

# 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 \*\*\*\*\*

To give is to receive and the more we give, the more we get back spiritually, mentally, and physically. This is true for the group as well as the individual. We contribute to N. A. services at an area level too. An area service committee(ASC) works for our primary purpose in ways that an individual group can't. Group contributions are vital to an ASC to pay for meeting lists, public announcements, mailings, helplines, literature for members in hospitals or institutions, copying expenses and the literature for public information. The spirit of our Seventh Tradition is also carried on in our regional and world services. In order to truly carry out our primary purpose, our groups must behave in a financially responsible way so that we can contribute to the N.A. message being carried at every service level, in every country, to every addict seeking recovery.

## Report of Regional Phonenumber Chairperson

The message to our fellowship is that the Phonenumber of the Greater Philadelphia Region need's money to stay on. The region has informed me that they are financially drained and that the old phone system bill will not get paid if the Area's of our region don't contribute.

The Greater Philadelphia Region consists of about sixteen (16) areas, seven of which lie within or directly next to the city of Philadelphia. Initially the four areas within the Philadelphia city limits and Bucks County were invited to participate since these are the areas presently sharing the same helpline. Our short term goal is to establish a new phonenumber system that is more efficient and effective in serving the suffering addicts.

This new system will bring about Unity in our region. This new system will have a (1- 800 ) number, that is toll free for the addict that is still suffering. It will connect the suffering addict with a live recovering addict at home who can then offer assistance. It will have the capability of allowing other areas in the region to participate in this phonenumber. Within the city itself the participation could increase from four areas to nine and also help us to accommodate those addicts in outlying areas such as SWANA and DelCo and MontCo

We need your help if we are to get this system implemented. The cost of the system as it stands would run about twelve hundred dollars a month with an initial startup cost of approximately thirty five hundred dollars. Currently the region is operating on approximately four hundred dollars every two months in area donations, which barely covers the cost of holding the regional weekend and other expenses. The profit from literature sales is not enough to pay for the phonenumber as it is and does not bring in enough monthly to run the regional service office ( approximately two thousand dollars a month ) and the phonenumber bill ( from nine hundred to fifteen hundred dollars a month). There is about seventeen thousand dollars in outstanding literature bills owed by the areas and facilities, that money could run the phonenumber for a year. It is up to us the fellowship to take responsibility for the services we use to carry the message. We need to come together and support our services by giving more and being more responsible financially. If you have any questions or suggestions you can contact me through the regional service office.

In Loving Service

Greg W.

Regional Phonenumber Subcommittee Chairperson

From: The Western Massachusetts Newsletter

### On The Lord's Prayer

When I first came through the doors of Narcotics Anonymous and joined in the closing circle, the Lord's Prayer worked for me. Since I came through those doors, I have learned of steps, traditions, and other indispensable spiritual principles that I also found worked for me. However, while practicing one of those spiritual principles, open-mindedness, I became aware that the use of the Lord's Prayer may compromise our traditions. I encouraged my home group to discontinue use of the Lord's Prayer, but was handed a lot of "Well, it worked for me." I couldn't agree more - it worked for me, too. Unfortunately, the addict it didn't work for isn't here to say so.

Principles and traditions aside, it is my opinion (uh oh, there goes that word) that this issue affects N.A. as a whole, not just my home group. A while back at a convention, a newcomer with about five months clean shared their love for the Lord's Prayer and "this Christian program." Yes those were the addict's words. I was shocked and thought to myself that this problem is bigger than I thought it was. By using the Lord's Prayer, we are not carrying a message that says this is a spiritual program; we are carrying a message that this is a Christian program. This affects N.A. as a whole.

Today, I try not to present problems without solutions. N.A. has a truly beautiful prayer that delivers a message of hope, freedom, and recovery. It is called "Just For Today," and it works!

B.B.

