

The Plain Brown Rapper

The official newsletter of the International Service Organization of SAA, Inc.

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THE ISO ENCOURAGES GROUPS TO REPRODUCE THE PLAIN BROWN RAPPER SO THAT COPIES WILL BE AVAILABLE TO ALL MEMBERS. THE PLAIN BROWN RAPPER IS MAILED FREE TO ALL WHO REQUEST IT.

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“That night as I Prayed I asked God how he could do this to me how could he take my only reason for life”

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“There is no way I can afford to stay sober living a life of lies – including lies to myself.”

See Page 10

For Peter B.

By Robert S.

My Friend, Our Friend, is dead.

As I was listening intently to the tape being played as we rode along one of northern Nebraska's less traveled highways, the old man in Pakistan was explaining to a young Afghan about his long lost boyhood friend. The stage for this meeting had been set by a complicated, yet seemingly natural course of events, all set forth in the previous seven tapes in the "Books on Tape" volumes of "The Kite Runner."

The secrets of the boys' past had been well kept, but now had to be told, along with

the recent events of Taliban behavior in Afghanistan. It turns out that the boyhood friend was in fact, his half-brother, by an illegitimate relationship. The old man had observed the execution of this man and his wife some six weeks before. There was a son that needed finding.

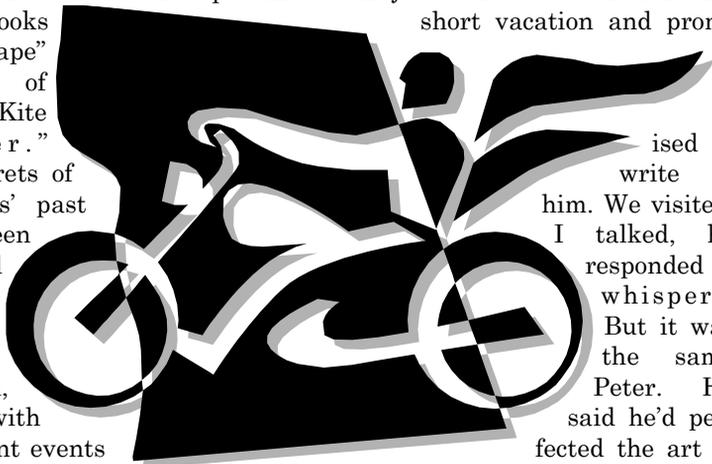
It was exactly at this point that the cell phone rang. It is somewhat usual that reception in some parts of the west tends

to be problematical, so it was surprising that we had reception there.

A voice I knew well greeted me warmly. It was the same voice that called me nearly a year ago, sort of "out of the blue." I seemed to know why, even before it said, "I have some bad news."

Last year it was Claude E. This time it was Peter B.

I had talked to Peter a while back just before we left for this short vacation and prom-



ised to write to him. We visited; I talked, he responded in whispers. But it was the same Peter. He said he'd perfected the art of

"talking in whispers." He was prepared, I do believe.

I never got the letter written; "the road to hell is paved with good intentions," it is said. I owed Claude a letter I never seemed to get around to writing. I have feelings about the things I leave undone. Perhaps others do too.

We might all extol the virtues of any departed friend, and I have much I could say of Peter and our fellowship together. And he was as

For Peter B.**Continued**

By Robert S.

great to you as to me. The same is true for Claude, and Arnold D., and Jeff F., and all the others now passed on from our circle of support, care and love.

So what has all of this story to do with losing a friend? For me it brings full circle parts of my life that are intimately entwined with the human family; that my life has been scarred by secrets, mine and others, that I have great intentions and still fail, that I see pain all

around me, and within me, but have found the recovery community and the friends, and the tools I need to rebuild my life.

As for Peter, his life might be personified best by words I received from another of his close recovering friends in late June. Maybe they're yours too:

"He taught me that sobriety is meant to be fun. And his child-like and playful spirit were heaven sent for me."

Whatever Do You Mean?

By Charles J.

[Editor's Note: Charles J. is an Illinois prisoner.]

Behind these walls I've been locked away
 from family friends and society each and every day
 nothing left for me to hide
 not even the pain way deep down inside
 my whole life has been one big lie

Some say I'm dangerous that my anger is way out of hand
 I know not what they mean
 for I no longer grab people by the throat and shake them to their knees
 nor do I yell just to be left alone

I can't help my size of 6'8 and 315
 some say you intimidate me some say you're mean
 I say for whatever do you mean
 I have a deep voice which I try to tone down
 I laugh to cover up my feelings burying them further deep down inside
 though my laughter is phony I know they can't tell
 how do I intimidate you how am I so mean

In prison there are no children only men
so if you come here a coward you must learn to take a stand
for many we're used to pretending so it's really not too hard
truth is we've been doing it most of our lives

By now you may have figured out that outside though I may look big
and tough,
inside I'm really just a very sad scared little boy

