
Plain Brown Rapper



The purpose of the Plain Brown Rapper is to be a voice of the SAA Membership, published by and for those recovering from compulsive sexual behaviors. We strive to be informative, sensitive, and responsive in expressing the experiences, strengths and hope of recovering sex addicts. Unless otherwise noted, the content of the PBR reflects the opinions of the writers and editors and not necessarily of the National Service Organization, the Literature Committee, or Sex Addicts Anonymous as a whole. Contents © S.A.A. N.S.O.

Faulty Braking System

It was like a switch went off in my head. Suddenly, I had tunnel vision. All I could think about was acting out. Nothing else entered my mind, no thoughts of consequences, no thoughts of risks. Finding a woman to sexually assault was the only option in my brain. Some great mental wall kept out all sane thoughts; perversity remained. I started cruising in my car, hunting the right victim. Not just any woman would do; she had to be pretty. Eventually I found her. The great pit in my stomach swelled larger. Then I did it. I forcibly touched her where no stranger had

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LETTERS

March 14, 1993

Dear Plain Brown Rapper:
I loved your latest issue so much that it was hard to pass on my copy as I usually do. I especially needed to read the conclusion of Nadine's Sixth Step. I too need to feel God's love in terms of grace rather than as a reward for constant denigrations. I also feel that the new size is more manageable.

As Michigan Intergroup Representative for the Ann Arbor Friday night Womens' Sanctuary Group, I wrote a Christmas card and brief note to the Grand Rapids Women's Group for support and networking. The results were very gratifying. They recently responded and I have sent them information about our group. I am hoping that we can keep in written contact.

Along the same lines, I

would like to contact the new For Women Only group listed in Rap-Around. Can you please send me a contact address for them? Starting this coorespondance has been a boost for my program and I'm wondering if you could help me further by putting a notice in one of the issues. It might read something like the following:

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PBR Editorial Staff

Dave M.
Fred J.
Lisa G.
Zoe

Submit articles before the 15th for consideration in the following issue.
Send to: PBR, P.O.Box 3038
Mpls. MN 55403

Articles from or about those of us who have been imprisoned on account of our sexual addiction, with the understanding that...

We're All Doing Time



Home Steel Home

My home is a big headache
A place of steel and stone,
An iron cell, a place in hell,
That no man wants to own.

My home in hell is one small cell,
Where lights glow night and day.
Although I rage and pace my cage,
I still must stay and pay.

But don't be sad, it's not so bad
Cause I hide it deep within,
No trace outside, it's deep inside,
What my trip through hell has been.

John G. • Liberty County Jail, Texas

Part II of **Beyond My Wildest Dreams**

by John A

...I had no religious convictions. In fact, I had rather abandoned the idea that God even cared. How could He? As I grew older, the schemes I used to set up sex with other children grew more and more complex and conniving in their nature. It was also at this time that a boy my own age assisted me in experiencing my first orgasm and I truly began to lose control over my sexual desires; I was 13.

Once I lost my virginity, I became destined to find ways to relive the excitement of that first time as much and as often as possible. Drawn to it as if compelled by some outside force, I withdrew deeper and deeper into a fantasy world of masturbation, which was always followed by tremendous guilt and shame. Even though I felt defective and evil, I continued to pursue my sexual fantasies.

As time passed and the obsession to find sex became stronger, I feared ridicule and humiliation should my secret be found out. By growing up knowing that I was probably homosexual, I felt that there was no one to whom I could turn for support. I was becoming something society abhorred. I didn't want to be this way, but the attraction toward other males was something I couldn't control. It became a fact of life for me.

I began taking risks with people I didn't know and began orchestrating more and more sexual events. I started hitchhiking on a stretch of interstate highway near my home because I knew that "people do things to young boys" in those circumstances. The danger was only an added element of excitement and made the experi-

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ence somewhat unreal. I would later equate the experience to that of taking a narcotic. It provided a rush — and for the moment, took away my pain.

