



Plain Brown Rapper

THE SAA NEWSLETTER

DECEMBER 1995

Vol.7, No.12

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The Thursday Night SAA meeting in Sioux Falls, SD, offers suggestions for twelve-stepping new members.

*When we're in a
bad spot, we need
a meeting.*



*When we're in a
good spot, the
meeting needs us.*

Recovery Toolbox

Do I Dare?

by Kenneth R.B.

Do I dare take a chance to be the person I wish I could,
or just turn my back on it once more?

Do I dare do the things I've only dreamed I could,
or make believe that I have never really cared?

For I have seen the view from the grand canyon
and have wished that I could fly, but believing that I would fall.

Do I dare to take the chance to live a life where I could make a difference,
or do I just stay in my room and stare?

Do I dare to take one day at a time,
or do I try to take them all at once?

Do I dare to know a new freedom and a new happiness,
or do I just keep regretting the past and shut the door on it all?

Do I dare to comprehend the word serenity and look for peace,
or keep at the bottom where I think I really belong?

YES I WILL DARE! No matter how far down I feel I belong.

And YES I will dare to see how my experiences can benefit others
and not only worry about myself.

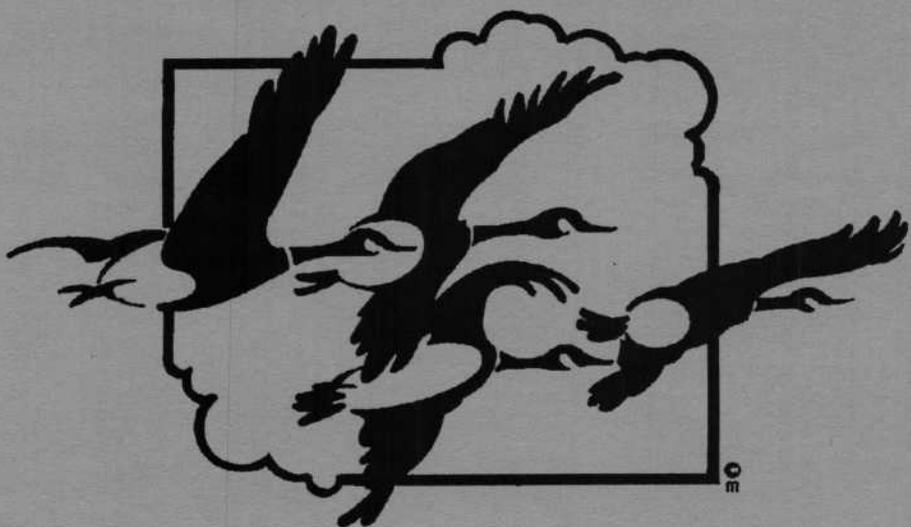
And YES I will dare to let my whole attitude and outlook on life change,
for I can no longer do business as usual and expect different results,
for that is truly insanity.

For if I will dare I will intuitively know how to handle situations
that used to baffle me.

And know that God is doing for me what I could not do alone.

For I will dare to soar where the eagle flies,
upon His wings above the mountains
and know that I belong there because I'm willing to dare!

Recovery Toolbox



Twelve Steps

Step Twelve: Having had a spiritual awakening as the result of these steps, we tried to carry this message to other sex addicts, and to practice these principles in all our affairs.

Graduation.....NOT!!! by Robert S.

It starts with a simple premise: "Having had a Spiritual awakening...." The language implies that I perceive that I have had a Spiritual awakening. And now this tells me that I try "to carry this message to other sex addicts, and practice these principles in all of our [my] activities."

I have had more trouble in my recovery doing 12th step and service work than any other part. I am finally getting the message that this "Spiritual awakening" comes very, very slowly. After 6 years in the program, "it's beginning to sink in."

My problem is that I wanted to work a perfect program, sail through the 12-and-12 quickly, and then move on to bigger and better things. And I am thankful that despite all my troubles, my center circle behaviors of masturbation, incest, affairs and infidelity remained there. My group and HP kept me sexually sober throughout. But I was a long way from the humble person it takes to be in recovery.

My relapses were violation of Traditions Two and Twelve. Why? Because number Two is the

"Do not play Higher Power" tradition. Number Twelve is the tradition of humility. (More on this in the next article.)

