

CleanTimes

January - March 2006

Serving the West Tennessee Area of Narcotics Anonymous

Happy Holidays Season Greetings Happy New Year

Back to the Basics

I can't consider myself a newcomer, but by no means can I say I'm an oldtimer. I've settled on being just an addict with a few days clean under my belt. For the last month I've struggled, not with using thoughts or a desire to use, but with spiritual unrest and a feeling of not being centered in my recovery. Although I have been doing the things to keep me clean, I've found I haven't been doing them for the right reasons. I have attended meetings, but have tried to just carry the message and not listen to it. Have I called my sponsor? Yes, but have I honestly told and shared with him how I'm doing? NO!!! Am I working on my steps? Yes, but I've been stagnate on one for months, not making any progress on it. Prayer and meditation is a must. Have I prayed and meditated like I did when I first found the rooms of NA? No. Have I reached out to other addicts on the phone? Of course not. Just ask my sponsee brother, he is still trying to guilt me into calling him!!! Finally how about service? Yeah, I can finally say something positive. Well let's get honest. I've truly found myself over committed. My character defect of people pleasing is coming out really bad. My sponsor shares you can't pick or choose what parts of the program you are or aren't going to do. For me I've realized just that. I chose some parts and avoided others. And the ones I'm working, I'm skating around half assing them. That's the honesty I have today. For 2 years at different times I've committed myself to going to meetings, then working steps, and communicating with a sponsor. Never once did I make a commitment to all of them. With the help of my Higher Power I'm making a commitment to all the "basics", not just the ones I want to pick and choose. I paid a high cost for that low living. Today I choose to stay clean and hopefully use the tools that are given to me to stay that way. Today I don't need to feel superior one day and inferior the next. Today I'm just an addict not using, living my life with spiritual principles, living clean a day at a time and using the basics to do that.

ILS,

Get Involved In Your Recovery!

Do Service Work

Keep coming back!

*"Meetings keep us in touch with where we've been,
but more importantly with where we could go
in our recovery"*

Basic Text, p. 54

MY FIRST CONVENTION

This year, I went to the VRC 23. I missed the first 2 days because of work and family stuff, but after work Friday I went to the speaker meeting, and heard someone share her story. I had met this addict in a meeting before, a “displaced” Katrina survivor. I would imagine she would not feel displaced, hence the quotations. It is so amazing how circumstances beyond our control bring us just where we are supposed to be. Then on Saturday, after having to take care of some life on life terms, I finally made it back to the convention at around 11:30 am. As soon as I came in someone christened me with a “Hug Patrol” necklace... (THANKS JAMEY!!!) I think it was really supposed to be for security but what the hey? I got a LOT of hugs! So I began to mill around, having missed the first workshop. I ran into addicts everywhere! I hit a marathon meeting, and got my first glimpse of the unity we have in the fellowship. People shared ESH from all different areas. I kind of bounced around the place talking to everyone until I needed to leave for lunch. When I left, I looked at the car tags and every car had tags from different states! I came back for the main speaker meeting...here it comes - the most overwhelming thing ever! That clean time countdown...whoa! It seemed like there were a thousand people in there, and all clapping. When it got down to the months, then days, well everyone around me, and me, we were all crying and clapping. People started chanting “KEEP COMING BACK!” and I almost lost it, the spirit that was in the room, I never felt so connected in all my life. My Higher Power was there. I know it. I could feel it, see it, and when it got down to the last week...I saw someone I know stand up and I was so grateful! Then it got down to the last day, that most important day, *one day* - all we ever have. And the place erupted. People were surrounding this addict who was clean, just today, hugging him, telling him “KEEP COMING BACK!” and he was smiling! And so was I. And crying. And feeling! I can't believe I am part of this! This was like a family reunion. I am having trouble typing this now because I can still feel it. It's a new high for real. I only wish I could have gotten out of my shell enough to have really met some new people...but hey, there's always next year! And I got so caught up in the countdown, I almost forgot, the main speaker! Mindy, from I can't remember where, was awesome. She said a lot of stuff that hit home, in a way that I could really relate to. This convention was powerful!

Trinity P.

A NIGHT TO REMEMBER!

