



Plain Brown Rapper

THE SAA NEWSLETTER

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Rap Around the World

Rap Around the World is devoted to news from SAA groups and Intergroups worldwide. Appropriate material for this section includes news, events, announcements, and any other information which may be of interest to the fellowship. The PBR invites all regions to submit monthly news updates of 50 words or less. News and announcements should be submitted a minimum of 6 weeks in advance of expected publication. We are currently accepting news items for publication in the September issue (or later issues).

The Living Return: The Plain Brown Rapper is Alive and Well!

Dear PBR readers and subscribers:

Thank you for your great patience! After a brief hiatus, it's with a great deal of enthusiasm and joy that we bring you a new issue of the *Plain Brown Rapper*. We are aware that the *PBR* is many months behind schedule and want you to know that your Newsletter will be returning to a regular publication schedule.

We wish to thank the previous editor, David G., for his service. With David's resignation, the SAA Literature Committee has been searching for a new editor for the *PBR*. We welcome aboard member Steve B. as the new editor. Furthermore, the Literature Committee has appointed a temporary oversight committee to ensure the timely production of the *PBR* and assist Steve in putting together 7 issues over the next 7 weeks.

We realize this task is possible only with the energetic service of our fellowship, and we honor and thank those members who have contributed. We are particularly grateful to the members of the Houston Intergroup who offered their time and service to transcribe a backlog of submissions for the *PBR*.

In order to return the *PBR* to a monthly schedule, a number of previous issues will appear in rapid succession until we have caught up to the calendar (which we hope will occur by October of this year). To keep the *PBR* content timely, only current and pertinent news, letters and announcements will be printed.

Please keep in mind that the *PBR* is not only the Newsletter of the SAA Fellowship, it is also our journal and a vehicle for communication among the fellowship's members. In these pages, we hope you find that the shared experience, strength, and hope of our fellowship will provide many gifts for your recovery and serenity.

Recovery Toolbox

53 Things That Don't Work

by Steve S.

When I was a newcomer working the steps, my sponsor told me to read the first 64 pages of the AA Big Book and to identify "the four things that do not work." So with pen and pad I sat down to read and write down every phrase in those pages that will not work to keep me sober. This is my list:

- "Strong warnings"^(Big Book p.1)
- "Ominous warnings"⁽¹⁾
- "Forebodings"⁽¹⁾
- "Past successes"⁽⁴⁾
- "Fierce determination to win"⁽⁴⁾
- "Flights to country or city"⁽⁴⁾
- "Self control with periods of sobriety"⁽⁵⁾
- "Sweet promises"⁽⁵⁾
- "High resolve"⁽⁵⁾
- "Determination"⁽⁵⁾
- "Confidence"⁽⁶⁾
- "Cocksurenness"⁽⁶⁾
- "Escape"⁽⁶⁾
- "Will power"⁽⁷⁾
- "Discipline" (although strong in other areas of life)⁽⁷⁾
- "Self-knowledge"^(7, 25, 26, 36)
- "Self-confidence"^(8, 40)
- "Fear"⁽⁸⁾
- "Common sense"⁽¹³⁾
- "Sensibility"⁽²¹⁾
- "Consequences"⁽²⁴⁾
- "Memory of past consequences"⁽²⁴⁾
- "Middle of the road"⁽²⁶⁾
- "Religious convictions"⁽²⁷⁾
- "Moderation / Control"⁽³⁰⁾
- "Manipulation"⁽³¹⁾

- "Bargains / Deals / Promises"⁽³¹⁾
- "Sound reasoning"⁽³¹⁾
- "Reading inspirational books"⁽³¹⁾
- "Long periods of self-control"^(31 - 34)
- "Reservation"⁽³³⁾
- "Lurking notion that someday I'll be able to (act out)"⁽³³⁾
- "Severity in the disease does not matter"⁽³³⁾
- "Good character and judgment"⁽³⁴⁾
- "Threat of loss"⁽³⁶⁾
- "Intelligence"⁽³⁸⁾
- "Humiliating experiences"⁽⁴⁰⁾
- "Keeping on guard"⁽⁴⁰⁾
- "Mental defense"⁽⁴³⁾
- "Good morals"⁽⁴³⁾
- "Philosophy"⁽⁴⁴⁾
- "Self-sufficiency"⁽⁵²⁾
- "Logic"⁽⁵³⁾
- "Reason / Intellect"⁽⁵³⁾
- "Easier, softer way"⁽⁵⁸⁾
- "Old ideas"⁽⁵⁸⁾
- "Half measures"⁽⁵⁹⁾
- "Self willed run life"⁽⁶⁰⁾
- "Self-propulsion"⁽⁶⁰⁾
- "Running the whole show; arranging everything"⁽⁶⁰⁾
- "Self managed life"⁽⁶⁰⁾
- "Selfishness/Self-centeredness"⁽⁶²⁾
- "Playing God"⁽⁶²⁾

