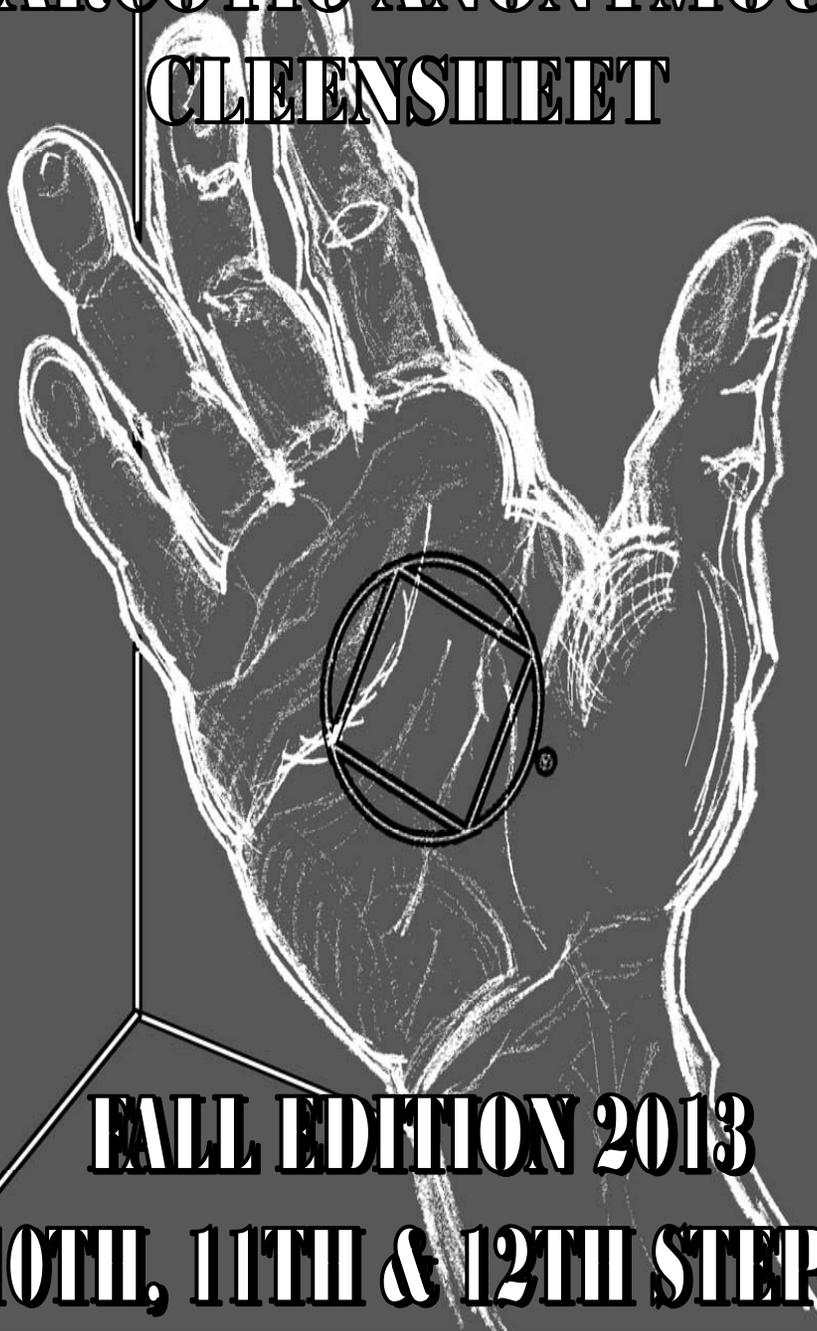


# BUCKS COUNTY NARCOTIC ANONYMOUS CLEANSHEET



**FALL EDITION 2013**

**10TH, 11TH & 12TH STEPS**

## 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](http://www.na.org/?ID=naway-submissionguides) (NA World Guidelines)

Editor Notes is one suggestion...

Contribute: [bccleansheet@yahoo.com](mailto:bccleansheet@yahoo.com)

# STEP TEN

“We continued to take a personal inventory and when we were wrong promptly admitted it.”

I find it important to say the beginning of my recovery did not start immediately with step work but instead by taking the suggestions given in the rooms of NA through its members. I was told to keep coming back and keep coming back clean. Not to pick up under any and all circumstances and avoid people, places and things. Fellow addicts suggested I find a female sponsor because I was a woman, get a home group I could show up to early/stay late at and make meetings every day. I followed these suggestions like they were my last hope to avoiding a life of complete suffering because I knew they were. If anything else before it had worked I wouldn't have found my way into NA.

