



Cleansheet

Issue 4

Philadelphia Area
Newsletter

April 1984

AREA NEWS

Philadelphia Area Service was held on Sunday, February 12. The Area decided to adopt the Twelve Traditions as their guidelines. Group registration forms are being handed out for the new Regional Meeting List. The current meeting list is inaccurate and we are working to improve it. The contact list for the Hotline needs people who want to help the still suffering addict. Groups should pass a list around with accurate times and days of availability. The Literature Committee is doing fine and has begun to purchase Basic Texts for the Area. A new Secretary, H&I, and Vice-chairperson were elected. Public Information Chair has resigned. The Cleansheet needs financial support and asked for subscribers and input. The next Area Service meeting will be held on March 10, 1984 at 7:00 p.m., Harbison Ave. & Roosevelt Blvd.

The Cleansheet is a sub-committee of the area service committee of Phila. of N.A. Our primary purpose is to carry the written message of recovery to addicts seeking recovery. Opinions expressed herein are from the individual member of N.A. and may not necessarily represent the views of N.A. as a whole

Committee dates: March 18, 1984

April 1, 1984

Contact: Andy P. 676-8784

Bob H. 886-7233

for location of meeting.

Subscription: cost \$5.00 for 1 year

Send in check or money order:

The Cleansheet

P.O. Box 14541

Phila., Pa. 19115

REGIONAL NEWS

Greater Philadelphia Regional Services was held on February 19, 1984 at First Unitarian Church, 2125 Chestnut St. in Philadelphia. The following are highlights discussed at the meeting:

In general all Areas are doing well. Meetings in the Bucks County Area need support. Central New Jersey Area attended the Regional meeting and are considering joining our Region. Public Information is gathering information to organize an effective committee. The P.I. committee invites all who are interested to attend their meetings. Contact Bill T. at (215) 322-8671. Literature Review Chair distributed new literature to be reviewed by Area and Groups. The Regional Convention committee reports that all is going well. Support physically, spiritually, and financially is asked of the Area's to help the convention be successful. The registration cut-off date for the convention is April 4th so please register as soon as possible. The R.S.R. reported that the final Fellowship Report for the year was received. All concerning information will be copied and distributed to A.S.R.'s to take to Area's and Groups. Likewise, when the agenda for the World Service Conference is received it will be distributed. The Alt. A.S.R. has moved into the A.S.R. position and a new Alt. A.S.R. was elected. Treasury and Co-chair positions are still open and need to

be filled. A new format for hosting Regional Service meetings by different Area's in the Region was adopted. Next Regional Service meeting will be held on Sunday, April 15th at the Hershey Hotel in Philadelphia.

MEETINGS IN NEED OF SUPPORT

MONDAY-

"Came to Believe Group"
Tabernacle Presbyterian Church
37th & Chestnut Sts., Phila.
Step 8:30 p.m.

MONDAY THRU FRIDAY-

"Reality Group" Afternoon Meeting
2205 Bridge St., Phila.
Speaker Discussion 11:00 a.m.

TUESDAY-

"K.I.S.S. Group"
1st Step Meeting 1502 Frankford
Ave. 1st Step Open, 6:00 p.m.

WEDNESDAY-

"Go For It Group"
Kensington & Haggard Sts., Phila.
Open Spkr. Discussion 8:00 p.m.

FRIDAY-

"Carry The Message Group"
Fairmount Farms
7700 Ridge Ave., Phila.
Speaker Discussion, 8:00 p.m.

FUNDRAISERS FOR REGIONAL CONVENTION

Mar. 24 - Bowling Dance
Thunderbird Lanes
Castor Ave. & Roosevelt Blvd.
Phila., Pa.
9:00 p.m. - 1:00 a.m.
\$6:00 Free shoes and coffee

Mar. 31 - Dance
All Seasnos Marina
34th St. & The bridge Ocean City,
N.J.
9:00 p.m. - ???
\$4.00

SOUTH JERSEY AREA SERVICE ST. PATRICK'S DAY
CELEBRATION

Date: Sat. March 17, 1984
Place: The Local Union Hall 731
1320 Parkway Ave. Trenton, N.J.
Time: 9:00 p.m. meeting
10:00 til 2:00 a.m. dance
Cost: Suggested donation \$3.00
Refreshments, food and fellowship.

NEW MEETINGS

"South Phila. Group"- Two-speaker mtg.
Sun. 8:30 p.m. - Ellsworth & Carlisle
Sts. (on Ellsworth between Broad and
15th Sts.)

"Phila. Gay & Lesbian Group"
Tues. 8:30 p.m. - 2125 Chestnut St.
(at the First Unitarian Church)

"Interim House"- Women's Group
Tues. 8:30 p.m. - Spkr. Discussion
250 West Tulpehocken St. (Germantown)

"Men at Work Group"- Basic Text meet-
ing, 2nd Tues. each month 8:00 p.m.
Church & Griscom Sts. St. Joachim's
Church.

