

The Plain Brown Rapper

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THE ISO ENCOURAGES GROUPS TO REPRODUCE THE PLAIN BROWN RAPPER SO THAT COPIES WILL BE AVAILABLE TO ALL MEMBERS. THE PLAIN BROWN RAPPER IS MAILED FREE TO ALL WHO REQUEST IT.

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Editor's Note: The ideas expressed in the literature section of the PBR reflect the opinions of the authors of those articles and do not necessarily represent the opinions of the ISO or of the SAA fellowship as a whole.

"I was so afraid of attending social functions, for fear they'd trigger more acting out behavior. "

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The Green Book

By Bill J., Virginia Beach

A member recently wrote me an e-mail and called our New SAA book "The Green Book." That has a ring to it; I think that is how I will refer to it.

Calling it the SAA Big Book didn't exactly set right with me. I did get a chance to read the first 98 pages that outline our program and the section is very powerful. I have read some of the first stories as well. In reading other recovery books about sex addiction, I wasn't really able to entirely trust the source, but with our book written by our people (fellow sex addicts) I feel more comfortable in the guidance offered in the Green Book.

I was particularly glad that the "Three Circles" were described and also that withdrawal / relapse was covered. In the beginning of the book it describes our dilemma of sexual addiction in great detail. There weren't any loop holes left to slip through—I found

that I could identify well.

When I sponsor people now, I can confidently recommend our Program in Print—The Green Book—as recovery material that reflects how we as sex addicts work our program. Thank you again, ISO and those responsible for giving Sex Addicts Anonymous this wonderful text.



Reaching Addicts in Need Through Therapists

By Dean L.

How do we best reach out to the addict in need? The San Francisco Intergroup surveyed 100 members to find out what got them to their first SAA meeting. The results were:

- #1. I heard about it in another 12 steps meeting.
- #2. My therapist sent me.

Response #1 indicates the value of posting literature at locations where recovery meetings take place. Also sex addicts attending other 12-step programs might consider the value of appropriately disclosing their issues and strength and hope in ways that might bring program awareness and hope to untreated addicts.

Further questioning about "my therapist sent me" revealed that generally therapists were not quick about figuring out sex addiction and prescribing action. Too often addicts reported their therapist sent them after "I got arrested for soliciting" or "I was fired from work for viewing pornography" or some other crisis.

Reasons therapists don't quickly respond include (1) sex addicts are not honest about disclosing the nature or extent of their activities; (2) therapists don't recognize sex addiction symptoms or aggressively pursue hints; (3) therapists don't know SAA is available as a resource.

So, the San Francisco SAA

Intergroup funded a mail outreach to therapists. This campaign and its mailing materials were sanctioned by ISO. Your meeting or Intergroup can duplicate it.

Here are the steps we took:

Defined our outreach region. We took a map of the San Francisco region, noted every meeting location and drew a perimeter 30 minutes driving distance around each meeting. (We have 40 meetings spread out over a large area.)

We called a mailing house that converted our map into zip codes and then determined there were 2,317 therapists inside our perimeter.

We sent an envelope to each therapist. It contained three items.

A letter speaking in their language and with specific requests. This was written with input and approval from therapists and ISO.

We created "business cards" stating how to contact SAA and find a meeting. There were three cards in each envelope. Therapists could hand out these cards to their clients who might be sex addicts.

We included the basic SAA brochure purchased from ISO.

We paid the mail order house for the mail list and to duplicate, stuff, address and send the letters. It was cheaper to pay them than to use volunteers because the mail house could qualify for lower mail rates.

If your chapter wants to duplicate this effort, we estimate it could take only about 20 man

hours, because the literature is created and approved and the vendors and processes have been tested. The cost comes to about fifty cents per therapist. Our effort was funded by the San Francisco Intergroup. Also, you might find some individuals willing to “Seventh Step” the effort.

To get a copy of the letter and the business card go to <http://www.bayareasaa.org> and click on “outreach.” For more information, including prices

and how to choose your mailing house, contact Dean L. at gratefulsanity@earthlink.net.



Safe Places

By Scotty W.

I had an “HP moment” this afternoon while walking to my truck, so I thought I’d share.

During the time of my First Step (which took an entire year), my life was in a shambles. I was barely surviving at work, and felt like my productivity was suffering terribly. My marriage was on the rocks; my wife and I rarely spoke, except on “business issues,” like how we were going to pay our mounting bills. I was so afraid of attending social functions, for fear they’d trigger more acting out behavior. The only emotional peace I found was in attending SAA or other 12-step meetings. To me, a meeting was “safe.” It was a place I could go, where I could be less anxious about my unmanageable life, and perhaps catch a little bit of the sanity I saw around me. During this time I also began associating with other “recovery buddies,”

and we quickly formed very deep friendships, based on our common desire to be well (whatever that meant). Meetings and meals with my partners in recovery were the only “safe places” I knew; I only felt comfortable while working my program, and in the presence of others.

During the time of my Second Step, I remember finding some additional “safe places” where I would go alone, often writing in my journal (my sponsor’s suggestion), and detail the peacefulness I felt when in these places. I found peace sitting quietly in my truck in a parking lot or at a park (curiously, I seldom left the truck; I just sat and journaled in the silence). Even cemeteries offered solace, peace, and safety in the midst of the turmoil elsewhere in my life. Later, I remember finding a wonderful garden spot near my house, where I would spend many

Safe Places (continued)

hours sitting on a bench, writing in my journal, and straining to hear what my Higher Power was telling me. My memories of these “safe places” are very peaceful. In the course of my recovery, the number of “safe places” increased. I now felt safe at meetings and in the presence of recovery buddies, and also in quiet places where I could be alone, journal, and listen to my Higher Power. Throughout these times, I associated geographic locations

with peace, as if being in a peaceful PLACE was the first step to BEING peaceful.

Today, I was walking along a somewhat drab stretch of road toward my truck, and suddenly realized I felt the identical sense of peacefulness I'd experienced in my “safe places.” I literally looked around to see if I could identify something nearby that had triggered this peaceful na-

ture, but there was nothing I could see. I felt I was “safe,” yet I wasn't in a “safe place.”

The peace, the feeling of safety, originated from inside me, and this time I couldn't say it was because I was in a safe place.



