

Bucks County Clean Sheet

Narcotics Anonymous



Fall Edition 2012

Steps 10,11,12 & NA History

Guidelines for Submissions Articles to BCCS:

The Guidelines used for BCCS are not personal opinions of members of BCCS subcommittee. To ensure fairness and in the spiritual principles of the program, the BCCS tries to the best of it's ability to employ the same guidelines set forth by the NA Way magazine which was established by the NA World Service Board. The following The following excerpts below regarding editing is taken verbatim from the NA Way Magazine from the NA World website. For additional information visit the website at <http://www.na.org>.

The NA Way Magazine is broad-based recovery and service oriented journal for NA members. One of our roles is featuring updates and information from world services. Our editorial content ranges from personal recovery experiences to opinion pieces of concern to our fellowship as a whole, right through to humor or nostalgia about recovery. While we prefer typewritten documents, we will gladly accept handwritten materials as well.

"Editing: All manuscripts go through a review and editing process. We look for a tone that reflects a spirit of unity and mutual respect. Any article that slanders another NA member will be rejected. Explicit sexual references and all obscene and vulgar language will be deleted from published articles. Articles that are written in a "preachy or teach-y" tone may be edited to read from a more personal one. We make other edits in keeping with NA's understanding of the Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions, using standard NA language such as "clean," "recovery," and "addict." Implied endorsements of outside enterprises are deleted, as are any other references that may be perceived as being in conflict with NA's spiritual principles. Authors' names are printed using the first name and last initial, unless the author asks to be identified as "Anonymous." Opinion pieces that challenge prevailing interpretations of the Twelve Traditions are welcome, and in those cases, some of the editorial guidelines noted above may be relaxed.

In addition, submissions are copyedited to ensure ease of comprehension and adherence to the rules of English grammar, i.e., we will review and revise sentence structure, spelling, punctuation, etc. Editorial staff may also substitute different words for clarification, but content and the author's intentions are retained in the copyediting process. We do our very best to maintain the tone and voice of the author. We prefer definite, specific, concrete language and orthodox spelling. The reference books we most use are current editions of Webster's Collegiate Dictionary, The Chicago Manual of Style, Fowler's Modern English Usage, and The Handbook of Good English.

("-<http://www.na.org/?ID=naway-submissionguides> (NA World Guidelines)

Editor Notes is one suggestion...

Contribute: bccleansheet@yahoo.com

Step 10

We continued to take personal inventory, and when we were wrong promptly admitted it." This means taking a good look at my self, my actions and also where I may not have acted appropriately when I really needed to. For me, Step ten actually takes on two different aspects that were taught to me by my first sponsor. The first are those things that we see as we do them, say them, etc. and are willing at that moment to try to make right. For me personally, these are the simple ones.

The second aspect are those things we may not see immediately, but can be picked up on at the end of the day by doing a thorough and honest inventory of the effects our actions, words, and even lack of actions have had or may have had on ourselves and those around us. For myself these are often a bit harder.

She also taught me that along with a daily inventory it is good to take one at the end of each week, the end of each month, and one at the end of each year.

The more willing I am to keep in touch with myself, my Higher power, NA and my NA support system (including my sponsor - I'm working on getting a better relationship with a fairly new sponsor too), the greater the chance that I will be able to catch those things I need to amend early and also the greater the chance I will have the willingness to immediately make those amends. The more complacent I get the less I am in touch and the less I will see and have the willingness to amend. I have also found that when I become complacent about any part of my program one of the first things that goes is my daily and weekly. inventory. That can really become a red flag for me to take a good look at where I am and what I have been, or haven't been doing. Often when I do look back I find that I want to just look at what I have done and forget (or don't want) to look at those things I haven't done that I really should have. I still want the easier softer way at times even though I know that can lead to more trouble. For me, practice and perseverance is the key to step ten.

- Anonymous

Everything we know, or think we know, is subject to change.

"11. We sought through prayer and meditation to improve our conscious contact with God as *we understood Him*, praying only for knowledge of His will for us and the power to carry that out."

