

**THE
RAINBOW
CONNECTION**

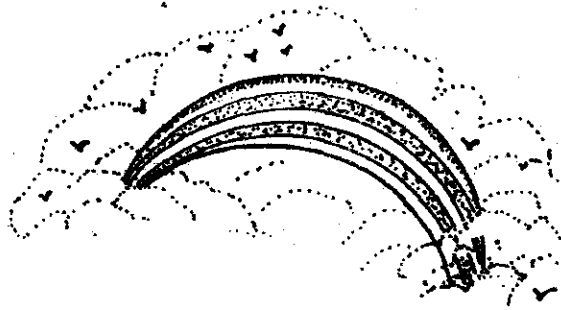
THE TWELVE STEPS OF N.A.

HOW IT WORKS

If you want what we have to offer, and are willing to make the effort to get it, then you are ready to take certain steps. These are suggested only, but they are the principles that made our recovery possible.

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 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.

This sounds like a big order, and we can't do it all at once, we didn't become addicted in one day, so remember — EASY DOES IT.



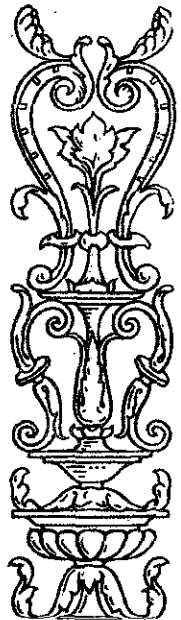
The Rainbow Connection

Metro Atlanta Groups of Narcotics Anonymous
" . . . caring and sharing the NA way . . . "

Volume 3 Number 1 January 1981

TABLE OF CONTENTS

ON ACCEPTANCE.....	P2
SHE LOST HER SMILE.....	3
THE RECOVERING ADDICT.....	4
DON'T QUIT.....	6
DEALING WITH DISAPOINTMENT.....	7
GIVING THANKS.....	9
HONESTY.....	10
DEAD END OR ONE WAY.....	10
AUTONOMY IN PROGRESS.....	11
WHAT I DO TO STAY CLEAN.....	14
PRESCRIPTION ADDICTION.....	16
A NEW LIFE.....	20
INSANITY.....	22
ANNOUNCEMENTS.....	23



Individual opinions expressed do not necessarily express those of NA as a whole. We welcome your story, article or perspective relating to NA recovery. Send to: The Rainbow Connection, 890 Atlanta Road, Marietta GA 30060



There are various 'home remedies' blaming everybody' self-pity and the rest, they all have one result: they make everybody, including ourselves, more miserable. They also add to our addiction problems without solving them. We have gone to several Narcotics Anonymous meetings, but are we still using? Shall we curse the program and die? No!

We do as the politician does, "If you can't beat them, join them. " If you can't stop using drugs on your own, try the NA program.

Oh sure, sure, just like that. All very well to say "Try the N.A. program" but it's another thing to do it. Just how do you go about it?

Very simple, so simple in fact, that you wouldn't try it unless you were desperate. If you are desperate enough, you'll try anything, so try something that works, try acceptance.

Acceptance of our addiction is the only real source of tranquility, serenity or peace. It is also known as surrender, bowing to the inevitable, joining them. It can be acquired if you have the urgent desire to help yourself, and are willing to ask your Higher Power to help you.

Luckily for us, the perfect formula for acceptance, as simple and practical as a can opener, is ready at hand. It is waiting for us to use it as millions have before. Written by Reinhold Niebuhr, it is known as The Serenity Prayer.

God, grant me the serenity to accept the things I cannot change, the courage to change the things that I can, and the wisdom to know the difference.

SKIP W.
ATLANTA

SHE LOST HER SMILE



On the shore one day, I passed a smiling child. An old man stood frowning down upon her. He said, "Your clothes are dirty." She said, "The sand feels good in my hands. I can make a sandcastle for you." He said, "The dirt is bad, now your clothes must be washed." She said, "The water is good; we can play in the waves and feel the earth move out from beneath our feet." He said, "Child, you will get salt in your eyes and smell like a fish." She said, "Love is good, can I hold your hand for a while?" He said, "Love is the root of all evil, it brings pain, jealousy, lies and hate." She looked up into the old man's eyes and said, "Then you tell me what is good." He thought for a while, then he said, "What I say is good, is good." The child lost her smile.

I am no more rational than any other living person. I searched the world over to find my purpose inside. My purpose is to love and to be loved.