My “safe place” had changed from a location to an emotion. I felt peaceful. I WAS peaceful. What a wonderful feeling. I smiled, pulled out my Blackberry (for writing these types of moments), and started again toward the parking lot, happily tapping this little journal entry.

If someone had been watching me, I probably had a little more pep in my step as well.

These days, I still visit my “safe places.” My latest “place” is the garden in my own back yard. The “Second Step me” would have been flabbergasted that I could experience so much peace so close. But the difference these days is that I arrive with the peacefulness I used to seek in my travels, in my quest called recovery.

The Drainpipe: A Recovery Story

By Willard W.

“What in the world?” the owner of the house thought. “Water shouldn’t be shooting out like that.” He had come out to the front porch to check out the biggest downpour of the summer and saw that rather than pouring out from the six-foot long extension drainpipe that lay on the ground, the rainwater was shooting up like a geyser from a joint in the vertical drainpipe.

Certainly the designer and builder of the house never intended water to squirt up so close to the house where it could seep down and undermine the foundation. Some time back, the homeowner had noticed that the end of the ground-hugging pipe was somewhat bent out of shape. Perhaps a delivery person, neighbor or playing child had stepped on it at some point? The opening was still fairly wide, seemingly spacious enough to carry water away from the house and onto the lawn. Still, at times the owner had wondered about its capacity. He had examined the pipe during other rainstorms and had seen some water escaping. But how would you know if all the water was making its way out? In this cloud-burst, however, it was obvious that most of the water was not exiting from the opening of the horizontal pipe. While a few drops were seeping out, the bulk of the rain was bursting out before it could travel to the opening away from the house.

The owner pulled the ground level extension pipe away from the vertical pipe to a gush of water. That showed that the system was working except for the pipe now in his hands. “What’s got into this?” The owner reached in as far as his fingers would fit and began to pull out leaves, silt, some of those maple tree propeller seeds, and “What’s this? It looks like bean sprouts. It smells like bean sprouts. But I don’t think I’ll be putting these on my salad. How could something like this grow in that wet, dark place?” The owner gave the pipe a few more shakes and fished out some more debris. “Was that all? Hard to tell. Still can’t see light through it.”

On a sunny day, the owner was back with a hacksaw. He sawed away noisily until he had removed about eight inches of the bent part at the end of the drainpipe. Now, the opening was wider, allowing him to reach in and find more material: the propellers, dirt, leaves and more succulent sprouts, an amount about equal to what he had removed before, about the three fist-sized glops. The same kind of sprouts growing in a window box or a garden could have been nourishing and tasty. But given where these had come from, they went straight to the trash. As he looked through the tube he could see daylight coming through the

The Drainpipe: A Recovery Story (continued)

end. Ah! The openings at both ends were now as they should be.

How like the recovery from addiction is this process of restoring a drainpipe to its normal function. Like the pipe, our basic design was satisfactory. We were made to weather storms in a manner that would not ultimately harm us just as the house was designed and built to handle normal, even heavy rainfall. But along the way, the pipe's ability to carry out its task was hampered by one more action. At some point, somebody applied some kind of weight, perhaps carelessly, perhaps intentionally, that bent the pipe from its original shape. It didn't look much worse than it had. It still had a nice coat of paint on it. Unless you looked closely, you wouldn't notice that it was misshapen and that the channel was somewhat narrowed. For months, maybe years, the water found a way to get out. But a particular conjunction of rain and the droppings from trees combined to imperceptibly clog the way. The pipe looked operational, but internally it was damaged and thus had become less and less serviceable as old debris blocked any new debris from getting out. In our addiction, we seemed to be carrying on, but we had lost much of our ability to function as designed and constructed. We sustained damage from actions

and messages of others and from our own poor decisions. We were trying to perform, but inside we are clogged with our resentments, our inadequacies, our shame and regrets. These things fester in the dark, out of sight, and seem to take on a life of their own. We can hardly believe the kinds of things that can grow, invisible to others and often even to ourselves. We sometimes managed to adjust our thinking so that the inappropriate growths inside can be seen as normal. But the system does not really work anymore. It is unmanageable. A mere shell that just looks adequate from the outside.

Then one day something happens that causes us to realize that our system has broken down and become totally unmanageable. This is like the homeowner's realization that the water can hardly even flow through the channel anymore. It's shooting up at the wrong place. Total, undeniable breakdown. Without intervention great damage can be done to our main structure which is our very personality and those with whom we live. The water threatens to undermine and destroy the foundation of our lives, being someone that we ourselves can like and would want to live with.

But there is one who is aware of our predicament. With our permission and cooperation, God removes the pipe and begins his work. He starts to clean out the debris, and

we detect a flow returning to our experience. We see some improvement and have a growing trust in the love and competence of our Higher Power. A moral inventory begins to reveal some of the elements we've been harboring inside. It's not that everything is rotten inside. Much of what we find is simply out of place, not helpful where it has become lodged. And so we need to acknowledge what is there and start the process of getting it out. At some point we have removed about as much as we can without some more major repair, even some excising of what once seemed a vital part of us. Going to those we have harmed to make amends can feel like being cut back and reshaped. We can't do it without letting go of our posturing, our pride, our self-sufficiency and our knack for hiding. As the saw trims us back, we find that more stubborn debris is brought into the light. There is now openness in our lives. An ability to breathe. We are getting back to living the way that we were meant to live. The pipe is reattached looking much the same, but in a radically different state. We've been cleared out and feel valuable again. Freedom!

You can be sure that the owner will now take notice of the drainpipe to see if it is maintaining its shape. Has a salesman, a newspaper deliverer, neighborhood kid, perhaps a pet tramped on it? If so, the same water

drainage problems and potential for damage to the house will return. The pipe will again silt up and cease to carry water. We want to be vigilant in maintaining our restored and revitalized selves. If the owner finds a bending out of shape, he'll get out a hammer to pound it back or a saw to remove the pinched off portion. With the knowledge of the earlier developments, he will ensure that the opening is kept clear. Likewise, we continue to take inventory, we maintain our conscious contact with God, and we're more willing to admit when we are wrong.

