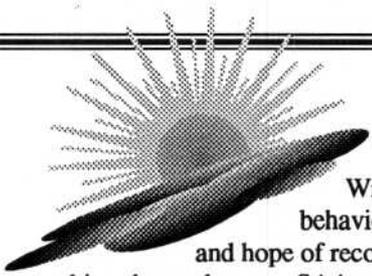


THE *Plain Brown Rapper* The SAA Newsletter

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April, 1991 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

Thought for the Month

I recently attended a special church service: a mourning service. No, this was not a “morning” service, but a *mourning* service; one meant to help us touch upon the sadness of our past and present brokenness. The sermon was given in an unusual way in that it was, for the most part, presented as a song. The minister explained that each verse of the song was written to reflect the sadness of the pain others had shared with him. The first verse dealt with the tragedy of child sexual abuse, the second with terminal illness, the third with broken relationships, and the fourth with the grief of war. As the verses unfolded and their personal stories revealed, tears flowed from my eyes as from many others in the room. The losses I have sustained because of my own brokenness were being mourned by me and shared with me.

I think in most cases we are honest with ourselves and others. We admit our powerlessness, we acknowledge our angers, we make amends, and we honestly seek a Higher Power’s will in our lives. But do we mourn? Do we face the need to grieve our past losses, whether the loss is a childhood, a relationship, a parent, or our innocence?

A healthy person, I think, is one who celebrates victories, but also grieves losses. And, whether celebration or mourning, shares these experiences with trusted friends.

For myself, I think that, before I decide to let go of a piece of who I was or am, I will ask myself the question: Have I sung my mourning song?

My Boundaries

Hi! I’m a struggling addict. There is much to my addiction I never realized existed.

I’ve set up boundaries for myself. The boundaries were good, but it-we-me stepped outside them.

Through the years I’ve blamed my priest for not helping or understanding. I’ve blamed the Catholic Church and the list of blaming goes on and on. I forgot to blame one person: me. I have to want to change and I have to admit my addiction.

As I’ve set up my boundaries, I’ve talked myself into going over my boundaries and wondering why I make no progress. I’ve gone the road of self-pity, disgust, revolt, etc., but I’ve never moved to really admit I don’t want to help myself.

I’ve read some of your literature and find it helpful. I want to become more active in my Catholic faith and become an active part of the religious aspect. But until my life and addiction come to a point where I can handle it, I can’t commit myself to a more active role.

As soon as I crossed over my boundaries, I was and am in trouble. My boundaries were not too difficult, but I looked past the boundaries. Sometimes I feel as though I’m in a whirlpool and never at peace, either with myself or my God.

Take care.

Clay
North Dakota

Another Time and Another Place

I'm Snoopi and I'm a sex addict. Step 11 is one of my favorite steps. I find myself basically always questioning the meaning of life, the meaning of the Twelve Steps, and the meaning of nearly everything. I need to at least feel that what I do matters, or else I won't get up in the morning. I had a few days in my life where I did actually just stay in bed. I needed to find a reason to keep going. The 11th Step says, "Sought through prayer and meditation to improve our conscious contact with God as we understood God." You know, I'm glad it only says "sought" because to me that one word alone kind of tells me that God is right there, and if we make the first move to reach out to Him, He'll reach even farther out to us. Now that's a powerful thought. Sought through prayer and meditation. I have this mind that won't stop thinking. That sounds fun, and some people may wish they had a photographic memory, but I can tell you right now it's almost a curse. I'm kidding, but sometimes I have some real embarrassing moments. Ron, who should be the one reading this, is probably thinking, "Oh yeah, you forgot my number at least three times." My response is "I'm not perfect." But anyway, because I have about ten things on my mind at all times, I needed to find a way to meditate on just one thing at a time. So I use music to help express my thoughts and get my mind centered on just one thing. My problem is I'm always buying new tapes. It's neat because just when you think you can perfectly identify with a song, a new song comes out that totally matches your ever-changing feelings. It also raises the question of what to do with 5000 tapes, and the answer seems to be buy more. Space is starting to be a problem, but whatever. Anyway, meditation for me helps.

