

own contract was ultimately not renewed. It's all there, and it is truly compelling reading.

The last personal note I'd like to add, and I know I speak for many many people, even many of his detractors, is a note of gratitude for the heart and soul of Bob Stone which was dedicated to the service of NA for so many years. I regret that he's gone and won't ever read these words of thanks, but we did take many opportunities to express them over the years. At several of the World Service Conferences I attended while Bob was Executive Director of the office, all he had to do was be walk up to the microphone and say, "Hello, I'm Bob Stone," and the place would erupt in a raucous and sustained standing ovation. Though there were voices and forces within NA who resented and resisted all his efforts over the years, and no one agreed with his every action, the overwhelming sentiment was always love and appreciation for the many gifts he brought to us.

Bob was never quite sure about this Higher Power we all talked about, but this Higher Power had no such doubts about Bob. His heart was true, his commitment was phenomenal, and his immense contribution to NA will, I'm sure, never be fully understood or appreciated. Thank you, Bob, for being a mentor to so many of us involved in world services throughout those years. Thank you for the genius you brought to defusing our craziness and helping us organize our service efforts. And now, thank you for your final act of generosity, your unique perspective on the history of our fellowship. For the guy who never did get much rest throughout your highly charged and productive years with Narcotics Anonymous, may God rest your soul.

Ron H., January 1997

Chapter One

A Miracle Begins...

"Once you're hooked, it's all over. There is no cure. Once you're an addict you'll always be an addict until the day you die. Most likely you'll die in prison, or in a mental institution, or maybe in some alley from an overdose. It's kind of like going to hell but being here on earth. Only a miracle can save you."

Those words, or many just like them, were about the only message addicts got from cops, judges, doctors, strangers, family members, and even other addicts in the old days. Until the events described in the first three chapters of this book took place, there was still little or no hope. But some people — a lot as it turns out — thought there might be another way, a way to prove that the old truism, "once an addict, always an addict" was in fact a lie. The trouble was that one addict had to be the first to prove you could truly overcome drug addiction so others could learn how that one did it and follow his lead.

In the 1930's, two alcoholics named Bill W. and Doctor Bob, through a provident series of events, got together and crafted a solution to alcoholism out of their own experience. That solution became known as Alcoholics Anonymous (AA). The idea that alcoholism is a variation of drug addiction, and that this solution could be applied to people addicted to other substances, undoubtedly occurred to AA members and observers from very early on.

It seems from Bill W.'s writings, and from the letters and reports out of AA's General Service Office, that many drug addicts were indeed coming to AA meetings to see if that could be the answer. This often caused problems. Some AA members were tolerant of addicts who shared about other drugs, and others were not. The acceptance — and often recovery — of addicts sometimes depended on their drinking history (or their willingness to characterize their using as "drinking" regardless of what it actually was), their appearance, their social status or their relationship to other AA members.

Eventually a few drug addicts who tried the AA route began to get some clean time, but they were mostly scattered and their successes were usually hidden from view. As they gradually began to

become more common in AA meetings, a concern began to grow among AA members that these addicts were diluting the atmosphere of identification for alcoholics. Both the drug addict members and regular AA members began to suggest that meetings using the AA Steps should be started for addicts so that AA's atmosphere of identification for alcoholics could remain sharp, and addicts could develop their own basis for identification. Occasionally these ideas landed on the right ears, and an effort to apply these Steps to drug addiction beyond alcoholism was tried.

The first three chapters of this book tell the story of how this idea was tried in different places by different people over a number of years. Those of us familiar with the NA fellowship of today know that this approach eventually worked, but there were also many failures. From those failures, addicts learned, and along the way Narcotics Anonymous emerged from the haze and survived.

There were two substantial efforts to get something going for addicts, one in New York City and the other in Los Angeles. There are two threads common to both of these efforts. One is the success of Alcoholics Anonymous, as most attempts by addicts after 1935 to start a group recovery process, were modeled after AA.

The history of Alcoholics Anonymous is so widely known and so thoroughly documented elsewhere that it need not be recounted here. There was, however, an important decision made in AA's formative years that helped set the stage for the creation of Narcotics Anonymous. Within a few years of its founding, AA committed itself to keeping its efforts focused on one thing: helping people recover from alcoholism. Throughout the years that Bill W. guided AA, he kept their fellowship on that path.

When people came to AA with other problems — gambling, non-alcoholic drug abuse, overeating, etc. — they were encouraged to start their own organizations, and AA even offered the use of their Steps and Traditions for adaptation to those purposes. To preserve the atmosphere of identification for alcoholics, AA elected not to allow their meetings to be used for these other issues. It was in this context that addicts and friends of addicts approached AA on different occasions for permission to build, for drug addicts, an organization based on the AA model of recovery — the Twelve Steps.

