

CLEANSHEET



The Cleansheet is a function of the NORTHWEST AREA 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 a permission to be used

CLEAN SHEET 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:

*CLEAN SHEET
C/O
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Newsletter Committee or Call
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THOUGHT FOR THE MONTH



The Phoenix is a legendary bird whose tears have the power to heal. The Phoenix can resurrect itself from its own ashes. When addicts get clean and stay clean, they begin to resurrect themselves from the ashes made of their lives. The twelve primary feathers represent the NA Twelve Steps of recovery. We looked at the past with shame, the present with guilt and the future with fear. Recovery changed all that!

Recently I had the opportunity to attend two really good conventions, and as some of you might know, I'm not really a convention guy. But what made these conventions so great, was the presence of oldtimers being actively involved in the process, both speaking, but most importantly being in simple service. I'm speaking of the members with 20, 23, 27, 33 years of continuous cleantime who have the willingness to make themselves visible and available to the newcomer and the sometimier. My sponsor and his sponsor 26 and 43 years respectively, active participants in service. It makes me wonder if I have the right to just walk off and have a "life". I understand that some of us aren't built like that and our personalities don't allow us to hang with recovering people but so long before a screw pops loose. That's cool, but when I ask these predecessors why they hang, the same answers come back at me every time. "It keeps me clean and I never want to live the way I used to". At first I thought what they're still scared of using, but then I realized that no matter what, we all still works in progress and we must never forget that "we can plan the plan, but we cannot plan the outcome". We must forever remain vigilant and keep our lifelines open to the possibilities of life's moments. After all, it's recovery that takes place in our meetings and service helps us find ourselves, but most of all it keeps us grounded in the reality that we need each other and that we are never alone. I had began to understand why we walk off when we get a little time and a few possessions and that special someone, but recently I was reminded of what allowed us to find those things in our life and I became more fully aware of what helps us to keep those things and those people in our lives. We only keep it by giving it away. We have to remember that we are the vision of hope and that if we're not there then there is no vision, and then there is no hope for the newcomer. When I first got clean some fourteen years ago, they told me this was lifetime program and that recovery was an ongoing process. The Basic text reminds of the need to stay vigilant and grounded, because the disease is only under arrest and not cured. If this true why would I stop checking in for regular checkups and getting my workout with the folks who know me best. There's nothing like being reminded of where you came from to keep you where you're at. I was reminded by a member with 33 years last week of the joy of welcoming the newcomer. I watched this oldtimer give the poncho off his back to someone, just because they liked it. You'd have to seen the joy on addicts face to understand the joy in the oldtimer heart when we practice unconditional love and remind ourselves of the need to give it away to keep it. I watched people with seventeen and twenty years serve as driver for the week for out of town visitors and marveled at their gratitude for just having the opportunity to be of service. That's something we all need to embrace and hold onto with all our hearts, remembering that the chance to be of service is a gift and not a privilege. Our NA communities are healthier when the old and the new stay around long enough to serve together and learn from one another the joys of recovery. Like we say "IF YOU ARE NEW HERE, IF YOU ARE OLD HERE, JUST STAY HERE, ...HEARHEAR".

Kuala Lumpur still growing strong

A total of 23 members from NA Kuala Lumpur spent the weekend [5-6 July 2003] at a beach bungalow in the seaside town of Port Dickson for our Annual NA Vacation in conjunction with WCNA50.

Among the highlights of the much needed retreat was the World Unity Day telephone hookup on Sunday morning [local time].

It was most encouraging seeing many old friends again who albeit clean, have not been to meetings in a while.

Six members from a private treatment center who are relatively new to the NA program also joined us and were suitably attracted to the realization of how big NA really is worldwide and this realization also returned a sense of perspective to most of us there.

We were also fortunate to have John T from Minnesota, USA joining us - he is currently living in Penang for a year.

NAKL intended that this year's gathering would once again foster closer ties with one another and further cement the unity that we need; and also encourage members, especially those who have been away from the meeting rooms for a while to Keep Coming Back once again.

Our new group NA Terengganu - on the east coast - is now 1 year old. There is one meeting per week on Tuesday nights 8pm. Attendance there is somewhat shaky, with only two regular members keeping the flame alive. Its founder member regularly comes over to KL and informs us of the progress of the Group. As the Group is still in its infancy, they feel that registering this Group with WSO should take place at a later date.

