



Cleansheet

Issue #6

Phila. Area Newsletter

June 1984

Area News

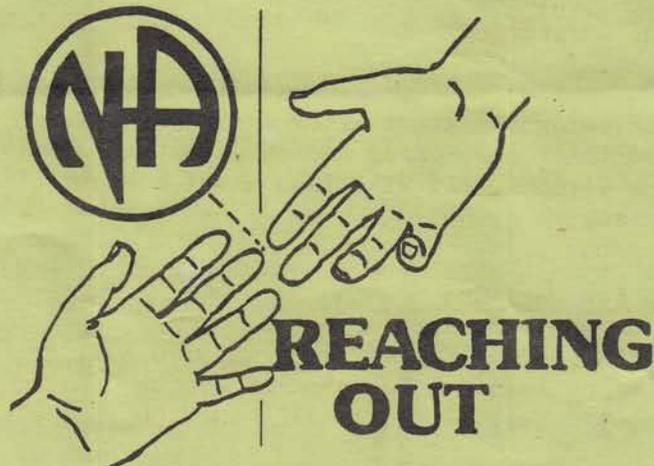
Area Service Committee met April 8, 1984. Literature Review has two individual pamphlets, A Physician's Viewpoint in N.A. and Self Acceptance to be reviewed by the Area. H&I is working on Hosts for prison commitment. Hot Line has changed over to 1-800-232-HOPE. They need phone numbers from the groups. Please make a list for each group to be filled out with names, phone numbers, and time available and also clean time date. Literature is doing fine; request more money for Basic Text. The next Area Service Meeting is on Sunday, June 10, 1984 at Harbison Avenue and Roosevelt Blvd. at 7:00 p.m.

Regional News

The Greater Philadelphia Regional Service Committee met on April 15th, 1984 at The Hershey Hotel in Philadelphia. The following are highlights discussed at that meeting: All Areas are doing well. Bucks County Area needs support with meetings. Montco. Area has a new hotline number, 215-688-4730. Our R.S.R. has received the Region's Group Conscience on the fellowship agenda items so that our Group Conscience can be carried to the World Service Conference. New Regional Meeting Lists were given to A.S.R.'s to distribute to their Areas. Any additions/corrections/deletions on the meeting list should be given to your A.S.R. so that we can keep an accurate Regional Meeting List available. Updated lists will be available quarterly. Literature Review Chair reminds that the Groups should be reviewing the literature passed out last month. Our Regional Convention went very well. The Convention Committee has over 100 Basic Texts left over from the convention that need to be sold. Anyone interested in purchasing a book please contact your A.S.R. A new Co-chair and Treasurer have been elected. A temporary Chair for H&I has been appointed. The positions of Chairperson for H&I and P.I. are open. The Chair position for the Regional Service Committee is also open. It is important that these positions be filled so that we can better carry the message to the still suffering addict. Anyone interested in these positions please attend the next Regional Service Meeting. The next Regional Service Meeting will be held the 3rd Saturday of July in Montco. Area. A reminder to Area Subcommittees and interested people that right before the Regional Meeting workshops will be held. All are encouraged to attend these workshops.

**5th East Coast
Convention for N.A.**

June 22, 23 & 24, 1984
YALE UNIVERSITY
NEW HAVEN, CT



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

The Cleansheet is a subcommittee of Philadelphia Area Service Committee. The primary purpose of The Cleansheet is to provide a written message of recovery to addicts seeking recovery, to provide our members with news, and to promote unity. The opinions expressed herein are from the individual member of NA and do not necessarily represent those of NA as a whole. All input is welcome 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

Committee Date's: May 20th, 1984 June 3rd,
1984
Contact for location call: Andy P. at
676-8784 or Bob H. at 886-7233.

Hospital & Institution Committee

The Bridge- Primary Purpose
Interim House -
L.K.E.C. - Go for it Group
Firehouse - Men at Work
Guiffre Medical Center Detox - South Phila.
Gaudenzia House - Center City
Guiffre Men's Rehab - Men at Work
Today Inc. - Abington Hosp. Group
Episcopal Hosp. -

Prisons

Womans Facility Maximum Section
Womans Facility Minimum Section
Holmesburg
Detention Center
House of Correction
Laurel Hall

Prison Meeting can start after everyone has received their I.D. Cards and an Interview with the wardons. It will take about a month to process.

Open for Host Groups

Interim House - Tuesday 8:30 to 9:30 p.m.
250 Wayne Avenue & Tulpehocken Avenue
Episcopal Hosp. - Monday 7:15 to 8:30

Anniversaries

Jaime B. - May 9 - 1 year
Kim w. - May 11 - 1 year
Ted M. - May 31 - 2 years
Steve O. - June 25 - 3 years
Bob E. - June 3 - 3 years
Sheryl R. - June 19 - 3 years
Sharon B. - May 1 - 6 years
Tom C. - May 17 8 years
Jim H. - June 6 - 10 years

Congratulations, you are all the power
of examples for the newcomer.

