

The

Plain Brown Rapper

THE SAA NEWSLETTER

Carrying the message of hope to the sex addict

Volume: NINE [9]

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Recovery Toolbox

PAGE 5 "OUTSIDE" TOOLS. DO WE USE? FROM WHOM, WHERE, WHY, WHEN, AND HOW.?

Features

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PAGE 2. SOBRIETY, A DEFINITION [FROM '93]

Fellowship Forum

PAGE 5 Bob L shares a prayer of thanks and admission to his HP. Missed last issue but you'll enjoy it even

Steps, Traditions, and Topics

PAGE 4 STEP FIVE/TRADITION FIVE FOR MONTH #5, NAMELY MAY.

Reports: ISO Board, Literature Committee, Prison Outreach, Convention, Groups and Intergroups, Office, Financial and Oversight, Subscription, Other items of note

The PBR recently received from ISO the following information on the newly adopted ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE and the ORGANIZATIONAL PLAN for our fellowship world-wide. The concepts lend depth and vision to our FIFTH TRADITION and our TWELVE STEP work on a global basis.

ISO Organizational Structure

In 1995, when we changed our organization name from the National Service Organization of SAA, Inc., to the International Service Organization of SAA, Inc., we formally recognized that our fellowship extended beyond the borders of the United States of America.

We also formally expressed our hopes that SAA would flourish throughout the world.

Yet, having made these statements, we were without

any kind of policy to guide us in developing into an international organization.

In January of this year, at its mid-winter teleconference, the Board adopted a policy to guide it in making future decisions.

Rather than explain or interpret the Board's policy, the structure, as it appears in the meeting minutes, it is presented here, along with a second action which defines current regions.

ORGANIZATIONAL PLAN Organizational Levels

The Fellowship will be divided into regions designated by the Board of Trustees. In designating regions, the Board will use these classifications and criteria:

1. Autonomous Regions are defined as geographically contiguous, self-supporting areas composed of forty or more currently registered active groups. Each Autonomous Region is represented by one voting Board member and one Literature Committee member

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elected at a regional convention or caucus.

2. Developing Regions are defined as geographically contiguous, partially self-supporting areas composed of from twenty to thirty-nine currently registered active groups. Each Developing Region is allowed one non-voting Board observer whose participation in meetings is regulated by the voting members and is at the expense of the region. A Developing Region may be represented at Literature Committee meetings by a non-voting observer whose participation in meetings is regulated by the Literature Committee and is at the expense of the region. The delegates from a Developing Region will caucus with an Autonomous Region designated by the Board.

3. Outreach Regions are defined as geographically contiguous areas composed of less than twenty groups who have expressed a desire to be recognized as a unit and who seek the support of an Autonomous Region Sponsor.

Autonomous

Regions

Great Lakes Region: Illinois, Indiana, Michigan, Wisconsin.

Intermountain Region: Arizona, Colorado, Idaho, Montana, Nevada, New Mexico, Utah, Wyoming.

North Central Region: Iowa, Minnesota, Nebraska, North Dakota, South Dakota.

Northeast Region: Connecticut, Delaware, Kentucky, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New

York, Ohio, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, Vermont, Virginia, West Virginia.

Pacific Region: Alaska, California, Hawaii, Oregon, Washington.

South Central Region: Arkansas, Kansas, Missouri, Oklahoma, Texas.

Southeast Region: Alabama, Georgia, Florida, Louisiana, Mississippi, North Carolina, South Carolina, Tennessee.

Developing

Region

Canada

Eligible For Outreach

Region Status

Australia, Central America, Mexico, South America, the United Kingdom, and all other areas of the world with from one to nineteen meetings.

There is one exception, however, which the Board adopted during its March teleconference: Latin America, which was designated a region by the Board during the 1995 convention, will retain an Autonomous Region status until the year 2000 at which time it will revert to its appropriate status as defined in the Organizational Plan approved by the Board on January 18, 1997. It is hoped that Canada, as the only geographical area meeting the criteria for Developing Region, will continue to grow towards Autonomous Region status, and that areas eligible for recognition as Outreach Regions will take advantage of this status and develop a

mentoring relationship with an Autonomous Region.

