



THE CLEANSHEET®
Dallas Area Newsletter
June 2007©

Email us letters/comments: cleansheet@dallasareana.org
Helpline: 1-888-NAWORKS or 972-699-9306 En Español 1-888-600-6229

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Step 3

*"We made a decision to turn our lives
over to the care of God as we understood him"*

".... We found that all we needed to do was try When we gave our best effort, the program worked for us as it has worked for countless others. The third step does not say, "we turned our will and our lives over to the care of God." It says "we made a decision to turn our will and our lives over to the care of God as we understood him."

NA basic text pg. 25

That passage taken from our basic text was a major *AHA* moment for me. Over my years of trying to get clean in other 12 step fellowships I could never get an answer to my question "How do I know I've turned my life over to my HP"?

Thank God for NA and the simplicity of the NA basic text. As complicated as I was in my addiction it is paramount to my recovery today that I keep it simple. Real simple.

When I took step 3 with a sponsor I made a decision to let go and let God. I renew this decision everyday in my morning prayers. I ask God to take my will and my life and to guide me in my recovery.

I'm not perfect and do take my will back sometimes but; the more I practice step 3 and ask God to take my will and my life the easier it gets for me to live life free from self will. It has also become much easier to accept life on life's terms.

Dave M. TENA

NEXT MONTH'S TOPIC IS STEP 4

The Cleansheet needs your support. Please take a minute of your time to share your experience, strength, and hope. Email submissions to The Cleansheet at cleansheet@dallasareana.org by June 22nd for the July Edition

If you don't have access to email and would like to submit an article call Dave M. @ 214.717.8260

IT'S YOUR BIRTHDAY!!!

CARROLTON/ FARMERS BRANCH

Shelly G. 30 days
Amber J. 60 days
Kathy N. 60 days
Ron N. 60 days
Robin P. 60 days
Autumn H. 60 days
Eileen K. 90 days
Tommy W. 90 days
Brandi M. 6 months
Laura A. 9 months
Tanya S. 1 year
Don M. 5 years

CENTRAL GROUP

Angie 30 days
James B. 90 days
Lisa D. 6 months
Greg R. 6 months
Shaheed K. 9 months
Mitch B. 1 year
Carla D. 3 years
Cora W. 4 years
Rodney B. 4 years
Janet E. 9 years
David M. 9 years
Timothy P. 12 years
Carl W. 13 years
Calvin W. 13 years
Oscar A. 13 years
Robert K. 15 years

COURAGE TO CHANGE

Robert J. 18 months
Tommie T. 6 years
Bruce S. 21 years

DUNCANVILLE

Tonya R. 6 months
Henry C. 1 year
Tedra H. 18 months
Albert C. 2 years
Andre M. 2 years
Jason R. 3 years
Kenneth 3 years
Frashon 4 years
Danny T. 5 years
Willie Ann 8 years
William F. 10 years
Anthony V. 13 years
Keith L. 19 years

GROVE GROUP

Dena M. 1 year
Diane M. 1 year
Tracy B. 1 year
Zack H. 1 year
Penny M. 18 months
Ray 18 months
Regina 18 months
Rhena B. 2 years
John S. 2 years
Kenneth 2 years
Patti L. 3 years
Sheli S. 3 years
Betty P. 4 years
Nancy S. 5 years
Marilyn W. 7 years
Reggie W. 8 years
Vita J. 9 years
Clinton A. 10 years
Carolyn N. 12 years
Debra B. 13 years

Sadie H. 14 years
James T. 15 years
Sonya W. 17 years
Dorothy R. 18 years
Norma L. 19 years
Larry F. 20 years

LAST HOUSE ON BLOCK

Kathy 3 years
Reggy W. 8 years
Gail S. 16 years
Meta P. 22 years
Loretta 28 years

Mc KINNEY

Laci S. 1 year

NORTHSIDE

Mark 1 year
Chase W. 1 year
Catriona Q. 2 years
Henry C. 2 years
Staci H. 6 years
Jeff P. 9 year s
Bill M. 10 years
Willie 13 years
Cathy N. 14 years
Dorothy W. 14 years
Adele F. 14 years
Jeannie G. 15 years
Michele G. 15 years
Roxanne C. 17 years

