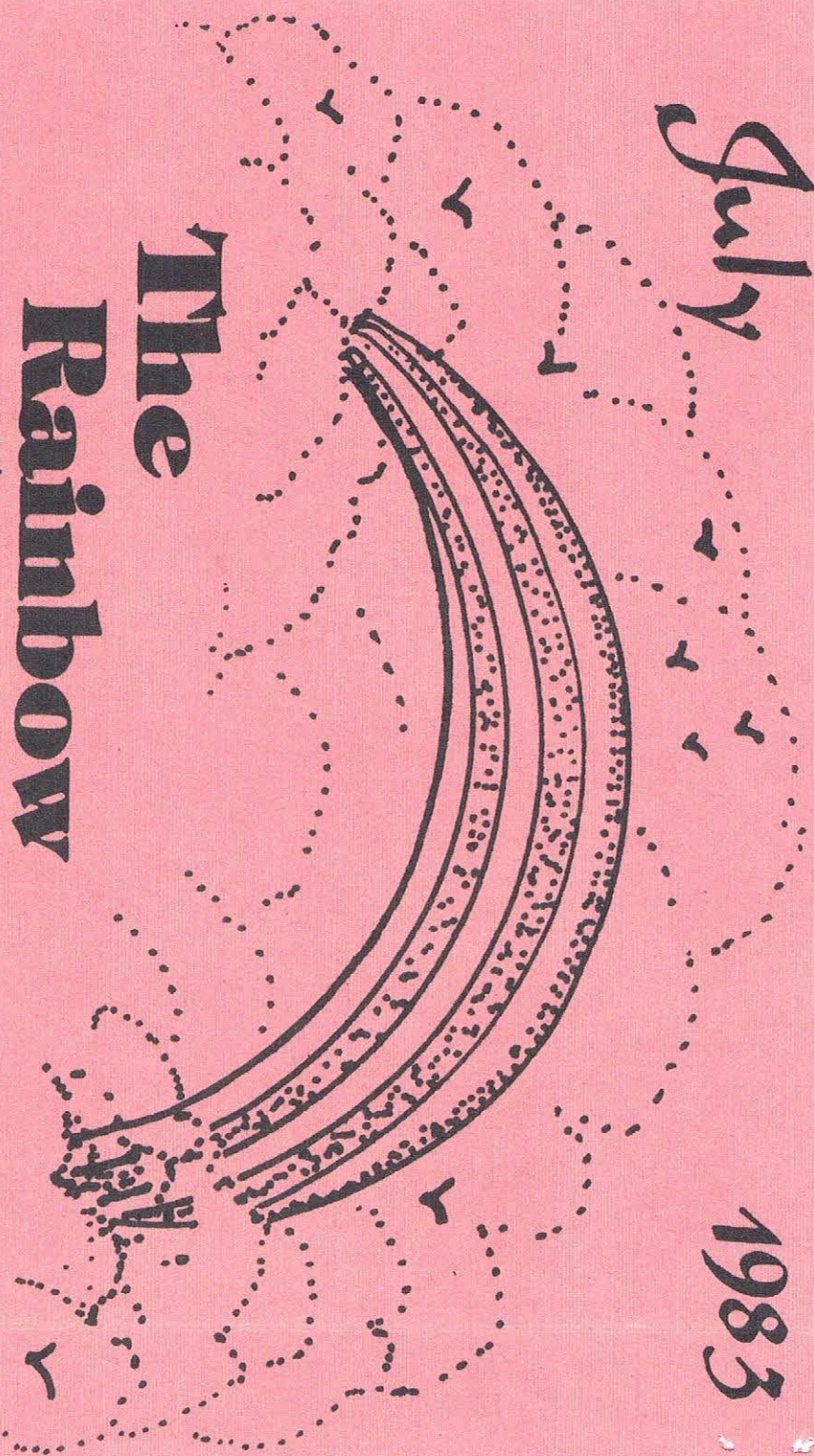


July

1983

**The
Rainbow
Connection**



The Rainbow Connection



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

VOLUME FIVE NUMBER FIVE JULY 1983

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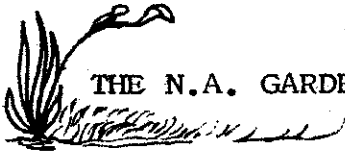
WHAT IS N.A.?

