

CONTRIBUTIONS

**Our 10th Concept: is it really about
"redress of a personal grievance" ??**

At the April ASC, our Regional Committee Members Team (RCM / RCMA) gave a 90-minute workshop -- mostly on the 10th Concept: *"Any member of a service body can petition that body for the redress of a personal grievance, without fear of reprisal."*

The 10th Concept is a personal one for me. I aired a grievance several years ago with the gracious and indispensable help of my sponsor. I felt humiliated, untolerated, disrespected, misunderstood and a thousand other emotions. Thank God for our Traditions and Concepts !!

I have also been on the other side of this Concept: I have made more than one amends to a service body. Despite my personal growth over the last 13 years, quite recently, I made both personal and group amends at one past ASC, when I dissed a member, the facilitator, and the body at large by blurt-ing something out ... out-of-turn.

Although, the reasoning was correct, the "delivery" and timing were inappropriate. This was not a very good demonstration of goodwill: *the base of our symbol*. This can also be stated as *"the road to hell is paved with good intentions"*. Motives and spiritual principles go hand-in-hand. But I digress ...

There is another facet to this Concept. It is actually **stated twice** in the Concept's essay:

"The Tenth Concept is our fellowship's guarantee of respect for the individual trusted servant."

Yet, there is a tendency to take this Concept on its face value .. that face value being *"if I am wronged I can seek amends."*

Let me draw an analogy; it is akin to saying:

If I harmed someone, I can make amends "later" by doing an 8th Step and 9th Step" or

If I harm someone, I'll just make amends by "promptly admitting it" (ie, a 10th Step).

No, no, no, no no !!! This is missing the whole point !! We work on our character defects and their shortcomings so we don't have to make amends !! No one is perfect ... thank God there's a safety net: *Our 8th / 9th Steps and 10th Step.*

The safety net in service is ... (drumroll please) ... our 10th Concept. However, if we don't apply the basic spiritual principles of our Steps, what is the point ? It is like saying I don't have to work on my shortcomings and character defects, because I can always make amends.

Is this really "living the program" ? If we conduct ourselves properly in public and conduct ourselves properly in our recovery meetings but "behave the fool" in our service meetings ... what really does that say about our recovery ?

If we can treat "normies" with respect in the real world but we treat our fellow addicts with contempt and disrespect in our service meetings ... what is wrong with this picture ?? After all, these are the same addicts that we rely on to help us in our recovery !! Why would we treat them with respect in recovery meetings and then diss them in service meetings ??

Our "How it Works" reading says:

"...the sooner we face our problems within our society ... just that much faster do we become acceptable, responsible, and productive members of that society."

If we are not facing "our problems" (our defects and shortcomings) in "our society" (eg, our service meetings) how in the world do we expect to *"... become acceptable ... members of that society" ?*

I won't pretend to speak for everyone here. After all, this is my experience, strength and hope. I learned how "not to play the fool" in the real world by "not playing the fool" in service meetings. Service meetings were my training grounds ... and I took many a fall early on. But, my God ... if I acted like a fool at my job ... well ... I would not have one right now !!

So, in my humble opinion, the 10th Concept is: like insurance for the individual: *you hope you never have to use it, but if you need it it's there !!* respect for each other -- the "golden rule" (treat others like I want to be treated)

Bullet point #2 -- respect for each other is what this essay is about.

Our Steps are related to each other. I have heard it said in our meetings *"The Steps are in order for a reason !"* In the case of our Traditions and Concepts -- although there is no order per se -- they are all inter-related as well.

In our recovery meetings we are there to help each other recover. Under the covers, by meeting together we are also supporting the Group at which we meet which -- in turn -- supports the fellowship. This is unity, recovery, and common welfare: *Tradition 1 and Tradition 5*. The same can be said for our service meetings ... if we allow each other freedom to be "right" and freedom

CONTRIBUTIONS

to be "wrong".

My Home Groups have stated something similar to "in these meetings we share are experience, strength, and hope ... we refrain from crosstalk ...". What a beautiful and powerful concept -- one that has helped me do something I could never ever do for myself ... *thank you*. Our service meetings should be no different. Yet, we crosstalk, state opinions, "what if's", etc. Ouch !!

The Basic Text states:

"Our meetings have an atmosphere of empathy. In accordance with the principles of recovery, we try not to judge, stereotype or moralize with each other."

So why do we sometimes act so critical and judgmental of each in service meetings ??

If someone shares something in a recovery meeting I try to be open-minded since it may help me in my recovery. In a service meeting, this is akin to our 9th Concept:

"All elements of our service structure have the responsibility to carefully consider all viewpoints in their decision-making processes."

In other words, when an individual expresses a viewpoint, I should try to be open-minded and carefully consider it since they -- just as me -- are part of the Group Conscience. What they say may help the service body ... it may also help me.

The Basic Text says:

"We recover in an atmosphere of acceptance and respect for one another's beliefs. We try to avoid the self-deception of arrogance and self-righteousness."

