

RAINBOW

CONFECTION



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



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

VOLUME SIX

AUGUST 1985

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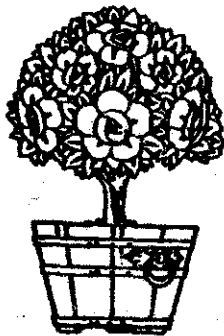
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Marietta ASC

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



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Narcotics Anonymous - "Our Way of Life"



In the past few months, there has been an ever-increasing awareness of the need to distinguish the NA way of life from all other ways of life. We are a fellowship of our own. Literature of our own. Beliefs of our own. Recovery of our own. All given to us through a loving God for our use and for others like us.

Remember that this is only my story and the awareness of how it is unfolding to me.

God has allowed me to be an active participant in my recovery and in the growth of Narcotics Anonymous, for which I am extremely grateful. Over the past few years, it would be hard for me to count the number of meetings I have attended. And basing my life and my recovery on our basic text, I still go to meetings regularly. Regularly to me means once a day, a day at a time. I need to both give and receive daily, and this exchange for the most part takes place at the meetings.

When I first came into the fellowship in 1981, we were still using the gray form of our book. That year, by God's Grace, He allowed me to attend the last literature conference in Memphis, at the end of which He placed in my hand the smooth white approval form of our present basic text. It was upon this book that I began to base my life and my recovery. And to this day, this has worked for me. I am able in part to live and enjoy life, clean and growing, and my life and recovery are getting better. Not very long ago, a fellow member asked me if everything in our book was true. After a very short pause, I responded, "Yes", knowing that if it wasn't, then I was in trouble. But so far, it hasn't let me down, and I am very grateful to a loving God for giving me something to base my life on that works on a daily basis, as long as I use it.

Back to the original purpose of this article. Recently, God has allowed me to attend meetings in several places, some in regions other than my own. During this journey, I have been becoming increasingly aware that it appears that either a number of our members are not reading our literature and reading something else, or else my brain hasn't cleared enough for me to be able to think clearly.

And I don't believe that is really the case. Without doubt in my own mind, whatever some members are reading and basing their life on is not NA. Perhaps the best way to express this would be by a few examples.

A statement that is often heard is "God helps those who help themselves." The book I read says, "God helps us as we help each other." Big difference.

Last night in a meeting, a member that was celebrating his third birthday stated that his first step was "I admitted that I was powerless over drugs and alcohol."

Our book says "We admitted that we were' powerless over our addiction. Again, a big difference.

A lovely lady raised her hand and pointed out in so many words that this is a "We" program, we can't do anything alone, that we need a loving God and each other. Our basic text is a "We" book, our steps begin with "We", and the promise is that "We" do recover.

I still have a long way to go in my recovery, and sometimes I use the word "I" to separate myself from others. But a lot of the time, when the word "I" is used, it is rather a part of the whole. In someway, by God's Grace, the "I" has become "We", and there is no difference. Rather than separating me from you true NA members, I have become a part of you.

I am very grateful that for today, I know where I belong. If God had wanted me in some other fellowship, reading some other literature, He would have placed me there and kept me there. I ended up where He wanted me to be.

I really do understand members that read the literature of other programs. At first in my reocvery, I also read other literature, many outside of even other programs.

I read all kinds of books. It was interesting. It would lead me out into left field for awhile, but by constantly going to meetings, sooner or later, I would wind up back at our basic text and our steps. Sometimes I still

read books such as "The Prophet" and they are interesting to me and seem to add to, not take from my recovery. But my foundation is laid in NA, and it is that that allows me to enjoy the other without feeling confused or threatened.

By the grace of a loving God, NA and other members like myself, many changes have happened in my life, and recently I married a very wonderful, very beautiful member, and I am beginning to feel happier than I have ever been before. Life is taking on a new meaning to me and dreams are beginning to come true in recovery for me. All of this because of a very loving God and Narcotics Anonymous as we understand it. This is not "The End" for me, but only the beginning.

More will be revealed!

God Bless,

Rick H. (Marietta)



"Joy"

To the extent that we want
something from someone,

To that exact degree
we will be in pain

For it is desire that brings
pain

And it is love that brings
joy.