Finally, the name of the Southwest Region was changed to the Intermountain Region with Idaho, Montana, Utah, and Wyoming being transferred from the Pacific Northwest Region, which is now called simply the Pacific Region. Kentucky was moved from the Southeast Region to the Northeast.

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"A static system allows for no differences. A static system gives the illusion of safety. A static system ignores or disparages process in favor of content. A static system devalues and devours itself."

Anne Wilson Schaeff: Women's Reality, 1981

The following definition is from the May, 1993 PBR which was submitted [then] by Fred J. of Mpls. It is used as a prelude to this 1997 story.

SOBER

a dictionary definition:
Moderate in amount or quantity; indicating a thoughtful character of intent; unhurried; peaceful; unpretentious, humble; marked by moderation; subdued; reasonable, tempered; carefully reasoned or considered; free from fancy or exaggeration; realistic; dictated by sane and sound reason; rational; freedom from unreasonable excess; temperate, implies moderation, self-control and restraint operating against the excessive, extreme, extravagant or violent; continent, indicates deliberate accustomed restraint on desires, especially sexual desires.....

26 Hours of "FREEDOM FROM COMPULSIVE SEXUAL BEHAVIORS"!!! WHAT AN ACCOMPLISHMENT!!! THAT'S SOBRIETY, AIN'T IT???? AIN'T IT???

The scene: supper, Tuesday, May 1, 1997. Players: Me[m], wife[w], grandson[GS] age 10, granddaughter[GD] age 8. "Come da,dada, be our guest, dadadada us be blest. Amen." All ate. M gathered dishes, W called aunt in MN to access room for Wed nite enroute ND. M-irritated at lateness. All procede in auto to adult dance practice. M-"I think it inappropriate to be so late in making room arrangements". W-silence. GS-"We're going to be at mom's for 3 months this summer". M-"School doesn't get out til mid-June". [The start of argument and adult logic taking over]. W-"Just 'stop it', 'R', [Me]. M-didn't stop, right then; in a block maybe. Silence for 2 miles to Legion Hall. Inside in silence, removing coats, kids climbing rails, walls, nothing drastic. W-"I can see why 'H' [my first wife] wanted to stay at work all the time." M-"That's not in the rules of fair exchange, but if you wish to continue...?" W-"Do you want to practice?". M-"OK." [We talk to all dancers except to each other for 2 hours]. Gather kids, head home. Silence for 4 miles, silence while watching news, silence [but not detaching] at beddy-bah. Usual touches before sleep. Slumber all...

Wed am 5:30, M-awake, still a bit hyper. 6:00 W-up and at 'em [she works at 8:00] Get kids up, feed 'em, head 'em for b'room chores, teeth, etc. M-fixes the "Slim-Fast" for M/W, waits at table for W who comes, takes meditation books [6 each] from usual place. M/W drink and read respective thoughts for day. Both M/W still apprehensive, little direct talk. W-made amend for calling late for lodging, comments on former wife. M-acknowledged wrong-headed logic with children and for being argumentative. W-leaves for work; M-take kids to school.

M-home at 8:20 AM; prepare wife's "driving lunch[es] for 500 mile trip beginning at noon, then pay bills, make computer entries, etc. [M's cold and contingent asthma problem now 3 weeks old, but better...?]

W-home at noon, asks about specific credit card for possible charges for daughter's wedding stuff. M-"Doesn't matter, we have other

cards, just make a special account for it." W-"I'd rather do it my way." [heads for office area, gets folder from desk, makes call] M-"Where are you calling?" W-"To see if this CC is still in force; it is." M-[is visibly upset] "Please do it any way you like..." W-[looking through file drawer]. M-"What are you looking for?" W-"My IRA check book." M-"What for?" W-"Well I just may want to write 'T' [daughter who is getting married July] a check so she can get some things and we won't have to take it from current funds or charge it." M-"Money's money, what's the difference from where you take it?" [Helps her look for the d... check book, never did find it.

Sponsee [S] comes to door. M-"Please come back 1/2 hour, M/W are preparing for her to leave." [reality: "we're having a family spat"] S-"OK"

Upon impending departure: M/W [agree that we are "on the slippery stuff" and had been for a few days perhaps]. Cool good-byes, but not hostile.

Sponsee returns 1:00 Pm. 1+ hour with [our] problems. [who needs the sponsor in the worst way, eh???!]

