

THE RAINBOW CONNECTION

APRIL 1983

The Rainbow Connection



" ... caring and sharing the N.A. way ... "

Volume Five Number Two April 1983

CONTENTS

FLIGHT _____ page 2	GROWTH _____ page 13
CLEAN TODAY_ page 5	ACCEPTANCE ____ page 15
ROAD TO RECOVERY _ page 7	TIME _____ page 16
JUST FOR TODAY _____ page 8	ONE LINERS page 17
HOPE _____ page 10	ANNOUNCEMENTS_ page 17
SURRENDER _ page 12	CALENDAR _____ page 18
	STAFF REPORT _page 20

Individual opinions expressed do not necessarily represent those of N.A. as a whole.

© Copyright 1983 - Rainbow Connection



FLIGHT

I would like to tell you of a flight I have had the privilege of taking for the last two years. This flight is not of the ordinary, but it is one of a mystical nature. It is kind of like the heights I once tried to reach by using alcohol and drugs. But I found none too soon that the alcohol and the chemicals were demons of deception. They flew me around in circles. The chemicals offered me only an illusion of a flight to paradise. When the illusion was crushed, I realized I was crashing to the ground at a fatal speed. It was time to pay the devil his dues. Fear, loneliness, and depression set in. My world was crashing down all around me. I was caught in a terrible cycle of self-condemnation and fear of impending doom. I was at my bottom and I was truly lost. I realized, at this point, probably only as an addict can, the meaning of the word lost. Darkness and terror dogged my every thought. I was hopeless and completely powerless to do anything about it.

To some, at this point, death seemed the only answer, but those who tried and failed found themselves only in worse shape. Finally, after all the pain and misery and the feeling that nothing or nobody could help me, I became willing to try a new drug-free flight with a pilot who knew the way to all the places I was looking for. I didn't know where the places were or how to get to them, but my new pilot revealed

all of this and more to me.

My new pilot has me on a flight into a realm of spirituality. The destinations I have reached are states known as peace of mind, freedom, and serenity. The price of a ticket on this flight is relatively cheap; it requires only that you be willing to trust in your pilot. On this flight I have found many others. Like myself, they have found a destiny and purpose in life. Together we have found the way to go places and achieve things that brilliant men have only dreamed of.

On this flight, evil dares not tread, for its destruction would be inevitable. Fear, loneliness, and despair become only fleeting thoughts of distant memories. This flight is one of truth, life, and love; it can stay this way too, so long as the price of willingness is paid. However, there can be sudden jolts of turbulence. Turbulence for me, almost always arises out of whirlwinds such as fear and doubt. But I have learned that these whirlwinds always arise when I try to take over control of the flight. It seems as though I forget the willingness to a pilot better than myself who knows the best course for me.

But even though the pilot knows I am going to get off course and run into all kinds of complications, he still allows me to take control. I use to wonder why the pilot let me get into such a mess, but of late I have figured this out. I believe that my pilot loves me so much he is willing to let me try my own wings because he would never hurt me by forcing me to do anything against my will. I also believe in this love there is the lesson of perfect humility; for my pilot has all the power in the universe, and he can do any-

thing he wished with me or to me. But his love and respect for me and my feelings is so genuine that he would never force me against my will. So my pilot lets me take off under my own power and he lets me feel the turbulence of fear and doubt; but he never leaves the cockpit. He's always there waiting lovingly and patiently to take back control if only I ask. Then once again, I am able to experience peaceful and serene flight.

As long as I let God do the piloting, all will be well. I will overcome my earthly bounds and I will fly with the Spirit to the ends of time. With the Spirit I will pierce darkness with the light of truth.

Anonymous





CLEAN TODAY
(A Perspective)

When I was being me, just acting and reacting naturally the way I was, people said, "Don't mind him, he's crazy."

When I became one of them, they said, "Don't mind him, he's loaded."

When I got to Narcotics Anonymous, the people in the program said, "Don't mind him, he's clean."

