



Plain Brown Rapper

THE SAA NEWSLETTER

MAY 1995

Vol.7, No.5

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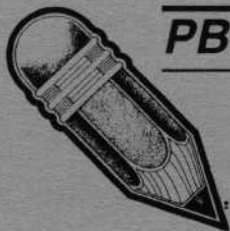
We admit to the exact nature of our wrongs in our Fifth Step. And in the Fifth Tradition, we are reminded we must act as individuals if our group is to carry its message to the sex addict who still suffers.

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PBR Submission Guidelines

With the *PBR* returning to a regular monthly publication schedule, your newsletter is in need of support through contributions of many sorts. The *PBR* publishes original written material (reflective commentary, letters, poems, etc.) and artwork of interest to members of Sex Addicts Anonymous.

Recovery Toolbox: Here we focus on the tools we find useful in recovery. Submissions should be 375 words or less.

Twelve Steps & Twelve Traditions: Reflective commentary on our steps and traditions. We match the step and tradition to the month (e.g. Step Five and Tradition Five are published in the May—fifth month—issue). Submissions should be 375 words or less on each step or tradition (750 words or less combined).

Features: Our members' stories, experiences, poetry, or other creative efforts. Submissions should be 750 words or less.

On The Topic: Here we focus on a specific topic or area of interest: service work, outreach, tips for meetings, or any other broad topic. Submissions should be 750 words or less.

Fellowship Forum: Your letters, opinions or commentary which you wish to share with the entire fellowship of SAA. Submissions may be of any length but long submissions will be edited as necessary.

Artwork: The *PBR* welcomes black and white line drawings related to aspects of recovery. We especially need illustrations of concepts or topics (such as anonymity, spirituality, connection, prison outreach, etc.).

Guidelines for Submission:

Please type or print all submissions, double spaced. If possible, please submit your work saved as a text-only file on a floppy diskette (3.5 or 5.25) to:

PBR Editor, c/o NSO of SAA,
P.O. Box 70949, Houston, TX
77270. Or send it via e-mail to:

EditorPBR@aol.com.

Please include your first name and last initial, otherwise the submission will be published as 'anonymous.' If you wish, include your mailing address so we may confirm our receipt of your submission.

All contributions become the property of SAA. If you have included your mailing address, you will receive a free issue of the *PBR* in which your submission appears.

In observance of our Sixth Tradition, the PBR does not endorse any outside group or organization.

Steve B., Editor

Honesty

by Richard W.

In order to maintain my recovery from addiction, I must choose always to be rigorously honest.

Lying is only justifiable in the most rare of uncommon circumstances. I'm not ready for justified dishonesty, yet.

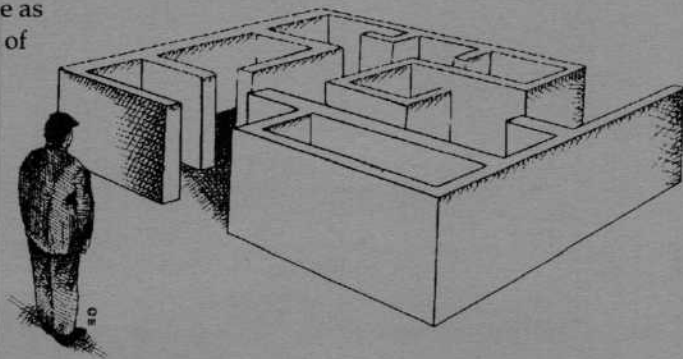
When asked directly, I express my true thoughts and feelings, remembering that incomplete disclosure is a form of dishonesty. By being honest, I sometimes need the courage to risk rejection. Telling the truth so starkly may seem hurtful at times. It is then I must recall that I'm not qualified to judge whether another person can "handle" the truth or not. Others deserve to know the truth from me, even though it may be painful, so that they may make decisions about their relationship with me, based on what is real.

The potential pain others may experience as a consequence of my rigorous honesty on any given occasion

is unlikely to be as great or as lasting as the pain they would likely experience eventually if I were to return to my pattern of telling lies.

Lying is a threat to my hard-earned sobriety, and hence cannot be a part of my behaviors. Honesty preserves my recovery, and maintaining the resultant serenity that recovery brings is one of the greatest priorities in my life.

Richard W.



Twelve Steps

Step Five: Admitted to God, to ourselves, and another human being, the exact nature of our wrongs.

"DOUBLE NICKELS" "TEN, THE HARD WAY" "FIFTY-FIVE ALIVE"

Whether you are shooting craps looking for the dice to show a pair of fives, driving the speed limit, or pairing Step Five with Tradition Five, there are some similies, or metaphors perhaps, that are born of life experiences, which serve to remind us of life's "connections".