Recently I lost my mom the only thing I had left to live for
the day they came and told me I felt all the strength ripped from
within along with my fight the only question was why

That night as I Prayed I asked God how he could do this to me how
could he take my only reason for life

As I heard those words aloud I thought of what I'd said
and suddenly it came to me that each time I lost someone precious
to me that's when

God strengthened me and filled me with his love
as well as brought someone into my life to help me through it all
despite myself and all the hate within

I took the time to reflect over a life that's been filled with bad,
shame, guilt, and anger
and hurt deep within as well as all I've lost and been taken from me
since I was young

I thought of all the long lonely nights in the dark rooms lying awake
for fear of the pending doom
the ones who came to steal away my innocence and replace it with
terror, anger, and rage
then came to me a word learned just a short time ago
"Resentment"
this has been my friend so long that I didn't want to let it go

Today I took a test that I failed
so I felt like quitting and walking away one more time
and I was reminded: this is all you've ever done all your entire life

Whatever Do You Mean?
Continued

By Charles J.

I wanted to yell but rather spoke with another addict who quickly
gave me a dose of reality and brought me back to real life
so I thought it over and spoke to my teacher asking for some help
he told me he'd let me make it up yes he gave me another chance

So I'll end up passing the class and graduating as planned cause
ya know what:

God won't let me fail because he Loves me in spite of myself
Tonight I received my first Plain Brown Rapper in the mail
And as I read each word and line God gave me more hope and
Strength another source of help

As I read the letters to Peter and loss many felt
it reminded me of the loss of my MOM and I knew then that others
suffer loss as well
and once again God replaced it all with hope and peace way deep
down inside

Cause I know that one day I will see my Mom again and will meet
Peter on the other side
I will get to sit and chat with him and share the stories we will even
laugh a little and
then I will remember the letters of Love so many wrote and I'll
know the reason why

So what am I trying to say you may ask
I'm really not that sure
But one thing is for sure
that despite what others may say about me or tell me of a disease I
suffer from for which there is no cure
SAA has given me hope that one day I can be outside these walls
again healthy and
happy to be living a new life of sobriety free from my past unhealthy
ways and
shortcomings that I once thought was life
the ones I thought were my very best of friends

Today I close by telling you that each day I ask God's help for the
release of my
misgivings and to bless me with a better life of healthier Proportions!



Letting Go of Old Ideas

By Anonymous

An interesting discussion question came up recently in a meeting about a phrase in “How It Works.” All agreed with one individual who told how he kept struggling over the phrase in this passage that, in recovery “...the result was nil until we let go absolutely.” He and some others noted that they were not finding abstinence despite writing thorough Step One inventories, praying, going to meetings and devoting themselves to SAA activities. They still felt bad and had lots of addictive thoughts. The one thing that most of them could point to was that they were acting out less frequently; unfortunately when they would get a week or a month or a couple of months clean, they would have a crisis and relapse. Each one of them was not satisfied that this was enough; they wanted full abstinence from all their addictive behaviors and they wanted the serenity that goes with that abstinence.

They berated themselves for a while about not trying hard enough to let go absolutely. Then one of the old-timers in the group spoke up. He noted that they sounded like they were a little unsure about what they were trying to let go of. He reminded them that the whole sentence reads, “Some of us held onto our old ideas and the result was nil until we let go absolutely.” He pointed out the dangers of taking part of a sentence out of context and suggested we talk about what it means to “hold onto old ideas” and how these can interfere with recovery.

There are two ways (at least) to interpret this phrase; the first is holding onto our old ways of thinking and the second addresses the content of our old ideas. Let’s look at the content first.

The most obvious group of old ideas has to do with sex addiction. Most of us have held thoughts like sex is the best thing in life, that it can fix all our

Letting Go of Old Ideas Continued

By Anonymous

problems, that any sex is good sex and so on. A big part of early recovery and hitting bottom has to do with recognizing that these are lies and that pursuing these lies has made our lives a mess. But these are just the first layer; there are plenty of other old ideas.

We had beliefs about ourselves as well: that we are bad people, loners, victims, special, supermen or superwomen. We believed that we must be in control or smarter than others or perfect or the best, and simultaneously, that we couldn't do anything right. These contradictory ideas made us work very hard and set us up

for an addictive life. We also held untrue beliefs about the world and

other people, such as: the world is a dangerous or unloving place, others want to use us, life is about getting all you can, and so on.

These old ideas are cunningly woven together by the addiction to serve its purposes. Few of us have ever gotten free of them all at once. Instead, by working through the Twelve Steps many times we discover them to be lies and come to recognize our own truths. These lies are so numerous that as we spend time in SAA we see how all encompassing they were. Fortunately, we can have many "Aha moments" as we find that we weren't the only person who believed them; this helps us to make connections with others in recovery.