Today, it doesn't matter what other people say because I use the 12 Steps as a design for living that really works for me.

I used drugs as a defense for how I felt and an excuse for what I did. Now I have the 12 Steps to deal with all my living situations.

Because of this, the short term things pass without my having to dwell on them ad infinitum. When I react, I know, "This too shall pass." I can let it pass today because (1) I accept how I'm feeling and (2) I admit it to you.

When something happens to upset me serenely, it's usually a hurt caused by my taking my will and life back from the care of God. This taking my will and life back from the care of God results in hurt feelings of frustration or disappointment when things don't go the way I expect things to go.

When I feel hurt, I get angry at myself or others because I'm feeling hurt.

When I get angry, I feel guilty because

"I should be better than this."

When I feel guilty, I get depressed because I start to worry if I'm going to feel this way the rest of my life, "When will I ever change?"

When I get depressed, I feel bored. The depressed worrying so drains my energy and vitality, I don't have the will to do anything about it, so I'm bored. So, when I feel bored today, it's a signal or barometer that I'm depressed about something.

Knowing I'm depressed, helps me look to see if I'm feeling guilty about something and to look at what's making me feel guilty.

Feeling guilty, helps me look at where I might be angry, Having angry feelings, helps me look at where I might be taking my will and life back from the care of God, thus causing the feelings of hurt, disappointment or frustration because things aren't going the way I expect.

When I turn my will and life over to the care of God, everything's on schedule. Applying the 12 Steps to all living situations, helps me live or cope with the schedule God has for me. The 12 Step action of this program allows a grace period of action where doing the action of the 12 Steps gets me through the situation without becoming self-obsessed by it. This too shall pass.

When using the 12 Steps, enough duration passes allowing me to have the serenity to live with even unresolved situations, have God lift them on schedule or they resolve themselves. Day by Day it works.

By the Grace of God,
Clean Today,
Dean



Road To Recovery

To remain drug-free for a day requires the desire to stop using. And the desire must be honest and come from within. People come to NA to solve their personal problems. They wanted to straighten out their lives, but didn't feel the need to stay clean. Most of them did not stay with us because if the desire to stop using is not greater than the urge that calls them back to drugs, their chances for sobriety are small. The road to recovery lies in front of the one who knows there is nothing behind him to go back to and that to change his present situation, he must stop using. He is the one we can reach out to and help. He is the one most like us, not a lot of expectations and big goals, just the desire to get clean and learn how to live. And this is enough for the beginning. Their religious or political views need not coincide with ours. In NA, we wish only to help someone who wants to help himself.

The program requires people who have the desire to stop using, because it will only work if a person wants to do something about their problem. Negative people or ideas will only hinder the beneficial use of the program for themselves.



unknown

JUST FOR TODAY

JUST FOR TODAY, I will try to live through this day only, and not tackle all my problems at once, I can do something for twelve hours that would appall me if I felt that I had to keep it up for a lifetime.

JUST FOR TODAY, I will be happy. This assumes to be true what Abraham Lincoln said, that "most folks are as happy as they make up their minds to be."

JUST FOR TODAY, I will adjust myself to what is, and not try to adjust everything to my own desires. I will take my "luck" as it comes and fit myself to it.

JUST FOR TODAY, I will try to strengthen my mind. I will study. I will learn something useful. I will not be a mental loafer. I will read something that requires effort, thought and concentration.

JUST FOR TODAY, I will exercise my soul in three ways: I will do somebody a good turn, and not get found out; if anybody knows of it, it will not count. I will do at least two things I don't want to do—just for exercise. I will not show anyone that my feelings are hurt; they may be hurt, but today I will not show it.

JUST FOR TODAY, I will be agreeable. I will look as well as I can, dress becomingly. keep my voice low, be courteous, criticize not one bit I won't find fault with anything, nor try to improve or regulate any-

body but myself.