JWH (Marietta)

"Wisdom"



Last night at a meeting, I listened intently. I usually talk. But recently I took my husband's inventory and told him he needed to listen. Since then, the God of my understanding has rendered me speechless.

Usually what I pray for for other people is what I need to do myself.

I'm glad I told Rick he needed to listen. I learned a lot at that meeting by listening.

The subject was "People-pleasing."

I know what that means. I have been a people pleaser most of my life.

As a child, I tried to "fix" my family. I would go outside and pick flowers for my Mother. Look for hours. I would buy her Babe Ruths at the movie with the money she gave me for myself. I would take care of my brothers.

Everyone called me "Dollbaby." They said I was cute and sweet. My double life began. The outside and inside were different.

Sometimes I was the all-American girl. Cheerleader. Varsity tennis player. Good old girl.

Other times I would get a carload of friends and drive down to 9th Street. It was a bad section of town. Lots of liquor stores. I would give a man some money to go into one of the stores and buy us a pint of liquor.

I would go to church and look spiritual. I got "saved" in front of a huge crowd at First Presbyterian Church when I was six. I didn't feel "saved", but they told me I was, so I faked it.

Determined to be the center of the universe, I decided my ambitions were too small. Chattanooga was a hopeless cause. What I needed to do was change the entire world.

It required a lot of drugs. It was the late sixties. I started doing acid and speed. I did it because of the job pressures. There was Vietnam and Nixon and Kent State. I had a lot of work to do.

Since then, all in the name of people-pleasing, I have used all kinds of dope.

On the outside, I was accomplishing a lot. People were impressed with my serenity. I could look fairly serene while everyone around me fell apart. The valium helped.

I could fix a Hell of a Christmas dinner for 20 people. Chugging wine in the bathroom gave me courage.

It got crazy. I worked my way up to a ten gram a day habit. My family thought I was doing great. I wasn't drinking much anymore.

I didn't know it, but I was employing my own warped version of the Serenity Prayer.

I took downers when I needed serenity. I

took uppers when I needed courage. The problem was, I didn't have the wisdom to know the difference. I was completely insane.

And I hadn't made anyone change. The sixties were dead. So was John Lennon. And Bob Dylan had, "Gotten Religion."

I was somewhere in outer space, totally alone, watching the earth and time pass me up.

I moved on. I was really sick by this time. The struggle to make so many people happy was wearing me out. It was a losing battle.

I was beaten. I'd had it. I found NA. I came in from my cold war. I found a home.

Today I don't try to change the world so much as the way in which I perceive it. I try to the best of my ability to "Go With the Flow."

There's a Bruce Springsteen song called "Trapped." I was trapped. In my own head. I had forgotten about God. Compassion. Love. I had none for other people. But most of all I had none for myself.

There's a phrase in the Springsteen song. It says, "The truth will set you free."

It's that simple. NA is a program of truth.

It has set me free from myself. I don't need drugs to fix me or the world anymore.

(Con. Next Page)



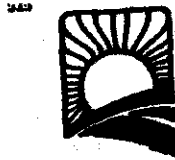
"Sometimes I Need to Remember to Forget"
Bob Dylan, 1985

The only person I never tried to please was myself. Today people don't call me "Doll-baby" anymore.

It never fit me anyway. My real name is "Anna".

I am Anna, an addict, not Dollbaby, a junkie.

And that's what I call the wisdom to know the difference.



THE SERENITY PRAYER

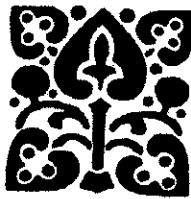
God grant me the serenity
to accept the things I cannot change;
Courage to change the things I can;
and wisdom to know the difference-

Living one day at a time;
Enjoying one moment at a time;
Accepting hardships as the pathway
to peace;

Taking, as He did, this sinful world
as it is, not as I would have it;
Trusting that He will make all things
right if I surrender to His Will;
That I may be reasonably happy in this
life and supremely happy with Him forever
in the next.