I always was a people pleaser; I needed affirmations. In order to please, I must accomplish. In order to accomplish, I must take part, to volunteer, even to sort of "push." In my sponsorship of members, new or old, I thought it needful that I "teach" them something. I had bad luck with sponsees. Some were downright P.O.'d. I had not learned that I was only scratching the surface of my own recovery, and had little to pass on. And I was angry that I could not control those persons or situations that I engaged.

When I engaged in service work in NSO, I thought I had all the talent, drive, and recovery I needed to tackle the tasks at hand. In my need to wade in, disassemble, re-organize, and control the entire process, I invited what proved to be near disaster. I violated many boundaries, I caused many persons many problems. Step Nines and Tens were many, and more are probably due.

Graduation? Hell, it's like I haven't even enrolled yet! A saying of old times perhaps says it

Twelve Traditions

better than anything—"The ass who perceives himself to be a stag comes to the knowledge of the truth when he goes to leap the ditch".

And despite it all, I wouldn't trade it for a moment. Some of

those lumps are the marks of recovery. I thank my HP that I was capable of using them for improvement, not only in affirming my sexuality, but "in all of my activities."

Robert S.

Tradition Twelve: Anonymity is the spiritual foundation of all our traditions, ever reminding us to place principles before personalities.

The Anonymity Paradox by Robert S.

"Anonymous" defined: "Lacking individuality, distinction, or recognizability."

Paradox defined: "Something with seemingly contradictory qualities of phases."

What's so "paradoxical" about anonymity? Do I have to lose my identity in recovery? How can I be not recognizable as I make a 12th Step call? How do I carry out my 5th Tradition obligations as a part of a group, or SAA as a fellowship?

Must I keep my recovery a secret from family, friends, co-workers and others with whom I have a good relationship?

For me the answer is becoming more clear, especially since I am working through my own issues of "needy-ness." In order to gain the affirmations I have needed in life, I had to make myself known—to the point of being ostentatious, sometimes

outrageously, even addictively, so.

Unknowingly I began again to take on the role I had before Step One—the role that I was in control. What I was doing was laudable and it was proper to reach out to others. The language of relapse, the elevation of self, the subordination of humility. It takes time to let go!

Truly Tradition Twelve is the "Humility Tradition". It is in essence the drawing together of all the traditions in order that I truly place "principles before personalities." I must place my principles before my personality as well. The principles are in serving without elevation of self.

I doubt seriously it matters if my neighbor knows that I am a recovering sex addict. When my fears about such sharing are removed, and when I am able to make appropriate choices, I do not need to be "faceless." My family might be strengthened by knowing. It might "attract" someone who is hurting.

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Feature

The Brass Rail

by Sonny W.

Dear friends in SAA

I'm sending this true story of some of my experiences I have had here at Mt. Pleasant prison here in Iowa. I'm new to this program of SAA but I have found there is hope for me now. You people, out there and in the program now, are what keep me going. On the day of my lowest point, my mother passed away and on that day my Higher Power did for me what I could not do for myself. God helped me to let go that day and it was OK.

Since then, many things have happened in the stairway leaning on the Brass Rail. I now have had many comforting talks with other men just like us in SAA. They also care and share. I was elected as the new chairperson last week in our SAA group here. I will do my best to carry the message. Our group has grown from 8 to 20, so soon we may need a bigger room to meet in and I think that is great. SAA is alive and well here in prison.

This is my story about an Old Brass Rail. Thanks to my higher power, whom I choose to call God, and that Brass Rail, I found peace, serenity, and hope (real hope!) in the SAA program and a way to work my program each day.

Here at Mt. Pleasant, most of us have jobs. My job is Stairway #4 Westside. Probably 400 or more inmates use that stairway all the time, each day. It is also a place where a lot of things happen, like fights, stabbings, and other bad things that are not supposed to happen. From time to time there are no guards there either.

My first day off work, I went there to clean that stairway. I was scared, really scared. I walked through the door on the second floor and there it was, cold, dark,

and even though people were running up and down, it seemed lonely. The scary sound of people hauling up and down was really loud. It hurts one's ears, if you know what I mean. There are two flights going up and two down from the second floor. I don't mind telling you again I was really scared.