Don't you imagine if the owner noticed a bent drainpipe at a neighbor's house, he would be willing to talk to him about the situation? His neighbor might not realize that the almost unnoticeable irregularity of shape of the pipe might have major destructive consequences. Telling others in need that help is near is a way of progressing through our rounds of the 12-step cycle.

So, we have made the marvelous discovery that God wants to restore us to the state for which we were designed and built. We no longer have to live in a bent, stifled, pretentious condition. There is one, all loving and all powerful, willing to go to work with us and on us for our good and the well-being of the whole house to which we belong. We have found new joy and serenity because we have faced the truth about ourselves, and we are learning how to keep our lives free flowing.

Seeking the Life of Balance Through the 12 Steps

By Santi L.

Though we don't know too many details about the lives of the founders of the 12-Step program of recovery and though we did not have the opportunity to know them personally, we can still experience their wise direction for ourselves. By reading the 12 Steps and 12 Traditions we can gain precious insights into the character of these great men. We can also discover the keys to the joyful life that permeates living in recovery—a joy that is available for all of us to experience...if we work the program.

In keeping with the principles of the program we have found that by keeping a close watch over our lives and continually searching our own souls we behold ourselves in the presence of our Creator. This means consciously turning to God in prayer throughout the day and in the midst of all our activities: when we wake up, as we are getting dressed, when we are eating or going to work, when we face difficult tasks at work, when we are home with our families, and at the end of the day as we look up at the beauty of the night sky.

In a world as fast-paced and

filled with distractions, temptations and sin as ours—even when we are in church—it is very easy to lose our sense of joy and gratitude for God's love. There is no simple (softer, easier way) automatic remedy for controlling our wandering thoughts and obsessive minds, yet through the program we have practical advice that encourages us to persevere in our recovery, sometimes a day at a time, sometimes a minute at a time. The more we can remember God throughout the day, the more



deeply we will grasp the absolute and amazing truth that we are not orphans in this world, but rather we are beloved sons and daughters of the Father, who loves us regardless of our past sins. This absolute reality will lighten our hearts and sustain us no matter what our situation.

Although the 12+12 has inspiring passages about God's presence and about our calling to be humble, truthful and obedient, very few of us today can spend much time in prayer and meditation each day to strengthen that resolve. Yet, this is exactly what we must do!

The dangers that workaholism or any other ism poses to the life in recovery are as real as our addic-

tions themselves.

How many times have you heard in 12-step rooms that “we must place the same energy into constructive things as we did on our addiction”? The addict who in ordinary circumstances takes to any work or endeavor with a zeal which absorbs all his time and energies and which burns out his fire of strength and emotional health is departing from what is for him the way of recovery. It is not a virtue for an addict to have his day so consumed with demands and appointments that he has no time to attend to his spiritual exercises.

An overly busy unbalanced

life will drain us of energy and rob us of the joy of life. Remember H.A.L.T. (hungry, angry, lonely, and tired). Spending too much time at work without taking proper time to relax with our families and cultivate holy leisure is harmful physically, emotionally and worst of all for us addicts spiritually.

With our sponsor’s help we must examine our daily routine and seek proper balance between work, rest and spiritual nourishment. Through prayer, a balanced life and love for one another, we can trudge the road to happy destiny together and experience the fullness of life while drawing closer to God.

Healthy Choices

By Joel H.

[Editor’s Note: This article originally appeared in the June 1990 issue of the PBR.]

I desperately wanted to call my old companion and beg for reconciliation. Instead, I honored her truth and her choices and set to work on myself.

I wanted to scheme a way to make her fall back in love with me. When I surrendered, instead, I was later rewarded with true serenity.

I visited a former flame who sought to make love. We chose instead to hold each other caringly. Later, I was filled with love and respect for myself for having stayed true to my pro-

gram and maintained my celibacy.

I yearned to masturbate to medicate and relieve the painful feelings of loss. I resisted and later was rewarded with my full feelings and many tears, reminding me that I was a human being and filling me with joy to be alive.

I was tempted to prove my attractiveness by flirting with waitresses and sales clerks, and by catching the eye of women on the street and in passing cars. Instead, I sought out and delighted in the real and meaningful friendships of men and women in my life.

I chose not to cruise down the street with the prostitutes. Later, I took time to appreciate my special relationship with my daugh-

Healthy Choices (continued)

ters.

The friend I stayed with had pornographic magazines in his home. I asked him to please put them away, and later relaxed with a novel.

In 12-step meetings I was pulled by old habits to check out the women, their faces, their bodies, their responses to me. Instead, I focused my attention on the presentations and each person's sharing. I received many lessons for my life.

I was tempted to tell women friends how attractive I found them in my heightened state of emotionality to experience that rush when I sexualize everything. Instead, I listened to them talk about their lives and shared with them about mine.

I was tempted to divert my fear and pain into fighting and anger at my ex-wife over the children. Instead, I made a list of resentments, amends, and gratitudes from the old relationship. This helped me heal one of my greatest sources of anger and resistance in my current relationships with women.

On my trip to Albuquerque I decided not to have any sugar or caffeine in order to have the greatest clarity in my feelings throughout the visit. Later, I was rewarded with a physical calmness through these difficult issues that I have never experienced in my life.

I am not perfect, nor do I wish to be. I am just a grateful recovering sex addict.

There was a time when I would have used work, political activism, depression, and medication or sex to avoid my feelings. Today, through the tools of my men's daily meditation book, 12-Step meetings, my writings, and my celibacy, I have been able to feel my true feelings,

use them as a guide to correct action, heal the deepest of them, and move on with my life.

I am not perfect, nor do I wish to be. I am just a grateful recovering sex addict.

I give thanks to the 12-Step program for its insights and structure, to my brothers and sisters in the program whose loving support heals my heart and opens my soul to God and to myself for many years of hard work. I hope that my success lends support, hope, and courage to any of my brothers and sisters who need it.

Step 6 Worksheet

Submitted by Anonymous

[Editor's Note: The following article represents a method of working Step 6 that has worked for some members of our fellowship.]

Step 6:

Were entirely ready to have God remove all these defects of character.

Overview: In Step 5 we acknowledged all of our wrongs (defects of character). In Step 6 we become entirely ready to let God remove them.