3:00 PM Wed. M-gets kids from school, GS gets in car first, radio is on, announcer says, "3:06 PM." GS-"That's not the right time." [I wonder where he got that dynamic from...??]. M-"Why not? How do you know? He's got to have ...and yatattyattattat.." And I'm [M] having a technical time conversation with a 10 year old...GD gets in, the hassle of GS stops [he's thankful, I'm sure; but so was I, I was losing I think...]. Home. A few menial 5 minute chores, clean up for fried spuds, BBQ beef, corn; sit down. Phone rings: KM [kid's mom from 100 miles away]-"Are my babies there?" M-"No, an 8 and a 10 year old who have just filled their supper plates." KM-"I'll call back in 30 minutes." M-"OK."

30 minutes passed, all ate well. M-"Don't go far, your mom will call any minute." [kids play w/ball gloves, tossed on garage floor, GS drove W's bike wheel through screen door. Gradually moved further from house with neighbor kid, over by the creek, then...???] M-Exasperated; KM hadn't called, 1 1/2 hours gone by. Irritated.

15 minutes later call came. M-"I'm not happy about your not keeping your word to the kids." KM-"I was....." M-"I can't care about that, I'll try to call them." M-Called!!Screamed! No answer. Told KM kids not found. M-Got in car to scour neighborhood; no luck. Home 5 minutes, they come. M-[with same screams used to call] "Where in h.. you been, etc, etc." M-Ballistic.

Kids to cold bath, bed; M-to watch Eichmann trial.[Just what I needed!] Phone. WS[wife's son, to whom I'm satan]-"S' [W] there?" M-"No!" [in response to known voice who has no phone manners]. WS-"Tell her that her brother had heart attack." M-"You tell her, call this number....." M-[why, oh why, this?] 10 minutes pass. Phone: W-"It was just as slow on the interstate as over the short route." M-"Didcall about 'J's' heart attack". W-"yes but not bad though." M-[cool, frustrated, angry. Already ate 8 Oreos, 2 mini Butterfingers, 2 glasses of juice]. W-"Wanna talk to....?" M-"No." M/W say cool "see-ya's". M-Fix myself a cold chicken breast sandwich w/mayo. Eat it, take my meds, get to bed.

Think about acting out in this 26 hours? Masturbation? Cruising? Looking up an old flame? Playing guitar in the nude; with guests? None of the above, or any other! Can't. They're in my center circle. My HP keeps me clean. No kiddin'! A day at a time!

Thurs. AM. M-Fixed hot cakes, made amends to GS/GD. Told me they didn't like how I behaved [I rather forced that; "and look me right in the eye when you say it, and mean it"]. To school.

Who, ultimately, are paying the price for asinine behaviors of we adults? All who are near, and powerless, especially the young.

No group meeting today. A best friend, the postman[P] came for coffee. He was [and often is] my group. We share much, we have much in common.

As you may compare my behaviors with the SOBER definition, perhaps you will rejoice with me for recovery, for I can only guess where I would have been without it.

Robert....

"TAKE WHAT YOU CAN USE AND LEAVE THE REST.....".

Is it really that easy? Do we addicts really "Leave the Rest"? Is it possible to assume we are addicts just because we can not? What is that tenacious part of us that "just won't let go"? As "temporary editor" of the PBR, I have had to re-evaluate my personal position on several given issues, then separate them from issues raised by a writer of a submitted article. Just as, perhaps, I would have had to do in a meeting when someone's words just "gravel" me. Invariably, and without reservation, I know that some old tape is playing; some old expectation has just turned into a resentment. And it just sits there, gnawing away at my gut, until my head trips over my head-trips, and I awaken. Sometimes quickly, sometimes slowly....as in the promises. It Will, if I Will..... Ed.

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STEP-TIME... FIVE

"ADMITTED TO GOD, TO OURSELVES, AND TO ANOTHER HUMAN BEING, THE EXACT NATURE OF OUR WRONGS."

Does it ever occur to us how things sometimes seem to "run together" in our lives? That no activity is really an isolated happening? That "process" is just a matter of seeing, believing, even acting, upon the whole of life, not just on the individual components?