For those of you who missed the 1st Annual Dinner Theatre, put on by the NA in May Committee, you don't know what you missed. For this addict it was one of the most awesome experiences I have had in recovery so far. I laughed, I cried and was totally mesmerized. Never before have I seen addicts as quiet as in this play. Even during meetings there is some side talking going on. But at the play it was total silence from the crowd who were captivated by the play.

Hats off to Trisha R. for writing such a wonderful play. I believe she did a specular job. For the cast members, hats off to you all too. I know that a lot of hard work went into it. And also for the stage hands and special effects people. Great job!

And who could forget Jay W. His wonderful dinner of Lasagna and Meatballs was great. I know there is someone that I am forgetting to mention. But thanks to everyone involved.

The two things that really got to me was, first the children's parts. It brought me to tears thinking what I must have done to my daughter, putting her through what I did. Then second, when the statistics were read, was a real eye opener. That so many addicts die from this disease. I feel very fortunate to have found the rooms of Narcotics Anonymous. I truly feel like one of the chosen ones.

It also made me stop to think. I must always be vigilant in my recovery and never stop the things I'm doing today. I know this disease does kill and it never goes away, even with years of recovery. But thank God it can be arrested by using the tools we are taught in the beginning.

I look forward to next year to see what the committee comes up with. It will be hard to beat, but I know now we have very talented addicts in this fellowship!

Anonymous

The Seventh Tradition Collections

The Seventh Tradition states that: “Every NA group should be fully self-supporting, declining outside contributions.” Hello family my name is Ward, I’m an addict. I’m sitting in a meeting and here comes a collection basket being passed from one addict to another progressing around the room quickly approaching me. My mind wanders off as it is prone to do ... WOW, look at all that money! The strength of what a group of addicts can do together that none of us can do alone is clearly represented by that basket of money.

I ask myself, “Where does all that money go? I reflect back on past meetings and recall that at several meetings it’s stated that this money goes for “rent”, literature, key tags, coffee, coffee supplies support for the NA hotline, Area, Regional and eventually World. As I analyze the situation (as my mind often does) a lot of questions start coming up. Who counts the money? Who collects the money over time? Does it get put in a bank or is it stored somewhere else? How much is “rent”? How much do key tags cost? How much does the coffee, coffee supplies, and literature cost? How much goes to Area, Regional, and World? Who is responsible for handling the money? Is there a “clean time” requirement? How often and where is an accounting of these funds made? How do I know that this money really is going to the places it’s suppose to go?

“Whoa!” Where did I come up with all of those

questions? I must prioritize them. How come I’m sitting here by myself?

Now for some answers. I’ll start with the ones I personally know about. First off as Chairperson of a meeting some of my responsibilities include passing the basket and counting the money. (*Prior to placing the money in the envelope I have a trusted friend verify my count*). Then I place the money in an envelope and ensure that the money gets to the Treasurer, using whatever method the group conscience decided on. Chair people generally have 90 days “clean”, which can vary from group to group. The Treasurer of a group is someone with a considerable amount of “clean time” that shows willingness and is voted into the service position. After attending several different monthly business meetings I’ve observed, that the treasurer is responsible for paying the bills: “rent”, key tags, literature, coffee, and coffee supplies. Also reporting to the attendees of the business meeting concerning what funds are being sent where.

The last question I can accurately answer is I’m sitting here by myself because while I’ve pondered these questions, the meeting ends.

As for the remainder of questions, show up at up at your home group’s business meetings and ask the “tough” questions of your treasurer. So I can avoid giving my NA family erroneous information.

Ward

Wondering some of those same questions yourself?

Why not show up at the

West Tennessee Area Service Committee Meeting

held every 4th Sunday of the month

(except in November and December, 3rd Sunday due to the holidays)

2:00 pm - where New Beginnings Meeting is held

Get involved in your Fellowship!