!?!!

N.A. is a spirit. It cannot be touched, nor can it be completely understood. It is as wide as the world, yet small enough to fit snugly into the mind and heart of man. It has brought light where only darkness dwelt. It has given hope to the hopeless and help to those who yearned in despair. It has nourished forgiveness in those who knew no pity. It has given strength to the weak and humility to the strong. It has given greatness to the common. It has spurred to higher goals those who strove for nothing. It has transformed sorrow into a weapon of happiness. It has given purpose to the trackless and shelter to the lost. It has taught patience to the hurried and action to the slothful.

To youth, it has given vision. To the aged - promise. To the lonely - companions. To the restless - rest. To the sick it has been a doctor. To the dying it has revived the desire to live. To those who have fallen, it has been a helping hand. It has no judgement against the unteachable nor has it praise for those who learn. To the outcast, it has been a family. To the childless, it has given children. To the ignorant - wisdom. To the wise - tolerance. It has given to all men that which is most precious - it has given love for truth with enough left over to share with each other.

ANONYMOUS



THE N.A. GARDEN - A GARDEN OF LIFE

I can remember that moment like it was yesterday. I was on the ceiling looking down at a small group of people who were gathered around a body on the floor. They were talking to the person on the floor, but there was no reply. The person's legs were jerking about uncontrollably. His face was drained of all life...the eyes were opened, but they stared blankly off into space. Then I heard my name, and it struck me that it was me stretched out on the floor. I tried to tell them that I wasn't down there, I was up on the ceiling, but they couldn't hear me. Then I realized that this was it. I was leaving. My pain was over. They picked my body up and carried it into the bedroom down the hall, but I remained on the ceiling. I heard a girl crying, but it was very distant, like an echo. Something happened. I felt an energy pulling me into the bedroom. The next thing I knew, I was looking into a pair of eyes, and a stream of strength and calmness was flowing into my body from those eyes. I still could not move or speak, but I was reunited with my body, and I knew I was going to live. For the first time in years, I felt a desire to live. The eyes belonged to my best friend. He'd been fighting Hodgkin's Disease for two years. Somehow, he's transferred his strength and desire to live into my being. I felt love and peace. Five days later, my friend died. His disease overcame him, and he left this world. I grieved, but deep inside I knew that what he gave me was still alive. I continued getting high for several months

after that, but something had changed. Every time I got high, I remembered that night on the ceiling. One night it occurred to me that my friend had suffered from a disease, and that he had done everything he could to stay alive. I then realized that I too had a disease, and that I was slowly dying from it. In fact, I should have been dead, but for the Grace of God and my friend's gift. I prayed for the first time that night. I asked God to help me to stop

killing myself...to show me a way out of my living hell. It was 3 weeks later that I first discovered N.A. That small seed of desire that my friend had planted broke through the surface of life in that first meeting, and it began to develop roots in the Fellowship of N.A. I shared my grief over the loss of my friend in those first few meetings, and I felt a healing and understanding empathy throughout my being. Most of all, I felt love, and I felt life, all around me. I wasn't breaking through the surface of life alone! I was one of many flowers in this garden of life. This miracle that I have recieved is one which I remain always willing to give away to others who are struggling to break through the surface of life. It is important for me to remember, though, that I can only be instrumental in this way by remaining in the garden, then I can help it to find some roots, and to allow the love and empathy of our meetings and the Steps to feed it and grow into a beautiful flower. Helping in this way is the essence of life for me.

ANONYMOUS



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HUMILITY - THE WISDOM TO KNOW THE DIFFERENCE

Humility is a word very hard for me to describe without losing something by putting it into words. It's one of those words like love or God that defies description and upon which you can't limit with time, space, or paper.