Written by Pastor Friedrich Christoph, 1782





IF SOMETHING IS BOTHERING ME

Often I have heard the statement, "If something is bothering me, it is always me." I have the tendency to agree with this, but with my own understanding which I wish to share with others, for whatever help it might be.

If something is bothering me about me, there is something about myself that I am not accepting about myself. Often I am either doing something that goes against my inside, my heart, my true nature, my spirit, the God within, or whatever you choose to call it, or either I am not doing something that I know inside that I need to be doing. Either creates conflict within. And I am very grateful when it bothers me, because when it bothers me enough, I'll start doing something. Either I'll take some sort of action, or stop doing something that I am doing. Either way I win.

If something you are doing is bothering me, it is still me. There is something about you that I am not accepting. Either you are doing something that goes against my inside, that it is not okay for me to do, or I'm not doing something that my inside would tell me to do. I am again grateful when these things bother me because it helps me to know more about me. That's how I learn about me from you.

If I am the problem, I will eventually admit my own powerlessness, become willing to change and humbly ask God for help, and either start or stop doing something.

If it is you, I will eventually accept that I am powerless over you, try to accept you as you are, and if I am able to be around you without conflict with you, that's good. If not, then I will love you from a distance. Either way, I am grateful!

Live and let live is a very valuable tool of the program. It allows you to be you, to live as you choose, and at the same time allows me to be me and live as I choose. To your own heart be true!

If something bothers me, it is there to help me grow. If something makes me feel guilty, it is a feeling of the disease, and is there to destroy me.

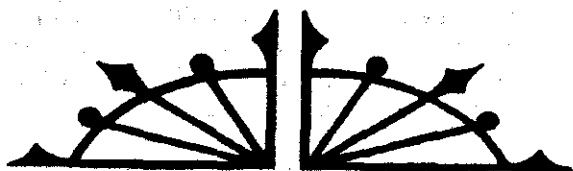
If it bothers me, I won't do it, but if it doesn't, I probably will. I do or do not do things when they bother me enough. I will usually do or not do something for as long as I can stand it!

If something someone else does affects my life, I will talk to them about it, or if that doesn't work, stay away from them.

If what someone else does doesn't affect my life, then it is none of my business.

Anonymous





"Surrender"

I turned my car over to Marietta Dodge today.

I have been driving too fast, and sometimes I took over at the passenger side and I see God sitting there.

He is pale, kind of plastered to the side of the windshield, and He is chain-smoking.

He looks that way because He loves me and doesn't want me to get hurt.

Sometimes I slow down and He disappears.

But then I feel a need to aggravate Him and I watch the speedometer hit 100.

He reappears, looking pretty sick and tired of the whole situation.

The disease makes me drive fast, but then God reappears when I am out of control.

Anyway, I've been taking advantage of the God of my understanding and driving like a maniac and God is sick and tired of driving around with me while I test Him out.

I have a fuzz-buster, so I don't get caught by the police, and God had to step in.

I turned my car over to a car dealer today.

I used to turn my life over to another kind of dealer.

I think my car will be safe in the hands of Marietta Dodge.

And that is called surrender of another kind.

(A couple of weeks later, the fuzz-buster mysteriously disappeared from my car while it was at Marietta Dodge. I suppose the God of my understanding arranged to have it taken away. I thought I was "Getting away" with driving fast, I thought I had pulled a fast one on God. I'm grateful He knows what I'm up to, even when I try to hide from Him.)

Anna H., Marietta

RAINBOW CONNECTION
SUBSCRIPTION FORM
MAILING ADDRESS:



NAME _____
 ADDRESS _____
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 STATE _____
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*** RATES ***

One year (12 issues) \$12.00 Checks payable to
 the Rainbow Connection, 890 Atlanta Road,
 Marietta, GA 30060.

USE THIS FORM FOR CHANGE OF ADDRESS.



