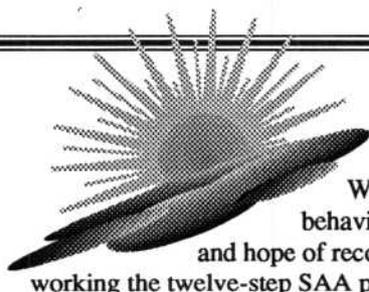


THE Plain Brown Rapper

The SAA Newsletter

50¢



May, 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 watched a handicapped person walk past me the other day, his body twisted and broken, with strange angles in his legs where none should be. I thought to myself, "Thank God I'm not like him." And then I saw the man awkwardly negotiate his body toward a group of young people. They turned and enthusiastically greeted the man with warmth and friendship. They saw a gentle soul come into their midst where I had seen a grotesque figure walking by. In that moment, a pang of jealousy came upon me, for I wanted to feel as valued and loved as this man obviously was.

Later, the thought struck me that I had experienced an almost instantaneous mindshift: from one of pity to one of jealousy. (I also noted the obvious self-esteem issue, but that's another story.) How could such a shift occur so quickly? What changed my outlook on this man?

The answer was an important one to me, for literally in seconds I had a "spiritual awakening" — my apparent impression turned into a falsehood. That is, what I thought of as "normal" became worthless, almost a burden to me.

How often do we judge others, testing them by a set of standards that are obsolete and don't show their real value? How often do we judge ourselves the same way? I believe a spiritual awakening means discarding old standards of value and worth. Further, it means *encouraging others* to see their own value and worth. And it means looking into the *spirit* of others to understand how really valuable those around us are.

My Addiction was Only Trying to Be My Friend

We rarely find out what "tidbits" of awareness have positive impacts on others. Because of one short sentence, in which a Twelve Stepper said, "I give my negative emotions a hug," I was able to collect another chunk of peace.

After this meeting, my thoughts began to flow and I realized that my negative emotions, actions, and inactions were trying to be my friend and protect me in some way. By embracing them as a friend who is trying to take care of me, a release of peace was my gift. I was no longer at war with them as any enemy.

As my thoughts continued to flow, it became apparent that nearly every action or inaction I take in life, regardless of how negative, is for the purpose of protecting or taking care of me. I further believe my addictions are also trying to take care of me, in some way.

Taking a good guess, all of us are probably trying to protect ourselves from some type of loss or absence. I expend a lot of time trying to protect myself from the loss of the "old familiar" and sometimes the "new familiars," which I pick up and latch onto. I have a multiple addictive personality.

Both my husband and I are addicted to sex, but our underlying reasons are the opposite, though they appear to be the same. My sex addiction stems from a driving need to believe and fantasize that certain other people have an uncontrollable passionate need to have sex with me. I used to sexualize a lot of people; certain people at work, certain movie stars, certain individuals at functions, a person in a restaurant, you name it.

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My Addiction was Only Trying to Be My Friend (continued)

My sexual addiction is definitely linked to the absence of parental affection, caring, and sharing and, of course, love. Sex became my parental substitute and a substitute for love. My fantasies, compulsive masturbation, and my husband's compulsive need for sex was what I "needed" to feel loved and cared about. Sex was the primary reason I got married.

Like any other addiction, it took its toll and I found myself only going through motions, in the absence of pleasure. But my addiction was still with me. Substitutes for love just don't work.

Most of us are ignorant of what love truly is, but the Twelve Step programs are teaching us. Now I tell my addictions, "Thanks for trying to take care of me, but I have found a new, true kind of love."

In appreciation of a "New Found Love,"

Linda

Poetry of Recovery

Selfish

I was selfish
and wanted everything for myself.
Sexually I was manipulative
for my own desires.
I wish I had not been,
I wish I could undo it.

I ate until I could eat no more,
my body is in pain.
I drank and used chemicals and was sexually compulsive
until I had no more problems.
I closed my eyes to the pain
because I hurt too much.

I have let go of the alcohol and drugs,
now I think about my past.
My full recovery is not here
Because I am sober.
My recovery is going to be
a lifelong process

*Bob
Oregon*

Laughing Jesus

As I lay in my bed in a state of half awake and half asleep, I had a strange dream. I dreamed that I was walking down a country road. The day was sunny and warm, with a soft breeze.

I could feel the warm sun on my face and the gentle breeze brushing my hair from side to side. I could smell the clover in bloom and hear the song of a meadow lark in the distance.

As I walked, I was thinking of nothing special and everything in general. Suddenly I noticed someone in the far distance walking toward me.

The closer we drew to one another, I could see the person was a man, but I didn't recognize him. As we drew closer, he began to run towards me. I became a little frightened. As he came closer, he began to smile and the smile became a hearty laugh.

This instant I recognized him It was Jesus.

