



Cleansheet

Issue # **12** Phila. Area Newsletter **Dec. 1984**

Our Members Write...

THE NATURE OF SERVICE

Tradition Nine

"N.A. as such ought never be organized; but we may create service boards or committees directly responsible to those they serve."

This Tradition is essential to our fellowship for many reasons. The Traditions are the guardians of our fellowship and without them we would lose sight of our primary purpose and the spiritual nature of this program. As it is stated in chapter 10 of our BASIC TEXT, "The program of Narcotics Anonymous provides an opportunity to ease the pain of living, through spiritual principals." Our fellowship has needs to be met in order to fulfill the purpose of N.A. We have a Hotline, Prison and Hospital commitments, Public Information, Literature to distribute, and a newsletter.

This 9th Tradition offers us a spiritual principal to live by. It allows our members to set up a service structure that works. To insure that this Tradition remains intact in Philadelphia we must chose very carefully who we nominate for our Groups, Area, and Regional committees. Other Areas and Groups have had problems when committees failed to exercise the spiritual guidelines laid down within our Traditions. Let us keep in mind the Spirit of our 12th Tradition when we select our trusted servants.

A member of a Regional Service Committee

Much has been learned in recent years by our growing Fellowship. Many dreams have come true. Our Book, "NARCOTICS ANONYMOUS" is now available to help newcomers and old-timers alike. Our World Service Office has been able to expand it's operation and perform services as never before. Many Regions, Areas, and Groups have come into existance, reflecting the recovery of thousands of new members. The need for a way to share the successful experience with others in N.A. service work has never been greater. For years, articles on service have been appearing in newsletters put together by members from all over. It has become obvious by default that some of this material, needs to be made available for wide distribution to meet the needs of our growing fellowship.

If all our program consisted of was service, however, we would soon exhaust our spiritual resources before we even learn to feed ourselves spiritually. Our surrenders, our faith, our inventories, and our amends to those we have harmed prepare us to carry the N.A. message. As we learn and grow in recovery, we soon discover that the good we do comes back to us; good works then make sense. Even the most hardened and embittered of our members eventually realize they have been given a new life by those who were privileged to love them before they could love themselves. Without service there would be no N.A., no newcomers, no helping of others. Our atmosphere of recovery depends on God's grace and the service of N.A. members.

In the beginning, the giving of our meager resources seemed like utter foolishness. We were all takers. We didn't think much of ourselves for taking, but our disease had reduced us to a point where we had no choice. Our disease ate up our resources so quickly, we had to do whatever we

could to replace them. In the beginning for each of us there was at least one member of N.A. we trusted. We may have hung out with them, chose them to be our sponsors, and gone to meetings and activities that we couldn't attend comfortably unless they were there. We all needed someone to turn to who wishes us well, and when we have good reason to trust. As our trust grows, and our fear of others is lessened, we make more friends. We may get a home group or a circle of friends we see often and have contact with. We go to more meetings and sometimes travel far from where we live, only to find ourselves at home in another N.A. meeting. We begin to feel about our N.A. Fellowship the way we felt about our first N.A. friend and our first circle of friends. Our fear lessens and we are more free.

We discover that many of the problems we have in our interactions as members bear a certain resemblance to problems in the outside society. In time we find our place in the world and are able to take it, joyously and gratefully. Most of our unreasonable fears are gone, and we can feel part of the human race again. Our needs are met, so we aren't as desperate. We see, accept and feel thankful for the help and love we receive from others. To do less for others than we receive from them would be sort of a spiritual relapse. Giving begins to make sense to us, because we can see that giving results in spiritual growth. Becoming a member of society is a transformation from being a taker to being a giver.

Basing our lives in a Power greater than ourselves gives us freedom which makes the welfare of others of real concern to us. This concern is part of the attraction our newcomers feel. This concern has been summed up in one phrase, "What do you want to do about your problem and how can we help?" By our efforts to help others, we ourselves are helped.

This spiritual lesson of the ages is brought home to addicts today in NARCOTICS ANONYMOUS. We call it service.

Reprinted from The N.A. Way
July 1984



Narcotics Anonymous is a program of spiritual principals; 12 Steps which we take and practice to recover. We as a Group of recovered addicts have accepted the 12 Steps into our lives will not have any problems accepting the 12 Traditions into our Group. When practicing the 12th Step, "... we tried to carry this message to addicts and practice these principals in all our affairs" the word "we" means I don't carry this message alone. We have group meetings to carry the message.