NAKL has been supportive by providing IPs and copies of the preamble in Bahasa Malaysia and plans to send representatives to visit the group sometime this year.

Letters From Asia Pacific

Dear NA member,

This is Mohammed Q, your fellow from Saudi Arabia, I have about one month since I got to Jordan. Actually there is no NA group so I will start my self as NA recommended. So I want to tell every body to make him know that there is an NA member in Jordan. If you know any body want to live in Jordan he/she may help. I have some step that may help in establish new group in Jordan , please if you know some body seeking help in this Area of Asia give him my Email.

Mohammed, Saudi Arabia.
Salam Mohammed,

I am Nor an addict from Singapore. When I bumped into NA fellowship it is very hard but I never give up hope. There was one time for three months I attended NA meeting - there is nobody but me alone. That was 8 years ago. Today I am still struggling and the group shows improvement. Mohammed, trust your heart, trust the Higher Power and trust NA. I am very, very sure things will work out for you and the NA in Jordan. Do your thing right everything else will follow. Last but not least, it takes your true courage to change the things that you can.

Till we meet again, you are always in my heart.
Nor, Singapore.

(REPRINTED FROM THE ASIA PACIFIC FORUM NEWSLETTER 5/2004)

The Twelve Traditions and Public Information

Public information work is done by service committees or groups created by, and directly responsible to, those they serve. We try to do the best we can with what we have while upholding our Twelve Traditions. Our experience has taught us that an understanding of the Twelve Traditions of Narcotics Anonymous as they apply to public information is helpful. With that in mind, it may be beneficial to spend time studying and discussing the traditions. The knowledge gained may help us to be more confident in our presentation of NA. This confidence can be apparent to our audience and may assist in developing a positive image of our fellowship. The following traditions can play an important role in PI work and may have direct applications to PI service we conduct.

Our Sixth Tradition states: An NA group ought never endorse, finance, or lend the NA name to any related facility or outside enterprise, lest problems of money, property or prestige divert us from our primary purpose. "This tradition is the basis for our policy of non-affiliation and is extremely important to the continuation and growth of Narcotics Anonymous." (Narcotics Anonymous Basic Text) While it may be important to reach as many people as possible with our message of recovery, it is imperative that we not risk our independence by becoming reliant on any outside source. If NA becomes strongly identified with any "related facility or outside enterprise" (club houses, drug treatment centers, or other twelve-step fellowships, for example), our primary purpose and independence can become confused with the priorities of others. Cooperation with those who come in contact with addicts is important when carrying the message of NA. Without this cooperation, many addicts may never have found our fellowship. We want to work with other organizations, but we do not want to be merged with them in the mind of the public. To give the impression that we are one and the same might threaten our independence. Our aim is simply to make it known that NA is available. It may require additional effort to make clear the distinction between NA and other organizations. However, we will be rewarded as more addicts find us through other sources and our fellowship continues to grow.

Our Tenth Tradition states: Narcotics Anonymous has no opinion on outside issues; hence the NA name ought never be drawn into public controversy. "Our recovery speaks for itself. Our Tenth Tradition specifically helps protect our reputation." (Narcotics Anonymous Basic Text) We have no recommendations for any outside organizations, nor do we participate in their politics. To do so might invite controversy, which may jeopardize our fellowship's standing in the community. If we voice an opinion on any public issue, we may block the path for a new member to join or feel welcome in our fellowship. It is critical that we remember this aspect of keeping our fellowship open to any addict who has the desire to stop using.

Our Eleventh Tradition states: Our public relations policy is based on attraction rather than promotion; we need always maintain personal anonymity at the level of press, radio, and films. "Our attraction is that we are successes in our own right. As groups, we offer recovery. We have found that the success of our program speaks for itself." (Narcotics Anonymous Basic Text) This tradition tells us that we do not have to promote recovery; the changes in our lives will be apparent to those around us. The positive effect of our own personal recovery can be a powerful element of attraction to our program. We may decide that we do need to inform the general public of our existence. Is this attraction or promotion? The difference between attraction and promotion is in the content of the message and its presentation. Providing basic information and informing the public who, what, and where we are is well within the definition of attraction. When we go beyond the act of simply informing the public that we exist, we can cross the borderline into promotion.

