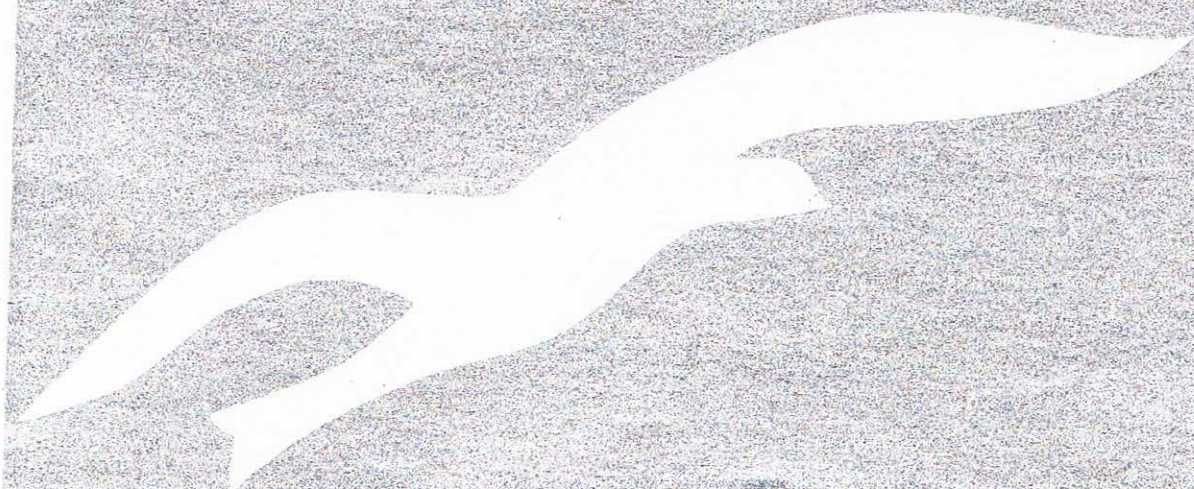


JULY 1980



The RAINBOW CONNECTION

HOW IT WORKS - THE TWELVE STEPS OF N.A.

- 1. We admitted that we were powerless over our addiction, that our lives had become unmanageable.**
- 2. We came to believe that a power greater than ourselves could restore us to sanity.**
- 3. We made a decision to turn our will and our lives over to the care of God as we understood Him.**
- 4. We made a searching and fearless moral inventory of ourselves.**
- 5. We admitted to God, to ourselves, and to another human being the exact nature of our wrongs.**
- 6. We were entirely ready to have God remove all these defects of character.**
- 7. We humbly asked Him to remove our shortcomings.**
- 8. We made a list of all persons we had harmed, and became willing to make amends to them all.**
- 9. We made direct amends to such people wherever possible, except when to do so would injure them or others.**
- 10. We continued to take personal inventory, and when we were wrong, we promptly admitted it.**
- 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.**
- 12. Having had a spiritual awakening as a result of those steps, we tried to carry this message to addicts and to practice these principles in all our affairs.**





The Rainbow Connection

METRO ATLANTA NA

".... caring and sharing the NA way"

Volume 2, Number 7 - July 1980

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We welcome your story, article or perspective relating to NA recovery.

LOVE

Today is the first day of the rest of your life. How often I've heard those words in the past eleven years, and how desperately I've wanted to understand their meaning.

I've known about Narcotics Anonymous for the past four or five years. I'm from Tennessee and when in Atlanta I would occasionally attend meetings, but I wasn't really trying to stop drinking and using until this past April.

I would come down here to the Veterans Hospital to get my habit down to a manageable level, but a habit is not manageable. I began having frequent black-outs. I had a very bad car wreck and an extremely painful motorcycle wreck. Then I had another car wreck, I lost every thing I owned and was sentenced to time in a chaingang. I was dying and I knew it.

This knowledge led me back to Atlanta and into the hospital . . . again. I got completely clean and sober for the first time in eleven years. I went to an N.A. meeting and got a white chip — my desire chip. I really wanted to be clean and sober. Eventually I picked up a thirty day chip.

Then in my "infinite knowledge of all things" I decided I didn't need to attend meetings any more. I still didn't understand the N.A. program and I was too lazy to put forth the effort necessary to begin to understand.

Very quickly I fell in with the wrong crowd and began smoking pot, again . . . but my drug of choice is heroin and my associates sold me some of very high quality. For two weeks I stood on the edge of eternity. I could take that first shot and dive head first into that bottomless pit of addiction. Or I could turn from the bottomless precipice and try to stay alive. I couldn't decide what to do. I was screaming for help and I just couldn't ask anyone. My pride was killing me. Then a member asked me if I was going to a meeting that night. I said "no, I'm too tired." Ten minutes later, Ken Y. my best friend and also an N.A. member asked me the same question. I gave him the same answer. He said "you are not too tired. Let's go." I went to the meeting with him that Thursday night because I feared for my life. In my heart I knew I was as good as dead if I didn't go. After the meeting, I was to go to a Fourth of July Picnic to be held the following day in Marietta.

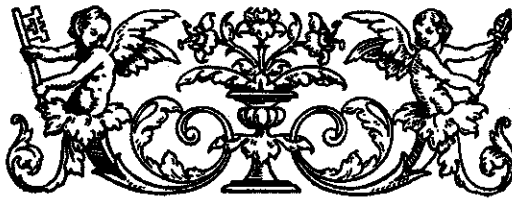
Two N.A. members I didn't know came by the house to take us to Marietta. Introductions were made. As I started to shake hands with Tommy D. he put his arms around me and simply said "I love you, Maurice."

I was surprised. I was suspicious and I doubted my worthiness to be loved by anyone. When we got to Marietta I met a lot of people who were new to me and everyone of them said, "Glad to see you here," and many of them said to me the most beautiful words my empty aching heart could ever hope to hear — "I love you." But I still couldn't accept this caring and love as being real, even though I wanted to very much. So, I spent the entire next day and much of the night with people from N.A. I was searching and hoping. And all the while these people kept showing me they cared and telling me they loved me. That night I let my guard down for a second or two and those people got through to me. I could feel their love for each other and for me just fill up the emptiness inside me. For the FIRST time in my twenty-nine years I've found people who really care about me and who love me. Not just one person, I've found a whole family of brothers and sisters and I love them all dearly. They're keeping me alive and teaching me to enjoy living. I just LOVE it!

As a newcomer to Narcotics Anonymous, I believe this is what N.A. is all about. It's about people who can care about and love a desperate, dying addict. And who can, in time, teach him how to care and love also. It's BEAUTIFUL!

