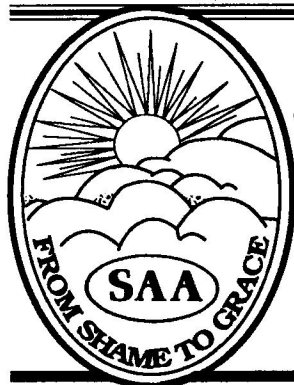


THE *Plain Brown Rapper*

The SAA Newsletter

50¢



January, 1992 Edition

The purpose of the Newsletter is to be a voice of the SAA membership. Written by and for brothers and sisters recovering from compulsive sexual behaviors; to be informative, sensitive and expressing the experiences, strength, and hope of recovering members. It is intended as an additional tool of recovery for those working the twelve-step SAA program.

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P.O. Box 3038, Minneapolis, MN 55403 — Telephone 612-339-0217

Thought for the Month

I recently attended a Bible study where the topic was fellowship. “Aha!” I thought, “I belong to a great fellowship! I surely can add much to the wisdom of this study!” As so often happens, what mostly came out of the study was a reminder of how not so great my own fellowshiping in SAA is. (Isn’t there *one* thing I can claim perfection in?!!) Now don’t get me wrong . . . SAA is a special fellowship of men and women who share a common affliction — and a common hope. And some individuals give much to the fellowship and its growth. But when looking at a true example of fellowship as practiced a few thousand years ago, my own expertise as a “fellow” kind of falls short . . . and so do many others in our fellowship. Let’s look at what fellowship *can* be and sometimes is:

1. *To fellowship is to share a common bond with others.* In SAA, our common bond is pain, shame, powerlessness, grace, hope, sobriety, peace, and joy. No matter where we are on the spectrum, others have been or are at the same place, and can identify with us and we with them.
2. *To fellowship is to reveal ourselves as who we really are.* Because our vulnerability is there for others to see, we no longer need to hide from others, nor be dishonest of where we’re at or what we’ve done. The best part is that we get back grace, love, and acceptance . . . something we’ve longed for all our lives.
3. *To fellowship is to give of ourselves to others and this program.* When we are Twelfth-Stepped, another human being is reaching out his or her hand of deliverance to us. When we listen on the phone or when we drive to another’s house to be with them in their need, we are helping to serve God’s goal for them of breaking the cycle of their addiction. When we volunteer our time for office or outreach work, we are shining a light in the darkness of despair. And when N.S.O. receives gifts from the fellowship, those gifts help expand the program — directly or indirectly — to other afflicted souls and literally can save lives in the process.
4. *To fellowship is to love one another.* Fellowship can be watching a football game together, but should also be much more. To listen, share, hug, cry, or be honest takes love. And, as much as we need to rely upon God, as we understand God, to come into the light of sobriety, we also need to ask that we be granted those special human gifts that say to another, “I love you.”

So I am faced with a big task. I ask, “How can I hope to attain such fellowship?” And then I hear like a gentle breeze at my back the words, “Progress, not perfection.” Are you truly fellowshiping as you could, or is your sharing falling a bit short? If you’re not sure, come with me. I know this place down the road that serves up a great ham on rye and we can talk and share and learn . . . if you have the time.

Toward a Group Conscience

How It Works comes from the book Alcoholics Anonymous. When the Group Guide of SAA was first printed, a shorter version was used. The difference between the two versions is in the opening paragraph. Italicized text has been deleted from the shorter version and text in brackets has been added.

How It Works

Rarely have we seen a person fail who has thoroughly followed our path. Those who do not recover are people who cannot or will not completely give themselves to this simple program, *usually men and women who are constitutionally incapable of being honest with themselves. There are such unfortunates. They are not at fault; they seem to have been born that way. They are naturally incapable of grasping and developing* [They cannot develop] a manner of living which demands rigorous honesty. *Their chances are less than average.* There are those, too, who suffer from *grave* [serious] emotional and mental disorders, but many of them do recover if they have the capacity to be honest.

The Original Works

The Thursday H.P. and Co. group in San Luis Obispo, California has taken a group conscience and decided that we prefer the wording of the original version of "How It Works." As I held the strongest opinion on this issue, I was allowed to write to you; please bear that in mind.