In my black and white, right or wrong, good or bad, "all or nothing" disconnected days of acting-out addiction, I never understood how my Godly pursuit of perfection could fail me so completely. And thus kept me from being connected to anyone or anything, especially myself.

I am finally realizing the connection which I have, and which all beings, and all things have, with one another

I masturbated in pre-pubescent days and continued for over 45 years. Date-rape, affairs, incest, alcohol, spending, gambling, work, anger, rage, religion, more affairs, were the addictions of my nearly 60 years. Now in my 6th year of sobriety in SAA, having made, and still making, mistake after mistake in my

recovery, I am finally realizing the connection which I have, and which all beings, and all things have, with one another.

These connections over time tend to dispel my polarized "black and white" positions about life, and open me to the gradual scales of reality, "real" living, really accepting the blend of who I am, and reaching out to others with a degree of sobriety and humility that honors not only my recovery, but also my spiritual connections to other lives.

I never thought of myself as being an isolationist, being a wonderfully happy, gregarious, lovable fellow. But I isolated my addictions and those parts of me that were shame-laden, and the behaviors that denigrated my spirituality.

Both Step Five and Tradition Five are a part of the recovery process that exemplify connection where there has been none, and re-connection where the "wires have been cut". "Alone-ness" is not a part of recovery; it is not a part of sharing the message of recovery with others. I do not believe however, that giving lip service to Step Five guarantees we have really passed this landmark

Twelve Traditions

Tradition Five: Each group has but one primary purpose—to carry its message to the sex addict who still suffers.

once and for all.

In my own recovery, being a "head-tripper", an "intellectual", an "actor", I went through Step Five within 5 months of entering recovery and the SAA program. Still being in my religious addiction to some degree, I opted to do my "five" with a minister. I think I was able to do it with all necessary graphics and truly get to the sick parts of my life uncovered by Step Four. And now 5 years later, I can see the shallowness of my beginning. I understand now why I had so many continuing problems in years 2, 3, 4, 5, and even now. I realize my destructive patterns of relating to others only after the boundaries have been crossed. There was a part of me that did not fully "connect" with the spiritual component of recovery at that time. And the Traditions were so many words that were far, far, down the track of my process.

The individual practices embodied in Tradition Five were not part of my early recovery—even middle, even late, recovery. Why are they important anyway?

They are important because I must act, as an individual, in order to fulfill the objectives of the group. The group can do nothing unless I, as an individual, am a

part of the movement. I can, however, "let Joe do it." And "Joe" continues to "do it." That's why I stay unconnected, and isolated, and "Joe" is constantly renewing his Step Five connections, and upgrading his life, and the lives of others. "Joe," and others like him/her, fulfill the one and only reason we have for group

I must act, as an individual, in order to fulfill the objectives of the group. The group can do nothing unless I, as an individual, am a part of the movement.

existence. I have no doubt my recovery would have moved forward with a lot less trauma to myself and others had I practiced not only the steps but also the traditions.

Connection is the beginning, and the continuing of new experiences gives a new awareness to life, expands our vision, thought, and language, and keeps us grounded in recovery.

Roberts S.

I never thought there was a way out of the shame and the despair, but there is!

by Mark N.

My story starts when I was 10 years old. I had an incestuous relationship with my sister, who was eight. We did not have sexual intercourse, but there was a great deal of fondling and nudity involved. There was also some childish play, as well, and my sister identifies what happened between us as adolescent sexual exploration. My parents, however, identified this as a rape of, and ruination of, my sister by myself. I identify today that this was causal to my sexual addiction.

I have always had obsessive thoughts about females, and also about sex in general. I can remember listening to locker room talk in high school, and believing that everyone felt as I did. The problem was, I never left the locker room arena in my thoughts and attitudes about sex. I also had great feelings of unworthiness regarding women, and severe rejection issues with people in general and with women in particular. I lived a life in constant sexual desire with no healthy outlet.

I did very little dating in high school. I was totally obsessed with one classmate of mine, and I

remained obsessed with her for over twenty years. She finally had to ask me to claim that I was the father of an illegitimate child she had conceived on a one-night stand some time before. I had not seen her for two years at the time. I simply couldn't see her anymore. She had been someone that I thought I was in love with, but I was actually obsessed with all my life. I always was most desirous of those females who said no to me. If I could only make them love me, then I could prove to myself that I was lovable.

I joined the Marine Corps after high school. I didn't want to continue my education at the time, and anyway, my grades were lousy, as I spent most of my class time visualizing the girls in the classrooms. I had also had some experiences with masturbation and improper touching of females in public so I was even more ashamed about my sexuality than before. I served four years in the Marines, having my first experiences with drugs, which I did not pursue, alcohol, which I did pursue, and prostitution, which I pursued off and on for years. I did, however, take time out to get married in 1973. My

marriage lasted five years, and was a total disaster. I was cheating almost immediately. We were divorced in 1978.