Prayer and meditation helps improve our conscious contact with God, and boy do I need that. With the way some people think of me, I start to wonder if I'm conscious at all. Let me elaborate on myself for a minute. One thing I like about Step talks is after I do one, people tend to get to know me better. I usually type my talks out and have someone read it for me because I have a speech impediment and it's hard for a large group of people to fully understand me. Because people have a hard time understanding me, they often don't understand that nothing else is really wrong with me. I can't walk, and some people think it's hard to be in a wheelchair every day of your life. I have to say I find ways to make it fun. Look at it this way: I can carry a heavy backpack around and not have my back get tired. The only hard thing about being in a wheelchair is knowing how much people read into it. I have a very good example of something that really drives me crazy. I'm outside a lot, and I'll be going down a sidewalk coming up to a red light, and some stranger will tell me the light is red, and every two seconds he'll remind me that the light is red as if I'm blind. Right before the light turns green I have to let my front tires drop off the curb so I can get going right away without tipping over, and the stranger thinks I'm going to gun the red light and get hit. That situation gets my blood in a flood, and then I get depressed for the rest of the day because I feel like everyone on the street thinks I'm retarded. Then I get mad at God because I start thinking God thinks I'm retarded, which really puts me in a bad spot. I find that what I meditate on has a huge effect on how I feel. I mainly have to remember God created me, and meditate on the fact that God knows me better than anyone, for I am an actual part of God. Nothing happens to any of us that doesn't also happen to God, for one part of God lives inside each one of us. So with that thought I can go to God and know it's a two-way conscious contact.

At times when I hear the word "contact," it gives me this faraway feeling, like I'm trying to make contact with the unknown. So I replaced the word "contact" and think of it as inner connecting, or inner communication, because God actually wants to deal with us from the inside out anyway. So it helps me to be more in touch with what I'm feeling if I keep in mind that God is dealing with me from the inside.

It's real easy for me to go around and talk about all of the things that I can do. I'm a songwriter, an artist, and a poet. I have many other talents as well that really amaze some people. My talents don't come from me alone. They all come from listening to God's will, along with years of hard work. I don't practice my typewriter art as much as I should. I got into a fight with a pastor because I started doing cartoon characters with my typewriter, and everything I wanted to do he told me was demonic. Donald Duck is demonic, that's a new one on me. So that got me away from doing my art, which is a shame because I'm the only one in Minnesota that does it. I still do it, but not as much as I used to. But it was listening to God's will that showed me all the talents and using them to somehow help people. If you help just one person you help change the world. Before I help the world I have to help myself because I count as much as the next guy. All of the Twelve Steps were not written to help other people; they were written to help each of us in a personal way. But as each of us recover, I think it pulls all of us closer to God so we can understand what God's will is for our lives.

(Continued on Page 3)

NSO REPORTS

Notes From the NSO Office

Wish List

The National Service office is in need of several pieces of office equipment. We wish to gain these items so that we might improve office efficiency. Those interested may give towards an item (not in excess of \$1000 per year), or you may choose to donate equipment that you possess.

All contributions are tax deductible and our office will return a receipt for these donations of funds or office goods.

Here is a list of office machines which we are in need of. The figures which appear next to the items are rough estimates of what new products would cost.

- | | |
|-----------------------|------------|
| 1. Folding machine | \$ 500.00 |
| 2. Laser printer | \$1,000.00 |
| 3. Fax machine | \$ 700.00 |
| 4. IBM comp. Modem | \$ 100.00 |
| 5. A new copier which | \$1,000.00 |

Felonious Guidelines Update

The N.S.O.-suggested guidelines for groups facing felonious or life-threatening behaviors are to be discussed at our June National Convention. We encourage groups to give feedback on this concern to their delegates, so that your group can be represented at our business meetings.