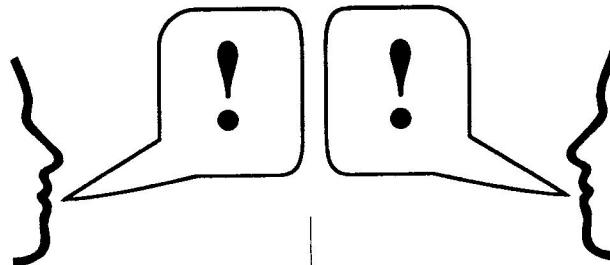
I was familiar with the piece "How It Works" before I came into SAA. The group I was attending at the time used the shorter version. Upon hearing it, I immediately felt that a dimension in understanding of this compulsion was missing. I referred to the original version, especially the line "their chances are less than average" when I arrived at my point of surrender.

As an exhibitionist in recovery for over a year, I still had not gotten a full 24-hour period of sexual sobriety, and it did not look like I would. Meetings seemed to be the only safe place for me. I thought my best function in the program would be to pose an example of what not to do. Even though others around me were establishing periods of sexual sobriety, I was not. Those words were describing me — speaking to me. At that point, the previous lines in the same paragraph of "How It Works" came to mind, and I was relieved of shame. I was encouraged by what followed — "many of them do recover if they have the capacity to be honest" — and never again experienced such a depth of despair.

I will continue to attend SAA, whatever the outcome of this group conscience. I have already been helped. My hope is for the sex addict who still suffers to hear that no matter how gloomy things appear, the path on which they stand has been successfully traveled before. I can point proudly to my own record of recovery, which is now measured by percent and not period. I put it at 99% successful.

Sincerely,

— Bob L.



Short Version is More Positive

By a unanimous vote in all of the SAA groups affiliated with Mother Lode SAA Intergroup, the use of the shorter version of

"How It Works" was recommended. The reaction to the original version was that it is too negative. Even our members who also belong to AA groups said they preferred the shorter version.

Most of our members do not belong to AA. They have always heard the shorter version since that is the one our groups have always used. Since recovery is being found within our groups, we would argue that the shorter version is just as powerful as the original version and, at the same time, it contains a positive force which helps us on our march toward recovery.

Thank you for giving us the opportunity to respond.

Sincerely yours,

— Jack H.

SAA 1992 Annual Convention Ramada Inn, Tucson, AZ May 22-24

The serenity of the Sonoran Desert will provide a fitting setting as Tucson, Arizona hosts the 1992 Annual Convention of SAA International. In keeping with our southwestern style, the theme for the spiritual gathering will be "La Promesa de Gracia," which is Spanish for "The Promise of Grace."

The event is to be held from May 22 through 24 at the downtown Ramada Inn of Tucson, and is being coordinated by the Tucson SAA Intergroup hope to see you in Tucson this spring!

NSO REPORTS

S.A.A. Literature Approval Process

N.S.O. Approved Status means that the piece of literature — which may have originated inside or outside of the Literature Committee — has been reviewed and possibly revised by the National Literature Committee. Feedback has been solicited from the Board and the National Literature Committee has prepared a final draft for publication. At the time of publication a notice will have appeared in the S.A.A. newsletter requesting feedback from the membership, and giving notice that the work will be up for conference approval.

Conference Approved Status means that the published piece has had adequate time in circulation to solicit feedback from the membership and then it has been approved by the delegates at the national convention.

1991 Convention Tapes Approved

The following tapes have been approved by the NSO Literature Committee and will soon be available for purchase through the NSO Office.

Prison Outreach by Arnold D.
Jill's Story
Healthy Sexuality by Kevin
Sponsorship by Jeannie O.
Long-Term Sobriety by Francie
Adult Child by Grant

Literature Announcement

It has been decided that due to financial considerations (cost cutting, lack of financial reserve) the National Service Organization will no longer be carrying the following items for sale through the N.S.O. office:

1. *The Work-Book for Hope and Recovery*, published by Compcare
2. *Women, Sex, and Addiction*, by Kasl, published by Harper-Collins
3. *A Male Grief; notes on pornography*, by Mura, published by Milkweed Editions

Most book stores would be able to order these items should you wish to obtain them.

In addition, we will no longer make aluminum S.A.A. Medallions available for other than blank sobriety

On the floor of the convention (Grand Rapids, MI, 1991) the delegates decided that, because the books *Alcoholics Anonymous* and *The Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions* appear on our reading list, we should carry them through the national office. While fully appreciating these books and the value they have to the membership — the Office Management Committee felt that it would not be in the fellowship's best economic interest to carry these items, since both books are widely available.