I pursued jobs in businesses where known sexual encounters had taken place, hoping that I too, would find such an encounter. The obsession for sex and nurturing by anyone overwhelmed my sense of practicality and safety.

I felt so alone. There was no one in the world I could talk to about what I was feeling. There was no one who could understand my feelings of guilt and worthlessness. There was certainly no one to whom I could tell the truth about my homosexuality. I felt like the scum of the earth—worthless and disgusting. I

withdrew deeper inside of myself. Thoughts of suicide emerged more frequently and I would soon make attempts on my own life.

Throughout high school, alcohol and drugs played a prominent role in my existence. They

... The danger was only an added element of excitement and made the experience somewhat unreal. I would later equate the experience to that of taking a narcotic. It provided a rush—and for the moment, took away my pain.

too, like the sexual fantasies and masturbation, helped to mask what I was truly feeling. I honed my survival instincts and began watching the behaviors of people around me. I

learned to become all that you wanted me to be and I could forget, if for only a little while, the hurt I was feeling inside. I had to—no one could possibly like me for the person I was. I had to survive—and survive I did, the best way I could. I became wiser to the ways of

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the street and better learned to
project the image I believed
you wanted to see.

**I became a
chameleon, changing color
to suit my circumstances
and to help me survive.**

I began working as a prostitute and turned six to eight tricks a night for cash, drugs and alcohol. I knew it was dangerous and I'd thought about the humiliation I would suffer should I ever get arrested or beaten up, but it didn't seem to matter. The sex was more important than the possible repercussions of my actions.

My sexual encounters were always anonymous and sometimes abusive and violent, yet it was still human contact. I was so hungry to be touched by another human being that I'd do anything for it. Eventually I'd have run-ins with the law on alcohol and drug-related

charges yet somehow avoided the humiliation of arrest on any sex charges.

When I turned eighteen and I could legally drink in bars, I moved my business inside. I quit high school just weeks before graduation and immersed myself in a subculture whose existence revolved solely around my three most ardent passions: sex, drugs and alcohol. I was young, reasonably attractive, and in my mind, possibly the most passionate and accommodating sexual partner I could be.

I learned fast and I learned well how to service my partner's needs at any and all costs. I applauded my good fortune at discovering a way to earn a living doing what it was I did best. I didn't think there was a problem with it. I was in complete control! I was finally popular, important, desirable and worthwhile. Certainly this was no problem! How could it be? I thought even

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any right to. Immediately, she started screaming and I fled.

Racing away I thought I'd soon be safe but then I heard another set of footsteps pounding after mine. Oh God! a bouncer had heard the screams, seen me running, and taken off in pursuit. Were I in the excellent physical condition I once had been, I may have gotten away—but not that night. He and one of his buddies caught me. They pummeled me with their weightlifter fists and knees. My face cracked against the cold, wet sidewalk., again, and again.

Soon the police arrived. The cuffs went on. Eternity passed in the back seat of the squad car. A bright light blinded my eyes through the window. "Is that him?" a man's voice asked. "Yes", replied a woman.

Later, in the cold, hard jail cell, I felt the torment in mind and body. The consequences flooded into my brain. The walls that had kept them out collapsed, and in they rushed.

How could I have been so stupid and insensitive? How could I risk losing everything important to me—my family, my job, my home, my freedom?

Time moved mercifully forward. In the following days I came to see how I had come to a such a miserable state of being. Though I had a high paying job, nice house, and beautiful family, I had been miserable. My work was frustrating and unrewarding. My self image had been going downhill for years.

My life had been full of things I thought I should do, and void of things I wanted to do. Unexpressed anger had been welling up, growing harder to contain as month yielded to month. Unable to control myself I had tried to control my wife by expecting perfection from her. I wanted her actions to be perfect. I wanted her body to be perfect. I grew to loathe her because, as pretty and as good as she is, perfect she is not. And I drank

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less about the physical ramifications of such a lifestyle. I knew that sexually transmitted diseases were out there, but if I ever was so unfortunate as to contract one, it was just a matter of getting a shot at the clinic. That didn't seem like such a serious price to pay and certainly worth the risk involved to maintain my sexual and chemical needs. Besides, I was convinced that I was really the enlightened one.

