You know how you despised Boston fans for reminding you, at every turn, just how deprived they were because they went 86 years between World Series titles? Well, don't look now Cleveland, but you are becoming a postmodern Red Sox Nation, in love with your own misery ... says Papa Cass in his latest. He says it's time to start paying forward the positive instead of wallowing in the negative. The time has come to stop feeding The Misery Monster.

A couple of years ago, a book was published called "Curses: Why Cleveland Fans Deserve To Be Miserable."

I've always hated that title.

Who deserves to be miserable? Who wants to deserve to be miserable?

"Congratulations, Cleveland! For enduring 42 years without a title and counting, you have earned the right to be depressed, sulk and whine, wallow in a bottomless pit of self-loathing and self-pity that will make every other fan base in the country hate you, always look on the dark side, even when your team is winning, and on the occasion you come into contact with the fan of another, more successful team, you get to hurl insults, curses, and throw things at them. Maybe even slug them if you're drunk enough and they're a Steelers fan.

"Have fun, Cleveland. You've earned it."

You know how you despised Boston fans for reminding you, at every turn, just how deprived they were because they went 86 years between World Series titles? Well, don't look now Cleveland, but you are becoming a postmodern Red Sox Nation, in love with your own misery.

I first started noticing it when the Indians were in the midst of their 1990s playoff run. Cleveland fans utterly refused to take even a shred of pride in those teams because they didn't win a World Series. To hear most Cleveland fans talk about those teams, that was an era of failure, and John Hart's legacy is his inability to find an ace pitcher. That, and trading Brian Giles for Ricardo Rincon.

The six division titles and two AL pennants those teams won in a seven-year span is a historic accomplishment, even if it was aided by weak AL Central competition. Few teams, outside of the Yankees and Braves, can ever hope to surpass the accomplishments of those Indians teams from 1995 to 2001. But Cleveland fans will have none of it.

It continues today. The Cavaliers have the most important athlete in Cleveland's history since Jim Brown. But instead of enjoying what LeBron James brings to the hardwood every game, we are once again getting lost in the misery of what might be.

The Cavs might be backsliding after a solid playoff run last spring. Mike Brown might be a bad choice as a head coach. LeBron might be upset with the offense. Larry Hughes might be a flop as LeBron's sidekick. LeBron might be a Net in 2010. We might have to sit back and watch LeBron win a zillion championships after he leaves Cleveland.

Before you know it, 2010 will be here, and every chance you had to marvel at LeBron's talent in a Cleveland uniform could be gone.

See a pattern developing here? It's not just Cleveland's teams that squander opportunities. The fans are right there with them.

You might not think much of the concept of the self-fulfilling prophecy, but I put some stock in it. If you expect bad things to happen, you'll probably get what you expect. That's not to say that if you believe Cleveland teams will win championships, it will magically happen. But professional sports teams are comprised of human beings, and they feed off the mood of the town, whether it's positive or negative.

Cleveland fans are in need of repeated doses of perspective. You can start by looking at one of our favorite poster boys for just how bad we think things are.

Gary Baxter spent weeks in the Cleveland Clinic recovering from the now-famous double-blowout of his patellar tendons in October. He made his return to the public eye Tuesday night on his self-titled WTAM radio show.

During his time in the hospital, Baxter did some mentoring of kids who really have problems, and not one of them had to do with Mike Brown's offense, Larry Hughes' jump shot or a 4-11 football team.

And many of those kids, possibly dying, were probably happier than your average Cleveland sports fan.

He related a story of a little girl who ran around her hospital room playing, telling people without flinching, without crying, "I'm sick."

Baxter said he heard "code blue" calls go out. It probably never totally left his mind

that he was in a place where people die every day.

And yet, that place of sickness and death, that place where healing comes so slowly and sparingly, was more hopeful than Cleveland Browns Stadium on a Sunday afternoon.

And then you realize why Baxter, even after suffering a compound injury that has happened only once prior in NFL history, never once said "Why me?"

And maybe that's the lesson for Cleveland fans to learn. Why you? Why your town? Well, maybe it's not all about you and how hard you've had it. And maybe it's time to start figuring out what's worth enjoying in this short life.

Maybe it's time to start paying forward the positive instead of wallowing in the negative. And maybe you shouldn't wait for the teams in this town to give you a reason to change. Make your own reason. And make them follow you.