After my divorce, I became very depressed. I drank very hard, often closing the bars. I blamed all my problems on other people and took no responsibility for my own actions. I especially blamed all the women in my life for my not having a relationship that worked. I used to believe that all women were in league together against all men, and especially me.

I was involved with compulsive masturbation, anonymous sex with women in bars, prostitution, anonymous sex with men in rest areas, public parks, and adult bookstores; I was sexual with married females every time I had an opportunity. I was very ashamed of all these activities. They fueled my addiction and gave me what I thought I wanted, but my world was a frightening and dangerous and shameful place for about twenty years. I could have died many times.

I joined A.A. in 1981 after my second D.U.I.L. I have been totally clean and sober in that fellowship since 9/10/82. I know that the twelve steps work. I can remember wishing that there were something like A.A. for people

with "sex problems." I didn't know that there was such a thing as sexual addiction, or that I was a sex addict, but I knew I had a problem. For example, I would get in my car to take a drive. I would find that I was on my way to a cruising area. I would argue with myself, and head towards home. I would argue some more, and turn around. I would arrive at a bookstore or a red light area. I would act out. I would promise myself that this was the last time. This lasted maybe half an hour and I would be acting out all over again. I meant all the vows I took, but I was totally powerless.

In September of 1990, I visited my Doctor. He had treated me for Gonorrhea and Chlamydia more than once. I asked him for help with my sexual "problem." He gave me a referral to a psychologist. I visited the man only once. When I told him I was unable to leave the red light district alone, and that I was afraid of AIDS, he told me he thought I was a candidate for S.A.A. I had never heard of S.A.A., so he told me that it was a twelve-step group like A.A., but for people who suffered from compulsive sexual behavior. I was thrilled!

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**I know what gun metal tastes like.
I have considered suicide.**

Feature

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I know what gun metal tastes like. I have considered suicide. I never thought that there was a way out of the shame and the despair, but there is! I was ready. I had had enough. The psychologist gave me a telephone number to call. I was able to find out about a meeting on a Sunday called the Fireside Group in Grand Rapids, Michigan, my hometown. September 15, 1990, was my first meeting.

I went to my first meeting of S.A.A. as a lifelong woman-hater. I blamed all my failed relationships and all my sexual frustrations on women. I would sometimes be deliberately friendly so I could set up a female for rejection and scorn. I believed that I was only paying them back for all the pain that I had suffered at their hands.

I opened the door to the meeting room and thought, at first, I was alone. Then I noticed someone sitting very quietly in a corner of the room. A woman. I asked her if this was the Fireside Group, and she said yes. We waited for about a quarter of an hour for other people to attend the meeting, but no one came. So, I was first-stepped into S.A.A. by a woman by herself. This was the first great gift that I have received from S.A.A., and I have received more than my share. I started to stop being a woman hater that day, and I am not a woman hater anymore.

I attended the 1991 S.A.A. convention in Grand Rapids. I found myself avoiding any workshop that dealt with incest. I finally attended one called "Healing the Family." It didn't say it was about incest, but it was. I sat through it as though I only wanted to be supportive of the presenter. I didn't want to just walk out. However, a seed of truth was planted in me, and I was finally able to talk to my sister about what had happened between us. I had never been able to face this issue before the 1991 convention. My sister and I were able to bury the family ghost. It took me thirty years to be rid of the shame involved.

At the convention I also heard Jean O., the first woman in S.A.A., speak. What a pleasure it was to hear her story! I was able to relate to her as a fellow addict, and not have to engage in any negativism regarding gender. It was wonderful to feel free of my prejudice towards women.

After one year in the program, I was able to develop a relationship with the lady who first-stepped me. Sadly, our relationship didn't last. However, I was able to share on an intimate level for the first time in my life, and we never acted out; we were able to stay healthy. This was the first healthy sexuality I had ever experienced. Even though our relationship didn't last, I shall always be grateful to Robin.

Mark N.

Fellowship Forum

Impressions of the 1995 National Convention, "Wiling to Grow Along Spiritual Lines."

Thanks to Dave R. for gathering these notes from the Hospitality Suite.

A lone, afraid, I stepped into my first SAA convention. Within three days, I had been completely accepted by over 300 people. Now, two years later, I feel like I'm coming home each Memorial Day weekend. Of all the things I have done in recovery, the most important thing was to take that "first step."

Terry D., ND

CoSA has been a Godsend in my recovery. The convention gave me an opportunity to share parts of my recovery and to open myself to learning more about recovery. It is wonderful to be in recovery and seeking the WHOLE PIE.

Linda J., Flint, MI

What a wonderful, loving, accepting group of people. Never have I felt so supported. These people hear me before I even speak. What a blessing to learn these people are here. CoSA has been a beautiful blessing from God.

