

CLEANSHEET



GREATER PHILADELPHIA
REGION



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The Cleansheet is a function of the Greater Philadelphia Regional Service Committee. The primary purpose is to carry the written message of recovery to addicts seeking recovery, to promote unity and to provide our members with news. The opinions expressed herein are those of individual members of Narcotics Anonymous and Do Not Necessarily represent those of Narcotics Anonymous as a whole. All material becomes the property of the Cleansheet. All material must be original and be accompanied by the permission slip on the back.

***** *THOUGHT FOR THE MONTH* *****

As the members mature, so does the group. We learn to practice the spiritual principles of Narcotics Anonymous in all our affairs. We also learn to divide and share the responsibilities for the growth and well being of the group. Home group members should try to remain aware of problems or difficulties their group faces and be willing to help. A home group is where you vote as a member of the group conscience on matters affecting N.A. as a whole as well as matters concerning your home group's well being. Home groups also participate in carrying the message of recovery at an area level. In the spirit of unity, oneness of purpose, for the good of N.A. as a whole, it is important that we all do our part.

***** *SMOKING AND RECOVERY* *****

Why is smoking tolerated in the rooms of Narcotics Anonymous, I remember when I first came around how uncomfortable I felt in the meetings by all the tobacco smoke. My heart use to race and at first I thought I was having a stroke due to withdrawl. That was until it was pointed out to me by another member that it was my reaction to the cigarette smoke. Then I had to go on a mission to find meetings that were smoke free. This was difficult despite the fact that the majority of the meetings I attended were in public owned buildings and were supposed to be smoke free. I remember many arguments in my home group between nonsmokers and smokers over having nonsmoking meetings. After one emotional confrontation we reached a compromise, there could be smoking in the room before and after the meeting. Sounds reasonable, until you walk into a room after twenty people were trying to get that last drag. It ain't cool. Besides the issue of uncomfortabilty, there's the issue of nicotine being a drug and also addictive, the fact that second hand smoke is more devastating on nonsmokers than smokers and the impression it leaves on the newcomer. We say we deal with the disease of addiction, so maybe it's time to include nicotine in that catagory. But most of all, why would I want to intentionally harm other people because of my inability to recognize my disease and it's affect on me. The Basic Text says we exist in a atmosphere of respect for one another and to maintain an atmosphere of recovery. We need to ask is this respect and is this an atmosphere of recovery.

WHAT IS THE NATURE OF SERVICE ?