The second thread common to both the New York and California Narcotics Anonymous movements was a program for narcotics addicts initiated by the US Public Health Service. By the mid-1920's, the US Health Service found that a growing number of heroin addicts were being admitted to their hospitals, but an effective treatment strategy had not been found. The government thought the problem was so

important that in 1929 Congress authorized funds for the development of two heroin treatment programs. The first was started in 1935 at the Lexington, Kentucky, US Public Hospital, and the other opened in 1938 at the US Public Hospital in Fort Worth, Texas. These hospitals initiated various experimental programs in an effort to find a cure or treatment for heroin addiction.

The programs were run as psychiatric hospitals. Between 1935 and 1964, over 87,000 admissions were recorded for both Lexington and Fort Worth. Of these, seventy-two percent were voluntary admissions. Many different approaches were tried and extensive records maintained. There was individual and group therapy, drug experiments using reduced dosages and substitute drugs as well as restraints for addicts during withdrawal, if necessary. Over time, the Health Services reported success with some patients, but even addicts with several months or years of abstinence would use drugs again and often end up in jail or return to the hospitals. Some addicts were released and apparently never used drugs again, but no treatment could be found which held much hope of producing that result with any kind of consistency.

The solution eventually developed by Narcotics Anonymous was to first understand that the problem was the underlying *addiction*, and to focus on the disease itself rather than on the specific substance around which it manifests in each individual, to adapt the Twelve Steps of Alcoholics Anonymous based upon that premise (NA's first step refers to powerlessness over "our addiction" rather than over any substance), and then to provide an ongoing support group of addicts recovering by way of those Steps. Not all the early attempts to start a Narcotics Anonymous movement had all those elements together. Initially, all that was obvious was that an adapted form of the AA Steps was the essential ingredient.

The most widely known of such early attempts to apply the AA model to a movement for drug addicts arose from a series of events that began in June of 1944 in Montgomery, Alabama. An alcoholic named Houston S. found AA and became a regular member, helping many others find recovery. One man he helped was a fellow named Harry. Harry drank, but he used other drugs too. The meetings seemed to be effective in helping the man stop drinking but they didn't put an end to his other drug abuse. In time Harry was stopped for a traffic violation, but when the officer found drugs in his possession, Harry was turned over to federal authorities. He was sent to the Lexington hospital. After his release he met Houston again and attended AA.

By 1947, Houston had been transferred by his company to Frankfort, Kentucky, not far from the Lexington hospital. As reported in a 1954 *Saturday Evening Post* article about these events, "Harry's

troubles kept jumping through my brain," Houston is quoted as saying. "I was convinced that the twelve suggested Steps would work as well for drugs as for alcohol if conscientiously applied. One day I called on Dr. V.H. Vogel, the medical officer then in charge at Lexington. I told him of our work with Harry and offered to assist in starting a group in the hospital. Doctor Vogel accepted the offer and on February 16, 1947, the first meeting was held. Weekly meetings have been going on ever since."

They called the group Addicts Anonymous, and it met continuously until 1966, when Lexington became part of the National Institute of Mental Health and its program emphasis was changed from treatment to research. Houston remained a loyal supporter, attending meetings nearly every week until 1963 when he turned his duties over to Sterling S., another AA member.

After the Addicts Anonymous meeting had been going awhile, Harry voluntarily returned to the hospital for additional treatment. He began attending the meetings, and this time it worked. Since there were several hundred drug addicted patients in the hospital at the time, attending the meeting was not mandatory. But the experiment was successful, and the meeting became a regular voluntary feature of treatment. Even the moderate success was encouraging enough that the Fort Worth facility also started a meeting for addicts. In the years that followed, all the patients who came through the drug programs were exposed to these meetings.

A public relations handbook distributed to incoming patients about the Lexington hospital some years later contained the following explanation:

The hospital cooperates in the sponsorship of an Addicts Anonymous group, an affiliation you may well want to continue later in the city where you live. Addicts Anonymous is patterned after Alcoholics Anonymous. Anyone is eligible who admits powerlessness over drugs and expresses a sincere desire to stop taking them. It is a bond of communications for an addict, who, after he goes outside, often feels that no one can understand him but another addict. Joining an Addicts Anonymous group can fill this need, reassure the addict that he is not alone, and reinforce his own determination to stay off drugs by helping other addicts do the same. Regular meetings of Addicts Anonymous are held three times a week. Find out who your Addicts Anonymous chairperson is from your Aid or Supervisor.