Maurice M.
July, 1980 — Atlanta





My name is Judy, and I'm an addict. I have lived in Georgia all of my life. I loved drugs & alcohol, it was a necessary thing in my life, I thought. Any way I abused it to the point that it became my mother, lover & friend. I started dating with I was 14 even if I had to hide to do this. My parents were very strict, as far as sex went or me just being me, and that was I guess hard for them to understand. I started using at 15, started off with alcohol and then went to drugs. Not knowing what the drug did or what it was. Just anything to try that was new. And it changed my thinking to Oh, well if this works just think I can get more. I didn't have to buy any of it, it was given to me, by my friends and lovers. I think I was really searching for some kind of serenity in my life! I always believed that if I didn't think and do like other people do, then I was not being what I was supposed to be.

I lived a hard, dark & lonely life after the body became maybe immuned to the drugs & alcohol and found no more hope or my thought within me being fulfilled. I know today, by the grace of God today, YES I can be Judy, Drug Free! Knowing that today is the first day of my life, if I treat it that way.

I was always afraid to be honest with other people, afraid that they would not like me or would think I was not such a good person. Hey! even Jesus said "Where your treasurer lie, Ye will be there also." To me that means that God loves me enough, that I can enjoy life on its own terms, drug free and let my spirit work with his power so that I may be able to help other people. I am grateful then—that we have each other to love and share love, strength & hope. This was made possible by the N.A. program, a program set up to our understanding so that it was easy enough to follow, if we applied this to our daily living.

Prayer has become a very necessary thing in my life today, because it is the communication between my H.P. and me. I will not kid around when it comes to the life of a person, especially a life and death situation. I'm grateful that I'm alive today, to be able to feel and share. I remember when I was using, I went to the liquor store and bought my grandmother some liquor. I have always regretted that moment. The reason I did this was to get money from my grandmother, and she would give it to me.

At this point in my life, being clean has shown me that I was a very sick person and needed help. I do not know why I was not shown certain things in my life that I have learned through the program. I am able now to overlook some of the bad things that would really upset me then, and just turn them over to my higher power. Or I would talk it over with Bo, who I love very much. He will always be a very special person in my life, he has given a lot of insight that also helps me in my daily living.

I do recommend to anyone coming into the program for the first time to get someone who has been in for a good while and is somewhat open minded. My life had become unmanageable to the point that I thought I would go crazy. Yes some insanity does step in, if we do not use the steps. Now if I hurt anyone or say something that might cause conflicting feelings, I get to judgemental of others. Anything that I do wrong comes back to me. That's why I think it is great to be clean today, so the reality is there, instead of the using. Anyway thanks H.P. for helping me, to help others.

I also thought that the program was a place to use people, but I found that eventually people will find you out. The people who loved me showed how to be & get honest with myself and others. If I didn't do this that I could go back into a real stinking thinking attitude, that everybody else is wrong and I'm right. Steps have really helped me in this area, such as steps 2, 3, 4 and 5.

Loving others was hard for me to do when I was using.

Love, Judy S.

UNITY

If it were not for this program I would be dead. This program is a vital part of my everyday living and I will go to any lengths to help this Fellowship grow and prosper. I love this Fellowship and it loves me; I help this Fellowship and it helps me. I get extremely angry when someone takes this Fellowship lightly or comes into the Fellowship trying to use me or one of my loved ones in the program. We do not offer sympathy, we offer recovery. If you have a drug problem and are seeking help, NA is the place to go. If you have a drug problem but you know what to do about your program yourself, well then you are welcome to leave and not come back until you are openminded and willing to try it our way.

United we stand, divided we fall; I can't, we can. These slogans tell me that if we do not stick together, and help each other, then I will die. I do not know if you will die or not because I do not know if you are an addict or not, but if you are, and we do not stick together, then you, like me, will die also.

This desire to live and enjoy life is why we need to remember what we are, why we come to NA, and that without this Fellowship we would surly die. I am a drug addict and I come to meetings and functions to get my recovery, not to listen to someone whine, brag, lie, gossip, preach or witness. I am aware that our disease is one that reaches our innermost souls with it's sickness and that almost all of us come in here as liars, cheats and thieves with emotional problems and little, if any, morals. And I am also aware that it takes a lot of time for us to get better with our honesty and our con games and our using people, and our staeling, but when you come to an NA meeting or function you should leave your street ways on the street, and be honest, openminded and willing to try.

I have been taught a new way of living and enjoying life by my new family and the Steps and Traditions. The Steps are for the individual and the traditions are for the whole so that we may function effectively as a unit working toward our single primary purpose which is recovery. We do not need power junkies in this program, we need love junkies. It is typical of addicts to con and manipulate, to have things our way, but in the program, we need to watch how we act because we have other people new and old who may be affected by our actions. We need to grow together, not apart. We need not to condemn our new members and groups but to praise and encourage them.

We in the Atlanta area are some of the most fortunate recovering addicts in the world. We have a choice of meeting times and places daily, and we have the longest NA meeting in the world. Also we have two clubhouses where NA meetings are held. We as NA members in Atlanta have a responsibility to ourselves and to our program to do anything we can to promote unity in our area and in our Fellowship.



I, an eighteen year old young man with long strawberry blond hair that went half-way down my back, looking at my reflection in the mirror, and this is what I saw: tears gushing out of glassy eyes — eyes as big as quarters; a pale, nubby face, and a head spastically shaking in every direction at once.

Looking down and away from my reflection I reached into the pocket of my old-patched-up, faded jeans. My hands, shaking profusely, managed to find what I needed — five hits of LSD.

I placed the two hits that were in my right hand on the tip of my tongue, swished them around in my mouth, and swallowed them. The other three went back into my pocket. I knew I'd need them later.

Next I staggered across the room to an old desk cluttered with books and papers. Frenzied, I rummaged through the clutter looking for some beer. I found a six-pack. I opened a bottle and guzzled it.

"I hate it," I yelled, "I hate it."

I flung my arms into the mess on my desk causing books and papers to scatter across the floor. Falling to my knees I threw the bottle straight down, shattering it into a hundred pieces. I lay there in a mesmeric trance surrounded by the scattered pieces of paper and glass. My trembling hands brushed away the papers around my feet except for one crumpled piece of paper which I kept. The only print on it was two big red letters — NA, and four names and phone numbers.

While grunting and crying, I managed to get off the floor. Immediately after I got on my feet, I seesawed out of the shambled room and went into a hallway. The hallway was filled with talking people. In my hallucinatory state of mind it sounded like gibberish was coming from their mouths.

Somewhere in that illusively endless hallway I prayed there would be a telephone. I wanted to get to that telephone just as a person lost in a desert wants to get to water.

