

THE

CLEANSHEET

ISSUE 6

VOLUME II



The Price & The Deal

I'm clean today. That statement has meant more to me lately than anything else that I can say. I've had a lot of problems since I first decided to stop the abusive way of living that I had been pursuing for over 25 years. And all of the credit for my recovery goes to the simple and realistic program called Narcotics Anonymous.

When I first realized that I needed help, over six years ago, there were only two meetings in the vicinity where I've lived all my life. Since then, NA's had meetings come and go. Now every day and night of the week has an NA meeting available. This is what makes me happiest today.

Some of the problems I've lived through clean have included divorce, the loss of certain physical capabilities, varying lifestyles, loss of personal possessions, deaths of friends, loved ones, experiencing unemployment, and even the wrong employment. I don't know why I didn't use over any of these situations (I sure thought about it), but I stayed clean.

Today, I have things in my life that I consider irreplaceable. I have serenity, peace of mind, love for others, and myself. I have a beautiful home and all the material possessions I've dreamed of (well almost all). I have a good job that pays well, and I enjoy doing. I have a truly loving circle of friends who love me for what I am, and allow me the freedom of finding out who I want to be.

Recently I learned something about myself through some physical problems I've encountered lately. See, when I was using chemicals to maintain my daily functions, I didn't think about what would happen down the road to my body. After years of being clean, it's finally catching up with me. When I asked the medical profession what was causing my medical situations, they explained that my body's normal activity was being sent mixed or incorrect messages regarding my bodily functions. The treatments they wanted me to begin would require some pretty addictive medications. I talked with my sponsor at length and she suggested I talk openly to physician about my past using. A big fear became apparent. I've never had to admit to anyone outside of the fellowship about my past drug problems. The saying "we don't care what or how much you used" began to lose meaning for me. I talked to my phy-

sician for the first time about my past history, honestly. Well, I couldn't possibly remember every chemical I ever ingested one way or another, or the quantities and combinations. But enough came to memory that startled my physician. The doctor stated, "Now you're paying for that abuse."

It's not like I haven't paid for abuse before. I've done some pretty degrading things to obtain the drugs which are causing the problems now. But today is different. I'm clean today. I honestly haven't ingested a chemical for several years. My body has completely detoxified, but now it doesn't know what to do or how to handle daily living. But I know I can begin again, just as I did when I first began attending NA meetings.

After consulting with my physicians and laying a lot of information on them about the fellowship of Narcotics Anonymous and talking at length about what I've done in my past, (it was doing a Fourth and Fifth Step!), the doctors have decided against my chemical medication. My physician has hopes that I can attain a physical balance if I just take care of myself better and maintain my daily program of NA recovery. The medication they wanted to put me on would have given my brain another set of mixed messages, and would have altered my thinking and feeling just enough to placate my addiction, until I began to build up an immunity. Then my active addiction would begin all over again, and I just don't want to go through that again.

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It's going to take time to get back to "normal" (whatever that really is), and I may still have to take medications in the future. But today, I'm able to maintain my serenity and peace of mind by taking life a little easier, praying daily for my HP's will for me, and eating a sensible diet. The most important thing to me is that I am able to stay clean today. I was able to honestly admit about my addictive personality for probably the first time in my life to someone outside the fellowship, and to openly admit that I can't handle "any type" of drug.

I was able to be truly honest with myself about my addiction and my fears of becoming active again. I have been lucky enough to find a physician who is able to understand my addiction, and is willing to work with me in maintaining my abstinence from all drugs.

For all these things I am truly grateful today. I am grateful to NA for showing me a better way to live, and that I don't have to do drugs to maintain my life anymore. Through this program I've gained a new insight about myself -true honesty-and with the help of others, how to take care of ME. This program of abstinence from all drugs is so much more than our literature says. It is truly a way of life for me today, and I know I'm going to keep coming back.

I want to thank the Public Information Committees for all the work they do in helping the public know that there are people with drug problems and there is hope. And thanks to the Literature Committees for providing literature that has helped my physician understand what addiction really is. Also, a big thanks to all the NA meetings around the world which are available to anyone who wants to find out about recovery from drug addiction.