The booklet also describes *The Key*, a hospital publication mailed to many former patients and interested professionals across the country:

The Key is the official publication for the Hospital's Addicts Anonymous Group. It is published once a month under the direction of the Vocational and Educational Unit and provides members of Addicts Anonymous with an opportunity to express their views in print. ... *The Key* is devoted exclusively to Addicts Anonymous and related subjects.

Many patients began to attend Alcoholics Anonymous meetings upon their release. An effort was even made by the hospital staff to refer patients to receptive Alcoholics Anonymous members and groups who would take them to meetings. Sometimes patients attempted to start Addicts Anonymous meetings in their home towns when they were released. A New York City man, Danny C., was one of these individuals.

Danny was an orphan born in Puerto Rico. At the age of five, he was brought by a woman doctor to live with her in St. Joseph, Missouri. Danny began using drugs after a hospital stay while living in Missouri as a teenager. He eventually settled in New York City, living there most of his adult life. The next twenty years were filled with failure — at work, at marriage, and at life in general. Even moving away from New York back to the Midwest ended in failure once again in the grip of drug addiction. His addiction became a cycle of drug use, arrest, hospitalization, and drug use again. He would be apprehended, sentenced to prison or Lexington (sometimes both), do his time, and then return to the streets of New York City. "In the periods when he was free, Danny embarked on a ceaseless quest for drugs and the money with which to buy them" according to one published source.

But in the late 1940's, Danny was getting to the end of his using days. The 1954 *Saturday Evening Post* story mentioned above reports, "On his seventh trip to Lexington, in 1948, he was in a profound depression. After a month of sullen silence, he began attending the group meetings, which were a new feature at the hospital since his last trip. 'I still wouldn't talk' he reports, 'but I did some listening. I was impressed by what Houston had to say. Harry came back one time and told us his story. For the first time, I began to pray. I was only praying that I would die, but at least it was a prayer.' He did not die, nor did he recover. Within six months he was found in possession of drugs and sent back to Lexington for a year — his eighth and, as it turned out, final trip. ... 'This time things were different,' he says.

'Everything Houston and Harry had been saying suddenly made sense.'

Exactly when the first meetings were started in New York City by Danny is uncertain as there are inconsistencies in the different sources available. The *Post* article suggests it was after the eighth visit to Lexington, which would place it probably about late 1949. His obituary published in the *New York Herald Tribune* says Danny "'kicked' the habit in 1949 after he returned to New York City from his eighth stay... at Lexington. This time he brought back with him the idea for NA." The *New York Times* obituary says, "Danny C. founded NA in 1950..." A *New York Times* article dated June 18, 1950, says, "The New York City chapter [of NA] was started five months ago by a discharged patient from the US Public Health Service Hospital in Lexington. Like other members he is known only by his first name, Danny."

In a 1957 publication of the periodical *Law and Contemporary Problems*, a Dr. Charles Winick wrote, "A related method of therapy is the kind of mutually-supportive group therapy offered by NA, developed at Lexington in 1947 and started in 1949 by Daniel C., an ex-addict..." Dr. Winick was associated with Danny for some time, and served as the Secretary of the corporation they created in 1954 to publish NA literature. In a book titled *The Junkie Priest*, published in 1964, the beginning of NA is quoted as being 1948. And a Salvation Army publication printed in 1964 about Brigadier Dorothy Berry, who helped Danny and his meeting, says, "One of the great helps to addicts is NA. Brigadier Berry has worked with NA since it was first started back in 1947 when she provided a meeting place for the group." However, both of these earlier dates should probably be discounted. The author of *The Junkie Priest* was using second-hand information about the beginning date, and Brigadier Berry was quite old when the Salvation Army article was written. Furthermore, none of the other sources suggest Danny was aware of the Addicts Anonymous group at Lexington until his 1948 visit. Other sources suggest the period between his seventh and eighth visits to Lexington was brief and not devoted to recovery. This then suggests the most reasonable time for when Danny started the meeting is upon his departure from Lexington near the end of 1949.

So, depending on which source a person elects to chose, NA may have been started by Danny in 1947, 1948, 1949 or in early 1950. The weight of evidence seems to suggest it was near the end of 1949 or the first month of 1950. Dr. Winick had a long-term association with Danny and is probably the best source on this point. The June 18, 1950, *New York Times* article would likely have been developed from Danny as the source and suggests a December 1949 or January 1950

start date. This time frame seems to be the most reliable, when trying to use the best combination of hints from the various sources.