While growing free of the content of our old ideas is a big task in itself, "holding on" is a big obstacle to recovery, too. Holding on



shows itself in rigid thinking and in pridefulness that prevents

the members of that SAA group. They started to see how holding on and their old ideas had undermined their abstinence and led to slips and relapses. They also recognized that they had made some progress in recovery because they had let go of some old ideas and were developing greater open-mindedness. They were each getting closer to letting go absolutely, and we hope soon be relieved of acting out.

from opening up to what others have to say. It keeps us from being teachable. Believing that we know what we are doing is not being teachable. For example, when I first entered the program I assumed that I didn't need a group or sponsor to teach me how to live the Twelve Steps. I assumed that since I can read then I could figure the program out for myself.

Being teachable starts with mentally paraphrasing the First Step as, "I am powerless over my old ideas and my old ways of thinking – they have made my life unmanageable." Without this recognition, we end up trying to graft recovery thinking onto our addictive thinking. We might improve a little but the addiction soon expresses itself.

This is what happened to

This is one approach to helping people let go of old ideas. If you have experience with others, please share them with the fellowship by sending them to Sponsorship Corner, Brown



The Choice Is Yours

By Rodrigo R.

My name is Rodrigo and I am a sex addict. My sobriety date is September 11, 2003.

My sponsor is slowly introducing me to Step 12 work by asking me to write articles to SAA publications (PBR, newsletters, etc). I am grateful to have a sponsor in SAA with long-term sobriety who works the steps, does service work and shows up at meetings!

It says somewhere in one of our many pieces of recovery literature that "this is a program of progress; we claim spiritual progress instead of spiritual perfection." I have worked my program during my first few years in SAA trying to reach a perfect ideal of recovery and it didn't work. I was always slipping. I was never happy. Today, I can write you this letter and tell you with 100 percent confidence that there has been tremendous progress in my recovery in all areas of my life. This is due to the fact that I work the Steps and I

trust my sponsor when he assures me that this is not a program of perfection. It is about progress – spiritual progress! I am extremely thankful to work with someone who I can trust!

One of the things that is keeping me sober today is the fact that I am learning to focus on

The steps are teaching me about GOD and many spiritual principles that are part of my definition of a Higher Power (GOD)

me, on my faults and assets through step work instead of blaming the world around me for everything. The steps are teaching me about GOD and many spiritual principles that are part of my definition of a Higher Power (GOD), for example: humility, tolerance, honesty,

willingness, patience, compassion and love. These are the opposites of many of the character defects I have: fear, insecurities, pride, resentments, lust, etc. I cannot begin to tell you how happy I am to have found a spiritual solution through the help of GOD in order to help me with the removal of all my character defects!

Another tool I frequently use in my recovery program in order to stay sober is to talk honestly

about my middle-circle behaviors, when I do engage in them, not only to my sponsor, but also at the meetings. I find it to be a humbling experience and very rewarding. There is no way I can afford to stay sober living a life of lies – including lies to myself. My middle circle teaches me a lot: I am not perfect; I can feel humility; I belong. I am no different than anyone else in the room. And it always presents me with an option: I can go into my addiction or I can work the program.

My inner circle boundaries are the following: anonymous sex; exposing myself; peeking under public stalls; visiting two particular downtown washrooms and being in the hot tub alone at my partner's place. I set these boundaries with the help of my sponsor and I am committed to staying out of them. Instead of focusing on what I cannot do, I am learning to focus on and live in the outer circle (having fun basically). Example: Instead of being in my inner circle or middle circle,

today and right now I choose to follow my sponsor's suggestions and write you this story. Service work is in my outer circle and part of working Step 12.

The gifts I have received during my almost one year sober have been countless: a relationship with a partner I love, a chance to visit my family after nine years of resentments and fear against them and having had an opportunity to make face-to-face amends to my mom, dad and a cousin; a job; a home; friends and family.

I know recovery is simple, but it is also hard work. However, I have a choice today. I am a sex addict and powerless over my addiction. I can go back out into my addiction and eventually die from it, or I can ask for help, do some work, connect with GOD and stay sober. I am grateful for this choice. I still remember when I first came into SAA and was down on my knees unwilling even to believe that there would be a choice one day. Today, I do! And if I do, I know that you and other fellow sex addicts do too! The choice is yours to make.

I can go back out into my addiction and eventually die from it, or I can ask for help, do some work, connect with GOD and stay sober.

Step 1 Worksheet (Revision 1 Jan 2004)

Submitted by Anonymous

[Editor's Note: The following two articles represent methods of working Steps 1 and 4 that have worked for some members of our fellowship.]

Last year one SAA member I knew over the Internet suggested coming up with a set of worksheets to aid newbies in doing the steps. He wrote the 1st three step worksheets. Our Thursday night group modified them slightly and we have set aside the third Thursday evening of each month to hold a Step Worksheet Workshop. I have received permission to submit these to PBR.