JUST
FOR
TODAY

Today I am going to believe. I am going to have faith in this Power I know nothing about and understand not at all. I can't handle it anymore. It meaning my life. I have tried every way I know how to make it work and have always made it worse. Please, I need Your help, Whoever or Whatever You are - but I know (believe) that You are because I have been asking You for help and You have done wonders in my life and I can see You working in the lives of others. I can feel You in the love I am receiving from others and the love I feel for them. It scares me sometimes. I don't know what You are, but I believe that You are. And I believe You are loving - in fact, I believe that without You there is no love. I can hear You, because I believe that You work (or help and give guidance and answers thru other people. I can touch and smell You in nature. I need You more than anything else. I need Your strength, courage, faith, and willingness and I realize if I have any of these, they are Your gifts to me and are intended to help me help others thru You. I am truly grateful for all the gifts You have so freely given me. I will try to the best of my ability to use them as You have intended for them to be used. I am asking for Your guidance and the strength faith, and willingness to live the way You want me to live. I surrender to You my will and my life.



"TALKING HEADS"



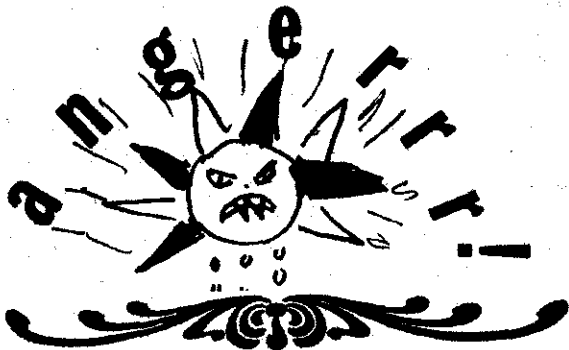
One of my favorite music groups is "Talking Heads." The reason is because that is what I have been most of my life. I talked with my head instead of my heart. In treatment, they would stare at me and ask me, "what are you FEELING?" I would sit rigidly in the chair and not answer. They would keep on asking. Finally, I would say, "I THINK..." They would interrupt me and say, "NO. Don't THINK. Your best THINKING got you here. What are you FEELING?" I would say loudly, "I am FEELING angry." They would say, "That's great." I thought they were nuts. They would not leave me alone. Sometimes I would lean over in my seat after an especially grueling day and get right up in their face. I would say, "I am FEELING like killing you." I would get pretty worked up about it. They would smile and say, "Wonderful." Sometimes, I FELT like Alice in Wonderland trying to carry on a conversation with the Mad Hatter. They would say, "And how do you FEEL today?" I would stare off into space and say, "I FEEL like I am going crazy." They would tell me that was wonderful. I wondered what was going on. Today, I FEEL like I understand what was going on. I was "out of touch" with my heart. I need to remember that my best

thinking got me here.

Today, I occasionally play head games, for as long as I can stand it. But I always try to remember that I need to know my heart first. That means following the instincts of my heart instead of what my head tells me. The eleventh step is particularly helpful in that area. I pray for "The knowledge of His will, and the strength to carry it out."

My head and my heart still wage wars. There are days, that I am pretty crazy. Today my heart usually wins out. That's one of the many ways NA works for me.

Anonymous



"Children Should Be Seen, not Heard"

I have always had a big problem with anger and resentment.

As a child, I grew up in an alcoholic home. My Father drank, my Mother got hurt, and I watched. Occasionally, I would fly in there and try to help her. Then I got hurt. One of the habits I picked up was, "Don't talk about it." It's a variation of, "Children should be seen, not heard."

I heard statements like, "Your Father doesn't really drink that much." My Mother would tell me this while my Father was lying in the bedroom "sleeping it off." I would think

"Well, that's interesting." Or she would say, "No, you didn't see your father hit me last night." That is known as, "Denial." It is denial of the truth.

There were always lots of smiles for the outside world, and a "Keep a tough upper lip" attitude about what was going on inside the family. My father, in spite of the fact that the family had plenty of money, told us that we should, "Pinch pennies and live like Spartans." Then he would laugh. Messed me up. I heard statements like those a lot. Originally, I tried to voice my feelings about what was going on.

I remember sitting around the kitchen table playing Pollyanna. My father was drinking. It was his move. He rolled a "six." He moved 12 spaces.

I must have been around 5 years old. I screamed, "He cheated!" My older brother laughed. My father laughed. My mother looked miserable. She didn't say anything. I remember other resentments building up over the years. And not talking about them. It is typical behavior in an addicted family. The children don't talk. It is called, "A Conspiracy of Silence." There is a lot of anger present, a lot of hurt. And it builds up.