Also, we at the office apologize for the title of the article, which referred to "level three" behavior. We had wanted to move away from that Carnesian term and, through a mistake, contributed to use of the term. Our apologies.

Another Time and Another Place (continued)

I have this thing about death because it's really the only fear I have. I heard some crazy ideas about what Heaven will be like, and people often tell me how great it will be when I'm no longer in a wheelchair. That is a very scary thought. I want to share a question that I carry around in the back of my head: What do you want to find in Heaven? For me, I really wouldn't mind it if I went around Heaven in a wheelchair, because the wheelchair has nothing to do with who I am. Of course, my heavenly wheelchair would have to fly, and move at least at warp speed. But my point is walking has nothing to do with my recovery, or with my being a person. I'm learning to talk about how I want Heaven to be. It lets God know that I am scared of death, but it also lets God know my level of understanding, and my fearful excitement of being with Him. I look at my recovery as a way of getting ready to be in that land that goes far beyond my imagination. Here on Earth I think we all have this feeling like we are not worth anything. I think when we all see God, every hope and dream will come alive. Somehow I don't think that means we will all be perfect in the way that the blind will see and the deaf will hear. To me it means the simple fact that I will belong, and we will all finally have the relationship that we were seeking here on Earth. The title of my talk is "Another Time Another Place," because to me this step helps to get away from the hour-by-hour recovery by getting our minds on God who is the source of all hope.

I listen to Sandi Patti a lot. I met her so maybe that's why her music means so much to me. Every album she puts out seems to be that much more related to where I am in my own life. I have her newest album that is not yet out in the stores or on the radio. Very powerful album, I actually had four songs to pick from that I could have used tonight, and that's really hard. It came down to a choice of two songs, and I decided on "Another Time Another Place" only because it kind of inspired this talk. But I tell you, I'm going to wait and see how I feel right before the meeting because the song "Unexpected Friends" is also very fitting for this step, if not more. I believe God sends certain people our way at different points in our recovery. I almost hate this album because it's so inspiring. Um, if it's okay with everyone, I would like someone to turn off a few of the lights so it's more of a meditational sitting. This is a spiritual program and I think it would be very beneficial if we all just took in the words of whatever song I end up playing.

Snoopi B.

The Seventeen Characteristics of Sex Addicts

1. We used sex as a drug to avoid our painful feelings.
2. We tried to control our sexual acting out, promised ourselves that we would stop acting out, but we were unable to stop.
3. We led double lives; we tried to conceal and deny our addiction and the shame we felt.
4. We became involved in sexual rituals which led up to and prepared us to act out sexually.
5. We broke our personal values in pursuit of a sexual high, and along with feeling guilty, we also felt ashamed.
6. We were preoccupied with sex, often losing ourselves in obsessive fantasies; fantasies that felt more powerful than our will to control or stop them.
7. Even though our addiction hurt us greatly over time, we continued our pattern of destructive sexual behaviors because we thought sex was our best friend and our most important need.
8. Our sexual acting out progressed into increasingly dangerous behaviors and our lives fell further down the scale toward destruction and isolation.
9. We suffered consequences that were directly caused by our addictive behaviors; we contracted diseases, experienced physical injury, were arrested, lost relationships, became pregnant, lost jobs, or lost respect for ourselves.
10. Our acting out left us feeling suicidal or hopeless.
11. Being addicted, we responded differently to sexuality than did people who had a healthy relationship to their sexuality.
12. Our lives were consumed by sexual thoughts, the pursuit, the having and the regretting of our acting out. Sex was our lives and not just an aspect of our lives.
13. We mistakenly equated sexual acting out and sexual attention we received from others — with love and nurturing.
14. Our addiction repeatedly left us feeling tricked when shortly after acting out — our pain would return with a vengeance.
15. We had powerful, ambivalent feelings about sex, which was expressed by periods of avoidance, denial and rejection of our sexuality. Often we wished that sex did not even exist.
16. We were left continually feeling angered and disappointed in ourselves, because of our inability to control ourselves.
17. As children we experienced neglect, or verbal, sexual, or physical abuse, which left us feeling needy, worthless and alone.