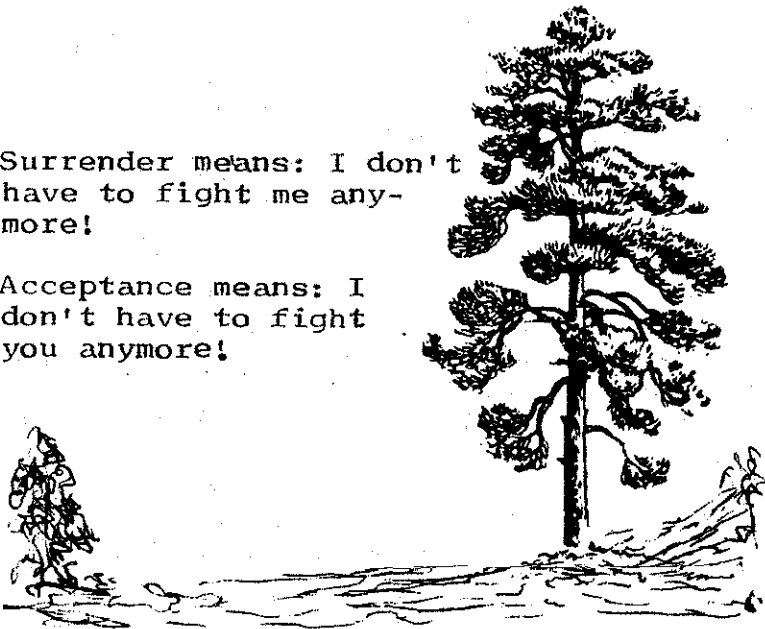
JUST FOR TODAY, I will have a program, I may not follow it exactly, but I will have it. I will save myself from two pests: hurry and indecision.

JUST FOR TODAY, I will have a quiet half hour all by myself, and relax. During this half hour, sometime, I will try to get a better perspective of my life.

JUST FOR TODAY, I will be unafraid. Especially, I will not be afraid to enjoy what is beautiful, and to believe that as I give to the world, so the world will give to me.

Surrender means: I don't have to fight me anymore!

Acceptance means: I don't have to fight you anymore!





HOPE

After our latest Area Service Meeting, I left feeling more serene and somewhat different than I had from the prior meeting. This time there were feelings of teamwork and a strong sense of accomplishment that I hadn't felt before. Although I lived through the previous frustration, hurt, and resentment, it was hard to accept and apply to my daily program at the time.

I feel we are all starting to learn the value of communication and a positive means of self-expression that we have needed in these committee gatherings for a long time. However, we still have a lot to learn, believe me. It is very important for us to realize that we are equals in our service efforts. Our Service Structure designates certain areas of more responsibility to some elected individuals. This has been done for the maintenance, growth, and survival of the combined effort we are striving to put forth for the welfare of our area. We will gain few results amidst the confusion, frustration, and destruction of a power struggle. We already have the Power greater than ourselves and that Power should prevail throughout our endeavors no matter how each of us may understand our God of choice.

Where would we be if the dedicated Trusted Servants who carried on while others grew and became ready and willing to get involved in service work had given up? Faith, determination and a lot of hope gave them strength in that phase of our development. They cannot simply step back

all at once. Deep down they know that they must be willing to share what now has grown out of the old capacities that used to be simple when we just had two meetings in the heart of this area. We all know it is not easy to let go of things. Slowly the work must be divided and given to the best possible persons that can handle and follow-up on their new found (and needed) responsibilities in the program. We all must be patient with our people and remember that we all are addicts. Let us not forget our primary purpose!

Amidst the "flying personalities" that prevail in the discussion sessions, emotions can sometimes get away from us. Unfortunately, a lot of us can still be stubborn at times. Through the Power of prayer and love we need to get each other through those trying times, we can still deal with the business of NA and learn valuable communication lessons for our daily programs.

Service is a result of recovery and recovery is a result of service. Each one of us is recovering from addiction because one or more people have made a service effort to help us stay clean. The NA program is a set of principles as laid out by the Twelve Steps. Steps 11&12 set forth the principle of service. It is our experience that eventually we have to apply all the principles of the program to our lives, to the best of our ability to stay clean.