Conventions & Announcements

5th E.C.C.N.A. -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 (doesn't include rooms & meals), Total Package \$75 (includes Registration, Rooms, Meals, Banquet, and Dances)

Mail To: 5th E.C.C.N.A.
P.O. Box 611
Hartford, Ct. 06142-0611

Meetings In Need Of Support

MONDAY THRU FRIDAY-

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

Wednesday - Center City Beginners
Meeting

3rd and Walnut Salvation Army 7:30 p.m.

Step Five

"We admitted to God, to ourselves, and to another human being the exact nature of our wrongs."

The Fifth Step is the key to freedom. It allows us to live clean in the here and now. Sharing the exact nature of our wrongs sets us free to live. After taking a thorough Fourth Step, we have to deal with what we have found in our inventory. We are told that if we keep these defects inside us, they will lead us back to using. Holding on to our past would eventually sicken us and keep us from taking part in this new way of life. If we are not honest when we take a Fifth Step, we will have the same negative results that dishonesty brought us in the past.

Step Five suggests that we admit to God, to ourselves, and to another human being the exact nature of our wrongs. We have looked at our wrongs, have seen patterns on paper, and have begun to see deeper aspects of our disease. Now we sit down with another person and share our inventory out loud.

Our Higher Power will be with us when we do this, and will help to free us from the fear of facing ourselves and another human being. It seemed unnecessary to some of us to admit the exact nature of our wrongs to our Higher Power. "God already knows that stuff," we rationalized. Although He already knows, the admission must come from our own lips to be truly effective. Step Five is not just simply a reading of Step Four.

For years, we avoided seeing ourselves as we really were. We were ashamed of ourselves and felt isolated from the rest of the world. Now that we have the shameful part of our of our past trapped, we can sweep it out of our lives if we face and admit it. It would be tragic to have it all written down and then shove it in a drawer. These defects grow in the dark and die in the light of exposure.

Before coming to Narcotics Anonymous, we felt that no one could ever relate to us or understand the things we had done. We feared that if we ever revealed ourselves as we were, we would surely be rejected. Most addicts are uncomfortable about this. We recognize that we have been unrealistic in feeling this way. Our fellow members do understand us.

We must carefully choose the person who is to hear our Fifth Step. We must make sure they know what we are doing and why we are doing it. Although there is no hard rule about whom we should choose, it is important that we trust the person. Only complete confidence in the person's integrity and discretion can make us willing to be thorough in this step. Some of us take our Fifth Step with a total stranger, although some of us feel more comfortable choosing a member of Narcotics Anonymous. We know that another addict would be less likely to judge us with malice or misunderstanding.

Once we make up our minds and are actually alone with the person we have chosen to accept our confidence, we proceed, with their encouragement. We want to be definite, honest and thorough, realizing that this is a life and death matter.

Some of us have attempted to hide part of our past, and in doing so, have tried desperately to find easier ways of dealing with our inner feelings. We may think that we have done enough by writing everything down, and this is a mistake we cannot afford. This step will expose our motives and our actions for what they really are. We cannot expect these things to reveal themselves.

Our embarrassment is eventually overcome and we can avoid future guilt.

We do not procrastinate. We must be exact. We want to tell the simple truth, cut and dried, as quickly as possible. There is always a danger that we will exaggerate our wrongs and an equal danger that we will minimize or rationalize away our part in past situations. If we are anything like we were when we first entered the N. A. Fellowship, we still want to "sound good".

Addicts tend to live secret lives. For many years, we covered low self-esteem by hiding behind phony images that we hoped would fool people. Unfortunately, we ended up fooling ourselves more than anyone. Although we often appeared attractive and confident on the outside, we were really hiding a shaky, insecure person on the inside. The masks have to go. We share our inventory as it is written, skipping nothing. We continue to approach this step with honesty and thoroughness until we finish. It is a great relief to get rid of all our secrets and to share the burden of our past.

Usually, as we share this step, the listener will share some of his or her story too, and we will find out that the things about ourselves that we thought were so awful or different

were so awful or different were not all that unique. We see, the acceptance of our confidant, that we can be accepted just the way we are.

We may never be able to remember all of our past mistakes. We do, however, give it our best and most complete effort. We begin to experience real personal feelings of a spiritual nature. Where once we had spiritual theories, we now begin to awaken to spiritual reality, This initial examination of ourselves usually reveals some thing about us that we don't particularly like. However, facing these thing and bringing them out in the open makes it possible for us to deal with them constructively. We cannot make these changes alone. We will need the help of God, as we understand Him, and the Fellowship of Narcotics Anonymous.