TODAY I TRULY FEEL LOST AND MYSTIFIED ABOUT WHAT THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN SERVICE AND INVOLVEMENT AND THE PROGRAM OF NARCOTICS ANONYMOUS IS. TOO OFTEN TODAY I ATTEND SERVICE MEETINGS AT THE GROUP, AREA AND REGIONAL LEVEL ONLY TO FIND LACK OF PARTICIPATION AND POOR ATTENDANCE BY TRUSTED SERVANTS AND INDIVIDUAL MEMBERS. WHEN I ASK WHY, THE MOST COMMON ANSWER IS THAT PEOPLE DO NOT WANT TO GET INVOLVED. "SERVICE TODAY IS FAR TO POLITICAL", THEY SAY. " I CAN'T TAKE THE BACKBITING AND THE SELFWILLING". I DON'T BELIEVE THAT ALL THIS IS TRUE, I HAVE BEEN INVOLVED IN MANY A MEETING WHERE PEOPLE WERE ABLE TO COME TOGETHER TO A CONSCIENCE, SO WELL THAT THE MAJORITY OF THE TIME THERE WAS NO NEED TO VOTE ON ISSUES, JUST ACT ON THEM. A LOT OF TIMES THESE WERE AT MEETINGS THAT WERE ONLY ATTENDED BY A SMALL GROUP OF PEOPLE. BUT MORE THAN ONCE IT HAPPENED AT MEETINGS THAT WERE ATTENDED BY A LARGE NUMBER OF PEOPLE. SOMETIMES I WONDERED HOW THAT HAPPENED, AND THE ANSWER ALWAYS COMES UP THE SAME. THESE WERE PEOPLE WHO KNEW WHY THEY WERE IN SERVICE, WHAT THEY WANTED TO ACHIEVE AND HAD THE ABILITY TO PLACE PERSONAL PREJUDICES AND BIASES ASIDE. THESE WERE PEOPLE WHO WERE COMMITTED TO THE PROGRAM AND IT'S PRINCIPLES. WHAT IS THE PRINCIPLE I WONDERED AND THEY TOLD ME IT WAS TO CARRY THE MESSAGE TO THE ADDICT WHO MIGHT WANT HELP. I GUESS WHAT I'M GETTING AT IS THAT I FEEL FRUSTRATED BY THE LACK OF COMMITMENT AND THE LACK OF PARTICIPATION. IT'S PAINFUL TO WATCH PEOPLE LOBBY FOR TRUSTED SERVANT POSITIONS, GET THEM AND THEN NOT FULFILL THEIR OBLIGATIONS BECAUSE IT INVOLVES TOO MUCH WORK. WAS THE MOTIVATION IN THE BEGINNING TO HELP ANOTHER ADDICT OR TO BE PLACED ON A PEDESTAL. FOR ME BEING INVOLVED IN SERVICE IS A STRUGGLE ON SOME DAYS BECAUSE I DON'T HAVE A GREAT LOVE OR TOLERANCE FOR PEOPLE AND THEIR WAYS, I PREFER TO BE BY MYSELF. BUT EARLY ON I WAS TOLD THAT SERVICE COULD BE A KEY TO RECOVERY AND IT WOULD ALLOW ME TO PLUG INTO THE PROGRAM. I WAS ALSO TOLD THAT SERVICE WOULD HELP ME TO BECOME LESS SELFISH AND MORE SELFLESS. IT MAY TEACH ME TO BECOME LESS SELF-CENTERED AND MORE GOD-CENTERED. WELL ON SOME DAYS I'M NOT SURE OF THAT BECAUSE MY CONCEPT OF A HIGHER POWER INVOLVES A GREAT DEAL OF EFFORT TO SUCCEED ON MY PART, IT DOESN'T TELL ME TO JUST WAIT AND SEE, IT TELLS ME TO GO AND FIND OUT. SERVICE TO ME IS A RESPONSIBILITY TO SEE IT THROUGH, BUT SOMETIMES I'M JUST TOO TIRED TO WALK THROUGH THE DOOR, THE SAD PART IS, THERE ARE PEOPLE WHO LOOK UP TO ME AND TAKE THEIR CUES FROM ME WHOM I FEEL I LET DOWN BY NOT BEING ENTHUSIASTIC. I'M RELUCTANT TO SHARE MY CONCERNS FOR FEAR OF RUNNING THEM OFF. I HAVE SEEN MEMBERS COME INTO MEETINGS AND SHARE HOW SERVICE AND THE "INSANITY" ASSOCIATED WITH IT HAVE TURNED THEM OFF AND THAT THEY WILL NEVER GET