In searching for the REALITY of life, however, we may need to take some of our global mass apart for some analysis of it before we can begin re-construction. If our lives are wired and glued together in addictive ways, we truly are a "mass". Also spelled "mess".

When we begin the steps it's one at a time, first things first, easy duz it, be gentle, etc., act as if, KISS, and all the rest. Is this a "taking apart" or a "re-construction" process. Both perhaps.

What is noticed about step FIVE might also be related to step SIX, even step SEVEN. Most recovering people might say, "Of course they are!", we got to "admit", "get ready", then "humbly ask...".

Notice the language, the words of each step, particularly the last 2, 3 or 4 words in each step. Did AA place those there to confuse me?

Is a "wrong" a "defect of character"? Or a "shortcoming"? If God removes my "shortcomings", will the "character defects" and the "wrongs" go with them? Are these "vagaries" of the language, or do they really serve some nobler, deeper, purpose?

In my hyper-active left brain logic there are times I can't resist taking things apart to the degree that I not only can not put the parts back together, I cannot even identify those parts. Maybe that's why the plateaus of recovery are important to search out, to define. The plateau of confusion comes all too often it seems, especially when my feelings, my thoughts, my actions are so bound up in a global mass, that I'm almost back into another cycle of addiction. Or maybe I'm leaning into another addiction/compulsion.

Step Five is most certainly related to 6 and 7. But it relates to all the rest as well. It's just because the un-identified pieces are laying around the threshing floor that I miss the true connections of ALL the steps, all the traditions, in fact, all of life.

Any re-modeling project is harder, dirtier, more time

consuming, and more aggravating than "building a new one". The old rot has to be removed, the salvage has to be cleaned and sanded, the old solder has to be melted off the defective wiring, before anything can be re-attached. Not only do the parts have to be renewed but some of the foundation must be in good enough repair to accept the re-attachment.

This is me scattered over 9 acres. What am I to do while this "cleaning process" is going on?

Part of my problem is that my procrastination leads to lethargy, then to super repairman. And some of the old adulterated parts go back on to a shaky foundation. Certain functions may be improved, but still not working "like it should".

And this is where perhaps the self-talk of head-tripping, fantasizing, catastrophizing, needs to be met head on at the next SAA meeting, or with my sponsor, even listening to the spoken or written words of another in recovery..

Yes, REALITY is the awareness of the minute, individual parts, actions, even words, within the whole.

RECOVERY is the acceptance of the slogging pace of "take apart" and "put together". Even "doing it wrong" until I "get it right".

TRADITION FIVE.....

In 1995 I wrote on both "five's" as they suggested a connective process at work. To carry the message to those who still suffer. Group work. But without an individual, no group work gets done. I need new contacts, even with "old" associates. It keeps me headed in a recovering direction as I take apart, and re-assemble the parts

FELLOWSHIP

Only one letter this month. It was mailed on April 1, 1997, went to ISO, then to the PBR. We had to omit it last month for space. We apologize Bob L., but here it is, just as you wrote it. It will touch others.

"Hi ISO,

For your PBR. I'm not so interested in publication, as just sharing and expressing my experiences in a healthy way.

This letter to Higher Power came from doing work in Cames workbook with my sponsor. I found it challenging to write a personal letter, so I was moved to do it as personal as I could:....."

"Dear Jesus,

Thank you for the gift of love, life and graceful laughter. All the good I am I have in faith from you.

I've abused many of your gifts, refusing to obey laws and guides to right living and loving as shown to me thru my brothers and sisters.

Forgive me. I can't totally amend the pain I've done to others and myself. Your mercy I ask.

I need your help to turn from addictive triggers and desires. I came to believe and know I need you to do this when I lost my family and career. Then, I humbly turned my life over to you.

Somehow, I was led to SAA where I continue to meet you.

Your son,
Bob L.

RECOVERY
TOOLBOX

In the "olden days" of life I often felt as if I'd maybe never "get it right", especially in the presence of others whose power was greater than mine. And since I didn't have any [or so I told myself], I was free to feel such inferior feelings in the presence of just, well, anyone.

This persisted long into recovery but after 7+ years it's still not gone. Sometimes it lingers as a thought that no one close to me really wants me to improve, not in recovery, not my skills, not my intellect, not improve, period.

