



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 issue 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

by Ron S.

What is *recovery*? I hear this word a lot these days. In the past, I thought of recovery as a period of convalescence and healing for people that have had a physical catastrophic illness, injury, disease, or some accident that affected the quality and well-being of one's life. Until I started working on myself, I had no idea what recovery was. Today, for me recovery means so much more than healing from physical injuries or diseases.

Explaining or giving a definition for recovery is not easy. The meaning of recovery is personal, private, and has different meanings to people working to improve their life through 12-Step programs. My recovery is a combination of things that have occurred in the last year to help me get focussed about what it means.

Recovery is honesty, trust, helping, awareness, being present, living with feelings, sharing, love, forgiving, and establishing a spiritual relationship with the God of my understanding.

Recovery is changing patterns of denial, isolationism, self indulgence, stuffing feelings, resentments, selfishness, acting out bottom line behaviors, dishonesty and self will.

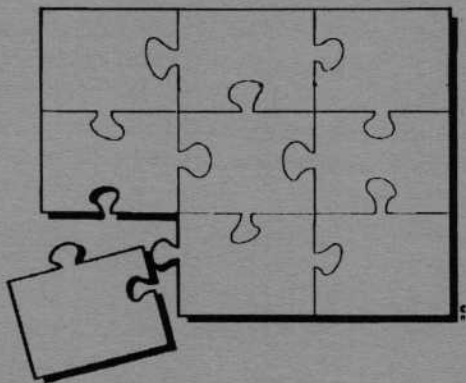
Being in recovery has meant changing some behaviors that I have learned from birth. That's neither an easy task nor a quick fix. Recovery takes time. I know

Today, for me recovery means so much more than healing from physical injuries or diseases.

that what takes a lifetime to develop is not going to be undone in weeks. Recovery is being patient and working a program. It takes time to work.

Recovery is changing my life and helping me be the kind of person I have always wanted to be. I just wish it didn't take so long to get well.

Love,
Ron S.



Twelve Steps

Step Four: Made a searching and fearless moral inventory of ourselves.

By E. Scott

The fourth step has been one of the hardest steps for me.

I realized upon reading this step what was being asked of me, and that to work on this step I must do something that I had never done before in my thirty five years: I was going to have to be *honest!* My God, the fear that filled my soul when I realized this. I was anything but *fearless!* To think that I had to take a good hard look at myself. Searching my past, and looking at my future. To have to come clean with the immoral things I had done, and could possibly do. So I tried to put it off, but the longer I tried avoiding step four, the worse I felt. I knew I was missing something in my life, but I couldn't put my finger on it.

One night as I was lying in bed, it came to me! I had never in my life felt like a whole person. I had tried everything to feel good about myself, or at least I thought I had. I tried to fit in, but never felt as though I did. I thought I was different then everybody else! I had a nice wife, a good job, I drank and got high with the fellas. I realized I had been only trying to prove to myself and my friends *who I was.*

The funny thing about this: "I didn't even know who I was." I had been trying so hard to be

somebody else, I had lost who "I was." Somewhere along the line my sexual addiction took over my life. I cheated on my wife with numerous one night stands and when this wasn't enough, I began molesting my eight year old daughter! I lied to my friends and members of my family, to my boss, and most of all, to myself!

I tried hiding my problems by using more drugs and alcohol, telling more lies trying to cover up and forget the horrible things I had done, but it didn't work. When I would get sober, what I had done was still there, my secret life, the one *no one knew about!*

It wasn't until I got arrested for the molestation of my daughter that I even realized I had a problem. After I was sent to prison, I got involved in group therapy and I was asked by my counselor if I wanted to attend an S.A.A. meeting, I accepted. This turned out to be the best thing that ever happened in my life.

At first I tried to hide some of the things that I had done to my daughter and to others. Then as I found out that I didn't have to be afraid to talk about my past and that these people didn't care what I had done, but they cared about me because I was just *being me*—not someone I wasn't.

A person I have met since I

Twelve Traditions

began my recovery told me, "If we would only be *honest* to God, to others, and to ourselves about every aspect of our lives, then we could not ever possibly act out again." I believe this statement to hold great truth. Since I have become *honest* with myself it has been much easier to be *honest* with others which has made living life much easier. Not having to worry about what lie I told who and the anxiety that comes with it, is a tremendous relief in and of itself.


