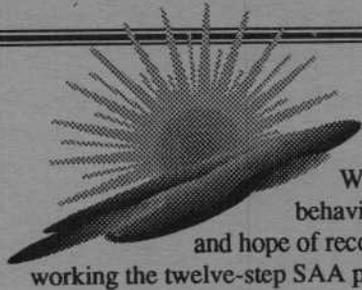


THE *Plain Brown Rapper* The SAA Newsletter

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July, 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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From the Editor

We receive letters periodically from recovering persons commenting on the *Plain Brown Rapper*. Recently, there have been a few points brought up that I consider important to address.

One recovering woman asked why her poem had not been included in the *PBR*. I believe it's important for all contributors to know that due to the number of poems submitted to us each month, it may be some months before a poem actually appears in the *PBR*. Please remember your submission is important to us, and your patience is requested if we don't publish your poem or story right away. Also, we receive fewer stories than poems, so they will appear much sooner when received.

Another person writes "[Some of] the poetry I saw . . . was lacking any hope for the readers. Negative poetry lacking hope should be considered as another way of spreading the disease of addiction, not the hope of recovery. I would really like to see poetry that engages the miracle of SAA more often in your newsletters." I believe the reader has a point. We are a program of hope and recovery, not despair. Yet a significant part of recovery is pain. And sometimes that pain has not been resolved. Hope can be hidden in the knowledge that others share that pain or tragedy. Please write us and let us know what you think about this issue.

Lastly, I would like to clarify that on a rare occasion a poem or story does not appear in the *PBR* at all. It may be the poem or story is just too long and so, regrettably, it is not published. Other times, it has been determined that the content is not consistent with the goal of the *PBR*, which is to be "informative, sensitive and expressing the experiences, strength, and hope of recovering members." We would also like your opinion on this issue.

It's important for us to serve you the best we can through the *PBR*, so please feel free to comment on this "tool of recovery." Tools need polishing now and then to maintain their usefulness; and this tool is no exception.

Believing in the Program

Recovery is a road we all travel. We all work our own program "not alone." There are a lot of us walking different pathways. I was once told there is no elevator in a 12-step program.

I am learning the warning signals of my sex addiction. When the urge comes I know there is some pain to feel. I've learned I need to put it aside until I am in a safe place to feel it, meaning at my home. I am learning I can feel it without acting on the feelings. I heard a long time ago from a friend in the program, feelings will not hurt me. That person is right. It takes me awhile for words to enter within. I become a stronger person when I feel the pain. The pain is very deep. I do not need to do it alone. God is right there holding me as I cry.

I want to thank my friends in the SAA program. I pray for them every day.

My favorite steps are the 3rd and 11th steps. I would not be where I am today if I hadn't taken the 1st step and entered those doors four years ago.

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Believing in the Program (continued)

I now have quality sobriety — I've got 7-1/2 years in AA, 2-1/2 years in ACA, and now I have 2-3 months or longer sobriety in SAA at a time. I use the program now. I go to 12-step meetings and work a real program. I take my program very seriously. It keeps me alive and sober.

I do not shame myself anymore. That only seeds the addiction. I've done a lot for me. I went and took a writing class at a college and received a B+. I entered a drawing in a fair and got a 3rd place ribbon. I am using the energy positively.

When I use the energy positively it amazes me and builds my self-esteem. My biggest goal is to be a spiritual counselor. And to also have my son living with me.

First, I continue to work on me. I am enjoying life a lot more. I can honestly say the program has saved my life.

I am a beautiful, bright, courageous woman. I believe in me.

Grateful survivor,

— *Marjorie*

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*

Letter From Clay

Hi, it's me, Clay.

I was just sitting here thinking of where my addiction has lead me.

All these years of wasted time and energy because of my addiction.

I'm 49 years old now and I thought as I got older, it would be easier to handle. But it isn't. If anything, the struggle gets harder. And the addiction gets deeper and I get weaker. Acting out and pornography are such a deep part of my addiction, I hardly know where they end and I begin.

It's important for you to reach out to struggling addicts like myself who live in areas where no SAA program is available.

It was only through the grace of God I finally met an SAA member and have become friends, as we struggle together on the road of sobriety. That member has offered me help, understanding, and most important of all, friendship. The Lord works in mysterious ways. I prayed for someone to come into my life to help me understand what was happening to me. And finally my friend was there.