Participation by NA members in public information events typically is not a violation of anonymity. Those who serve may personally choose to give up some of their anonymity in this fashion. But to give our full names to the press, allow our faces to be photographed, or appear on television or film in association with or identified as a member of Narcotics Anonymous is plainly a violation of the Eleventh Tradition. This can threaten an individual member's personal recovery and give a false impression to newcomers that they will have to reveal their identities to others.

Our Twelfth Tradition states: Anonymity is the spiritual foundation of all our Traditions, ever reminding us to place principles before personalities. "The spiritual foundation becomes more important than any one particular group or individual." (Narcotics Anonymous Basic Text) This tradition reminds us that NA is a "WE" program, and that the sacrifice of personal recognition may be inherent to the spiritual principle of anonymity.

When we act on our own in public information we can lose the spirit of humility inherent in a "we" program. The damage that can be done to NA's reputation by individuals acting on their own can take a long time to repair. Being of service in PI we get a glimpse of humility every time a newcomer walks through the door of an NA meeting. We can then recognize the spiritual aim of the fellowship and our own place within it. We are grateful to be able to carry the message of recovery and can acknowledge the actions of a power greater than ourselves.

BASIC TEXT UPDATE :

YOU CAN HELP MAKE HISTORY

Submit your experience to the Basic Text project

Addicts are a dramatic breed, and we may be overly fond of describing what's happening in our lives and our program as "once-in-a-lifetime" or "never-seen-before." But...if you are reading this, you really do have the chance to participate in making NA history. You can help contribute to the Basic Text. How can that be? Well, as some of you may know, the last World Service Conference approved a motion to replace some or all of the personal stories in our Basic Text, and we need members of the fellowship to put pen to paper and send us their writing.

The motion also includes adding a new preface to the text and adding a brief introduction to the personal stories section. No changes will be made to Chapters One through Ten or to the existing preface and introduction. You can read more about the news up to now on our website, www.na.org/conference, or in the January 2005 issue of *The NA Way Magazine*.

The Basic Text was first published more than twenty years ago, and since that time, we have grown from fewer than 3,000 meetings, mostly in the US, to more than 30,000 in well over 100 countries. Our fellowship today illustrates what we've always known—anyone can be an addict, "regardless of . . .," and any addict can find recovery in NA. But how do we put together a collection of experience that paints that picture? We believe two things are key: We need to think creatively, and . . .

WE NEED YOUR HELP.

This is a groundbreaking project. In fact, we suspect the phrase "personal stories" may not even fully describe what we are trying to capture. The word "personal" makes it sound like these pieces belong to particular people rather than to NA as a whole. The Basic Text is NA literature; it belongs to us all. A member who shares experience in the book, in effect, gives that experience to the fellowship. The word "story" also may not be the right word. When most of us hear "story," we think of the traditional: how it was, what happened, how it is now. Yes, we are looking for experience that fits this frame, but we also want to branch out and have a broader range of formats, sharing styles, and individual voices (we talk more about this below).

**Stay tuned for more on the subject of what to call this part of the Basic Text. If you have ideas, let us know.
Send your input to: worldboard@na.org.**

The experience, strength, and hope our members share in the Basic Text can put a face on our program—for those of us sitting in the rooms today and, more importantly, for the still-suffering addict who may walk through doors tomorrow. We need your help to update that shared experience so that it better reflects who we are today. We can already hear from the addict around the corner in our home groups; we want to hear from the addicts around the world in our Basic Text.

To gather all of our many voices, we'll have try some new things. We know that your responses to this solicitation will be a great start; many of you will send us something after you read this. But not all addicts are skilled at or comfortable with expressing themselves in writing (or in English). And, in some cultures, sending in your own personal experience, in response to a general call, could be seen as pushy or egotistical. In order to collect experience from some communities, we may need to use more active methods; members within those communities may be able to help us. We've also talked about using NA events, and even interviews, to collect experience that is more representative of our whole fellowship—the "we" that is a bunch of "I's." ***So how can you help?*** Send us your experience, spread the word, get others interested and involved, give us your input. We have a lot of new ideas, and we want to know what you think.

