

The Calling of the Green

Ella came into the morning group feeling depressed and in tears. She had been on the phone the night before with her daughter who informed her she needed money to avoid being evicted. Her aunt and her daughter knew Ella had some money in the bank and they wanted her to send it.

Ella has only been in the recovery center eight days. She now wanted to leave so that she could help her daughter. “Don’t do it Ella,” one member said. “You will only go out and get high again.” The group leader suggested that she was just feeling down and needed to hang on, that she would feel better soon. The leader also said that the phones should be taken out because they cause more of the trouble for people in the Center. Most of the other members agreed with the firm comment that if Ella left she would be doomed.

After a period of silence an older man in the back of the room spoke. “Ella, we who are addicted face difficult times during the month. There are things that come up that draw us away from the path we are on.” He continued: “For instance, my friend here and I came in just two days ago. We were out on the street we knew August 1st was coming up and that there would be empty beds at the recovery center because of “the calling of the green.” All addicted people know that the first of the month is “check time and there is money to be had.” He went on to explain that there are things that come up every month that pull people out. It might be family, friends, problems we left behind and especially “check time and the calling of the green.”

Another member of the group suggested that the father of Ella's daughter might help.

Ella responded: "When I was young I was sexually by my father and he is the father of my daughter."