1. List ways in which you have tried to overcome your defects but have failed. (Example: Tried to stop surfing the internet for porn.)
2. List any ways or times that your higher power has helped you to stop some compulsive behaviors. (Example: Power outage just before beginning to watch the latest R-rated film on HBO)
3. "Entirely ready" can be translated as "Entirely willing." There comes a time when we are truly sick and tired of being sick and tired. Describe in your own words what you are sick and tired of. Are you ready to let your Higher Power remove it?
4. In some ways our defects define our history, our choices, and who we are. List a few ways your defects have defined your life, your choices, and who you have become.
5. If God removes all your defects, will you stop being who you are or just who you have become? Explain.
6. What are some of the feelings you might have after a defect is removed? List a defect and a feeling you expect you may feel when it is gone. (Example: Compulsive voyeurism - freedom and relief)
7. List some defects you would like to have removed and list the defects where you are entirely ready to let go and let God.
8. List any defects you are not ready to have your Higher Power remove and why.
9. Were there any defects you are not ready to let go of? If so, do you know why? Do they provide some sort of coping mechanism or some sort of comfort or familiarity? Explain.
10. If you still have some defects of character that God has not removed, have you asked God to remove them?
11. (Optional) Compose a saying, prayer, reminder, whatever helps in your asking your higher power to remove all your defects of character. (If not entirely ready nor willing to have your Higher Power remove all your defects of character, word it asking for the willingness—readiness to let go.) Example: God, Please be with me today and make me ready to give up my compulsive (voyeurism, exhibitionism, masturbation, stealing, spending, etc.).

There Are Always Consequences to Our Words and Actions

By Santi L.

I was getting ready for work when I looked out the window and saw the utility company starting to erect a pole in front of my house. They were going to position it directly in front of my picture window. No way, absolutely no way was I going to permit this. I gulped down my last bit of coffee and went directly to the crew supervisor and told him in no uncertain terms that I was not going to permit his crew to put that stupid electrical pole directly in front of my picture window. He took out a plat map, a map for pole locations and a right-of-way document and explained that it is the best loca-

tion for it. I told him it is not the best location for me and when I came home from work that day I did not want to find that pole in front of my window. I told him I didn't give a hoot where he put it but not in front of my window. I felt pretty smug as I drove off to work because I felt I got my point across. I know darn well they are afraid to put it there now.... Ah..... The feeling of power.....at least until I got home.

Now you may be asking yourself what does all this have to do with my recovery. If you really meditate on this illustration you will surely know!



My First Step

By Cathy

[Editor's Note: This article originally appeared in the July 1990 issue of the PBR.]

My consequences of acting out sexually are varied—some emotional and some physical. I lost my marriage, became sterile (unable to bear children due to STD), got cancer and, in the emotional pile, I found mountains of self-hate and shame were there too. I was ready to take the first step. I was ready to become powerful. The power to surrender totally is spiritual. It cannot be done alone, but must be done only by me; no one else can do it for me. To let go completely is very powerful. This is the paradox of the program.

This power is to choose to have boundaries, to not give in to the fantasy life of being loved by everyone; thinking about how and whom I would seduce next to keep my power and to feel safe in every situation in my life. Setting boundaries is like stripping away negative conditioning, obsessions, and opening up to learn about myself. This power is having boundaries about fantasy, or not being sexual when I'm angry or feel lonely—not being sexual with myself or someone else to fix my feelings or medicate myself. These boundaries open up my awareness to be with myself in all my anxiety, fear, anger, and abandonment. With these

markers, boundaries, fences around me, I can visit my addictive places, notice when I “feel” sexual or like I want to cruise, or sexualize other human beings. I can notice and visit these addictive places, but I do not have to live there.

I can push through my fears of new situations, meeting people without sexualizing them. I can push through my fear, anger, and fear of abandonment with my healthy powerful side by not trying to control, but by just noticing how I am feeling and being with myself. I can talk to friends, my group, my support system about my feelings, and let them get to know me as I get to know myself.

I'm more fun to be with the better I get to know myself; the more I like myself and accept myself as a human being capable of joy, love, and mistakes. The power of the surrender of my life and my will over to the care of a higher power enables me to come into contact with my sacred inner self. The discovery of the sacred core of my being gives me power to change my life by enabling me to be gentle with myself.

I am willing to do whatever it takes. The power is in complete surrender.

Spirituality

By Rich W.

I remember my first SAA meeting. I had been 12-stepped by a guy named Pat and I knew this was a fit. I was amazed that there were other people out there like me. I had made a commitment to attend six meetings, and though I had lied my whole life, and cheated on my wife, I was a man of my word. I would certainly attend six meetings, probably go for a year or so, and when I was cured, leave.

What I wasn't prepared for was the start of the meeting which began with the Serenity Prayer. The first word, of course is "GOD". Oh man, what did I get myself into? There was never

any mention of this God thing when I was being 12-stepped and not only was I an atheist, I was anti-religion—with a passion. Now, here I was, standing around with a group of sex addicts who were saying the word "God."

You see, I grew up Catholic and was sexually molested by my "very religious" grandfather at a young age. My life after that revolved around sex, and my re-

ligion told me that I was a "mortal sinner," the worst kind. If I died, I would go straight to hell and spend eternity with robbers, thieves, murderers and all the other awful people. How could a seven-year-old tell the priest that? So I never did confess my sex sins until I was in

high school. In high school, I thought the best way to not be plagued by sex was to become a priest, and so I went into a pre-seminary school. I was kicked out for having sex with one of the brothers. This religion had chewed me up and spit me out. I was done with it and all others.

As the meeting progressed, the only other mention

of that taboo subject was when they read the 12 Steps. That was it. Maybe this wasn't some kind of "born again" meeting after all. The second meeting was much the same and I decided that I guess I could stick around since the rest of the meeting was really touching me—and my addict.