For me, in a way, it's being able to see the truth (both the positive and negative) in myself, others, situations, and life in general. Then accepting it and realizing that God uses it all for our good and the good of others. Then I'm free to do what I can do, leaving the results in God's Hands.

By looking in the past and searching with God's help, I've been able to learn some about me, both my assets and liabilities. (the Truth)

My liabilities are turned into assets when I recognize them, and the things I can't do - accept it, learn from it, surrender it, and simply quit trying to do what I can't do today.

My assets are useless unless they are put to use helping others. If I'm not trying to use them, then I'm not very grateful for what God has given me. So, I try to do what I can today.

Sometimes, because I'm still sick and don't know any better, I get involved in situations where I don't need to be, trying to be helpful and actually doing more harm than good. I become part of the problem,

instead of part of the solution. Hopefully, I'll learn from them.

I continue to grow by prayer, meditation and taking action on what God helps me to see. I didn't accept this in the beginning and had to learn it the hard way, by attempting to do what I couldn't do, change what I couldn't change and not doing what I could do to bring about change. In the end, I had to learn it by failure and humiliation. Sometimes, learning this way isn't too costly. If I'm trying to build a house and am not really a carpenter, the most it'll cost me is some humiliation, some time, some hard work and some money. Eventually, I'll seek help from a real carpenter. The next time, hopefully, I'll know better. But, with the disease of addiction, there may not be a next time and the price is my life and maybe yours! Today, I depend on a loving God as I understand Him and seek guidance from others who are trying to live a spiritual life, not a ~~self-centered~~ one. I'm trying to lay and build upon a spiritual foundation, by God's Grace. I do the seeking, try to follow directions, and God does the building. After all, He knows what it's going to look like. The Twelve Steps give me a plan to go by.

N.A. to me is not a religious, but is a spiritual program. And that's the way I try to live it. Show me a person who has the spiritual program, and I'll show you a happy person. One who is patient, tolerant, forgiving, understanding, has humility, helps others, and loves all. This person has something to look forward to with hope. Show me a person who just has a program, and I'll show you just an addict that's not using. This person also has something to look forward to, recovery!

In N.A., we have a common primary pur-

pose, I feel that God has given each of us a part we can do, if we are willing. And all the parts are equally important. To me, the old timer is just as important a part as the newcomer, but the difference is that the newcomer needs our help, our support, our encouragement, understanding, and love more openly and more often expressed. The old timer already knows that he or she has this from us.

I believe God gave each of us a part in His Plan, but none of us all of it, otherwise it would go to our heads. Even the rebellious, intolerant parts serve His purpose, and are used for our own good. So I need you and you need me for it to work. Together We Can!!

God Bless,
Rick

RELAPSE

The subject of relapse seems to come up fairly often in meetings; it is a facet of our disease that we have to deal with as a constant possibility. People do relapse, they do slip. We are all only a toke, fix, pill, or drink away from a slip and it is only a burning desire to stay clean and sober and a mighty Higher Power that keeps us clean and sober. In my recovery, I've been told that education about the disease will do away with any reservations about my addiction. The past week has given me more education and destroyed more reservations about this disease I've got than all the group therapy and reading I've

done so far. A friend who slipped showed me just how dangerous, just how insidious the disease of addiction is. Dishonesty destroyed trust which had been carefully built and nurtured over many weeks. All attempts at reasoning and rational help were useless. The disease creates people who are cunning and baffling, and nothing can help anyone who does not want to be helped. It takes a great deal of courage and strength to stand back and allow someone to destroy themselves, but I can only take responsibility for my own sobriety. I don't mean to sound cruel, but I am the sort of person who will try and tell someone about their broken finger when my own leg has been cut off. It hurts to have someone close to you go out and use; it hurts to see someone change overnight from a recovering drug addict to a using drug addict. The difference is intangible, it's frightening and it's unmistakable. The most that I can do is be there and be available to someone who wants help. I think that most of us can identify with the role of rescuer-ever ready to pull someone out of the fire. None of us can afford to take responsibility for someone else's actions. We can share our experience, strength, and hope; we can share the pain, and we can share the growth and joy, but we cannot feel or live for someone else. This is one of the more valuable lessons that the program has given to me. It's keeping me clean and sober and I'm learning how to live.



