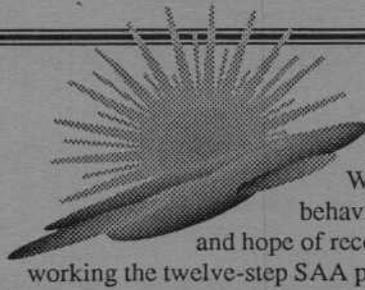


THE *Plain Brown Rapper* The SAA Newsletter

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March–April, 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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Struggle for Freedom

I found myself in the pit of incomprehensible demoralization six months ago. My life of empty promiscuity and dangerous liaisons had brought me to a point of feeling completely worthless, and fearful I had AIDS or herpes (luckily, I didn't). I walked into my first SAA meeting scared, lost and knowing it was life or death for me because I wanted to drink or drug (I'm sober and clean for 5-1/2 years). There were three men at the meeting, no women, and that frightened me even more. But they were kind and they understood my pain. I cried throughout the meeting while they shared their feelings and experience. I felt the fear drift into hope and the pain begin to lift. I started to feel like a person again. That day, I set up some boundaries and my life began to change.

A week later, feelings arrived, extremely painful and sometimes extremely joyful! I changed the way I dressed, joked, acted, reacted, and thought. I changed friends, rituals (from destructive to healthy), where I went and what I did...most of my behaviors.

I lived for the two meetings a week we have and only felt safe there or at home. I felt as though I'd lost my identity and was a "raw nerve" of feelings. I couldn't be touched and was crying all the time. I couldn't get a copy of the book (the bookstores had to order it) and I was the only woman in SAA here. I felt so isolated.

Slowly my life is coming together. My dignity, self-respect, and integrity are developing with the help of meetings, books, the steps, and my Higher Power. I have an excellent SAA therapist and sponsor who is teaching me to really love myself. I've started a women's meeting and have even found another woman brave enough to go to the mixed meetings with me.

And we all struggle along together, two steps forward, one step back. We have no long-term sobriety to lean on so we lean on each other. We cry, we share our pain, we call each other, and some of us slip in and out. But we show up every week and we pray for God to show us the way.

We live in probably the greatest city of "denial" in the world and we deal with temptations and sex around us 24 hours a day, 7 days a week: Las Vegas (a city built on sex and money — "Glitter City").

But we keep showing up, healing and "stepping on." We are recovering, slow but sure. God's will to all our SAA brothers and sisters. We need your support, love, and most of all, your prayers.

— Lynn T.
Las Vegas SAA

Letter to My Mother

The following letter was written to my mother. I am a gratefully recovering sex addict and incest survivor. I attended my first SA meeting in June of 1988. (The crystal mentioned is a prism that reflects sunlight or can be worn.)

This letter has been a long time in coming down to writing. Even today I feel it hard to be able to really say what I feel. I bought this crystal for your 68th birthday back in October and was unable to give it to you. At the time I didn't know why and just went on putting it off. Its importance seemed to grow almost magically.

The crystal represents many of my feelings today about my life and the life around me. Today there are more feelings and more awareness in my life than at any other time, other than the three days that I spent with Dr. Erikson. You see, light is all around us...all of the time. We really don't see light. We see the results of the light. Reflections off the dirt make the wonderful sunsets and sunrises. Light is the source of life. It provides the natural energy to grow and change. The crystal takes the light and breaks it up into the simple elements. All of the great teachers have said it is the simple that makes us, it is the simple path to understanding and knowledge. It is so amazing that such a simple piece of glass can show us such wonders.

This is what recovery is to me and what being real is all about. Being simple and accepting the truth and the world around me. Each of the colors of light blend together to give us such beauty — looking through the “crystal” that aspect of being real and accepting the way that I am, the way that I was treated when I was small as well as older — all of the events of my life contribute to the light that is within me today. Since 1975 when Dr. Erikson stated that he had never, in all his years of practice, ever met a person who hated himself more than Mark, it has been a long and difficult road. Sometimes filled with the light of snow and the warm sunshine off the waves on the beach and sometimes the dark tunnels of despair and tragedy, the loneliness and the solitude of dysfunction. Through the abuse of chemicals and the addiction to sex, the rejection of my inner child, the fear of being who I really am, to standing for what I believe, for helping others to see the rainbow within them, the rejection of the church of my childhood, the physical, emotional and sexual abuse as a child when I had no choice and the participation in the abuse when I did — all these things are part of the light that shines within me today.

I feel pain when I see you today. It is healing and forgiving that makes the pain easier. It is still there. Today I chose not to be around you and dad anymore than I have to so that wound may heal. It has been hard to try and be able to express how I feel without accusing, blaming or condemning. To just be able to say what really happened to me. To be able to accept me and my life.