The third meeting was on the Third Step and I sat in my chair, hoping the discussion about God would be brief. Instead, the talk

As I've been told, "Religion is for people who don't want to go to hell. Spirituality is for people who have been there."

moved to “as we understood God” and I began to hear that God didn’t have to be some guy with a big white beard. It could be anything I wanted to believe and for four and a half years I began to define “God.” God was the meeting, the guys in the meeting, the layer that lifts us above the animals, the thread that connects all man, all thoughts. I had more definitions of God than the Baltimore Catechism had questions. I felt comfortable enough and, although I winced when someone mentioned Christ or talked about God in a religious sense, I felt pretty good about “working the steps.” I didn’t work them hard, or consistently, but I was moving along. Suddenly, something felt wrong. I just wasn’t getting anything out of the steps I was working. My first sponsor, Pat, had told me some years before that if the steps aren’t working, I needed to go back because I missed something in one of the previous steps. He said, the steps are meant to be worked in order, and if I have left out a big piece in one of the steps, the order doesn’t work.

It didn’t take long for me to find that the place I needed to be was the Third Step. As I thought about it, I found the mistake. Who was I to try to define God? I am an insignificant life form on an insignificant speck of dust in the universe, yet I am saying I have the answer to who God is. What ego. Oh, isn’t that the Sec-

ond Step also? It is a power greater than me, yet here I am telling God, the Universe, Higher Power, that I know everything. I have the answers.

The light finally came on. I don’t have to define Higher Power. I don’t have to understand what it is. It just is. All I have to believe is that there is a Higher Power and when I put my faith in that power, my life makes sense and my addiction stays under control.

Since then, my spiritual journey has taken many twists and turns but my Higher Power stays strong. When I get confused or upset, my Higher Power is there to guide me—if I get out of the way and listen. The questions are answered, the problems are solved, and my life progresses as it should. Sometimes I can’t see where the path is leading, but as my friend Jeff says, “Life is like a tile floor. When you are at floor level, it doesn’t look like much but God sees it from above and the mosaic makes perfect sense.” Listen, just listen.

My spirituality has grown over the years. I’ve gone to meditation groups, Quaker meetings and spiritual retreats. Oh, I’m not religious by any means but I am very spiritual. And that’s just fine. As I’ve been told, “Religion is for people who don’t want to go to hell. Spirituality is for people who have been there.”

From the Editor

By Mike L.

As I'm sitting down to write, the top news story is the devastating effects of Hurricane Katrina on New Orleans, Biloxi, Mobile and many other smaller towns on the Gulf Coast. My partner, who is originally from Mobile, is very familiar with these cities; we have spent time together in all of them, visiting the 100-year old buildings in the French Quarter, going onboard the barge casinos in Biloxi, and spending the night in Mobile. And for some reason I am finding myself more affected by this disaster than even by the destruction of the World Trade Center, whose observation deck I visited back in 1986, possibly because this is the kind of event that no amount of governmental diligence can prevent. And then, without thinking about it, I put a live recording of an opera made in New Orleans in 1963 in the car CD player. I found myself listening to the orchestra players and the singers in the chorus and wondering what became of the ones who had lived the 40+ years after this performance and were still in New Orleans. And I remember saying that even though I ended up missing this year's SAA convention in the Big Easy, I knew I would be returning to the city before too long. And even if I get to do so at some point in the future, I know that it will be a while before the city returns to its former elegance. Even though my partner feels as though he rushed me through the city in the six hours that we spent there a couple of years ago, I am grateful that I got to spend the little bit of time in pre-Katrina New Orleans that I did.

One of the saddest stories from this tragedy, possibly the one that has deservedly received the most air time, is that of the man who lost his wife because he wasn't able to hold onto her any longer. She asked him to let go, telling him to stay and take care of his children and grandchildren. And so he let her go. And, in a brief lighter moment, there was another couple being interviewed on television who had been staying at the Superdome. The wife, wondering whether it was safe to do so, showed the treasure that she was holding in one of her fists. It was a little bit of toilet paper. This couple, while saddened at the loss of almost all of their property, still acknowledged the importance of family, and that they still had each other and the wife's ailing 75-year-old father. Both of these stories in their own differing ways show the resilience of the human spirit.

If I need anything to remind me of how "high class" my own problems are, even the more serious ones such as having my car engine freeze up, which it did a few days ago, it is seeing and reading about the many personal tragedies of my neighbors to the east. My prayers go to all of the victims of this terrible disaster that has struck the Gulf Coast.

New Orleans is home to quite a few members of the fellowship, many of whom, as I mentioned, got together and hosted this year's SAA convention, fulfilling a dream they had originally conceived at least five years ago. And fortunately we have heard from a number of our members from the area and we know that they are safe and sound. I'm very much looking forward to the rebuilding of this great city which has contributed so much to United States culture, and being able to attend the next SAA convention that the local fellowship hosts.

You are holding in your hands the November/December issue of the PBR. For the first time since I have been PBR editor, I had a shortage of articles for publication this month. So I received the unexpected blessing of getting to pore over old issues of the publication to find some appropriate material for republication. Both of the back articles in this issue originally appeared in 1990, and both demonstrate a strong understanding of what recovery was about at a time when our fellowship was still relatively young.

I hope you enjoy this issue of the PBR. I am most certainly looking for articles for future issues. You can submit them online at pbr@saa-recovery.org or send them to the ISO office at P.O. Box 70949, Houston, TX 77270-0949.





ISO News



ISO Literature Committee, ISO Board, & Board Committees

ISO Board Minutes

**The Board of Trustees of the ISO of SAA, Inc.,
met by teleconference August 20, 2005.**

The following is a report of significant actions taken.

Failed: A motion that the ISO Hospitality Suite is to be closed to all but members.

Failed: A motion not to allow any information from any other fellowship on the SAA registration table.

Approved: That SAA opening and closing ceremonies be for SAA members and their paid guests.

Approved: A motion to invite a COSA speaker to speak second at the Saturday Night Banquet.

Approved: Formation of a committee to evaluate the Convention Workshop Request Form and the workshop selection process.

Approved: Renewal of the Director & Officer Liability Insurance Policy.

Approved: An increase of ISO staff member Klaus P.'s pay rate to \$15.00 per hour.

Approved: A motion to raise the salary range for the position of Director of Fellowship Services to \$50,000.

Approved: A motion to increase of ISO staff member Jerry B.'s annual salary by \$1,785.04.

Approved: The job description for an administrative assistant with a work week of 24-26 hours at the discretion of the Director of Fellowship Services.