The people who held regular jobs and lived boring, predictable lives had it all wrong! I knew what real living was about and this about and this was it!

During those times when I beat my body pretty hard, I often denied I was really hurting myself. No encounter, regardless of its sometimes violent outcome, seemed to be enough to make me stop. I resigned myself to the fact that

I was probably destined to continue living this way. As a result, I went on with this demanding pace. I remember thinking one day that I would probably never reach thirty years old and if that was the case, I should probably enjoy what time I had left. I proceeded to bring new meaning to the phrase "life in the fast lane."

By age 19, I developed sexually transmitted Hepatitis B. There was no cure, only treatment with proper diet and rest. I couldn't hold a job or continue in my current vocation. I moved back home with Mother and her third husband. This didn't last very long since it put a serious damper on my lifestyle.

I moved out within a month and started it all over again—not telling anyone that I was ill. Instead, I operated from a position of "buyers beware." If my sex partners were willing to take the risk of anonymous sex with a prostitute, then they

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daily to numb out the pain I felt within.

The following years had been a decline in a distant sort of way. I knew I was going downhill like a car on a long gradual grade, but I told myself I could put the brakes on at anytime. But on that horrible night the walls had kept me from even thinking about braking or turning. I was out of control.

It may surprise you to hear that eight years before the night that my demon unleashed itself, I had graduated from a three year outpatient sexual offender treatment program. I was happy then, doing all the things needed to take care of myself. I was building myself up, expressing my feeling and exercising. In short, I was taking care of myself. Over time, though, I gradually stopped doing that. After all, I was feeling pretty good, so why bother with maintenance?

Now, in some ways, I'm

glad that I relapsed since it has turned my life around again. I finally feel a need for God, though I don't know exactly what He is. I know I need the support of other men who have been through similar experiences. I need to feel accepted and part of a community. I've only attended three S.A.A. meetings so far, but I think it's one of the places where these very special needs can be met.

John C. • Mpls.

PBR STAFF POSITIONS

The PBR is currently offering work in specified areas such as prison outreach, women's issues, same sex discussions, poetry, humor, Intergroup networking etc. You can do service work, contribute to the fellowship and enhance your recovery. Willingness and commitment are as important as expertise or experience. Send your letter of interest to: **PBR**

**P.O. Box 3038
Mpls. MN 55403**

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deserved what they got, I thought. Besides, I had to live! Morals were seldom, if ever, an issue for me during this period. I was too deeply caught up in the insanity of my behavior.

Within a year, I became ill with tuberculosis. Still very much in denial that I really had a problem, I decided that a one-on-one relationship and a "real job" would solve my problems—neither worked. In fact, each further supported my lifestyle.

**I was lost in a whirlpool
of destructive behavior
that begot only more
destructive behavior.**

Each time I faltered I would delve deeper into the sex and drugs to take away the pain. The cycle was never-ending.

I began frequenting gay bathhouses and adult bookstores. I traveled for hours to cruise roadside truck stops and highway rest areas. I spent days missing work in order to

satisfy what was finally becoming obvious to me as a little more than just "casual sexual fun." I moved 1600 miles away hoping that the change, the new environment, or the new start would fix me. I forgot one thing—I went along for the ride. I would eventually become more involved in narcotics and drinking and ultimately become unemployable. I lived in a world of illusion, creating a facade in order to survive. I was about to hit my bottom.