I found the phone; my head was still shaking; my hands were still trembling. I withdrew the crumpled piece of paper from my pocket and looked at the phone on the wall. Instinctively my finger began to dail. But after chain smoking a pack of cigarettes I still hadn't managed to dial seven numbers.

I clawed at my cheeks. I kicked the wall until fragments of plaster fell to the floor. I muttered a couple of syllables which made no sense. Tortured with pain around my temples, I beat my fists against my head.

I dialed again.

"Hello."

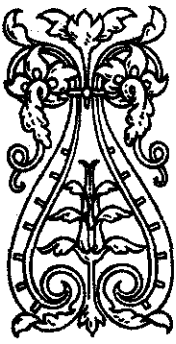
Sobbing, I answered with a few incomprehensible words.

"Hello," I heard again.

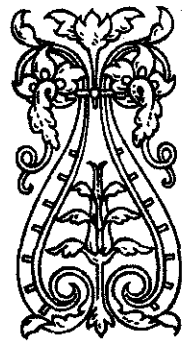
"Greg school get me"

I couldn't put words together to make a sentence, but I had let her know who I was and where I was. I had let her know that I wanted help!

Gergory E. L.
Wilmington, Delaware
July, 1980



A CARELESS WORD CAN KINDLE STRIFE
A CRUEL WORD MAY WRECK A LIFE
A BITTER WORD MAY HATE INSTILL
A BRUTAL WORD MAY SMITE AND KILL
A GRACIOUS WORD MAY SMOOTH THE WAY
A JOYOUS WORD MAY LIGHT THE DAY
A TIMELY WORD MAY LESSEN STRESS
A LOVING WORD MAY HEAL AND BLESS



Joey J. - Lincoln, Nebraska

THIRTY DAYS IS A LONG TIME

Not long ago a month could go by and not be missed by me. But I just went through a month where I remember every single day. The last time I anticipated every day so badly was when I was about 10 years old and I was waiting for Christmas.

I gave myself a present today—an orange chip. To many people this probably doesn't mean much. To me thirty days without getting high, it means thirty days of not seeing some of my old "friends". Thirty days of somehow having more money in my pocket than I expected.

I could probably say more about these thirty days. Things like — somehow I had time to fix up my car; clean up my apartment; change my sheets; and I also found time to talk to my parents a little more and strangely enough, it seemed a little easier.

It was one of the hardest things I ever did. For thirty days I went to bed each night with nothing coursing through my veins but straight natural blood. That's only happened a couple of times in the past ten or so years. One whole month clean and sober; damn, I'm depressed!

It was wasy for me to say "thirty days, no sweat" but it got harder as the days passed. I kept finding myself in convenient situations. Sometimes it was easy to say no thanks, but sometimes I really had to **work** at not accepting those friendly offers. Somehow I felt real good later.

What **did** help was thinking that I just have to get through **this** day, I'll worry about tomorrow, tomorrow. Today I'm clean and sober and I feel good!

Jiggs C.

POSSIBLE LONG FORM

FEEDBACK WILL BE APPRECIATED

1. Our dependence is on a Power, greater than ourselves, working through Narcotics Anonymous as a whole. By protecting N.A. unity, we protect the source of our individual recovery.

2. The conscious contact of our members with a Higher Power is best reflected in our group consciousness. This Consciousness is the most reliable guide for those who would serve us.

3. It is not our place to judge a fellow addict seeking help. We become members with our desire to stop using which is the basis of all our recovery.

4. Narcotics Anonymous exists in the consciousness of each member and group of members. We need no outside authority to carry forth our group purpose, unless we affect the rights of other groups to do the same.

5. Our groups consists of addicts who have found they can stay clean by helping those who still suffer. Our group purpose reflects this Truth.

6. Narcotics Anonymous should stand apart from any organization not directly based in our group consciousness. Affiliation, however well intended, would weaken us and threaten our primary purpose. A policy of non-affiliation is required to insure the rights of all groups to carry our message of recovery without arousing suspicion of motive in our newcomers. Our motive in helping others is our own recovery.

7. To preserve our autonomy, we need to avoid financial dependency at any level on outside sources. Within our Fellowship, we set reasonable limits on the financial contributions individual members can make both for our sake and theirs. Faith in the Spirit of our Fellowship requires that we be fully self-supporting.

8. We cannot charge for that which has been so freely given. Members are free to employ themselves as they see fit outside the program. Special workers may be employed to carry out functions not directly related to N.A. recovery; i.e. not one-to-one contact—N.A. 12th-Step.

9. Narcotics Anonymous is a set of principles, not a system. Our way of life should never be constrained by rules but based on positive principles of living. To serve the needs of groups, a basic service structure composed of group members has evolved ever dependent on those they serve.

10. To maintain our spiritual integrity, we hold no opinion on outside issues. Our groups concern themselves with helping others achieve N.A. recovery. Public controversy would be detrimental to the ability of all groups to carry our message.

11. Although we want addicts everywhere to know of our program, we maintain personal anonymity to insure that no personal excesses or shortcomings reflect on N.A. as a whole. This also protects our members from exaggeration of ego.

12. We give all glory to God according to our understanding. But for the Grace of that Power, greater than ourselves, we would have no recovery. We look to principles for guidance and try to accept others as they are. We seek only to become a meaningful part of the whole.

I can't but with God all miracles which happen in the area of Personality are possible and are happening all around us. With God all things are possible.

You can't keep anything until you give it away.

Loving the unlovable-- they loved me when I was unlovable.

Emotional zombie, couldn't feel anything - I am grateful I can feel now.

When we were starting our addiction and our straying, the other side of the fence seemed greener. We crossed and found it was killing us and we couldn't get back and stay on the side we were but by the Grace of God.

Carrying the message of Hope-- you don't have to stay miserable, use, beat your head and stay in that vicious cycle... each day gets better.

If you are here and are not sure you belong here, then maybe you are in the right place.

I felt good and tended to forget where I came from. How I hurt. How I was afraid. Who sat with me when I was shaking and lonely.

If I don't do something about my problem, I'm going to die. I may not die sane, but crazy with fear. Accept this and you'll do the steps.

Accept that I'm a member of a fellowship who knows what love is all about. I never have to use again if I don't want to.

Unconditional love - to give with out expecting anything in return. Like they did to me when I had nothing to give in return.

The snobbishness or holier than thou attitude had to go regardless of our different backgrounds.

God gives me the resources for unconditional love. My wants get in the way. I ask God to help me out.

I ain't bug eyed no more!