CHANGES

"Gloria Dei Group"- Beg. & Closed
Discussion, (2nd Tues. open)
8:00 p.m. Tues. Welsh Rd. & 2nd St. Pk.

"Manayunk Group"- Open Spkr. Discussion
last week Step, Thurs. 8:30 p.m.
St. David's Church, Dupont & Smick Sts.

"Serenity Group"- Open Spkr. Discussion
4th week Basic Text, Thurs. 8:00 p.m.
Bridge OP Clinic 1921 Grant Ave. Phila

"Oxford Circle Group"- Open Spkr. Disc.
1st Fri. Step, Fri. 8:00 p.m.
St. Martin's Church Roosevelt Blvd. &
Oxford Ave.

BUCKS COUNTY AREA SERVICE POLICY WORKSHOP

Date: March 18, 2:00 p.m.
Place: Washington & Chancellor Sts.,
Newtown, Pa. (Presbyterian Church).

5th EAST COAST CONVENTION OF N.A.

Date: June 22-24, 1984
Theme: "Reaching Out"
Place: Yale University
New Haven, Ct.
Events: Workshops, Marathon Meetings,
Dances, Swimming, Live Music.
Cost: Registration \$10, Banquet- Dance-
Registration \$30 (does not include rooms and
meals), Total Package \$75 (registration,
rooms, meals, banquet, and dances)
Mail to: 5th E.C.C.N.A.
P.O. Box 611
Hartford, Ct. 06142-0611

1st G.P.R.C.N.A. - 1st GREATER PHILADELPHIA
REGIONAL CONVENTION OF N.A.

Date: April 13-15, 1984

Theme: "A Time To Come Together"

Place: Hershey Hotel

Broad & Locust St.'s Phila., Pa.

Cost: Registration \$13, Banquet \$22, Room
fees- \$50 single, \$50 double, \$60
triple, \$70 quad.

Mail to: Greater Phila. Regional
C/O G.P.R.C.N.A.
P.O. Box 42629
Phila., Pa. 19101-2629

W.V.C.C.N.A. - WEST VIRGINIA CONVENTION
FOR N.A.

Date: April 20-22, 1984

Theme: "...Almost Heaven '84"

Place: State 4-H Camp, Weston, WV.

For More info-: write: W.V.C.C.N.A.

Route 7, Box 761

Morgantown, West Virginia
26505

STEP 3

Upon realizing my complete powerlessness over my addiction, and by the power of example set by those people whom the problem had been solved, my first two steps were in place. My sponsor, who understood this process because he had already realized this experience of recovery, suggested that I was ready to take the third step. He pointed out that I should try to understand what was meant by the wording in the step. My sponsor emphasized that those who had already taken this step "made a decision" Made-it's done! a decision-one determination! to turn over our will (everything we want to do)--- and our lives (everything we are and will be)--- over to the care of GOD. This decision should be made unconditionally and unselfishly, not for anything that will benefit me but for GOD and others. He suggested this prayer;

"God, I offer myself to Thee- to build with me and to do with me as Thou wilt. Relieve me of the bondage of self, that I may better do Thy will. Take away my difficulties, that victory over them may bear witness to those I would help of Thy Power, Thy Love, and Thy Way of life. May I do Thy will always!"

I'm happy that I did take that step back there a good while ago and I haven't yet found it necessary to take that decision back. Of course, with my sponsors help I went right on with the fourth step and the rest of the Twelve Step recovery process--- Wonderful!!!

Anonymous

Step Three

Before I could take step three, I had to take the first two steps. I just could not handle it anymore; my way wasn't working.

I had been in the program for over a year. I thought that when I stopped using drugs everything would get better. People kept saying things beyond my wildest dreams would happen. I was still waiting. Although some things got better, for the most part I was unhappy. I was fighting, always fighting to stay clean, fighting to be happy, fighting my insane thoughts, fighting everything.

Finally I couldn't take it anymore. I was tired of fighting, analyzing, and always having a problem. I know today that I took my first three steps that night. Then I knew I just wanted to feel better.

My third step was simply a decision to work the remaining steps and not to worry about all those little problems I was always analyzing. I believed that if I worked the steps I would be okay. Nothing else really mattered because God took care of it anyway.

Since I made that decision, I have surrendered many things. I don't enjoy pain like I used to. I know there is something better. I know I don't have to live with that pain.

Another thing that makes surrender easier is faith. When I first took the third step, I had just an inkling of faith. I had tried everything else and nothing worked. Now I was going to try this, and if I got to Step Twelve and it didn't work, I would try something else. As I progressed through the steps my faith grew. I saw God working in my life, it helps me surrender.