Traditions are founded within the family and passed on, each generation to the next. Understanding how Jim's and Bobbie's lives were when they grew up was very important. I will never know what it was exactly like. I do know that what we were taught when we were young is how we act throughout our lives unless we change. I do know what it was like to be physically abused, to be shamed and survive the incest. When I first started remembering the sexual abuse of David and Charles, I believed it was my fault. Somehow I was responsible and somehow it didn't really happen. I believed that I was the only one, that I was crazy. Today I believe that it was real and that I am not the only one. Our family hid the secrets.

I participated in a workshop on covert incest. The day will remain very clear to me. During a weekend conference for recovering sex addicts, there was the opportunity to grow and meet others like me. I was in a very good place. During the incest workshop, all that I could think about was mom and the bathroom — the bathings — and I felt like there was black ice in my soul. There was a speaker at this program who had just turned 68. She was a recovering alcoholic, al anon, codependent, co-sex addict, and stated that last year she owned her own sexual addiction. She related how she had raised her children, controlling them and trying to control others. Her children

NSO REPORTS

NSO Donations & Sales February, 1990

National Donations

CA Sandra K.	\$ 5.00
IN Elkhart SAA	10.00
LA New Orleans SAA	40.00
MI Flint SAA	10.00
Maria	57.50
Saginaw SAA	20.00
Swartz Creek	10.00
MN Anonymous	10.00
Anonymous	20.00
Fri. Noon Men's Walk-in, S. Mpls. ..	20.90
Mon. Golden Valley Mixed Open	25.00
Mon. Men's Closed, Anoka	10.00
Rochester SAA	10.00
Rochester SAA	10.00
Rochester SAA	20.00
Sat. 10:00 Women's Bdry., Mpls.	17.50
Sun. Closed Men's, Long Lake	57.00
Sun. Men's Bdry., Lake Harriet	21.00
Thurs. 4:30 Men's Bdry., SE Mpls. ..	17.50
Thurs. 5:00 Open Men's, S. Mpls.	17.50
Tues. 5:30 Men's Closed, St. Paul	25.00
Tues. 5:30 Women's, Mpls.	28.00
Tues. 5:45 Closed Men's, Blmgton ..	12.50
Tues. 7:00 Bisexual/Gay Men's	15.00
Tues. 7:30 a.m. Open Men's, Mpls. ..	18.00
Wed. 5:00 Men's Closed, St. Paul	15.00
Wed. 5:30 Closed Men's, S. Mpls.	7.50
Wed. 5:30, S. Mpls.	20.00
Women's Closed, Golden Valley	12.00
Sat. 9:30 a.m. Mixed	26.56
MO Fri. Women's SAA, St. Louis	20.00
ND Fargo SAA	15.00
NE Charles W.	10.00
OK Freedom Group	10.00
TN Knoxville SAA	15.00
TX Houston Intergroup	32.95
Journey Group (Austin)	10.65
VA Pioneer Group	100.00
Thurs. night, Crystal City	40.00
WA Donald M. (Olympia)	3.60
Joseph H.	4.31
WI Rochester SAA	10.00
Total February Donations	\$897.47

February Sales

Abstinence	\$ 350.00
Answers	133.00
First Step	135.00
Group Guides	148.00
Hazeldon Step Guides	18.00
Hope and Recovery	418.00
Human Sex and Addiction	36.00
Medallions	854.00
Out of Shadows	99.00
P.B.R.	84.00
SAA Brochures	90.00
Total Sales	\$2,365.00

NSO Board Meeting Travel Fund

MN Tues. Bisexual/Gay Men's, S. Mpls.	\$ 31.41
Sat. 10:00 Women's Boundary, S. Mpls.	30.00
Mon. 7:30 Mixed, Golden Valley	13.00
Tues. 7:30 a.m. Men's Open	34.00
Mon. Men's Closed, Anoka	20.00
Wed. 5:30 Men's Closed, S. Mpls. .	12.00
Total Travel Fund	\$140.41

National Service Office News

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

We encourage local groups to list their groups with community service agencies and place their group phone numbers or P.O. Box in their community service section of the yellow pages. Spread the message of recovery!

(NOTE: The following is neither sponsored nor sanctioned by the SAA National Service Organization.)

Case Worker Position Available

Golden Valley Health Center's Sexual Dependency unit is interested in new case workers. It is preferred that the person(s) be someone involved in a 12-step sexual compulivity group. For more information, please call Personnel or Robin Anderson at 588-2771.

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
Four people to contribute \$50 =	<u>200</u>
Ten people =	\$1,500

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.

My Three-Year Anniversary

October 26, 1989 — my 3-year anniversary in SAA. It also signifies 3-1/2 years of sexual sobriety from acting out. What do I feel as I reflect back? GRATITUDE! Gratitude for this program and the support of the wonderful people in it. Gratitude for the availability of SAA groups and treatment programs in Minnesota — in the Twin Cities when I lived there and now here in Duluth. Gratitude for the counselor who identified my problem and steered me into recovery. Gratitude to my pastors for not rejecting me, for fostering my spiritual growth. And above all, gratitude to my Higher Power, God, for His sustaining love, power, healing, and guidance, without whom I would not have enough courage to walk through my emotional pain, shame and anger.