H.P.  
“Phone # Reality”

I just picked up the new Feb. cleansheet at my homegroup. It sparked my interest, I haven't seen one in years. Some articles I agreed with and some I not, but that's how it the Big "O" in the H.O.W. works. The experience I wanted to share "Phone # Reality" just happened to me about an hour ago. I'll be clean 11 yrs. on "April Fools Day" and over the years always followed that suggestion take phone nos. and give out your no.. Well tonight I rewriting my N.A. phone book, my 3rd in my recovery. It gets used! It was beat up and falling apart (good sign) it gets used! As I was recopying My gratitude was intense. The relationship I'd built with sponsees, friends, and recovering people, some I shared at H + I commitments with, chairing and speaking, some with 15 yrs. recovery, some with months and some with a day! a lot of thoughts went through my mind as I went about redoing my Phone book, a lot of good thoughts and memories. then there were those that I crossed off because they had died during relapse or had just faded away, but the number that kept far outnumbered the others. I'm going to keep working the program "Just For Today" and add more and the reality is that some day I'll be crossing off a few. But the N.A. message is that We do recover and we are responsible for are recovery. We never have to go back to active addiction. I have never seen any addict fail that day if they are working the principles of N.A. that DAY!

Gratefully yours  
Jim L.

Dear Cleansheet,

I don't know exactly how to put this but I'll do my best.

I have noticed lately at my A.S.C. that there are these things called cliques. I understand the everyone has friends and some are closer than others, but when you let it start to carry itself into subcommittees and into service, that is when we as a fellowship have to draw the line.

I see these cliques are starting to affect subcommittees as a whole and that is not what service work is about at least not for me anyway. When a person thinks that they are

too good to go into drug infested neighborhoods to carry the message, I believe that they should remember that when they used those neighborhoods were their second home. If they can't carry the message there, why should they be able to carry it elsewhere.

I do know as for me I remember on a daily basis that I am no better than that addict that walks in for his or her first time and I thank God my sponsor taught me better than putting myself above everyone else. My sponsor taught me that no matter where I have to go to carry this message of recovery I need to go there.

What I'm saying is simply this; if I have to go to the suburbs, I will and if I have to go to drug infested areas, I will do that also. As a matter of fact I will go to meetings in drug infested neighborhoods a lot more than anywhere else because I remember where I came from. To actually see these cliques in subcommittees, especially H. & I. really pisses me off at times.

Obviously these people have forgotten that these neighborhoods at one time in their life were a reality and now that they got clean they think that they are too good to carry the message in them. Well like they say those who forget where they came from are doomed to repeat.

It really saddens me to think that people can get like that and I thank God for my sponsor teaching me better and setting an example for me to follow.

I really enjoy being involved with service work and this is only one way I can give back what was so freely given to me. It really scares me to think people like this are in service work and it also makes me wonder what kind of message are they passing on to the newcomer. When people turn down commitments because they just want to go home and watch television, it makes me wonder where they actually place their recovery.

I just hope that I never get this comfortable in my recovery because I worked too hard to get what I have today and I know all I have to do is just Keep Coming Back..

In Loving Service  
Anonymous  
Philadelphia Area

## About Addicts Who Want Recovery

When I first came to N.A., there was no Basic Text. Now there is through the help of addicts who want recovery. Then a few more pamphlets came along with the Just For Today book last year. All worked on by addicts who want recovery.

Now I've been clean for awhile and I'm still being told, if I want something, I've got to work for it. I wanted this fellowship, so I had to put time into it. I didn't know I was going to get something back, I trusted my sponsor and other people who were here.

Today I look around and only see a handful of addicts who want recovery. I see a lot of people who just want to go to a meeting and leave out for the party right after. They don't stay for the business afterward. I guess maybe some don't understand what goes on then.

### **CAN I SHARE.....?**

During a business or group conscience meeting, the recovery meeting you attended earlier, has their business taken care of. This is what keeps your group running! You just don't buy coffee, literature and pay rent - You participate in N.A. as a whole.

Recovery starts at home, which I believe is your home group. If you are grateful for N.A. then you are a part of it, Gratitude means action. Don't just raise your hand to complain about not being able to pay your bills.

In N.A. we are a growing number of addicts seeking recovery. What we need to be to help to help this fellowship grow strong is to be addicts who want recovery. If you want it, you need to be involved; or you can just sit back and let everyone else do it... You can be alone to suffer the consequences of not being a part of life like you were in your active addiction.

### **( NOW THE POINT ! )**

On February 13, 1993, a regional workshop on worldwide information was held in Philadelphia. Was your group represented? Only 20% of our region was. Lots of information will never reach the group level because of this apathy. So obviously you don't want to be a part of this if you're not about addicts who want recovery.

Looking For The Fellowship,

Henry D.