Dave 17 years
Davis S. 18 years

STONEWALL GROUP

Angela V. 30 days
Kattie S. 30 days
Sheena I. 60 days
Terry T. 60 days
Carlos 60 days
Tasha S. 90 days
Keith C. 90 days
Buddy S. 90 days
Lonnie 90 days
Eliger C. 9 months
Kenneth 9 months
Donald S. 1 year
Roshandra P. 1 year
Steve R. 2 years
Cornelio P. 2 years
Betty P. 4 years
Peggy 19 years

WORK STEPS AND LIVE

Keia 6 months
James Y. 18 months
Tyrone M. 2 years

If your groups birthdays were excluded and you would like to get them printed here please get with your GSR and ask him/ her to turn in your groups birthdays at the next Dallas Area service meeting.

WRITINGS FROM THE FRONTLINE

Step 3

"We made a decision to turn our wills and our lives over to the care of God, as we understand Him"

For me, being brought up with religion, I thought I had a "leg up" on this step. I learned, though, that there was a vast difference, for me between religion and spirituality. I had the religion part down but had failed to ever maintain a spiritual relationship with my higher power. Growing up with religion taught me the "business" of that relationship like attending services and participating in activities, however, I didn't learn the "suiting up" part of "showing up". I wouldn't learn that until my life became unmanageable, I surrendered and became willing to live the NA program.

Looking back over the years I spent using substances, chemicals, people, etc... I can clearly see where my Higher Power was ever present and waiting for me to want that spiritual connection.

I "understand Him" today much differently than I ever have. I'd never felt such peace in the face of tragedy as I did the night I got the news that my son had fallen into the sitter's pool. That sounds strange even looking at what I just wrote, but the point is that I was at work at a rehab facility (talk about irony, ha), authorities came onto the property (which wasn't supposed to happen) and my aunt and mother followed. Long story short, my mom and aunt took me by police escort to the hospital. I prayed to my "Higher Power" to do what was best for my son. My will was screaming, "He'll be okay, I'll take him home and I'll just deal with that sitter myself!" I didn't get to bring him home in my arms. Instead, in just a few short hours, I was a mother without my first-born child making funeral arrangements to put a part of my flesh and blood in the ground. That morning I had picked out what he would wear to play in that evening I was planning what he'd be buried in.

I peacefully and with empathy accepted the sitter into my home that very evening along with many others offering condolences. That peace only came from having "Let go and Let God". The following months and years, I refused to do so and sorrow and resentments fueled the addict I am and the downward spiral got faster and faster. For thirteen years, I would continue to hold my own will, maybe for fear that it would, again, not turn out the way I thought it should. Finally, my "Higher Power" lined up my way out of addictive addiction in such a way I couldn't refuse.

I didn't return to that place of employment. I hadn't been there but a couple of weeks at the time and had no desire to return to the place where my life as a woman and mother had so tragically changed.

13 years later and under 90 days clean, I was asked to attend and observe an H&I meeting at a ladies treatment facility. I didn't understand where it was located and with just a small amount of clean time and open to all suggestions, jumped at the opportunity. My will was screaming again when we entered the parking lot of the very same facility I had worked at 13 years prior on the night my son died. My heart raced I got very anxious and everything in me screamed, "I ain't going through that door!" I wanted to run away, anything to get rid of those all too familiar feelings that were resurfacing. My sponsor & grand sponsor were unaware of the history until I spoke about it to them before we got out of the car "If God brings you to it, He will bring you through it"- I nervously entered the door of the facility, flashed back to the events of that night, walked down the corridor and into the unit where we were greeted with smiles and applause- I don't remember much at all about that meeting, but the two things I'll never forget are the gratefulness those ladies had that we had come out there and MY Higher Power's message to me. It was in the form of a handmade poster among all the other inspirational posters on the wall- It spoke to my heart and brought me comfort in that painful place. It said *"God, teach me to laugh again, but never let me forget I cried."* It was in that moment 'began to allow my Higher Power to have much more *free* reign over my will and my life.