Our First Tradition states "Our common welfare should come first, personal recovery depends on N.A. unity." We cannot do this alone. We need others to help keep us on the right path. When my homegroup is Twelve Stepping a newcomer, I am keeping in contact with what I need in my life. The rest of the 12 Traditions are for the Group and come together just fine as long as we don't have an attitude of indifference or intolerance towards the 12 Steps. I surrendered to this program of recovery because nothing I had ever tried worked for me. Ever since I surrendered to the spiritual principals of this program, I lost the obsession and compulsion to use, and I gained some kind of peace of mind and serenity, not to mention I gained the desire to live.

In Loving Service

The Cleansheet

P.O. Box 14541

Phila., Pa. 19115

The CLEANSHEET is a subcommittee of the Philadelphia Area Service Committee. The primary purpose of the CLEANSHEET is to provide a written message of recovery to addicts seeking recovery; to promote unity; and provide our members with news. The opinions expressed herein are from the individual member of N.A. and do not necessarily represent those of N.A. as a whole. All input is welcomed and needed to carry the message. The CLEANSHEET is a monthly publication. Subscriptions are available at a cost of \$5.00 per year. Send name, address, and check or money order to:

THE CLEANSHEET
P.O. Box 14541
Phila., PA 19115

CLEANSHEET committee meets the first and third week of every month. Everyone is welcome. For time and location call: Andy (215)-673-1763, or Bob (215)-886-7233.

H&I Commitments

PRISON COMMITMENTS

- House Of Correction - Wed., 7:30 - 9 p.m.
(Men) Host - Butch M. (535-3195)
- Laurel Hall - Tues., 7:30 - 9 p.m.
Host - Paul N. (634-7261)
- Homesburg - Tues., 8 - 9:30 p.m.
Host - Paul K. (456-0613)
- House Of Correction - Sat., 9:30 - 11 a.m.
(Max. Sec. Woman) Host - Diane W.
(426-7074)
- House Of Correction - Mon., 8 - 9:30 p.m.
(Min. Sec. Woman) Host - Mary Mc.
(769-7665)
- Detention Center - Thu., 9:30 - 11 a.m.
Host - John S. (332-2209)

Requirements: need I.D.; 6 months cleantime to Chair; 3 months cleantime to speak. Call host of commitment desired. H&I Committee meets every 1st Sunday of the Month, 7 p.m., call Diane W. 426-7074.

Conventions & Announcements

3RD ANNUAL VIRGINIA CONVENTION
January 4-6, 1985
New Marriot Hotel, Richmond, VA
Info: 3rd A.V.C.N.A.
P.O. Box 25285
Richmond, VA 23260
or call: Tracie 804-264-3910.

VOLUNTEER REGIONAL CONVENTION

November 21 - 26th, 1984
Sheraton West, Knoxville, TN.
Info - P.O. Box 4443,
Chattanooga, TN 37405-0443

6TH EAST COAST CONVENTION

June 21 - 23rd, 1985
Towson State University
P.O. Box 26513
Baltimore, MD 21207

15TH ANNUAL WORLD CONVENTION

August 30th - through Sept. 1, 1985
For Info - write WCNA 15
P.O. Box 2232
Washington, DC

ANNOUNCEMENTS

SOUTH PHILA. GROUPS 3RD ANNIVERSARY

Friday, December 7th, 1984
St. Rita's Bingo Hall
1231 South Broad St. (Broad & Wharton
St.) N.A. & Nar-Anon Speakers, Refreshments,
and free door prizes. All are welcome.

THANXDAY BANQUET

Saturday, November 24th, 1984
Best Western Genetti Motor Inn
Market St. & Pennsylvania Ave.
Wilkes Barre, PA 18701
4:30 - 1 a.m., Dinner, Meeting, and Dance.
Call Rich at 717-457-9751 or Al at 717-
457-8682.

PA STATEWIDE HOTLINE MINI CONVENTION

December 22nd, 1984. Begins 1 p.m.
Holiday Inn
2nd & Chestnut Sts., Harrisburg PA, 17010
Christmas Party Banquet and Dance.
Total package \$35. For more info call:
Bob at 215-376-2218, or Vito at 717-287-
5621, or Mason at 717-763-9069.

New Meetings

Wednesday - "K.I.S.S. Group" 1:00 p.m.
1502 Frankford Ave.

Tuesday - "O.D.A.T. Group" 8:00 p.m.
Guifree Med. Center 11th Flr.
8th & Girard Ave.

Wednesday - "Surrender Group" 8:30 p.m.
Our Lady Of Calvary Church
11024 Knights Rd., Teach. Lounge



Changes

Nar-Anon

GROUP CHANGES

Tues.- Fri.- Sun. - "South Phila. Group"
8:30 p.m. Dixon House on 20th St.
between McKean St. and
Mifflin St.