Regional Service Representative Alternate

## **PREJUDICE IN NARCOTICS ANONYMOUS**

The following is not a policy statement from the World Service Service Board of Trustees. it is intended merely to stimulate thought and discussion on the topic of prejudice and how it affects Narcotics Anonymous

WSB External Affairs Committee

"The only requirement for membership is a desire to stop using;" isn't it? That's what our Third Tradition says. But in some N.A. groups, it almost seems as if a few more membership requirements have been added. Though it may not be said aloud, the impression you get from such groups is this: "You've got to come from the same racial, or ethnic, or social, or economic, or educational, or sexual background as we do in order to be accepted here. It's not enough, just to have a desire to stop using."

In July, the World Service Conference held a workshop

in Arlington, Virginia. One panel focused a portion of its discussion on the subject of prejudice in Narcotics Anonymous. Participants felt the discussion was long overdue, and that we as a fellowship should begin to further explore ways to "raise our consciousness" and, thus, to begin changing our attitudes and behavior. The purpose of this article is 'to begin raising our awareness of how we treat one another so that, ultimately, any addict seeking recovery, "regardless of age, race, sexual identity, creed, religion, or lack of religion," may find what they seek among us.

### **AWARENESS**

We can't begin to change unless we're aware there is a need for change. As addicts, we reflect the society we come from. We bring our racism, classism, sexism, and all our other prejudices with us into recovery. We accept unacceptable behavior, in ourselves and in each other, because "that's the way it's always been." We all suffer, to greater or lesser extents, from this kind of thinking; it's the way of the world we've been raised in. (cont p.7)

## NEWCOMERS PAIN IN RECOVERY

### LIVING ONE AND REMEMBERING THE OTHER

The first 3 paragraphs are on the physical and mental insanity of ACTIVE addiction, which then led me to spirituality, an area I had much trouble understanding. So this is my own experience with spirituality.

#### INSANITY

Physical: The energy used to get the property  
The property used to get the money  
The money used to get the drugs  
The paraphernalia used to do the drugs  
The chasing the man who has the 'drugs  
The drugs  
Mental: The high

#### DESTRUCTION

Physical: The destruction of skin, tissue, and veins to put holes in our body  
The destruction of our throats and lungs to hold in smoke  
The destruction of our nasal passages to snort  
The destruction of our stomach lining while a pill desolves  
Mental: The high

#### RISKS

Physical: The risk of getting beat but doing it anyway  
The risk of when will be the next time you sleep and where  
The risk of being picked up with an illegal drug, for loitering or tricking  
The risk of tricking and getting ripped off , physically beaten, and/or disease  
The risk of jail  
Mental: The high

Obviously, if you are in the rooms of NA you know the surface wasn't even touched, physically or mentally. But spirituality is different. There is nothing tangible about it. It is a law without physical

existence. To me, so are the principles of N.A. I like to write on the the 3 principles; Honesty, Open-mindedness and Willingness.

I see no physical way to live these principles.  
You can't run after honesty.  
You can't take your hand and open your mind.  
You can't by willingness.

To myself as a newcomer it does sound mentally capable to live the principles. But as a newcomer it gets too difficult, overwhelming and dangerous.

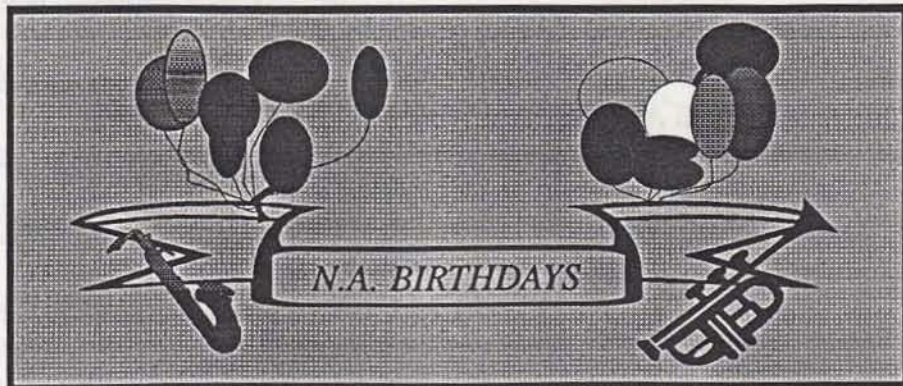
For me to believe there is something (a God of my understanding) or someone helping me stay honest, open-minded, and willing to the best of my ability is the spiritual part of N.A. that is helping to take a great load off, finally making it seem possible to stay clean. As I said before, for myself it's the hardest concept to grasp. But once I started coming to these rooms daily, and noticed I was touching the surface of getting honest with myself, and found my mind automatically opening to things I didn't understand, and I found myself willing to take suggestions and guidance, whether it be from the text or other recovering addicts, spirituality followed.