GIVING TO OTHERS

When I first came to the program, all that I could think of was me, me, me. It was very hard for me to get out of myself and into you. I was always looking for a way that I could get what I wanted; whatever that may be. To conceive that you had feelings and that they were as fragile as mine was definitely a new idea. My mode of operation had always been FUCK YOU!!!

As time went by in the program, I began to realize that not only was I really human, so were you! Being such, we shared many if not all of the qualities that make a human being. The same actions that hurt me would hurt you. The same things that made me laugh would make you laugh. The meetings were very instrumental in helping me see this reality. It was a strange experience when I heard other people expressing my feelings. I often wondered if they would sit outside my window at night listening to me. (I really took myself seriously!)

As I began to work the Steps and apply my program to my life, I began to notice something strange. I could sit down with someone for several minutes or hours and give a little of myself, and contrary to my old ideas I was not robbed of anything. I found that not only was I not robbed of anything, the memory of the moment remained sweet and like fine wine got better with age!

Another thing that I found was that even though I might lose a little sleep, the feelings that I had inside and the way I would feel when I saw that person again more than made up for any time, coffee, or food that I may have "lost".

Today there is a great joy in seeing

and watching the people grow with whom I have spent a little time. Beyond that I know that anytime that something comes out of my mouth that helps another person, it was not me. It was God. I was merely an instrument.

Although love at times hurts, the joy which it gives is greater. Thinking it through, the pain comes from my attachment to what I believe is mine. I have to remember that I have not cornered the market on love, care, and concern for others. The gift of giving comes from a power greater than myself.

Anonymi



THE DAWN

It's often difficult trying to live a spiritual life in a normal world. It's like trying to mix the day and the night, you always end up in the dawn! Then, all that can be done is to wait for the sunrise and God to shed a little light, so you can see where you are going! But, the waiting is better than getting lost in the dark!

Throughout it all, the journey is interesting, an adventure in living. There really isn't enough time to get bored. On this journey, just about the time the sun sets and you're preparing to rest, the moon shines and with it enough light to see dimly and it's time to move on to the dawn!

Love,
Rick





I am a recovering addict and a member of Narcotics Anonymous. A member because I say I am, an addict because I have a disease, and recovering because I work the Twelve Steps in my life.

I would like to share some of the rewards that I have reaped from working the Steps as well as being an active part of the Fellowship of Narcotics Anonymous.

Last summer, while attending a conference in a northern state, a phone call was recieved at the house where a lot of us were staying. It was from a member in a city about 350 miles away. This member told me that they had NA there for a few months, but had no personal contact with any members from other places, almost no literature, and no knowledge of the service structure. He wanted to know if some people could come down and share their experience, strength, and hope with them. I talked to two friends about it and we said we would be glad to come down the next weekend.

It was about a seven hour drive, and when we got there we found out that they had booked us in a hotel. Now, this was a trip, because we had brought our sleeping bags, and all we expected was a piece of floor.

The next day we had breakfast with a few folks and the weekend started. We did workshops on meeting formats, the Twelve Traditions, group, area, regional, and world service, public information, H&I, fund raising, and just about anything else we or they could think of. The first reward was that they were grateful for the

information and were drinking it in like people dying of thirst.

These workshops or question and answer sessions were held in three main places; in a church basement, in a state park in the country, and in a city park overlooking a major river.

On Saturday afternoon we had the first major get together at the state park. It was very informal with a lot of sharing of feeling and ideas. As it started to get dark, we built a large bonfire and broke out the guitars and harmonicas and jammed

long into the night. Sometime after dark I found myself standing in front of the bonfire talking with a heroin addict who had been clean for a week or two. I was talking about total surrender, about having tried every last thing before coming to Narcotics Anonymous and how nothing else worked for me. Abruptly, he walked away and I thought he was tired of hearing what I had to say. I hoped that maybe next time he would be more openminded. I really learned a lesson in not being presumptuous, for a few minutes later he came back with something in his hand. It was a couple of syringes and a rubber tourniquet that he had been saving in his car, "just in case." He threw them into the bonfire!