Speaking well of service and counseling with those of us who do not understand, provides an increase of emotional support for our service effort. Service alone will not keep us clean, although it does enhance our recovery and personal growth. Most of all; if there were no service effort, none of us would be here!

SURRENDER

I am very grateful that the God of my understanding has allowed me to surrender gradually -- in ever deepening levels, for the surrender which is possible today would have been impossible just a few short months ago.

The willingness to admit that my way was no longer acceptable did not come easily. I did not want to admit defeat, but I was certainly defeated on all levels -- spiritually, emotionally, and physically when I first came into the program. If my way was no longer the path to follow, I had to find another.

At first I felt the surrender was a one time thing -- but it wasn't -- and I could no longer just turn my addiction over to God. The step says, "We made a decision to turn our lives over -- and when I could finally surrender my will and my entire life to the care of a power greater than myself -- the desperation began to fade. Each area of my life has required separate and daily surrender. There are times when I refuse to surrender an area of my life for a while, but the pain of trying to do things on my own becomes too great.

It is then that I have to admit defeat. And again ask for the help that is always available. Sometimes it really hurts to admit I'm no longer in control, for control was the one thing I always wanted. But, surrender, not control is the key to my recovery. Surrender, not struggle, is the only way I have found to the serenity I could never find while using drugs. It's ironic, but for years, I fought serenity, But I am beginning to find it now that I have stopped fighting.



GROWTH AND FRIENDSHIP

When I came to Narcotics Anonymous, I was told to go to meetings, work the Steps, get a sponsor, and don't use. I did what I was told because I wanted to be happy. I went to meetings every day, got the sponsor, didn't use, and tried to work the Steps.

Getting a sponsor and using a sponsor are two different things. I never called her, I'd stop by once in a while and chat, but I never could open up to her. I soon realized that I needed to find someone to be my friend. A friend loves you, they see the good and the bad in you. Your friends are your needs answered. A field which you can sow with love and reap with thanksgiving. Friendship is the mutual trust and honesty that lets us be ourselves at all times. It is a special blessing from God, so I prayed.

God gave me that special friend. I asked her to be my sponsor and from that day on my life was changed. We have become very close. We have shared the everyday "chores" of living and the joys and sorrows of time. We laugh and cry together, it seemed we were never apart.

She helped me work the Steps one at a time and when it was time for me to pick up a chip, she always made it special for me. We were even able to celebrate our birthdays together. Her second, my first. She made it a very unforgettable day for me.

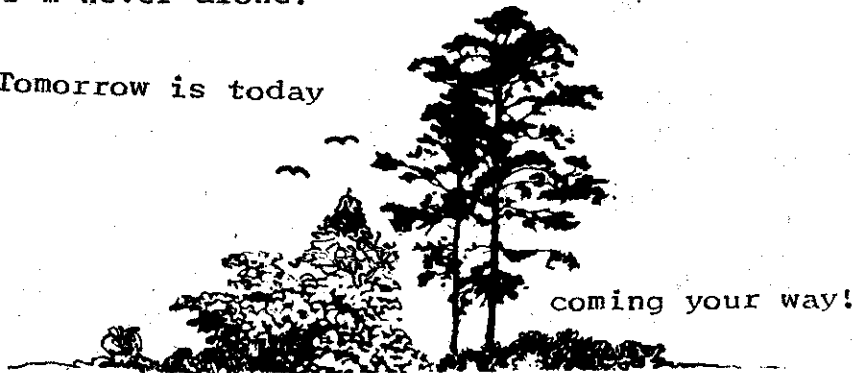
We both worried that maybe we were too close. But we worked very hard at being honest and open-minded with each other.