Approved: That the password and access to altering the website be given to five people, these people being the Board chair, the Online Outreach Committee chair, the Director of Fellowship Services, and two people - one being a staff member designated by the Director of Fellowship Services and one being a person

designated by the Online Outreach Committee chair - with the staff member actually making the changes to the website; that the password be sealed in an envelope and kept in the ISO safe deposit box; and that the password be changed quarterly or whenever deemed appropriate.

Approved: Formation of a committee called the ISO Website Committee for the purpose of creating and maintaining ISO run websites, this committee to be composed of but not limited to two Board Members, two Literature Committee members, the Director of Fellowship Services, the ISO staff information technician, and other non-voting members.

Authorized: Expenditure of \$200.00 for Teen Outreach mailing.

Authorized: John L. and Francie E. to attend the Interfellowship Forum Conference on November 5, 2005, in St. Louis, with the ISO bearing the expense of travel and hotel.

Approved: A statement describing what the work and services performed by the ISO. ("What Does the ISO Do?" is posted on the ISO website)

**The Board of Trustees of the ISO of SAA, Inc.,
met electronically between August 23 and September 13 , 2005.
The following is a report of actions taken.**

Adopted: The 2005 Delegate recommendation "that a committee be formed, made up of at least 51% of SAA members who have sexually abused minors as a part of their acting out behaviors, to further evaluate and make recommendations to revise the current ISO Board Policy regarding Handling of Information About Ongoing Sexual Abuse of Minors; and that all members of this committee have a minimum of one year of continuous abstinence from all inner circle behaviors and have completed all Twelve Steps with a sponsor (at least once)."

Approved: Formation of a subcommittee be formed to review the ISO Board Policy regarding Handling of Information about Ongoing Sexual Abuse of Minors and report its recommendations to the Board by April 30, 2006, the subcommittee to be comprised of Patrick W., Bellevue, WA, Staci, Seattle, WA, Bill S., Moneta, VA, Jerry B., Houston, TX, and other SAA members they might choose to include.



ISO Financial News

This report does not include income and expenses associated with the annual ISO Convention or the Delegate Meeting nor does it include travel expenses, which are intended to be funded by the convention surplus and delegate fees. Any convention surplus not used for travel expenses is used to fund the ISO's various reserves.

ISO Income/Expense

Daily Operations - August & Year To Date

Income	August	Monthly Average	Year To Date
Net Sales	13,352	8,813	70,504
Undesignated Donations	9,082	9,531	76,248
General	5,616	6,592	52,736
LifeLine Partner	3,466	2,939	23,512
Miscellaneous Income	0	25	199
Total Income	22,434	18,369	146,951
Expenses			
Wages/Benefits/Taxes	11,014	10,524	84,193
Wages - Outreach Related	2,363	1,800	14,397
Wages - Other	6,562	6,784	54,281
Benefits	1,406	1,376	11,004
Taxes	683	564	4,511
Insurance	139	215	1,718
Board/Committee Expense	623	729	5,830
Postage	75	216	1,730
Communications	447	441	3,524
Rent/Utilities	1,274	1,140	9,123
Office Related	413	561	4,485
Financial	1,193	757	6,057
Plain Brown Rapper	1,501	1,016	8,131
Translations	0	122	975
Total Expenses	16,679	15,721	125,766
Surplus/Shortfall	5,755	2,648	21,185

August sales of *Sex Addicts Anonymous* continued at a pace only slightly below that of the previous four months. From April through August, Green Books sales averaged \$16,045.82 per month. August sales were less than \$500 below that average. Non-SAA literature sales continued to lag behind 2004 by \$3,360.14, but only \$2,780.14 of this decrease came during the five months *Sex Addicts Anonymous* has been available. At one point during the first five months, the decrease had been as much as 33% but now stands at 22% overall.

Undesignated donations through August were about the same as they were in 2004 after eight months, with \$77,058.55 being received last year versus \$76,247.83 this year. While general donations from individuals have decreased by \$7,412.58, LifeLine Partners donations have increased by \$2,113.29 and group general donations by \$4,085.51.

Green Book sales have made it possible to hire a second part-time employee. Also made possible by the increase in sales brought on by *Sex Addicts Anonymous* have been full funding of the three-month prudent reserve at \$42,392.00 and building the reserve for translations up to \$12,791.41. This latter reserve will be necessary for translating and printing *Sex Addicts Anonymous* into Spanish. Presently the fund is being increased by about \$1,500.00 per month, a pace that should provide the money needed to complete the project by May, 2006.

With the addition of another staff person, eventually another computer will have to be purchased. Houston, like any city near the Gulf of Mexico, is a hurricane target and, as such, subject to flooding. More shelving is needed in the ISO Office to safely store the increased inventory now that *Sex Addicts Anonymous* is in house and is being printed in larger quantities. The sales increase brought on by the Green Book

make possible capital expenditures such as these as well as the expenses that will be associated with the planned reorganization of the ISO staff structure (see ISO Announcements on page 25.) Even so, donations from the fellowship continue to be needed to meet ordinary day-to-day expenses.





ISO News Continued

Notices and News Bits



Notices and News Bits

Our new basic text, *Sex Addicts Anonymous*, is the culmination of the efforts of many in the fellowship, whose collective experience has given us a new way to carry the message of recovery.

The ISO Literature Committee of SAA respectfully requests feedback about this new book. Please forward any comments, suggestions, or criticisms to:



ISO of SAA, Inc.
P.O. Box 70949
Houston, TX 77270-0949
e-mail: info@saa-recovery.org

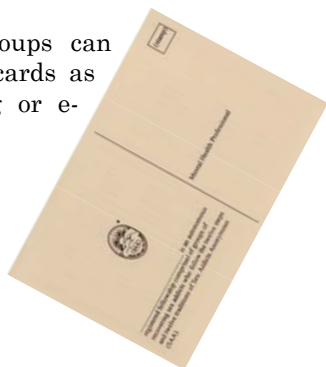
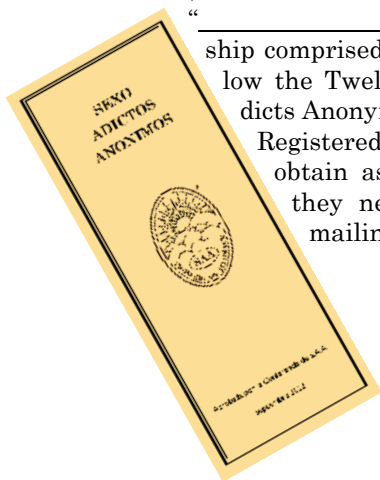
Outreach Bargains

Is your group or intergroup aware that the Outreach Version of *Sex Addicts Anonymous* (the 12-question pamphlet) can be purchased by groups and intergroups at cost if purchased in quantities of 500 or more? The ISO Board approved this discount as a way of helping groups and intergroups in their outreach efforts.