I ask, should our service meetings be any different ??

When I worked my 2nd Step in NA, in life, I learned that:

I did not have all the answers

some of my decisions were insane

So why oh why -- even after many days-in-a-row clean -- would I think in service:

I have all the answers ... **NOT !!**

all of my decisions are sane ... **NOT !!**

CBDM and NA Group Conscience are based on the belief that no one of us has all the answers. We use Tradition 2:

"... there is but one ultimate authority - a loving God as He may express Himself in our group conscience."

and Concept 6:

"Group conscience is the spiritual means by which we invite a loving God to influence our decisions."

because (to quote Tradition 2 in the Basic Text):

"We are mismanagers and not one of us is capable of consistently making good decisions."

I remember in my early days of service being frustrated with people because I thought I knew better. Today -- although not always content with the decisions made -- I believe that the people who helped shape the decisions are doing their best to "carry the message of recovery to the addict who still suffers" ... just as I am. I learn respect by practicing our 12th Tradition's "principles before personalities" because I also want respect; I want to "keep my side of the street clean".

True, we are indeed addicts ... but as addicts in recovery, we learn acceptance, open-mindedness, respect, faith and many other spiritual principles that help us overcome doubt, worry, "I know", ego, etc.

My hope by writing this, my hope in the both of us reading this, is that all of us apply this in service. After all, this is a "we program" ... isn't it ?? I can't do this by myself ... I need all-o-ya'll

In Loving Service,

David M., Northside GSR





The Dallas Area Newsletter

"May 2013" Email us letters/comments:
cleansheet@dallasareana.org

LETTER FROM THE CHAIR

The Dallas Area NA Newsletter is in need of submissions.

It can be a personal story of how you used the Fellowship or your Higher Power to get through a tough time, your views on a particular quote from the Narcotics Anonymous literature that you happen to like, Or a simple expression of gratitude. Don't worry if you think you can't write well enough, we will be happy to make any spelling or punctuation corrections for you. The important thing is that you will be sharing your recovery with another addict. After all, we can only keep what we have by giving it away. The only real criteria for submissions are that they reflect the message of Narcotics Anonymous and stick to the identification of ourselves as addicts suffering from the disease of addiction.

NEXT MONTH'S TOPIC

"TEACHABLE"

JFT May 8th

"We have learned that it is okay to not know all the answers, for then we are teachable and can learn to live our new life successfully."

In a way, addiction is a great teacher. And if addiction teaches us nothing else, it will teach us humility. We hear it said that it took our very best thinking to get to NA. Now that we're here, we're here to learn.

The NA Fellowship is a wonderful learning environment for the recovering addict. We aren't made to feel stupid at meetings. Instead, we find others who've been exactly where we've been and who've found a way out. All we have to do is admit that we don't have all the answers, then listen as others share what's worked for them.

As recovering addicts and as human beings, we have much to learn. Other addicts—and other humans—have much to teach us about what works and what doesn't. As long as we remain teachable, we can take advantage of the experience of others.

Just for today: I will admit that I don't have all the answers. I will look and listen to the experience of others for the answers I need.

Drug Problem?

We can help. Helpline: 1-888-NAWORKS or 972-699-9306

EDITOR'S DISCLAIMER

Before sending anything in to us at the Cleansheet please be advised of the following disclaimer:

By submitting your entry you are agreeing that, if selected for publication, your material may be edited in keeping with NA's understanding of the Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions. Submissions may be copyedited to ensure ease of comprehension and adherence to the rules of English grammar such as word substitution and sentence structure revisions.

**GROUP
BIRTH -
DAYS**

2 years: Tiffany
5 years: Mike H
8 years: David G
12 Years: Susan S
Dana R
26 years: Mike D

JUST for TODAY

30 days: Vickie
60 days: Sonya
Rosie
90 days: John H
1 year: Jason L

MC KINNEY GROUP

6 months: Michael H
4 years: Brett H

NORTHSIDE

30 days: Sunguire
Kristi D
Sarah T
Jake W
Zal S
Vanessa
60 days: Kim M
Connie M
90 Days: J.R.
Will B
Theresa
Timothy P
Callie P
1 year: Justin B

Will M
Barry R
18 months: Jodi L
Jason C
Stephanie M
2 years: Thomas M
3 years: Thor H
4 years: MaryAnn
Aaron C
Ron N
4 years: Tamma G
7 years: Tracy J
12 years: Allen L
14 years: Valerie M
16 years: David K
25 years: Kelly C

SOUTH OAK CLIFF NA

30 days: Allen

Joe
Brandon
60 days: Jason N
Allen M
Harry
90 days: Jeffery H
Emma
Harry
Noreen
Orace
6 months: LuLu
Yvette
Elaine
Michelle
Lauren
9 months: June
1 year: Seiarda P
Gracie
Mary C
8 years: Andre'
16 years: Richard H
20 years: Sadie H