BRISTOL GROUP ON NA



The Bristol Group called to wish us well. They have converted a study group to a taped discussion of the Steps. They then transcribe the tapes for us in future study groups in other areas. They received the Open Letter to NA from Venice, CA about not reading outside literature in NA study groups and felt this would be an appropriate response to the needs of Narcotics Anonymous for new literature. They are sending a cassette tape for their group to ours in Marietta and we will respond. They also mentioned a floating discussion meeting of NA that meets on whatever big ship happens to be in port in South Philadelphia! Right on Bristol, we love you!



Rainbow Staff

GOD AS YOU UNDERSTAND HIM

My name is George and I am an addict. Coming to believe in a power greater than myself was one of the gifts of recovery in Narcotics Anonymous. I have always been deeply moved by the nature and the wonder of creation; I spent this past weekend at the N.A. Greenville South Carolina mini convention. Somehow the faith and love I have come to know was deepened by seeing clean and sober drug addicts learning to love and live and share with each other.

There was a feeling of life all around us and within us. I remember feeling the presence of God as I understand him during the pause for silent meditation at the campfire Saturday night meeting.

My feeling of gratitude increased as I remembered those endless days and nights peering out of my cell at the fluorescent light on the walls of the county jail. I remembered waking up from a fight that I'd lost hands down the night before in the drunk tank or was it two nights before? I scraped the dried blood and the vomit from my face and hair. Sometimes I shudder and wish it would all fade into my mind so far I could forget. But the real miracle is that its history. Its not happening today. Today I am with friends; today I'm loved. Today I have hope and an honest faith in a God of my understanding that has changed from the slow, painful death of a dope fiend to the shared beauty of recovery. I am grateful to the N.A. program for the happiness and joy it has given.

George S.

YOU OPENED MY EYES

This short visit with you has meant alot to me.
You have opened my eyes and made me see,
The good, the bad, and the ugly too,
and when I'm finished, I'll feel like new.
I'll go through this, I promise to you.
As you have done and made it through.
My problems are many and soon will be few.
And when it's all over I'll think of you.
I want to be open, honest and free,
but most of all I want to be me.
I know it can happen and soon it will,
I'm now climbing up my biggest hill.
I'm seeking the help I know I will find,
If I can just keep good thoughts in my mind.
You opened my eyes and made me see,
Your love for me as it was meant to be.

Donna S.



SMOKE

A lady friend on the program who I have known since she came to us was telling me the other day about having to defend her position of not smoking grass. She said that the conversations usually ended in a stalemate. For her sake, I thought I would write down some of the conversation.

Most of us have had at least some of our drug addiction behind a cloud of pot smoke. In the beginning it seemed fun to me and it occurred to me that if the authorities had lied about pot, which seemed fine to me, I ought to try out some more of the drugs that they said were bad for you. Pot seemed perfectly natural and exhilarating. It left me with no hangover like alcohol. It put me in a place where I could express myself more freely and really get into what ever I was doing.

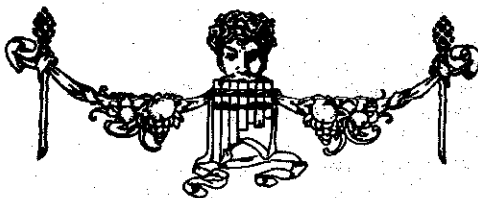
I remember walking down a street in Atlanta after I was into my dope pretty heavy. I was walking with a buddy and two old time addicts who had really been around. My friend asked them if pot had any real effect on you or if it was in any way addicting. One of the old addicts looked at the other and said, "Well I don't know if it's addicting but if you smoke regularly for a couple of years, you sure get lazy."

In my new life today I don't want to screen myself off from reality. If I'm not perfectly happy, I want to change things to suit me or at least be able to face things as they are and accept them. I don't want living problems to creep into my life again. I don't trust drugs anymore. They have killed many people who I have loved. They burnt me out past the funny part where you can turn it off. One toké would set off all the confusion from when I came off a month speed run that set me back for over two years.

The program of Narcotics Anonymous has taught me that I don't have anything to prove to anyone in my recovery. I don't talk much about the program except to an addict seeking help. The main thing I say is if you think you might be an addict seeking recovery. I realize that a real addict is going to resist recovery. They usually find some way to convince themselves they have defeated me personally so that the things I have shared with them lose the validity that would interfere with their using. I put my trust in the group. If a person tells me that they can smoke pot and suffer no ill side effects there are two ways I can look at it without threatening my own recovery. The first is the possibility that they aren't an addict. The other is that the disease syndrome hasn't become apparent to them yet. I always try to be careful because I don't want to say or do anything that might prevent them from seeking help if the dope turns on them. I have several friends on the program who regard pot as their drug of choice and I can relate to the despair and loneliness that drove them to seek help from the program.

I don't run into too many people who want to defend their right to smoke pot and I'm glad. I enjoy my new life and the many beautiful friends I have in Narcotics Anonymous. I don't want to go back to the old days. I pray that my lady friend will bear in mind what she has learned of our disease. I don't want her to go back either. The best is yet to come, clean and sober. I want us to be able to enjoy it.

Bo S.
ALC



World Literature Conference

Hey everybody, have you heard about the great news? Lincoln is hosting the next W.L.C. Yea right here in Lincoln. It's the 8th through the 14th of Sept. You guessed it, that's right after the 10th World Convention in Wichita.

If you're like me you probably needed someone to tell you what a W.L.C. is. Well personally I'm sick and tired of our little white pamphlet and would like to see a Big Book of our own. You know, one that maybe has some insight to where an addicts head's at and what way to steer it. To do all this we need everyone's support, caring and sharing. By now your probably wondering where it's going to be happening. It's at the old Federal Building at 9th and P St. (1st Floor) Registration is ten dollars. You can register by sending your check or money order to:

NA World Literature Conference
P.O. Box 30364
Station A
Lincoln, NE 68503

Remember we need stories, one liners, poems, and anything else you can get down on paper. You can bring it or send it in, but if you can make it, be there.

Love,
Sam J. Lincoln NA



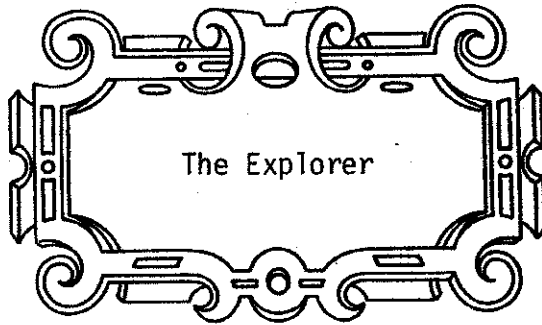
GAINESVILLE

It's been a while since I have seen any of you and I want you to know that I'm OK and have been thinking of you. My wife and I got a home last week. Its small and out in the "boonies" but very pleasant. Things have been a little out of kilter. I've been laid off (thank God for unemployment) and there's still a lot to do as far as getting the house in order.