It was only a few short months later and within a few days of the anniversary of my son's death I was given the opportunity to speak to the ladies and tearfully but peacefully share that part of my story with them. The outpouring of love and connection in the room that night helped to heal a wound that had been so painful for so long. Talk about therapeutic value! Had I held onto my own selfish will bound by pain and guilt, I would have missed the blessing I received that first night and every week since. I've witnessed miracles come out of what was a terribly painful place, indeed. There's been more of these moments that I can count over the last 9 months, but that was the one that assured me that turning my will and life over to the CARE of God as I understood Him was the right thing to do. I continue to go every week to that facility. The sign isn't there, but I know my Higher Power is with me every time I walk through that door. Where once there was pain, there's now comfort, where once there was fear, there's now peace, where once there was sorrow, there's now serenity and where once was a place I associated with devastation in my life, there is now HOPE

A Grateful Member

Julie C Waxahachie Group

The following is part of my Step 3:

I have made a decision to turn my will and my life to the care of God as I understand Him.

"Please guide me; take my will and my life into your care. Help me to never stop surrendering my will to you. I know you will always be there, I know you will help me recover. Help me to manifest you in myself. Help me to learn your ways. And most of all help me to never use again. Because I know that by constantly and consistently surrendering to your will, I will never use again, find serenity and help others through your guidance. Let your Love overflow in me and spill out across the world, and let my gratitude never cease." -My Personal Prayer

Step 3 is something I practice on a daily basis, because it is necessary for me in order to maintain and continue on in my recovery. The Basic Text says on page 26 "If we are thorough and sincere, we will notice a change for the better. Our fears are lessened, and faith begins to grow as we learn the true meaning of surrender." This really hits home for me, because in my experience, every time I make a decision to surrender my will to my Higher Powers, three things happen. 1 Whatever the situation was, it always turns out okay, if not better than I expected. 2 My faith grows in my Higher Power and it becomes easier for me to surrender next time. & 3 I progress in my recovery by growing spiritually and mentally into the person my Higher Power and I, want me to be.

Obviously everybody makes mistakes, and I make them very frequently, but the more I practice surrendering my will, the easier it gets and the less mistakes I make. The mistakes I do make, my Higher Power helps me deal with and learn from. So either way I'm in a win win situation even if it doesn't look like it at the time.

All I can say to someone who is going to work Step 3 is to take little steps and not beat yourself up when you make the mistake of taking your will back. I guarantee your Higher Power will provide you with another situation where you can make the right decision and surrender your will. It is truly a beautiful thing to know you made the right decision regardless of how big or small the decision may be.

Evan Rockwall Group

RUMINATIONS

I recently read an article that made me reflect upon the essence of Step 3, and the problems I had sometimes in truly turning my will and my life over to my Higher Power. The article informed me that there were only 3 kinds of business in the Universe: mine, yours and God's. I could see your business and my business, but what was my Higher Power's business? The article informed me that God's business was anything outside of my control, which was almost everything!

Much of the stress I encountered on a daily basis came from mentally living out of my own business. I would constantly think about what you needed to be doing, how you needed to treat me, or what needed to be different about this or that. In being mentally in your business or God's business (running the world), the effect is that I felt isolation or separation.....I was apart from others, in the danger zone of self.

If I stay busy running the world and mentally living your life, who would run mine? Being in your business and in God's business keeps me from being present in mine. I am ignoring what I need to do for me to stay healthy, happy, and clean, and then I wonder why my life doesn't work.

To think I know what's best for anyone else is to be out of my business. Even in the name of love (which is where I really get sick), diagnosing other's lives is pure arrogance, and the result is tension, anxiety, fear and anger. Do I really know what's right for myself? Have I achieved such great results with my own affairs, that I have now earned the right to solve your problems? I think not.