Taken from the Basic Text of Narcotics
Anonymous

1982 C.A.R.E.N.A.

Experiences On This Step...

One thing that I hadn't realized when I finished my fourth step was that there was not one but three parts to the fifth step. My sponser pointed out to me that I was to admit it to God First, then to myself in a mirror. Admitting it to Myself in a mirror sounded rather strange but when I finished the I realized why it was important.

I got a real feeling of knowing myself from doing this. It was hard to look myself in the eye and admit the exact nature of my wrongs to myself.

After admitting it to God and to myself, then I was ready to admit it to another human being. Doing the first two parts made doing this last part much easier.

I did this part with my sponser which I felt was important, just for the reason of taking these twelve steps with one person. It gave me a feeling of wholeness, of real completion.

After doing my fourth and fifth steps. I had a real feeling of knowing myself unlike any feeling I had ever had before. I knew what things about myself I wanted to keep and nurture through spiritual growth and which thing I wanted to be rid of by taking the rest of the steps. I felt for the first time that I would be able to answer that classic question, "who are you?"

We admitted to God, to ourselves and to another human being, the exact nature of our wrongs.

Admitting our wrongs to God first gives us a sense of Humility. We can share our faults with our God without embarrassment or shame. This first part of step five gives us

a clearer understanding of ourselves as well as an awareness for the things we want to change. Personal Communicating with God and the surrendering of our will creates the foundation for our unquestioning acceptance of His guidance.

We may gain self-awareness of our major faults by observing our own actions or wondering why things turn out the way they did. Behind every action lies an attitude which may require medatative reflection now to avoid an unwelcomed result next time,

Admitting our shortcomings to ourselves begins the process of improvement.

Sharing our shortcomings with a helpful experienced member of N.A. lightens our burden and gives us an opportunity to grow from another person's experience and point of view.

We were open and honest in describing the exact nature of our faults. We were also ready to listen with an open mind. Step five begins the continuing process of being able to confide in another member of N.A. and to share our intimate problems and inner most feelings.

John C.

The 12 Steps - A Package Deal

My first attempt at the steps, I took 1 through 5... that's as far as my sponser had been, so that's as far as I gor with them. There wasn't anyone else around who had gotten any further - most people weren't even into the steps or sponser, yet. My sponser went from the 5th step into therapy, which

I could neither afford nor handle, so I dove into service, headfirst. I worked' the rest of the steps to the best of my ability... I went to step meetings, asked different people how they worked their steps, I wrote about the steps, and everytime I had any kind of new awareness, I thought it meant that I was experiencing that step. As I approached my 4 year anniversary, it seemed that my life was getting worse instead of better; I found myself afraid. Something wasn't right - something was missing.

In my running, I went to meetings all over the place... I was searching for the missing link in my recovery. Some meetings emphasized cliches and one-liners; others were strong on sharing feelings and how your day went; there were step meetings where everyone analyzed the steps and themselves. I grew very tired and frustrated... and more and more self-centered. Then I went to a meeting and heard something different. I felt something different - a calmness, a peace inside. For that hour and a half, my thoughts turned off, and I just listened. People shared about what it was like, what happened, and what it's like today. The "what it was like" part, every person in the room understood - we've all been there. The "what happened" part was always the same - "I got 2 sponsors and took the steps." The "what it's like today" part was always good, and hopeful - it always ended with, "I got 2 sponsors and took the steps." The "What it's like today" part was always good, and hopeful - it always ended with, "And I can't find anything to complain about now." I wanted that...so I got 2 sponsors. Both had been through all 12 steps and take ten eleven and twelve daily. With their guidance, I'm now taking the steps in order. I'm not 'working them - I tried that before. I'm letting them work. I'm not "using" my sponse sponsors - I'm letting them guide me through the steps. (I've "used" a lot of sponsors, not to mention people, friends, drugs, ect.)

What a difference I feel, already! I've learned that the steps are a package deal - you don't just take a few of them and then stop. They don't work that way. You take all 12, in order, and you don't take them alone. I've learned that this is not a selfish program, as I've been hearing for

4 long years. When I made that decision in step 3, it was an unconditional surrender of my will to God; from that point forward, I am in this thing for god and others. Whatever comes my way is totally up to God, not me. My recovery is no longer any of my business! My sponser said to make sure that my understanding of God was one that was loving and forgiving - so I know that I'm in good hands. I pray, daily, to be able to help a newcomer that day.

Our Members Write...