I took to it like a new puppy dog does to a new home. Hesitant, lost, and scared, like this new puppy, I eventually realized I had to depend on this "thing" to survive my own recovery.

But somehow I know someone is watching over me. These days when I feel there is just no fight left in me, I feel a "push" "outside" my mind which gets me to a meeting with seeming no effort. Spirituality helps me live through my pain of recovery ( but pain is so much lessened than the pain of active addiction), but pain nonetheless, for being a newcomer I remember one and am living the other. Spirituality makes my life a little less chaotic. The strange thing is sometimes I don't even know it's happening.

So for me, if I stop analyzing and allow the spiritual guide me to stay honest, open-minded, and willing to the best of my ability at this time, I have hope that today and each today, my recovery will seem easier.

ME



### For The Newcomer

As I walked the road of recovery,  
Life became a new discovery.  
Learning about the disease of addiction,  
Causing so many a mental infliction.  
So baffling and cunning and so insidious,  
Feeling sorry and wanting people to pity us.  
There is a way to end the pain,  
Keep coming around and you'll get more sane.  
It's working for me, and it will work for you.  
Ridding self of all we went through.  
Yes I choose this path, and I feel great.  
I praise my God I was not to late.  
I allow that power to control my fate.  
Today I don't waste my time screaming,  
I can achieve the dreams that I'm dreaming.  
Don't drink or drug is where to begin,  
Change people, places, and everything.  
You're not alone were all right here.  
It's o.k. to feel pain, and cry a tear.  
So be honest, openminded, and willing.  
Watch your life get more fulfilling.  
This is no joke, but can be some fun.  
If you feel like using, remember your last run.  
Go to a meeting tell us how your feeling.  
That's how you start the process of healing.

SO JUST KEEP COMING

Martin B  
Addict from  
Wilm., De.

TRACY APRIL 18TH 6 MOS  
( ICA )

SHARON D. MARCH 19TH  
2YRS



WRITE US AND LET US PLACE YOUR  
ANNIVERSARY IN THE CLEANSHEET  
OR BETTER YET LET YOUR CLEANSHEET  
REPRESENTATIVE KNOW

What can we do? Well, to deny our bigotry only allows us to continue old thinking and behavior. But when we admit we discriminate, we can begin to address that thinking and behavior with the tools of recovery.

In N.A. we're told to "show up and tell the truth". When addicts hear other addicts share their pain and their fears, something wonderful happens. Open discussions in our meetings can be very important in helping us see how prejudice affects our ability to carry the message to others. "Choosing Freedom from" as a discussion meeting topic, for example, can open the lid on the defects we try to hide from one another, and sometimes from ourselves.

Sponsorship is another tool to be put to work. What would occur if we all took a mini inventory of ourselves, an inventory focused on prejudice, its affect on our lives, and its impact on our fellowship? And what would happen if every N.A. member talked with their sponsor about their fears of people from other backgrounds or lifestyles? Whenever we work the steps with open minds and hearts, healing begins to take place.

#### INTO ACTION

When we can accept that we are indeed bigoted, without making any excuses, then we're ready to take action. The miracle begins when we accept that, as individuals and as a fellowship, we frequently fall short of our own principles. Yes, this is who we are today- and yes today we need to change. Acceptance here does not mean, "Well, that's just the way things are." Acceptance means taking responsibility for ourselves, and seeking the courage to change. At the Arlington workshop, individual members shared about their own experiences of prejudice - not only ways in which they had felt it's cruel sting, but ways in which they had inflicted that sting on others. People talked about not being hugged because they were black; being shunned because of their use of essential, prescribed medication; avoiding members who have disabilities; being fearful of people from different educational levels; avoiding anyone with different sexual preference from their own. Some of these things hampered their own recovery; some hampered their role in supporting the recovery of others; all of it made them hurt. They admitted it, and they asked all of us, as a fellowship, to help them change.