After a year and a half, we are closer than ever. We have gone through a lot of changes, some of which were very scary. We began to see our lives growing in two different directions. Mine more and more involved in service and her's more involved in her family. I think that both of us were so comfortable in the security of our friendship, that neither of us would talk about the change that was happening. It wasn't long before the hurt got so bad that we couldn't stand it any longer. We had both talked to someone about the situation, but it wasn't until we talked to each other and God that things improved.

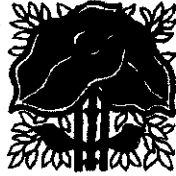
Our friendship is a gift from God. The sensitive understanding, endless patience, and special love were all still there. Our lives are growing and changing but, that doesn't mean we can't still share life together. Someone told me that sometimes we outgrow our sponsors. I thank God that we can grow together instead of apart.

I wanted to share this with you. My friends are very important to me, without them, I would be alone. Thank God today I'm never alone.

Tomorrow is today



coming your way!



ACCEPTANCE



I've run away from myself for so long,
Trying to escape from the girl who
Always seemed just about to catch up.
That one day, I just got tired of running
And I turned around to face this shadow
of mine.

And I see a child who never grew up-
A person I know and yet, is so unfamiliar.
We talk over old times and memories come
back that we share.

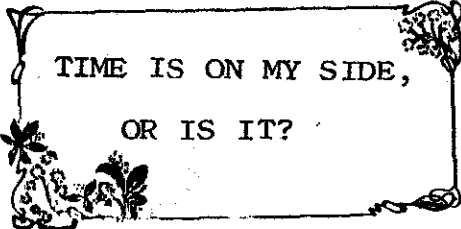
She's a child, but a woman, too,
She's a wife and a mother
She has all the feelings I never shared
with another.

We look at each other and it's like look-
ing into a mirror.
The tears from my eyes fall on her cheeks
And the smile on her face spreads across
mine.
And I know I don't have to run anymore.



Nan M.
Decatur N.A.
Alabama





TIME IS ON MY SIDE,
OR IS IT?

I have a deep and almost burning feeling of concern inside, It is for my fellow addict, the one who still suffers. The one who has "X" amount of months or years of sobriety and leaves the fellowship, returning to using and suffers like never before.

My own experience of using again after being in this program (once for fourteen months, once for sixteen months) comes back. Sickness, remorse, guilt, and mental agony are some of the feelings I experienced coming back to this fellowship.

But, you already know this if you are one that made it back to the fellowship. The feelings of self-condemnation, because once you had what other people wanted and now it's time to listen to those other people. These feelings I share with you out of my experience.

With time on my side, I too returned to using drugs. Of course, drugs were not the answer. They only shortened my length of time.



ONE LINERS

If I want my brother to be what I want him to be, I have missed what he is.

If we try giving it our best, then what we do will suffice until we can do better.

Time heals all wounds but talking about our pain is the best medicine.

The first step to understanding is hearing; the first step to hearing is listening.

In opening up to others, we begin to see more of ourselves.

In living for yesterday and tomorrow, we miss today.

***** ANNOUNCEMENTS *****

THE BOOK (ongoing recovery). The WSO says everything's okay. World Literature says cease and desist. More to be revealed next month. Support WSC 83!

N.A. WAY needs your help! You can help, by reading and evaluating new unpublished material, through Marietta Lit. and other area Literature committees. The N.A. Way put out seven issues in a row, addicts in recovery sure can write!

The first regional literature conference was held last month in Fresno, California to work on new material for an NA book on the Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions. It was very successful conference introduced a lot of new material. The effort will be reviewed at this years WSC. Great going, California!

The Georgia Region has finally established

a regional office. The address is GR50, 3166 Maple Dr., Atlanta, GA 30305 or call 266-8179. Please visit and support!

Literature writing sub-committee has been formed by the GR5CNA to deal with our growing need for new literature on guidelines and ect. Anyone interested contact your ASR.

New Area has been formed in Roswell, GA. More to come!

Marietta Literature Committee has come out with a catalogue of old and new archives and review material for study and reference available to Fellowship at cost of copies.

Help needed in all areas of NA service. There's a place for you!

