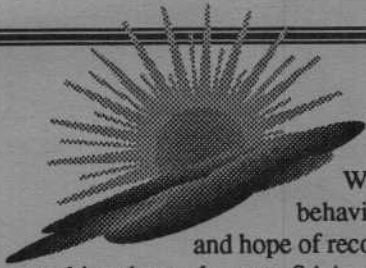


The SAA Newsletter
THE Plain Brown Rapper

50¢



February, 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*

A Change

More than ever today I want to scream out and say the program works, if worked at all. You ask how do I know, I'm a convicted sex offender, who ten years ago was arrested. I couldn't, nor did I want to, stop what I was doing. My life was out of control and it didn't matter to me.

I lied when the police arrested me as was the practice from my entire life. In the car on the way to the police station, I thought, "Wait till they hear my story, they'll let me go." If this isn't self-deception at its best. The officers broke me and I confessed to everything. Even made up stories of what I didn't do. In jail I thought even if I do 99 years I'm going to change. Little did I know they wouldn't do the work...I had to.

A day didn't go by before this where I wasn't thinking about rape, window peeking, looking at magazines, or touching my wife at night. I lived only for these moments and looked at the world through dead, angry eyes. Many times suicide crossed my mind but I was too chicken. Yes, the day I was arrested was the start of change that will never stop.

I made a promise to God and the woman I terrified — and didn't know — that I would tell my story to who would listen. This might keep other men from doing what I did and start to change this awful crime toward women. Never did I bargain God into becoming my spirituality, but he really snuck up on me.

What really bothers me and prompted me to write this is so much sexual rape and misconduct taking place in Minneapolis and everywhere. I contacted my parole officer and told him I'd be willing to speak to other offenders to tell of a better life. One day at a time. God has given me a gift to love myself for the first time and love others in return.

I'm a sex addict today and will be the rest of my life. Today, through the program God, fellowship and a loving spouse of 22 years, I'm sane and sober. There's so much more to say, but mostly thank God, thank the program, and the day I was arrested.

—Bruce P.
Eden Prairie, MN

Boundaries August 21, 1989

In our program of recovery, I believe the most important part of becoming able to stop the sexual behaviors that have given us so much pain, is the careful setting of boundaries so we have a good chance of working with our higher power to establish sobriety.

As we came into the program most of us felt we were oversexed, loners, losers, screw-ups, incapable of any self-control, and worst of all, we felt we were such terrible people we couldn't possibly be loved by anyone. The negative affirmation of our out-of-control sexuality served to confirm to us that these beliefs about ourselves were true. And for that reason it is not possible for any of us to grow in recovery unless we are able to find a way to set effective boundaries and stop acting out!

The first thing to remember is that our affliction is fueled and driven by shame. For most of us our acting out behaviors were the deepest, darkest secret of our life. It is this shame, coupled with our feelings of being unlovable, that causes us to believe the only nurturing we can get or deserve is the pseudo-nurturing of our acting out. That is why our First Step was so important, as it helps us cast off the bonds of shame so we can come to feel that we can build a new and better life for ourselves.

For us a central part of our new and better lives is establishing a healthy sexuality. Yes, you heard right — a **healthy** sexuality! At first we have trouble believing that there is such a thing. We have always felt sex was dirty, and only was a source of agony in our lives.

Because of this it becomes apparent that the first thing we must do when we begin to look at setting boundaries is we need to forget every opinion we ever had about sex. We have been hopelessly misled about sex all of our lives by faulty family messages, adolescent lockerroom talk, the pornography we have viewed and read, and the sexual abuse we may have suffered. We need to depend on our professional therapists and our sponsors in SAA to help us look at ourselves and at our sexual activities, to see which ones we must leave behind, and to find other sexual activities that we can cultivate.