Before I even picked up an orange key tag, I was sure that the 11th step would be my favorite step. I hadn't learned yet how little I knew, I still believed that I knew what was best for me. Before I ever picked up, I was obsessed with spiritual development and mystical experience. I spent long hours practicing meditative exercises — in a self-righteous attempt to satisfy my over-inflated ego. In fact, my earliest motivation to use drugs was the idea that certain drugs would make me spiritually superior. When I started coming to meetings and heard the 11th step read or shared about, I knew (or at least thought I knew) that I would truly receive the gifts of Narcotics Anonymous when I reached the 11th step and elevated my meager existence to one of spiritual grandeur. Experienced NA members will quickly recognize how wrong I was. Everything we know, or think we know, is subject to change. My understanding and experience of the 11th step is far from what I ever expected.

"...improve our our conscious contact with God." I thought I had a head start on everyone else when it came to this one. I can't remember a time when I didn't think about God. I was raised in church and I questioned everything I was taught from the very beginning. By the time I came to NA, I had a well-defined God in my life. When I heard "came to believe", I thought "no problem, I'm one step ahead of ya". The joke's on me, it turns out that I don't even believe in God. I used to live with a spirituality that was derived from intellectualizing and academic investigation. It wasn't until I met members of Narcotics Anonymous that I learned of a greater means of growing spiritually: practice.

To me, the 11th step is about maintaining a spiritual practice. Through the hard-work and willingness of the men and women in NA who have offered me guidance, I've been given the chance to

lead a truly spiritual life. The spirituality offered to me in NA has nothing to do with the self-righteous pursuits I worked towards before I got here. The spirituality available to me today is not about what I think or believe, it's about what I do.

If my spirituality is based in what I do, then the way for me to grow is to practice. This is the secret to every step. It's made explicit in the 12th step. To live the life promised in Narcotics Anonymous, we need to practice. The 11th step is an opportunity to practice improving our conscious contact with the God of our understanding. The nature of our understanding is highly personal and we all have the right to a God of our own understanding. The thing that really matters is that we practice this step.

We here fairly often "the steps are in order for a reason". This is usually said when talking about the 9th step or the 4th step. It is just as true, however, of the 11th step. Before learning about principles by practicing the first ten steps, under the guidance of a sponsor, I was not ready to benefit fully from the 11th step. I had to learn that prayer and meditation is not about how great I can be or how easy my life can be. I had to learn inventory skills and recognize my character defects, so that when self-centeredness arose in the midst of prayer and meditation I would recognize it. Conscious contact with my higher power is not about altered states of consciousness and deep insight as I thought in the past, it is about finding the strength to live by spiritual principles. Without conscious contact, I would quickly be exhausted and return to the self-centered fear that has run most of my life.

It's not worth trying to prematurely understand any of the steps. The most important thing we can do as recovering addicts is to find a sponsor whose experience we respect, and work the steps under their guidance. Upon reaching the 11th step, each of us will have a unique understanding that benefits our personal spiritual journey.

-Anonymous

What I do to be an example of the twelfth step?

“12. Having had a spiritual awakening as a result of these steps, we tried to carry this message to addicts, and to practice these principles in all our affairs.”

Spiritual Awakening is the core of the twelfth step. The steps are in order for a reason to gain this enlightenment. I entered in this process in 1987, and I see that the journey continues of recovery for my lifetime. The previous eleven steps prepared me to carry the message to the still sick and suffering addict today.

Awakening of my spirit was subtle and took years of being clean. I was an atheist the first three years of continuous clean time, which started in late 1991. After this I started to believe that N.A. is a God given program.

Personally through this process I am able to deliver a clear message of recovery. I am able to do this by keeping myself safe from danger, for instance by not venturing into crack dens and bars. I carry the message by my example of living. Recovery is more about application then preaching.

“Its’ not how you do something, its’ is what you do.” My old cliché I changed to fit reality.