No one can truly be themselves if they are not *honest* about

who they are and where they came from, or where they are going. The worst part of working step four is the fear of being found out, taking off the mask that we use to cover up our real selves. Once you share your past experiences, humble yourself and look deep within your soul, you can then truly see the real person that is you. So, feel the fear of step four and then go ahead and do it anyway. It just may be the best thing that you ever do for yourself and those around you.

E. Scott

Tradition Four: Each group should be autonomous, except in matters affecting other groups or SAA as a whole.

At press time, no material was available for a discussion of this tradition. The PBR welcomes reflective commentary from the fellowship on all of our traditions—Ed.



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Feature

Born From Fire

by Bob W.

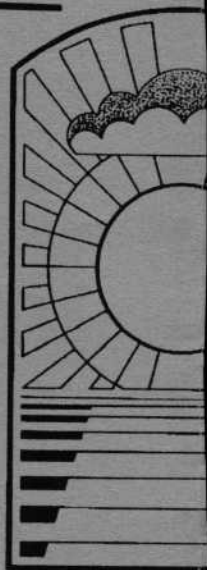
I was born at the end of the Second World War. Extreme jubilation in the United States are some of my earliest memories. My father was a professional boxer who was one step away from being the world's light-heavyweight champion before he was beaten. He thought he could use the same skills from boxing to bring success as a husband and father. He thought he could simply beat his opponents into submission, and thereby be a success in the family. His opponents were his wife and kids.

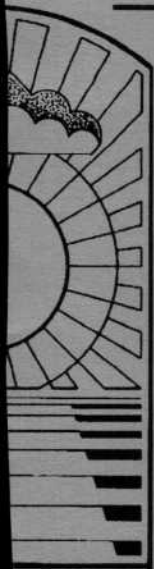
My mother left him suddenly when I was 7 years old. We went to another city. It was traumatic because I was afraid he would kill her if he caught her leaving. My mother relinquished the nurturing role, went out to fight the world to make a living, and turned her hostility toward men toward me. I became the little pseudo-husband of the family, responsible for taking care of my younger brother and sister.

At about this time I saw that my mother was a threat to my ability to relate to women. I knew I was very much attracted to women, and valued a future relationship(s) very much. I knew I had been gifted with many skills: good health, many academic skills, social skills, and many other skills to succeed in the

corporate world and military arena. The use of the atomic bomb in WWII had, in my opinion, meant that I would not have to fight in a major war in the early part of my life and I was therefore free to direct all of my skills into the war with my mother in order to preserve my ability to relate to women. I decided I would fight her with everything I had. To paraphrase a great leader of WWII: I would fight here in my mind, in my heart, and in my emotions; I would commit all I had to the fight and I was committed to winning; I would fight alone if necessary, and for as long as my heart could pump one drop of blood; but I would never surrender to her. I knew it would be a bloodbath, with my blood, but I felt I could survive long enough until the programs would be put in place by other members of society that could give me some help. I felt that God was on my side.

Secretly, an alliance was formed with my brother, and especially my sister to help each other. By helping my sister to survive the abandonment by both parents, I hoped to be able to build a friendship with a female,





and eventually use that as a foundation for a relationship with a special woman in the future. It was my only hope, since I could not bond with my mother. I also made a decision not to pass the incest on to my sister, and not to pass the violence on to any other woman, since that would hinder or destroy my ability to relate to women in the future. That decision was successfully executed.

At the age of 12 I began accumulating pornography and masturbating. It tore me to pieces emotionally, but I couldn't stop. The Catholic Church said I would go to Hell for masturbating. After two years I was able to stop masturbating for two and a half years, but lived in fear of pornography and masturbation. My life was in great turmoil, and I had no one to talk to about the problem. My sexuality had been badly damaged by my mother, who gave me the communication that men were evil, and their sex drives were a terrible burden for women.