Report from the Literature Committee

From November 1–3, the Literature Committee held its mid-year meeting in New Orleans, Louisiana. In attendance were the following committee members:

Linda M. – Literature Chair	Dee N. – Southeast alternate (soon to replace Francie)
Lisa G. – North Central representative	Michael M. – Southeast alternate
Joni R. – South Central representative	Steven L. – California and Pacific Northwest alternate
Francie E. – Southeast representative	Lester D. – Great Lakes representative

Although each representative received some assistance from their area groups, a large portion of the expenses for travel and lodging had to be picked up by the N.S.O. Therefore, we are asking for additional contributions from members and member groups to help cover these expenditures.

The following is a summary of the work we accomplished:

Approval of Literature

The main work of the meeting was going through the "Three Circles" brochure, which originated with the Southern California Intergroup, and the "Getting Started" booklet, which originated with the Twin Cities Intergroup. We went through everything, line by line, to make sure that the concerns of the originating intergroups would be addressed, that the ideas expressed would be in line with existing approved literature, and that the needs of the fellowship for effective tools of recovery would be met. Many times during our meetings we had to center ourselves with the slogans "progress, not

Continued on Page 4

(Continued from Page 3)

perfection," "keep it simple," and "principles, not personalities." Nevertheless, we think the long meetings were worth the effort. These are two important pieces of literature. We hope to have the new pamphlet, "Three Circles: Defining Sexual Sobriety In S.A.A." published shortly. We are awaiting approval from Southern California Intergroup and feedback from our N.S.O. Board.

Plain Brown Rapper

We are considering redesigning the PBR format and instituting regular columns. We hope to see regular writings on the Steps and Traditions, and a continuation of the forum on issues of policy to be considered at our annual conventions. We also want to initiate regular columns on the experiences of women in SAA, on healing from child sexual abuse (from both sides — perpetrator and survivor), on prison outreach, and on how Twelfth Step work is helping us in our programs. Submitting articles and contributions on computer disc (IBM or MAC) reduces the time and effort required at this end, and would be greatly appreciated.

Future Publications

We have received a manuscript for a book on recovery written by an SAA member. After cursory evaluation by this committee, we see much promise in this book and recognize its potential as a valuable tool for recovery in our fellowship. Therefore, we have formed a committee to begin the editing process and to prepare a publishable "draft." Hopefully, this will be ready for distribution at our 1992 Convention in Tucson. The book will remain in publication as a draft, not as approved literature, for a time period sufficient to allow us to receive feedback so that we can complete the evaluation and editing process before submitting it for approval.

A book of poetry, written by members of the fellowship, is being assembled by Joni, our South Central representative. To anyone wishing to contribute, please send your poetry to our N.S.O. address: "attention Joni R."

The Great Lakes area representative is seeking contribution and feedback on a "meditation" book. The idea being pursued is to collect quotations, thoughts, and meditations on the Steps and Traditions.

Other Publications

We have received some feedback from members regarding material considered objectionable in "Exploring Healthy Sexuality." However, we have also received feedback on the same material calling it inspiring and enriching. Therefore, we are opening this to the fellowship for additional feedback. An article will appear in the PBR regarding this matter.

When the "Group Guide" was revised last year, we inadvertently removed the Abstinence Statement. To rectify this we will insert it into an appendix in the back of the "Group Guide," beginning with the next printing. If you have a revised "Group Guide" and would like a copy of the Abstinence Statement sent to you once it is printed, please contact the office.

Other Agenda Items

A Prison Outreach committee, based in New Orleans, is going to network with intergroups for the purpose of formulating literature on prison outreach. If your group or intergroup has a prison outreach program that is working, we would like you to share your experiences, strengths, and hopes with us. Please write to the N.S.O. address: "attention Prison Outreach."

The committee gave final approval to six tapes from the 1991 Convention and drafted a letter of guidelines — directed to future presenters — to help improve tape quality, both content and sound.