Reality Groups meetings have been cancelled
due to not having any meeting place.

NAR-ANON

Anyone interested in Nar-Anon, which is for the friends and families of addicts, there is now a Sunday night meeting in Philadelphia at 8:30 p.m. and a Thursday night meeting at 7:00 p.m. The Group meets at the Dixon House, on 20th St. between McKean St. and Mifflin St. in South Phila. For more information call Nar-Anon Answering Service at 215-468-7773.389-7359.

Area News

The Philadelphia Area Service met on October 14th, 1984. The following are highlights from that meeting:

Hotline Committee is doing fine. It was asked that the Area vote in favor of a new billing policy. Literature Review and Lit. Distribution are doing fine. H&I Chair says committee is doing fine. There is still a need for a P.I. committee. Anyone interested in this see your G.S.R. or attend the next Area Meeting. The position of Literature Distribution Chair is open. New Alt. A.S.R., A.S.R., and Literature Review Chair positions have been filled. The Cleansheet has been made a separate committee apart from Lit. Review. There was much discussion on the subject of whether or not it is a Tradition violation if individual members of N.A. talk and promote A.A. Literature. There was a question to be taken back to the Groups regarding this issue. The next Area Meeting will be held on December, 9th 1984 at Harbison Ave. & Roosevelt Blvd. at 7:00 p.m. All are welcome.

Regional News

The Greater Philadelphia Regional Meeting was held on Sept. 15th in Buck's County. All Areas were present. South Jersey and Shore-Coastal Areas are considering the possibility of forming a New Jersey State Region along with the other Areas in New Jersey. The positions of H&I, Treasurer, and Convention committee chairs are still open. Anyone interested in these positions please contact your A.S.R. The Region started a Literature Distribution committee so that the Region can stockpile literature so the Areas can purchase directly from the Region. There are new Regional Meeting Lists that will be available to the Areas in October. There was discussion of the possibility of starting a Regional Service Office. The next Regional Meeting will be held on Sat. November 17th, 1984 by the Tri-County Area. The meeting will be held at the :

First Presb. Church
Chester Pike & Ashland Aves.
Glenolden, PA 19036

Meeting will be held from 12 noon till 5:30 p.m. and a dinner and dance will follow. Dinner and dance requests a five dollar donation. All are welcome to attend.

Experiences On This Step...

FOLLOWING DIRECTION

Before surrender came to me, I spent a lot of time and effort trying to work these steps on my own. The 11th step was one I worked at diligently. Without the benefit of an unconditional surrender, and the experience of Steps One through Ten to prepare me, my efforts seemed wasted. I usually wound up frustrated and confused, and I developed some strange and bizarre ideas of what a "conscious contact" was. Meditation was something I used to escape the problems and pressures that a life of total abstinence seemed to bring on.

After a long time, and a lot of pain, I surrendered unconditionally. I knew everything I'd tried to do on my own had failed; I knew I was an addict, and that no human power could have helped me. I met a lot of people who had recovered through the 12 Steps. I asked two of them to help me experience the steps. I had no other choices left. They shared their experiences with me, and gave me direction. For the first time in four years, I began to experience manageability in my life. The problems and pressures vanished. I didn't understand what was happening, ... I only know that when I am following direction, everything seemed to fall into place. When I got into the 11th Step, The direction I got was to take this step every morning. My sponsor showed me how to do it, and I tried it the way he showed me. So far, it is working fine. I still don't understand it, and I am still not sure what a "conscious contact" is, but it doesn't seem to matter. I take this step everyday, and the results are a peace of mind, that I never knew before. Life is really good today.

Anonymous

AN ADDICTS EXPERIENCE WITH THE 11th STEP

After twenty-four years of narcotics use, which included many years of Methadone programs, Shrinkers, Therapists and Counselors, I found myself at an N.A. meeting and I was hurting. I was looking for a way out of all of this, but I didn't know how to do it.

I found out at this meeting that there was a solution, a way out. It was explained to me that I didn't have to live the way I was living anymore, that there was a program of recovery here available to anyone who wanted it. A program of 12 spiritual steps that was working for people just like me. A little hope got me started, all I had to do was to make the effort.

I got two sponsors to help me through these 12 steps and I became a member of a home-group.

As I began experiencing these steps I found that the true nature of my addiction was a direct result of "the lack of a Higher Power in my life." I came to believe that a power greater than me could restore me to sanity, and I made a decision to let this Higher Power, who is my GOD, take care of my life. As I continued with the Steps my life began to change. Gone was the obsession to use drugs. Gone was the hopeless, useless feeling. Confidence and peace of mind were entering my life. All areas of my life began to get better.