Before we can set boundaries, we must do some Step Four work and do a searching and fearless inventory of our sexual activities. I would suggest that it's a good idea to read Chapter 13 in *Hope and Recovery* on Abstinence and sobriety and the portion of Dr. Pat Carne's book, *Out of the Shadows* on the addictive cycle. Then make a written list of all of your past and present sexual activities and see if they fit the addictive cycle or if they don't. Are you frequently preoccupied with thoughts of that activity? Do you tantalize yourself with thoughts of how "good" the behavior will be the next time you do it? Is the behavior always a secret? Do you tend to do sexual activities in a certain order, or at certain times? Have you developed a ritual?

Unfortunately for many of us when we first do this list, every sexual behavior seems to fit the acting out criteria, and we despair that we must turn away from sex completely.

In many cases we try to adopt celibacy on a permanent basis without realizing that we are doomed to failure even as we begin. We need to remember two things here:

1. The human animal is inherently sexual and a well-adjusted lifestyle does not preclude **healthy** sexuality.
2. That we in our position of low self-esteem always tend to set goals for ourselves that we can't possibly achieve, to maintain our low self-esteem.

NSO REPORTS

NSO Donations & Sales November, 1989

NSO DONATIONS (less postage)

Anonymous	15.00
CA Motherlode SAA	5.00
CO Denver SAA	30.00
GA Thurs. Atlanta Serenity Group	21.00
IA Gary L.	200.00
IL Michael V.	30.00
LA Lafayette SAA	25.00
MI Flint SAA	10.00
Lansing SAA	30.00
Noon Grand Rapids Group	40.00
Swartz Creek SAA	10.00
MN 7:00 Boundary Men's Closed	7.50
Mon. 7:00 Anoka Closed Men's	4.00
Rochester SAA	20.00
Sun. 7:00 Lake Harriet Men's	20.00
Thurs. 4:30 SE Mpls. Men's	17.50
Thurs. 5:00 S. Mpls. Open Men's	12.00
Thurs. 5:00 S.Mpls. Men's Open	12.00
Thurs. 7:00 Brook Center Mixed	50.00
Thurs. 7:00 Open Gay Men's	1.50
Thurs. 8:00 St. Paul Men's Closed	17.00
Tues. 5:30 St. Paul Closed Men's	10.00
Tues. 7:00 Mpls. Gay Men's	15.00
Tues. Noon Open Mens	40.00
Wed. 5:30 Mpls. Open Men's	25.00
Wed. 5:30 S.Mpls. Closed Men's	45.00
NC Greensboro SAA	15.00
TX Mark T.	50.00
WA Tacoma SAA	18.13
WI Madison SAA	15.00

TOTAL DONATIONS \$840.63

NSO SALES (less postage)

Group Guides	\$ 104.00
Abstinence & Boundaries	472.00
First Step to Recovery	138.00
Plain Brown Rapper	90.00
Hope and Recovery	330.00
Out of the Shadows	36.00
Answers in the Heart	246.00
SAA Brochures	36.90
Hazelden Step Guide Pack	9.00
Medallions	390.00

TOTAL SALES \$1,851.90

National Service Office News

Office hours: Weekdays 11:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. Central time.

The National Service office wishes to thank the following groups for volunteering one night per month for 3 hours. Two members of each of these groups have been helping out both with our phone lines and to help ease the office workload.

Tuesday S. Minneapolis Gay Men's group
 Tuesday a.m. S.Minneapolis Group
 Thursday Night St. Paul Men's Group
 Saturday 9:30 a.m. Mixed Group
 Wednesday 5:30 Minneapolis Men's Group
 Sunday Lake Harriet Men's Boundary Group
 Monday Women's Golden Valley Group
 Thursday the "DTA's" Dinky Town Addicts

The National Service office would also like to recognize several individuals whose weekly daytime volunteer service has been appreciate:

Michael G.
 Dick S.

The National Service office was burglarized over the weekend of January 6. Luckily, our losses were minimal (but beneath our deductible of \$250.00). Items stolen included: Our good phone, our answering machine, and Douglas' boom box (the office manager). We have taken measures to improve security, but a move to a more secure building may be in the offing.

As of the January donation tally, the following are monies earmarked for defraying board meeting travel expenses: General pool money = \$32.00.

Karl H.'s Lake Harriet paid this expense: \$200.00.