DREAMS

***** CONTINUED NEXT MONTH*****

**Change of Phone
Numbers**

**NSO
(612) 339-0217**

**Twin Cities Intergroup
(612) 871-1520**

BECOME AN S.A.A. GROUP SPONSOR TODAY

The national office is always getting contacted by newcomers who have no SAA meetings in their area want to start one. In the past we have simply sent these people information and a letter encouraging them to start a meeting. In an effort to facilitate new meetings, we are introducing a group sponsorship program.

We ask our SAA members and SAA groups to please sponsor a meeting by sending a check or money order for \$18.00. Your gift will supply literature to a newcomer who expresses the desire to start an SAA meeting. We believe that with basic meeting materials, many sex addicts will find the strength to move forward and recover.

We will maintain a list of group sponsors and when a newcomer indicates interest in starting a meeting, we will send out the literature items listed

below. An accompanying note will explain that you or your group have provided the materials.

Discount package

\$18.00

- 10 — SAA brochures
 - 1 — SAA Group Guide
 - 3 — Getting Started in SAA
 - 3 — First Step to Recovery
 - 1 — Abstinence and Boundaries
 - 10 — Three Circles
-

What a wonderful way to practice Step Twelve, knowing your gift will help start an SAA. Please mail your check payable to NSO, along with the sponsor's name. Send to:

**NSO of SAA
PO Box 3038
Mpls., MN. 55403**

The Truth Will Set You Free

The pathway toward spiritual peace is often a rocky climb, full of dark recesses and caverns of fearful questions. My most ominous, looming question was "Why did I let men hurt me?" To get the answer, I was forced to look back over my entire life beginning with childhood. I had to go back there and feel again—feel who that child was, and what was done to her. I had to go back there and listen—listen as an adult, to the messages that were given to her. I had to expose the pink elephant in the living room, that for years, my family and I had obliviously walked around as if it didn't exist.

I had grown up with huge secrets, so for years, I wasn't phased by secrets about my sexuality and my acting out practices. My childhood taught

me that secrets were normal. My childhood also taught me that where sex was concerned, I had no control, no will of my own, and that for someone to be hurting me was 'okay'. A small part of me knew this wasn't true, but a larger part was conditioned so well to believe this lie. It carried over into my adult acting out practices. I became my own perpetrator. I looked for men who would hurt me in the bedroom. This was 'normal' to me, for it had been part of my life almost from day one.

I told myself as an adult that this was fine so long as the man did not abuse me in other ways or at other times. The woman that I was outside of the one in the bedroom was independant, intelligent and capable. I had enormous

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emotional strength and a mind of my own. I did not need a man to tell me who I was or what to do—except in the bedroom. In there, I looked to him as a gauge of my worth. He was my higher power.

The years progressed and my acting out took on a false sense of control. My inner frustrations and confusion accelerated as I found that the sexual things I was willing to offer men was in high demand. They would pay for it. My independant streak set me on a course of a high-priced call girl, with all the trappings that entails. The money was good, the travel, exciting and most of the men charming and attentive. Notice that I say 'most' because some were dangerously out of control, a risk someone in my line of 'work' always had to take. My vulnerability was high during those times; I am lucky to be alive.

The years progressed and my acting out took on a false sense of control.

I was finally forced by circumstances to take a good look at myself and these men. Why was I attracted to these men? The answers were long in coming, but they filtered in at last when I turned back to my childhood again. My abusers had been utterly unable to allow themselves to feel true emotions such as pain or fear. Anger, they could feel—that one was less threatening to them, but pain and fear were decidedly uncomfortable.

When one of my acting out partners confessed to me that he would do anything rather than feel pain, my process of understanding began. All of these men of my past had the same internal struggle, and turned to me as soon as they felt these emotions emerging. They projected what they themselves were feeling inside, onto

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me – their fears, their frustrations and their own pain. They inflicted real physical pain upon me and watched me experience it. This was a small catharsis for them and it had nothing to do with me or the person that I was. My childhood had simply set me up for this pattern. My first 'partner in intimacy' was such a man, and I was too young to realize that what he did had nothing to do with me or my worth, my goodness or badness, my physical appearance or my relationship with God.