I have a lot of rough days, but I also have a few good ones and someday I'll have more good ones than bad. I'll never say, "I quit." I might say, "I'm tired. Does anyone care? Am I alone?" But never "I quit."

Until next time — all SAA members and all those struggling in areas where there is no SAA, you are all in my prayers.

— *Clay*

NSO REPORTS

Notes From the NSO Office

Office Wish List Update

Items we would like to acquire for the National Office:

1. Laser printer
2. Fax machine

Donations are tax deductible — and may not exceed \$1,000 per year.

Report From the N.S.O.

N.S.O. Teleconference — 5-19-91

Present: Linda M. — Literature Chair
 Ed G. — South West Region
 Pam H. — South East Region
 John B. — North Central Region
 Karl H. — At large
 Ron A. — At large
 Arnold D. — Great Lakes Region

Absent: Vacant — North East
 Vacant — North West
 Vacant — South Central
 Douglas P. — Staff

Items discussed:

1. Convention items — Presenters selling books at the convention bookstore: There was interest expressed to table this item until we can discuss it further, in Grand Rapids.
2. Election procedures discussion for Twin Cities board members.
3. Tax exempt status/incorporation, an update on our progress.
4. Financial report was given and discussed.
5. Meeting of the 12 Step fellowships in Phoenix. A board member will be attending.
6. Arrival and transportation concerns for the preconvention board meetings.
7. Translation of sex addiction materials into foreign languages.

There will be further discussion at the conference — focusing on SAA literature.

Respectfully submitted,

Douglas P.

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Report From the N.S.O. (continued)

Note of correction from last month's N.S.O. notes: It was said that the literature committee will be moving to a parliamentary system if the bylaw changes are adopted. This statement does not fully explain the substance of the proposed change, which is that if changed, the literature chair would be chosen from among the ranks of the literature committee, and not nationally elected. Discussion on the board and literature committee seemed to have supported that change, because, like the structure on the board, it makes sense that that body itself should elect its own leader.

Newly-Registered S.A.A. Groups

| | |
|------------------------------------|----------------------------|
| British Columbia, Capbell River | PA – Butler |
| CA. – Jackson | TX – San Antonio |
| IA – Cedar Rapids | UT – Vernal (incarcerated) |
| MI – Muskegon (incarcerated group) | VA – Winchester |
| Ontario Ottawa | |

“Acting In” Group Reply

In answer to the inquiry about the “acting in” group in Dallas, unfortunately, the group folded. There was not enough interest to support the meeting.

— Victoria

Surrender

Surrender in the past always meant to me that *I had to do* God's will for me. Since I read the Bible and prayed and I believed I knew what God wanted me to do, then it was up to me — by myself — under my own power, to do it. I believed God's part in helping me accomplish His will was just to make sure I knew what *I had to do*.

I know today that I am not able to do God's will in my life by myself. I need God's help and daily ask Him for that help by using the guidelines of the 11th Step: “Sought through prayer and meditation to improve our conscious contact with God as we understood Him, praying only for knowledge of His will for us and the power to carry that out.”

The following acrostic displays somemore of my thoughts today about surrender.

| | |
|---|--|
| S | acrifice may be required |
| U | nder His care I will be happiest |
| R | eal help and strength come from God |
| R | ely on God; He is trustworthy |
| E | veryone needs God's help; I'm not alone |
| N | ever to face my addiction alone again |
| D | o not give up when I start to take control back and slip |
| E | ven I can be helped; no one is beyond God's help |
| R | ealizing that God can and will give me the knowledge of His will and the power to carry that out |

— Steve M.
Indiana



The Child Within

The Child Within in Sex Addiction Connection

I find it hard to write the word "incest" because that implies that a family member was guilty. Dreams have been a great influence in my life. I looked back at my dream journal from 1985, when I was in the height of my sexual addiction. I read three or four dreams that had a crying baby in them — my subconscious was trying to help me remember. My action was to pick her up and to comfort her.

The struggle with the painful realization that someone close to me had abused me took its toll on my life's activities. It has been hard to focus on the task at hand . . . even when I thought that I was doing my best. For instance, I have been trying to get a professional license (each time I tried my best) three times before I passed. That was so painful, but I tried to be gentle with myself knowing that I was sexually abused and remembering.