I think I often looked at others who did improve as doing it just to arrogate themselves above my level. To make sure I knew my place beneath them. It was, still is, hard to create for myself a new set of rules within which to "improve the product".

Of course this is all tied up with my own narrow view of myself, and the continual looking at me as the center of the universe [s]. This is recognizable, over time, and even I can deal with it.....sometimes.

What I have done since the inception of my recovery was to be engrossed in, by, and with, the experiences of others. I still believe that these interfaces, in whatever form, will help me. Just like meetings, sponsors, all the tools of recovery.

I never liked to read especially. I was lazy, even with ability. In retrospect my reading in later life was based on the "arrogation of self" above others in my field, my social strata, even family.

In my early days there was no such thing as a "tape", let alone one with any healing messages on it. And the records of the day were traditionally addictive, maybe co-dependent, or at least pointing in that direction. Sexual, too, if you tuned to some of the country.

There were "dirty" books, "dirty" records, even before it became known as "porn". I did have some time for those sorts of things.

I have been chided, mostly by some family and closer acquaintances, about my intensive interest in "books and tapes". Made to look like the indoctrination of a pyramid scheme, or a cult, or religious persuasion, perhaps.

It has been with great difficulty that I have finally taken some personal pride in what I have found inside some of those covers, and

on those "rolls of mylar" [or whatever it's made of...]

So what this writing is all about is that to me a recovery tool might well be a "book review" by someone who has read and added to his/her recovery as a result.

This could sound like heresy. The Fellowship went through some of this at the time the LitCom ok'd the sale of "outside literature" through the ISO office. Had some great anxieties floating around here and there.

And "outside literature" that we didn't handle surely would not lend itself to the "break-even" point we needed at our own bottom line.

With improving research into our complicated selves, the improved reporting on it, the societal openings through which it might be channeled, might it not be well if we expanded our horizons a bit from time to time just to see what's out there for us today?

I believe there are improving recipes for recovery stored in most of the nooks and crannies we touch from time to time. If we have the desire to add it to the collection.

Change is hard; "stasis" seems easy, until we're dying again.

What I'd like the PBR to do is to be a conduit for change through your recommendations about a book, a tape, a talk, a program, that you've been through, with the idea that others could use it also. If it fits. If it doesn't, we don't wear it, eh? Let it go by... ED.

He who is an ass, and perceives himself to be a stag, comes to the knowledge of the truth when he goes to leap the ditch..... Italian Proverb
PROVERBS TO LIVE BY.

Hallmark.....1968

Living
in the
Light

'97

If you haven't already done so, you still
have time to make plans to be on your
way to **HOUSTON, TEXAS**

Every thing is ready for your arrival. You are the
only one missing. Get a form from your group or
call 713-869-4902. GO-GO-GO

RECOVERY--THE ONE-SOCK METHOD

"I am a recovering sex addict, with a little over four months of sobriety. I want to share a very helpful idea which was given to me by Peggy. Peggy tells the story of her problems with housekeeping during her early days of recovery in another fellowship. She let her house get dirty, and then felt so defeated by the mess that she wouldn't attempt to begin cleaning. This put her into a "downward spiral" of slovenliness and overwhelm.

Peggy finally discovered what she calls the "One-Sock Method". She began giving herself permission to pick up just one sock, instead of beating herself up for not getting the whole house clean. She found that once she allowed herself to make a small beginning, she would often continue and do some more housecleaning. In this way, she was able to make housekeeping more manageable.

In the past, I would put off many self-care tasks until I had a big block of time to devote to them. I now am getting better at taking a few minutes in the midst of a busy day to do some important self-care work.

One of the promises of the program is "We will intuitively know how to handle situations which use to baffle us." The "One-Sock Method" is helping that promise to come true for me, on day at a time.

[This was submitted by "Perry" back in July of 1994.....familiar to anyone you know.....???]

Ever throw out a left-over Peanut Butter and Jelly Sandwich...

.and find out, when you were 20 miles from nowhere with a blow-out, and a flat spare, that it sure would give you a little added energy to walk to the nearest service station....?

Maybe it's the same with what we gather from meetings and the PBR....

Don't toss out the information too soon; it may have some nourishment left in it. And that's why:....

...You need your own personal subscription to the PBR !!!! And READ 'EM AGAIN!!

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.

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