I am not sorry I took this step; it opened the door I never dreamed possible.

Anonymous

STEP THREE

"We made a decision to turn our will and our lives over to the care of God as we understood Him."

As addicts, we have turned our will and our lives over many times to a destructive power. Our will and our lives were controlled by drugs. We were trapped by our need for the instant gratification that drugs gave us. During that time, our total being—body, mind and spirit—was dominated by drugs. For a time it was pleasurable, then the euphoria began to wear off, and we saw the ugly side of addiction. We found that the higher our drugs took us, the lower they brought us. We faced two choices: either we suffered the pain of withdrawal or took more drugs.

For all addicts, the day comes when there is no longer a choice; we had to use. Having given our will and lives to our addiction, in utter desperation we looked for another way. In Narcotics Anonymous, we decide to turn our will and our lives over to the care of God as we understand Him. This is a giant step. We don't have to be religious; anyone can take it. All that is required is willingness. All that is essential is that we open the door to a Power greater than ourselves.

Our concept of God comes not from dogma but from what we believe ourselves, what works for us. Many of us understand God to be simply whatever keeps us clean. The right to a God of your understanding is total and without any catches. Because we have this right, it is necessary to be honest about our belief if we are to grow spiritually.

We found that all we needed to do was to try. When we gave our best effort to the Program, it worked for us as it has worked for countless others. The Third Step does not say, "We turned our will and our lives over to the care of God." It says, "We made a decision to turn our will and our lives over to the care of God as we understood Him." We made the decision; it was not made for us by the drugs, our families, a probation officer, judge, therapist or doctor. We made it. For the first time since that first high, we have made a decision for ourselves.

The word "decision" implies action. This decision is based on faith. We have only to believe that the miracle we see working in the lives of clean addicts can happen to any addict with the desire to change. We simply realize there is a force for spiritual growth that can help us become more tolerant, patient, and useful in helping others. Many of us have said, "Take my will and my life. Guide me in my recovery. Show me how to live." The relief of "letting go and letting God" helps us develop a life worth living.

Surrendering to the will of our Higher Power gets easier with daily practice. When we honestly try, it works. Many of us start our day with a simple request for guidance from our Higher Power.

Although we know that "turning it over" works, we may still take our will and life back. We may even get angry because God permits it. At times during our recovery, the decision to ask for God's help is our greatest source of strength and courage. We cannot make this decision often enough. We surrender quietly and let the God of our understanding take care of us.

At first, our heads reeled with the questions: "What will happen when we turn our life over? Will we become perfect? We may have been more

realistic than this. Some of us had to turn to an experienced N.A. member and ask, "What was it like for you?" The answer will vary from member to member. Most of us feel open-mindedness, willingness and surrender are the keys to this step.

We have surrendered our will and our lives to the care of a Power greater than ourselves. If we are thorough and sincere, we will notice a change for the better. Our fears are lessened and faith begins to grow as we learn the true meaning of surrender. We are no longer fighting fear, anger, guilt, self-pity or depression. We realize that what brought us to this Program is still with us today and will continue to guide us if we allow it. We are slowly beginning to lose the paralyzing fear of hopelessness. The proof of this step is in the way we live.

We have come to enjoy clean living and want more of the good things that the N.A. Fellowship holds for us. We know now that we cannot pause in our spiritual program; we want all we can get.

We are now ready for our first honest self-appraisal, and we begin with Step Four.

TAKEN FROM THE
BASIC TEXT OF N.A.
1982 C.A.R.E.N.A.

MORE THAN JUST MEETINGS

I had the kind of weekend that reminds me that N.A. is more than just meetings! I just moved to this area, and was having a lot of trouble reaching out. This is where I first sought recovery, years ago. N.A. wasn't around then, or I didn't know about it. Moving back has brought back a lot of what it was like then, painful memories I've been pretty isolated since I came back, and began to experience a lot of those old feelings again... at first, I enjoyed having the memories, because I could see how far I've come. But then I started getting into those old feelings too much. I was slacking off on meetings, and sinking into some old ways. It got harder and harder to work the steps, and my relationship with my Higher Power slowly went out the window. At the end of a long, hard week at work I was desperate and hurting enough to call a fellow N.A. member in Philly. He told me to come over to a meeting in South Philly that night. I went to that meeting and ran into a lot of friends who I hadn't seen for awhile. I could see that they've grown a lot. There was a lot of talk about the steps and how people were applying them in their lives. It was just what I needed to hear. I left that meeting with a lot of hope that things would get better. I didn't expect it to happen so soon. I went to a dance afterwards and got in touch with feelings like I was on the outside looking in. It seemed like everyone was having a good time except me!