I remember I had spent a lot of time in meetings over the past almost 12 years hearing members sharing their experiences on the 10<sup>th</sup> step. Many would talk about sitting each night with the “living the program” pamphlet and doing their inventory of their day. I was so excited to now get to be one of the 10<sup>th</sup> step members using the “living the program” pamphlet. I got a copy at the very next meeting and took it with me when I got together with my sponsor. When the time came I eagerly pulled it out and proudly showed her how willing I was to get started writing. However, my sponsor asked me what I had in my hand? I told her it was the 10th step pamphlet.

She explained she had gotten clean before this was written and when she did her first 10<sup>th</sup> step she wasn't guided through it using the pamphlet. She read over it and said it sounded good, to go ahead and give it a try. I read over the 10<sup>th</sup> steps in the “Basic Text” and “It works how and why.” I then asked other members what there process was with the tenth step.

Being the organized perfectionist that I am I took my copy of the pamphlet and retyped it on my computer and added it to my email so I could open it every day to write. I worked second shift and during the end of my night I would sit for a few minutes to answer the questions. Eventually I memorized them. During my day I would hear the questions in my head while situations were occurring. Simply put my 10th step taught me to focus on my actions, feelings, behaviors and thoughts.

Things began to change in my reactions to others. My relationships were changing. I remember this was the time when people at work could be flipping out in anger and I could remain calm. If I had an irritating day I didn't need to take it out on my husband when I got home. The question “how have I acted different” would play out in my head. I began to pay attention to my gut reaction and be able to follow it. The prior nine steps had helped to make that reaction more aligned with the will of my HP and not my own. I had been being restored to sanity over the years.

However, I still made mistakes. The 10<sup>th</sup> step taught me that I wouldn't ever be perfect, just more human, just better than I was when I entered NA but not

# MY 11TH STEP

better than. If I messed up I just owned it, made the appropriate amends and tried my best to not repeat it. I learned that as I took myself less seriously and let expectations go of me, I could do the same with others. I could no longer sit and judge others for them judging me. When waiting in line at the store or driving in traffic I had to be patient, not just expect others to be. I more accurately knew who I am.

I found a deeper understanding of my NA foundation. Days when I called my sponsor, made a meeting, talked to another addict, helped a newcomer and talked with my HP were all better days. If I took time to write my 10<sup>th</sup> step inventory at the end of my previous day the next day my actions were often more based in spiritual principles. I knew the commitments of a home group and showing up when I said I would. However, now I needed to sit every day and be conscience during my day of my thoughts, feelings, actions and behaviors. Prayers I said in the past to get through something I know took the time to say at the start of my day.

In the beginning of my recovery I was told I could have "beyond my wildest dreams." My dreams in the beginning weren't very big so I watched others to see what they had that I could maybe hope one day to have myself. Those hopes were for serenity, self-acceptance and the ability to be sane in insane situations. My 10<sup>th</sup> step was the completion of these hopes. With this complete understanding of who I was I continued on to my 11<sup>th</sup> step to find out who I needed to be.

This is my 11th step experience, not NA's. So please take it with a grain of salt I am not dictating what people should do in their step process. Instead I am describing mine. Which, I believe is the true nature of the 12th step. I am not called to give advice or direction as much as my experience.

It is important from the onset that I acknowledge my difficulty in writing about this step. My personal practice has fallen off. That doesn't mean I lose knowledge or experience. It means that my understanding is lessened and strained by inaction. This is like when somebody eats poorly, doesn't exercise and lost the physical benefit of committed practice.

I still pray and meditate, just not in the disciplined manner described in this step.

The path to the 11th step is built upon all the proceeding steps. My decision in Step 3, the real commitment to real change in step 7 and the daily discipline of step 10. I had already established a sort of conscious contact but needed to strengthen it in step 11. That is one of the keys in step 11, IMPROVING an existing contact.

The particular method, I choose is of no real importance. There are many teachings on meditation out there. I choose one that is made up of different beliefs. I think of my meditation practice as sitting. I sit in a regular place, at a regular time. I sit in the morning.

For me this is a step that involves regular daily discipline. By daily, I mean 4 or 5 times a week. I shoot for daily, but if I fall short, I don't hate myself. For me it involves sitting and seeking a stillness. It is a cessation of all the mental noise that makes up my day. It is not silence for me. The endless causal chain of

thoughts, that build upon each other, just becomes less powerful.

