

THE *Plain Brown Rapper* The SAA Newsletter

50¢



January, 1990 Edition

The purpose of the Newsletter is to be a voice of the SAA membership. Written by and for brothers and sisters recovering from compulsive sexual behaviors; to be informative, sensitive and expressing the experiences, strength, and hope of recovering members. It is intended as an additional tool of recovery for those working the twelve-step SAA program.

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P.O. Box 3038, Minneapolis, MN 55403 — Telephone 612-339-0217

Louisiana Fall Retreat

On a Friday night in November, 31 recovering addicts gathered around a campfire to open the Louisiana Fall "Back to the Basics" Retreat. The warmth of the fire and the fellowship cut the chill of the crisp 40° night air. The sounds of the lush forest provided a gentle backdrop for the meditative theme of the retreat. Many chose to stay up to the wee hours of the morning, sharing their experience, strength, and hope with each other. In small groups everyone eventually found their way down the terraced hillside and along the boardwalk that connected the five cabins.

After a splendid breakfast and morning meditation session, a group-led workshop on meditation techniques was held. Following the workshop was individual meditation or recreation time, bringing us into the noon meal — an appetizing spread of build-your-own Po' Boy sandwiches. A birthday party was held for everyone to celebrate their time in recovery (note that the gentle emphasis was on time in recovery — not time in our boundaries). The crowning glory of the party was beautiful cake with a full-color reproduction of the SAA medallion. The candles were ceremonially lit by the most senior member of the group, blown out by the newest member, and the cake was cut by one of the ladies to emphasize the vital contribution which the female members have brought to the program. The afternoon was spent lying in the grass listening to four members share their first steps out on the sunny terraces of the amphitheater. More free time for walks and talks preceded the evening meal, a Cajun gumbo. Saturday night found us once more around the campfire for another outdoor meeting. After several hours of sharing, the meeting was recessed and the marshmallows were broken out to be toasted while we sang around the fire. Late that night, several members gathered upon the deck overlooking the lake and enjoyed the sights and sounds of the night backlit by the glow of 50 candles. Sunday was a very flexible day of winding down and long goodbyes.

It's hard to compare one retreat to another, but I found this one to be a balanced mixture of healing joy and healing pain. Many thanks go out to everyone who contributed to the success of the retreat, especially Sharon F. and Steve E. In retrospect, I can only think of one thing that was missing — hope you're out of the hospital in time for the next one, Jim.

— Michael B.
Lake Charles, LA

Listen

When I ask you to listen to me
and you start giving advice
you have not done what I asked.

When I ask you to listen to me
and you begin to tell me why I shouldn't feel that way,
you are trampling on my feelings.

When I ask you to listen to me
and you feel you have to do something to solve my
problems,
you have failed me, strange as that may seem.

Listen! All I asked, was that you listen,
not talk or do — just hear me.

Advice is cheap; 25 cents will get you both Dear Abby and
Billy Graham in the same newspaper,
And I can do for myself, I'm not helpless.
maybe discouraged and faltering, but not helpless.

When you do something for me that I can and need to do for
myself, you contribute to my fear and weakness.

But, when you accept as a simple fact that I do feel what I
feel, no matter how irrational, then I can quit trying to
convince you and can get about the business of
understanding what's behind this irrational feeling.

And when that's clear, the answers are obvious and I don't
need advice.

Irrational feelings make sense when we understand what's
behind them.

Perhaps that's why prayer works, sometimes, for some
people because God is mute, and He doesn't give
advice or try to fix things. "They" just listen and let
you work it out for yourself.

So, please listen and just hear me. And if you want to talk,
wait a minute for your turn; and I'll listen to you.

— Anonymous

National Conference

(NOTE: The following is not an
SAA-sanctioned event.)

Minneapolis will host the
Third Annual National Sexual
Compulsivity and Addiction
Conference. The conference on
Sexual Compulsivity and
Addiction will be held in
Minneapolis on May 21–22, 1990
at the Radisson University Hotel.

The conference will bring
together professionals involved in
studying and researching the
origins, concept and treatment of
sexual compulsivity and
addiction. The conference is
sponsored by the University of
Minnesota's Program in Human
Sexuality and the Department of
Family Practice and Community
Health. Major co-sponsors of the
conference are the Golden Valley
Health Center and the Institute for
Behavioral medicine at the
University in Minneapolis.

For further information,
contact the University of
Minnesota at (612) 626-5803, or
the Golden Valley Institute at
(612) 520-1077.