I would like to thank all the loving people who knocked down my walls of protection, and introduced myself to me.



THANK YOU ,

MITIZIE



THE RECOVERING ADDICT



I am an alcoholic junkie, my name is Marie, and I am from Boston. Right now, I'm living in Miami, trying to start a new life, living clean and sober. I am in the programs of Alcoholics Anonymous and Narcotics Anonymous. I am writing to you tonight, to the helpless and hopeless addict, because tonight is one of those nights where you hang in there, if only by your fingernails.

My addiction has brought me to the point in my life where I have to get down on my knees and ask God to give me the courage and strength to stay clean and sober. I have been in the A.A. program for six years, and have been incapable of staying clean. I have been hospitalized close to fifty times for acute alcoholism and drug addiction. From Washington, Boston, Beachhill, McCleans psch., Bellevue N.Y., North Miami Gen., Las Vegas Memorial, etc. etc. etc. I tried methadone for two years, reality therapy, gestalt, aversion, psychiatry and antabuse. I have been helpless and hopeless since I smoked my first joint at thirteen, drank my first drink and shot my first bag of dope. I became a walking zombie. I am twenty-five years old and what is considered as gorgeous and very intelligent. My looks and body have taken me around the world. I have always been able to live like a millionairess. My looks have been one of my biggest drawbacks in staying sober.

I found the program of N.A. in Miami, and there, by the grace of God, I am clean and sober today. This is a miracle because I had found no power on Earth that could help me. Not my hospitalization, commitment to state hospitals, degradation, humiliations, or prison, nothing has kept me clean up to now; I have tried with every ounce of strength

and sanity. I came to N.A. to get clean, and through N.A. I have what I have always been yearning for; a Spiritual way of life. This is the big leagues, and to be a player in the big leagues is where it is for me today.

I have the experience of trying to get stright thinking I did not have to change all of my old ideas and ways. Thru my addiction I became a professional call girl because of my deep emotional problems and insecurity. I made money my god, my higher power, and the rest is history...

I have always wanted the best. Quality, thats what it's all about, being willing to give to live and to love those of us who have reached the point of dispair. We can't love ourselves because we've fallen so many times and we don't even believe there is any use in trying.

My message to you where ever you are, is no matter how bad today is, remember "This too shall pass." And if you don't believe that you can make it, there is a girl in Miami named Marie who knew nothing but how to be a lowlife bitch, who now is a decent, clean and sober junkie who loves you and prays that you will come to believe. All you have to have is the willingness to ask for help.



MARIE R.
MIAMI, FL.

I don't know what I'm going to do today....
But I know what I'm not going to do!

ANON.



===== DON'T QUIT =====

When things go wrong as they sometimes will,
When the road you're trudging seems all uphill,
When the funds are low, and the debts are high,
And you want to smile but you have to sigh,
When cares are pressing you down a bit,
Rest if you must, but don't you quit.

Life is strange with it's twists and turns,
As every one of us sometimes learns,
So many failures turn about,
He might have won if he'd stuck it out
Don't give up though the pace seems slow,
You may succeed with another blow.
Success is failure turned inside out,
The silver tint of that cloud of doubt.

You can never tell how close you are,
It may be near when it seems so far,
So stick to the fight when you're hardest hit,
It's when things get worse that you must not quit.

RICKEY F.



Life is only a day....





DEALING WITH DISAPPOINTMENTS

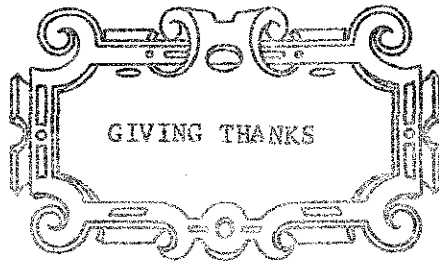
Through my inability to accept personal responsibility for my actions, I was actually creating my own problems during my active addiction. Today, I have benefited from the twelve steps in many ways but I still have trouble with this tendency to fault others for my own difficulties. I get relief from this tendency by doing the things I've learned from the program on a daily basis. The tendency can't get a grip on me and pull me down if I counterbalance it with Spiritual principles. I pray, I get to a meeting, I ask for help from someone who may have my answer or from the group itself, I am willing to try and be honest and openminded, I surrender to the fact that I can't handle it and never could. It is a relief to find that the program still works for me. Every other time I remember feeling good, it started going away as soon as I started feeling it. I had come to distrust feeling too good. The higher I had gone, the longer the falls were. The program of recovery I found in Narcotics Anonymous seemed and still seems to offer me a way of life in which I can feel, think, grow Spiritually, avoid relapse, practice freedom until I get good at it, live very close to others and limit my life to achievable goals.