[Editor's Note:

The original author adds:

These worksheets come from my experience in watching a lot of 'closed' step studies. First off, most people in our fellowship do not join a step study group, closed or open. Secondly, once a step study has closed, the usual behavior is that people start dropping out of the group. Most closed-step studies do not make it through many steps before running out of people. (Yes, there are some such groups which survive and have good recovery, but they seem to be the minority.)

So, I wanted to have a way to have an open step study - one where people can come in at any time without having done any preparation. The idea was to have a meeting where people did not have to have bought a workbook, or done homework, or even have to come with pens.

Whoever shows up can participate and the pens and worksheets are available. Each sheet then has to be able to stand on its own.

These worksheets are not intended to replace the more in-depth work which is done with one of the workbooks and a sponsor. Instead, they are intended to help a person get started on the process of working the steps. At present, they cover the first three steps. As one starts living these first three steps, recovery will take them through the rest of the steps.

Format:

Each meeting starts with reading the steps.

Then, the worksheets are handed out (and pens for those who did not bring a pen). We spend some time filling out the worksheets. Then, we go around the room and share what we have written. In my experience, the sharing is more intense when we share on one or two questions and go around the room several times. At present, the leader also fills one out and shares what he or she has written. (We share our experience, strength, and hope. We are not in positions of authority.)

Afterwards, people get to take their worksheets home with them and they can share them with sponsors, therapists, etc.

Do people have to work these in order? No. I am finding that by doing them over and over again, people are getting more out of them each time. Nor do people need to work all the worksheets.

Are these worksheets done? No. You might find that your experience in recovery leads you in different ways than those suggested by these worksheets. Feel free to modify, enhance, and experiment to find what works for you and for the people in your groups.

I am also finding these worksheets helpful with sponsoring people. I have one or two sponsees who do not get to many meetings. I handed them a couple of worksheets and they are working them as homework and we go over them when I meet with them. While I have some pride in having come up with these worksheets, I am also very aware that a higher power can say when and how to use them. I do not want to force other people to walk a specific path in recovery.]

We admitted we were powerless over addictive sexual behavior – that our lives had become unmanageable.

In order to put some structure to this step, let's break it into two parts, powerless and unmanageable.

Powerlessness:

In this first part, list how you are powerless over the addiction. That includes how you were taught the addiction in your family, how it started showing up, how it progressed, how you were unable to stop it, etc.

Step 1 Worksheet

Continued Submitted by Anonymous

Unmanageable:

This part includes the costs of the addiction. What has happened because you acted out? It is important to include only those costs that you value, not what other people think you should value. (To give an extreme example, if you did not care that your wife left you, then that was not a cost to you when she did.)

Slippery Times

There are a number of events which trigger me into thinking I can (or need to) act out. From my past, what are they?

There are a number of behaviors that we go through prior to acting out. This is part of the ritual. List them

One way to diffuse the triggering and the ritual is to plan out other behavior that I can do once I realize that I am triggered or am into my ritual. For each of the above, list a recovery behavior that I can do, once I realize that I have been triggered.

The Lies – 2 Types:

Lies We Tell Others and Lies We Tell Ourselves

List as many lies as you have used.

Lies We Tell Others

Some examples:

Lies we used to enable us to act out (*“I need to work late,” as a cover to go act out.*)

Lies we used to prevent detection of acting out. (*“I ran into Joe and you know how he talks,” covering an acting out event.*)

Lies concerning money. (*“The charge was a business expense” to cover up a prostitution cost.*)

Lies We Tell Ourselves

These may be half-truths or out right deceptions we have used to rationalize and justify our acting out. In recovery, it helps to go through these lies and identify them. In this way, we can better see them when we start to act on them again.

In this exercise, take an acting out episode and list off the actions and choices made based on the lies we tell ourselves which led up to the acting out. Do not list the details of the acting out — list

the lies, the events, and the actions that happened *before* acting out.

(An example: I had a tough day at work. So I decided to work late by myself. I kept at it until 2 am. Then, I decided to take some time to reward myself.)

It may help to use affirmations to directly counteract the lies. Take the lies and identify some statement that counters that lie. (Example: Leaving work and getting a good night's sleep means that I will do better work than if I stay late. Staying in recovery is more important than keeping a job. Time with family is a better reward than acting out.)

Affirmations

List some affirmations here.

It is suggested that time be taken for group sharing of lies and affirmations.

Shame

Shame is one of the difficult parts of recovery. Many of us do not know when we are having shame. Shame may keep us stuck, which is why we cannot recover on our own.

One technique for dealing with shame is to say all the shame (without putting it on others). The floor here can soak up a lot of shame and not be harmed by it.

Other questions to ask myself:

What messages about my sexuality did I hear growing up?

How can I tell if I'm feeling shame? What actions do I do which indicate I'm having shame?

What parts of my sexuality do I have shame about?

What is the part of my addiction that I have the most shame about?

Some questions which may help to define and /or reduce our shame:

How are the family messages wrong? What can I do to have pride in my sexuality?

How can I honor myself when having shame?