Also, in the stairwell is an old banister; it is an Old Brass Rail. It runs up to the top of the stairs and down to the bottom on both sides of the stairways. It was tarnished, spotted, and ugly. I said to myself, this has to be the worst place in the whole prison to work. I really felt down. I said to myself, this is hopeless to try and clean. Some of the men using the stairway would spit on the floors, the walls and on the Brass Rail. Most men using the stairway were very noisy and not

courteous at all. All of the noises would echo all up and down something terrible. Anyway, I went ahead and tried my best to clean the stairway.

While I was working, a lot of the men would rush by and laugh at me trying to clean. Some would stop sometimes and ask how much the job paid. I would tell them and all would say that's not enough pay, and that they would not work in the stairway for four times the amount I was getting. A lot would say they would not do the job even if it meant confinement for days. Some told me to quit and would laugh and spit tobacco on the steps just after I mopped. They would do and say the same thing day after day.

I really got depressed. I hated that stairway, and worse, I hated that Brass Rail which needed to be polished. I also thought about quitting. The only up lifting thing I had was my bible, reading my meditations each morning, my A.A. meeting on Monday, and my SAA meeting on Wednesday every week. That helped me, but only for a day or so after the meetings. It wasn't long before I would slip right back into my depression of loneliness and hopelessness. I was really dreading every day of having to go to the stairway and clean. I hated it so. I also hated the men there, too.

One morning, I went to the stairway to clean and it was empty and quiet for a change. As I

said before it sometimes is also the loneliest place in the prison. Even when people are there, it can still be lonely and cold and it always was to me. Anyway, that morning I walked into the stairwell and it was empty. I just stood there. I was hurting so bad. I felt

From that moment on, something changed. I felt different. I don't know why, but I felt at peace with myself for the first time since I'd been in that stairway, and for some reason the stairwell seemed brighter.

so alone and hopeless of ever recovering from being put in prison and recovering from my sex addiction. I really felt no hope. No hope for me, my wife, my life. I cried that day, I really cried. I called out for my higher power, whom I chose to call God. I said, "God please help me." Please take this pain and this emptiness I have away.

You know something? From that moment on, something changed. I felt different. I don't know why, but I felt at peace with myself for the first time since I'd been in that stairway, and for some reason the stairwell seemed brighter. I felt more refreshed than I had in a long time. I started cleaning that stairway with enthusiasm and I started polishing that old Brass Rail harder than I ever had before.

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Feature

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There were some men coming down the stairway and I said good morning. They answered back the same. Some more men came up the stairway and I said good morning, and they said "Hi." All the time I cleaned that day I kept saying "hello" and "hi" and "good morning" and "have a good day." Some of the men would answer back and some would not. But after work that day, I felt good for the first time in a long time.

The next day I went to the stairway and I did the same. I spoke to everyone passing. I also polished harder on the old Brass Rail. Some of the men noticed me shining the rail and some would say, "You sure have that old brass rail shining." That made me proud and made me feel good inside.

Everyday I made it a point to shine the brass rail more and more, and everyone noticed. While I was polishing the old Brass Rail, I, for some reason, started thinking about my A.A. and SAA programs. Every time I would polish the old Brass Rail, my steps, all twelve of them, would go through my head. I would start thinking about this new SAA program more and more. I remember in one meeting, we were talking about the man in the looking glass and the reflection of yourself back at you. More and more each day I could see my

reflection clearer and clearer in the brightness of the Brass Rail. Also, the old Brass Rail reminded me of working my program and the steps I love.

I guess I don't have to say much more now except I don't mind that stairway any more. Things have changed. The men have gotten to know me. I know they look for me and my good morning each day. Also, the shiny Brass Rail does shine brighter every day. Yes, I have a special place in my heart about that stairway and a much more special meaning about the program and the Brass Rail. You see, if I don't polish that Brass Rail every day, it starts to tarnish. After two or three days it will start to turn dark and ugly again. To keep it shiny, I work on it every day. You see, that is why I kept associating the Brass Rail with my programs. I could not figure out at first why I would think of the steps while cleaning the Brass Rail. I know now. As the Brass Rail needs cleaning every day, my program and steps need working every day. As the Brass Rail will tarnish if not shined, my program of hope and faith will weaken and may fail if I don't practice it every day.