Douglas P.'s DTA's group and the Saturday morning mixed group paid his expenses of \$218.00.

Twin-Cities Intergroup Welcomes You to the...

3RD 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 BUSINESS SESSION
AT WHICH THE BY-LAWS
AND OTHER IMPORTANT BUSINESS WILL BE CONSIDERED**

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

SAA's 10 Most Wanted List

The SAA Convention is May 25–27, 1990. There is a need to raise \$1,500 to cover expenses for the Convention. SAA is looking for these ten people:

One person to contribute \$500 =	\$ 500
Two people to contribute \$250 =	500
Three people to contribute \$100 =	300
<u>Four</u> people to contribute \$50 =	<u>200</u>
Ten	\$1,500

We have already identified one person to give \$500 and one to give \$250. We encourage you to become ONE OF THE TEN MOST WANTED at whatever level you are comfortable with. You can make a difference! Please make checks payable to SAA Intergroup with the notation "Convention-90." All donations are tax deductible.

Carry the Message Conference

May 25, 26, 27, 1990

Dear Friends In SAA and COSA:

It is time to register for our third national convention, "Carry the Message"! Here is your registration form, along with information on air travel and hotel reservations. As always, remember to respect the anonymity of others when registering and discussing the conference. "Anonymity is the spiritual foundation of our program. We are to ever place principles before personalities."

Conference Registration

To register for the conference, complete the form below and mail it to the NSO Office along with your check or money order. The prices for each day are printed on the form. If you will be attending Saturday night, please mark your meal choice. Send your registration no later than May 11, 1990. Make your check(s) payable to "Carry the Message".

Hotel Registration

To register for a room at the Sheraton Airport Hotel, you can call the Hotel at (612) 854-1771. To get our discount rate specify that you are registering for the "Carry the Message" conference. If you choose to use the Sheraton's national reservation line (1-800-325-3535) your room rate will be adjusted to the discount rate upon your arrival at the hotel. Rooms are available at \$41 per night with a maximum of 4 people per room (at no extra charge) from Wednesday the 23rd to Monday the 28th. If you need daycare, it must be arranged with the hotel beforehand.

Air Travel

The official airline of the conference is Northwest Airlines. Discounts apply to all fares except military and government fares and roundtrip fares under \$100. We are getting a 5% discount from the lowest possible fare. You must specify the conference name, "Carrying

the Message", and our contract number, 16374, to get our discount. To reserve a ticket, call Northwest at 1-800-328-1111 in the U.S. or 1-800-328-7747 in Canada. Your travel agent can arrange this for you if you give him the contract number. The discount is available for 3 days before and after the conference. Bus service to and from the airport will be provided by the Sheraton Airport Hotel.

Program

Guest speakers from all over will be covering such topics as addiction, sobriety, the Twelve Steps, spirituality, codependancy, continuing recovery. There will be meetings and workshops open to both SAA and COSA attendees, as well as mixed, men's, women's, couples and co-addicts' meetings. There will be a Hospitality room for conversation, meditation, prayer, and other types of fellowship. On Saturday and Sunday morning there will be a national SAA business meeting - all are welcome to attend. (We need your input!)

Entertainment

Besides the Program events, there are many activities to enjoy in the Twin Cities area. Fort Snelling State Park is a beautiful spot for a serene walk or a picnic by the Mississippi river. If you play an instrument, bring it along! There will be other musicians to jam with, and many who will enjoy listening.

Scholarship Fund

A scholarship is being established by the groups in the Twin Cities. The scholarship program has three steps: first, the individual should decide how much of the cost he can bear on his own. Second, he should approach his home group for a scholarship. The third step is to write the Convention Registration committee at the SAA office, requesting the balance. For details, contact the Registration committee through the SAA office.