In a 1953 book titled *Monkey on My Back* by Wenzell Brown, Danny is reported to have had a spiritual awakening during his eighth visit to Lexington. As Brown relates it, "Then one night something strange happened, something Danny himself cannot explain. It was during his eighth 'cure' at Lexington. He was alone in the darkness of his room. Without conscious volition he began to pray. But this time he did not ask God for dope. Instead, he spoke humbly in the darkness, saying that he was powerless to help himself and that, if he was to continue living, only God could help him. This was, Danny claims, his first honest prayer...Danny resolved that morning never to use drugs again; in the four years that have passed since then, he has honored that resolve."

Brown also reports that, "As soon as possible, Danny went to AA and studied their plan. Some of the program could not be applied to drug addiction [whether this is Brown's conclusion or Danny's statement is not known]. Danny borrowed what he could from their experience, but he had no one to call on for help. Many alcoholics have cured themselves, returned to their businesses, and become highly successful. This was not true of narcotics addicts. At best, there were a handful of former addicts who were truly cured. And the lives of these few had been so shattered by the horror of their experience that they were in no shape to help others. Danny must work alone."

Again, there is no way to determine if this represents Danny's thinking or the hyperbole of a dramatic writer. If it were true that Danny felt other addicts could not be as capable of helping other addicts as he was, then the effort was doomed to failure. However, it is likely that Brown was suggesting that in the beginning Danny didn't have others with clean time, circumstance and perseverance to work along-side him. Even a short association with AA would have taught him that twelve-step work was best done with another member in recovery rather than alone. The claim Danny had no one to call for help seems a little disingenuous, as he certainly had Houston as a reliable resource and supporter. Additionally, several others came to the fellowship in its first year and stayed for considerable periods of time.

Although the extent of participation by others in his group is not known, the group did continue to meet. The May 7, 1951, issue of *Time* magazine included an article highlighting Danny's life and recovery since leaving Lexington the last time. The article cited a celebration to commemorate his first year of total abstinence. When the August 7, 1954, *Saturday Evening Post* article appeared, it noted that Danny had celebrated his fifth year clean. [The inconsistency in clean time is noted, but not explainable.] The *Time* and *Post* articles un-

doubtedly helped the fledgling meetings in New York, but their impact in other cities is unknown.

From the description given by Wenzell Brown, Danny "was in his mid-forties. His face was gaunt, the skin taut against the bones. His eyes were deep-set, large. His forehead jutted, his eyebrows were heavy, his light-brown hair sparse. His mouth was wide and straight, his chin narrow. There were heavy creases about his lips. His taut body, his drawn expression, his compressed lips and clipped speech did not impress me favorably." By using Brown's description and the caption under a photograph in the *Saturday Evening Post* article, Danny can be identified in the only published photograph known to exist of him.

Brown attended meetings while gathering information for his book, which chronicled the lives of numerous addicts. Brown gives the following account of his first meeting, which he attended with a police inspector: "When we arrived we found the hall already well filled with perhaps from two hundred to two hundred and fifty people. Only a scattering of these people were users or former users. There was a group of students from Columbia's Teachers College. Most of the rest were social workers, public officials, and members of citizens reform groups."

"A moving picture, Drug Addiction, released by Encyclopedia Britannica was shown. ... After that, Danny announced that three members of NA would tell about their experiences..." The third speaker's talk "was followed by a round of applause and then a minister said a brief prayer. Danny called the meeting to a close."

While this New York strain of NA does appear to have used the Twelve Steps as the basis for recovery, the Twelve Traditions do not appear to have been adapted for their use. Danny financed some of NA's daily expenses with money he received from being on welfare. It didn't go far, and there was very little money, if any, received as contributions. Neither Brown nor later writers mention collections being asked for at meetings, suggesting that perhaps they were not. If so, NA in New York at the time might have been depending on gifts from outside individuals and organizations.

Dr. Winick, who by 1957 had served for three years as Secretary of the parent corporation of NA, wrote, "It is typical of our society's attitude toward addiction that NA has never been able to raise funds in the community. Each attempt to raise money has been unsuccessful because the people approached were convinced that the money would be used to buy more drugs for the NA members!"

Danny did not shun publicity. Rather, he used it to help spread the word that NA existed. A number of newspaper and magazine articles mention the New York NA meetings and about the Addicts Anonymous project in Lexington in the 1950's. A few were: the *Chi-*

cago-Sun Times (1950), *Newsweek* (1951), and *Family Circle* (1951). In 1958, the *New York Post* did a lengthy series of articles about addiction and provided information about the NA meetings in New York and their members. The *Saturday Evening Post* article was undoubtedly the most important, as the magazine was, at that time, among the three most widely read publications in the country.

