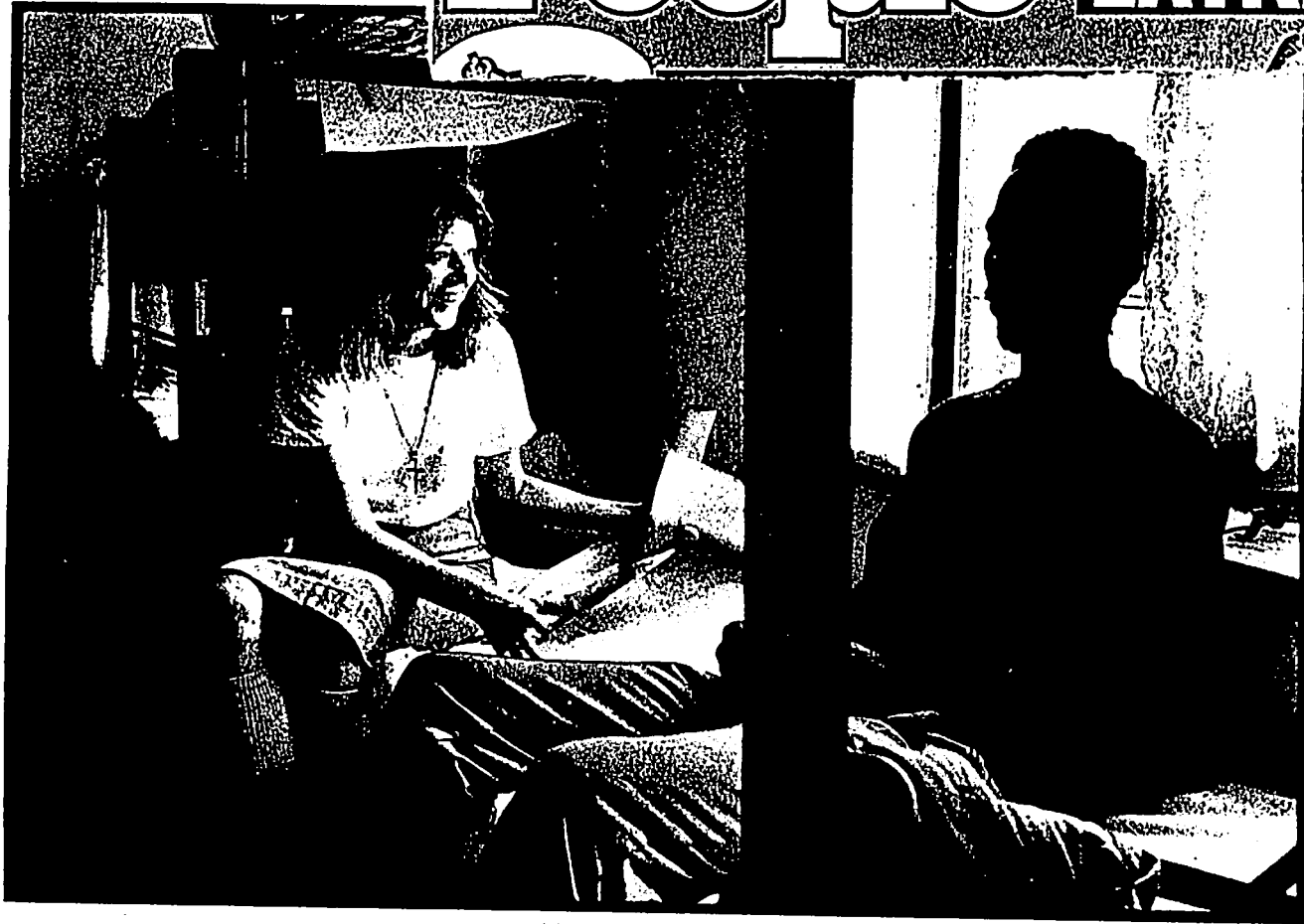


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Annie Troy Clark

My last night in advertising," recalls Annie Troy Clark, "my department took me out for a big dinner, and then they rented a limousine and we went around Manhattan. That was supposed to be my last blowout. Nobody made the connection that I was going off to war." The battleground was East Harlem. All you need to get there is a subway token; all you need to stay is despair, poverty—or the belief that you can save souls. Clark is a believer. She came to her current job the long way, from Tripp City, Ohio, to New York City, where she was employed as a creative supervisor at Young & Rubicam, overseeing Met Life commercials featuring Snoopy. Then, four years ago, a friend died of AIDS. "I couldn't handle it myself," she says. "For the first time in 12 years, I found myself going to church." There she heard a sermon about a 19th-century evangelist, Stephen Tyng, who had worked in the city slums. The name was unfamiliar to most of the parishioners. To Troy it was literally a household word: Tyng was her great-great-grandfather. The sermon, she maintains, "was like a message from God, say-

ing it was time I thought of others." Troy decided to get off the fast track and take the local.

Her stop finally was 124th Street and Lexington Avenue: Emmaus House, a shelter for the homeless. She became a full-time volunteer, living at Emmaus. Gone was the expense account, the fat paycheck. There was no room for cute here. There was only a \$25-a-week honorarium, making her one more of the city's poor. Except that she had a role to play and a place to trust: "What I like about Emmaus House is that it gives homeless persons a lot of credit and ways to channel their intelligence and abilities. There aren't many places that do that." Even so, she recalls that "weekends were when I really wanted a break so bad, and there was no way to get it." At times she was tempted to resume her old Madison Avenue life-style. But somehow Grandpa Tyng wouldn't let her. In 1987 she became executive director of Emmaus. Now 36, she earns about 25 percent of her midtown income, but, she notes, "It's more creative here, working with people and helping them get there, wherever that place is. I won't be going back."