Yes, today I do thank my Higher Power and an Old Brass Rail for changing my life. I found out all I had to do was ask for help, like our programs tell us to, from our Higher Power and He will help if you trust in Him. I

(continued on next page)

Surprised By Freedom's Paradox

by Glenn G.

Surprised by freedom's paradox,
Claiming power a deadly ploy;
The more I took the more I lost,
'Til real surrender brings joy.
Now my worth is found within,
Gentle serenity caught;
Acceptance and truth bring sanity,
Courage to purge my thought.
But worth cannot be found alone,
Isolating from others;
Spiritually we are connected,
In pain shared as brothers.

Self-love dawns from intimacy,
Openness between friends;
Inner-valuing truthfulness,
On which our trust depends.
Real security comes from God,
With honest power to cleanse;
Regaining responsibility,
Grateful to make amends.
Alert for snares, with feelings open,
Changing selfish poison;
Freely tuned thoughts of empathy,
Real health must be chosen.



(continued from page 5)

It all goes with the "Spiritual Awakening" in Step Twelve. When I am moving toward that awakening, I am preparing a part of the Spiritual Foundation mentioned in Tradition Twelve.

As I am progressing [not perfecting!], I am gathering the humility to subordinate myself from that throne of power, and acknowledge my total dependence on a power higher than myself.

Robert S.

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found hope is really believing that there is real hope out there. For me, I thank God, SAA, and the people in it. I also thank A.A. and the people in it. I don't know for sure how long I will be here, but I

take it one day at a time. I do have real hope now. Maybe, someday, I can walk with you in the spirit out there.

Thank you.
Sonny W.

On the Topic

A Suggested Format for Two Volunteers to Follow When Twelve-Stepping a New Member Developed by the Thursday Night SAA Meeting, Sioux Falls, SD

The following is submitted as a suggested format. The PBR reminds the fellowship that the following appears as a gift from the Sioux Falls meeting. Take what you like and leave the rest.

Have one volunteer take charge and follow guidelines as follows:

Explain that no two sex addicts are exactly alike; that every person's story is different, and the sexual behavior they want to stop differs from person to person. Examples: using prostitutes, going to porno shops and topless bars, having affairs and casual or anonymous sex, fantasizing, compulsively masturbating, flirting and enticing, flashing, molesting, etc.

Explain that sex addicts are ordinary people who have one thing in common: they have used their sexual behavior like a drug, and that use has made their lives progressively more and more painful, less and less manageable.

Have both volunteers briefly tell their stories as follows: a) how your sex life became unmanageable b) how you came to SAA c) how the program has helped you recover.

Give the newcomer the option to share their story if they feel comfortable in doing so. -Give the newcomer the "Getting started in Sex Addicts Anonymous" booklet and "The Bubble" and "The Three Circles" brochures and encourage them to read through them on their own.

Encourage them to seek out a professional counselor and explain that SAA meetings are not considered therapy groups, but rather a place to come for information and support in their program of recovery. Many questions will arise that should be worked through with the guidance of a professional counselor. Emphasize it is the newcomer's responsibility to seek out this help on their own, but that they are free to ask other members for ideas on how to select a good counselor for themselves.

On the Topic

Encourage the newcomer to attend six meetings before deciding whether the program is really for them. Warn them that the addict inside them will try to discourage them from giving it a real try.

Explain that due to the very sensitive nature of sexual addiction, only those identifying themselves as sex addicts are allowed at our meetings. Emphasize that anything they say will be held in trust and will not be discussed outside the meeting and that we expect them to grant us the same courtesy.

Explain the importance of adopting a sponsor and give them the option of selecting one of the two volunteers to be their temporary sponsor. Explain they will have the option of selecting a new sponsor if they choose after their initial six to eight weeks are up. Give them the phone number of the temporary sponsor and request their phone number to give to the temporary sponsor.

Explain to the newcomer they are under no obligation to share during the meetings if they do not feel comfortable in doing so, but encourage them to share what they can because it may help to set them free. Inform them about the opportunity to get together socially before and after the group meeting for some fellowship for dinner and coffee.

Allow for questions and comments from the newcomer and then rejoin the meeting before the close.



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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