It gets worse. By the time, I was a teenager, I was a very quiet kid. Stayed in my room alone. Listened to the radio. Holed up with my head, thinking some pretty sick thoughts like, "I wonder how I could do away with both my parents and get by with it." There was a movie when I was a teenager. It was called, "The Bad Seed." My mother didn't want me to go see it, so naturally I did. It was about this little girl who went around killing people. She was adopted, and it turned out her "Real" father was an

ax murderer. "Bad bloodlines" were her problem. I got off on that a lot. I felt pretty hopeless. There was a lot of "Bad" in my family. I felt like I was probably doomed to carry on the misery. I remembered that Biblical saying, "The sins of the Father are passed on, generation unto generation." I accepted as my fate misery and unhappiness.

I got a summer job when I was 15. I just handled the inventory in a clothing store. It was nice. Not too challenging. I had gotten to the point where challenges weren't too appealing. I preferred activities where I didn't have to think about anything. I called myself, "Laid back." Actually, I was more "Down and Out."

I was a good worker. Very quiet. One day my Father decided to show up. He was drunk. He stood inside the store screaming at me. Everyone was embarrassed, especially me.

I didn't know what to do. I felt like dying. I called my Mother and she came over. My Father chased us all over the city in his car. My Mother must have been going a hundred miles an hour. She was crying. I sat there smoking a cigarette in silence. I wished that we would all have a wreck, my parents would die instantly, and then I could go to their funeral and cry a lot. Of course I would have to get drunk to cover up my grief.

They didn't have a wreck. We outran my Father. He didn't come home that night. The next day at work, my boss and the other employees looked uncomfortable. The job wasn't so much fun anymore. I felt sick and tired of it all. But nobody talked about what had happened.

Today I realize the importance of

talking in NA meetings. It has been said that it is the things we are most reluctant to talk about that kill us. If I get angry about something, I talk about it until I get it out of my system

No Matter if I have one day clean or 1,000, my disease is always with me, and it is critical that I talk about what is going on in my head.

Either I use my sponsor or take it into a meeting. I pray for the person, place or thing that is bothering me.

As an addict, I can't afford anger today. I need to remember the definition of "Anger." Our NA book says, "Anger is our reaction to our present reality." Unspoken anger is a serious form of denial. It is deadly to an addict.

I try to remember the "HALT" system. "Hungry, angry, lonely and tired." Also "Serious." When I get the "HALTS" I try to take care of them. I felt that way a lot as a kid. Sick and tired of being sick and tired.

Today I have a choice. I'm not a helpless kid playing Pollyanna.

I'm an adult and an addict and the "game" is real and deadly. Silence would kill me now.

I am grateful to NA because after all these countless years, I have a choice.

I am not alone with my anger today. There are people who will listen to me.

I have a God of my understanding who will listen to me.

I used drugs because of my unwillingness to talk about what was going on in my life.

Today I share in meetings and with my sponsors. Both my joy AND my anger.

NA broke that "Conspiracy of silence" that I had kept to myself for so long.

Today I have a choice. Sometimes I think about that movie "The Bad Seed" and I smile a little.

020

I was never "Bad", just sick. As long as I work my program, I don't have to keep myself to myself any more.
What a gift!

Anonymous

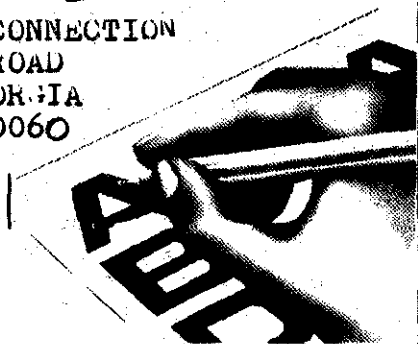


WE NEED YOU!

The Rainbow Connection is going again! But we need your help to keep it going. Remember, we keep what we have by giving it away. If you have anything you've written, we'd love to hear from you. It can be signed or unsigned. Simply submit whatever has helped you in your program to the below address. It doesn't have to be typed. We look forward to hearing from you!