Thanks NA for existing, and making my life a better life today.

Anonymous

Reprinted from The NA Way Magazine

What We Put Into It

I am writing to share my experience, strength, and hope about my first NA meeting.

First, I think it is important to say what brought me to NA. Actually, it's very simple. All I wanted was to learn how not to use drugs.

My addiction took me to hospitals and emergency rooms. Four months before I got clean, I found myself again in an emergency room. I liked the attention of the ambulance, the chaos. I was sent to detox, where they allowed me to lay around for seven days until I was no longer "ill due to addiction."

I returned to the hospital in an ambulance. The doctors suggested exploratory surgery. I didn't hear surgery, removal of body parts, or much of anything else except that if I signed on the dotted line I would get more drugs.

After my surgery, I left the hospital with the simplest of hopes and dreams. I planned to go grocery shopping, wash clothes, or walk on the beach with my children. I didn't make it eight hours before I was again at the dope man's house, a little more desperate than the last time.

I knew by then that detox and treatment centers would no longer accept me unless I was hospitalized to be "medically detoxed." Four months later, I went to a detox center that would accept me if the only drug I used was the drug alcohol. I had to sign a paper that said that. Once inside, I was required to attend two in-house meetings a day. They were run by people from another fellowship who talked about how the drug alcohol affected their lives. It wasn't good or bad. I just thought that it had little to do with me. I couldn't relate.

I found out later that an NA meeting was held once a month. That meeting saved my life. Here were three people I understood. They had done what I had done. They knew the pain and struggle I was going through. They were just like me. They didn't have quite as much literature or as much clean time as the other fellowship's people, but they were just like me. They had learned to live without drugs. I listened that night. I knew that there was hope for me, too.

I had finally found hope. I took all of the pamphlets they offered (they only had one of each). I told the counselors that NA was where I was going to go when I got out of detox. I was told that there was "no good recovery in NA." That "NA isn't a strong fellowship." That "people in NA only want to dressed in black and ride motorcycles." I was confused. The panel members who came in that night didn't seem anything like what my counselors said. I was at the "last house on the block," so to speak. I knew that if I used again, I would die. I had nothing left to lose.

When I got out of detox I went to an NA meeting, then another, and so on. This last week I celebrated three-and-a-half years clean in NA. NA has taught me how to live life without drugs. It's the reason I keep coming back. This is it.

I think about how NA members came into the treatment center that night, how I found a spark of hope. It was nothing fancy or elaborate. It was simple. There was a place for me in NA. And I realize now that my group, area, or region will only continue to grow strong as long as I keep coming back.

In my time in NA, I have been very privileged to give back some of what was so freely given to me. I am a responsible, reliable member of the H&I subcommittee for our area. I never thought that I would be a writer and love doing it.

I haven't had to use since that that first NA meeting. I have changed. I have had a spiritual awakening as a result of the Twelve Steps. I am, very simply, learning to live life without the use of drugs.

Last week someone told me with pride how her fellowship recovers and that there is no good recovery in NA. Personally, I think that is a lie. Recovery is what we put into it. Keep coming back!

JM, Washington

Reprinted from The NA Way Magazine, April 1995

God of My Understanding

God's name is used through the rooms of NA
We thank him for life, just for today
We thank him for clean time, the fellowship and desperation

for recovery
 But we are missing something in our new life discovery.
 God gives us the wisdom of wanting to learn
 And the strength, that weakens that disease on life's terms.
 God is the solution to everything we go through
 Everytime there's a situation what do we do?
 We give thanks or plead to God for strength, understanding or
 just some worldly blessing
 We ask for all these things, when the answers right in his
 lessons.
 Thanking God is giving and showing respect also.
 The understanding you have of God now read and study his
 bible.
 God is giving us this understanding for a specific reason I
 must say.