***** CALENDAR *****

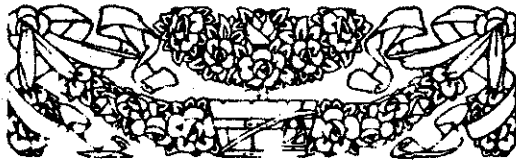
- OHIO REGIONAL CONVENTION May 27-29 First Annual "We Made a Decision" Columbus, OH Call: (614)486-3280, (513)399-2231, (614)486-3280 (513)399-2231, (614)889-5673, Write: ORCNA I, P.O. Box 451, Dublin, OH 43017.
- 4th EAST COAST CONVENTION - Bethel, PA June 24-26. "Freedom Through Fellowship" Lehigh University. For information, call (215)322-8896 or (215)776-1548. Write 4th ECCNA, P.O. Box 4475, Allentown, PA, 19101.
- FLORIDA'S 2nd REGIONAL CONVENTION - Ft. Lauderdale, FL July 1-4. "A Vision of Hope" Galt Hotel. Write 2nd FRCNA. P.O. Box 23575, Ft. Lauderdale, FL 33307.
- THE PANAMA CITY TRIP "Fun In the Sun" sponsored by the Georgia Region at the

Gulf Breeze Hotel May 13-16. Call (404) 355-1296.

- 1st ANNUAL STAMPEDE FOR SERENITY CAMPOUT
Sponsored by Northern Nevada Area July 15-17 at Stampede Reservoir, 19 miles west of Reno, NV. Call before July 1st, NA Hotline (702)322-4811 or write: Northern Nevada ASC, P.O. Box 3394, Sparks NV 89431. s
- 4th ANNUAL B.C.N.A.R. "Serene Summer Festival" July 1-3. Call (604)383-3553. Write P.O. Box 384, Station "E", Victoria, B.C
- LET'S PRAY FOR WSC '83 - Spiritual Retreat at Cloudland Canyon State Park April 30 May 2 near Chattanooga, TN. Sponsored by the Volunteer Region.
- SECOND ANNUAL NORTH ALABAMA AREA RALLY "Freedom In The Valley", June 19, Monte Santo State Park, Huntsville, AL 11 a.m. till Register by June 5th. Write; Patty, P.O. Box 5133, Decatur, AL 35601 or call Bill B. (205) 353-0924.
- W.C.N.A. XIII "The Impossible Dream" September 1-4, New York World Convention of Narcotics Anonymous to be held at the World Trade Center. Write: WCNA XIII P.O. Box 127, Jackson Heights, NY 11372 or Call: (212)570-7070.
- WORLD SERVICE CONFERENCE OF N.A. - Santa Monica, CA May 4-8 Retail Hall, 1410 2nd Street, Santa Monica, CA. Call: (213) 553-7499, (213)374-3197.
- Want to have a great year? Why not subscribe to the Auckland newsletter called the "New View" from New Zealand. Send two dollars to; N.A. (Auckland), P.O. Box 6520 Wellesley Street, Auckland, I, New Zealand. N.A. is a world wide Fellowship reach out!

Contributors: Members wishing to send in articles and announcements are essential to any newsletter. Your support is crucial.

!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!
!PRAY FOR THE WSC 83!
!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!



STAFF REPORT

Here we go again! It's good to be back! With the help of Sheryl, Jaye, John, Bo, Nancy, Greg, Susie, Rick, our subscribers and contributors, as well as the Marietta ASC and the power of a loving God as expressed in the group consciousness, we are going to try to come out on a monthly basis. As members in service to N.A., we sincerely pray all associated with the Rainbow from staff and contributors to the lonliest reader keep in mind the hell we came from and the relief from the disease of addiction we have found in N.A. Pass it on

Subscribers: Members and other persons who wish to subscribe to the Rainbow, please send \$12.00 along with your name, complete address and phone number to: Rainbow Connection, 890 Atlanta Road, Marietta, GA 30060.