(I have generally found these seventeen characteristics to be commonly held by people who are sexually addicted — self included.)

Submitted for consideration,

Douglas P.

Recovering in Mpls. MN.

Lost and Found

In the August issue of PBR, there was an article about an “Acting In” group forming in Dallas. I sent a letter to the address listed and it was sent back with an “unknown address” statement from the post office.

Does anyone know anymore about this? An address?

Al G.

Literature Description

N.S.O. Approved Items:

1. **S.A.A. Group Guide** — A complete guide including a suggested meeting agenda, the twelve steps and twelve traditions, tools of the program, the promises, How it Works, etc.
2. **Abstinence and Boundaries in S.A.A.** — A booklet of contributions made by S.A.A. members sharing their written sexual sobriety programs. This booklet is a helpful tool for individuals who are in the process of defining both abstinence and boundaries in their own program.
3. **First Step To Recovery** — A helpful booklet (guide) for preparing a first step presentation. The guide is useful in facilitating addicts in viewing the differing areas of their powerlessness and unmanageability.
4. **S.A.A. Self-Assessment Brochure** — This pamphlet is a tool for people seeking to find out if they have a sexual addiction.
5. **The Plain Brown Rapper** — The National Service Organization of S.A.A.'s monthly newsletter, filled with fellowship updates regarding upcoming events, and new projects. This newsletter is written by and for the S.A.A. membership, and includes recovery stories, insights, and poems.
6. **S.A.A. Medallions** — The S.A.A. "From Shame To Grace" medallions are both a keepsake and a staple of recovery, helping S.A.A. members build and honor a positive history. An aluminum version for up to 9 months is available at a reduced cost.
7. 1990 "Carrying the Message" Conference audiotapes — A selection of powerful recovery presentations from the conference.

Twin Cities Intergroup approved items:

8. **Getting Started in S.A.A., a beginner's packet for recovering sex addicts** — This newcomer booklet offers a great deal of information which helps to ground people in the program of S.A.A. The booklet focuses on answering questions beginners often have about recovery from sexual addiction. Many people already in the program have found it very helpful to read this booklet.
9. **Exploring Healthy Sexuality** — A collection of personal stories on what healthy sexuality has come to mean to some members of S.A.A. in their recoveries.

Other Recovery Items:

10. *Answers In The Heart*, Hazelden
A daily meditation book written by a female and male member of S.A.A.
11. *Out Of The Shadows*, Dr. Patrick Carnes
This was the first book explaining and detailing sexual addiction.
12. *Women Sex And Addiction*, Dr. Charlotte Kasl
This book looks at sexual addiction from women's perspectives.
14. *Hope And Recovery*, Compcare/paperback
A "Big Book" styled book for recovering sex addicts. Includes a section of personal stories.
16. *Hope and Recovery Workbook*
17. *A Male Grief: Notes On Pornography And Addiction*, David Mura.
This booklet is a powerful essay on sex addiction and our sexual culture.

In keeping with the sixth tradition, S.A.A. offers no opinion on non-program materials. We choose to sell these items as a means of offering resource options, but they do not necessarily represent S.A.A. The conference tapes although put on by program people, are as of yet not approved.

SAA ORDERING INFORMATION — SPRING 1991

Mail to: S.A.A. Literature, P.O. Box 3038, Minneapolis, MN 55403; phone (612) 871-1520

Please send me the following materials. Prices include shipping and handling. (With overseas orders, please include an additional 20% to help defray the additional postage.)