Three plus years. Yes, I'd hoped at some point I could defy the addiction process and be cured. I now understand why that's not possible. Just as it took 30 some years worth of situations and circumstances to shape who I am, it will take a lengthy process to become the person God wants me to be. That's probably safer and wiser than instant revelation anyway. It would be too much for me to handle. Rather, a healthier process is to peel one layer off at a time, like that of an onion or to sort through items in a closet. It gives me a chance to explore new beginnings, new behaviors, new options, and new relationships.

My Higher Power, this program, and the recovery process has given me peace, an inner peace that I've never known before or thought possible. It is so freeing and so wonderful. That peace is the impetus that propels me forward in my recovery today and keeps my sexual sobriety intact.

Thank you everyone in SAA for your part. Without you and this program, my recovery would not be possible. God bless!

— *Martha C.*
Duluth, MN

The Face of God

Tonight, I saw the face of God,
I touched the glory of His love,
He held me in His loving arms
And said, "I love you...as you are."

Tonight, I saw the face of God
He came to give me all his love
And to remove the dreadful harms
That left on me an ugly scar.

Tonight, I saw the face of God
I brought my sadness and my pain
And then I laid them at His feet,
I looked at Him and then said, "Why?"

Tonight, I saw the face of God
His truth to me was made quite plain
Acceptance, love and grace do meet
To take away the need for answers why.

Tonight, I saw the face of God
I brought to Him my wounded child
Who felt alone and sad and lost
And void of spirit, truth and love.

Tonight, I saw the face of God
His eyes of tenderness so mild
Held tears for me who paid the cost
Of life without a parent's love.

Tonight, I saw the face of God
He said, "My child, receive My grace.
The past is past...you must move on,
You must begin to care for you."

Tonight, I saw the face of God
I won't forget this time and place
And I have seen a brand new dawn,
Through Him I'll live a life anew.

Tonight, I saw the face of God!

— *Gary L.*
St. Paul, MN

Letter to My Mother (continued from page 2)

had turned to drugs, alcohol, sex, and starvation in order to compensate for their lives. The longer she talked the more anger grew in me. Why couldn't my mom be up there? I felt frustrated for not knowing just how far the incest within my family had grown. I own the choices that were made for me and by me. I know that those feelings are real. I can remember the houses that we lived in, except the bathrooms. And they are dark and forbidding. I know that from the age of Two I have masturbated, that I had sex with Charles and David, and scores of other children. I was a very bright child who was very sexually active and learned advanced positions before the age of five. I did not learn this by myself. I chose sex as a substitute for love and intimacy. I learned toxic shame. I learned self-hate. I learned that other families had something that I didn't. There were homes where I was welcomed and made to feel important.

Today, through the grace of the spirit of God, and working a recovery program, I don't regret one thing. I ask for everyone that has ever done anything to or for me to be blessed. I ask God for that blessing for you, Mom. I have the opportunity to grow and to change and walk tall and proud. The gratitude that comes with just knowing that today I feel. When I see others who have the opportunity when they are still teenagers, it is really good. Some days I wish that I could have learned this when I was younger, but I was not ready.

Today, I know not what my life will bring, but I pray each day to accept the lessons of life and to share of myself as much as I can. I choose now not to share with you and dad. It is too painful now. May the future and God bring the healing. Today I realize that I am not perfect and that I don't have to strive to be perfect. That the God of my childhood is your God. That love and acceptance is the God of my being. That I am part of God and that God lives in me.

I would like to introduce myself as I do at my meetings.

Hi. My name is Mark. I am an incest survivor. I am gay. I choose no longer to abuse chemicals and have not since June 1, 1989. I am a recovering codependent and have found that relying on myself and my Higher Power for my self-worth and identity fulfills the needs that I did not receive as a child. I am a gratefully recovering sex addict, and an adult child of a dysfunctional family system. Today I accept and embrace all of the events in my life no matter whether great joy or tragedy and the people who participated for these are all that make up me today. For today I live, unconditionally, myself and the light that is within me. I thank God that I did not commit suicide in November of 1987. For living, no matter how painful or how pleasurable, is the lesson. And the lesson is why I am here today. Today I ask forgiveness from all those that I have seduced and used and forgive and give thanks for everyone who has given to me in anyway. Mom, I forgive you and accept you. The past cannot be changed. I can only change me.

Love...Mark

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. If you have a modem, or can submit your writing on a disk (either Macintosh or IBM), that would be greatly appreciated. For more information concerning telecommunicating your article, please call the NSO office. Please submit all writings for the May newsletter by March 29, 1990.