So now, when I feel stress or discomfort, or any other negative feeling, I ask myself whose business am I in. I usually burst out laughing! When I notice that I'm in someone else's or God's business, it brings me back to the wonderful process of taking care of me only. And what I've learned, even from that, is that I really don't have any business either. My life pretty much runs perfectly well on its own, when I just keep breathing and do the next right thing.

Gina S. Duncanville Group

GROUP EVENTS

IRVING GROUP 17th anniversary June 23rd
2007 Britain Road Irving TX

TOWN EAST NA Speaker Jam June 16th beginning at noon thru ???
2209 Gus Thomasson at Motley (behind motley mart) Mesquite, TX 75150

AWAKENINGS GROUP of NA is having a Creative Celebration in October 2007 We will have an art showing followed by an auction (details to come). We are also considering bands and music made up of members in the program We Know there is a lot of talent out there and we want to host a day to let it shine if you have any creativity to display....

Art (sculpture, paintings any media)
Poetry(to be read aloud) with possible slam!
Music (acoustic singer songwriter types up to a full band)

This is still in the planning stages ~ please contact mark w marko@markwerld or 817.539.1906

STONEWALL GROUP 26 Year Anniversary
"LETS CONTINUE TO BE HERE FOR THE NEW-COMER"
BBQ and SPEAKER JAM
Saturday June 23rd 10am to 6pm
5415 Maple @ Butler #347 Dallas TX 75235
We are on the backside of the last building in the same office complex

REGIONAL ANNOUNCEMENTS

LONESTAR REGIONAL OUTREACH PEN PAL COORDINATOR

NEEDS VOLUNTEERS to write inmates seeking recovery!

Only 6 months clean time required. This is a great way to do service work from your own home. Get involved and help the still suffering addict behinds the walls. To get involved or for more info; email or call:

David A LSRNA Regional Outreach Pen Pal Coordinator
817.966.3858 or email penpals@lsrna.com

BACK TO BASICS NA 8th anniversary
"Surviving Against All Odds" June 8th 2007
4720 Wichita St. Fort Worth, TX 76119

Before sending anything in to us at the cleansheet please read and understand the following disclaimer.

By submitting your entry you are saying that you understand that, if selected for publication, your material could be edited in keeping with NA's understanding of the Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions. Submissions could be copy-edited to ensure ease of comprehension and adherence to the rules of English grammar. In addition, editorial staff may also substitute different words and/or revise sentence structure for clarification.

We at the cleansheet look forward to hearing from you.

GROUPS NEEDING SUPPORT

Eastside Group Sunday night Women's group needs support and women willing to provide sponsorship
Sunday nights 8pm
Cross Bend Christian Church
801 Cross Bend Rd. Plano TX. 75023

Central Group 8pm meeting need support
1810 Hall St. Dallas TX. 75204

Just For Today Group needs women for support and sponsorship
2805 Lee St. Greenville TX. 75401

Just Plano Group would like some help and fresh ideas to get a literature drive started!!!
Contact Teal McD. @
thaibebe23@yahoo.com or 972.867.5547

Waxahachie Group needs support
Ellis County Counseling Center
6350 South IH 35 Waxahachie TX. 75165

Work Steps and Live needs support
Tuesday and Thursday Book Study; noon meeting needs support; Spanish meeting Sundays at 5pm
2125 SW 3rd St #410 Grand Prairie TX. 75051

Garland Group needs support
Monday nights 8pm
Salvation Army Building
452 West Avenue D, Garland TX. 75040

Irving Group
Has added a dance to their birthday night First Saturday of each month
2007 Britain Road Irving TX. 75061

Awakenings Group is in need of trusted servants and support for all groups; now has a Monday night ask— it—basket or literature study
359 Lake Park Rd. #111 Lewisville TX. 75057

Stonewall Group needs support for all noon and 7:30pm meetings
5415 Maple, # 349 Bldg. 300 -- Entrance in Rear (Access via Butler) Dallas, TX 75235