Anon.

The work that went into the conference (such as registration and the hospitality room) made me feel that I was cared for and loved. Thank you all for your work. The meditation room was very important for me. It was a safe place to process and listen. I also used the paints, clay, and construction paper.

Anon.

This was my first time attending a National SAA Conference. My first time reminds me of one regular SAA meeting multiplied a thousand times, with all the love, care, support, sharing, and pain, including all of the sister organizations like CoSA, SLAA, etc. The pain I felt from people's past experiences is not regret of the past, but trying to deal with it in the present.

Chris S., Indianapolis, IN

Fellowship Forum

The Large Book Project

An update from the SAA Literature Committee

Dear members of SAA: We are pleased to tell you that we have decided to accept Pat C.'s willingness to write a basic text with our fellowship. We came to this decision after consulting with as many of you as was practical and considering the matter carefully. We are acting on what we have heard to be your wishes. We have responded with a letter to Pat C. that outlines our understanding of the process and our boundaries regarding the book.

We picture this book to be a basic text for our fellowship. It will define, in spiritual terms, what is sex addiction and how SAA treats it. It will not assume any prior recovery knowledge. It won't require anyone to read *Alcoholics Anonymous* or *Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions* to understand our program. In this book, we will recommend that people read those books. This book will supplement those works rather than repeat them. It will introduce the steps but won't be a step guide like *Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions* or *Hope and Recovery*.

We will continue to involve the whole fellowship in the writing of this book. We will announce through the *Plain Brown Rapper* the topic of the month. The

object of the topic of the month is to tell you in advance what chapter Pat C. will be writing so that you can compose essays on that topic. We will give you an address where you can send your essays. In keeping with the Twelfth Tradition, your essays will be submitted to the Large Book Subcommittee anonymously. Pat C. and the subcommittee will attempt to incorporate your ideas into the text when we review his chapter on that topic. You must understand that you forfeit any copyright on your work and that we cannot give you royalties or credit for your work. Submit essays because you believe in what you say and out of service to the fellowship. We will need you to write to us for this to work.

To contribute, we want you to contact your regional Literature Committee Representative. Your representative will forward your ideas to Pat C. and the editor via the Large Book Subcommittee. We ask that you trust that your representative will communicate your ideas. Additionally, we are investigating setting up an online meeting place for the purpose of discussing this book. We'll keep you informed on any developments in that area.

Fellowship Forum

The gift that Pat C. brings to us is the momentum for us to take action. We have done more writing, discussing and defining of our fellowship in the last few months than we have in a long time.

We picture this book to be a basic text for our fellowship. It will define, in spiritual terms, what is sex addiction and how SAA treats it.

We'd like to ask everyone to observe the Twelfth Tradition reminding us to place principles before personalities. Some people have embraced this book, others have rejected it already. The book has not been written yet. People are judging it by its author. Please

judge this book after you have read it.

Finally, it is tempting to view this process of defining our fellowship, as a battle for the hearts and minds of SAA members. We would like to suggest a more spiritual alternative. Let us enter the debate with open eyes, open ears and open hearts. Let us listen to each other and to our Higher Power. Let us not assume that we know what our Higher Power wants before we listen to others. Our Higher Power will speak to us in a group conscience. Let us seek that.

We look forward to hearing from you. Thank you for the support you have given us already.

Yours truly,
The SAA Literature Committee

Giving Credit Where It's Due

Dear *PBR* Editor:

I'd like to submit an addendum to my presentation of an original song, "Willing to Grow," at the recent 1995 National Convention in An Arbor. In my stage fright, I forgot to credit my partner, PeteB.,

for writing the guitar accompaniment. I want to credit Peter's contribution to the song that was performed Sunday night just before the open speaker's section.

Ken M.

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 in literature-related work. Connect to the network of people helping to create and distribute recovery literature. Fill out the form below and 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: (____) _____ - _____
E-Mail Address: _____
Intergroup: _____
Do you have a computer? <input type="checkbox"/> MAC <input type="checkbox"/> PC <input type="checkbox"/> Modem?
Friends of the Literature Committee (FOLC)

Some projects we're working on:

- *Plain Brown Rapper*—increase the distribution of the *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 as well as reviewers of material already translated)
- Do you have any ideas for new literature?

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

SUBSCRIBE TO THE *PLAIN BROWN RAPPER*

The *PBR* includes news of the worldwide fellowship of Sex Addicts Anonymous, stories of recovery, the experience of the fellowship in working the 12 Steps, outreach, service work, and more. The *PBR* is our journal and a vehicle for communication. In its pages, through the shared experience, strength, and hope of our fellowship, we aim to provide gifts for your recovery and serenity. \$12/year (\$18/year outside the U.S.)

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