I received a letter from the lit committee recently asking for ideas for topics in our big book. Please don't forget the newcomer: Not as a chapter but maybe on a few pages I would like to see something about relapse mentioned. It seems as a newcomer the thought of living without drugs scared me to death! That fear would continually drive me back to using again. I didn't understand what was happening and each time out made it harder to come back. It took three years after one time out and there was one more left for me still.

Today it all seems like a long leason in loss of reservations. But I feel so many are lost for the same reasons as those above and there are those who, because of guilt or shame over using again, never come back. Then again I feel there are those who feel they "just can't tow the mark." The whole point of recovery is missed. Its not how long one is clean that counts, its the **ONE DAY!** How many of us could have hoped for or can ask for more than that? I'm certainly not going to pray for tens years sobriety. It may not be in God's Will for me and I can't stay clean ten years at a time. When recovery is based on time clean or I have to use my time clean as a club, its time to stop and take a long hard look at where I've been, where I'm at, and where I'm going. If I forget I'm bound to go back and its happened before.

John H.



Many years ago during a time of society bound freaks a young man arose from the bed of chains. He was an adventurous individual that felt that it was wrong to accept the knowledge of life from hear-say evidence. His family was poor and his father had been long dead. He had three brothers, one sister and one half-brother who lived many miles away in a culture which was surrounded by the outlaws of society. His family strove in time to make adjustments for the loss of a father and even though the mother never remarried, she kept the family together except for one young man.

He was hyperactive, let us say, but he just wanted to feel excitement and when it wasn't there he made it. In school he was smart but this ability of society's so called normal standards made him feel like an outsider. He was bored with the classroom setting but he went through nine and a half years of school without failure. Now let me carry you back to the first year of his schooling. The teacher felt that something should be done to calm this young man down. He was as nervous as a young colt when he first encountered the touch of man, but in his own mind he was as steady as he should be in a world that he didn't like. Even though his opinion was there, it was overlooked and the teacher won. He was put under some form of medication that was suppose to help him adjust but still he refused to see a psychologist because he heard the word head shrinker and even though young he knew that this doctor was used to control certain types of behavior. So he refused to see him and even though he won one battle, he lost the war.

Many days passed and he reacted the way that others wanted but for himself he didn't like what was going

on. He turned twelve years old and off the medication he came but at that time he had already got used to it and so he felt that something was missing that he needed. He was at a distance too great to talk with his family and besides, why should he do something that he never did. Instead of talking or really thinking he reacted to what was there. During the time of this age, he would go on the routine visits to his friends and relatives. Upon arriving at their house he would go up to the bathroom. Upon his destination he would open up the medicine cabinets or if there was none he would look on the shelves for those little capsules.

Knowing only what they looked like or what came close, he would take a few from each bottle and put them in his pockets. Later he would take them while he was alone. The reaction that took place was different in a way but the same over all because he was in the world of his own. At the age of thirteen he would visit his half brother in Atlanta. His half brother took him one day to the strip on Peachtree Street and showed him the hippies and rejects of society. He would look at them with a big question mark of why they were different. To him they seemed to be happy without any troubles and so he was confused. The confusion bothered him and so he needed an answer. This young man knew that he couldn't get the okay of his family and so he would slip away during the weekends when he stayed with his half brother. A journey he undertook into a culture he knew nothing about but what others said. The words of his family didn't mean anything to him. He was tired or hearing the word "NO" and if you sneak off then you will get a spanking. But he was thirteen years old and he could handle what his family dished out because he had done it before and so he went to talk to the hippies.

One weekend came and a lady older than he was stopped him and started a conversation. The topic of pills came out and with a hand full of reds in his pocket she told him that he could go to prison if the law caught him with them. This young man asked what is prison and why would he be sent for doing something that the doctor gave someone. The lady smiled and said because it is illegal for him to have them and prison was full of murders. The young man thought for a moment and said that she, the lady, was the only one that knew that he had them. She smiled.

again and asked him would he come to her apartment. His answer came and there they were in a room of long hair bearded men and women with nothing on but tight shorts and tee shirts that showed lovely breasts. The young man and the lady went into another room alone and then he saw how beautiful she really was. From her he learned that sex was more than a function between a man and a woman and also that the word for the pills was called drugs and they were used to be free. Sure he was free and he had to keep hiding his freedom because she said that others wouldn't accept being totally free and happy.

Addiction came with raw codine and before the lady left and brought him off codine onto heroin. She said that his life was there and it could be cut short if he got careless. Walking on the edge of hell when he was fifteen he quit school for a reason that seemed acceptable to his family but in reality he was addicted to heroin and he was losing control of his hiding and seek game. He split and went to California to carry a girlfriend home but his horse was running too fast and and the junk man knew it. Making a deal, he started carrying pure opium from Texas to Miami, Florida. Never knowing who he worked for and not caring if he knew. He was going to the tracks and running 95 bags of horse a day. For three months the monkey on his back was pampered but he met a lady on the island of Texas. It was called Galveston but he called it paradise because on it he found a little isolation in which he could feel the devil without trouble.

One day lying there in the sand a woman appeared out of the bay. She strolled across the sand with the graceful movements of a princess but when she picked up the bag of powder and threw it into the water, she turned into a horrible witch. Jumping up the young man grabbed her arms and shouted what in the hell was she doing but she only smiled and the brightness of her hidden power froze him.

Three months addicted and three more months to destroy the monkey on his back. Feeling the sharp strong claws dig in his back he wanted to back out but the lady held him strong. The monkey died and because of a financial loss there came trouble. Staying on the road as he did before, he traveled through the southern states of Florida to Texas. Many more days passed between times he saw the lady

but when she appeared one day he knew not what to think. Reacting to what appeared to be a horrible nightmare he spoke harshly to a pregnant woman and left. Later he returned and found that the baby was really his. There were tests to prove that and so he was happy. But someone had already made plans for the outcome of this young man. Court came. The baby was taken but the life of a lady that gave life to the young man in two days died from overdose. Not knowing what to do this young man ran back to what he knew would make him happy but he wouldn't go back to the junk man. Instead he went to Reds, and setting his family farther away from him he got addicted.

He refused their love and used their pity for him against them. He didn't want a family, he wanted to die. He overdosed three times but somehow something or someone pulled him out and he lived.