And the reason is our life
 that not only drugs can take away.
 Something much higher can take our only life,
 And that is the power of our Higher Power.
 He's showing us how powerful ,
 He is through the rooms of NA.
 Do you think if there wasn't such a disease you would have an
 understanding of God today?
 We put our faith and trust in God sounds like we found a
 friend.
 He said we'll never lose his bond as long as we follow him

Valerie C.

Riding The Storm

My disease comes in many forms
 I'm about to ride a storm
 I could not spell my name
 And I felt so ashamed
 Hospitalized with a sickness unknown.
 Powerless to the care doctors had shown.
 I'm about to ride a storm.

The storm of fear of what they may find
 The storm of guilt-what has drugs done to my mind?
 The storm of what's happening to me.
 The storm of this disease not wanting me to be free.
 The storm of trusting doctor's diagnosis
 The storm of dealing with these emotions.
 I am riding a storm.

Through this storm I will grow from the love my God will
 show
 Already He's begun to replenish my faith
 Letting me know that He's never late.
 Already He's taking away the fear
 Letting me know that He's near.
 Yes, I'm riding a storm
 The storm of the disease of addiction
 A disease that has no restrictions.
 It comes in many forms.

I got on the first cloud of this storm
 And I grasped my God's hands and arms
 He pulled me near and whispered in my ear,
 "Trust in me, it's just a little storm brewing.
 They don't know what they're doing.
 Whatever is the cause
 I will not let you fall.
 This storm may try to take your very soul--
 But just remember that I have complete control."

Yes, I'm riding a storm
 A storm that I must ride.
 But it's a storm that I'll get through with my God by my side.

Cythnia F.

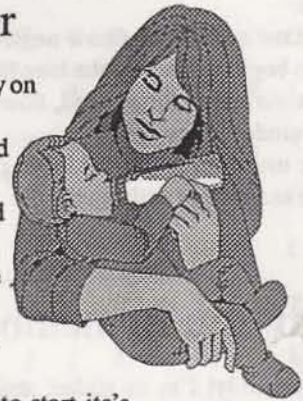
Expecting Mother

Expecting mother has a monkey on
 her back,
 Now her child is born addicted
 to crack.

Two weeks of withdrawal and
 going through hell,
 Can't bond with its mom 'cause
 its mom's in jail.

The cries and the tremors from
 this child is a sight,
 What a hell of a way to have to start its's
 life.

To be so innocent and young and not know a thing,
 But knows the need for a drug 'cause the mom was a fiend
 The warden had to tell her that her baby died,
 She couldn't stand it anymore and committed suicide.
 Now their pain is over and their bodies are cold,
 Because Scotty had her body and the bowl had her soul.
 I'm telling this story hoping to shed some light,
 So we can stop the madness and do what's right.
 If it doesn't stop now and it continues on,
 Our race will die before our race is reborn
 Drugs are taking over



Antoinette R.
 Submitted by *Tim B.*

One More Try

Now that I see, as time passes me by ,
 four years later and I'm wondering why.
 Not thinking about all the pain I've caused
 Having a lack of spirituality that's definitely what it was.
 Being in recovery taking Step by Step,
 Living life on life's terms is what must be kept.
 Taking on the feelings, all the good and the bad,
 Praying for another day clean is what I wish I had.

Now it's too late to do all this crying
One thing for sure I'm not going to stop trying.

Larry Q.

Untitled

God, let me never forget
how it feels to be devastate,
Let me never forget how it feels, to be confused.
Let me never forget the feelings of poverty.
Let me never forget what a true friend really means
Let me always remember what it means to give
sincere help, hope and love to someone in need.
Let me always remember to do for others, as will be done for
me.
Let me never forget how neglect, sadness and fear
can begin to destroy the true fruits of happiness.
Let me never forget God, how it felt so I can always have a
reminder of my duties
Let me never forget the feeling of loneliness.
Let me always feel Love!

Pat S.

Do You Remember The Times

Hey family! I'm an addict, strivn' to get better, called Wali.
I'm new to this but I'm true to this. I'm learning a lot of things
in recovery that will benefit me down the pike. One of the
things you told me that sticks out is "those who forget are
doomed to repeat." I was thinking about that lately and it re-
minds me of a piece I wrote a while back. It's a song I rewrote
and it keeps me touch. I hope you can identify.