STONEWALL NA

30 days: Tifara S,
Kathryn B, Mike D'A,
Avery T, Austin F,
Stephanie J, Melissa H
60 days: Sonny M, Anna,
Michelle M, Kathy C, An-
thony R, Keith C
90 days: Nicole T,
Anthony J
6 months: Beverly P, Pam-
ela F, Johnathon K, Chris
C, Salvador P,
Herman H, Phillip P
9 months: Brandy T, Dan-
iella R,
Geisha, Stacy, Yvonne
1 year: Barbara, Steven H,
Mary C, Brandy, Ashley,
Kathleen V, Tiffany W,
Duane, Blanca, Jose S,
Denise, Jamie C, Tameka N
18 months: Kimberly C,
David C, Lamesa S,
Greg D, Karen N
2 years: Kristi W,
Brenda V, Lakisha M,
Laura B, Joe
3 years: Gerald W

8 years: Andrew M
Tony P
12 years: Lucy M
13 years: Lisa R
15 years: Chad W

TOWNEAST NA

30 days: Dale K
60 days: Terri C
90 days: Letisha S,
Dafanee
Jennifer L, Dawn D, Nancy
6 months: Jesseca M,
Bush, Wendy G,
9 months: Michael V,
1 year: Yesinia A, Jeff Y,
Thomas C, James A,
3 years: Nicole M, Denise
H, Joseph H
18 months: Sammy M,
Charlie, Courtney S
6years: Kris C
11years: Courtney S
20 years: Patty

WYLIE NA

30 days: Alex
60 days: Billy
90 days: Keri
6 months: Brad
13 years: Reyes
23 years: Jerry

BROKEN CHAINS

60 days: Jennifer
Brian
1 year: Nikki E
18 months: Tom
Deborah D
3 years: Cindy
Paul

DE SOTO

30 days: Brie
90 days: John S
Kev J
18 months: Sandy J
3 Years: Adam F
8 Years: Andre M

GROVE GROUP

1 year: Misty W
Demetri B
6 years: Kelly
12 years: Kathy M
13 Years: Marilyn W
14 years: Tom F

IRVING GROUP

30 days: Spring
Luis M
Cole E
Billy
Charles
Shelby
60 Days: Darrell W
Jonathan
90 days: Julio G
Star B
Angie K
9 months: Charity R
1 year: Andrew G
Philip R
Roger S
Julene
Shannon
18 months: Shiloh

**NARCOTICS
ANONYMOUS**

The Dallas Area H & I needs your help to carry the message into Jails, Prisons, Treatment Centers and Detox Facilities.

The Outreach and Hospitals & Institutions subcommittees are a viable resource for carrying the message. **These subcommittees need support.** There are many addicts in facilities that would benefit from our presence. If you would like to get involved there will be orientations at H&I subcommittee meetings. If your group is interested we have members that can give orientations at your group.

For more information please see below:

H&I HOSPITALS & INSTITUTIONS SUBCOMMITTEE MEETING

May 19 @ 2:00 pm

Town East NA

Committee Chair: Sal A. 214-642-7178

OUTREACH COMMITTEE MEETING

May 18 @ 2 pm

Town East NA

Committee Chair: Robert S. 214-283-0973

**LONE STAR REGIONAL
OUT- REACH and PEN-PAI
COORDINATOR
NEEDS VOLUNTEERS**



To write inmates seeking recovery !

Only 6 months clean time is required And is great way to do service work from your own home. Get involved and help the still suffering addict behind the walls. For more information E-mail : penpals@lsrna.org

GROUPS NEEDING SUPPORT

Awakenings

Tues & Thurs 6pm & Fri 10pm Candlelight

Broken Chains

Needs members with clean time & sponsors.

Carrollton Farmers Branch

Needs male & female sponsors

Carrying the Message

All Meetings / Sponsors

Central Group

All meeting need support

Living Clean the Journey Continues

All Meetings / Sponsors

Miracles & Solutions

Needs support

Red Oak

Women Sponsors

Seagoville

Meetings Support/experienced members

South Oak Cliff

Meetings Support

Stonewall

Male Sponsors at Mon-Wed 7:30 pm

Female Sponsors at Tues - Thurs 7:30 pm

Stonewall / Espanol

Tuesday 7:30

Stay Alive Kaufman

All meetings/Experienced members

Work the Steps & Live

Female Sponsors needed

Meeting support 12pm, 7pm, Fri 10pm

Just for Today

Meeting support / men & women for 12pm and 8pm meetings

Dallas Area Service Committee

June 2, 2013 Northside, 1:30 pm

Dallas Area Group Events

Central Group

Unity Day

May 18th 12 pm—9pm

Grove Group

30th Anniversary

June 8th 12 pm—9pm

Irving Group

23rd Anniversary

June 15th 12 pm—11pm

Stonewall Group

Anniversary

June 29th 10 am—8pm



E-subscribe - to the Cleansheet for a copy of the Dallas Area newsletter to your inbox every month Sign Up today at WWW.DALLASAREANA.ORG