In March of 1974 at the time of his being still seventeen he came home and found that there was a warrant for his arrest for the past three months burglaries. It didn't worry him because he could prove where he was at them time but the death of a lady and his belief in himself made him refuse the offer of the Sheriff. In the courtroom whd got six years and it didn't really matter about the time that he was about to serve. His family was there but for him he rejected their love in a way that would embarass the wildest of men.

For a year in prison he used their love to get money to buy drugs. Writing letters to them telling how he had changed was wrong because the change that took place was not for the better. He made early parole and three months later he was back in prison for violating the rules of parole. The rule that he broke was for being in a place of bad reputation and so he went back to prison. Writing more letters to his family relating how wrong the parole people were and how mistreated he was, he kept the pity game going and he kept his drugs.

For a year and some months he built and again he made parole but this time on an educational reprieve. Building three months in a halfway house was like being in prison and so he left parole's supervision.

This caused the parole people to revoke his parole but before the arrest was made he had the charges of possession of three point six ounces of marijuana. He built three more months in a work camp and after his discharge he was sent to the county where he was arrested for possession. Making bond he went home but he still didn't accept it as his home. Drinking alcohol like soft drinks he came off hard drugs but he was still smoking marijuana and in June of 1977 before his court date arrived he was in a car accident that almost killed him. Coming out of the hospital after spending a week in intensive care he went to court and got his probation revoked for breaking the rule of probation about drinking. This sentencing awoke this man to the fact that he had a problem and he could now see what he was doing to himself. Sitting in prison thinking back into the times when he had nothing but needle marks in his arms he wondered why he was alive. Many things went through his head and he had to find a way out. He knew that he could get drugs from the doctor because his records show that he needed them but he wanted to quit. Thinking about the eleventh step of Alcoholics Anonymous, he found an answer but this wasn't enough. He was a weak man with little hope of recovery because his past laid out before his eyes. Fighting dearly with himself he came to know who he was. Then came a man from Narcotics Anonymous and here the story began to unfold. There was true Fellowship there and this young man wanted to be part of it.

Stepping too fast, he made mistakes because he wasn't fully aware of what the program was. N.A. became a threat and not the goddess he pictured the program to be. But you see like all women in physical or mental form, she gets to be a bitch when she is getting too close to you. The young man has experienced too much pain to undergo anymore and so he started to run.

Remembering back to the Eleventh Step, sought through prayer and meditation, he found himself again but the people of N.A. were many miles away and he felt that he had already lost their trust. Then came a letter and it made him feel great because it showed him that they really cared. Many days will pass again but in N.A. he'll be because the goddess is real and

she lives in his heart.

You see, I am that young man and I know that life is more than being a paper mache symbol. I am Richard W. a drug addict, and alcoholic and an explorer of life. N.A. is a challenge and it is one that everyone should take because it is life. So let us live to be more than a symbol.



Richard W.
Valdosta, Ga.
January 1980



Thank God!

A dope pusher lives across the street from me, you know.
I lean on my oak table and watch
Through a glass pane while
One hundred feet away, in and out a doorway
Move dope and dopes.

Four years ago come October 5
I was a druggie, too.
Drug-alcohol seesawed with drug-valium inside of me.
But not today.
Thank God,
I say as I watch the drugs come and go over there.
Drop the money under the car seat;
Pick up the drug under the hood.
Drop a pill, drop a snort, drop a vien, drop dead.

Young Man right now is passed out across the back seat of that old car.
He raises up from time to time.
Restless torment.
Been there since before daylight
Cut through all the fog we had today.
Dew sits on each blade of grass.
On my zennias, too, colored like Old Mexico.
This year I was free to choose to plant those seeds.
Eighty-nine cents: A give of life renewing.
I didn't used to have any choice like this, you know.
My choices were only
When?
Where?
How?
To get more drugs.

Church going investor owns that rent-house 100 feet away.
(12% return, I'm sure).
Last week a trucker parked in front from 2 a.m. till dawn.
Blocked the whole, little street, that cab with trailer did,

Red, blinking lights bothered my Dog.
So he barked and charged the semi till he was sure it would'nt bother
Us or our home.
Red devils, yellow jackets, black beauties.
Drop 'em all.
Drop dead.

Young man staggers out now, onto the curb.
No shoes.
"Where am I?" "Oh, no, it's morning."
Sunlight's cruel; it knifes through the dope,
Cutting even the end of each hair follicle.
He stumbles into the driver's seat.
Pour out that flat beer.
Piss in a cup.
Pour that out, too.
Chug, chug, roll off to another day with
No choices, except
When?
Where?

How?

How to get more dope.

Oh, God, thank you for those poor dopes over there
Keeping me clean and sober today.

Fran B.
Nashville, TN
June, 1980

ON THE PROGRAM

I have to mix studying the program with applying its principles in my daily living. I must practice the principles of recovery in all my affairs as well as listening about them in N.A. meetings, reading about them in books and researching else where. If I am just studying the program but not practicing it, I will get top heavy as I am now. Things won't get any better because I am not applying it to my life. If I expect to get any better I must work the program all day within society. I'm at the point where I have to go out and join society and become a member of it. The program is a mean to an end and not an end in its self. Only if I apply the program will I improve. I must use what I have learned or I have not learned very well. As I trudge my course I must become ready and willing to use the survival tools. No one can do it for me because I am the enemy. The higher power can only guide, strengthen, and give me positive outlook. The footwork is up to me. I am the one who has to be assertive, aggressive, determined, ready and able; venturing forth into a society where my conscious must be my guide,

A mixture of going back to meetings and reading the literature and the meetings with applying the program sincerely in all my efforts, is needed. I have to take time out to meditate for my prayers to be answered, and to be happy.

If all else fails, ready (study) the directions (the program) but don't spend all time going from one set of directions to the next. Take the set you need and study it while it is fresh in your mind and follow them; thoroughly, then you are fit to go on to the next step (set) and don't spend all your time studying the directions or you'll never get anywhere.

Love, HANK



SELF—RELIANCE

Everything that is great in life is the product of slow growth; the newer, and greater, and higher, and nobler the work, the slower is its growth, the surer is its lasting success.

Mushrooms attain their full power in a night; oaks require decades.

A fad lives its life in a few weeks; a philosophy lives through generation and centuries.

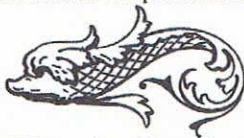
If you are sure you are right, do not let the voice of the world, or of friends, or of family swerve you for a moment from your purpose.

Accept slow growth if it must be slow, and know the results **must** come, as you would accept the long, lonely hours of the night with absolute assurance that the heavy-loaded moments **must** bring the morning.