Accountability

The issue of our accountability to you, the fellowship, was discussed at length. We were elected to be your trusted servants and we want to insure that communication is always open. We do not want to be individuals making decisions but truly be representing the members of our regions. Therefore, each representative has committed to corresponding with their member groups to solicit feedback and to keep them informed of our actions. We want you to contact us about any concerns you may have. We are looking at ways we can more actively solicit your contributions and feedback. To begin with, we will regularly put articles in the PBR offering information and seeking input. And soon we will be putting a "feedback" page in the back of all our publications. We are attempting to reach out to you, but we need your interest and cooperation so that we can more effectively serve as your Literature Committee.

Sincerely,

— Linda M.
Literature Chair

SAA ORDERING INFORMATION — Winter/Spring 1992

Mail to: S.A.A. Literature, P.O. Box 3038, Minneapolis, MN 55403; phone (612) 871-1520

Please allow five weeks for delivery. Prices include shipping and handling. With overseas orders, please include an additional 20% to help defray the additional postage, and expect a longer delivery time (items shipped surface mail only). Orders of more than \$25.00 within the United States, please use a non-PO Box address so that we may ship packages U.P.S.

National Service Organization Approved Items

QUANTITY		TOTAL AMOUNT
_____	S.A.A. Group Guide	@ 4.50
_____	Abstinence and Boundaries in S.A.A.	@ 2.50
_____or 12 for 25.00	
_____	First Step to Recovery	@ 1.25
_____or 12 for 10.00	
_____	S.A.A. Self-Assessment Brochures	@ .25
_____or 10 for 2.00	
_____	NEW! The Bubble — An analogy that describes what it is like to be in the addiction	@ .25
_____or 10 for 2.00	
_____	The Plain Brown Rapper (1 year)	@ 6.00
_____	The Plain Brown Rapper group subscription rates (1 year, each)	
_____	10 or more to the same address	@ 3.00
_____	S.A.A. Fellowship Directory	@ 3.50
_____	S.A.A. Medallions	@ 2.50
_____	Blank 6 MO 18 MO 4 YR 7 YR 10 YR	
_____	1 MO 9 MO 2 YR 5 YR 8 YR 11 YR	
_____	3 MO 1 YR 3 YR 6 YR 9 YR 12 YR	
_____	Aluminum S.A.A. Medallions (available only with blank sobriety date)	@ 1.50

"CARRYING THE MESSAGE" CONFERENCE - AUDIO TAPES

QUANTITY		TOTAL AMOUNT
_____	1. The Founding of S.A.A., Pat C.	@ 6.00
_____	2. Multiple addictions, Barbara B.	@ 6.00
_____	3. Measuring and Celebrating Progress, Rich S.	@ 6.00
_____	4. Exploring Healthy Sexuality, Douglas P.	@ 6.00
_____	5. Sharing our Recovery — Three stories: S.A.A., COSA, and a Couple	@ 6.00
_____	6. Sharing our recovery Part Two	@ 6.00
_____	7. Personal Stories, Gregory M., Linda M.	@ 6.00
_____	* Order any six tapes for the price of five	@ 30.00

MICHIGAN 1991 CONFERENCE - AUDIO TAPES

QUANTITY		TOTAL AMOUNT
_____	1. Prison Outreach, Arnold D.	@ 6.00
_____	2. Jill's Story	@ 6.00
_____	3. Healthy Sexuality, Kevin	@ 6.00
_____	4. Sponsorship, Jeannie O.	@ 6.00
_____	5. Long-Term Sobriety, Francie	@ 6.00
_____	6. Adult Child, Grant	@ 6.00

Twin Cities S.A.A. Intergruop Items

_____	Getting Started in Sex Addicts Anonymous; a beginner's packet for recovering sex addicts	@ 2.50
_____12 for 25.00	
_____	Exploring Healthy Sexuality	@ 3.50
_____12 for 35.00	

Other Recovery Items

_____	Answers in the Heart (meditations)	@ 9.00
_____	Out of the Shadows (Carnes)	@ 11.00
_____	Hope and Recovery	@ 12.00

Mn. residents add 6.5% sales tax

Total Enclosed

Make checks payable to SAA literature

Ship to (please print clearly):

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____

State: _____ Zip: _____

Literature Description

N.S.O. Approved Items:

1. **S.A.A. Group Guide** — A complete guide including a suggested meeting agenda, the Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions, tools of the program, The Promises, How it Works, etc.
2. **Abstinence and Boundaries in S.A.A.** — A booklet of contributions made by S.A.A. members sharing their written sexual sobriety programs. This booklet is a helpful tool for individuals who are in the process of defining both abstinence and boundaries in their own program.
3. **First Step To Recovery** — A helpful booklet (guide) for preparing a first step presentation. The guide is useful in facilitating addicts in viewing the differing areas of their powerlessness and unmanageability.
4. **S.A.A. Self-Assessment Brochure** — This pamphlet is a tool for people seeking to find out if they have a sexual addiction.
5. **The Plain Brown Rapper** — The National Service Organization of S.A.A.'s monthly newsletter, filled with fellowship updates regarding upcoming events, personal stories, and N.S.O. information. This newsletter is written by and for the S.A.A. membership.
6. **The Bubble** — An analogy that describes what it is like to be in the addiction.
7. **S.A.A. Medallions** — The S.A.A. "From Shame To Grace" medallions are both a keepsake and a staple of recovery, helping S.A.A. members build and honor a positive history. An aluminum version (with blank sobriety date) is available at a reduced cost.
8. **1990 "Carrying the Message" Conference audiotapes and 1991 "Having Had a Spiritual Awakening" Conference audiotapes** — A selection of powerful recovery presentations from the conferences. (Note: These items have been approved by the N.S.O. Literature Committee, but have not yet been approved by the N.S.O. through the National Convention process.)

Twin Cities Intergroup approved Items:

9. **Getting Started in S.A.A., a beginner's packet for recovering sex addicts** — This newcomer booklet offers a great deal of information which helps to ground people in the program of S.A.A. The booklet focuses on answering questions beginners often have about recovery from sexual addiction. Many people already in the program have found it very helpful to read this booklet.
10. **Exploring Healthy Sexuality** — A collection of personal stories on what healthy sexuality has come to mean to some members of S.A.A. in their recoveries.

Other Recovery Items:

11. **Answers In The Heart**, Hazelden
A daily meditation book written by a female and male member of S.A.A.
12. **Out Of The Shadows**, Dr. Patrick Carnes
This was the first book explaining and detailing sexual addiction.
13. **Hope And Recovery**, Compcare/paperback
A "Big Book" styled book for recovering sex addicts. Includes a section of personal stories.

In keeping with the sixth tradition, S.A.A. offers no opinion on non-program materials. We choose to sell these items as a means of offering resource options, but they do not necessarily represent S.A.A.

Child Sexual Abuse

Working the First Step

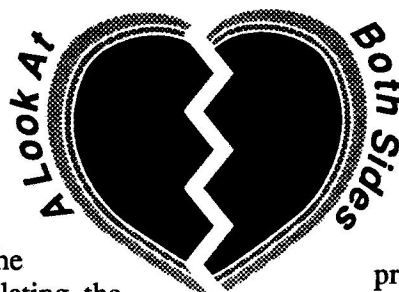
Many who come to SAA have experienced incest or child sexual abuse and, as a result, have acted sexually to mask the pain of feeling uniquely different and damaged. Healing from child sexual abuse can happen through working the twelve steps. The process involves relating the techniques given by the steps to the particular issues arising from the damage done to us by out-of-control adults. In the case of perpetrators, this means the damage done to both our victims and ourselves. Perpetrators' problems are usually compounded by even more guilt about the pain we have caused our victims and our own family and friends.

Working Step One means simply admitting that it has happened — that we did it or that it was done to us. If we were victims, we may be denying it because we were molested by a trusted relative or friend. The psychic pain may be so intense that we have kept it very deeply buried so that we may survive our daily aches and pains.

If we have perpetrated, we are afraid of punishment and will lie to ourselves and others to escape the consequences of our actions. Perhaps we rationalize what we did by pretending that our victims wanted us to do what we did, or that we were engaged in sex education, or that our actions did not really hurt anyone. Perhaps we took the attitude that society was to blame for being so uptight about sexuality — heaven forbid that there could be anything wrong with the fulfillment of our desires,

Whether perpetrator or survivor, we are afraid of remembering fully. We are afraid that overwhelming feelings of fear and excitement will sweep back over us and we will be powerless once again — under the control of others as victims, or under the control of our addictive urges as perpetrators. In recovery, we will be reminded over and over again, of how much courage it takes to admit and remember what happened. At this stage we need support. Once the remembering begins it is difficult to stop it. The pent up emotions of shame, anger, fear, and grief may be enormous. Victims and survivors may still have such great fear of perpetrators that it feels impossible to talk about issues in the context of an SAA group, where there may be perpetrators. If this is the case, we must seek help from someone that we do trust, a member of the group, our sponsor, a clergyperson, or a therapist.