SEND YOUR ARTICLES TO:

THE RAINBOW CONNECTION
890 ATLANTA ROAD
MARIETTA, GEORGIA
30060





NA SERVICE COMMITTEES



Area Service Committee Meetings:

★Coastal Area Service Committee:

★Marietta Area Service Committee;

Meets on the last Friday of the month,
9:30 pm, Rising Sun Clubhouse

★Midtown Atlanta Area Service Committee;

Meets on the first Friday of the month,
10:00 pm, Highland Club

★North Atlanta Area Service Committee;

Meets on the last Sunday of the month,
5:00 pm, Northside Clubhouse

★Piedmont Area Service Committee;

Meets on the second Saturday of the
month, 1:00 pm

★South Atlanta Area Service Committee;

Meets on the third Tuesday of the
month, 10:00 pm, Odyssey Counseling Cen.

Regional Service Committee Meetings:



The Regional Service Committee meetings are held at Area Service Committee locations in alphabetical rotation on the second Sunday of the month, beginning at 1:00 pm. The location for the upcoming meetings are as follows:

August _____ South Atlanta
September _____ Coastal
October _____ Marietta



CONVENTIONS AND CONFERENCE

Ireland's First Convention of NA

Oct. 25th, 26th and 27th

The Dublin Sport Hotel

Kilternan, Co., Dublin.

Telephone: 893-3631

Contact: Irish Convention Committee

P.O.Box 1368

Sheriff Street, Dublin, Ire.

Pacific Northwest Convention

8th Annual Alive in '85

Oct. 11th, 12th, 13th

Eugene, Oregon

Contact: Martin or Susan C.

Phone: 503-485-1397

Rick G. 503-746-7466

Doug W. 503-689-7711

San Diego Regional Convention
A Celebration of Unity
August 2,3,4th
Town and Country Hotel
500 Hotel Circle North
Box 80098
San Diego, Ca 92138
800-542-6098

Southern Nevada Convention
Recovery NA
Feb. 7,8,9, 1986
Showboat Hotel Convention Center
Las Vegas, Nevada
Contact: Anita, 702-382-3550
Dave 452-6938, Corby 737-7357

Volunteer Regional Convention
Thanksgiving Weekend, Nov. 27th - Dec. 1st
The Benchmark Hotel
Memphis, Tn.
Contact: Bill C. 901-525-4798
Gene L. 454-1313
Joseph P. 529-8779

The 15th Annual World Convention for NA
"Unified and Staying Alive in 1985"
August 29th - Sept. 1st.
Contact WCNA-15
P.O. Box 2232
Washington, D.C., 20013



Desiderata



So placidly amid the noise and haste, and remember what peace there may be in silence. As far as possible without surrender be on good terms with all persons. Speak your truth quietly and clearly; and listen to others, even the dull and ignorant; they too have their story. Avoid loud and aggressive persons, they are vexations to the spirit. If you compare yourself with others, you may become vain and bitter; for always there will be greater and lesser persons than yourself. Enjoy your achievements as well as your plans. Keep interested in your own career, however humble; it is a real possession in the changing fortunes of time. Exercise caution in your business affairs; for the world is full of trickery. But let this not blind you to what virtue there is; many persons strive for high ideals; and everywhere life is full of heroism. Be yourself. Especially, do not feign affection. Neither be cynical about love; for in the face of all aridity and disenchantment it is perennial as the grass. Take kindly the counsel of the years, gracefully surrendering the things of youth. Nurture strength of spirit to shield you in sudden misfortune. But do not distress yourself with imaginings. Many fears are born of fatigue and loneliness. Beyond a wholesome discipline, be gentle with yourself. You are a child of the universe, no less than the trees and stars; you have a right to be here. And whether or not it is clear to you, no doubt the universe is unfolding as it should. Therefore be at peace with God, whatever you conceive Him to be, and whatever your labors and aspirations, in the noisy confusion of life keep peace with your soul. With all its shame, drudgery and broken dreams, it is still a beautiful world. Be careful. Strive to be happy.



THE TWELVE TRADITIONS OF N.A.

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.