(continued on next page)

When I face a disappointment today, I accept the fact that I have set myself up by placing unreal expectations on others or events. Unfortunately for me, I have had alot of practice at how it doesn't work. It's like I still react to alot of the things that happen in the course of the day but I just don't follow through on my reaction. Some mornings I even run through the personal equivalent of a meeting before I even open my eyes. I wake with stinking thinking, I feel guilty and personally responsible for something I cannot change. I am able to bring to mind and use what you have taught me to counter my unmanagable thinking. I experience relief immediatly and can feel my mental feet setteling back to the ground. These kind of experiences make me really grateful for the recovery from addiction you have given me. My Third Step, and what has come since gives me a basis for believing that there exists a force greater than myself which is constantly guiding me toward my greater happiness. From what my life has been like since my life and my will have been placed in the hands of my Higher Power, I want more. I haven't always understood what was happening but the flow of events has constantly lead me into a greater awareness of reality as it is. Without ever being able to see too much of what was happening, the program has carried me into a completely diferant way of life. Disappointment now means that I have something to look forward to beyond what I was expecting. I have just been amazed so many times clean and sober at the way things work out when I don't get loaded. I am also somewhat amazed each time things work out because I don't have a deal worked out with N.A. that I wont use as long as everything is peaches and cream. It is enough for me today that I don't have to go back to the anxiety and dispair that used to accompany me every hour of every day.



B. S.
ATLANTA LITERATURE
COMMITTEE



It's Thanksgiving day, and I'd like to take a little time to be very thankful for everything I have. I'm not using today, and I'm going to go to my parents house for dinner. In my active addiction, I'd already be out the door to party.

I'm going to bring Debbie (my girlfriend), Pete (my roommate) and my best buddy over to my parents with me. Before, my parents hated all the creeps that I hung out with. I'm very grateful for these new people in my life.

This year, in the program, I met a lot of people who shared of themselves with me. I learned alot and grew very much Spiritually. I'm very thankful for the conventions I've been to this year; The East Coast Convention, The Greenville Mini-Convention, The World Convention, and The World Literature Conferance. I'm very grateful for the people I've met at those conventions, and for the people here at home, who give me a very lot of love.

I'm very happy to be where I am today, and very thankful for meeting all of you. I'm also thankful for this program and all the opportunities it gives me.

The most important thing is that today I live without the use of drugs. May your Higher Power help you spread the message to the addict who still suffers.

Love,
George K.





I have found honesty to be the most difficult, but most rewarding thing to practice in my sobriety. Total honesty, without reservation. I heard that loud and clear when I came back into the program. It seemed like every meeting, or at least every other meeting, for the first couple of weeks, was honesty. I started to practice it, and have found it to be the foundation upon which my sobriety is built. I believe that if I get away from being totally honest with myself, I stand in danger of losing my sobriety. It is very easy for me to be dishonest while I appear to be honest as pie. But when I am dishonest, I lose touch with reality, and life becomes a game I play in my head. The situations in which being honest has been the most difficult have produced the most satisfying and rewarding results when I was honest. I've experienced feelings of happiness and serenity such as I've never known by dealing with problems honestly.

BRISTOL
LITERATURE COMMITTEE

DEAD END OR ONE WAY

Hello, I'm Dean and I'm a drug addict. I've found addiction to be a dead end street. In N.A. you're on a one way street going in the right direction. As long as you don't put anything in, as long as you don't take that fix, pill or toke, you're on a smoother highway to a cleaner life. On the dead end street, the roads are bumpy, heading nowhere. There is always the choice: which road to take, the one way, or the dead end.



DEAN S.
MARIETTA, GA



AUTONOMY in PROGRESS



The other night, I went over to an old, familiar place, but with a new and confusing feeling.

Sylvia, a sister in Narcotics Anonymous, was going to meet me there, and we were going to ride in her car to Central State Hospital, to hold a N.A. meeting for the drug addicted patients. We had agreed to meet at the local A.A. clubhouse, since it was familiar to both of us.