Step Four
“Why Step Four is so (!#?&!) hard!
- Or -
“No Pain – No Gain”

By Ed W.

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

Recovery requires *giving up the old ways* in which we nurtured ourselves by living in the *extremes*.

1. Step Four is not done in isolation – support is critical to get through the emotional roller coaster!
2. Grieving Process: Includes discomfort, anger, fear, shame, sadness, and loneliness.
3. We will be recognizing the:

Good	Bad
Positive attributes	Imperfections
Successes	Failures
Courage	Mistakes
Efforts	Harm Done

4. We possess counteractive strengths! Was our addict:
 Strong? Enduring? Clever? Willing to Risk? Resourceful?
 We use the same traits to aid in our recovery.
5. We don't just focus on the Bad, but we acknowledge the Good – and rejoice.
6. The Fourth Step is a draining experience! We pace ourselves, we take gentleness breaks. We reach out to others for help and guidance.

Fourth Step Inventory

1. -Avoiding Personal Responsibility: _____
2. +Taking Personal Responsibility: _____
3. -Misuse of Anger: _____
4. +Positive Expression of Anger: _____
5. -Paralyzed by Fear: _____
6. +Respect for Fear: _____

- 7. +Taking Healthy Risks: _____
- 8. -Shameful Events: _____
- 9. +Pride in our Achievements: _____
- 10. -Losses and Painful Events: _____
- 11. +Learning from Sadness: _____
- 12. -Beliefs about our Unworthiness: _____
- 13. -Self-Hatred (negative traits):
 - I have been _____ I have been _____
 - I have been _____ I have been _____
 - I have been _____ I have been _____
 - I have been _____ I have been _____
- 14. +Self-Affirmations (positive attributes):
 - I am _____ I am _____
 - I am _____ I am _____
 - I am _____ I am _____
 - I am _____ I am _____

Prayer

Realizing that I'm a person within a person is really challenging, scary, and kind of a relief. I know I'm a good person with good qualities, but I have an evil side or portion of me that struggles to manifest itself and control the good side. I must always be alert, vigilant, and proactive in my work with God and in the Program to manage the evil side (the obsessive, compulsive side of me.) Only through conscious, proactive efforts can I be open to God guiding my life to spirituality and righteousness and pushing back the beast of my compulsive urgings. I must let God in and work with his guidance.

Affirmation

I can never forget my past or my problems, but I can set them aside and live today as a child of God. I can grow spiritually! I can have self-respect! I can be a loving person! I can be kind! I can be righteous again!

With God's help – I will.

From the Editor

By Mike L.

Last night, I saw a most wonderful movie. It was called *Renaissance Man*. A Renaissance Man (I guess one would say “Renaissance Person” nowadays) is one who has some level of expertise in a variety of different fields. I don’t think Renaissance People are as valued in this day and age, when there is much more emphasis placed on specialization. And I’m still not quite certain why the picture is named as it is, possibly because Danny DeVito, who is teaching eight military cadets who are struggling through basic training to become more competent academically, is also expert in the field of advertising and can likewise get out there with the recruits and go through some of their tougher drills with them.

In any event, de Vito decides that he is going to increase the soldiers’ competence--and self-confidence--by reading through *Hamlet*, one of the Bard’s more difficult plays, with them during this six-week course. (Yes, I know I talked about Shakespeare last issue.) The idea is that if he can raise their level of awareness and intelligence, they will likewise become bigger assets to the military. Besides awakening an interest in Shakespeare in at least one of the eight class members, he helps another of them get on a better life path than he had been on at the beginning of the movie, helps raise the esteem of yet a third of them in the eyes of his fellow cadets, and so forth.

As my partner pointed out, the movie wasn’t really about Shakespeare or *Hamlet*. Instructor de Vito could have picked any kind of challenging subject matter. The idea was to replace the comic books and sports magazines that the students were reading at the beginning of the movie with something a little more difficult. The whole thing reminded me in a way of recovery and particularly of the outer circle. I learned in SAA that I couldn’t just abandon my old ways of life; rather, I had to replace those old habits with new ones and in that sense, the outer circle is in many ways the most important of the three. If I had just left a void in place of these former activities, it would not have taken long for the former activities to return to their original place of prominence in my life.

It’s probably no coincidence that this issue of the PBR, the last one for the 2004 calendar year, is helping to bring in the New Year with several articles relating to endings and beginnings. The issue begins with Robert S.’s farewell to Peter B., and immediately follow-

ing is a poem from a prisoner telling how he was affected by the other farewells to Peter B. that have appeared in these pages, despite his never having met the man, and how these expressions of grief helped him to say good-bye to somebody in his life. This issue's Sponsorship Corner is specifically about "Letting Go of Old Ideas," and another anonymous article provides us with a first step worksheet. Keeping with the idea of step work, there is also a worksheet for the fourth step, which is the step where many of the soldiers in this program take a good look at themselves for the first time. Finally, we have several articles that address the issue of progress, something that in itself is a first for many recovering sex addicts once they discover this program.