It had everything to do with the fact that I was a child and therefore vulnerable. Once I saw the truth I realized that today I have choices in what I believe about myself and about God. Today, I choose God as my higher power, not men. I allow God to fill me with feelings of self-worth instead of deriving my sense of being valued from a man's view

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SOBER :

a dictionary* definition

Moderate in amount or quantity; indicating a thoughtful character or intent; unhurried; peaceful; unpretentious, humble; marked by moderation; subdued; restrained, reasonable, tempered; carefully reasoned or considered; free from fancy or exaggeration; realistic; dictated by sane and sound reason; rational; freedom from unreasonable excess; temperate, implies moderation, self-control and restraint operating against the excessive, extreme, extravagant or violent; continent, indicates deliberate accustomed restraint on desires, especially sexual desires.

Fred J. • Mpls.

* Websters' Third International
Dictionary

Intergroup Close-up: HOUSTON

Houston Intergroup meets on the first Thursday of each month from 7:30 to 8:50, with about twelve group reps attending. Of the 29 meetings in the Houston area, three are for women, three are for men (including a Christian study group), the rest are mixed. One of the mixed groups is a Carnes study group, another is a closed meeting for level 2 and 3 behaviors and another is for gays and lesbians. There is one jail meeting for men, and action is being taken to establish jail meetings for women and for gays. One mixed speaker meeting is open to C.O.S.A. attendance and story presentation, and the last one of the month is a birthday celebration, complete with cake and punch, for saluting recovery in S.A.A.

Five committees are currently in progress:

Phone Line, Outreach, By-Law, Spending Plan and Convention Scholarship. The spending plan committee and

the scholarship committee have been instrumental in setting guidelines and dollar amounts available to delegates who wish to attend the convention. As far as I know, Houston Intergroup has not held a fund raiser. This is probably due to our local interpretation of the Twelve Traditions. If any group has had any success with this, we'd appreciate your input. We do not have enough volunteers to work the phone, yet we have an abundance of calls, sometimes 30 to 40 per day! We need suggestions for how to improve this situation.

I am honored to be Chairwoman for Houston Intergroup. I wish to extend a special thank you to all of the S.A.A. reps who attend our monthly meeting. Without your support, my position as chair person would be difficult, and without your attendance my position would be non-existent.

Your trusted servant,

Dee A. • Houston,

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of me or from the feelings of power I got by acting out in dangerous ways. I choose to believe today, that my higher power never meant for me to believe the lies told to me as a child or that my sexual acting out behavior defined me. I used to believe that the things I did reflected who I was, so therefore I was deviant, isolated from the mainstream of society, useful only for others' pleasure, incapable of any intimacy other than the droplets attained through a very limiting sexual orientation.

The program of SAA tells us the truth. It gives us a chance to change our perception of ourselves and of our higher power. We can at last come out of the darkness of lies and secrecy to see that our images of ourself and of God were distorted; so too were our ways of seeking happiness distorted. We can let go of the shame, knowing that often we did things to survive. Today we

can construct a life for ourselves that is safe and shaped by truths. The twelve steps and the promises tell us how and that we no longer walk alone. When we feel the fear creep in, we can reach out to another in SAA who is opting for healthy recovery.

**We no longer have to
feel the fear and
cover it up by acting out.**

SAA offers something real and lasting - a new life, no matter what has happened in the past. We have the power to break the cycle. My power comes from realizing I was a victim as a child, but I need not further victimize myself today. I can unchain myself from my former abuser. I need not continue his work. Then, I had no power, today I do. SAA and God have given this gift to me. Together, we can empower ourselves towards a new freedom and love, like none we've ever known before.

Sherry

MINUTES OF THE MID-YEAR N.S.O. BOARD MEETING

The regular annual midwinter meeting of the National Service Organization (NSO) of S.A.A. was held January 15-17, 1993 at the Villa Redeemer Retreat House near Chicago, Illinois. An aggressive business schedule was conducted over the three days. 43 resolutions and amendments were passed. Of these, 14 were policy decisions and 29 were procedural (accepting minutes, treasurer's report, setting agendas, agenda form, accepting committee reports, tabling issues, etc.).