I waited a while for her, but she never arrived. Reluctantly, I decided to stay for an A.A. meeting. I had half an hour to wait, so I decided to socialize a little. (Nashville doesn't have their own N.A. clubhouse.)

As I looked around the room, I saw people who had once taken me in like loving parents, and I saw the walls of a house where, long ago, I had felt at home. Six and a half years ago, when I had first stumbled through that door, it had been the only place that I knew of that I could be myself. But, things had changed. When there weren't many drug addicts, or dual-addicted drunks, we had been encouraged to stick around. Now there was a statement being read before every meeting, requesting everyone to be prudent in their remarks to substitute relating to alcohol. And recently, a sign had been posted outlawing the use of profanity.

One of the oldtimers, who had been nursing intellectual as my first taste of sobriety, came up and asked me where I'd been, and why I had been leaving messages. I told him that I'd found that feeling of belonging that he had been talking about. I joined in to the Fellowship of Narcotics Anonymous. He mentioned that I didn't believe anymore that I couldn't cure or talk about my...

(continued on next page)

Being a good A.A. member, he quickly referred me to the chapter in the big book (6. Into Action) that says we can no longer afford to fight anything or anybody. I had to admit the truth of his words, and I thanked him.

There were other N.A. members at the club that night. They were chiefly there to hear the speakers, but a couple were simply seeking shelter. Before we went upstairs to the meeting, two of us held a mini-NA discussion. We sat together later on in the A.A. meeting held together by a common bond.

Meeting over, chit-chat over, I bundled up and walked out into the chilly night air. Walking the mile home, my thoughts were on the people in my N. A. group, not on the meeting I had just left. Just as soon as I got home, I took off my hat and coat, and called Sylvia.

She was loaded. After two years of chemical abstinence, after over a year of active participation in Narcotics Anonymous, after helping to build our little Fellowship here, she had stuck a needle in her arm. Her boyfriend was over there too, completely bombed. I thought back to a year ago, when the two of them had been the very back bone of Nashville N.A.. Could I tell her to look something up in A.A.'s Big Book, only substitute words, personalities and actions to fit her situation? No. That just wasn't good enough. I had no way of reaching her. So I just told her that I cared, and that I was willing to help her stay clean, whenever she would let me.

I didn't start crying until I hung up the phone, simply because that's how long it took for the brutal reality of our conversation to register with me. I reviewed our conversation. There were two basic feelings that she had expressed over and over. One was resentment over "What will so-and-so think." The other was self-pity, with that 'what the hell' attitude hanging onto and dripping off of every syllable she spoke.

Then, I looked at me. I could easily see myself in my sister addict. Less than hour before, I sat



in a room full of other addicts, isolating myself in my own mind, out of needless spite. True, some of the A.A. members had little use for me and my brothers of N.A., but most of them had been really helpful and loving with us. I sure couldn't afford to shut them out of my life completely.

I got a phone call from one of my N.A. brothers in Atlanta. There, there are two clubhouses specifically for Narcotics Anonymous. He told me about the dance they had held the night before, about the enthusiasm the groups share. I was jealous at first, but then I felt a surge of hope for our little pack of dope fiends. If Atlanta can have forty or fifty meetings a week, so can we!

Later, I lay in bed, half dreaming, half awake. A movie came into my head of Sylvia, stretching out in a beat up arm chair, with a needle plunged into her long, pale arm.

The sun streamed in through the window to awaken me. I rose with a new feeling about the day and about the future. As I thanked my Higher Power for the new day, I rushed out into it to see what I could do to change things.

First, I made a few phone calls. I finally talked to a counselor that said the chances were good that we could meet in a nearby crisis center on one of the nights that there hasn't been any N.A.N available here. Then, remembering a day when the only thing that came between me and a fix, pill or toke had been a copy of the Rainbow Connection, I sat down at the typewriter and began to write this article. True, it's not a book. True, one more meeting isn't like having our own clubhouse. But that's two steps closer to N.A. autonomy than we had been the day before.

I no longer resent the A.A. community in our city. I just know that we need autonomy, even autonomy from them. If we want the suffering addict to have a place he can go where he can speak as he does naturally, and be himself, recovering, then



we are responsible for providing it. No other group can be expected to help the drug addict. But, we can. If we want to be free in any clubhouse, then we'll just have to get a clubhouse of our own. And, if we want a book, that we don't have to rewrite to fit our addictions, then we will just have to write that book! The suffering addict is nobody's business but ours. And, we can carve out a future for him, if we work, clean and sober, together.