Registration Form

Please send this in with your check payable to
"Carrying the Message"

Registration Fees

Friday night only.....\$15
Saturday only (dinner included).....\$30
Sunday only (brunch included).....\$20
All Weekend
If you register before April 15.....\$40
If you register after April 15.....\$49

Saturday Night meal choice: Chicken
(check one) Beef Vegetarian

Name Preferred on Name Tag

Address

city

state

zip

Confidential information

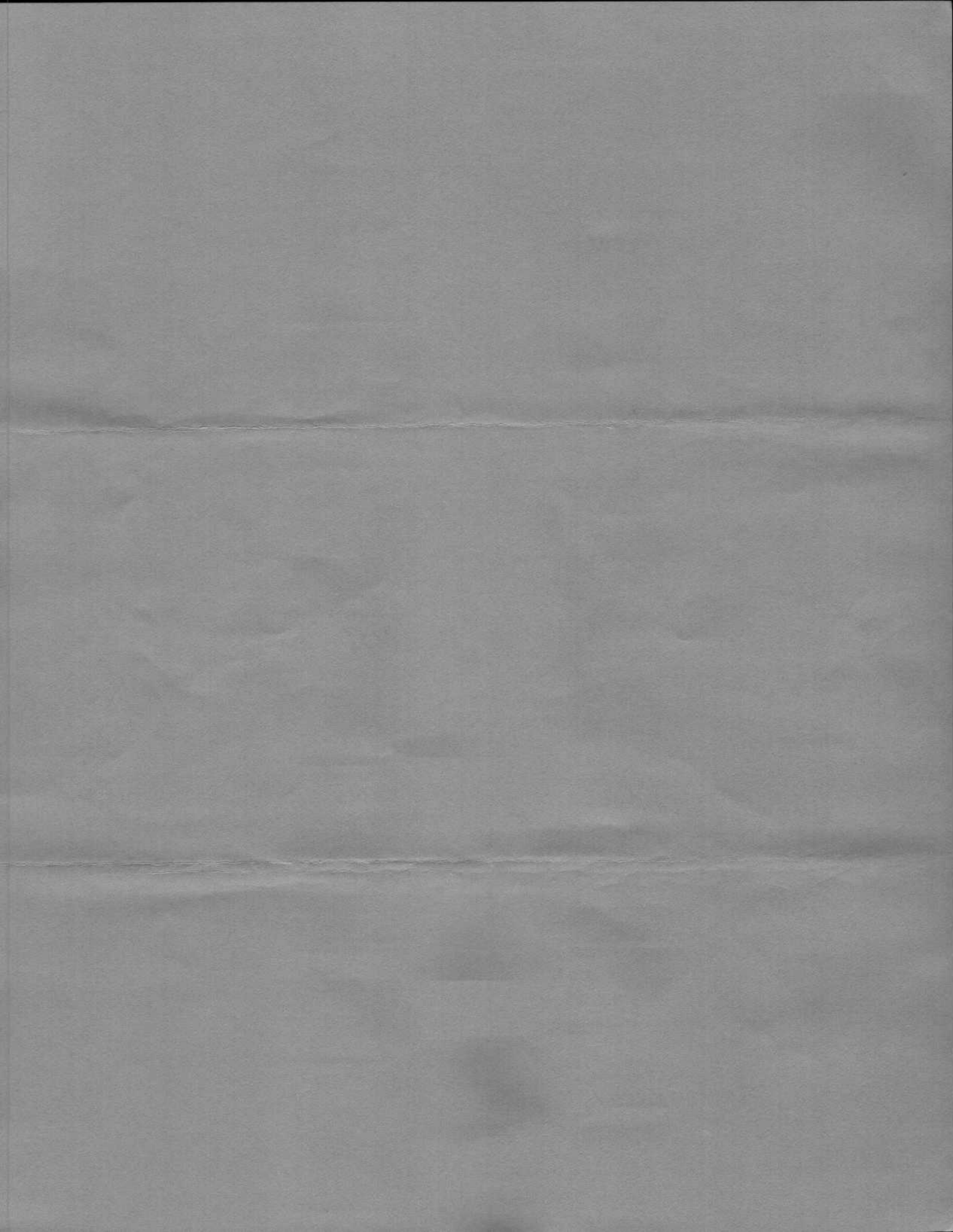
(circle one)
COSA or SAA

TWIN CITIES SAA

P.O. BOX 3038

Minneapolis, Minnesota 55403

(612) 871-1520



Duluth SAA 2nd Annual Retreat

From Shame-Based to Shame-Released. This retreat will be held March 16-18, 1990. Pre-register one week in advance by calling Verne at 525-1694 or Pat at 729-7962. Make checks in the amount of \$50.00 payable to McCabe Renewal Center. Price includes accommodations and meals. Guest speakers for Saturday are Colleen Birt, Katrina DeConcini, and Lonnie Owen. Sunday guest speaker will be Jeanne Ann Weber. There is a limit on reservations so please respond soon.

Letter to Our Membership

Dear Brothers and Sisters of SAA,

I am in prison for having acted out, only at that time I never knew of such things.

During my sentencing process I came to realize that I had a problem that only my Higher Power could handle. When I finally arrived here almost two years ago, there wasn't an SAA group here for us.

In April, 1989, seven of us finally got permission to meet as a group. We were thrilled, but Custody was afraid for our safety.

In the almost year that we have met as a group, there has been only one person who has had to seek protective custody. We have had some members go home and we have added some new members to our group. We are seeking to be registered nationally. Our group name is "Prisoners in Grace."

To all others who are trying to get a group started at their prison, keep working for it. For me, it has been a great blessing to see each of the members growing through the 12 Steps.

I am more free now because of the program. It has helped me to be free of my compulsive sexual behavior and to learn how to be sexually healthy.

Thanks to SAA and my Higher Power.

Your brother,

Randy O.
Greencastle, IN

Boundaries (continued)

Ernie Larsen, in his lectures, has defined acting out as "an activity where we obsessively and repetitively violate our own moral standards." Ernie goes on to say that we can do two things to avoid acting out:

1. Obviously, we can decide to not do the behavior.
2. We can change our standards. In other words, we can teach ourselves that it's okay to do the behavior without shame.