In conclusion I thank God for this program. One more thing I would like to share my experience on, if you’re an atheist or agnostic. Keep coming. I have been rewarding so many internal blessings because of being in recovery and applying the steps to my life. **-Anonymous**

3RD WORLD LITERATURE CONFERENCE NA MEMPHIS

Our two local Literature Review Committees (Philly Lit and Bristol Lit) had wrapped up their work on the 8th and 10th chapters of the "NA Big Book" (now known as the NA Basic Text). I was planning to drive to Memphis for the 3RD World Literature Conference NA (3WLCNA). I had asked if anyone wanted to join me for the trip. I let them know money wasn't an important issue because the local NA Members would provide us with food and a place to sleep. I had two volunteers. One member from each committee committed to going. (I was a member of both committees) I just turned Twenty One years old ten days earlier and my 4th anniversary clean was less than a month away. I had two addicts travelling with me to Memphis. Terica W. was a member of the Bristol Literature Committee. She was Seventeen years old with about 18 months clean. Ted S. was a member of the Philly Literature Committee. He was 18 years old and had around 9 months clean. We left early Friday morning on January 30, 1981 heading to Memphis, Tennessee for the 3rd WLCNA.

We were all very enthusiastic about our mission. I had estimated that it would take about 20 hours to drive there. Once we were on the road, I started to discuss my idea of taking turns driving. That way we could drive straight through. That's when I found out that both of them didn't drive. I then revised the plan. They could take turns being the navigator. I had a big as* fold-up accordion style road map. It was literally as wide as the car. It wasn't too long before I realized that they also couldn't read a map. I gave them on the road crash course on how to read a map.

We hit a 3 inch snow storm when we were driving through Virginia. I barely slowed down. I was on a mission. After driving through the entire storm I relaxed a little and I then noticed that my navigators, Ted and Terica were sound asleep. I woke them up and asked them how many miles until our exit. After 10 minutes of a of map rustlings I had to pull over. We were lost. When we figured out where we were. We discovered we had driven about 100

miles past our exit. After absolutely confirming where we were on the map. I found a small road on the map that headed due west and decided that was our new route.

We travelled on that road for almost 2 hours. We kept checking where we were on the map. The road then ended right at a small river. At first we thought we had to turn around. Terica noticed a sign for a ferry. We waited for 20 minutes for the ferry. It looked like a wooden raft with rope for railings. We were told it held up to 3 cars per crossing. We had faith that this was just part of the adventure that God had planned for us. We decided to enjoy our scenic river crossing.

I had been driving for over 12 hours and that doesn't include the running around that I did picking up Terica and Ted before we left. I thought we were about 2 hours from Nashville and 6 hours from Memphis. I was exhausted. I needed to sleep. I was trying to figure out where to crash out for a few hours. I then remembered that there was a woman named Gina H. who lived in Nashville. I met her at the 2nd World Literature Conference NA. She told me if I was ever in Nashville to look her up. I was quite sure she wouldn't mind letting us crash out at her place for a couple of hours. Ted and Terica had their doubts. Shouldn't we call her they asked? I couldn't call her because I didn't have her phone number or address.

I decided to call the NA Hotline. I went to a payphone and looked up the NA Hotline. Nashville didn't have one yet, so I called the Nashville AA Hotline and got the address of an 8:30 P.M. AA Meeting. I figured we could ask somebody there if they knew her. We were farther from Nashville than I thought. We didn't get to the meeting until almost 10:30. There were only 3 or 4 people left. They were still talking in the parking lot. I asked them if they knew Gina H. from NA. One woman answered back "Do you mean little Gina who goes to those meetings for drug addicts?" "Yes yes yes" we replied. We told her we were from out of town and we were on our way to Memphis to help write the NA Big Book! She said she

knew where Gina lived. Gina was always inviting people over she told us. I'm sure she won't mind if I bring you over to her house.

We finally got to Gina's house. Gina answers the door and gave me a giant hug. We then learned there were a few people from Atlanta that were crashing out there and then everyone was heading to Memphis early in the morning. I told her I needed a place to sleep. Gina asked me why I didn't call first. All her beds were taken. She already had a full house. I told her I didn't have her number and I wasn't planning on stopping there, but I remembered her telling me if I ever was in Nashville to look her up. So here I am. I asked her since she had a full house if it would be ok if I crashed out in my car in front of her house. I couldn't drive any further tonight anyway. It was near midnight now. Gina said it was too cold out and she could not turn away another addict. She said I could crash on her couch, but it would be noisy. She was still getting ready for Memphis. Five minutes later I was sound asleep.