The fourteen policy decisions are: •The NSO will proceed with office separation, the target completion is March 31, 1993; Jill will report to Arnold. •The board members and appointees will be permitted to claim reimbursement for authorized (travel) expenses. Board and Literature Committee members are still urged to solicit travel expenses from their areas, but not as a prerequisite to claiming expenses. Donations may be sent for handling by the NSO office. •A Louisville committee is planning the 1993 SAA/CoSA Convention. Scholarships will be awarded prorated on participation levels of SAA and CoSA for fundraising and donations. The committee will inform CoSA that splitting any proceeds from the convention, after a 5% administration cost by the NSO, cannot be accepted unless CoSA is willing to accept risk for a prorated share in the event of a shortfall. •The board agreed that the NSO needs to stop selling outside literature but the NSO will wait on implementation of this until current inventory are depleted and that we find an alternate source of income. We have \$500 of stock that may be sold out in about two weeks. •Approval of the wording for the 1992 changes to the Bylaws was accepted. Other changes suggested by the author, John B. were tabled. The proposed bylaw change to add a section authorizing and requiring yearly audits will be announced in the call to convention. The proposed bylaw change to permit Board and Literature Committee Alternates to act in the absence of the representative was accepted as desirable, but tabled until its wording could be worked out by the Bylaws committee. •The resolution that future national SAA conventions will not be joint with CoSA will be announced on the call to the convention this year. •A verbal conditional resignation by Douglas P., as office manager, effective May 31, was accepted without its conditions. Further dialog will continue between the office manager and the office management committee. The office management committee will recruit, interview and hire an office manager, to begin June 1, 1993. •Jill is planning not to extend her term as At-Large Board member from the Twin Cities area, where the office is. Two people will be recruited for At-Large Board positions from the Twin Cities area, for terms not to exceed one year.

•An outline of the old and new business was prioritized using Delphi focus group technique. Committees were able to meet, report to the board, and recommend action. This technique will be used at the convention to prioritize the agenda of old and new business items. •The decision to move the office was made after the board meeting (2/2/93). This will be done as soon as practical, perhaps at the time a new

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Your meeting may
not allow cross talk
but we do.

Cross Talk:



Dear PBR,

I attended the convention in Tucson last year, and for me, the dance was one of the high points of the session. I felt a lot of good, strong energy flowing. I value ways of getting a good high feeling without alcohol, drugs, or addictive sex. I do recognize however, that the dance could be an occasion for some people to get into their addictive patterns. Some of my friends avoided the dance for this reason. I felt some addictive pulls while watching some of the women dance, but I didn't want to let this spoil the opportunity to have some fun.

My goal in recovering from sexual addiction is not to avoid all forms of sexual activity. Nor is it to only have sex in the context of a committed relationship. One of the guidelines in SAA is that each person sets his or her own boundaries,

specifying which types of sexual behavior are allowable and which are to be avoided. For those of us who have been abused or have otherwise had our boundaries violated in the past, this freedom to set our own boundaries is very important to our recovery. To have other people attempt to set boundaries for us, to try to judge what type of behavior we should or shouldn't engage in, simply perpetuates the abuse we've received and prevents us from growing into responsible, mature beings with a sense of our own power.