The rest of the weekend went really well also. The next morning, after camping in the state park, we met in a city park on the banks of a major river that carried boats back and forth slowly as we talked. That evening we had a formal workshop and a speaker/discussion meeting in a church whose pastor seemed very grateful for Narcotics Anonymous.

After the meeting, my friends and I headed back to the conference. It had been

really rewarding having all those people yearning for the NA message. We had many new friends and we knew that maybe a few more addicts might not have to die, but that's not the end of the story.

I did not see my friend who threw the syringes into the fire until five months later, at a Halloween party, dressed as a clown and taking the donations; a Trusted Servant!

I decided to hitchhike to the convention in Atlanta last February because I was laid off work, and as I stood on an entrance ramp to an interstate highway, a car pulled up and I heard a voice say, "Sure we got room for you, Tom!" Yes, it was my friend from the bonfire. He had a newcomer in the car with him and had just been telling him about total surrender. They took me over a hundred miles down the road.

I love you and please, keep coming back!

ANONYMI

ACTIVITIES SUB-COMMITTEE/ MASC

In the months of August and September, the Activities Sub-committee of the Marietta Area Service Committee will meet at 9:30 p.m. at the Rising Sun Clubhouse, on the following nights: August 1, August 15 August 29, September 12 and September 26.

We have a chairperson and secretary. We need a vice-chair and a treasurer. We need members support, participation and input of ideas and suggestions.

Our common welfare should come first; personal recovery depends on NA unity.

In loving service,
MAAS

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FIFTY-TWO QUESTIONS ABOUT OUR STEPS

1. Do you have to work the Steps to stay clean?
2. What step do you have to work before you can begin to work the Steps?
3. Do these Steps need to be worked "in their entirety" and in their continuity?
4. How are these Steps inter-related and how do we know when to move on to the next Step?

Step One

1. Define Powerlessness.
2. What is addiction?
3. How was my life unmanageable when I was using and how is it unmanageable now?
4. If I can't manage my own life, does that mean I no longer have the right or power of choice about my life?

Step Two

1. What does it mean "Came to believe" and how does it happen?
2. What is sanity?
3. Does our Higher Power restore us to sanity; if so, how long does it take?
4. What is a power greater than ourselves?

Step Three

1. What is a decision?
2. What does "our will and our lives" include?
3. How does God take care of our will and our lives?
4. Having worked this Step - what is God's responsibility and what is mine?

Step Four

1. What does the word moral mean?
2. Are we capable of doing anything fearlessly?
3. What does the word inventory mean?
4. What is the purpose and results of working a searching and fearless inventory?

Step Five

1. Why do I have to admit to God - He already knows it?
2. Why do we have to admit to another human and how do we admit to ourselves?
3. What sort of "other human being" should you choose to do this Step with?
4. Why aren't assets of character included in this Step?

Step Six

1. What does it mean "were entirely ready"?
2. What are defects of character and how does God remove them?
3. How do you know when you have worked this Step?
4. Why are Steps Six and Seven separate?

Step Seven

1. What is humility and how do you get it?
2. What is a shortcoming?

PAGE FIFTEEN

3. Why do we ask God to remove our shortcomings instead of our defects of character?
4. How does God remove our shortcomings?

Step Eight

1. How do we know who we've harmed?
2. What is willingness?
3. How do we become willing to make amends and do we have to become willing to make amends to everyone we have harmed in order to work this Step?
4. Why are Steps Eight and Nine separate?

Step Nine

1. What does it mean to make direct amends?
2. What does "whenever possible" mean?
3. Does "others" include me? And how does this relate to the Third Step?
4. What does injure mean in terms of the Ninth Step?

Step Ten

1. What are three ways to take the personal inventory of the Tenth Step?
2. How did you learn to recognize when you were wrong?
3. What does promptly mean?
4. Who do I have to admit to when I'm wrong?