Yes, it's true: we come from a prejudiced society. That does not mean, however, that we must remain forever bound by prejudice.

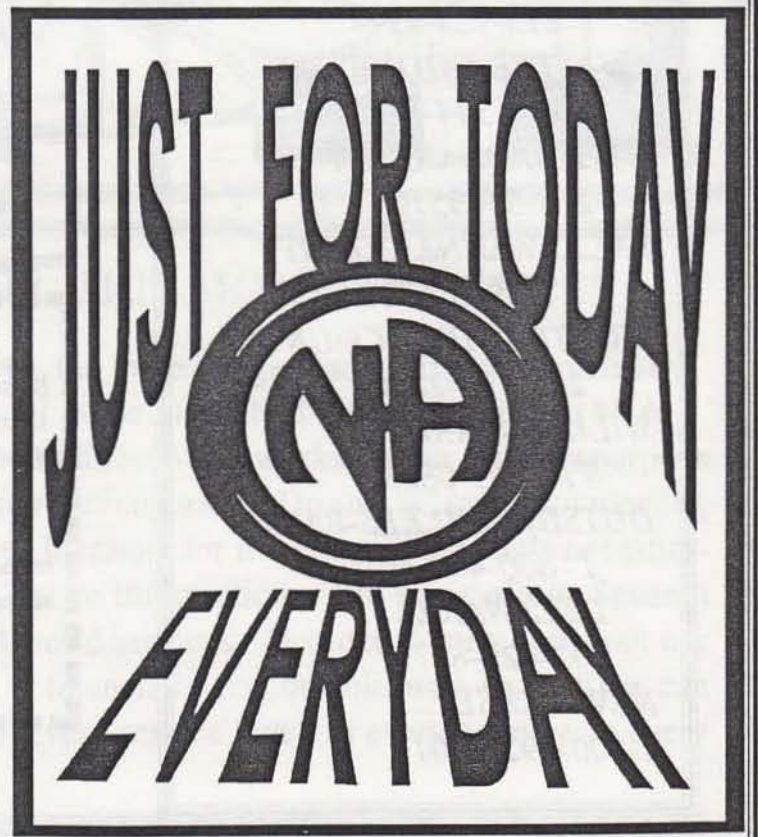
The N.A. program offers freedom, not only from drug addiction, but from the insidious defects of character that keep us from living full, healthy, happy lives.

By working the steps, we can rise above our shortcomings. In doing so, we can set an example for one another, and for others in our communities, of what spiritual recovery is about.

How can you "show up and tell the truth" about prejudice in N.A.? You can:

1. Raise the topic at a discussion meeting.
2. Contact your regional convention committee, and ask them to hold a workshop on prejudice at the next convention.
3. Ask your area and regional service committees to consider whether prejudice affects any of their services.
4. Talk with your sponsor about how prejudice-yours and others-affects you and your recovery. Talk with those you sponsor, too.
5. If your group conducts an annual inventory, ask that "prejudice" be one of the subjects they examine.

Prejudice in N.A. hurts the whole fellowship, from the oldest old-timer to the newest newcomer. We, as members of a fellowship based on spiritual principles, can not and must not settle for anything less than freedom from prejudice.



*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*

*C/O*

*Greater Philadelphia Regional Service Office*

*6212 Ridge Ave, Phila. Pa 19128*

*attn: Cleansheet*



*WHATS NEW AT REGIONAL SERVICE OFFICE*

*12 CONCEPTS OF N.A. SERVICE  
JUST FOR TODAY DAILY MEDITATION BOOK  
BASIC TEXT AND PAMPHLETS ON TAPES  
THE N.A. WAY MAGAZINE*

*BI-PLATE MEDALLIONS YR.S 1-21  
MEDALLION HOLDERS  
BOTH NECKLACES AND KEYCHAINS  
IN BOTH SILVER AND GOLD*

*LITERATURE IN SPANISH  
N.A. TWELTH STEP CARDS  
NEW PAMPHLET -- IN TIMES OF ILLNESS  
VARIOUS SPEAKER TAPES*

*PHONELINES  
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DELAWARE COUNY  
215-5349510  
LACKAWANNA COUNTY  
7 17-963-0728  
MONTGOMERY COUNTY  
215-496-2826  
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717-283-0828  
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