Miraculously, and surely by the grace of God, I tried out for the grade school baseball team when I was 12 years old. The other boys had more experience but I had, unknown to me, inherited many of my father's athletic skills. There I met the man who would save my life, a coach

who had attained the rank of Colonel as a fighter pilot throughout the Second World War. He took me, and any other boy who needed help, under his tutelage. He was gentle, but firm, and discipline was supreme. He gave me his time and his honest opinion about anything I wanted to discuss. We would start by talking about baseball, but my favorite topic was war. We discussed everything about how to fight a war, from strategic and tactical planning to winning. I was, unknown to him, using the information to fight the emotional war with my mother.

The love of baseball saved me in my youth. I went on to play shortstop in high school, college, and semi-pro leagues. Baseball was my lifeline. I also acquired a BS in Electrical Engineering.

By age 24 I was married. I noticed that I was not able to discard the pornography and stop masturbating, even though I much more preferred sex with my wife. I saw the continued masturbation as a sign of trouble, and felt it was undermining my relationship with my wife. I saw it as a form of adultery. When I told this to a psychiatrist, he said it was alright, that other married men did it, and that it was my bad attitude about sex that was the problem.

We had two children within the first four years of marriage. I

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Feature

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had been seeing psychiatrists since age 19 for depression, and was not getting relief. The pain of my childhood became an even greater burden, and eventually the only way I could see to get relief from the pain, which I believed I would eventually die from, was to live by myself and not be responsible for others on a daily basis. My wife and I were separated for two years, and then divorced at age 31.

The use of pornography for fantasy during masturbation continued, and I had occasional relationships with women, but I was emotionally starving to death. I was dying a slow emotional death, and did not know how to reverse the trend. I would date a woman for three months, and then push her away while maintaining a friendship. I stayed within the level one characteristics, spent only small amounts of money for pornography, and did not branch out to other level one activities. But the pain and turmoil from my sex addiction was killing my career, relationships, and my life.

In January of 1989, I began attending Incest Survivors meetings for men, and acquired considerable healing in those meetings for one year.

In January of 1990, I was ending a nine-month relationship and starting to crash. Rather than completely crash and lose my job, I decided to go to a well-known

treatment center in Arizona for a month to get some help. They were unable to help me in many ways, but they did suggest that I was a sex addict and that I should begin attending SAA meetings. Upon returning home I started working the SAA Program, threw out my pornography, and said goodbye to all of my past girlfriends.

Over the past five years in the SAA Program, I have attained sobriety and the benefits that were previously impossible to even imagine. I have been with the same employer for six years (twice as long as any previous), bought a house and new car, have vastly improved relationships with my adult children, and have been in a relationship with a woman for three years.

I have participated in other recovery programs that have helped me "clean house" and heal my childhood wounds. For the first time in my life I have hope, and my sobriety in SAA is the cornerstone of that hope.

I know that I must work the SAA Program for the rest of my life, and that I can continue to do this one day at a time.

Thank God for the SAA Program.

Bob W.

My Story of Prison Outreach in SAA

by Mark N., Prison Outreach Coordinator, Michigan

It was in January of 1992 that I attended my first state intergroup meeting. I was very grateful to SAA for the gifts I had received, and wanted to do something to repay the fellowship for those gifts. Also, I wanted to see if carrying the message would enhance my own recovery. I sat in three meetings without saying very much. In July of 1992, at the Michigan Intergroup meeting, Arnold D., the Prison Outreach Chairperson for SAA stated that he needed some help with the letter writing to prisoners who had asked our fellowship for support for their addictions which had cost them their liberty. This seemed like something I could do; write a few letters myself, and try to convince others to do the same. I volunteered to take this project on in West Michigan.

Our letter writing program in West Michigan had some limited results, when out of the blue I received a letter from the Brooks Correctional Facility at Muskegon Michigan, inquiring as to the possibility of establishing an SAA group at that facility. I wasted no time in contacting the Assistant Deputy Warden who had written the letter. I told her that we would do our best to find volunteers for her facility, and

that if we could, we would be willing to chair meetings on a weekly basis. I was able to recruit four other men besides myself. Bill G. had already been involved in prison outreach in the past, although he had not been allowed to conduct meetings at another

I had been a woman-hater, yet I was able to facilitate a successful outreach to a woman's facility.

prison, M.T.F., also in Muskegon, in 1990. Bill was very supportive to our outreach to Brooks. Dan D., Ken B., and Bill L. were also to become volunteers at this prison. We were all given background investigations, an orientation to the facility, issued I.D. cards, and scheduled to have our first meeting on October 4th, 1992.