As I came to the 11th step I had heard many times throughout "faith without works is dead,..."

I had a talk with my sponsor and it was suggested that I begin each day with a little quiet time with GOD, to review my plans for the day and follow this with a prayer asking GOD for a better understanding of his will for me, and the courage and strength to carry it out. It was suggested to me to keep it simple, not to be elaborate and not to ask for anything. I began doing this, even though some days I'm in a rush. I still found time on the way. My days constantly begin with prayer and meditation. I found that the length of time we take doing this is not important but, the daily constant contact with GOD is essential in our recovery.

As a result of experiencing these spiritual steps and practicing the 11th step daily my life has changed drastically. The daily battle for surrender is over. The little things that were always so disruptive in my life no longer affect me. I am powerless over everything and I know my Higher Power is taking care of me. The fear and desperation have been removed, and sanity, love and happiness have come into my life. A way of life I thought was impossible for me.

Today my life is that of a usefull person,. Thanks to the N.A. fellowship, GOD is in my life today.

It is amazing how different and how much better my thoughts are since I began practicing the 11'th step.

Step Eleven

Ever since I can remember, I was trying to be someone else. I was striving to be something, anything besides myself. When I was about eight years old, I started getting high. This way I didn't have to face life on life's terms. After using for ten years, I realized that I never liked me. That feeling of insecurity could no longer be suppressed. Life in the fast lane began to consume me. Getting high wasn't enough. My frugal efforts to stop using were useless. I had been in psychiatric treatment for five years and I couldn't get honest. After lying through my teeth, not only to my therapist but also to myself, I realized how useless my life had been. I made one last attempt at suicide, and I was then committed. I continued to fight, swearing that I wasn't suicidal. My drug dependance became evident and I was placed in a drug program. When the day arrived for my release, I had one thought on my mind, "Where's the cop man?" I felt as if I needed a fix, anything to escape.

I tried the program, but I couldn't picture a drug free life. After getting high one last time, I realized that I didn't enjoy it. I decided to surrender. I had no alternative. With nowhere to live, a dollar in my pocket, and a handfull of dreams, I went back to the N.A. meeting I had frequented once before. This time I sat still long enough to hear the message. There is recovery. I must have heard it before. This time I really listened.

I began my journey down the road to recovery after retaining two sponsors experienced with the Twelve Steps. Because of my willingness to take suggestions, I learned about the steps and had my own experience with them.

I read the First, Second, and Third steps and began to accept spiritual principles. I can't, He can, and I think I'll let Him. It was as easy as that. After asking my Higher Power to remove me of self so I could someday help another, the obsession to use left me. I continued to experience the remaining nine steps with the help of my sponsor. Through practicing steps 10 & 11 on a daily basis, my conscious contact with GOD has improved. Step 11 helps me to help others. After praying for the knowledge of GOD's

will and the power to carry that out, I meditate and experience GOD's will. Knowing GOD's will just for today, enables me to live life on lifes terms.

Spirituality is the basis of my recovery. GOD is working in my life. I could not face anything without him. Living drug free is easier than I had once believed it could ever be.

Anonymous

CONSCIOUS CONTACT WITH MY HIGHER POWER

Before I took my 11th Step, I had to take the first 10 with the help of two sponsors who had previously experienced them. I kept an open mind and listened to everything that they suggested for me to do.

When I came to the 11th Step, my sponsor shared with me his experience. He explained to me that I should sit quiet and still twice a day, starting out with ten minutes in the morning and at night. During this time I should think about God, as being a "LOVING" one who is taking care of me whatever may come down the pike. He also gave me his concept of prayer, which was basically talking to his Higher Power as though he were talking to a person. He also told me not to ask Him for anything because that would be selfish, but "Only to pray for the knowledge of His will for me," whatever that may be.

This step helps strengthen my Third Step. Basically, when I "Made the decision to turn my will and life over to the care of God, as I understand Him," I really didn't understand what I was turning my will and life over to. I only knew that I trusted my sponsors God, who, he explained, was loving and caring and wasn't about punishing me.

By praying and meditating on a daily basis, my conscious contact with a Higher Power is strengthened and I'm constantly reminded that He is taking care of my life today.

Anonymous

If You want to use DRUGS; That's Your business
If You WANT TO STOP. That's Ours
Call NARCOTICS ANONYMOUS At
1-800-232-HOPE
for someone to talk to, and meetings in
your local area.

Louis
744-9260