I know in my past I have tried most of these approaches to stop my shameful behavior with very little success. *The only thing that works for me is constant conscious contact with a loving Higher Power.* May you find God now!

Steve S.

Twelve Steps

Step Three: Made a decision to turn our will and our lives over to the care of God, as we understood God.

The third step is the basis of all of my recovery from addiction. Work came before, and work continues, but the Third Step is the foundation of my spiritual life. And it was the hardest of all steps for me to take. Steps One and Two were simple actions for me; I was so beat up by life that I was fully resigned to telling the truth, and even risking a little faith. However, the Third Step challenged all of what I had invested my life into up to that point. It was total surrender.

Surrender is hard for me. I lived in the fantasy that my life was my own, that the power was mine to make my future...if only I willed hard enough. Also, I had long bought the lie that my life was to be misery, and that I was alone in the Universe. The Universe was set up to make me suffer. I resented to life, and God. I stuffed down any feeling that came of being alive. I focused on the objects of my compulsion, and the practice of my addiction. I put on a good face and attempted to bluff my way through life, while acting out in secrecy three, four, five times a day.

However, my heart was alive, beyond my denial. It got me to meetings, because it wanted to live. I'd rather act out, but my

heart outmaneuvered my head and dragged my body continuously back to the work. While there, I couldn't help but hear things. When I stopped working my mouth (finally), or planning my next gem of wisdom, a gradually emerging miracle happened. I started to feel! And realized that I had a treasure on my hands — me! My life had value beyond my imagination, and I realized that I had something to lose. I stood at the turning point, and I felt myself beginning to balk.

To turn away was death for me. I was so scared that I was paralyzed. I realized that I didn't understand surrender as a good thing. Surrender had always meant humiliation, assault, pain and shame. There I was, stuck in my fear and confusion. I turned on the TV for relief, and what I saw that day helped change my life. It was the end of the Gulf War, and the Iraqi Army was surrendering. To my amazement, they were not killed, humiliated, nor ashamed. How they smiled and shouted and hugged their captors! The horror was over for them, they were willing to be humble, lay down their arms, and their fear. I got it.

Jon K.

Twelve Traditions

Tradition Three: The only requirement for S.A.A. membership is a desire to stop the compulsive sexual behavior.

To me, the traditions act like the Steps, only in the context of we addicts as a group. They direct our group conscience to adhering to the basics of our simple program, so that we may all recover. The Third Step teaches me how to be humble and accepting. As an addict, I have a lot of judgement. I lived most of my life distrustful of the world; wary, cynical, and self-centered. When I first entered SAA, my main focus was on how I was going to make this experience safe for me. I know now that I had not grasped the spirit of the Third Tradition.

I had tried to control the world around me. I judged all of the people I saw: that one too wordy, that one too egotistical, that one a coward, etc. I tailored my words to pander to, or push back, certain people. My mind closed, and my mouth working, I

was not making any progress into sobriety. All this effort was exhausting, and I soon found myself frustrated, and losing patience with the program. I thought about bailing out.

Then some funny things happened. Although I was sincere in my desire to change, I was still in control. I got weary of trying so hard, and said less at some meetings, and planned my comments less. As I waited, I started to listen. People started to touch me with their words. I heard similarities. I heard feelings that described my deepest secrets. I felt loved for not talking. I knew then that I was not there to perform, but to heal. I saw that I was being loved for just showing up. If I could be included just as I was, so could we all. I retired from my judge, and I have been healing ever since.

Jon K.

From Shame to Grace

Stories of Recovery from Sex Addicts Anonymous

New Perfect-Bound Edition
Available for \$10 (+shipping) from SAA
P.O. Box 70949, Houston, TX 77270
(713) 869-4902

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Fellowship Forum

Beginning Thoughts on a "Big Book"...

by Pat C.