We had our first meeting on the aforementioned date. One of the most memorable nights of my life happened as we first-stepped 11 inmates into SAA. For those who read these lines and believe that this would be a very frightening experience, I can assure you that it was: for the inmates! After all, our fellowship deals with some very painful and personal issues, issues that these men had

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On the Topic

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never discussed frankly with anyone. It took a few meetings, but a trust was built by the inmates for each other and for the volunteers. I have often thought back to that first night at Brooks and marvelled at the various places that Prison Outreach has taken me.

If only one person is spared by our efforts in Prison Outreach, then our efforts are worth it.

Since that time, Michigan SAA has conducted meetings at eight prisons. We in Grand Rapids are currently involved in four. One of my favorite recollections is the first SAA meeting at M.T.F. where Bill G. had been refused in 1990. In 1993 on August 4th, Bill G. chaired the first meeting at M.T.F. The promises state that "sometimes quickly, sometimes slowly, they always do materialize." I have come to believe them.

I had been a woman-hater, yet I was able to facilitate a successful outreach to a woman's facility at Coldwater, Michigan, the Crane Facility. What a gift for me to be able to help in this way! I will always be proud of the efforts made by the female volunteers at Crane. They did not receive the support of the psych staff at Crane, and so the group that was established there eventu-

ally died because of a lack of referrals. The volunteers did their best to keep it going, though, and this was especially impressive as the drive for most of them was over one hundred miles one way. Some day, God willing, Crane will have a group.

I feel that I should explain why I do this type of service work. I never believed that my sexual addiction could ever be of any use to myself or anyone. Yet, here was an opportunity to put that addiction to use in a positive way. I can chair meetings for people who want desperately to change, people who want more than anything to believe that there is hope. I feel privileged to chair meetings for child molesters and rapists, partly because they do want to change.

I also believe that if men and women who have committed an act of molestation can abstain from their behavior, then perhaps a potential victim need never suffer the horror of being a victim of sexual abuse. If only one person is spared by our efforts in Prison Outreach, then our efforts are worth it and we have made our amends. I know in my heart that we will do a lot better than one—we already have.

Mark N.

(Look for Mark's story in the next issue of the PBR—Ed.)

Greetings from SAA in Britain!

In many ways it has been a difficult year. There has been a change in both the membership and outlook of the fellowship which is hard either to describe or quantify. On the face of it, it appeared to many of us that SAA in this country was indeed in crisis. Significant numbers of the oldest members are no longer regular attenders at meetings; we have lost the meeting in Manchester; and there has been a certain air of division and tension within the fellowship.

On reflection, however, what I notice is really simply change. If I say that some older members no longer attend meetings, then this has mostly to do with those people moving into different avenues of growth and recovery. Many current group members are associated with other organizations and philosophies. There has been an enrichment of the fellowship through the ideas that these different approaches bring with them, while the message of recovery is being spread elsewhere in many subtle ways.

Those meetings which survive continue to be strong and committed; the very flexibility of approaches which has felt so unsettling seems on balance to allow for more and changing views to be expressed and listened to; there are new meetings

in Wales, the South of England and in Scotland; newcomers continue to contact the 'phone line and to come to meetings.

Our Intergroup is going through a marked change in complexion, with service being spread more evenly amongst the fellowship in general, rather than every job being carried out by the same small number of people! There is a new Prison Outreach programme. (Our particular thanks to Arnold D. from Michigan for his help and support).

We remain, for the moment, a small fellowship, with barely more than sixty people who regularly attend meetings across the whole country. I am hopeful that the changes we have seen over the last year are precisely those that are needed in order to allow SAA to grow. All the signs are there. We are benefiting from regular press interest but an interest which is much more serious and helpful now, and appears on the whole to be free of the paranoia and sensationalism which was so much a part of press coverage even in the recent past.

In the hurry to put this report together, it has necessarily been short. I apologise if any of my own issues have crept into my account.

William J. (for SAA - UK)
May 21, 1994

(The PBR apologizes for the late publication of this letter—E.d.)

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.

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