National Service Organization Approved Items

| <u>QUANTITY</u> | <u>TOTAL AMOUNT</u> |
|--|-----------------------|
| _____ S.A.A. Group Guide | @ 4.50 _____ |
| _____ Abstinence and Boundaries in S.A.A. | @ 2.50 _____ |
| _____ First Step to Recovery | or 12 for 25.00 _____ |
| _____ | @ 1.25 _____ |
| _____ | or 12 for 10.00 _____ |
| _____ S.A.A. Self-Assessment Brochures | @ .10 _____ |
| _____ | or 12 for 1.00 _____ |
| _____ The Plain Brown Rapper (1 year) | @ 6.00 _____ |
| _____ The Plain Brown Rapper group subscription rates (1 year, each) | |
| _____ 10 or more to the same address | @ 3.00 _____ |
| _____ S.A.A. Fellowship Directory | @ 3.50 _____ |
| _____ S.A.A. Medallions | @ 2.50 _____ |
| _____ Blank _____ 6 MO _____ 18 MO _____ 4 YR _____ 7 YR _____ 10 YR | |
| _____ 1 MO _____ 9 MO _____ 2 YR _____ 5 YR _____ 8 YR _____ 11 YR | |
| _____ 3 MO _____ 1 YR _____ 3 YR _____ 6 YR _____ 9 YR _____ 12 YR | |
| _____ NEW! Aluminum S.A.A. Medallions | @ 1.50 _____ |
| _____ Blank _____ 1 MO _____ 3 MO _____ 6 MO _____ 9 MO | |

"CARRYING THE MESSAGE" CONFERENCE - AUDIO TAPES

| <u>QUANTITY</u> | <u>TOTAL AMOUNT</u> |
|---|---------------------|
| _____ 1. The Founding of S.A.A., Pat C. | @ 6.00 _____ |
| _____ 2. Multiple addictions: Barbara B. | @ 6.00 _____ |
| _____ 3. Measuring and Celebrating Progress, Rich S. | @ 6.00 _____ |
| _____ 4. Exploring Healthy Sexuality, Douglas P. | @ 6.00 _____ |
| _____ 5. Sharing our recovery — Three stories: S.A.A., COSA, and a Couple | @ 6.00 _____ |
| _____ 6. Sharing our recovery Part Two | @ 6.00 _____ |
| _____ 7. Personal Stories, Gregory M., Linda M. | @ 6.00 _____ |
| _____ <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Order any six tapes for the price of five | @ 30.00 _____ |
| _____ "Carrying the Message" T-shirts in _____ large or _____ extra large | @ 5.00 _____ |

Twin Cities S.A.A. Intergroup Items

| | |
|--|--------------------|
| _____ Getting Started in Sex Addicts Anonymous; a beginner's packet for recovering sex addicts | @ 2.50 _____ |
| _____ | 12 for 25.00 _____ |
| _____ NEW! Exploring Healthy Sexuality | @ 3.00 _____ |
| _____ | 12 for 30.00 _____ |

Other Recovery Items

| | |
|---|---------------|
| _____ Answers in the Heart (meditations) | @ 9.00 _____ |
| _____ Out of the Shadows (Carnes) | @ 11.00 _____ |
| _____ Women, Sex, and Addiction (Kasl) | @ 11.00 _____ |
| _____ Hope and Recovery | @ 12.00 _____ |
| _____ Hope and Recovery Workbook | @ 11.00 _____ |
| _____ A Male Grief: Notes on Pornography (Mura) | @ 4.50 _____ |

Mn. residents add 6.5% sales tax

Total Enclosed

Make checks payable to SAA literature

Ship to (please print clearly):

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Traditions

The first word of the traditions like the first word of the steps tells us that we are not alone, and the rest of this first tradition tells us why it is so important to remember this — because our recovery and our lives depend on it. Without unity, our organization will die. This does not mean that the individual must conform, or that we all must think and act alike; quite the contrary, no organizations celebrate and nurture individuality like the Twelve Step programs do. The point is that our differences in life experiences and opinions become irrelevant because we have that most important thing in common; we are all sex addicts.

Years ago, when I was new to the Twelve Step programs, I found myself meeting and connecting with people I would never have come across in my addictive days. I remember marveling at the helpful and precious gifts I received in the words of people seemingly so unlike myself. Because I wanted to recover, I was forced to drop some stereotypes I had about people. Slowly I became more willing to look for what we had in common, and slowly I began to feel less isolated and less unique. Now this unity of purpose has become an integral part of my spirituality. I believe that when I stretch myself to experience that common bond, that I am tapping into a sort of spiritual conduit and certainly a life-saving stream.