As we met, he threw his arms around me, still laughing, said, "I've found you, my friend, I've found you. I looked for you and looked for you and couldn't find you. Where have you been?"

"I love you so much and I'll never let you go again. I love you and forgive you. Come back to me."

*Clay R.
North Dakota*

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 is more efficient. | \$1,000.00 |

The New Group File

Here is a haphazard list of some of the new SAA meetings since our last directory was published. From now on we will "attempt" to list new meetings as we become aware of them so that you can contact us if you have a need for further information.

Anniston, AL	Bolder, CO	Wilmington, NC
2 in Birmingham, AL	Dillon, CO	Winston-Salem, NC
Fayetteville, AR	A second meeting in Orlando, FL	Grand Forks, ND
Scottsdale, AZ	5 in Indianapolis, IN	3 in Sante Fe, NM
18 from Phoenix, AZ	3 in suburban Chicago, IL	New York, NY
Glendale, AZ	An additional mtg. in Louisville, KY	Elka Park, NY
4 in Tucson, AZ	Ditto in New Orleans, LA	Toledo, OH
Redondo Beach, CA	St.Cloud, MN	Sioux Falls, SD
Oh, several in Los Angeles, CA	2nd in Mankato, MN	2 in Murfreesboro, TN
San Francisco, CA	Speakers Meeting in Mpls. MN	Chatanooga, TN
Marin County, CA	Bemidji, MN	Salt Lake City, UT (Women only)
A second Ottawa group, Canada	Long Lake, MN	2 in Clarkston, WA
Edmonton, Canada	3 in Missoula, MT	Kent, WA
Winnipeg, Canada	2 in Charlotte, NC	St.Croix Falls, WI

Tools of the Program

One of the tools of the program is sharing our experience, strength and hope with our fellows. Here is a list of just a few of the tools of recovery — please share with us how you use one of these and why it is important in your recovery.

Steps	Anonymity	Confidentiality
Abstinence	Boundaries	Phone List
Contracts	Sponsorship	Literature
Meetings	Service	Affirmations
Journaling	Prayer	Meditation
Slogans	The Promises	The Traditions

Dear brothers and sisters in recovery,

Come experience the 12th Step at the SAA/COSA National Convention June 21-23, 1991 at Calvin College in Grand Rapids, Michigan. Remember to register soon . . . you won't want to miss this experience of recovery. "Having had a spiritual awakening" is an ongoing, unfolding experience. You cannot keep it unless you give it away. We hope to see you there.

Julie N.
Steering Committee Chairperson
Michigan Intergroup

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.
8. **The Bubble** — An analogy that describes what it is like to be in the addiction.

Twin Cities Intergroup approved Items:

9. **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.
10. **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:

11. *Answers In The Heart*, Hazelden
A daily meditation book written by a female and male member of S.A.A.
12. *Out Of The Shadows*, Dr. Patrick Carnes
This was the first book explaining and detailing sexual addiction.
13. *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.
15. *Hope and Recovery Workbook*
16. *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 _____
_____	NEW! The Bubble	@ .25 _____
_____	.....	or 10 for 2.00 _____
_____	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 _____
_____	☛ 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	@ 3.50 _____
_____	.....	12 for 35.00 _____

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: _____

A Traditional Column

Tradition Three: The only requirement for membership is a desire to stop our compulsive sexual behavior.

This bottom-line statement about our fellowship is what makes us strong. When a diverse assortment of people become unified behind this desire and when the umbrella of the program can and does expand to embrace people with so many different beliefs and experiences, then we have a strong program. The strength comes in part from the love and acceptance we all must have in order to combat possible feelings of intolerance or judgmentalness. The strength comes from realizing that these feelings are based in fear. The strength comes from the growth that comes from stretching ourselves to find common ground.

In the history of the 12-Step programs, this understanding was not always so dear. The earliest A.A. groups really struggled with this, fearing that the whole fellowship, on which so many lives depended, could be tainted, even destroyed, if any but 'true alcoholics' were admitted. There were those who felt it was better to bar one potential troublemaker — deny one person help — in order to protect the program for the majority. It was only after some risks were taken that they came to see how many people were ultimately helped by these same 'troublemakers.' They came to realize that basing membership on this simple self-proclaimed desire, is what our Higher Power would have us do, and so they formally adopted this tradition.

In my opinion, this tradition is what needs to be at the foundation of any loving, challenging feedback that we offer to fellow group members who seem to be getting slippery. By this, I do not mean that I think anyone else has the right or ability to assess our own "desire to stop compulsive sexual behaviors." Far from it, we declare our own desire and thus decide for ourselves when and how we want to work this program; but I think that with this tradition as our guideline and our justification, we can challenge ourselves and others to grow. For me personally, many of my choices are simplified when I keep uppermost the idea that my dominant desire is to stop my compulsive sexual behavior.