During the process of recovery many people, myself included, go through a highly moralistic, sex-negative phase, which is understandable, but must be let go of if the individual is to develop a truly

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office manager is hired. With the separation, NSO will keep the phone number: (612) 339-0217, while Twin Cities Intergroup will keep (612) 871-1520. The committees that met at the midwinter board meeting and the agenda items they handled are as follows: **OLD BUSINESS**

Office Management Committee: Jill, Elizabeth, Kevin
Finance Committee: Robert, Victor, Ed, Tom

- O.4 Office separation
- O.13 Personnel Review
- O.12 Personnel policy
- O.11 Bonding
- O.7 Goals 1.1 1.3 1.4 1.5
- O.8 Travel Policy
- O.16a Royalty, general
- O.16b Royalty, Promises of Grace
- O.5 S.A.A./CoSA - 93
- O.9 Outside Literature
- O.7 Goals 2.1 2.2 2.3

Bylaws Committee: Tony, Arnold
Convention Committee: Ed, Victor,
Tom

- O.2 B 1992 bylaws revision
- O.5 S.A.A./CoSA
- O.6 S.A.A./CoSA >93

Literature Interface Committee: - Elizabeth, Douglas, Kevin, Tony, Jill

- O.10 Clarifying role
- O.9 Review outside literature
- O.7 Goal 3.3 4.1
- O.15 Convention manual
- O.7 Goals 1.5

Intergroup Development & Statewide

Outreach Committee: - Tony, Jill, Douglas, Elizabeth, Kevin

- O.17 Membership survey
- O.7 Goal 3.1 3.2 3.3

NEW BUSINESS

Office Management Committee - Elizabeth, Jill, Tony, Kevin, Douglas

- O.12 Personnel Policy N.2 Future staffing - Jill: Interface with the Finance Committee N.7 Recruiting of and At Large Representative to supervise office - Jill N.11 Office facilities - Jill
- Convention Committee: Ed, Arnold, Tom (Victor absent) N.4 Plan for Delegate meeting -

Prepare Call to convention - Convention Committee, Ed, Victor, Douglas

- N.5 Business meeting rules re: delegate meetings - Convention Committee
- N.8 Soliciting future convention host - Intergroups - Convention Committee
- N.10 Conference committees/ focus groups for business meetings - Convention Committee
- Finance Committee:** Robert, Arnold, Ed, Tom N.1 Accounting Procedures N.2 Future staffing - interface with the Office Management Committee N.3 Financial Policy Changes Needed in Bylaw
- Bylaws Committee:** Robert, Tom, Arnold N.6 Any new by-law change proposals Bylaws Committee, Robert N.6a Organization Name change (->ISO, WSO,...) Bylaws Committee, Robert N.9 Planning for pre-convention board meeting - Arnold and office

Respectfully submitted

***** Kevin K., secretary, NSO of S.A.A. February 24, 1993*****

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healthy sexual identity rather than remain a sexual cripple (or anorexic). Healthy sexuality isn't something that just shows up by magic one day after years of practicing abstinence. Issues of shame must be actively dealt with through reflection and open, honest discussion. The condemnation of another person's actions isn't one of the effective ways of dealing with shame. It hurts the person doing the judging even more than the person being judged.

Obviously, the important issue here isn't really whether or not we have a dance. We didn't have one the year before in Grand Rapids and managed to survive. What is important are the attitudes behind the decision. Whatever is decided, I hope the decision isn't made on the basis of some members thinking that they have to "take care of" other members, that they have to "protect" their lesser, weaker brethren from falling into sin.

Bill V. • Iowa City

LETTERS from page 2

WANTED women's groups to become pen pals for a women's group in Ann Arbor, Michigan. The aim is to support and network, with possible get-togethers. Share anniversary date, number of members, meeting format, literature organization, attraction strategies, strength, hope and experience. Please contact Andrea B., Ann Arbor Women's Sanctuary Group, PO Box 7474, Ann Arbor, MI 48107.

I realize that it is ironic to be requesting information for women-only groups in the aftermath of Tony L.'s heartwarming story on how women at meetings spiritually benefit his program. Unfortunately, many of the women in our group have abuse/incest issues, have been thirteenth-stepped at mixed meetings or wish to discuss facets of their addiction which would violate boundaries at mixed meetings. For some of us, this is the best or only choice.

Keep up the good work and thank you. Andrea B.