The original "Big Book" of Alcoholics Anonymous was a work of genius inspired by the courage of those original people. It is moving to think of the forces at work when all that happened. I was recently in Dr. Bob's house and found tears in my eyes sitting at the kitchen table where he and Bill W. had those early talks over coffee. I think we revere their early efforts and their very words because they mean so much.

Yet that was over half a century ago. And we have learned so much since then. If recovery has taught me anything it is not to let my rigidity close off important options. Recovery is about adding options. So if I were looking for a new Big Book for our fellowship I would wish to preserve important elements of the original and I would hope for change that reflects our learning since that time. Bottom line: I would want that it be the truest expression of our experience as a fellowship of recovering people.

Here is what I would preserve:

The original has a durability that has stood the test of time; it inspires courage; it collects the wisdom of an oral tradition and creates a format that everyone can use; it says clearly what the twelve steps and twelve traditions

are; it is built on the stories of its people; it is not about one person but rather "we," "us," and "our experience;" it has an essential toughness about the nature of addiction and the life and death struggle that recovery is ("If you are not living in the solution, you are living in the problem."); it has implicitly a concept of sex addiction. ("Some of us crying out for sex, never seeming to have enough." "The pursuit of the woman who understands." "They found us in bars and bordellos.")

I hope that the book would be written in such a way to profoundly acknowledge our roots in that early wisdom. I do not wish that we emulate, imitate, or pattern after — rather we build on their experience.

Here is what my "ideal" book would include:

1. The original used stories which described "how we were then and how we are now." This does not allow either for the stages of recovery people go through or the long-term challenges of living a recovery form of life. There is implicit in the twelve steps a discipline and way of life that impacts a newcomer differently than someone who has been at it for 20 years. How to live the long-term life committed to the way of the steps is a question that continues to challenge.

Fellowship Forum

2. Sobriety is a more complex issue now than in 1935. Abstaining from self-destructive behavior is not enough. What do we actively strive for? Can the twelve steps be used to create sexual health? Can the twelve steps be applied to surviving an abusive history? What happens when we have multiple addictions? What about coupleship? What about participating in other fellowships with similar purposes? What happens when you pursue sobriety actively for years and do an excellent recovery only to have unmanageability decades old come back to destroy you? (I have a dear friend in Oregon who has been in recovery for twelve years and in perfect health discover he has AIDS and is dying.) There is a new toughness required, accompanied by a compassionate gentleness and a quiet discernment.

3. The language and tone of the book should not be sexist, triggering, or difficult to understand. The focus should be on the pain and how to befriend our own suffering. I do believe that genuinely funny things have happened and we need to stir them into the pot lest we become too earnest. Above all the message of hope and change that is so crucial to the healing of the planet. I do believe we are a subversive group in that our sexual values undermine much that is wrong or painful. I would hope, yet, that the book avoid arrogance or righteousness — in that sense that a book written “in the answer” and not “in the problem.”

I look very forward to hearing from you.

Pat C.,
May 18, 1995

Keeping Newcomers in Mind

I'm new in the program. I feel lost and confused and impatient, but at the same time very hopeful. I've been to 4 meetings now, and have heard different people read different things — the Steps, the Program, the Preamble. I beg you all to remember that there may be someone present who has *never* heard these words before.

Please speak slowly and clearly!
Please keep newcomers in mind when reading the “stuff” you've probably heard thousands of times.

Also, please translate SAA words for newcomers (I didn't understand “intergroup,” for example).

Anonymous,
March 13, 1995

Fellowship Forum

Share Your Thoughts

"Large Book" subcommittee seeks your feedback

Dear members of SAA: Pat C., a longtime member of our fellowship, has offered to write a "Big Book" with our fellowship. He sent a letter to the Literature Committee (*part of which is included in this issue of the PBR, see pages 8-9 — Ed.*) Please note that his letter reflects only his initial ideas for the book. It is not an outline and he expects our input on an outline.

Pat C. wants to know how the fellowship feels about his offer. He has asked us, the members of the Literature Committee, to solicit feedback from our regions. Our duty at this time is to prepare a response to Pat C. based on what we hear from you.