In the *Saturday Evening Post* article, Danny's group told of responding to some 5,000 inquiries and that some 600 addicts had attended one or more meetings since they had been started. Because their address was published in the article, they undoubtedly received a considerable number of new inquiries. The *Post* article reported other NA meetings were also held in several other cities, but no details were provided about those NA meetings.

It had been hard to find a location for a meeting when Danny started NA. At first, the meetings were held at the House of Detention in Manhattan. Later they moved to the Presbyterian Labor Temple on East Fourteenth Street and finally to the YMCA center on Twenty-third Street near Seventh Avenue in Manhattan. The meetings were held at the YMCA for over twelve years. Danny received assistance from local physicians, the Presbyterian Labor Temple, the YMCA and the Salvation Army which gave him a small office for a while, from which to conduct his work. He was tireless and committed to the success of NA.

They had two meetings a week. A Wednesday evening meeting (some reports say Tuesday) was open and often had visitors curious about how to help family members. There was an "addicts only" meeting on Friday evening. Sources differ on the day of this closed meeting, too. It may be that the meeting schedule changed over the years.

Danny worked with addicts wherever he found them. Through radio, newspaper and magazine stories he did his best to encourage addicts to come to his meetings. In later years he was able to get exposure on local New York City television. Among the things he did for addicts, in addition to keeping his meeting going, was to help find work for those who returned from Lexington to live in New York City. And he was always answering letters from across the country. He was constantly going all over New York to help addicts who called.

A lot of people who went through the Lexington program also came into contact with Danny and his meeting. One such man was Mike M., who was in Lexington during 1954. Mike had entered Lexington voluntarily under a program known as "Knock on the Door" admittances. He could have left any time he wanted, but he chose to stay even though he wasn't included in a medical program. He was simply given time to recuperate after he detoxed. They gave him a job sweeping floors, and when the editor of *The Key* left, Mike got the

job. He recalls there were about two hundred patients, and they still had the in-house meeting for addicts.

Upon his discharge he attended one meeting of the New York City group at the YMCA. Although he remembers it only vaguely, he believes they called it "Addicts Anonymous." Years later he got clean in California and found NA there. In 1971, he helped start NA meetings in the Ventura, California area.

Another Lexington alumni, hearing of the success in New York, visited that city and then returned to Virginia where he had lived previously. He attempted to start an NA meeting in the Federal penitentiary at Lorton, Virginia. No subsequent references to this meeting have been found.

In 1954, a corporation was formed to publish the literature Danny and his group used. Called The National Board of Narcotics Anonymous, it was a body which described itself this way: "A group of civic-minded citizens, sincerely interested in this problem (drug addiction), functions as the Board of Directors for Narcotics Anonymous. The function of the Board is to direct, guide and coordinate Narcotics Anonymous groups."

They distributed a pamphlet entitled *Our Way of Life, An Introduction to NA* that briefly outlined their concepts and philosophy. Its format and content were derived from an Alcoholics Anonymous pamphlet entitled *A Way of Life*. The Steps were included, and the wording of Step One is of particular note. Rather than admitting powerlessness over "alcohol" the word "drugs" is used. When California meetings were started in 1953 — the time and place cited by the NA meetings of today as the birth of NA — they elected to substitute "addiction" for Alcohol. This is often cited by NA members as a distinction which forms the basis of the modern NA message. The choice of "drugs" instead of "addiction" suggests that the New York members had not shifted the emphasis off the drugs and onto the disease of addiction as the Californians did. The pamphlet is comparable to the booklet then being used by the California fellowship, with this important difference in the wording of the First Step.

One of Danny's best supporters was Brigadier Dorothy Berry, a Salvation Army worker who helped many addicts during the 1940's and 1950's. Dorothy must have been nearly fifty years old when Danny started his meetings. She was a quiet, small woman, and always had a gentle word to say about people. She began helping Danny when he first tried to start a meeting. Dorothy helped the New York meetings until she retired in 1965. She came to the meetings regularly but didn't say too much.

The New York group suffered a setback when Danny, who had stayed clean, died of cancer in 1956. Rae L., who had been his dedicated assistant, took over the group. Rae had been one of the first members to come to Danny's meetings and stay. As the only woman with much clean time, she was esteemed by women who came to meetings, yet brought discomfort to some of the men. Born of Puerto Rican parents, she grew up in Harlem, where she began using as a teenager. She was one of the many women who spent time in Lexington and then found NA in New York City. With a natural beauty and dark penetrating eyes, she was deceptively strong willed.