Town East Group has a Friday night midnight meeting that is in need of support; 9:30pm meetings in need of support
2209 Gus Thomasson at Motley (behind motley mart) Mesquite, TX 75150

Last house on the block group has an 8pm candlelight meeting on Sunday nights
5835 Penrose Ave. (at Bremen)
Greenland Hills United Methodist
Dallas, TX 75206

CONVENTION INFORMATION

WCNA32 Our message is hope, our promise is FREEDOM
San Antonio Texas August 30 thru September 2nd 2007
Register on the web NA.ORG
Or call 800.301.9673

LSRCNA The Dallas Area is providing a hospitality room at the LSRCNA conventions for 2007 and 2008 and is need of people to donate food items
Contact Linda B.

Elections for Committee Members for the 2008 Texas State Convention will be held on June 16th 2007 at Town East Group at 10 am

Find, Explore, and Discover
Fundraiser for Texas State Convention VI
July 7th 2007 @ Central Group starting at Noon
1810 Hall St. Dallas TX. 75204

WHAT'S GOING ON IN THE DALLAS AREA!!!

UPCOMING DALLAS AREA SERVICE CONFERENCES

May and June

Work Steps and Live group 1st Sunday of the Month Get involved!!!!
2125 SW. 3rd St. #410 Grand Prairie, Texas 75051

DALLAS AREA COMMITTEE MEETINGS NEWSLETTER SUBCOMMITTEE

June 9th, July 14th 1:30 @ Northside NA

PUBLIC INFORMATION SUBCOMMITTEE

June 9th, July 14th 1:30 @ Northside NA

WEBPAGE COORDINATION SUBCOMMITTEE

June 9th, July 14th 1:30 @ Northside NA

OUTREACH COMMITTEE NEEDS SUPPORT

June 10th, July 8th @ 10am Town East NA

HELPLINE COMMITTEE

June 24th, July 15th @ 10:30am Stonewall Group

H&I SUBCOMMITTEE MEETINGS

June 17 @ Duncanville Group 2:00pm,

July 15th @ Central Group 2:00pm

Come and get involved in spreading the message of hope after dope

There are several facilities in the area we are allowed to take NA meetings into but since there are not enough addicts to take meetings to these places there are no meetings. If you are interested in carrying the message to one of the many institutions we are allowed to enter please contact David M. @ 469.855.3456 or attend the next H&I subcommittee meeting

SURRENDER

Surrender is my favorite spiritual principle. When I act on it, I usually realize that had I surrendered way back in the beginning of the situation, I would have saved myself a whole lot of suffering. One way of surrendering is to “turn it over” to my Higher Power. It’s amazing that when I ask, I get an answer—not always the one I want, but the one that works if I surrender to it. Seven years ago, when I started working the steps from the *Step Working Guides* with my sponsor, the answer to my prayers for guidance would usually be to surrender to the situation and write on whatever step I happened to be on at the time. Somehow that step—whichever one it was—would give me a perspective that I could understand and accept. One of these times, a conflict arose between myself and someone I love. I wrote endlessly on the step I was on at the time. I finally came to the conclusion that what I wanted was peaceful resolution so the knot in my stomach would go away. Finally, I surrendered to the situation. I couldn’t change the other person’s perceptions, so I surrendered trying to be “right.” I learned that I need to do things differently in this area with this person in the future. It’s more important to me to have serenity than to have that person acknowledge that I am right. Also, surrender keeps me in the “now.” My disease loves it when I am regretting the past and worrying about the future. Self-centered fear is at the core of our disease. I’ve done my share of regretting my past and anticipating disasters in the future, but when I can be in the moment and admit my powerlessness over the past and future, I can be serene and content. One day while I was first in detox, I was outside smoking a cigarette with a fellow patient. He asked me for my definition of success. After thinking for a moment, I answered that success, to me, was being able to put my head on my pillow at night and feel at peace. When I surrender to my powerlessness, I am able to do that. Maybe that’s why surrender is my favorite spiritual principle—because it allows me to feel that my life is a success.

8Cathy Y, Barcelona, Spain

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