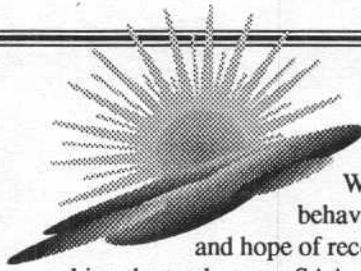


THE *Plain Brown Rapper*

The SAA Newsletter

50¢



June, 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

When is enough, enough? How often are we allowed to come to our groups and say, "I've had a slip"? I must confess that, during my recovery, there were times when I would indicate to my group all was fine and dandy when it wasn't. I feared that if I were to report one more slip, they would say, "You aren't trying hard enough! Further, your lack of sobriety makes our group look bad! Get out of here!"

Of course, there is a difference between slipping during recovery and slipping *out* of recovery. With one, we claim spiritual progress, not spiritual perfection, and continue with our program of recovery. With the other, we dive head first into denial, dishonesty, self-pity, and eventual withdrawal from the program, deciding our addiction is more of a friend than the Twelve Steps.

But when we fear our group or sponsor, the motto, "From Shame to Grace" can remind us that "good works" does not a recovery make. It is faith—faith in our Higher Power, in the Twelve Steps, in our SAA members, and in SAA itself—that allows us to find "spiritual progress" in the midst of failure. And from that faith "good works"—and recovery—will come.

So when is a slip one too many? That is a question to be answered only by you, your sponsor, your group. However, I do know one thing: When I have slipped on my path of spiritual progress, I have always landed on a pillow of Grace. That's why I come back. I hope you do, too.

The Vampire Revealed

The vampire sucks blood, creating a victim who, in turn, also becomes a vampire. A vampire is killed by a silver cross to the heart.

Is this a myth? Or is the vampire symbolic, expressing a reality beyond the scope of the physical world?

Growing up in a dysfunctional family, I was a victim as a child. I grew up to victimize myself the same way I was victimized. Since the way I related to myself was victimizing, I related to others this same way, victimizing them.

I was victimized because my emotional and spiritual self were sucked dry, devoured by the diseases of two sick parents. Light energy is the spiritual force within us, our aliveness. It's no accident Darth Vader represented darkness. Blood is a physical representation of the spiritual light energy. My light energy was stolen. I was robbed by my sense of I AMness. Being sucked dry created a huge emptiness inside, a spiritual void, a vacuum. Nature abhors a vacuum. So for 38 years I searched, looking all around me, grabbing at anything to fill up the void. I tried sex, alcohol, a fast-track career, material possessions, clothes, food, and a marriage partner. All of these attempts came up empty. The gnawing emptiness inside was worse than ever. The attempts and their consequences victimized me and others, for I was not being true to myself. I sucked my own energy for meaningless pursuits and sucked others in along with me. Misery does love company.

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The Vampire Revealed (continued)

Fear consumed me, although I never “let it show.” I was “too strong” to let it stop me, always having to prove to myself with my aggressive actions that I wasn’t scared. This dishonesty slowly seeped into other areas of my life. Oh, I was cash register honest, considered a trustworthy, respectable person. My major corporate employer continued to increase my responsibilities. But I was dishonest with the person most important in my life: **me**.

Fear is always willing to work overtime. Buried and unconforted, fear begets more fear. Fear is the absence of unconditional love, a state of being light energy. And so the vampire stalks in the night, the darkness, the absence of light. Where is the vampire found? In the cemetery, symbol of death, living without light. Death as the end of physical life gives rise to great fear among us mortals.

As the vampire stalks, the terror and craziness build. The vampire must be stopped. The job is too big for any one person alone; many are recruited — there is power in a group. The vampire meets the end via a silver cross in his heart. The heart is the home of feelings, the source from which life flows. Silver represents purity to me, singleness of purpose, and simplicity. The cross represents God. God is love. When God is brought to the heart with a singleness of purpose, the vampire is killed.

I am killing the vampire inside me, the vampire I made. I have found a trickle to slowly fill up the void. Unconditional love is the state of being that opens the door to the void; spiritual nourishment is the trickle. I pray, I turn my will over, I say affirmations. I found my inner self, my real **me**. **I share. I love. I am alive.**

— Julie H.
Michigan

In Utter Simplicity

For several weeks, a thought has been nagging my mind. Spirituality has to be simple enough for even the most feeble to receive its gifts. God certainly would not leave out the feeble

My mind was also reminded of something I read: God’s methods will baffle the world of intellects. I have to admit that I have addictively spent hours and hours, at times, “trying” to gain spiritual insight; instead of simply allowing the gifts of insight to unfold. I’m not alone, though. Many Twelve Steppers do the same.