"There are individuals with rare mental gifts and delicate spiritual discernment who fail utterly in life because they lack the one element Self-reliance. This would unite all their energies and focus them into strength and power."

What a waste that so much time is spent looking for self instead of Self.

Bill
Atlanta



June 18, 1980

Dear Folks,

Well, I have procrastinated long enough. It's time, once again, for the official Tennessee area communication, which I put out every so often in a fit of insanity, just so that you all will know what's happening here in your great state Capitol.

First, May 19, Polly and Richard H., two of our regular members, just became new parents. The baby is a boy, very healthy, and Polly seems to be feeling well again too.

Second, on Memorial Day weekend, Nashville, NA had a picnic. It lasted most of one day, and the Sunday eating meeting came after that, and everyone enjoyed themselves immensely. We plan to do more and more stuff like that, but nothing is definite yet.

We have at least three new groups in the makings, but we can't really announce them until they are part of reality. Just now, our usual Thursday night meeting, which has been at Central State Mental Hospital, has been called off for a while, and we hope to start it back up in July.

What about the convention in Wichita? We want to get a bunch of us together, and that includes people from other towns, like Crossville, Memphis, Knoxville, etc. Maybe we could rent a bus. What do you all think? I bet that at least ten people from Nashville are going, and if we could agree on a central location to meet, we might all save a little money.

Other than that, nothing more to tell. We are all having either good times or "growing experiences" this summer around here. All of us are brown as berries and wild as bears. Feel free to write back or give me a call, hint hint. Take care, one day at a time.

Love,

Gina H.
Secretary, Twilight Twelve by Twelve
Nashville, TN



2nd and 3rd step work

When I turn my will and my life over to the care of God as I understand him and live the way he wants me to live, sparing no effort to become all that God would have me become all he wants me to become. If I am living right I am packing all I can into the stream of life, then I feel neither self centered or spacey. I feel cared for protected, and I should feel special because in contributing my energy into the stream of life I am free from selfishness. It makes the world go better for me. I bathe in that stream of life around me. I never have to feel apart from it again. I know my God looks out after me so that I really couldn't care less about tomorrow. Today my job is to pack all I can into the stream of life, a smile, a warm word to someone who is down, a warm hand shake or hug. God is the boss and when I let him know I feel this way he gives me some guidance. If I try to boss my life and every one in it, God doesn't give me the time of day. Unless I ask, Him for it, no, one can help me. I have to want the help bad enough to ask, bad enough to surrender. No one can help me, even God, if I don't let Him, that's what free will is all about. The choice is mine. No one elses.

My higher Power told me in my mind that he was the stream of life. Into that I am a tributary.

Not only does the big guy wash away my defects of character (inner difficulties) but he also shapes me into a true child of God. I am a child when I say I am. He loves me good or bad, but desires my ultimate happiness as his beloved child, returned from the pits of lonely despair, sickness and sorrow. Caring for me as a mother cares for her young. Thinking thus I trust God. I come to know him, in my way, and am spared years of death, in the tomb of my drug induced grave, from which I cried out "GOD SAVE ME SAVE ME IN YOUR MERCY, I CAN'T GO ON LIKE THIS". That loving power that can solve this mess.

Having turned my own will over to God's far reaching and far seeing power I live in a beautiful reality of recovery. All I knew was how to die. I never suspected a way to live. My will got me here and it threatens to take me from the reality of recovery from the fatal progression of the addict, so it is the first thing that has to go. You can have it god! It won't hurt you big guy, it will kill little me. Thank You. I have turned loose of the steering wheel.

It also helps to let go of my illusionary attachments, by the grace of God I can be better to other people.

God never stopped creating. Some religions say so but am I glad I have an opened mind, I don't have to live as I once did. I can change my belief or add to it as I please. Let no man tell me I am wrong in what is revealed to me when I seek to understand God better. I am on my path and they are on theirs. I see the creation in a new spring, in volcanoes, etc. In me he is creating new ideas, new and wonderfully true. Aspiration, preserverances, all his positive motions as with his hands he bathes me in the stream of life, washing away all he sees fit to in order to create a new and better person. A person with a real personality, not lies. His creation is obvious every day for all to look upon. I need to manage nothing. God is boss, I am his child. It is we, not I any more. I've nothing on you, you've nothing on me. No longer am I judge and jury of all I am part of. What is the will of the supreme inside me? If in a life time one true friend is found, we are lucky. In my case I had to hurt enough long enough to want true friends. My only true friend is you my God, none else but you stuck with me through the long suffering and none but you can lead me through.

Peace, Anonomously

CALENDAR

WORLD CONVENTION OF NA AT WICHITA

We hope this letter finds you all clean and serene! ... and preparing yourselves for your journey down the yellow brick road to the land of OZ for the Tenth World Convention of Narcotics Anonymous, September 4-7, 1980, in Wichita, Kansas, at the Broadview Hotel.

Everyone in the region has been working hard to put together this celebration for "you all" to share in. We hope that through our work and a great deal of help from our "Higher Power" we will make this a truly memorable event for each and every one of you.

We encourage everyone to pre-register for a combination of reasons. Forst, this is where the \$\$\$ come from to present and operate the convention. Secondly, if you pre-register it's cheaper, and last but not least, pre-registration for the banquet is a must, as we have to give the caterors a count before the convention. So....send in your registration, NOW! Besides, if you pre-registered for the convention, you won't have to worry about that money when convention time arrives.

There are many new and exciting additions to this year's convention which, we hope, will assist you in "Your Program" as well as being fun.

We're looking forward to seeing you ALL in September.

Keep on keepin' on,
WCNA-10 Committee

SECOND WORLD LITERATURE CONFERENCE will be held September 8th to the 14th right after the World Convention. Members of the Fellowship in Lincoln Nebraska will host the Conference at the Old Federal Building at 9th and P Street. Send in \$10 registration to: NA World Literature Conference, P.O. Box 30364 Station A, Lincoln, NB 68503.

THE NEXT EAST COAST CONVENTION OF NARCOTICS ANONYMOUS will be held in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. It will probably be held in the Spring or early summer. Details will be announced as soon as they become available. The 1st ECCNA was a wonderful experience for us all and we would encourage any member to make arrangements to attend the Second as soon as the flyer comes out.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

As chairman of the Hospital and Institution Committee here, I am in dire need of pertinent literature. We have recently started a meeting at the state hospital for the criminally insane and it will shortly expand from two to six wards and I'm looking at twenty to twenty-five inmates attending. Presently there are nine, all heroin, coke and speed addicts. All are on medication. All are hoping to beat the charges pending. All of them have access to contraband smuggled in. All of them are playing games to some extent and all of them have attended every meeting since the start about seven weeks ago. I haven't started bringing women yet. So therefore I would like to do everything possible to capture their attention after the meeting ends. I have been using a speaker each week but when we expand we plan to change the format and have the Steps done once a month, speaker-discussion, discussion, two speakers, etc. So in summing up these are some of the needs I see for new literature in pamphlet form:

- 1, Incarceration (the total picture)
- 2, Pot and why I shouldn't use it.
- 3, Stories from junkies.
- 4, Stories from coke and speed freaks.
- 5, Stories from minorities.
- 6, On medication.