Step Eleven

1. What is "conscious contact"?
2. How and when do you get a "conscious contact" with God?
3. Why does this Step say, "we sought...to improve our conscious contact" rather than "we meditated and prayed.."?
4. Why should we call the Eleventh Step the service Step instead of the Twelfth?

Step Twelve

1. What is a "spiritual awakening" and when do we have one?
2. Why is a spiritual awakening needed before we can successfully carry the message to the addict who still suffers and practice these principles in all our affairs?
3. What are the principles that we try to practice in all our affairs?
4. "I'm working the Twelfth Step, now what?"

FIFTY-TWO QUESTIONS ABOUT OUR TRADITIONS

1. What is the purpose of our traditions?
2. Are the Traditions meant to be worked the same way we work the Steps?
3. What are the ties that bind us together and what are the forces that would tear us apart?
4. How are our Traditions inter-related, can they be considered separately, and is there an overall theme of our traditions?

Tradition One

1. What is unity?
2. Why should we place "Common welfare" before personal welfare?
3. How does personal recovery depend on N.A. unity?
4. What is the most common cause of disunity?

Tradition Two

1. When we work the Steps we find a God of our understanding is there a God of our Fellowship?
2. What is Group Conscience?
3. Is Group Conscience always right?
4. What is a Trusted Servant?

Tradition Three

1. What is a desire to stop using?
2. How can you tell if someone has a desire to stop using?
3. Why is a desire to stop using a requirement for membership? Is there a difference between N.A. membership and group membership?
4. What does membership in N.A. entitle someone to?

Tradition Four

1. What is autonomy, and why isn't it a license to do whatever we want?
2. What sort of things affect other groups or N.A. as a whole?
3. How can we use autonomy to further our primary purpose?
4. How can we avoid abusing autonomy?

Tradition Five

1. Why is our primary purpose so important and why does it need to be stated in our Traditions?
2. Do groups have other purposes; if so, what are they?
3. Who's responsibility is it to maintain our primary purpose?
4. Is anything ever more important to us than our primary purpose?

Tradition Six

1. What are endorsement, financing and use of the N.A. name, and how do they lead to problems of money, property, and prestige?
2. What are related facilities and outside enterprises?
3. How do service boards, committees, conventions, activities, newsletters, and other service functions related to this Tradition?
4. What can we do to prevent outside enterprises and related facilities from using our name or implying endorsement?

Tradition Seven

1. How are we fully self-supporting in ways other than financial?
2. Why shouldn't we accept outside contribution, after all, we could use the money to help carry the message?
3. What constitutes an outside contribution; what about contributions made through an N.A. member?
4. What problems could we be creating when we allow our members to contribute more than their share of money, time, and energy?

Tradition Eight

1. What is a professional?
2. If we hire a special worker, are they an employee of of Narcotics Anonymous?
3. Can we allow someone who is employed by someone else

*****CALENDAR*****

TODAY WE LIVE - For more information, call Fred (414)284-3008, Sandy (414) 284-4736, or Chicago Ed (312)779-5776 or write: ECWASC-NA, P.O. Box 453, Kevaskum, WS 53040.

COME CELEBRATE 4 YRS. IN MEMPHIS, TN, July 16, 10:00 a.m. - 5 p.m.. 2972 Cordie Lee Lane. For more information, call: LeeAnne (615)755-5187, Jane (615)353-7068, Joseph P. (615)529-8779.

RIOT FOR RECOVERY - HCASC of Narcotics Anonymous, July 22-23. \$5.00 donation. For more information, call: Narcotics Anonymous (201)866-7475 or Hoboken Joe (201)656-2830.

2nd ANNUAL VIRGINIA ROUND-UP - Weekend Camp-Out at "Natural Chimneys Regional Park" Mt. Solon, VA. July 29-31. \$5.00 per person. BRANA, P.O. Box 182, Harrisonburg, VA 22801.

NA RETREAT - Dominican Retreat House, Elkins Park, PA. August 5-7, \$55.00 includes all. For more information, call John S. 425-3958.