Terica and Ted had stayed up with Gina while I was sleeping. They had plenty of sleep on the ride to Nashville. They got to know Gina a little bit while I slept. After a few hours of sleep it was time to hit the road to Memphis. We had a caravan of 4 vehicles racing to Memphis. I was glad they knew how to get there. It was a relief to follow someone who knew how to get to where we were going. I followed them all the way to the Conference.

Getting to the conference was like returning home. I was getting greetings and hugs from some of the friends I had made from attending the 1st East Coast Convention, the 10th World Convention, and the 2nd World Literature Conference. I was being introduced to new friends. The conference floor was buzzing with love and excitement. I had goose bumps already. We all had a strong common bond but together we believed in a miracle that many of us were told was impossible. The atmosphere on the conference floor was charged with an unwavering faith that the NA Big Book would soon be here.

At the start of the conference I met with Bo to give him the cut and paste ups from chapters eight and ten. those were the chapters that the Philly Lit and Bristol Lit had worked on since the Lincoln Conference. I couldn't find the work from chapter ten. That was the chapter Philly Lit. worked on. I was reviewing the work in my bedroom the night before I left for the conference. I must have left it on my night stand. I explained to Bo I only had one chapter with me. I had left one Chapter at home. He told me to try and get someone to drive it to Memphis. Group Conscious was about to start. I would have to deal with this later.

Tom M opened the conference with a moment of silence and the Serenity Prayer. The readings were then read. Joseph P. then read the introduction to the 1st World Literature Conference, and I was asked to read the history of the 2nd World Literature Conference. I read about how the Little White Book was used as an outline for our NA Big Book. How all of the writings were filed into the chapter outlines. How the cut and paste technique was developed at that conference and that the cut and paste technique was used at that conference to develop the first 7 pages of our NA Big Book.

When the history of how we got to this point was finished being read. The goals for the conference were discussed. The goals were:

Complete the final draft of the NA Big Book.

Submit the NA Big Book to World Services two months prior to May 1, 1981.

After the conference goals were discussed. We were asked to introduce ourselves, tell everyone why we were there, and what we hoped to accomplish. There were many emotional pleas and a lot of tears. Many of us came from areas where there were few NA meetings and some of us had little or no NA literature. We wanted to be able to hand a newcomer a book on how to recover from active addiction. We wanted to have a text that would help the addict we hadn't met yet or who wasn't even born yet. We wanted every

addict to be able to pick up the "NA Big Book" and could find something that they could identify with regardless of what they used and where they were from. We hoped that any addict could come to their first NA meeting and find a comprehensive book on recovery available to them. We wanted this book to be able to help others find recovery where ever they were.

We were asked to keep in touch with someone from our home area to keep our areas informed of the progress on the book. We were asked for our areas to send whatever donations they could to help with the conference cost. I spoke with Pete B. who was my roommate. I spoke with him regularly to keep him and our area updated. I think our Lit Committee sent a small donation also.

I asked Pete to check in my room for the cut and paste ups from chapter ten. He said they were there. "Great! Pete can you drive them to Memphis?" I asked. He wasn't able to drive it to Memphis. He did tell me he would get it there. I really felt horrible about this. There was so much work that was done and I forgot to bring it.

We also went over the processes we were going to use at this Conference. Many chapters were assembled through the local Lit Committees using the cut and paste method. We were to edit the chapters, and then review them. We decided to edit one chapter at a time. There was also discussion about a style sheet. Jim M. brought up that we wanted consistent language throughout the book. He suggested if we were clean aren't we also sober? Saying that we were clean and sober was redundant. It also suggested we had multiple diseases. Many of us identified ourselves as addicts and alcoholics. We also used many other terms. Addicts also identified themselves in meetings as hopeless dope fiends, junkies, garbage heads, pill poppers, cross-addicted, and poly-addicted. We wanted our book to be consistent. We agreed to write a style sheet so we could have a clear and consistent language about the disease of addiction.

To be concluded in the next issue