If we are perpetrators, we need to face the consequences of our actions. In most states there are laws mandating



teachers, therapists, and some other professionals to report cases of child sexual abuse. The legal consequences vary with locality and with public education and attitude. The important thing to remember, if we have molested a child, is that the child almost certainly needs professional help to understand and work

through what has happened. To bring this about, we may need to turn ourselves in to the authorities. If we are accused, we will not help the situation by denying what we have done. On the other hand, we need not make the legal consequences any worse than they need to be. Having a lawyer to help us through the situation with dignity can help us rebuild our sense of self-worth. If our case has been publicized we will probably feel shame and that we are outcasts in our community. We may be surprised at how many of our friends still care about us, even though they do not condone what we have done.

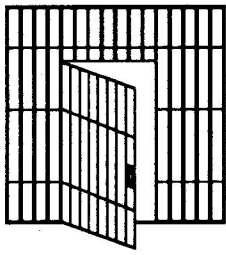
If we are survivors, we may find that people close to us do not believe us, especially those in our families. We have been caught up in sick family systems in which the perpetrator has, in one way or another, been enabled in his or her illness by others in the family. We may face not only disbelief but hostility for upsetting the system and for bringing public attention to family secrets. If we do not persist in exposing the perpetrator, other children may be at risk. Indeed, we may need protection from perpetrators in denial who try to batter us emotionally and even physically. We need to ask and keep asking for help until we get it.

Luckily, many programs now exist to treat those caught up in the cycle of child sexual abuse, although, unfortunately, there may be long waiting lists. There are also self-help groups for survivors of incest and child sexual abuse.

Above all, the important thing is to stop holding everything in, trying to control what happened and the consequences. We need to let go, admit or acknowledge what has happened, and ask for help until we get it. We will learn that we are not alone. We pray, cry, journal, share with others, and feel the pain, but eventually we do go on through it to the other side.

If you have experiences of healing from incest or child sexual abuse that you are ready to share with the SAA community, please send them to the Editor of the PBR. Thanks for reading this.

— Lester D.



Prison Outreach Update

WE DID IT!

We finally got S.A.A. in the Michigan prisons! Bill G. had been working to start a meeting in a prison in Muskegon, MI for several months,

and was finally told by some staff that they didn't need a twelve step meeting there. I had been writing to these men and they wanted it. They now have their group started. They are called M.T.F.S.O. Self-Help Group. Good job. Well done, men. Keep on going.

Two weeks ago (November 7, 1991) I finally got through the paperwork and was able to chair my first S.A.A. meeting in prison at Lapeer, MI. There are twelve men in the group and we have had two meetings at this time. It seems to be working out well. The program is on a six-month trial. If it works out, they will refer us to other prisons in the state. Let us pray that it works.

Last week I received a letter from Marquette, MI. A therapist there heard that the Michigan Intergroup had been sending free books and packets to inmates and they wanted to get involved. I called them and as soon as they get the information from me, they are going to start S.A.A. meetings in-house also. So this was slow to get started, but it is going like wildfire now. I am writing to about 30 inmates right now and have a few other people helping with this. I get a lot of recovery from doing this and a very healthy high that lasts a long time.

I'd like to thank Richard C. from the Indiana State Farm for being one of the first to write me and tell me of their in-house S.A.A. meetings and what to expect. I'd like to thank Mario F. who wrote to me from a Muskegon prison and let me know they wanted it desperately. Thanks to Eddie S. from a Lapeer prison who was very instrumental in getting meetings started there.

I would also like to thank the Michigan Intergroup and the groups they represent throughout Michigan for their financial help.

Thanks also goes out to several people who have sent me money through N.S.O. for Prison Outreach.

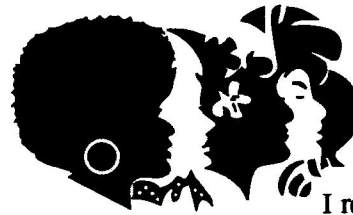
We have a great program here and we continue to need your support, both money and time from you. With your help and my goal as a board member, I plan on spreading this across the whole United States and other countries too. Thank you again.