GINA H.
NASHVILLE, TN.



HOW I STAY CLEAN



Usually I get up and pray that my Higher Power help me to stay clean. Then I turn my will and my life over to His care. I pray that God, as I may or may not understand Him for that day, remove every defect of my will that stands in the way of my usefulness to Him and to my fellow man. I pray to be shown the way of patience, tolerance, kindness and love. I read the Twenty-four Hour a Day Book and the Day By Day.

Throughout my day, I am in the downtown areas of a big city and I try to stay away from people who use drugs. Maybe this is a little paranoid, but I remember that, for me, one is too many and a thousand never enough. That helps me to stay awight. In I rino myself thinking about drugs, I pray that my Higher Power remove the obsession or compulsion at once. I say not to get too

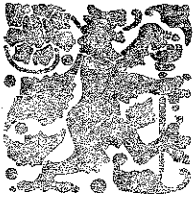
hungry, angry, lonely or tired. Eating if I'm hungry, praying if I'm too angry, calling someone if I'm lonely, and backing off and taking a break if I'm tired. In this way, I'm being good to myself so I don't think about using, and I try to be desperately grateful for my being clean and sober.

This helps me to maintain what is termed as my Spiritual condition and is the only defence that I have against relapse. When I start to worry too much about tomorrow, or feel too bad about yesterday, I remember that all I have is today, I can't do anything about yesterday, and tomorrow never comes. I try to make it one day at a time, I feel better that way.

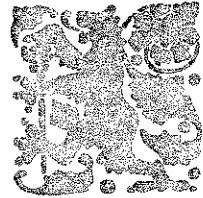
When I get home at night, I may or may not thank God for keeping me clean. I always thank him at bed time, it helps me remember that I can't, He can and all I did was the footwork. It is important for me to remember that God is doing for me what I could not do for myself. I go to meetings, do service work and help clean up after meetings or come early to make coffee. These things help me to stay clean one day at a time.

ATLANTA LITERATURE COMMITTEE





PRESCRIPTION ADDICTION



Drug manufacture and innovation in modern times has created an availability of potentially addictive drugs never before seen in the history of man. One of the ancient dreams of men in all seems to be coming true. The ability of modern drug technology to combat disease and alleviate human suffering is a great blessing. Hidden in this blessing is a cruel reversal of effect called drug addiction. The innate susceptibility to this disease through genetic factors of behavioral inclinations is of little concern to addicts recovering through the Narcotics Anonymous program. The way is not so important, the what to do is our chief question. We feel it is important, however, to share the experience of many of our members to benefit others who may suffer from our disease and not know it.

To begin with, there is no way to take enough safeguards with most addictive types of drugs. Inexplicably, many people are exposed to them and show no evidence of addiction. Others can become addicted through minimal usage. What we feel is most important is that the disease of addiction be recognized by councilors, physicians and persons concerned with the laws of our country. We believe that we have a positive solution for anyone with a drug problem and an honest desire for help.

Habitual usage, compulsive behavior and denial seem to be the main symptoms of our disease. To be able to receive the help we have to offer, most of us have had to reach a personal point of pain which

makes it possible for us to seek help. The trouble with addiction is that in the early stages, the individual may not only meet the demands put on them by their fellows, they often exceed them. The assurance is that if all looks right, all is right. As the disease progresses, the addict becomes expert at avoiding detection and manipulating others to enable them to continue their addiction regardless of the trouble they cause. In other words in the early stages friendly caution can be made to seem foolish and in the latter stages, the addict is usually the very last to admit their need for help. When they do, who can help them understand the helpless confusion they experience? The most sincere and constructive efforts of some of the nations best doctors, in all specialties, have shown meager results. New breakthroughs may come in the future, but it seems likely to us that the principal of one addict helping another pyramids and the solution has begun in our program.

In the past, users of hard drugs, obtained through various sources, made up the majority of our membership. Their cleanliness has laid the bedrock of our Fellowship. Today, more and more addicts of all types turn to us, and this article is addressed to their needs. We feel that prescription addicts outnumber all other types. The Twelve Steps of Narcotics Anonymous guide us in our recovery through admission, finding a power greater than ourselves to aid us in our recovery and restoring health and sanity to our lives. Meeting and exchanging viewpoints with other addicts allows us to recover at our own rate. Helping others as soon as we are able fills us with a sense of purpose. As we observe recovery in others, it slowly dawns on us that we too are recovering. Remedies to life long dilemmas appear in a form we can use, and problems too great for us to handle, get handled. Abstinence from all mood changing drugs is the basis of our program. Many otherwise useful medicines are poisonous to us all and any casual use of medication can result in relapse into our addiction. Those who live and make it back keep us well informed of the fact that however bad it may seem from time to time, there

is nothing so bad that a relapse can't make a whole lot worse.