So far, we have talked with members of our home groups and intergroups to get a sense of what you want. The response so far has been that yes, we want a book, and that there are some areas of concern. We have had a teleconference and compared the feedback we have received so far. Barry D. has talked with Pat C. several times and communicated some of our concerns to him. He has responded to some of our concerns already. Here are some of the concerns that we discussed so far:

Don't replace our current litera-

ture. AA's "Big Book" is the spiritual guide for a great many of us. Some groups already use *Hope & Recovery* as their "big book." We plan not to replace any of our current literature.

Don't let Pat C. write the book alone. People have made it clear that the fellowship wants input on this book. Pat C. has made it clear that he intends to involve the fellowship from the beginning. That is why we are asking for your input now, before he starts.

Make sure that the book addresses the concerns of the whole range of people in the fellowship. We want this book to speak to people regardless of gender, sexual orientation, ethnic background, or education level. To achieve that, we will need feedback from all parts of the fellowship.

Don't let this book be another psychological text on sex addiction; preserve the spiritual message of Alcoholics Anonymous. Pat C. has assured us that he is prepared to treat this as a spiritual book based on the twelve steps.

The finances should be clearly understood from the start. It is the job of the NSO and not the

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Literature Committee to negotiate matters concerning money. However, we have heard that Pat C. is asking for a 15% royalty.

Based on what we have heard so far, we have formed a Large Book Project Subcommittee of the Literature Committee. The subcommittee consists of:

- Barry D.** of the North Central region, Literature Committee Liaison
Jon K., of the South Central region
Carolyn L. of the South West region
Jeff W. of the Great Lakes region, Editor

For now, this subcommittee has the responsibility to draft a response to Pat C. In the event we go ahead with this project, the committee will take on new responsibilities. These will be to: oversee Pat C.'s writing, work with the literature Committee to review his work with the fellowship at appropriate intervals, and

to make sure that the book conforms to the standards of NSO approved literature.

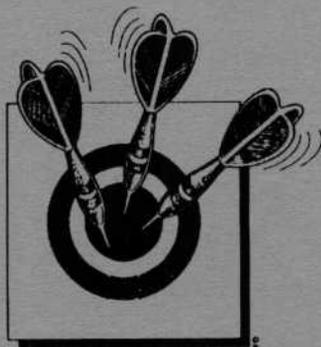
We need your response to his offer. Should Pat C. write this book? We need your suggestions for the contents of this book. The ideas that he has shared with us are only a starting point. What topics would you like to see covered or emphasized that Pat C. has overlooked in his letter? Pat C. will not write this book without the support of the fellowship. We, the members of the Literature Committee, will respect your desires.

Please write us with your thoughts, suggestions, and concerns. You can reach us via the NSO office:

Large Book Project
P.O. Box 70949
Houston, TX 77270

We look forward to hearing from you.

The Literature Committee,
July 14, 1995.



Announcements

Friends of the Literature Committee (FOLC)

The Literature Committee is made up of elected representatives an alternate from each region, up to three at-large representatives, and the editor of the PBR. We want to involve more SAA members for literature work. Fill the form out to connect to the network of people interested in creating and distributing recovery literature. Send it to **Friends of the Literature Committee, c/o NSO of SAA, P.O. Box 70949, Houston TX 77270.**

Name _____
Address _____
City _____ State _____
Zip _____ Phone _____ Fax Number _____
Email Address _____ Intergroup _____
Do you have a computer? Mac PC Modem? _____

Friends of the Literature Committee (FOLC)

Some projects we are working on:

- **Plain Brown Rapper** — increase the distribution of PBR in local areas and intergroups and finding local group or intergroup news contacts
- A booklet on **sponsorship**
- A short guide to **working the 12 Steps**
- A **book on the 12 Steps** (to be published in 1997)
- **Translations** of our literature into **Spanish** and **French** (We are looking for translators and reviewers of material already translated)

Do you have ideas for new literature? Send us your ideas or literature you have published for use by your meeting or intergroup.

NSO of SAA P.O. Box 70949 Houston, TX 77270.
713-869-4902 - Messages can be left any time
Office hours are between 10 am and 6 P.M.. Central Time

Subscribe to the Plain Brown Rapper \$12(\$18-International) for 12 issues. It includes news of the worldwide fellowship of Sex Addicts Anonymous, stories of recovery, practical advice on working the steps, & more. Enclosed is \$_____ for _____ subscriptions to the Plain Brown Rapper.

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