She did not like AA, and tried to mold NA as a unique entity. Working with Brigadier Berry, they tried to recompose the Steps so they were unique yet held the same simplicity and depth of meaning. This effort turned out to be unsuccessful. The group remained small during the years she led the fellowship, and she became disappointed that few stayed and achieved much clean time.

In the early 1960's, the news media as well as many city and state officials began to think treatment was a better solution to drug abuse than prison. Since she knew more about addiction than city officials did, they eventually sought her out, thinking she could do more as a worker in the system than she could just running a small meeting of addicts. She loved this new challenge, and in 1961 took a position with the City of New York. For a time she had considerable impact on many public officials and helped move policy toward treatment rather than prison. She was able to continue leading the NA meetings and also to influence "the establishment" about positive solutions to addiction. She is reported to have testified before several congressional committees.

Rae appears to have been very effective in this position, as the Mayor and Governor began to promote programs for drug addicts. Unfortunately, however, a change of mayoral administrations came along and her position was eventually downgraded in importance, then eliminated.

A non-addict acquaintance of Rae's remembers attending meetings in 1958 and 1959. "The meeting was small and a lot of the people who came were still loaded. Rae would lead the meeting and try to show there was a way out of the misery. But each week, there were so many new faces that it seemed like a hopeless task." Nevertheless, they carried on.

One of the few New York members still around from those days is Corinne P., now retired and living in another state. She had been in Lexington for a few months and remembers, "It was just like being in prison." After her release in 1957, she began attending NA meetings in New York. The group didn't have much structure, she remembers, but Rae was a strong, dedicated leader. The group was small

and unstable most of the time, since other than Rae, herself, and maybe two other regulars, most addicts only came for a short while. But they tried everything to keep it going. They even appeared on New York television to talk about NA.

Corinne recalls that it was difficult for newcomers. There were no detoxification facilities, and addicts could be arrested for "internal possession" (having drugs in the blood stream at the time of arrest). Addicts who needed to kick often avoided the meetings because the cops came to the meetings too. Corinne relates that they found a place over in Patterson, New Jersey where they could hide addicts for a few days or a week, and that was helpful. Corinne went to meetings for several years, then stopped going, although she continued to be abstinent and helped out when she could.

Sometime around 1961, the parent organization of the New York City group, called the National Board of Narcotics Anonymous, was reorganized and named the National Advisory Council on Narcotics. The new address for the Council was Rae's business address at the New York City Office of Narcotics Coordination.

Another person affiliated with the New York fellowship was Father Dan Egan. Father Egan was at the time well known among women addicts in New York City, as he had been working with troubled teenage girls during the early 1950's. This work led to helping girls and women addicted to drugs. His education about female addicts led him through the streets where they used, the jails and institutions where they were confined, and into the fringes of the organized crime network that controlled drugs in New York. He befriended so many addicts that he was constantly called by them when they were in trouble.

Fran O., a well-known NA member today, remembers Father Egan from the streets of the late 1950's. "He was a little naive, I thought at the time. He was always trying to help — buy us lunch or something, talk a little religion — but he wasn't judgmental at all." Eventually he came into contact with the fledgling NA group.

As Father Egan recalls, one day in 1959 he was waiting outside the office of a social worker for an appointment concerning one of the women he was helping. He found a small pamphlet about NA in the reception area. His attention was immediately focused on it because he had never heard of NA, although the idea made sense to him. His interest was also stirred because one of his brothers had used drugs and was now going to AA.

Before moving from the table, he read the complete pamphlet, which included notice of an NA meeting every Wednesday at the

YMCA. He went to his first NA meeting that night, and he met Rae and a few other addicts.

He recalls there were nearly more visitors (concerned family members, social workers, nursing students, clergy, and maybe an even undercover cop) than addicts. Dorothy Berry was also at this meeting; Father Egan remembered her from when they were both at the women's prisons seeing to their separate inmate clients. Father Egan recalls that "Rae seemed to do most everything," and that the meetings were substantially different from NA meetings today. There didn't appear to be clear guidelines for the meetings, and they may not have followed the Traditions very well. "This may be understandable," he comments, "as aside from Rae there were few role models that newcomers could identify with to show that recovery was really possible."

Father Egan began to come to the meeting regularly, mostly to bring addicts, and on occasion to speak. Corinne remembers that Father Egan brought women addicts to the meeting, which helped the meeting's attendance, but it was always difficult to get them to come back. Father Egan recalls that while he was involved, there were meetings at the YMCA, at the House of Detention, a meeting at the St. Augustine Episcopal Church, and one at the St. John Crystom Catholic Church. He also remembers an effort to get something going at the prison on Rikers Island. A book entitled *The Addict*, published about that time, confirms the meetings remembered by Father Egan.