The progression of the prescription addict is roughly the same as that of a person addicted to illicit drugs. To complicate detection of his disease the prescription addict may only appear eccentric in the eyes of his friends and family. Having to take medication because the doctor says so precludes criticism and is the ultimate license to use. Prolonged and severe addiction is made possible by the very comfort and familiarity with surroundings common to prescription addicts. Some never even realize that they are chemically dependant until their prescription lapses some awful weekend and they go into withdrawal. Symptoms of addiction are easily mistaken for normal anxiety, depression and fear. Obsession or compulsion may be confused with dedication and perseverance. In time, however, the symptoms will worsen and questions regarding the individuals behavior will appear. Most of us have become very grateful in the course of our recovery that we have a disease from which we can recover in the sense that our lives return to normal or nearly normal in the course of abstinence and working the Twelve Steps.

Drug use or any sort of self-medication will lead us back into active addiction. We caution our members strongly against seeking treatment from any doctor not fully aquainted with our disease or withholding the fact of our addiction from a doctor. We trust that our medical records will be kept confidential. This is one of the danger zones in our recovery. We cannot recover overnight and we can't expect sincere physicians to revise their opinion or methods of treatment overnight. Our place is to help the addict who still suffers; especially the ones who are asking for help.

The most successful way to get help that NA has to offer is by attending an NA meeting. Most addicts will find some way to defeat the good the program has to offer them if they are given too much hearsay to work with. Many who come to a meeting or two then stay away a while, come back with a more open mind. Active addiction is a good convincer. One of the characteristics prescription addicts have in common with other types of addicts is the ability to see

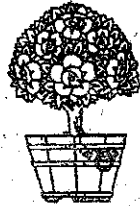
their present difficulties as passing things, even after years of misery and loneliness. We are open to thier needs. In the program, we learn that if we are hurting, there is a reason. Although sometimes we simply have to let time pass to get relief, there are many things we can do. The Twelve Steps guide us in many of these areas. If we are wrong, we can promptly admit it and save ourselves the time and trouble of attempting to justify our wrongdoing. If we find ourselves in trouble with self-will, we can pull on the group or the power of a loving God to restore us to sanity. If we have insurmountable difficulties, we can take them to our groups and most likely find one or more person who has sucessfully faced these same problems. What worked for them may very well work for us. Above all, the identity we find with fellow recovering addicts, who like us, face jail, institutions and death if we return to using, gives us the basis for a truely new life. One in which we no longer have to hide the true nature of our difficulty. When we no longer have to hide, we can begin to live.

Bo S. - 1978





A NEW LIFE



Recovery is the daily practice of a spiritual maintenance program. Recovery does not take away from; instead it aids me in becoming a working part in the world around me.

When I came to the program, seeking help, there were three things that were more important than anything else: a way to live and enjoy life, to find my place in this world (something told me I wasn't like everyone else) and a good woman (not necessarily in that order). All of these things meant one thing to me, happiness.

Through several years of trying to make myself happy with cars, women and dope, I was more unhappy and less satisfied than when it all started. Today I see everything I did to "enjoy life" was for one purpose, to fill a void deep inside that couldn't be filled. Since I was powerless and unmanageable, I couldn't see it. It was all someone else's fault. I was in the wrong place at the wrong time and things never went as planned! Looking in the mirror was hell! One side could see what was happening, the other side wouldn't accept it. I was caught in an illusion of if-only's and just one more try. I had accepted a life of pain. Looking back even the best of times were hard and the pain inside never went away, just sometimes it was weak and sometimes it was strong.

I had reached the point where I could no longer see reality. My fantasies were my only hope and I truly believed that some day they would all come true and I would be happy. Kind of narrow, ain't it?

Today I have feelings, real feelings of love, joy, hope, excitement, sadness (of varying degrees) and friendship. Before, I was either super excited or super depressed, very little in between. Today, I can empty ashtrays after a meeting and feel good about myself. I needed that desperately when I got here. I didn't too much of myself then. Today it's

different. I've seen some good things happen to me and have worked to do a few good things.