Your Great Lakes Rep.,

— Arnold

P.

(See Page 10 for a special letter.)



Women in Recovery

To Whom It May Concern,

I realize now that God was using you as a vessel, an agent in my life. I don't fully understand what all His purposes are yet, but here are just a few I know: I am breaking the cycle that has continued for generations and generations on both sides of my family of origin. I have stopped the cycle of alcoholism in this family. I have stopped the cycle of sexual addiction in this family. I will stop teaching my children to be rageaholics, to be angry and bitter at the world and all those in it. I am learning that I don't have to be a workaholic and give my God-given talents away for nothing. I will not sexually, physically, verbally, or spiritually wound my children — and thus will stop the cycle going on to their children. I am learning that problems in a marriage can be worked out. I am learning that when there are problems I don't have to eat, drink, drug, have sex, abuse myself or someone else, or run away to survive the pain. I am learning to face my fears and walk through them. I'm learning I don't have to neglect my children because I don't know how to be a parent — there are books and people to teach me. I know now that I am wise to ask for help and foolish to try to cope with the world alone. I don't make my children sit at the dinner table and eat what they hate to the point they throw up.

I am teaching my children that: It feels wonderful to be honest and forgiving and they don't die when they admit they're wrong, but it is humbling to ask forgiveness. There is a God, He's alive, He is a loving God, and they are not God. Miracles happen every day. They are responsible for their actions and they do have choices and options to every situation. Healing is painful, but it is possible — and it is never too late. They can trust people. There is such a thing as unconditional love. All feelings are okay. Bitterness will rot their soul and body. God does for us what we cannot do for ourselves. People are beings, not objects. Children are children and are precious. Spills and drops are accidents and everyone makes mistakes. We don't have to be perfect, and when they judge another, they judge themselves. Internal things they don't like about themselves can be changed. They are never too old to play. They can never learn enough. Lots of feelings come before the feeling of anger. They are learning there will always be a child within. They don't need to look at or read pornography. They can forgive the offenders in their life and still not have to talk to them.

Maybe all of this is the purpose my life has been how it was, and I thank God and don't wish to shut the door on it. If nothing else, I have put a stop to generations and generations and generations of destructive, insane, addictive breeding. And no one — absolutely no one — has done that for generations and generations and more generations.

— Joni R.
Texas

Spirituality & SAA

Devotion

For many of us, our lives are empty and filled with pain and uncertainty. We act out seeking relief from the pain, the rejection, the loneliness, and the anger of wanting to succeed with our lives, yet we know that we have become our own worst enemy in this endeavor. Betrayed by ourselves time and again, we live like prisoners in an existence filled with silenced rage. We hurt ourselves over and over, mistakenly thinking that someday the pain will either bring us love or enough despair to help us end the pain completely. Left to our own devices, we are truly hopeless people who feel abandoned by even the most sacred of causes.

But then came our program, and the rules that bound us turned into promises that could free us. The love of other people gradually replaced the jailer we kept inside us. Loneliness was exchanged for phone calls, lunches and special trips or events with trusted friends. Slowly, we began to own our problems honestly, and the power of denial was broken. Without denial, despair could no longer fill us. Our friends taught us that we were children of God who were not bad, only misguided. In their love we discovered our worth and soon claimed it as our own, a wonderful and glorious start towards a new life, a new purpose. In our joy and hope we turned to the sacred within us, only to find a loving and gracious God — with arms outstretched — saying "Welcome Home."

And home is here — with our brothers and sisters, who listen to our stories, bind up our wounds, give us hope to face another day, and remind us each week that we are good people. In their love we discover our goodness; in their support we overcome the strangeness of calling ourselves good. We have fought so long to keep ourselves bad, we can hardly believe that we are good, lovable people. Yet look around tonight; is there anyone here who condemns you? Is there anyone here better than you? Is there anyone here who denies your right to be here, or thinks themselves better than you? In every face there is understanding, in every eye welcome. We are family — a new family of trust and kindness. Together, God works the miracle of love that bring us serenity.

— Doug E.

Faithful Fiver and Trusted Tenner

The Faithful Fiver and Trusted Tenner Program has been inaugurated to help give N.S.O. a sound, predictable financial base for outreach activities and to support member services.