I hope you enjoy this issue of the PBR. And with this being the holiday season, I want to close with some of the words from the song "One Tin Soldier," a song made famous by the 1971 film *Billy Jack*:

Now they stood beside the treasure,
On the mountain, dark and red,
Turned the stone and looked beneath it...
"Peace on Earth" was all it said.

Happy holidays to all.





ISO News



ISO Literature Committee, ISO Board, & Board Committees

ISO Board Minutes

**The Board of Trustees of the ISO of SAA, Inc.,
met via teleconference on November 20, 2004.**

The following is a report of votes taken.

Approved: Amending the minutes of the Board's May 26-27, 2004, meeting to include a motion to authorize the Literature Committee to supervise the design of the book and to also authorize the Literature Committee to prepare the book for printing.

Adopted: The Literature Committee's recommendation of the following four mechanisms for keeping the Committee informed about Board discussions pertaining to literature:

- a) That when the Board agenda is prepared and distributed, the office will send all members of the LitCom a truncated version of the agenda covering all items that involve literature.
- b) That the Board be requested to communicate to us [the Literature Committee] specific questions they may have on any upcoming issues involving literature. This may be done either through the Board liaison to the LitCom by e-mail, at the LitCom teleconferences, or by some other means.
- c) That a "liaison to the Board" be invited to attend all Board discussions of issues involving literature.
- d) That the Board set a date for a joint Board/LitCom teleconference for issues involving literature at least once a year at some point midpoint between the conventions.

Approved: The 2005 ISO Convention Budget.

Approved: A motion to empower Francie E. to enter into a recording agreement for the 2005 ISO Convention speakers and workshops with the vendor she had recommended.

Approved: ISO Office audit procedures as recommended by the Office Oversight Committee, with the addition of checking for multiple checks under \$500 to the same vendor but whose total amount exceeds \$500.

Approved: A proposal to send Jonathan C. to San Jacinto College to take two-year Webmastering Program with the short term goal of Jonathan C.'s course of study being to provide the ISO with a proficient staff webmaster and the long term goal being to provide the ISO with a staff Information Technician.

Approved: An Employer/Employee Agreement, with the following amendments:

- a) The ISO will pay a maximum of \$3,500 for the course and related expenses.
- b) During the times when he is attending classes, Jonathan C. will work thirty hours in the ISO Office and be paid for ten hours of schooling.
- c) Jonathan C.'s study progress will be reviewed, at a minimum, after each semester.

Note: A copies of the course curriculum and Employer/Employee Agreement, which are too long to print in the PBR, can be obtained from the ISO Office upon request. In broad summary, the ISO agrees it will pay for the course of study and related expenses and to structure the employee's time and compensation in a way that supports successful completion of the course. The employee agrees to complete the course satisfactorily or to reimburse the ISO for its expense if the course is not completed satisfactorily. The employee further agrees to continue employment with the ISO for at least two years after certification or, if he does not, agrees to reimburse the ISO for its expense.

Approved: A motion to permit the SAA self definition statement to be used on the Interfellowship Forum website.

Failed: A motion to cooperate with COSA by including the SAA name, along with the names of other organizations, in a letter sent to treatment centers.

Approved: A motion to sell as non-SAA literature the newly formatted book *Sexuality in Perspective* once the new format has been seen and approved.

Approved: A motion to offer the following groups of people to have a copy [of the SAA Book] with an inserted statement of appreciation: 1) authors, 2) past and present literature committee members, alternates, and their designees, 3) past and present board members and their designees, 4) ISO staff.



ISO Literature Committee Minutes

**The ISO Literature Committee met by teleconference
on Sunday, November 14, 2004.**

The following is a report on approved motions.

Approved: That the pamphlet *Sexual Sobriety and the Internet* be approved as submitted on November 14, 2004, with the provision that minor grammatical and punctuation changes, and changes to bring the pamphlet into conformity with the style sheet, can be made without further consultation with the committee.

Approved: A motion to include the style sheet at the back of the Lit-Com handbook.

Approved: A motion that the style sheet set "sponsee" as the preferred term for somebody being sponsored.

Coming Soon!

The new pamphlet *Sexual Sobriety and the Internet* will soon be available for sale directly through the ISO office or on SAA's official web site. The pamphlet must be formatted and the first printing run before a price can be set. Spanish translations will then follow.





Prison Outreach News

By Mike L.

Those of you who are more familiar with CDs than with their predecessor, LP records or even 78s, may not recognize, let alone understand, the expression “sounding like a broken record.” It usually refers to somebody who says the same thing over and over again. That term “broken record” is actually something of a misnomer since broken records, like broken CDs, can’t really be played. It might have been better if whoever coined the expression had said “like a scratched” record or “like a record with a hairline crack” since these can still be played, although in the latter case at some risk of damage to the stylus or needle. The scratch or the crack might cause the needle to keep repeating the same groove. And then again, sometimes it would cause the needle to jump ahead. So the whole expression doesn’t make a whole lot of sense. Well, let’s not go there...