INVOLVED AGAIN. AS A RESULT THE NEWCOMER BECOMES DISILLUSIONED AND NO LONGER WANTS TO BE A PART OF THE SERVICE STRUCTURE. I DON'T WANT TO BE A PART OF THE PROBLEM, I WOULD LIKE TO LIVE IN THE SOLUTION AND FIND A WAY TO GET MORE PEOPLE INVOLVED SO THAT THE PEOPLE WHO ARE INVOLVED WON'T FEEL OVERBURDENED. AT TIMES I FEEL THAT I DON'T HAVE ANY GRATITUDE IF I DON'T BECOME INVOLVED ESPECIALLY WITH THINGS THAT I HAVE EXPERIENCE WITH. I LOVE NARCOTICS ANONYMOUS AND WHAT IT HAS GIVEN ME AND AT TIMES I FEEL OBLIGATED TO PARTICIPATE IN OTHER LEVELS THAN MY HOME GROUP TO EXPRESS THAT GRATITUDE, AFTER ALL WE CAN'T ALL SIT AT THE TABLE AND BE THAT N.A. GURU. THERE ARE TIMES DUE TO THE LACK OF PARTICIPATION I HAVE BEEN ACCUSED OF SELF WILL, BUT THE REALITY IS THAT THE SERVICE STRUCTURE DOESN'T EXCLUDE ANYONE FROM PARTICIPATING IN SERVICE WORK, RATHER IT ENCOURAGES. ALSO BY PARTICIPATING IN SERVICE WORK IT CAN HELP YOU TO GET A BETTER UNDERSTANDING OF WHAT THE PROGRAM IS ABOUT. IT ALSO ALLOWS YOU TO KEEP TRUSTED SERVANTS RESPONSIBLE TO THOSE THEY SERVE. LET'S BE HONEST THERE HAVE BEEN SITUATIONS WHERE MONEY OR EVEN LITERATURE OR MERCHANDISE HAS COME UP MISSING. ONE OF THE PRIMARY REASONS FOR THIS IS THE LACK OF OVERSIGHT AND SHARED RESPONSIBILITY, AFTER ALL MOST OF US WERE THIEVES OR DISHONEST IN OUR ADDICTION AND WHAT MAKES US THINK WE GOT WELL OVERNIGHT. IF WE ALL SHARED THE RESPONSIBILITY FOR CARRYING THE MESSAGE IN THE MULTITUDE OF WAYS THAT IT NEEDS TO BE CARRIED THEN THERE WOULD BE LESS DISSENSION AND MORE PRODUCTIVITY. AFTER ALL THE GOAL IS TO BECOME PRODUCTIVE AND RESPONSIBLE MEMBERS OF SOCIETY.

IN LOVING SERVICE AN ADDICT





JESUS * AND THE ADDICT

A desperate young one cries alone.
 Her million tears seem shed in vain.
 She's lost all hope and faith in dreams.
 Her soul screams out in pain.

A gentle touch from Jesus' hand--
 It dries her tears for now.
 "Show me how to live," she said,
 " Because I don't know how."

The Lord knelt down beside her,
 And wept with her awhile.
 Her tears subside as hours pass--
 He touched her heart and smiled.

" Dear child, I have brought for you,
 A gift for days to come--
 Just close your eyes in blindness.
 Take my hand, I'll lead you home."

"And on your journey, you may feel
 Some thorns or prickly vines.
 Just go on taking little steps,
 And keep your hand in mine."

"Should you grow weary, tired, or lame,
 I'll carry you while you sleep.
 I'll wipe away your tears, my child,
 If the memories make you weep."

"And if you fall, turn back, or stray,
 To go alone--you're free.
 Just don't forget that I'm still here,
 Exactly where you left me."

--An Anonymous Friend

* Don't be offended by the word Jesus, as it is my concept of a Power greater than myself. Please do take the a moment to absorb the concept of this as it relates to your relationship with your own Higher Power.

The Unthinkable

Though the eyes of another
 Much stronger than I.-
 Do I learn to see
 Those things I knew not before.
 It is only by God
 As He..... Gently....speaks to me.
 That my soul will allow growth.
 And it is those blissful moments
 To which I cling -
 so dearly.
 For I have just awakened
 Unto the Peace
 That only comes through pain
 Under tons, I can stand,
 Almost no longer.
 I realize now that
 I do not have to carry it alone.

- Anonymous

I KNOW NOT THE SPIRIT

The Spirit is calling me
 to fly over mountains
 So I may rest
 on the Other Side.
 The Spirit is calling me
 to walk through valleys
 no matter how far
 no matter how wide
 The Spirit has chosen me
 to dream a new dream
 now darkness is White
 I'm on my way Home .
 The Spirit has chosen me
 to live through the pain
 in awe of my past
 I've not walked alone
 The Spirit will give to me
 all that is mine.
 taken or not
 I wear a new face.
 The Spirit will give it to me
 a life I Know not -
 forever undying
 Unconditional grace.

- Anonymous

*The Cleansheet needs the participation of it's readers.
Share your experience, strength and hope on any topic
related to your recovery or the N.A. program. Send your
articles, artwork, comments or suggestions to:*

Cleansheet

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