My spirit's better. It's not only awake, it's alive. I can see a lot more of God as I understand Him. A God that likes trees, mountains, lakes and small creeks even. A God that cares for John, willing to help John, willing to be John's friend, if I let Him.

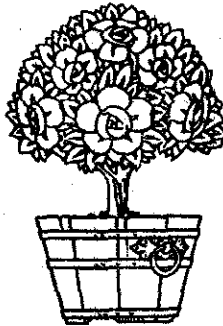
I have true friends, a place I can go and be welcomed. A place where I can get help (if I ask) and give help back.

A place where I am needed and a place that I need, a place where I belong.

I have grown a lot. I can see a little more reality and live a little more reality. I can tell you which ends up and be sure of it. I know peace of mind, serenity and happiness, but most of all, I can live and enjoy life.

There's more to recovery than staying clean and sober. That's just the beginning, one day at a time.

John H. - Athens





INSANITY



It would seem there is a "brother-sister" relationship between the insanity of our obsessions and compulsions. I remember vividly an experience I had while still using.

On my way to work one day, not having any "smoke", I brought two Miller 12 oz. bottles of beer. Finishing them quickly, I began to think about a friend of mine who had returned from New Hampshire. His car had broken down in Virginia and upon his returning home, I had promised him to go up the next weekend and get it. The more I thought about it, the better the idea to go to New Hampshire sounded. (Obsession)

Upon arriving at work, I decided "lets go" and promptly left work. That Friday, we left though there were many obstacles in the way that week. Self-will run riot cleared the way! My compulsion had grown so strong that there was nothing I could do to stop it. I was in the grip of an insane force to go to New Hampshire. Two weeks later I returned home, beaten again. The dream and the idea of what it was going to be like and the reality of what it was were two different things.

In nearly all of my obsessions, using or clean and sober, the obsession, compulsion and insanity work in a vicious circle. The obsession and compulsion to use have been removed, yet it remains on in other areas of my daily living.

A way out? I think not, yet through the Twelve Steps I have found a reasonable degree of relief. Thank God for a Program such as ours.

John H. - Gainesville
July 1980



ANNOUNCEMENTS

January 31 thru February 8-- Third World Literature Conference. To be held at Memphis State University, Memphis, Tennessee. For information, call Joseph P. at 901-529-8779

February 1st--Atlanta Area Service Committee meeting at The Highland Club at 11 am.

Saturday February 14 - Third Anniversary Party for the Clubhouse of the Rising Sun. Free dance to follow.

Sunday February 15 - Southeastern Central Regional Service Committee Meeting, 4:00 pm at the Rising Sun.

Friday February 27 - Marietta Area Service Committee meets at 10:00 pm at the Rising Sun.

The Annual Panama City trip is being scheduled for sometime in late April or May. Flyers should be out soon.

June 26, 27 and 28 - Second East Coast Convention of NA. Trenton State University, Trenton, New Jersey. For information write:

Second East Coast Convention of NA
P.O. Box 1136
Doylestown, PA 18901

September 10, 11, 12 and 13 - 11th World Convention of Narcotics Anonymous, Miami Beach, Florida. For information write:

WCNA - 11
P.O. Box 694594
Miami, FL 33169

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
Physicians and Surgeons Hosp.

Canton Group — No. Ga. Mental Health
Highland Group — Highland Club

11:00 am Meeting — Highland Club

Closed discussion—

Rising Sun

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
Log Cabin Group
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.

**RAINBOW CONNECTION
SUBSCRIPTION FORM
MAILING ADDRESS:**

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

CITY _____

STATE _____

ZIP _____ PHONE _____

***** RATES *****

One year (12 issues) \$6.00. Checks payable to
the Rainbow Connection, 890 Atlanta Road,
Marietta, GA 30060.

USE THIS FORM FOR CHANGE OF ADDRESS.

THE TWELVE TRADITIONS OF N.A.

WHY IT WORKS

We keep what we have only with vigilance and just as freedom for the individual comes from the Twelve Steps so freedom for the groups springs from our traditions.

As long as the ties that bind us together are stronger than those that would tear us apart, all will be well.

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 out to be fully self-supporting, declining outside contributions.
 8. Narcotics Anonymous should remain forever non-professional, but our Service Centers may employ special workers.
 9. N.A., as such ought never be organized; but we 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 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.
-