The views expressed here are mine.

Lisa G.



Women in Recovery

Once Upon A Time . . .

. . . I was a pretty little girl who dreamed of growing up and marrying a tall, handsome man who would love me forever. To complete my life would be baby boys with baseball caps and baby girls with bright pink bows. We all would be happy forever. That dream never came true.

Instead, I was a prisoner of my sexual addiction, chemical dependency, alcoholism, and food disorder. Yes, I did marry and I did have two sons; however, I was a ticking time bomb inside. Repressed within my mind and body were raging memories of overt sexual abuse with my father from ages 3-1/2 to 16. I could not raise my sons normally as my only frame of reference was what was taught to me as a child. So, against whatever values I had, I acted out with my sons. My marriage ended abruptly after 21 years, and custody of my sons was given to my ex-husband. I lost it all, especially the dream.

I moved to Minnesota for treatment of my sexual addiction and to be part of SAA. I attended my first women's SAA meeting with my head hung down in shame. I was so grateful that the 12 Steps had been part of my life for 15 years already. I knew and could recite the 12 Steps and had several medallions from other fellowships. But without sexual sobriety, my life was over. When I had some sober time, I joined a mixed SAA group and my recovery and commitment deepened. Half of the group was male and that felt very scary as my acting out was with men. At this meeting I began to set boundaries around my interactions with the men. I began to feel safe around these men and that felt affirming to my recovery.

Last fall, I had an emotional setback around my dad and, once again, the despair returned. This time I took an enormous personal risk and began seeing a male therapist to dig into my acting out patterns with men. I also was in a women's therapy group to help me understand the impact my mom and family of origin had on my life. I had a deep feeling that if I couldn't come to terms with my past and understand my destructive patterns with men, that I probably wouldn't stay sober.

My life in early recovery was work, sleep, SAA meetings, and therapy. For months I put aside the so-called "fun" parts of life (whatever that is) in order to focus on my recovery.

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Women in Recovery (continued)

I got involved in service through my meetings and intergroup. To outsiders, my life looked overly serious and lacking in balance. What no one could see — but I could feel — was my deepening faith and trust in my Higher Power. I just kept on living one day at a time.

Now the snow is melting and spring will soon be here. I am feeling hopeful about my life and my future.

I can look back and remember my inner child, Jilly, playing in the sand by the seashore. As she built sandcastles, she dreamed of her future. Jilly is crushed by the way her life turned out. I am allowing her all the time she needs to grieve. I let her cry, pout, stamp her feet, and scream "life isn't fair!" I love her dearly, but I don't let her run my life as an adult. I got us two kittens and that was a childhood dream come true. They do not take the place of my two sons, but they are cuddly and so enjoyable. Jilly's loss of a dream of motherhood and marriage is also my loss. Jilly lost her fantasy, and I daily endure the pain of life without being near my sons. This is a profound loss and a severe consequence of my acting out.

Every day I turn over my powerlessness over my sexual addiction to my Higher Power. I am beginning to experience some serenity as each day feels brighter than the one before. I feel as though my broken heart is beginning to heal and ache less. I am alive, I am well, and I'm beginning to *accept* the story of my "real" life.

*Jill S.
Minneapolis*

A Letter From a New S.A.A. Group

Our group spent three months deliberating a change of affiliation to Sex Addicts Anonymous, and that change feels like God's will for us for now. We feel that we learned a lot from our seven year affiliation with Sexaholics Anonymous and that this change is in keeping with moving on into the broader concepts of recovery and sexual health which were already embraced and which are better described in SAA literature and which are characterized in SAA meetings in many cities we have visited. We are especially excited about the way SAA's NSO is organizing itself with representative leadership and a service office which carries out the wishes of local meetings.

After a three month process of deliberation, our group conscience consisted of 100% of our Jan. 7th Business Meeting in favor of changing to SAA, followed by a Jan. 14th vote of all present (36) with 75% in favor, 17 abstaining and 8% against. We feel this was entirely representative of our 60-70 person membership.

We will contact you later about our group representatives, formation of a Colorado SAA Intergroup, quarterly contributions, literature orders, etc.

Sincerely,

Rich

Many Thank You's

I travel the road of many. Dreaming and setting goals. I am fulfilling some.

The snow is fresh. I am becoming fresh. Working on my heavy duty. Sometimes I feel alone. I know there are many survivors out there. First I thank me for wanting to get better. Then I thank God for working with me and being there. Then I want to thank all the people who have taken the time to help me on my journey. I know you all know who you are. Someday I'll come visit you. In the meantime, I hear your voices in my heart when I am having a rough time or a good time. Walk, but not alone.

God's spiritual blessing,

Marjorie

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 June newsletter by April 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.