This week I was brought back to a book written by a man who was perplexed by his own continuous cycle of victories and defeats. He, too, was not content with accepting this cycle as natural and asked for answers. He, too, received the answer of God’s simplicity.

Most of us know that God can do for us what has been impossible for ourselves to do. How rarely do we take that trust and faith to the degree of actually “expecting” God to do it. Believing is not enough — I need to also “expect.”

Last night a pleasant thought came to me. Spirituality is like baking a cake from scratch. We “add” a variety of ingredients such as: fellowship, honesty, God, affirmations, forgiveness, compassion, awareness, and an attitude of gratitude. We stir the ingredients together, let it bake in the energy of God to see the rising of serenity, happiness, and LOVE. Yes, we “expect” the cake to rise.

I can add all of these ingredients to my life, but if I do not take my faith to the degree of *expecting* the cake to rise, I will never enjoy the desserts.

SAA, thanks for being a part of the desserts.

In learning Simplicity,

— Linda

NSO REPORTS

Notes From the NSO Office

Office Wish List Update — Douglas P.

Items donated to the National Office from SAA Members:

1. A used copier which is more efficient — it is saving us a good deal of money compared to our old copier.
2. Two desks of which we were in dire need.
3. A used two terminal, second computer system, which will serve as additional storage and volunteers will use this system to help our needs for data entry.

We would still like to acquire:

1. Laser printer
2. Fax machine

We recently purchased an inexpensive electric folding machine for \$91.00. Donations are tax deductible — and may not exceed \$1,000 per year.

NSO Board Report — National Service Organization Board of SAA

The NSO Board will soon be presenting a number of changes to our By-Laws that would:

- Establish alternates to take over the seat of an NSO member who quits or is disqualified from service
- Put the Literature Committee into the By-Laws (it is not currently in them) with language closely matching that which now governs the NSO Board
- Change the manner in which the Literature Committee Chair is elected

We do not expect these changes will require much discussion, as they are not controversial. The 1991 Convention delegates will be asked to approve these changes, and any so approved will need to be ratified at the 1992 Convention before they become a part of the SAA By-Laws.

There is one topic, however, that requires thoughtful discussion by our fellowship. It involves limiting the terms of members of the NSO Board and NSO Literature Committee. We believe that most 12-step fellowships have provisions that limit the time a member can serve in an elected position. There are good arguments for us to do the same, and there are also good arguments for us not to do it yet. Here are a few of each. Please discuss these in your group and let your delegate know your views.

For limiting terms to ____ years of consecutive service in a position (the NSO Board has looked primarily at a four-year limit):

- Ours is a program of principles over personalities; having any member occupy a spot for many years tends to put personalities over principles.
- Any incumbent would probably have a significant advantage over any other candidate, so even if a Board or Literature Committee member was not very good, that member could be difficult to replace.
- Serving is a privilege and an honor, and we should make sure more people can enjoy it.
- New blood brings new ideas and new energy.

Against currently limiting terms:

- SAA is, at the national level, very young. We do not have a large number of members who both satisfy the recommended guidelines for national service and are willing to serve.
- The NSO Board and the Literature Committee have had trouble keeping their members. The NSO Board alone has had four of seven area seats vacated by resignations for personal reasons in the nearly two years since the Board was first elected. There will be only two or three Board members come Convention 1991 who will have more than a year's experience in their positions, and if any of those resign or are disqualified to continue on, we could be in pretty tough shape.

Continued on Page 4

NSO Board Report (continued)

- The Board and Literature Committee need some continuity now; we have not been around enough to have much institutional memory.
- Projects undertaken by the Literature Committee can take several years to complete.
- The NSO Board only meets together twice a year. As we do not have the funds to bring our Board members together four times a year the way AA does, our terms may need to be longer, at least for now.
- As we only have a half-time staff person now, and as some Board members have taken on considerable work in regard to conventions and other matters, to lose that service work by the Board members would place an extra burden on our staff person.

There may be some very powerful arguments not suggested above. These just happen to be the ones the NSO has discussed.

The NSO Board agrees that limits must come on time of service. The questions now are: Is this the time to establish those limits? If we do, for what length of time should a person be able to serve? How much time must elapse after serving before reelection is possible? We encourage you to give this matter discussion, and if you wish, share your ideas with us even before our June convention in Grand Rapids, Michigan.

General NSO Notes

- One of the Convention Keynote Speakers will be - Marv N. of Mpls. Mn. - long time S.A.A. member and former national office manager. Plan to attend!
- Please donate to the convention general scholarship fund, we do not have enough funds to meet the needs of what has already been requested of the NSO.
- We ask that groups and individuals continue to remember the NSO with donations — the service work of the fellowship depends on your support and care.
- The Revised Group Guide is now available and we encourage all groups to obtain a copy. The revised copy is streamlined and includes VITAL information for groups and for group connection to the fellowship as a whole. The National Literature Committee worked hard to produce this work of literature.

N.S.O. Teleconference Summaries: 3-9-91 and 3-23-91

In attendance:

| | |
|--|--|
| Linda M. – Literature Committee Chair | Ron A. – At large member (not present on 3-23) |
| Ed G. – S.W. Regional board member | N.E. Region – vacant |
| Pam H. – S.E. Regional board member | S.C. Region – vacant |
| John B. – N.C. Regional board member | N.W. Region – vacant |
| Arnold D. – G.L. Regional board member (not present 3-9) | Douglas P. – Staff |
| Karl H. – At large member – N.S.O. Chair | |

The primary topic of both meetings was the revision of Bylaws. In brief, what was discussed were changes to be presented to the membership in June (and if accepted, ratified the following year) regarding the following:

- Literature Committee
- Going to a parliamentary system
- Having the committee elect a chair, proposed changes for the Board allowing several board members to serve one-year terms in the near vicinity of the national office for operation/supervision purposes, etc.

There was discussion about limiting terms of nationally elected positions. No resolution was arrived at. It was decided that a letter on this topic would be written by one of the board members, putting the issue out to the fellowship for consideration.

Copies of proposed bylaw revisions will be sent out to delegates prior to the convention or will be made available to delegates at the convention.

A motion was proposed and passed to extend an invitation to other sex addiction fellowships to attend our board meetings at the conference in June.

One of the board members discussed that person's experience at the SCA national convention in Los Angeles where that person sat in on SCA's board meetings.

The next teleconference is scheduled for 4-20-91.

New groups in April of 1991:

| | |
|-------------------|----------------------------------|
| Munchen – Germany | Hagerstown – Md. |
| Mt. Clemens – Mi. | St. Louis – Mo. |
| Sugar Land – Tx. | Grand Rapids – Mi., two meetings |
| Stafford – Tx. | Milwaukee – Wi. |
| Vista – Ca. | Manhattan – Ny. |
| Fort Wayne – In. | Roswell – Nm. |
| Warren – Oh. | Calgary, Canada |
| Owatonna – Mn. | |

**S.A.A. Income Statement
1/01/91–3/31/91**

| | Twin Cities Intergroup | National Service Organization | Literature | Total |
|--------------------------------------|---------------------------|-------------------------------------|------------|--------|
| Income: | | | | |
| Sales | | | 10327 | 10327 |
| Donations | 2430 | 3387 | | 5817 |
| Commissions | 529 | 876 | <1405> | |
| Total Income | 2959 | 4263 | 8922 | 16144 |
| Personnel Expense: | | | | |
| Salaries | 2047 | 2048 | | 4095 |
| Taxes & Benefits | 405 | 404 | | 809 |
| Consultants | 72 | 72 | | 144 |
| Cost of Sales: | | | | |
| Literature | | | 4898 | 4898 |
| Medallions | | | 1185 | 1185 |
| Other: | | | | |
| Printing | | 994 | 700 | 1694 |
| Supplies | | | 263 | 263 |
| Postage | | 44 | 988 | 1032 |
| Staff Travel | 17 | 18 | 18 | 53 |
| Telephone | 509 | 931 | | 1440 |
| Conference Calls | | 296 | | 296 |
| Rent | 420 | 375 | | 795 |
| Board | | 891 | | 891 |
| Sales Tax | | | 100 | 100 |
| Miscellaneous | 89 | 83 | 61 | 233 |
| Prior Year | 168 | 153 | 15 | 336 |
| Total Expense | 3727 | 6309 | 8228 | 18264 |
| Income Over <Under> Expense | <768> | <2046> | 694 | <2120> |

A Report on Our Questionnaire

A questionnaire appeared on our group registration update form. Of the groups who responded using the new form, the following percentages of groups reach out to addicts in their area in these specific ways.

- 70% List group contact information with an A.A. Intergroup.
- 32% List group contact information with a community service/referral agency.
- 21% List group contact information in a newspaper.
- 50% List group contact information in a local recovery newsletter/paper.
- 48% List group contact information in a local phone book.
- 80% Give out brochures to professionals or agencies in their area.
- 51% Speak at hospitals, treatment centers, or institutions.
- 45% Put on meetings which are open to nonaddicts.
- 50% Organize and put on regional S.A.A. conferences or retreats.

Some groups noted outreach efforts such as; forming an intergroup, posting flyers, placing recovery books or pamphlets in libraries, and mailings to professionals and agencies.

Of the hundreds of groups that updated their group registration, less than one hundred utilized the update form, responded to this questionnaire, and are represented in these statistics.

**OUR FELLOWSHIP IS GROWING SPIRITUALLY —
BY CARRYING THE MESSAGE TO THOSE WHO
STILL SUFFER.**

Thank you for responding.