FIRST ANNUAL SUMMER LAKE CAMPOUT - MISS-LOU, Natchez, MS. August 5-7, Lake Concordia, Ferriday, LA. For more information, call: Walter (601)442-2491 John (318)757-6687, Dal (601)352-0692.

(especially treatment center personnel or C.I.T.A. workers) to function as a "Special Worker" concurrently? What problems do members who are professionals in the treatment field experience?

4. Can our Service Centers afford to be without paid special workers?

Tradition Nine

1. What is "N.A. as such"?
2. How can we abide by "...ought never be organized..." and have a service structure, organized activities, newsletters offices, and such?
3. May we create anything other than service boards or committees, and if we create them what is their relationship to Narcotics Anonymous?
4. How are our Service Boards or committees directly responsible and who do they serve?

Tradition Ten

1. What is an outside issue?
2. When does a member's opinion become N.A.'s opinion? (What other Traditions does this relate to?)
3. How could the N.A. name be drawn into public controversy and what effects could this have on our Fellowship?
4. How do we deal with internal controversy?

Tradition Eleven

1. What are attraction and promotion?
2. What is "personal anonymity" and does it differ from the anonymity of our Twelfth Tradition?
3. What is "public relations" and what are our public relations policies? (what other Traditions affect public relations?)
4. Why is personal anonymity important at the public level?

Tradition Twelve

1. What is the principle of Anonymity?
2. How is Anonymity the spiritual foundation of all our Traditions?
3. Is there a difference between anonymity at the public level and anonymity within the Fellowship? (if so, what is it?)
4. Why is our tendency to focus on personalities such a problem and why is it a violation of anonymity?



When a pick-pocket meets a saint, all he can see is pockets.

2nd SULLIVAN COUNTY CAMPOUT - "Camping Clean", August 19-21, Williamsport, PA
Donations: \$2.00 per person, \$5.00 per family. Bring your own camping supplies and food. For more information, call Denny S. (717)326-9621.

THE IMPOSSIBLE DREAM - World Convention of Narcotics Anonymous, P.O. Box 216, Jackson Heights, N.Y. 11372. Registration: \$15.00, Banquet: \$30.00. Vista Hotel, attention: Reservations Dept., 3 World Trade Center, N.Y.M.N.Y., 10277-0356. \$75.00 Quad. Sept. 1-4th.

1st ANNUAL SERENITY FESTIVAL - Francis Marion Hotel, Charleston, SC. September 23-25. Registration: \$10.00, Hotel rates: single \$39.00, double \$47.00, extra person \$8.00. Annual Serenity Festival, P.O. Box 305, Green Pond, SC 29446.

FIRST ANNUAL VOLUNTEER REGION CONVENTION - "living Through Giving", Nov. 24-27. Hyatt Regency - Nashville, 623 Union Street (615)259-1234. Register rooms directly with hotel. Reg.: \$12.00 per person, Banquet: \$15.00. For more information, call: Hollie (615)883-0285, Cyndi (615)832-8035, Jenny (615)385-1107.

A NEW BEGINNING - SECOND ANNUAL VIRGINIA CONVENTION OF N.A., January 6,7,8, 1984. Registration: \$10.00, Banquet, dance, and registration: \$30.00, total package (reg. room, meals, banquet and dance) single: \$109.00, double: \$81.00. Triple rooms Available. Send to AVCNA, P.O. Box 2131, Newport News, VA 23602.

MacMillan Dictionary for Children

ADDICT

A person who has let himself be taken over by a drug or a habit. An addict has little control over himself because the drug or habit controls him. Doctors are trying to find a cure for heroin addicts. Note: the word addict used to mean "to deliver" or "to turn over". A judge could addict someone to prison. A person could be addicted to another person as a servant or slave.

Rainbow Staff - 10th Step

We received a letter from a member informing us that our use of the Just For Today, long form, was a violation of copyright laws. We would like to express our gratitude to this concerned member for the information and for the opportunity to admit wrong promptly. In the future issues we'll try to be more careful and we are very grateful to a loving God, that we don't do worse than we do.

In loving service,
Rainbow Staff

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.