Call Us

The Missouri and South Illinois
chapter of the National Council
on Sexual Addiction, Inc. wishes
to be contacted by groups,
contacts or therapists involved
with sexual addiction in order that
they might advise people of
available resources. The address
is: N.C.S.A., P.O. Box 16145, St.
Louis, MO 63105, telephone
(314) 921-6272

NSO REPORTS

NSO Donations & Sales November, 1989

NSO DONATIONS

AZ -	Thurs. Night Tucson	\$ 80.00
DC -	Washington D.C. SAA	5.00
IN -	Wed. night Indianapolis	25.00
KY -	Tues. Night Louisville SAA	10.00
MI -	Tues. Bay City	50.00
	Flint SAA	10.00
	Utica SAA	28.00
	Saginaw SAA	20.00
MN -	Mon. 7:30 G. Valley Mixed	50.00
	Tues. 7:30a S. Mpls. Men's	21.00
	Sat. 10:00a Women's	17.50
	Thurs. 4:30 S.E. Mpls. Men's	17.50
	Wed. 4:45 Richfield Men's	7.00
	Mon. 7:00 Anoka Men's	13.00
	Thurs. 7:00 Brooklyn Park	20.00
	Wed. 7:00 St. Paul Men's	10.00
	Thurs. 5:30 St. Paul Men's	7.52
	Tues. 7:00 S. Mpls. Men's	15.00
	Sun. 7:00 S. Mpls. Men's	26.00
	Thurs. 8:00 St. Paul Men's	17.50
	Sun. 7:00 Long Lake Men's	61.00
	Fri. 7:00 Shakopee Men's	4.00
	Sat. 9:30a S. Mpls. Mixed	24.00
	Thurs. 6:30 G.V. Women's	10.00
	Thurs. 7:00 Rochester Men's	10.00
	Tues. Noon S. Mpls. Men's	25.00
	Wed. 5:30 S. Mpls. Men's	10.00
NC -	Apex SAA	5.00
OH -	Journey Into Light (Dayton)	25.00
TX -	Houston SAA	20.99
	Sunday Austin	10.00
	Fort Worth	15.00
WA -	Tacoma SAA	7.50
WI -	Madison SAA	15.00
	Appleton SAA	15.50

TOTAL DONATIONS\$698.01

NSO SALES

Group Guides	\$ 44.00
Abstinence & Boundaries	120.00
First Step to Recovery	83.00
Plain Brown Rapper	36.00
Hope and Recovery	165.00
Out of the Shadows	72.00
SAA Brochures	31.60
Answers in the Heart	160.00
Hazeldon Step Guides	9.00
Medallions	304.00

TOTAL SALES\$1,024.60

Support for the NSO

The National Service Organization's purpose is to help suffering addicts. We do this by serving as an informational resource and providing a forum in which to share ideas, support and hope. We provide another means for getting the word out about positive ways to deal with our addiction. In providing these services, we look to individuals and groups to share their thoughts and ideas with others around the country.

The NSO office is also encouraging individuals and groups to help maintain their national organization by giving financial support to help defray office expenses. Monthly expenditures include staff, rent, phones, insurance, and office supplies. Additional funds are needed to help defray the cost of the NSO midwinter board meeting. Approximately \$1500 is needed for this activity.

Perhaps a group consciousness will be necessary to determine how your group wants to handle a contribution. We are suggesting monthly donations because that would not present a financial burden on any group, it provides an opportunity to include additional feedback, thoughts or written material, and it reinforces an ongoing link with your national organization.

Until very recently, Twin Cities Intergroup had virtually underwritten 100 percent of the NSO's expenses. However, as of November 1989, this has fallen to 48 percent of NSO's income because national support for the NSO has been growing. Although this support needs to increase, it is an encouraging sign that SAA groups around the country are beginning to support their National Service Organization. The NSO hopes you continue to increase your financial support so that you can have a truly independent National Service Organization.

One other need of the NSO office is for donations (which would be tax deductible) amounting to \$300 for a 20 megabyte hard drive for the computer. The computer is needed to maintain finances, SAA membership resources, and other information which has been growing as SAA grows. The hard drive will provide additional computer memory to efficiently maintain these records.

For many of us, supporting the efforts of those recovering from their addiction by sharing information and creating additional resources on a national scale is a small measure of gratitude for what the program has done for us. Thanks for your attention to this request and thanks in advance for any contribution you can make.