Anyway, in some ways I feel like I’m sounding like a broken record because each issue of the PBR I tell you that there has been an increased interest in prison outreach. This is especially true of the South Central Region but also true of other regions as well. I’m also starting to get increased interest in writing to prisoners from the prisoners themselves. Because of a number of new state regulations, prisoners are often not allowed to write to each other. Still, I’m getting inquiries from prisoners about getting involved in Prison Outreach once they get out. I hope this interest continues.

We do ask certain things of our letter writers. We ask that they have a year in the program, have started their ninth step, and have their sponsor’s approval. So if you meet these guidelines and you’re interested, please get in touch. I’m especially looking for women volunteers as the number of women prisoners is continuing to increase as well.

You’ll be reading this article very close to, or maybe even during, the 2004 holidays. This is an especially important time to give some thought to writing to prisoners. I know the prisoners themselves consider the holidays important, just from the number of cards I get each year. Write to me at elrojo9701@yahoo.com or P.O. Box 27544, Houston, TX 77227-7544, and I’ll send you a set of guidelines and a name or two if you want.

Also, I have a request from a man in Beeville, Texas, for a sponsor. If you live in that area or even if you don’t and want to help this man out, please get in touch with me at the above address.

That’s all for this issue. Y’all have a great holiday season and I’ll be in touch again next issue.



Start a meeting.

SAA has an interesting way of growing. The size of the city does not necessarily coincide with the size of the fellowship in the area. Some large metropolises in fact have no meetings at all. That is because SAA does not grow like a typical for-profit corporation. If it were like McDonald's, SAA would say, "We need a meeting in Boston, let's start a franchise there, and get someone to run it."

But SAA doesn't do it that way. In order to start a meeting somewhere a member is needed there to start it. SAA doesn't just pay someone to start it.

Generally, meetings spread to a place where a member has moved. Another way meetings start is by a member who has been traveling a distance to get to a meeting and who starts a meeting closer to home.

The new meeting might now be close enough for someone else who would not have driven to the first meeting. This new member might someday start a meeting even further out.



A third way meetings are generated is when someone is instrumental in starting a second, third or even fifteenth meeting in an area where meetings already exist. Newcomers are generally encouraged to go to as many meetings as possible. If an area has only one meeting, this is a situation in which more definitely would be better.

All of this is mentioned to encourage members to start new meetings, to not be satisfied with the status quo.

Anyone interested in starting a new meeting can call the ISO office. The staff would happy to share ideas on how to proceed.



ISO Financial News

ISO Income/Expense Summary Daily Operations January - October, 2004

This report does not include income and expenses associated with the annual ISO Convention or the Delegate Meeting nor does it include travel expenses, which are for the most part funded by the convention surplus. Any convention surplus not used for travel expenses is used to fund the ISO's various reserves.

ISO Income/Expense

Daily Operations October & Year To Date

Income	October	Monthly Average	Year To Date
Net Sales	3,550	3,480	34,804
Undesignated Donations	8,124	9,265	92,645
General	5,072	6,498	64,975
LifeLine Partners	2,952	2,767	27,670
Miscellaneous Income	100	422	4,217
Total Income	11,774	13,167	131,666
Expenses			
Wages/Benefits/Taxes	9,101	8,009	80,092
Wages - Outreach	2,811	2,081	20,808
Wages - Other	3,783	4,476	44,760
Benefits	713	924	9,246
Taxes	487	528	5,278
Insurance	139	183	1,825
Board/Committee Expense	329	643	6,425
Postage	107	129	1,287
Communications	389	520	5,197
Rent/Utilities	1,210	1,169	11,694
Office Related	517	592	5,924
Financial	452	567	5,670
Plain Brown Rapper	287	977	9,771
Translations	0	348	3,477
SAA Book	0	141	1414
Total Expenses	12,531	13,278	132,776
Surplus/Shortfall	-757	-111	-1,110

The September-October PBR reported that the summer had seen a fall off in revenue. Even so, the end of August showed a \$4,770 surplus for the year. The summer slump persisted through September and October, however, and wiped out the surplus, making it necessary to withdraw \$5,753 from the Operational Reserve. The eight-month surge in donations that had been fueled by the enthusiasm generated at the 2003 Convention has subsided. Donations have gradually regressed toward the pre-2003 Convention level.

It was in November of 2002 that the ISO began to suffer through six consecutive months during which it could not meet its obligations to fund its various reserve funds. During the current downturn, all reserves have been funded except for the Operational Reserve. It became impossible to put aside money for that reserve starting in August, when in fact it was necessary to borrow from it. Without a turnaround in both individual and group donations during the coming months, the long term outlook is for a repeat of what happened during the winter and spring of 2002-2003.

For the short term, however, there is a respite. Help is on the way, some planned but most by way of an amazing, Higher Powered happening.