This past summer I got in touch with a new mountain of shame. I realized that it was an "in the womb" experience — it was my mother's shame I felt, not mine. She was ashamed that she was pregnant with me at the age of 42. Her oldest daughter just had a baby out of wedlock. I wrote this piece and read it at her grave:

Shame, accumulative mountain
weighing on me, squelching my self-worth,
I have named you, you black cloak
that has smothered my giftedness.
I will pierce your darkness with truth,
dismantle your power with courageous confrontation,
sweep you aside to nurture self-worth.
You descended upon me in the womb
in my innocent embryonic state.
My delicate nature oppressed with
my mother's shame.
I disown you! You are not mine!
I will pull out your deep reaching roots
from my embryonic center. I will remove
every last one of them!
Self-worth, crushed, crippled little thing,
I will find you, I want you, I love you!
Let me gently hold your fragile,
frightened center. Trust my hands
to protect you, shape you, guide you
into the God-given gift you were meant to be.
It will take time . . . and that we have. . . .

At the grave, I pulled a stem of grass from the place over her heart, and placed it in my journal as a sign of peace between the two of us.

— Francie E.

A Traditional Column

The Fourth Tradition

In S.A.A. each group is self-governing, dictated to only by its own group conscience. Implicit in this freedom is the responsibility for the group to conduct itself in such a way that S.A.A. as a whole is not injured. This means keeping in mind the guiding principles of the other traditions. This fourth tradition serves the same function at the group level as the Fourth Step does at the level of the individual. It calls for taking an inventory. This, in turn, means asking questions such as the group's fulfillment of its primary purpose (Tradition Five), the group's lack of affiliation in any way outside the workings of S.A.A. (Traditions Ten and Six), and the group's public relations policy (Tradition Eleven).

Aside from the responsibility, the freedom of group autonomy implies confidence that just as the individual can survive a trial and error process, so, too, the group entity is capable of learning from its own mistakes, capable of figuring out what will work, with only the loosest guidelines.

— Elizabeth



Prison Outreach Reports

A prison outreach fund has been created. This fund is aimed at supplying S.A.A. literature to people who are incarcerated and sexually addicted. Some future funds will also go toward meeting the expenses of a (hopefully) soon-to-be-formed prison outreach committee.

Current account balance: \$0.00

I'm asking you, the readers of *The Plain Brown Rapper*, for help now. If you have ideas, suggestions, or personal experiences that would help in our goal in prison outreach, would you please contact me or the N.S.O. office?

You can send letters to me at this address:

Arnold D.
P.O. Box 90735
Burton, MI 48509-0735

Thank you for your help and support!

— Arnold D.
N.S.O. Rep., Great Lakes Region

Poetry of Recovery

Amends

We've done so well
And yet so poorly,
Bruised and beautiful,
Land of my birth

Still, neither black nor bright
Disturb the debt and the duty we share:
The great amends we both deserve
And surely must bear.

— Roy K.
Tucson

Escape

Escape with compulsivity, isolation,
resentment, numbing, alcohol,
sex, cigarettes, food, bitterness, blame,
and depression.

I want to stop hurting,
to stop being victimized
I want to go home,
I am empty, alone, I hunger.
I crave touch, intimacy, and sex.

I want to see God,
I want a million dollars,
I want to stop being so selfish,
I want to learn to share.
I want to stop crying,
I want my wound to heal.
I want to love myself
more than I do now.
I want to learn how to live.

— Bob
Oregon

Bodies Damaged

The bodies were fresh and alive.
Then they were shut in,
the darkness.
The doors to the sunlight were closed.
The freshness was gone.
They were left alone
to survive

Survivor,
— Marjorie

End of the Day

The sun on the mountaintop is such a sight;
Even when it's going down, the radiance is bright.
The majestic purpose of the mountain reflects the sunset;
The beautiful orange, red, and yellow are spoiled by a jet.
Then an eagle soars down above the meadow;
And from high above, it spreads its huge shadow.
A large buck deer is silhouetted by the pines;
His huge rack stands out with its fourteen tines.
The eagle dives and snares a rabbit for dinner;
the deer watches silently without a glimmer.
I watch the beauty of the day disappear;
And I listen to the sounds of the night come near;
A slight breeze rustles the leaves of the aspen trees;
And a lonely coyote howls for a mate to please.
I hear the water of the stream as it hits the rocks;
And the screech of a nearby owl as it gives me shocks.
The crisp night air has become quite cool,
as I put out my fire, for that's the rule.
I crawl into bed and remember the sights and sounds of the day;
"Oh, that tomorrow will be this good! Thanks, God," I pray.

— Walter P.

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 August newsletter by June 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.