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

SAA ORDERING INFORMATION — Summer/Fall 1991

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

Please allow five weeks for delivery. Prices include shipping and handling. With overseas orders, please include an additional 20% to help defray the additional postage, and expect a longer delivery time (items shipped surface mail only). Orders of more than \$25.00 within the United States, please use a non-PO Box address so that we may ship packages U.P.S.

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 _____ |
| _____ | or 12 for 25.00 _____ |
| _____ First Step to Recovery | @ 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: _____

Poetry of Recovery

My Friend

The day was cold and bleak,
when I knelt at your altar to pray.

My soul cried out, "My God, my God,
why have you abandoned me this way?"

I used the words you did, my Jesus,
as your passion and death were in sight.

My soul was heavy and at unrest,
as I cried to you my plight.

It was then you whispered to my soul,
"My dear, dear one, I have never
abandoned you.

As my friend, Simon, helped me carry
my heavy cross to the place where I
would die — A special gift I've given to you,
a precious someone — a friend.

This special friend will be at your side
when you need him most.
Your weary body and uneasy spirit
he'll tend

With me, your Savior, on one side of you
and your friend on the other, you'll never
be abandoned by either of us.

We love you as you are, not as you
think you should be, or as others
would have you be.

You'll never be abandoned by
either of us —

Don't you see?

We both love you so

We love you so."

— Clay R.
North Dakota

The Twelve Gifts

1. The gift of "God"
2. The gift of "Life"
3. The gift of "The Spirit"
4. The gift of "Truth/Honesty"
5. The gift of a "Sharing Fellowship"
6. The gift of "Choice"
7. The gift of "Forgiveness"
8. The gift of "Gratitude"
from which evolves,
9. The gift of "Freedom"
10. The gift of "Serenity"
11. The gift of "Happiness"
12. The gift of "LOVE"

Untitled

The THIRST for deep lovely
Pristine succulent innocence,

The HUNGER for fine soft
Virgin touches and kisses,

The LONGING to fullness
Far-reaching delicate exotic,

The ABSOLUTE moistness of endless
raining down and welling up.

The meal and its NUTRITION
Melon, fruit, berry, bread, and beverages.

The love and its NURTURANCE
Gentle, healing, attentive.

This is the

thirst, hunger, longing

the absolute . . .

Worth the Quest
Toward the one

— Alex B.

What Hasn't Worked for Me

1. Top of the list is lack of faith — placing my focus on not believing and expecting freedom from lack of control, lack of choice, lack of direction, lack of honesty. Placing my focus on "I'm not free" instead of "I shall be free." I forget that freedom is a "promise."
2. Placing my focus on blame — blaming my past, blaming my parents, blaming the sick world, blaming others, blaming myself, or even blaming a wounded child; not accepting "what was" and "what wasn't" and not letting go of it to the past.

Comment: My definition of forgiveness is fully accepting "what was" or "what wasn't" and letting go of it; placing it in the past where it belongs to free up my today. Forgiveness is sort of a gift to myself that gives me the "gift of today." To not forgive is also lack of faith.

3. Lack of attitude of gratitude or appreciation — focusing on "one more," "what's wrong," "what's missing," "if only," "what isn't," "what wasn't," "what I don't have," "errors," "judging self or others," criticism, worry about tomorrow, etc. These also are indicators of a lack of faith in a "promise of freedom."
4. Lack of full surrender to God's guidance, direction, and will — hanging on to chunks of my own guidance and direction, while reaping the consequences. This, also, is a lack of faith in God and His promise of freedom.
5. Allowing myself to be ruled and beaten up by the "shoulds" and "should nots" (worldly rules of obligation) of a sick world. Not honoring who I am and my own special gifts to share with the world.
6. Dishonesty and indulging in the games of pretending a false self, a false ability, a false intellect, a false recovery, a false achievement, a false affection, a false love, a false caring, a false feeling, and not having the courage to openly admit these games, in fellowship.
7. Having pity parties and playing the victim role.

Comment: To me playing the victim is the same as saying there is no promise of freedom, and simply indicates a lack of faith.

8. Lack of prayer and meditation — not setting aside the time for communication with God. Lack of faith in the power of prayer.
9. Lack of using affirmations in times of distress. Lack of faith in the power of affirmations.
10. Isolation, hiding, being an ostrich, running away — not reaching out for the help and power of fellowship; lack of faith in the power of fellowship.
11. Lack of risking sharing, chairing, service, support, flubbing up, spontaneity, being creative, letting go of the familiar, inviting the unpredictable, etc.
12. Keeping my involvement in Twelve Step programs a secret from others, as if I should be ashamed, instead of proud and thankful.

Going back to where I went off track,

— Linda

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 July newsletter by May 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.