As an example: thinking "I'm not sitting correctly," then thinking "I am a bad meditator," then thinking "I'll never have a program." then thinking, "I am a bad person." etc., etc., etc. I am able to be more gentle and less judgmental with my internal self. The quiet and stillness grows. I can view things with a calmness.

When I sit on a regular basis, the influence of the practice becomes greater and greater in my daily life.

I am conflicted about prayer. I try to be pragmatic. Asking myself, what works instead of why is works. Being less concerned about who I am praying to. Allowing my ideas to grow and change. To be less involved in thinking I have found the answer now and it is the only answer that will ever be true.

That is why I rely so much on meditation. I have no doubt that it works. It allows me to get past myself and see others. To not be so afraid. I am able to surrender to what is and become part of a greater whole. I can realize we are all interconnected. The practice of meditation does not require faith, it requires effort. Through this practice, I am able to address what got me high in the first place. The genuine root cause of being an addict. I am able to be of use to others, to be a vessel of peace, love and understanding. (Nothing funny about that.)

I understand, through the program, through consistent effort, comes from within me but is not me. That is the point of the program for me. To bring myself in accordance with genuine inner truth. To rely on my inner spirit to power my effort. To genuinely understand from the seventh step; my need for that power. Thus to prove improve my knowledge and conscious contact with that power,

**TO AWAKEN.**

# **12TH 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**

# **A Tale of Addiction then Recovery**

The swirling and twirling of my mind growing up feeling like I didn't fit in with mankind, so I experimented with drugs and felt I found the void to fill in my soul. I felt free to be me. The only problem with damaged people is they know they can survive. I stayed 6ft deep in addiction as everything else around me unraveled still in denial that the drugs were ever the problem. Facing many more problems with homelessness and the lack of ability to live life on life terms without something in my veins- without anywhere to really call home laying on the cold streets. I say "now I lay me down to sleep, I pray the Lord my soul to keep" as night terrors and dope sickness kept me up at night with heroin my first thought and by the morning light, sick and tired, was how I stayed when I took my will back everyday as the needle pierced my track marked vein. I forgot all my sadness. I forgot all the pain. But that was only temporary. I became sick and tired of being sick and tired with nothing left. No family, no job, no friends, no home. Most importantly I lost myself. I was tired of the strife and tired of my life. With a drop of willingness to change I was able to have things rearrange. Coming into recovery with nothing to lose and everything to gain I gave it everything I had. I'm grateful for NA because now my life is better today.

-Times New Roman

# **Experience, Strength and Hope**

I was nobody in addiction, just a nameless dope fiend. Nothing mattered neither family, friends, interests and no job especially not a career to a fulfilling life. I had no prospects except the next hit. The next shot was all I was about. I saw no other life for myself. No pain and momentary bliss was the seek and destroy way of life. Values were compromised for drugs. Everything must go for the next one.

I was a hollow derelict of my own making. I hit judicial systems, long lasting health problems and institutions. Finding a twelve step programs, Narcotics Anonymous was the last and only resort open to arrest the disease of addiction. I didn't listen to authority yet when I sat in a room of my so-called peers, my ears opened. I was suspicious and paranoid. They said they were clean from drugs, and had tales of using like I have. The feelings and thoughts I understood even though the jargon was unfamiliar. I "Kept coming back" and each day was a struggle I lost to the disease. I couldn't stay clean. I just kept trying to self-will through white knuckles,

there was no surrender. That sounded weak. I could do this on my own, I thought. I BELIEVED everything my mind and urges fed me. I trusted nothing but the disease. I thought was my true identity.

My self-loathing kept me sick, so step work was in order. The one thing I saw was brutally honest with the floor and crew I started to establish. That is a core and largest principle I found. I hear secrets keep you sick and that I had experienced. Never to live in secrecy.

The NAers said they had the solution. A power greater than themselves. They said the greatest aspect was "one addict helping another" which was hard for me to grasp. I was a loner for a long time. People were for using and means nothing more. I learned from the fellow addicts that a small piece of compassion was necessary and saw understanding glint in their eyes.

I was in and out. I got hundreds of white key tags through a five year period. The day I surrendered was when I saw that my best intentions were not going to keep me clean. It didn't matter what I felt of thought or act like, I was going to die using. That's when I started staying clean.

**-An Addict, A survivor of self obsession.**