*This letter was recieved by the World Literature Committee from a member in the South. It speaks well to the need for new literature. If you think you would like to help, please write: WLC, 890 Atlanta Road, Marietta, GA 30060.

YOU ARE WELCOME - Did you know that many members of our Fellowship are presently working on material that will help us get a book for the Program of Narcotics Anonymous? Did you know that any member of NA world wide is encouraged to write and send in material? We are writing this to let you know that the effort is well underway and we really want you to get involved if you want to. When we first got involved we were worried that our efforts would be out of order and that probably someone else would be working on it anyway. Well, we think that you the members of our Fellowship are the real miracle and that the things you do to stay clean and sober are miraculous and that material collected directly from you is miraculous in nature. We have discovered that really fine material results when a member sits down and writes what he or she would share at an NA meeting or in Fellowship. Please give it a try and let us hear from you.

WSC Literature Committee

GROWTH

Narcotics Anonymous is growing at a steady pace. We have recently realized a dream of many members for a long time; we have a central office and a twenty-four hour phone service. The central office is located at the Highland Club (corner of North Highland and St. Charles) and is open with somebody there from nine to five Monday through Saturday. Come on by and have a cup of coffee and see what is happening.

We need support for this central office, also. Anybody who can work at the central office and/or take phone forwarding please call 375-3995. Remember, this is for all of us.

Diana H.

ATTENTION: Several groups have expressed a need for study material for their meetings on the Steps and Traditions of Narcotics Anonymous. We are anxious to publish as much material as we can relating to these vital needs from different areas. Please write and send in your article or perspective and we will do our best to get it into the next issue.

TRUSTED SERVANTS WORKSHOP: A workshop will be held August 17, 1980 at the Highland Club sponsored by the Atlanta ASC. Time 2:00pm. The workshop will be conducted by the former ASC chairman Chuck S. Trusted servants who want to learn more about service in letter and spirit are invited to attend.

NEW MEETING in Alabama. A new group is forming in Tuscaloosa called the Tranquil Dimensions Group and meets at the Christ Episcopal Church on Thursday's at 7:30pm. The meeting will be open. The contact number in Tuscaloosa is 752-4171.

DEAR READERS: We are deeply grateful for the response you have given to our newsletter. With your continued support, we will try to improve the RAINBOW in some way each issue. We hope to go over to all type set issues soon but it always seems like some thing must be added at the last second and we pull out the old IBM. We are incontact with the other NA newsletters and we are all supportive of other newsletters coming into existence. Today the newsletters offer the best way to showcase the new literature being written by members of our Fellowship. We love getting it out of the files where only a few would even know of it's existence. Do not hesitate to send in material. We also encourage you to subscribe to the other newsletters. No one newsletter can publish it all. We want to thank the members who have written their stories and perspectives of NA recovery for this issue and those volunteers without whom this newsletter could not exist.

RAINBOW STAFF

SUNDAY

12 Step Study Group — Rising Sun
 Highland Group — Highland Club

MONDAY

Clean and Serene — Ridgeview Institute
 Feeling Free Group
 Peachford Hospital
 New Answer Meeting
 Parkway Regional

Highland Group — Highland Club
 Serenity Group — Gainesville, GA
 United Methodist Church

Literature Meeting — Rising Sun

TUESDAY

Open Arms — Brawners Hospital
 New Visions Group

DeKalb Addiction Clinic
 Buckhead Group — St. Ann's Episcopal
 Canton Group — No. Ga. Mental Health
 Highland Group — Highland Club
 11:00 am Meeting — Highland Club

New Meeting — Ga. State U.

Room 212, 11:40 am
 Non-Smokers — Rising Sun
 (no smoking in room only)

WEDNESDAY

Turning Point

Peachtree Parkwood Hospital
 Southside Survivors — Clayton General
 Forward Group — Rising Sun
 11:00 am Meeting — Highland Club

THURSDAY

NAVAHO Group — VA Hospital
 Woodstock Meeting

Little River Methodist Church
 New Meeting — Kennestone Hospital
 Golden Eagle Group — Buford Prison
 Open Up Group — Rising Sun
 11 am Meeting — Highland Club
 Good Time Gang

Holy Cross Catholic Church
 Highland Group — Highland Club

FRIDAY

New Connections — Peachford Hospital
 Highland Group — Highland Club
 Reaching Out Group — Rising Sun
 New Birth Group

New Horizons Womens
 Pre-Release Center
 Late Meeting — Highland Club

SATURDAY

Speakers Meeting — Rising Sun
 Frogmyre Junction

Ridgeview Crisis Center
 Survivors Group — Rising Sun
 Speakers Meeting — Highland Club

Meeting times are all 8:00 pm except
 Survivors Group and Friday Late
 Meeting at Highland Club which meets
 at 11:00 pm; and the Golden Eagle Group
 and Southside Survivors which meets at
 8:30 pm.

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THE TWELVE TRADITIONS OF N.A.

1. Our common welfare should come first; personal recovery depends on N.A. unity.
2. For our Group purpose there is but one ultimate authority — a loving God as He may express Himself in our Group conscience; our leaders are but trusted servants, they do not govern.
3. The only requirement for membership is a desire to stop using.
4. Each Group should be autonomous, except in matters affecting other Groups, or N.A. as a whole.
5. Each Group has but one primary purpose — to carry the message to the addict who still suffers.
6. An N.A. Group ought never endorse, finance, or lend the N.A. name to any related facility or outside enterprise, lest problems of money, property or prestige divert us from our primary purpose.
7. Every N.A. Group ought to be fully self-supporting, declining outside contributions.
8. Narcotics Anonymous should remain forever nonprofessional, but our Service Centers may employ special workers.
9. N.A., as such, ought never to be organized; but, we may create service boards or committees directly responsible to those they serve.
10. N.A. has no opinion on outside issues; hence, the N.A. name ought never to be drawn into public controversy.
11. Our public relations policy is based on attraction rather than promotion; we need always maintain personal anonymity at the level of press, radio and films.
12. Anonymity is the spiritual foundation of all our Traditions, ever reminding us to place principles before personalities.