Does your group or intergroup know that the ISO also offers free postcards that are designed to be sent to helping professionals as a way to introduce them to Sex Addicts Anonymous? On one side of the postcard is printed the description of SAA as it appears in the *Sex Addicts Anonymous* pamphlet. This is followed by the ISO telephone number and a box for a local SAA number. On half the reverse side is a place for an address, with the other half bearing the SAA logo and the statement

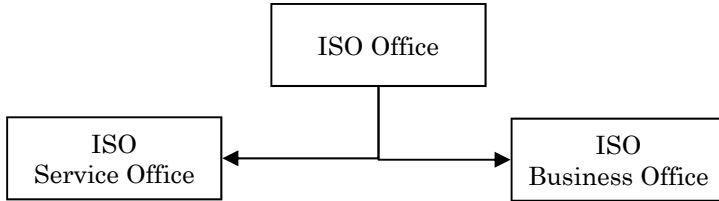
“_____ is an autonomous registered fellowship comprised of groups of recovering sex addicts who follow the Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions of Sex Addicts Anonymous (SAA).”

Registered groups and intergroups can obtain as many of these postcards as they need simply by calling or e-mailing the ISO Office.



ISO Reorganization

In 2001, the ISO Board of Trustees approved a document called ISO Organizational Structure - Phase III. The document is a long range chart that outlines what the ISO of SAA, Inc. will look like as the organization grows and develops. It calls for the corporation to be divided into two divisions, one which will be called the Service Office and the other which will be called the Business Office.



During the Board meeting held prior to the 2005 Convention, Jerry B., the present Director of Fellowship Services, requested that the Trustees begin to implement this plan by dividing his current job into two positions, one being the Director of Fellowship Services and the other being the Director of Business Services. The Board voted to put the plan into motion, with a goal of having it in place by the summer of 2006. A subcommittee has been appointed to bring a detailed plan of action back to the Board by its mid-year meeting scheduled for January 21, 2006. The plan will include job descriptions, qualifications, and a timeline. The membership will be kept informed about the progress of this project, including information about which positions are open and how to apply.

ISO Office Adds Second Part-Time Employee

During the past year, it became increasingly evident that an additional employee was needed to take up some of the workload at the ISO Office. At its August teleconference, the Board authorized the part-time position of Administrative Assistant. Carol Ann R. has been hired to fill the new opening. An SAA member since 1995, Carol Ann had been volunteering at the ISO Office on a regular basis for the eighteen months prior to being added to the staff. She brings with her an extensive background in administration and service work, particularly in the area of outreach. Members who contact the office by phone or e-mail are likely to reach Carol Ann, as she is the primary contact person three days a week. Among her other responsibilities will be carrying out most of the office's work and coordination associated with the 2006 Convention. With her on board, the ISO staff is now comprised of two full-time and two part-time employees.

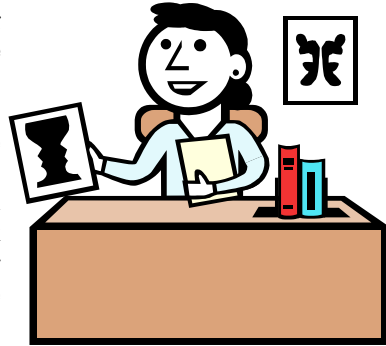
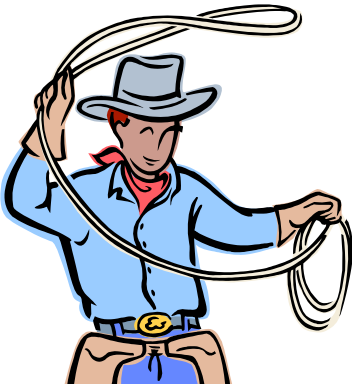
**ISO News**
Continued

Notices and News Bits

Notices and News Bits
(continued)**Houston SAA Teen Intergroup Reaches Out To School Counselors**

This month Houston SAA Teen Meeting Intergroup sent SAA outreach materials to the high school guidance counselors in 13 independent school districts in and around the Houston area. Although 11 other school districts declined the materials and two are still in the decision making process, four school elected to distribute the outreach information directly to their staff members. Through initiatives such as this, the Intergroup hopes to carry the SAA message to teen sex addicts who still suffer by reaching out to helping professionals whose clients include teens.

Registered SAA groups or intergroups interested in learning more about the Houston SAA Teen Meeting Intergroup's work to establish meetings for recovering teen sex addicts can do so by contacting Carol Ann R. at the ISO Office (800-477-8191 or saatm@saa-recovery.org).

**Northern Tier Intergroup To Meet and Host Roundup**

The Northern Tier Intergroup will hold its Fall meeting and NTI SAA Roundup on October 15, 2005. The intergroup meeting will start at 10:00 a.m. and run until noon. The Roundup is scheduled from 1:30 p.m. until 9:30 p.m. and will include workshops, speakers, and an evening meal, all for a \$10.00 registration fee. Registration is now in progress. Send payment to FM Recovery, P.O. Box 9682, Fargo, ND 58106. Those planning to register on-site should call Tom L. at 701-793-8129. This will help in planning for the evening meal.



Telemeetings Proving to be a Valuable Tool

Need a meeting on Sunday night at 8:00 p.m., Eastern/5:00 p.m., Pacific?

Need a meeting on Tuesday night at 10:00 p.m., Eastern/7:00 p.m., Pacific?

Need a meeting on Thursday night at 9:00 p.m., Eastern/6:00 p.m., Pacific?

...but you are...

- ◆ In an airport?
- ◆ Traveling and hundreds of miles away from a meeting?
- ◆ On vacation?
- ◆ Bad weather?
- ◆ Live in a remote area where there are no meetings?