Lisa G.

Tradition Two

For our group purpose there is but one ultimate authority — a loving God as He may express Himself in our group conscience. Our leaders are but trusted servants; they do not govern.

This Second Tradition is my favorite because I still marvel at how well this “benign anarchy” works without any bosses. I respect and admire the group conscience, believing that, in general, it is wiser and more likely to be closer to a spiritual truth than any one individual’s opinion. I believe that as a group, we can overcome obstacles that I cannot surmount on my own. In fact, my earliest attempts to work Step Three — to turn things over to my Higher Power — involved consulting my group’s conscience. I do not think that group conscience necessarily means group majority because sometimes the minority opinion needs to be the one that is followed. I also do not think that group conscience means that we all have to agree. In fact, I think it guarantees that we can all have our own opinions so long as our decisions as a group — whether they involve the production of literature or decisions about policy and meeting format — reflect the group conscience. Because there is not one individual running this Twelve Step organization, the responsibility for providing direction rests on all our shoulders.

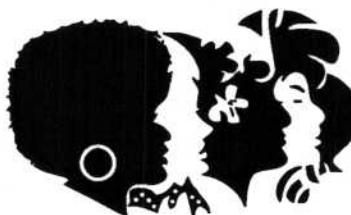
The second part of this tradition describes our leaders as trusted servants. What this means to me is that people in a service position have a responsibility to listen and act upon the desires of the group they represent. Our leaders are not authorities and they do not have the power or the right to carry out their own agenda, but instead must seek out the will of the group. Because no single leader can represent SAA, and because there is a limit to the perspective and ideas that any one person can bring to a service position, it is important that the role of trusted servant be rotated. If one person retains the job of trusted servant for a long time, the organization or group may begin to be unduly shaped by that one individual, and that can’t help but limit our possibilities as a group. Our wisdom and strength as a group needs the freshness and energy of new perspective.

Lisa G.



The Child Within

This space reserved for those whose child needs to come out and play. Stay tuned and let's hear from you!



Women in Recovery

This space is available for a woman with a special story to tell. Could it be you? Your story is so important to us! Let's hear from you soon!

I May Seem Crazy Sometimes

Do you know what it's like to grow up in a family
Where people have sex with each other;
Where they hit little kids;
Where you're always being
 bossed
 or yelled at
 or hit;
Where mom never hugs you and
says I love you;
Where dad doesn't either;
Where every week
you're forced to tell a man
what you did wrong
and how bad you are
and always walk out
carrying, "I masturbated,"
because you are scared to say it;
Where you have no friends;
Where you never have a date;
Where the only person you can talk to,
goes away;
Where you're scared
 of everything
 and everybody?
I'm not crazy
But this is, so
I may seem
 crazy
 sometimes.

J.
Colorado

The Temple Steps

Only a well-armed, victorious
immortal Warrior
in service to a King;
A king acceptant, receptive,
a king humble, respectful.
A king wounded in healing,
Self-honest in public and private.
A king sincerely open enough
in Fact to learning —
to teach studentship.
Only a well-armed, victorious,
immortal Warrior
in service to SUCH a King . . .
Can protect, provide for
and treasure —
Such a precious
vital
loving under all circumstances
YOUTH.

The Magician is the ENTIRETY
dust and spark
real and unreal
Touching it altogether.

Before
entry
into Sacred place . . .

— YOUTH unarmed
relaxed
resting
nearly ignorant bliss.

Alex B.

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 computer 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 21, 1991.

Unless otherwise noted, the content of all articles, stories, and poems that appear in the *Plain Brown Rapper* reflect the opinions of the respective writers. Those opinions are not necessarily shared by the N.S.O., S.A.A., or the Literature Committee. Discussion of the contents of this newsletter is encouraged.