About the time Corinne ended her active role in the group, Father Egan was expanding his efforts to help female addicts. An article about his work was published in the September 1962 edition of *The Catholic Digest* which resulted in a wave of interest. He began receiving contributions in the mail from across the country as well as considerable local support. Soon he was able to open a halfway house for women who were being released from institutions or just needing help for their addiction.

The *Catholic Digest* story led to a lengthy story in a major New York City newspaper. The reporter was so enamored of what Father Egan was doing that he went with him for months along his daily routes and eventually wrote a book entitled *The Junkie Priest*. This appellation was given to him by many of the women who were attending the meetings at that time whom he had helped. In the book, Father Egan is noted as being the "chaplain of Narcotics Anonymous founded in 1948 by Daniel C." By the time the book was published in 1964, the halfway house for women was already operating.

The halfway house had been a dream come true, and he got help from many places. Corinne remembers she brought clothes to the house for the women, and Father Egan would sometimes bring women to her house so they could see for themselves that it was pos-

sible to stop using drugs. Unfortunately for Father Egan, his superiors in the church didn't take too kindly to his work with addicts, and not long after the halfway house was created, they assigned him to other areas of work. The house continued for a number of years with social workers running things, but it eventually closed.

In *The Junkie Priest*, Rae is reported to have started meetings in prisons in Marquette and Jackson, Michigan, as well as in Passaic County and in Newark, New Jersey. She is reported to have been planning two meetings for Philadelphia, but no details were given about them.

Some of the New Jersey meetings survived for several years. As reported in the September 1963 edition of *The Key*, five meetings were going strong. In Newark, there was one on Monday at the Mount Carmel Guild Headquarters and another on Thursday on Washington Street. The groups in Hackensack, Passaic and Jersey City were also still meeting. The article suggests efforts to expand in other cities were being made, but no details were provided. When and why these meetings died is not yet known.

Brigadier Berry's efforts are best reported in The Salvation Army's April 1965 newsletter entitled *The War Cry*. This article, written mostly about Brigadier Berry, touches on the help provided to Danny, and to Rae after Danny died. Ms. Berry was going to the jails and prisons to help women with clothing, counseling and temporary lodging upon their release. Many female addicts received her attention and assistance. Salvation Army work with addicts in New York City continued to be centered around Brigadier Berry until her retirement in 1965. Rae was reported to have fourteen years clean when the article was published.

During the early 1960's, the political climate for drug recovery began to change. Newspapers were continually carrying stories about the need to provide treatment for addicts rather than to simply throw them into prison. City and state officials were starting programs, including one on Rikers Island. Here addicts were allowed to detox while in custody and some effort was made to provide counseling and job training. Throughout the sixties, New York City and State officials put through larger and larger budgets for medical treatment of addicts; for a time as many as 2,000 hospital beds were allocated for use by drug addicts. Unfortunately, the treatment methodology and aftercare did not include Narcotics Anonymous. It seems that long-term success was rare.

Despite the improved attitude by the government toward treatment, the demise of New York meetings came as a result of the enactment of legislation commonly known as the "Rockefeller Laws." This legislation, enacted in the mid-1960's, provided that drug addicts

on probation were guilty of a new felony violation if they were *in the presence* of another drug addict; both could be arrested and sent to prison. This brought the meetings to an end, and the few remaining members faded into the streets. Meetings in New York did not begin again until the early 1980's, after the "Rockefeller Laws" were ignored by addicts and many police officials.

As the New York meetings were about to end, there was an offshoot effort by addicts in Cleveland, Ohio, to start an NA meeting. An addict named Marvin S., sentenced for a drug violation, was ordered to Lexington. On his return home, in 1963, he was referred to an AA member who became his sponsor and took him to meetings. He was soon introduced to an officer in the Cleveland Salvation Army, Captain Edward Diamond. Between them they gathered a few more addicts.

During the fall of 1963 they began meeting in the Cleveland, Ohio Harbor Light Center of the Salvation Army. Captain Diamond obtained excerpts of the pamphlet provided by Rae or Dorothy Berry from New York, and they used this until a complete pamphlet was printed. They also began meeting on Wednesday evenings at the Red Shield Hotel.