Twin-Cities Intergroup Welcomes You to the
THIRD NATIONAL SAA/COSA CONVENTION

CARRYING THE MESSAGE

May 25, 26, 27, 1990

**Sheraton Airport Hotel
Minneapolis, Minnesota**

Program will feature, speakers, workshops and meetings
focusing on the Twelve Steps and Traditions of SAA and COSA
Lots of How to Do It Information

**Each SAA group is entitled to send a delegate to the convention's
Business Session at which the by-laws and other business will be considered.**

**PLAN NOW TO COME AND SHARE YOUR EXPERIENCE, STRENGTH
AND HOPE, AND LEARN FROM OTHERS.**

Hotel's conference rates are \$41 per room (1-4 persons)
and special airline rates are available – write for information.
Watch for more information in *THE PLAIN BROWN RAPPER*

or write to

NATIONAL SERVICE ORGANIZATION OF SAA

P.O. BOX 3038

Minneapolis, MN, 55403

Post - Connection Syndrome

Post-connection syndrome is the phenomenon a friend of mine and I experienced, and later named. It can best be explained as having really connected with a person in the program in a positive way, yet wanting to act out (feeling jazzed) afterward. This is a natural process addicts to go through as they recover.

The question then becomes, why on earth would I/he feel like acting out just after a good experience — rooted in bettering our lives?

The answers to that question are twofold, and I believe both answers play a large part in helping to explain the cause of this syndrome. (1) It may be explained as rediscovering our aloneness, from the loss of that connection. That we felt connected and hopeful, then finding ourselves alone again. (2) That as addicts it is unnatural for us to feel valued, connected, and hopeful. In having these positive feelings, we need to preserve our old reality — counteracting those positive feelings by doing something which is more in line with our view of ourselves (the view of oneself as a person who does these negative things).

The good news is if we can remain sober, those post-connection syndrome addictive feelings will occur less and less. This change occurs by being valued, and by choosing to value ourselves. Our view of ourselves slowly transforms. We begin to see ourselves as valuable. In time these urges to act out become incongruous with our view of ourselves.

Douglas P.
Minneapolis, MN

P.S. Thanks to Jack A.

Write Us!

We want to hear from you. Send your ideas, thoughts, comments and suggestions. We invite written contributions for the newsletter. Use subject to space and balance of subject matter. Submissions may be edited for clarity and length. Send to: Plain Brown Wrapper, P. O. Box 3038, Minneapolis, MN 55403. Thanks!

One Statement About Abstinence

Our primary purpose is to abstain from sexually compulsive behavior, and help others achieve abstinence. In line with this purpose, we feel that a brief statement regarding the meaning of abstinence is in order.

First, we define abstinence in terms of behavior rather than mental states. We do not focus our efforts upon abstaining from mental "lust," but from compulsive behavior. Just as A.A. focuses on the need to stop the behavior of drinking, and as O.A. focuses on compulsive eating as the point of abstinence, so S.A.A. focuses on compulsive sexual acting-out. The lust of the mind may take years to drain away as one works the twelve steps of recovery; abstinence from the destructive behaviors, however can begin today, and is the basic foundation upon which all subsequent growth depends. "Progress rather than perfection" is the atmosphere for growth that we seek to promote.

Secondly, abstinence will be different for each member of S.A.A., depending upon what behaviors are compulsive and lead to pitiful and incomprehensible demoralization. Some addicts can engage in sexual behaviors from which other addicts find they must abstain; in S.A.A., we leave the choice up to the individual.

Finally, abstinence does not imply the complete elimination of sexuality from the addict's life, whether married or single; rather, it lays the foundation for learning a new approach to the experience of sex and relationships which is non-compulsive and non-destructive. Such an approach is possible to all who earnestly desire it.

S.A.A. Los Angeles

"When You've tried to Live"

And when you're tired of living and when you tried and tried so hard. But when you tried to live and are tired of living, put your head in my arms and start to cry.

And when you do, I'll take your hands in mine. And when we touch, it will be as heaven for you and I.

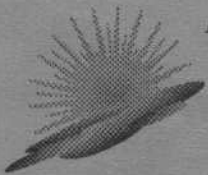
And as we touch, we will fly hand in hand to a desert and find the highest mountain. And on that mountain there will be a dove. And the dove will be waiting in a tree overlooking a valley.

And in that valley there will stand a house. And the house will be called our home, but only if you take my hand and cry in my arms.

But I have reached out many times before and have fallen. But when I did, a dove came down and took my hand and whispered to me, "My will be done." And as he did so, he took my hand and led me to that mountain so that I may see for myself.

And now I will take you to that mountain. And if you come with me, we will see our home together, standing quietly in that valley called Heaven.

Louis J.
New York



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News for:

