the region. I think it might be better if we suspend the committee and explore other options. The RSC will need to decide that.

Robert: So RSC we have 5 here today or the next meeting is December 13th and we could have the discussion there. Then if we decide something we could go to the assembly and say here's our current status. We would probably need a lawyer for whatever we decide and we can't hire one without the assembly's approval for the expense.

Sunny: I will go on record to suspend the Narateen Committee until we have had a chance to form ad hoc committees and research what would be a good way forward for this region. Including legal advice.

Robert: We're trying to do consensus-based but that sounds like a motion and we do fall back on the motions when there's anything where there could have legal implications.

Sunny: **I make a motion, that we suspend the current Narateen committee, and instead we have an ad hoc committee to research ways to go forward for Narateen including legal advice.**

Robert: Is there a second to the motion?

Barbara: I second the motion.

Robert: RSC what do you want to do? Count: Robert is yes, Mary is yes, Sunny is yes, Barbara is yes, Larry is abstaining. Are we good with that?

Robert: Should we ask Sunny to begin preparing to form an ad hoc committee and report to the RSC at the regular meeting in December?

Robert: Question, If we suspend the Narateen committee, then are the current Narateen chair and NTPP still voting members in December? Robert thinks not. Ken: there's no active committee and you have no active chair. Robert: We'll still invite them. They're still welcome as members.

Mary: Are they notified about the suspension?

Robert: They'll need to be. Barbara, when do you think you can have the minutes for this meeting put together?

Barbara: By this evening.

Robert: then the full RSC, including those two, is in review when approved we'll send it out through Chimp and when the full RSC has approved the minutes, I will notify Alijah and Stephanie. We'll do a quorum vote. A lot of time in emails you get one response.

Sunny: Thanks to everyone who came out, listeners and presenters.

Mary: Thanks for moving us forward we will go forward with the help of our higher powers.

Close the meeting at 11:18 AM with serenity prayer.