An interesting element of this new association was that a lot of them were jazz musicians who started a band together. In December 1963 or January 1964, the group published their first newsletter which reports Marvin was the group secretary. The second newsletter (date unknown) reports three meetings in three locations: Downtown, Cooley Farms and Lexington (a suburb of Cleveland). In this edition, a small note appears stating, "The Harbor Light Center in Los Angeles is taking preliminary steps to start a chapter of NA, following the lead of the Cleveland Harbor Light Center which is believed to be the first Salvation Army Center to sponsor an NA group." Sometime after the third group started, they re-printed the pamphlet *Our Way of Life* with information for all three meetings — Sunday, Tuesday and Wednesday — on the cover.

Elections were held, and officers of the first group (Downtown) were Julius N. and John C., while Marvin continued to serve as secretary. Mention is also made of similar activity in New York. Other records of the Salvation Army suggest that meetings were also held in New Orleans, Los Angeles, and Cincinnati about this same time, but no additional information about the meetings in these other cities has been found. A brief mention in the Second Edition of the Cleveland newsletter offered birthday congratulations to five members of the New York group, which is undoubtedly a reference to the group being kept alive by Rae.

Unfortunately, Marvin relapsed and returned to the Lexington hospital. Twelve years later, he was one of two people who started the first NA meeting in West Palm Beach, Florida.

The Cleveland meetings seem to have had the same start-stop-and-start-again cycles too. In a letter dated March 9, 1965 to the Cleveland Salvation Army headquarters, Captain Diamond reports the meetings stopped at the end of 1964, "as no new addicts were coming to the meetings." The letter goes on to suggest, "It may be that the group will resume holding meetings later in the spring of this year." In a 1970 letter from Officer Diamond, by then promoted to Major, he reports that the NA meetings had been continued under lay leadership until October 1, 1970 when they "discontinued holding meetings due to the numerous other groups now providing service in this area."

As the New York meetings were about to come to an end, a glimmer of hope remained at the Rikers Island facility. One edition of *Our Way of Life* has been found containing a notation that "All meetings are held at the McBurney Branch YMCA at 215 West 23rd Street." The pamphlet also contains this statement: "The Department of Corrections wishes to express its appreciation to the National Advisory Council on Narcotics, Inc., (Narcotics Anonymous) and Brigadier Dorothy Berry, Director of Correctional Services Bureau for Women of the Salvation Army, for permission to reprint this pamphlet and make it available for distribution to the inmates of our department. Printed at the Rikers Island Print shop - Inmate Vocational Training Program."

This is probably the best confirmation of the close affiliation between the Salvation Army, the National Advisory Council, and the City of New York. The credit notation would no doubt have been viewed by the California fellowship as being a violation of the Sixth Tradition.

Another issue of conflict that seems possible to identify is how the meetings were conducted. No mention is made of reading the Steps or Traditions, and mention is made by several sources that professionals (ministers, Father Egan, or Brigadier Berry, for example) were allowed to participate in the meetings. Even AA at the time was pretty strict about not letting non-members talk at their meetings. Such a practice would have been unacceptable to the California fellowship.

The Narcotics Anonymous meetings led by Rae, and the support effort that involved the National Advisory Council and the Salvation Army, seems to have faded to oblivion about the time the Rockefeller Laws in New York took effect, except for the meeting in Cleveland that survived until 1970. Sadly Rae died in the early 1970's without

having witnessed her dream of an independent and stable Narcotics Anonymous fellowship.

Many people have speculated about possible contact between the New York City meetings Danny started and those beginning in 1953 in California. It is possible there was some contact. Their connection was probably through the staff at the Lexington Hospital and its publication *The Key*. If there was any contact, it was likely to have happened after the 1954 *Saturday Evening Post* article was published. However, there appear to have been substantial differences between them in how they used and understood the Traditions. Although the California group had its own share of problems in this area, they appear to have held closer to a strict interpretation than the group in New York. The appearance in the *Saturday Evening Post* article of a picture of two members with full face photographs is an example of the kind of thing the California fellowship would not have found acceptable. This emphasis on adhering to the Traditions is perhaps the key factor which contributed to the long-term survival of this NA movement as opposed to all the others which ultimately folded.

After carefully considering all the information available about the New York fellowship, it is probably fair to suggest that it was too closely controlled by one member — first Danny and then Rae — and that a group conscience process as presented in the Second Tradition did not exist. Individual recovery did work there, however. This seems to be more evidence that, even though the Steps do work for individuals even without the Traditions enforced, the long-term well-being of the organization comes from conscientious application of the Traditions. Considering this sharp difference between the two groups, it is unlikely that they would have easily formed an alliance, or would have considered themselves part of the same organization.