The anticipated help will come from the ISO's annual appeal. With the mailing going out earlier this year, \$235 had already been received even before Thanksgiving, making for a promising beginning. The appeal was sent to 29 intergroups, 672 groups, and 673 individual members. If you have not heard about the annual appeal in your group and want a copy for the group or yourself, call the ISO Office.

A huge, completely unexpected short term shot in the arm is on its way from the Bay Area Fellowship. During the fall of last year, SAA members in the San Francisco area got together for an ISO Seventh Tradition fundraiser. With the food and place for the get-together donated by the hosting members, other members were invited, knowing the event was specifically to raise money for the ISO. At the time, the ISO was getting ready to make its move to better and larger office space. The move was anticipated to cost in the neighborhood of \$3,000. The Bay Area gathering raised \$3,500! Exactly what was needed!

Now planned to be an annual affair, a second Bay Area ISO Seventh Tradition fundraiser has raised \$10,673, with another \$1,200 coming in from pledges! Like the first year, this was all done in one day. Not only will this astounding benevolence enable the ISO to repay the \$5,753 borrowed from the Operational Reserve, it will also enable the organization to finish the year in the black. More important, it will stanch the flow of red ink, giving the rest of the fellowship time to revitalize its own Seventh Tradition support and reverse the downward trend that began in the summer.

Note: Anyone interested in learning more about the Bay Area's fund raising success is encouraged to contact the ISO Office.

**RESERVE YOUR COPIES
OF THE SOON TO BE PUBLISHED SAA BOOK**

The SAA book will describe our addiction and tell about the effect it has on our lives and the lives of our friends and family. It will describe our purpose, our program and our fellowship. It will tell how working the program can lead to recovery from our addiction and to a spiritual awakening. It will tell what our life will be like in recovery. It will describe The Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions of SAA and how these and service to others are key components of our recovery program.

There will also be stories written by SAA members who tell how they became addicted, the nature of their addiction, and how the program has led them to recovery.

You have the opportunity now to fill out the form below to tell us how many copies of the SAA Book you want to reserve. This will be used to determine how many copies to print in the first run and to insure that you will be able to order yours once the price has been set. Reserving copies **does not** obligate you to buy them. You will actually order and receive your book(s) after you know their price.

Please indicate how many hardbound and paperback copies you want for personal use and for group use.

You will be notified when the price is determined.

×.....

Please Print Clearly

Group Name _____

Your Name _____

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City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone _____ and/or e-mail _____

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Personal Copies _____ _____

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Mail to: ISO of SAA, P.O. Box 70949, Houston, TX 77270

Please Make Copies For Your Group!

How to Submit a PBR Article

First:

Write from your experience, strength, and hope. Others may need to hear exactly what you have to say.

Second:

Send your article by e-mail to: PBR@saa-recovery.org

or mail to: ISO
P. O. Box 70949
Houston, TX 77270

Third:

Send the **Article Release Form** below. Download an extra from the SAA website if needed or feel free to make copies.

“Having had a spiritual awakening as the result of these Steps, we tried to carry this message to other sex addicts...” Step 12

Submission deadlines:

Dec. 1, Feb. 1, April 1, June 1, Aug. 1, Oct. 1

Release Form: I hereby give this newsletter, its successors, assignees, and those acting on its authority permission to copyright and/or publish any articles, poems, other written material, or art work pertaining to my personal story of recovery from addiction and my personal experience with or opinions about the SAA fellowship or program. I understand that additions may be made to my written material and that it may be changed or edited. I further understand that every effort will be made to assure my anonymity. I possess full legal capacity to exercise this authorization and hereby release the ISO newsletter from any claim by myself or my successors.

SIGNED: _____ **DATE:** _____

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Mail to: ISO, P.O. Box 70949, Houston, TX 77270

♣ ♣ ♣ ♣ ♣
 3890-D North Freeway
 Houston, TX 77022

Phone: 713-869-4902
 Toll Free: 800-477-8191

web: <http://www.saa-recovery.org>

Office e-mail: info@saa-recovery.org

PBR e-mail: PBR@saa-recovery.org

Office Staff

Jerry B.
 Director of Fellowship Services
 Klaus P.
 Assistant Director of Fellowship Services
 Jonathan C.
 Publications and Administrative Assistant

PBR Staff

Mike L.
 Literature Editor
 Jerry B.
 ISO News
 Jonathan C.
 Layout Editor

Sex Addicts Anonymous is a twelve-step program of recovery based on the principles of Alcoholics Anonymous. Our primary purpose is to stop our addictive sexual behavior and to help others recover from their sexual addiction. The only requirement for membership is a desire to stop addictive sexual behavior. Our fellowship is open to women and men regardless of religion, race, ethnic background, marital status, sexual orientation, or profession. Our members define their own sexual boundaries with the guidance of their sponsors and other group members. We encourage our members to discover and explore what healthy sexuality means to them.

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