CAMPS

Our primary purpose is to carry the message of recovery to the addicts who still suffer. We can do this in many different ways. What's important is to make sure that we get the message to them. If we just sit in our meetings and wait for them, how are they going to know where we are, or what we have to offer? One way to find them is to go to the places where addicts always wind-up (if they don't die first) - the jails and the institutions. It's a sure bet that every jail and every institution is filled with addicts - and if you've ever been to one of those places, you know that they're sufferin' in there. The way we get to them is through our H&I Committee. They set up meetings in the institutions, and ensure that Groups and/or members support the meetings, and carry a message of recovery in there. They also get literature marked, "H&I", or "H&I Literature," that's what it's for - to buy the literature that goes in there.

I heard a member refer to H&I work in this way: "During World War II, millions of Jews were dying in Concentration Camps throughout Europe. An underground network sprung up of people dedicated to helping the Jews back to safety, and life. They would sneak into the camps late at night, and steal 'em out, one by one, in the face of death.

Today, there's a similar mass genocide taking place... millions of addicts are dying out there. The jails and institutions are there camps... that's society's only answer to the dilemma. That's where they're kept until the addiction annihilates them. Through our H&I meetings, we're sneaking in there and stealin' out of the clutches of death... one by one." Everytime an addict in one of those meetings hears a clean addict share, he finally has a choice. But, we have a lot of prisons and institutions in this Area, and in this Region, that do not have meetings. Why? Because nobody's willing to support them... Our H&I Committees are getting little or no help.

If you're not supporting an H&I meeting in some way, or helping out an H&I Committee, or doing something to let the still-suffering addict know that we're here... What ARE you doing?

The Fifth Tradition and the Twelfth Step

Listening to Sidney at the convention I realized some thing I needed to add to my program, working the twelve traditions. She talked about working the "twelve traditions. She talked about working the "twelve steps and traditions" as if they were one.

Recently I had felt stagnant in a meeting that I used to feel very comfortable at and had been going to since it started. Members had been congratulating other members for not taking about the twelve steps as much as they used to. I felt as if maybe I was wrong for talking about them myself. I stopped sharing in this meeting for this reason, then stopped going.

After hearing Sidney I took a look at the fifth Tradition, "Each group has but one primary purpose, to carry the message to the addict who still suffers." I realized that the answer to my confusion was in this tradition. But I had another question, what was the message that this tradition was referring to?

I looked to the twelfth step which is the step about carrying the message, "Having had a spiritual awakening as a result of these steps we tried to carry this message to other addicts and practice these principles in all our affairs." I realized that this step tells us what the is. It tells us that the message is that we've had a spiritual awakening as a result of the steps. So the fifth tradition tells us that the group's primary purpose is to carry the message that we've had a spiritual awakening as a result of the steps to the addict who still suffers.

I realized that it is up to me as an individual member to see that this happens and that I must share what I know to be the truth.

I spent a lot of time in my addiction people pleasing. Today it is important to carry the message to the addict who still suffers and not to share what I think others would like me to share.

In loving service,
Al R.
Andy P.

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.

The Written Message

When I first came to meetings, I desperately wanted to find out what Recovery was all about; but I was scared to death of people. I had lost the ability to trust another human being in the course of my active addiction, and my walls were impenetrable. I could not listen to someone talk without my mind getting in the way. The only thing I felt I could really trust was the written word...if something was down in black and white, I could possibly consider it. At least I could have time to read it, think about it, and then read it over again. It was something I could hold on to. My first feelings of hope came from reading about another addict's recovery...I identified with it, and realized I was just like him and maybe I could recover, too. I'm grateful that somebody took the time to sit down and write about their experience getting clean. If they hadn't, I might never have stuck around, and would probably be dead or institutionalized today. Instead, I'm alive and free!

Since this is the way the message was carried to me, this is one of the ways I try to carry the message - writing down my experiences in recovery. I suspect there are some newcomers out there just like I was - confused, wanting what everyone else has, but not knowing how to reach out for it. It's simple, but it sure isn't easy! I know how it feels...just about everybody here knows what you're going through, 'cause we've all been right where you're at. I can tell you that after trying everything else, when I got a sponsor and started taking the steps, things got better, immediately. The desire to use left around in my head, and I felt calm and at peace with myself and others for the first time in my life.

To those of you who have been around for a while, who have been through the steps; you have a lot to offer to the newcomer. He may not 'hear' your message, verbally, but he might get it by reading it. It only takes about 15 minutes to sit down and write an experience you've had in recovery... it could be the key to a newcomers recovery. This newsletter is the vehicle which will deliver your written message out to where it might be received, and carried on. Don't hang onto it...give it away!

A Clean & Serene Magazine