Ernie says that we need in fact to make **two** lists. A Stop List of the behaviors we must avoid, and a Start List of activities that we can choose to do in place of our old addictive behaviors.

Of course, the things that will damage our health or the health of our families, or that will get us arrested, must always stay on the Stop List.

For our Start List there are a few fundamentals that should go at the top.

1. We have sexual hormones in our blood and it's normal and okay to experience the sexual feeling that we receive each day from things we see and hear.
2. We cannot control our thoughts. It's normal and okay to experience and acknowledge all of our thoughts each day, be it a sad thought, an exciting thought, or a sexual thought, always remembering that our thoughts have no inherent power to compel us to action.
3. Each day is filled with good choices we can make.

Activities we might put on our Start List are to go for a walk in the evening, to go and be surrounded by nature at the park, take up a hobby and schedule time to be alone to pursue it.

One activity most of us can enjoy is to schedule some time to be alone, light the bathroom with candles, have a little soft music playing in the background, and give yourself a bubblebath with lots of bubbles and maybe some bath oil. It's an example of how we can be good to ourselves and nurture ourselves without violating boundaries.

For those of us in relationships we can learn to be truly honest and intimate with our partners, and learn that intimacy and sexuality are different things. Those of us with same-sex preferences can put healthy relationships with a monogamous partner on the Start List.

Sexual researchers tell us that nearly all men and most women masturbate. Many of us can teach ourselves that it is normal and okay to masturbate at certain times.

Finally, I want to remind us all that boundaries are not cast in stone. As we continue to take our daily self-inventories, we will know if we need to tighten or are ready to loosen our boundaries in certain areas.

We must always remember that boundaries are not ends in themselves, but are one of the first steppingstones for us to use on our journey to being the happy, healthy people we deserve to be.

Do you have a story, a poem, an experience of growth, or would you just like to share your emotions and feelings? Please write The Plain Brown Rapper. Your brothers and sisters in SAA would like to hear from you. We have much to share with each other. Please write to PBR Editor, c/o SAA, P.O. Box 3038, Minneapolis, MN 55403. Please submit all writings for the March newsletter by March 1, 1990.