You will be provided with preaddressed envelopes for your convenience. Records of your contributions will be treated as highly confidential and will be available only to the two people required to process and account for your contributions. After the close of the year a receipt will be sent to you for your tax purposes.

You may withdraw your pledge or modify it at any time by notifying the N.S.O. Office.

INDIVIDUAL PLEDGE CARD

Out of gratitude and in support of conveying the message to others, I hereby pledge to:

... Be a Faithful Fiver

☐ I pledge to contribute \$5.00 per month, in addition to regular support through my meetings, to the work of the National Service Organization.

... Be a Trusted Tenner

☐ I Pledge to contribute \$10.00 per month, in addition to regular support through my meetings, to the work of the National Service Organization.

I wish to make my contributions:

- ☐ Monthly
☐ Quarterly
☐ Annually

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Telephone: _____ Date: ____/____/____

Home group _____

Why Prison Outreach — A Letter

What follows is a letter which clearly shows why it is important for each of us to do anything and everything we can — to reach out with the message of hope and recovery — to our fellow addicts who are isolated in prisons with little or no assistance from prison authorities.

Oct. 13, 1991

To Whom it may concern:

In May of 1990, my husband was arrested, later convicted, and then sent to prison for sexual assault.

Prior to my husband's arrest, we had twice been involved with marriage counselors. While our problems were significantly different on both occasions, the issue of sexual addiction on my husband's part was raised both times. Although the issue was brought to our attention, it was not a subject that we spent any length of time discussing. Now, looking back at the situation, I can't help but feel distressed because if the issue of sexual addiction had been pursued further, my husband might not be in prison today.

Now that his problem is out, I again can't help but feel distressed because the prison system has not yet provided him with any help. Since February of this year, my husband has been in prison and he has received no counseling. As I understand it, the reason is because he is not considered a priority since he is not eligible for parole until May 1995. It is difficult to imagine that a problem as severe as my husband's would not be considered a priority.

I know that my husband has also written to you, for he has been desperately seeking whatever he can find to help himself. Several months ago, my husband wrote a letter to the prison warden, asking if there was a group that he could be involved in, and if not, could he start one? He was told that there would be a program beginning in September or October and that inmates were not allowed to run groups. September has come and gone, we are nearly half way through October, and still he has not been involved in a group, nor can he help himself by forming one of his own.

It is frustrating for him, but it's also frustrating for me. My husband is an intelligent man, he has a degree in criminal justice and has been indentured as a plumbing apprentice. His work at the prison occupies some of his time, but I don't understand why his time is not spent trying to understand and overcome the sexual problems that put him there in prison.

Many people, my family included, do not understand why I have stayed with my husband. What I haven't told you is that both my husband and I are victims of sexual abuse. My whole family is aware of the abuse my husband suffered as a child, but only two members of my family (my sister and brother) are aware of my abuse. I won't go further into this issue, but surely you can understand the bond between my husband and me because of our backgrounds, and also the compassion that I now feel for him.

Because of this, and also because the prison has not yet come through with any help for him, it is my hope that your organization would inform this prison that you do have a program to help sexual addicts.

My husband, children, and I will be together when he is paroled, whether the prison offers him anything or not. If need be, we will just have to seek the help on our own. However, it would be comforting to know that he received his beginning there in prison.

The story of Lester D. in the September edition of the PBR, sent to me by my husband, has given me additional encouragement that sexual addiction is a problem that can be controlled, given the proper support.

Thank you. Sincerely,

— Jean S.

Do you have a story, an experience of growth, or would you just like to share your emotions and feelings? Please write The Plain Brown Rapper. Your brothers and sisters in SAA would like to hear from you. We have much to share with each other. Please write to PBR Editor, c/o SAA, P.O. Box 3038, Minneapolis, MN 55403. If you can submit your writing on a computer disk (either 800K Macintosh or IBM), that would be greatly appreciated. Please ensure that all IBM disks (either 5-1/4 or 3-1/2 inch) are formatted consistent with their physical density (i.e., high-density disks formatted high density; low-density disks formatted low density). Please submit all writings for the January newsletter by December 21, 1991.

Unless otherwise noted, the content of all articles, stories, and poems that appear in the *Plain Brown Rapper* reflect the opinions of the respective writers. Those opinions are not necessarily shared by the N.S.O., S.A.A., or the Literature Committee. Discussion of the contents of this newsletter is encouraged.