Grab your phone and call 1-323-785-4156 and then use the password 134679 to participate in International Conference Call of SAA.

These meetings are a tool for sex addicts who are reaching out for help or looking to reach out to the addict who still suffers.

I have had the privilege of setting up the Sunday night meeting and see the growth and changes of these teleconference meetings. We have had addicts call from Brazil, France, Romania and China. There are addicts who use the teleconference weekly because the closest meeting is three hours away!

I have experienced so many blessings listening and helping other sex addicts who are reaching out by the phone. I am extremely blessed to be a part of the San Francisco Bay Area Fellowship which has over 45 meetings a week. I know now that many are fortunate to be able to get to even one meeting per week. Currently there are seven people who have found long distance sponsors through these meetings.

We currently have three teleconference meetings per week and a new all Women's Meeting has started on Wednesday night at 9:00 p.m., Eastern/6:00 p.m., Pacific.

My hope is that more meetings will be created

My hope is that more addicts will find help by participating in a tele-meeting.

My hope is that sober addicts will hear their Higher Power's call to service and perform some amazing Twelfth Step work.

I am confident my hope will be answered knowing that my own Higher Power will provide what is needed rather than what I desire.

I look forward to being with you on a conference call.

In recovery,

Tim L.

Recovering Sex Addict from San Francisco.



The 2006 ISO Convention website is now operational. Contact the ISO for the web address, user ID and password needed to log on to this site. Once there, members can register online or use the registration information to register by phone (800-477-8191). For those who prefer to register by mail, the registration form can be downloaded. A special convention mailing went out in September. This was sent to all groups and individual members on the ISO mailing list. If needed, addition registration forms can be obtained from the ISO Office.

Speakers and Workshop Presenters Needed

Now is the time to be thinking about serving the fellowship as a speaker or workshop presenter.

The Convention Committee is looking for SAA members to share their recovery stories with SAA Convention participants and their guests. Speakers are needed for the opening and closing ceremonies, for the Saturday night banquet, and for the Sunday lunch. The ISO Board has established the following speaker requirements:

- ✓Two+ years abstinence from inner circle.
- ✓Ongoing participation in SAA.
- ✓At least one SAA meeting per week attendance.
- ✓Completed Twelve Steps with sponsor.
- ✓Service at some level (meeting, sponsorship, intergroup, international).
- ✓Endorsement by sponsor or group.
- ✓Use standard "what it was like, what happened, etc." format.
- ✓No speaking from the level of "professional/expert."

A special committee will interview each potential speaker by telephone.

There are also inspiring, and knowledgeable SAA members in every region who are too modest to promote themselves as international speakers. Please help find them! (Please get their permission before you nominate them.)

Speaker forms can be downloaded from the convention website or obtained by calling or e-mailing the ISO Office.

Workshop presenters are needed as well. Topics should relate to the Twelve Steps or to elements of the SAA program, e.g., sponsorship, sobriety, tools, etc. For workshop presenters, the ISO Board has established one-year of continuous sobriety as a suggested guideline. Again, the form needed to apply as a workshop presenter can be downloaded from the convention website or obtained from the ISO Office.



Hotel Reservations

For those who are certain they will attend next year's convention, it is advisable to make hotel reservations early. One of the pluses of the hotel is that it is small, making *Healing at the Crossroads* the only event being hosted. However, the size also means the number of rooms is limited. There are enough for the number of participants past conventions have drawn, but only enough. Log on to the convention web site or contact the ISO office at 800-477-8191 for hotel information.

How to Submit a PBR Article

First:

Write from your experience, strength, and hope. Others may need to hear exactly what you have to say.

Second:

Send your article by e-mail to:

PBR@saa-recovery.org

or mail to:

ISO

P. O. Box 70949

Houston, TX 77270

Third:

Send the **Article Release Form** below. Download an extra from the SAA website if needed or feel free to make copies.

“Having had a spiritual awakening as the result of these Steps, we tried to carry this message to other sex addicts...” Step 12

Submission deadlines:

Dec. 1, Feb. 1, April 1, June 1, Aug. 1, Oct. 1

Release Form: I hereby give this newsletter, its successors, assignees, and those acting on its authority permission to copyright and/or publish any articles, poems, other written material, or art work pertaining to my personal story of recovery from addiction and my personal experience with or opinions about the SAA fellowship or program. I understand that additions may be made to my written material and that it may be changed or edited. I further understand that every effort will be made to assure my anonymity. I possess full legal capacity to exercise this authorization and hereby release the ISO newsletter from any claim by myself or my successors.

SIGNED: _____ **DATE:** _____

WITNESS: _____ **DATE:** _____

Mail to: ISO, P.O. Box 70949, Houston, TX 77270

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Jerry B.
ISO News

Jonathan C.
Layout Editor

Sex Addicts Anonymous is a twelve-step program of recovery based on the principles of Alcoholics Anonymous. Our primary purpose is to stop our addictive sexual behavior and to help others recover from their sexual addiction. The only requirement for membership is a desire to stop addictive sexual behavior. Our fellowship is open to women and men regardless of religion, race, ethnic background, marital status, sexual orientation, or profession. Our members define their own sexual boundaries with the guidance of their sponsors and other group members. We encourage our members to discover and explore what healthy sexuality means to them.

<u>Region</u>	<u>Board Members</u>	<u>Board Alternate</u>	<u>Literature Committee</u>	<u>Lit. Com. Alternate</u>
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Great Lakes	Ken S. <i>Chair</i>	Ted M.	Elizabeth S. <i>Chair</i>	Vacant
Intermountain	Shelley K. <i>Secretary</i>	Jeanette W.	Dolores F.	Vacant
North Central	Greg B.	Jim A.	Tim L.	Thea D.
Northeast	Gary C.	Bill J.	Tom K.	Chris J.
North Pacific	Tim E.	Mary Joy S.	Jeff W. <i>2nd Chair</i>	Lawrence S.
South Central	Judy N.	Darryl H.	Carol Ann R.	Jeff H.
Southeast	Francie E.	Carla P.	Jim L.	Mark S.
Southern Pacific	Ed B.	Mark S.	Thom C.	Cliff N.
At Large	Don K. <i>Treasurer</i>		Mike L. <i>Secretary (PBR Editor)</i>	