Do you remember when we used to smoke go get our digits,
spend it all on coke
Do you remember excuses that we made tryin' to borrow money
when we just got paid
Do you remember high times that we had, after it was over we
felt so bad?
Do you remember thinking you was slick till your spouse came
in and caught with a trick?
Do you remember the times out there gettin' high?
Do you remember the times, oh yeah
Out there gettin' high?
Do you remember the times?
Do you remember ridin' in a car buyin' in bags with tape or
with a golden star?
Do you remember goin' through those fits thought you brought
some dope, it turned out to be grits?
Do you remember being scared of a mouse after a mega blast
in that abandoned house?
Do you remember smokin' up a pack buggin' out like crazy
tryin; to watch your back?
Do you remember the times out there gettin' high?
Do you remember the times you could have died?
Do you remember the times out there gettin' high?

Do you remember the times?

That's a piece I can really identify with because I've experi-
enced it and then some. It lets me know what's waiting for me
it I decide to test the waters again. Just for today the war is
over and recovery has begun so I'm staying home where I
belong with you people and Narcotics Anonymous! Love, peace
and recovery.

Wali

NA Birthdays

Charles S	12/01	ICA	6 yrs
Cliff	12/01	ICA	2 yrs
Scott T.	12/03	Clean Acres	2yrs
Rob U.	12/11	Clean Acres	11 yrs
Kathy D.	12/13	Riverfront	5 yrs
Paula H.	12/13	ICA	1 yr
Brian G.	12/15	Clean Acres	10 yrs
Gilbert G.	12/15	ICA	6 yrs
Tom M.	12/22	SWA	2 yrs
Bill H.	12/26	Bucks	11 yrs
Ray R.	12/27	SWA	2 yrs
Craig S.	01/03	Bucks	3 yrs
Karen G.	01/07	SWA	3 yrs
Steve P.	01/07	SWA	2 yrs
Ralph	01/12	Pyramid of Freedom	12 yrs
Wally D.	01/14	Bucks	7 yrs
Melvin R.	01/23	ICA	6 yrs
Evan	01/27	SWA	1 yr
Richard H.	01/29	Bucks	9 yrs
Debbie M.	02/05	GCA	8 yrs
Theron W.	02/05	GCA	8 yrs
Marilyn M.	02/09	SWA	4 yrs
Nolan J.	02/10	NWA	3 yrs
Alicia W.	02/12	SPA	4 yrs
Kelvin C.	02/14	Bucks	10 yrs
Iman	02/17	NWA	1 yr
Laura N.	02/17	ICA	7 yrs
Betty J.	02/19	ICA	6 yrs
Camila	02/23	NWA	1 yr
Carol S.	02/24	NWA	5 yrs
Diane J.	02/24	ICA	9 yrs
George R.	02/27	Bucks	19 yrs
Wayne A.	03/22	NWA	6 yrs
Mike R.	02/17	SWA	9 yrs
Doug P.	03/01	SWA	9 yrs
Dave D.	03/28	SWA	3 yrs

NA Events

Recovery in Abbotsford 3rd Anniversary
Saturday, Feb. 10, 1996; Doors open: 6pm, Meeting starts:
7pm

Abbotsford Community Center 3228 McMichael St.

Change Is The Solution 8th Anniversary

Monday, Feb. 12, 1996;
Doors open 6pm, Meeting starts 7pm
Lonnie Young Community Center Chelton & Ardleigh Sts



Northwest Area is holding General Elections

Saturday, Feb. 17, 1996; 11 am to 2 pm
Lonnie Young Community Center Chelton & Ardleigh Sts

Bucks County Bowling Night

Saturday, Feb. 24, 1996; Morrisville Lanes
Nolen Avenue, West Trenton

Recovery is Possible

Friday - Sunday, March 8, 9, 10, 1996; Rochester, NY
Contact: Judi M. (716) 224-0688
Glen S. (716) 288-7232

