



RECOVERY ROAD ONLINE

GROUP UNITY STEP FIVE

ZOOM UP THE HIGHWAY OF HOPE



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Each group has but one primary purpose—to carry its message to the compulsive gambler who still suffers.

“Blacksmith, stick to your anvil!” It’s better to do one thing supremely well, than many badly. That is the central theme of this unity step. Around it, our fellowship gathers in unity. The very life of our fellowship requires the preservation of this principle.

Recovery Road Online can be likened to a group of physicians who might find a cure for cancer; and upon whose concerted work would depend the answer for sufferers of this disease. True, each physician in such a group might have his own specialty; every doctor concerned, at times, would wish he could devote himself to his chosen field rather than work only with the group. But once these men had hit upon a cure; once it became apparent that only by their united effort could this be accomplished, then all of them would feel bound to devote themselves solely to the relief of cancer. In the radiance of such a miraculous discovery, any doctor would set his other ambitions aside, at whatever the personal cost.

Just as firmly bound by obligations are the members of RRO; who have demonstrated that they can help a compulsive gambler as others seldom can. The unique ability of each RRO member to identify themselves with and bring recovery to the newcomer in no way depends upon their learning,



GROUP UNITY STEP FIVE

eloquence, or any special individual skills. The only thing that matters is that he or she is a compulsive gambler who has found a key to stop gambling. These legacies of suffering and of recovery are easily passed among compulsive gamblers; one to the other. This is our gift from God, and its bestowal upon others like us is the one aim that today animates Recovery Road Online members all around the globe.

There is another reason for this singleness of purpose. It is the great paradox of Recovery Road Online that we know we can seldom keep the precious gift of not gambling unless we give it away. If a group of doctors possessed a cancer cure, they might be conscience stricken if they failed their mission through self-seeking; yet, such a failure wouldn't jeopardize their personal survival. For us, if we neglect those who are still sick, there is unremitting danger to our own lives and sanity. Under these compulsions of self-preservation, duty, and love, it is not strange that our fellowship has concluded that it has but one high mission: to carry the RRO message to those who don't know there is a way out. Highlighting the wisdom of the principle of singleness of purpose, a member tells this story:

Restless one day, I felt I'd better do some Twelfth Step work. Maybe I should take out some insurance against a "slip". But first, I'd have to find a compulsive gambler to work with. So, I drove to the city's holdover quarters at the jail. I asked the Sergeant on duty if anyone had been picked up on a hot check or embezzlement charge.



GROUP UNITY STEP FIVE

He replied, “We have a real tough one; been in several times. He always blames other people—his partner, his wife. He’s very suspicious of everyone.” “Doesn’t sound too good does it?” I said. “But, working with him may do something for me, so may I have permission to see him?”

I was soon sitting beside a very unfriendly man; he stared at me and I agreed with the Sergeant that he certainly didn’t look good. However, I told him my story. I explained what a wonderful fellowship we had and how well we understood each other. I bore down hard on the hopelessness of the gambling problem. I insisted that very few compulsive gamblers could ever get well on their own; but that in our groups, we could do together what we could not do separately.

He interrupted to scoff at this and asserted that he’d fix his wife, his partner, and stop gambling by himself. Sarcastically, he asked, “How much does your scheme cost?” I was thankful I could tell him, “Nothing at all.” His next question: “What are you getting out of it?” Of course, my answer was, “Keeps me from gambling and makes a mighty happy life.”

Still dubious, he demanded, “Do you really mean the only reason you are here is to try to help me and to help yourself?” I told him, “Yes, that’s absolutely all there is to it. There’s no angle.”



GROUP UNITY STEP FIVE

Then, hesitantly, I ventured to talk about the spiritual side of our program. What a freeze he gave me! I had no sooner gotten the word “spiritual” out of my mouth than he pounced, “Oh, now I get it! You’re proselyting for some damn religious sect or other. Where do you get that ‘no angle’ stuff? I belong to a great church that means everything to me. You’ve got a nerve to come in here talking religion!” Thank Heaven, I came up with the right answer for that one!

“You have to have faith,” I said, “perhaps far deeper faith than mine. No doubt you’re better taught in religious matters than I; so, I can’t tell you anything about religion. I don’t even want to try. Can you give me a letter-perfect definition of humility? From what you have told me about yourself, your problems, and how you propose to lick them, I think I know what’s wrong.”

“Okay, give me the business”, he said. I told him I thought he was just a conceited man with a big ego who thought he could run the whole show. This really rocked him; but as he calmed down, he began to listen while I tried to show him that humility was the main key to stopping gambling. Finally, he saw that I wasn’t attempting to change his religious views; that I just wanted him to find the grace of his own religion that would aid his recovery. From then on, we got along fine.



GROUP UNITY STEP FIVE

What would have happened if I had been obliged to talk to this man on religious grounds? Suppose my answer had to be that our fellowship needed a lot of money; that we went in for education and rehabilitation? Suppose I had suggested that I take a hand in his domestic and business affairs? Where would we have wound up? No place, of course.

A few years later, this same man liked to say: My sponsor sold me one idea and that was to stop gambling. At the time, I couldn't have bought anything else.”