



RECOVERY ROAD ONLINE

GROUP UNITY STEP TEN

ZOOM UP THE HIGHWAY OF HOPE



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Recovery Road Online has no opinion on outside issues; hence the Recovery Road Online name ought never be drawn into public controversy.

Never since it began has Recovery Road Online been divided by major controversial issues; nor has our fellowship ever publicly taken sides on any question in an embattled world. This, however, has been no earned virtue. It could almost be said that we were born with it; for as one old-timer recently declared, “Practically never have I heard a heated religious, political, or reform argument among RRO members. So long as we don’t argue these matters privately, it’s a cinch we never shall publicly.”

As by some deep instinct, we RRO’s have known from the very beginning that we must never, no matter what the provocation, publicly take sides in any fight, even a worthy one. All history affords us the spectacle of striving nations and groups finally torn asunder because they were designed for, or tempted into, controversy. Others fell apart because of sheer self-righteousness, while trying to enforce upon the rest of mankind some millennium of their own specification. In our own times, we have seen millions die in political and economic wars, often spurred by religious and racial differences. We live in imminent possibility of a fresh holocaust, determining how people shall be governed and how the products of nature and toil shall be divided among them. That is the spiritual climate in which RRO was born and, by God’s grace, has nevertheless flourished.



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Let us re-emphasize that his or her reluctance to fight one another or anyone else is not counted as some special virtue which makes us feel superior to other people. Nor does it mean that the members of Recovery Road Online, now restored as citizens of the world, are going to back away from their individual responsibilities to act, as they see the right, upon issues of our time. But when it comes to RRO as a whole, that's quite a different matter. In this respect, we do not enter into public controversy because we know that our fellowship will perish if we do. We conceive the survival and spread of Recovery Road Online to be something of far greater importance than the weight we could collectively throw back of any other cause. Since recovery from compulsive gambling is life itself to us, it is imperative that we preserve, in full strength, our means of survival. Maybe this sounds as though the compulsive gamblers in Recovery Road Online had suddenly gone peaceable and became one great big happy family. Of course, this isn't so, at all. Human beings that we are, we squabble. Before we leveled off a bit, RRO looked more like one prodigious squabble than anything else; at least, on the surface. A corporation director, having just voted a company expenditure of a hundred thousand dollars, would appear at a fellowship business meeting and blow their top over twenty-five dollars worth of needed postage stamps. Disliking the attempt of some to manage a group, half its membership might very angrily rush off to form



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another group more to their liking. Old-timers, temporarily turned Pharisee, have sulked. Bitter attacks have been directed against people suspected of mixed motives. Despite their din, our puny rows never did RRO a particle of harm. They were just part and parcel of learning to live and work together. Let it be noted, too, that they were almost always concerned with how to make Recovery Road Online more effective and how to do the most good for the most compulsive gamblers.

The Washingtonian Society, a movement among alcoholics that started in Baltimore a century ago, almost discovered the answer to alcoholism. At first, the society was composed entirely of alcoholics trying to help one another. The early members foresaw that they should dedicate themselves to this sole aim. In many respects, the Washingtonians were akin to the A.A. of today. Their membership passed the hundred thousand mark. Had they been left to themselves, and had they stuck to their one goal, they might have found the answer. Instead, the Washingtonians permitted politicians and reformers, both alcoholic and non-alcoholic, to use the society for their own purposes. Abolition of slavery, for example, was a stormy, political issue at that time. Soon, Washingtonian speakers violently and publicly took sides on the question. Perhaps the society could have survived the abolition controversy, but it didn't stand a chance when it determined to reform America's drinking habits. A few years following their temperance crusade, the Washingtonians completely lost their effectiveness in helping alcoholics.



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The lesson to be learned from the Washingtonians was not overlooked by Recovery Road Online. As they surveyed the wreck of that movement, early members resolved to keep the fellowship of Recovery Road Online out of public controversy. Thus, was laid the foundation for Group Unity Step Ten: “Recovery Road Online has no opinion on outside issues; hence the Recovery Road Online name ought never be drawn into public controversy.”