Celebration of Freedom (The Treasure of Life II)

Friday - Sunday, March 22, 23, 24, 1996;
700 King St.; Holiday Inn, Wilmington, DE
SWACNA

ISNAC

Friday - Sunday, March 29, 30, 31, 1996
Fort Wayne, Indiana; Cut off date: March 19, 1996
Reservations: (219) 420-1100

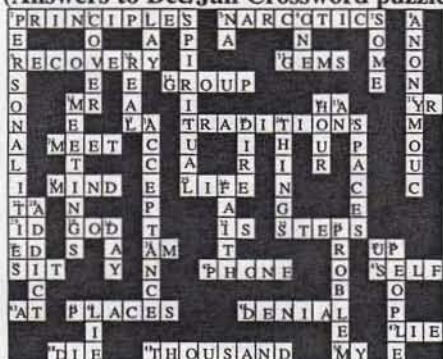
Games

Trivia

In one of the following six readings, "must" is written once. What reading is it in and where is it in that reading?

- Who Is An Addict?
- Why Are We Here?
- What is the NA Program?
- How It Works?
- Twelve Traditions
- Just For Today

(Answers to Dec/Jan Crossword puzzle)



Narcotics Anonymous

O P E N M I N D E D N E S S Y
U Y V C T K C M S P E T S R T
Z I O S N X R E L A P S E S S
G M R J E A I J K L H V N C E
P I O U M S T L A H O O G I N
F X F S T G H P R C I G N T O
E I Z T I Z O T E T H N I O H
I A Z V M J U R I C F I L C C
E F I L M G S D E A C R L R J
O N E D O E A L P S F A I A X
G W U D C R N A O Z P C W N C
Y A D O T P D R H V Y E Y T L
M N M O C R M J Z U E I C G T
Z T P L S D Z U J J J S W T U
H F M I V H B V S Q C J U N D

- | | |
|----------------|------------|
| Acceptance | Caring |
| Commitment | Faith |
| First | Gift |
| Giving | God |
| Halts | Honesty |
| Hope | Just |
| Life | Low |
| Narcotics | One |
| Openmindedness | Recovery |
| Relapse | Respect |
| Steps | Thousand |
| Today | Traditions |
| Use | Want |
| Willingness | |

Cleansheet Permission Slip

By signing this slip I am giving the Cleansheet permission to print the enclosed material. I understand that the Cleansheet may edit it at the discretion of the Committee.

Name _____

Title of Work _____

Signature _____ Date _____

**FOR A PROBLEM WITH DRUGS
CALL THE NA HOTLINE
(215) 440-8400**

NA REGIONAL PHONELINE OFFICE OF THE GREATER PHILADELPHIA REGION
(215) 509-7830 (215) 509-7831

BE A VOLUNTEER ON THE HOTLINE CALL THE REGIONAL PHONELINE OFFICE

**PHONE LINES
PENNSYLVANIA**

PHILADELPHIA.....215-440-8400
 LOWER BUCKS COUNTY.....215-943-8866
 UPPER BUCKS COUNTY.....215-871-9263
 CHESTER COUNTY.....215-344-3250
 DELAWARE COUNTY.....215-534-9510
 LACKAWANNIA COUNTY.....717-963-0728
 MONTGOMERY COUNTY.....215-469-2826
 WILKES-BARRE.....717-283-0828
 OUTSIDE WILKES-BARRE.....1-800-444-9999



DELAWARE

NEW CASTLE COUNTY 302-429-8175

NEW JERSEY

NEW JERSEY.....1-800-992-0401
 (OUTSIDE NJ.....1-908-462-9199)



CLEANSHEET

THE GREATER PHILADELPHIA REGIONAL
 SERVICE COMMITTEE
 6212 RIDGE AVENUE
 PHILADELPHIA, PA 19128
 (OR CONTACT WALTER D. 215 423-1124)

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. PLEASE SEND US YOUR ARTICLES, ARTWORK, PUZZLES, COMMENTS AND SUGGESTIONS.