The next day, another N.A. member called and asked if I wanted to go to a fundraiser buffet-meeting dance for the Hotline. A carload of addicts picked me up... I had no money in my pocket, but was in for the night I will not soon forget! On the way, I got a chance to talk to a couple of newcomers in the car, and their spirit and enthusiasm hit me in the gut. When we got to the fundraiser, someone lent me the money to get in. Some of us just hung around for awhile, talking about struggles with the ninth step. I felt right at home. I saw a lot of people I hadn't seen for ages, and slowly felt a real good feeling coming over me... I got to hear a speaker from out-of-state, Sal from N.Y.C., and had the time of my life at the dance. We had some car troubles on the way home and this gave me a chance to get to know some of the members in my area better... despite the situation, we all had a great time. My faith in a Higher Power working through N.A. is renewed, and my desire to move away from all those old feelings is very strong. I know the way to do it is through the steps... but I've been reassured that I don't have to do it alone. What a relief!

GRATEFUL IN SO. JERSEY

ONE ADDICT'S EXPERIENCE WITH ACCEPTANCE,
FAITH AND COMMITMENT

When I came on the N.A. program I had identified my problem---I had the desire to stop using, but couldn't see how. Due to the nature of addiction my whole personality was geared toward getting, using, and finding ways and means to get more. All of my personality traits reinforced this obsession with self. Totally self-centered, I tried to manage my life by manipulating people and circumstances to my advantage. I had lost all control. Obsession forced me to use drugs repeatedly, against my will, knowing that it was self-destructive, and against my basic instinct for survival. Insane, and feeling hopelessly helpless, I gave up fighting, and accepted that I was an addict---that my life was totally unmanageable, and that I was powerless over the disease. My will power could not change my diseased body that craved drugs compulsively. My self control could not change my diseased mind, obsessed with the idea of using mood changers to escape reality. Nor could my highest ideals change my diseased spirit---cunning, insidious and totally self-centered. As soon as I was able to accept the reality of my powerlessness, I no longer needed to use drugs. This acceptance of my condition---my powerlessness over my addiction and the unmanageability of my life was the key to my recovery.

With the help of the recovering addicts at N.A. meetings, I abstained, a minute, an hour, a day at a time. I still wanted to get high. Life felt intolerable without drugs. Giving up left me feeling even more hopeless than before, and to cope my mind told me to use drugs again. Acceptance of my powerlessness and the unmanageability of my life left me needing a power stronger than my disease to change my self-destructive nature. The people I met at meetings told me they had found a power greater than their addiction in the N.A. program. These people had been clean for months or years and didn't even want to use any more. They told me that I could lose the desire to use drugs by living the N.A. program. I had no choice but to believe them. I had tried doctors, psychiatrists, hospitals, mental institutions, job changes, marriages, divorces; all had failed. It seemed hopeless, but in N.A. I saw hope. I met addicts recovering from their disease. I came to believe I could learn how to live without drugs. In N.A. I found the faith I needed to begin to change.

At this point I had stopped using drugs, and reluctantly believed that I could continue to abstain. I still thought and felt like an addict, I just didn't use drugs. My personality and character were the same as they had always been. Everything about me reinforced my self-destructiveness. I needed to change or I would start to use again. I had accepted my condition and believed that I could recover. In order to do so, I had to make a total commitment to the spiritual principals of the N.A. program.

With the help of my sponsor, I decided to turn my life and my will over to God as I understand God. For me, this was a turning point. This decision demands continued acceptance, ever increasing faith, and a daily commitment to recovery. The decision to turn my life and my will over to the care of God required that I find out about myself and actively try to change my ways of coping with reality. This commitment brought honesty into my life. This is how the N.A. program works for me: I accept my disease, develop a faith that the program can change me, and make a commitment to the spiritual principals of recovery.

Action is now required. If I don't change, I will be miserable, and return to using drugs. The actions suggested by the N.A. program can change my personality and character. I honestly examine myself, write down what I have done, and how I have felt. I reveal myself completely to my God, and to another human being, telling all of my most secret fears, angers, and resentments. By doing these things, the past no longer has control over my life, and I am freed to live up to my ideals today. I begin to behave differently, and become ready to be changed by my God into the sort of person He wants me to be.

I have begun to develop a reasonable self-image, based in reality, by asking to be relieved of my shortcomings.

By amending the wrongs I have done to other people, I have learned how to forgive myself and others.

I review my behavior regularly and correct my mistakes as soon as possible. I am continually developing and expanding trust and faith in spiritual principals. I give to others, sharing myself, and our program, and try to live the principals that I learned.

These Twelve Steps have allowed me to stop using, taken away the desire to use, and have given me a new way of life.

Taken from I.P. No 14
Sun Valley, CA
1983 C.A.R.E.N.A.