You are NA

A new collection of shared experience is an opportunity to reflect more fully the diversity of our fellowship today—who we are, the way we feel, and the way we live. We hope for a book that better showcases the international nature of our fellowship, our wide-ranging demographics, and our breadth of experience in recovery. We know NA can work for anyone—we want a collection of experience that illustrates all of those "anyones" getting clean, staying clean, and living clean. We are in more than a hundred countries—in cities and towns. Some of us are isolated in rural areas or institutions, while others struggle to shape their own lives and recovery in communities that are very close-knit. Some of us got clean when we were still "kids," others were senior citizens. We are every ethnicity, sexual identity, and demographic imaginable. Help us to put together a collection of writing from our rich fellowship. Tell us about *you* in all of your unique beauty. And we're not just looking for writing from diverse kinds of members; we're also looking for members to share their diverse experiences. Maybe you struggled to develop a relationship with a Higher Power when you were new, and you want to focus on that. Or maybe you had a breakthrough at nine years clean that you can share about. Perhaps you confronted a long-buried demon at a point in your recovery where you thought "I can't believe I am struggling with this when I have xx years clean." Help the person who will confront those demons and have those breakthroughs after you by writing it down and sending it in. Maybe you are an atheist, a single parent, a celebrity, a veteran. . . . Talk about it! You don't have to write about everything that's happened to you from birth until now—how could you? Maybe you have something to say about coping with illness in recovery . . . what it's like to start NA in your community . . . going back to school. . . . Perhaps you relapsed for five years and finally "got it." Or perhaps you were able to stay clean the moment you joined NA but you confronted your disease in other ways. Share your experience and tell us what happened and how NA's spiritual principles got you through. Regardless of our circumstances, we seem to have this in common: all of us felt different in some ways before we found a home in NA. What kind of shared experience would have helped *you* when you walked through the doors of your first meeting? Tell us now. Remember, "diversity" means all of us—from the "margins" to the "mass." Send us your experience! Don't second guess yourself.

Send your experience and ideas to the World Board
19737 Nordhoff Place Chatsworth, CA 91311 USA
worldboard@na.org

Greg B.	Mar. 17th.....14 years PLEASANT AFTERNOON
Stephan M.	Mar. 25th.....NAVEL BIRTHDAY TRANSITIONS IN RECOVERY
Zakia R.	Mar. 15th.....19 years
Gamel	Mar. 26th.....14 years RECOVERY IN THE MORNING



Important dates: BASIC TEXT REVISIONS

December 2005
 Deadline to send in your experience for Basic Text revisions

September 2006–March 2007
 Review & input period (the period when the revised text is mailed out to those who sign up to receive it, and members give their input on the draft)

September 2007
 Approval draft is published (this is the draft that will be voted on at the World Service Conference)

24 April–4 May 2008
 World Service Conference

**Serenity On A Sunday Afternoon
 Marathon Meeting
 12:00 Pm until 9:00 Pm
 Sunday April 17th 2005
 5725 Sprague St. (Germantown) Philadelphia, PA**

H & I INFORMATION :

Why is an H&I Meeting/Presentation Needed

The purpose of an H&I meeting is to carry the NA message of recovery to addicts who do not have full access to regular Narcotics Anonymous meetings. H&I meetings/presentations, except for those in longer term facilities, are intended to simply introduce those attending to some of the basics of the NA program.

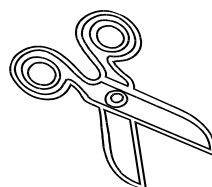
Who is Best Suited to Carry the NA Message in an H&I Meeting

In our experience, it is best for members to have three months clean before attending an H&I meeting, and six months clean before speaking at one. It is not important whether or not we have been in a similar facility ourselves. Anyone with a clear and consistent Narcotics Anonymous message who is willing to share is well suited for H&I work.

H&I and Public Information Cooperation

Generally, a PI activity is geared to people outside our fellowship and includes people who come in contact with addicts and can help addicts to find NA.

If a PI subcommittee doesn't exist in an area or region, H&I subcommittees may take on many of the responsibilities generally taken on by PI subcommittees.



NEWSLETTER PERMISSION SLIP

By signing this slip I am giving Clean SHEET permission to print the enclosed original material. I understand that the newsletter committee may edit at the discretion of the editor.

name of submitted work: _____

signature: _____ *date:* _____

please enclose this form with all submissions