Birthdays and Anniversaries

JANUARY

Ed D. - 1/1 - 8 Years - Primary Purpose
Margaret S. - 1/1 - 6 Years - Primary Purpose
David L. - 1/1 - 20 Years - Primary Purpose
Laureen G. - 1/1 - 2 Years - Cordova Hope
Jai E. - 1/1 - 2 Years - Cordova Hope
Scott B. - 1/3 - 1 Years - Cordova Hope
Eric O. - 1/4 - 1 Year - Farfromusen
Kent W. - 1/4 - 3 Years - Lunch Bunch
Glen H. - 1/6 - 2 Years - Nothing to Fear
Jesse J. - 1/6 - 7 Years - Clear A.I.R. of Jackson
Darrin Y. - 1/8 - 13 Years - B.Y.O.M.
Ken B. - 1/9 - 1 Year - Cordova Hope
Lawanna L. - 1/13 - 3 Years - Cordova Hope
Butch K. - 1/13 - 2 Years - B.Y.O.M.
Chuck H. 1/15 - 8 Years - Farfromusen
Lewis S. - 1/15 - 2 Years - Lunch Bunch
Carol C. - 1/19 - 1 Year - Lunch Bunch
Lucy O. - 1/22 - 19 Years - Primary Purpose
Dawn O. - 1/22 - 14 Years - Desire
Brenda N. - 1/26 - 1 Year - Lunch Bunch
Allison W. - 1/31 - 4 Years - Cordova Hope

FEBRUARY

Jay W. - 2/6 - 2 Years - Lunch Bunch
Robert J. - 2/11 - 1 Year - Cordova Hope
Brooks S. - 2/12 - 4 Years - Lunch Bunch
Judy W. - 2/18 - 1 Year - Cordova Hope
Cortez - 2/19 - 11 Years - Primary Purpose
Tina H. - 2/23 - 2 Years - Clean A.I.R. of Jackson
Garry T. - 2/26 - 3 Years - B.Y.O.M.
Lori K. - 2/28 - 3 Years - B.Y.O.M.

MARCH

Pam P. - 3/1 - 3 Years - Clean A.I.R. of Jackson
Paula W. - 3/4 - 2 Years - Lunch Bunch
Neal M. - 3/5 - 22 Years - B.Y.O.M.
Tim H. - 3/6 - 7 Years - Lunch Bunch
Drew M. - 3/7 - 1 Year - Cordova Hope
Charlie B. - 3/8 - 2 Years - Lunch Bunch
Julie H. - 3/10 - 2 Years - Cordova Hope
Randy L. - 3/12 - 5 Years - Cordova Hope
Shannon F. - 3/12 - 2 Years - Cordova Hope
Pat F. - 3/14 - 3 Years - Cordova Hope
Jonathan R. - 3/14 - 1 Year - Cordova Hope
Mark S. - 3/15 - 1 Year - Cordova Hope
Susan S. - 3/15 - 16 Years - Nothing to Fear
Kelley A. - 3/19 - 1 Year - Desire
Freddie D. - 3/19 - 2 Years - Primary Purpose
Melinda C. 3/20 - 1 Year - Cordova Hope
Ron G. - 3/27 - 1 Year - Cordova Hope
Lindsey E. - 3/28 - 1 Year - Clean A.I.R. of Jackson

Editors Note: I apologize if your birthday has been omitted. Please get with your GSR of your Home Group and have them contact me, Connie G. at kateyesldy40@aol.com for the next issue. Please note these are actual clean dates and birthdays may be celebrated on a different day. Listen for announcements in meetings for exact date of celebration.

Bring in the New Year Clean!

Black and White Ball

December 31st, 2005

1000 South Cooper St. - First Congo Church

Potluck - 7:00 pm (Bring a dish to share)

Speaker Meeting - 8:30 pm - Jodi V. from

Louisiana

Dance - 9:30 pm to 12:01 am

*Come enjoy a
fun-filled night of Fellowship*

NA in May's

Annual Spaghetti Dinner

with a Cake Walk,

Pie in the Face Booth

and Auction.

*Will be held sometime in January, look for upcoming
announcements.*

*Cakes and auction items greatly needed and
appreciated. Contact Raymond M. at
free2wreck8@aol.com for donation info.*

The Outreach Sub-Committee

is planning a road trip to

"Survivors Group" of Lexington

sometime in January.

Please look for flyers with more information soon.

**If you have a group you would like
showcased in the Cleantimes Newsletter, or
have an article, cartoon, poetry, or
whatever sharing experience, strength and
hope, please contact me, Connie G., at
kateyesldy40@aol.com.**