



Plain Brown Rapper

THE SAA NEWSLETTER

Do I really have to say I'm gay?

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One of my most helpful recovery tools has been what I call the Active Serenity Prayer. I learned the Serenity Prayer before I became involved with SAA. But at one time it was.....

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Miss Your September PBR?

You probably did and might be wondering what happened to it? Well, we..... were.. *SEE PAGE 2*

Being of service

Being of service here is a great privilege. It is also an opportunity to use the tools of our program of recovery. One of those tools is to give what I can of my recovery, as I am told that the only way to

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It was in January of 1992 that I attended my first state intergroup meeting. I was very grateful to SAA for the gifts I had received and wanted to do something to repay the fellowship for those gifts.....

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Miss Your September PBR?

You probably did and might be wondering what happened to it? Well, we were running so far behind due to the changes we have undergone this year, we thought it best to get our months more in line with the publishing date. But, in doing so, we don't want you to be short-changed, so we have extended all expiration dates to ensure each subscriber receives a full year for their money. Thanks for your patience.

The Active Serenity Prayer.

One of my most helpful recovery tools has been what I call the Active Serenity Prayer. I learned the Serenity Prayer before I became involved with SAA. But at one time it was just a collection of words. I did not see how to apply to real situations. However, one of the promises of SAA is that we will, through our Higher Power, intuitively know how to handle situations that used to baffle us. To me that meant there had to be a role that I played in concert with my Higher Power, and that role was to turn the situation over to Him and let Him walk me through the solution.

So I decided that I should take an active role in the prayer, not just asking for the Serenity, Courage and Wisdom. I decided to take it on faith that once asked, it had been given. So with the new found wisdom for the situation granted by my higher power I am able to dissect the situation or feeling. To admit those things which are beyond my control and accept them. To admit honestly what I need to have the courage to change. And to set a goal or plan to change that part I can control. I have found on many occasions that this Active prayer has given me a direction or tool which I have been able to recognize and invoke in similar situations.

The final role in my Active Serenity Prayer is to acknowledge the new found wisdom and to thank my Higher Power for caring enough for me to grant my prayer.

Doug



FLASH!

This just in from the Vancouver SAA.

There will be an SAA retreat held at Sasmat Lake, just outside Vancouver Friday - Sunday, February 10-12. Cost will be about \$72 Canadian and will include meals. For details, call Stephen W. at 604-255-6673 or write the Vancouver SAA at PO Box 4941 VMPO, Vancouver, BC V6B 4A6, Canada.

Keep On Traveling,
Jerry B.

National Inventory

During November the national office answered 149 phone calls from around the world. In addition, during non-office hours, callers have the option of leaving a message or making selections from a menu that includes "The Problem," "How It Works," "The Twelve Steps of SAA," "The Abstinence Statement," "The Promises," or national intergroup and international contact phone numbers. The office also filled 77 literature orders, mailed out 43 written responses to inquires, and sent out 68 contribution acknowledgements. We have had an encouraging response to the push for Plain Brown Rapper subscriptions, with 53 subscriptions in November. Setting the pace was the Lakeside Group in Minneapolis, which voted to purchase 15 subscriptions! Along with the order, Art F. sent his group's encouragement to other groups to join in the effort to get the PBR into the hands of more and more members. In the PBR office, we have the beginnings for some great issues. A tremendous response from people who are reaching out! - We had 9 submissions in November- more than all the prior 4 months combined!

RAP AROUND

Send news for Rap Around to PBR, NSO of SAA, PO Box 70949, Houston TX 77270. Include a phone number. Remember that the PBR goes out by bulk mail, so send news of events well in advance.

Internationality

Greetings from SAA in Great Britain!

In many ways it has been a difficult year. There has been a change in both the membership and outlook of the fellowship that is hard to describe or quantify. On the face of it, it appeared to many of us that SAA in this country was indeed in crises.

On Reflection, however, what I notice is really simply change. If I say that some older members no longer attend meetings, then this has mostly to do with those people moving into different avenues of growth and recovery. Many current group members are associated with other organizations and philosophies. There has been an enrichment of the fellowship through the ideas that these different approaches bring with them, while the message of recovery is being spread elsewhere in many subtle ways.

Meetings which survive continue to be strong and committed. The very flexibility of approaches which has felt so unsettling seems on the balance to allow for more and changing views to be expressed and listened to. There are new meetings in Wales, the South of England and in Scotland; Newcomers continue to contact the 'phone line and to come to meetings. Intergroup is going through a marked change in complexion, with service being more evenly spread amongst the fellowship in general, rather than every job being carried out by the same small number of people! There is a Prison Outreach program (Our particular thanks to Arnold D. from Michigan for his help and support).

We remain for the moment a small fellowship, with barely more than sixty people who regularly attend meetings across the whole country. I am personally hopeful that the changes we have seen over the last year are precisely those that are needed in order to allow SAA to grow in numbers. All the signs are there. We are benefiting from regular press interest; but an interest that is much more serious and helpful now, and appears to be free of the paranoia and sensationalism that was so much a part of the press coverage even in the recent past.

William J. SAA — UK

(The Preceding was a report submitted to the NSO from SAA-UK)

Greetings.

It was great to see the letter in the January 1994 issue of the PBR from the guy in England who gave his address and asked for correspondence. I wrote him immediately. I have always thought this kind of network for people who want to correspond would be very helpful. So I am sending the enclosed entry with a PO Box # asking for correspondence. I thought that getting a PO Box would suggest a way to correspond that would ensure a feeling of safety and maintain anonymity.

Though I have told my story in the June 1993 PBR, I wanted to write a short postscript. Having come into SAA 2 1/2 years ago, my simple prayer was, "If I never see another item of pornography for the rest of my life, I will die a happy man." Somehow the simplicity of the moment has faded as I realize that pornography was just the tip of the iceberg that was ominously close to capsizing my life boat.

When it got overwhelming, I was reminded, "Just keep on going to meetings and stay in touch with your feelings." Small request, big job. My feelings were acting like thunderbolts and lightening one minute and midnight in the Anartica the next. I was stone cold depressed, some days leaving a now permanent body print in my sofa. Another day I would find myself in fetal position on my tear stained oriental rug clutching the sunsuit I wore at one year old, crying, "Some one hold me," or screaming, "Stop hitting me, I'll be a good boy." Then would find myself at the cemetery kicking my father's tombstone and hollering in reference to his suicide, "Why did you leave me to those three crazy women?" At other times in relating to an attractive women, I would be overwhelmed with obsessive erotic fantasies around the clock. Stay in touch with my feelings? I'd sooner stick my tongue in a light socket! But I did it . . .

No wonder the psychiatrist in 1965 thought that shocking my brains for two months was preferable to letting that bag of tricks ever see the light of day. Besides, he was too obsessed with Duke basketball to want to listen to my story. Last year I started reading. Pat Carnes, John Bradshaw, Robert Bly, Gershen Kaufman, Murray Bowan, Harriet Lerner, Pia Mellody, Bill W., Dr. Bob, and finally everything that Alice Miller has written. With Alice Miller, the roof on the world as I had know it collapsed.

If this life script strikes a responsive chord with anyone out there, God bless you. I'm asking for help and correspondence. There are days now when I begin to catch a glimpse of that sunrise on the SAA coin.



Bill P.
PO Box 52452
Durham, NC 27717

Prayer of St Francis of Assisi

Loving God make me an instrument of your Peace.

Where there is hatred let me sow Love;

Where there is injury, pardon;

Where there is doubt, faith;

Where there is despair, hope;

Where there is darkness, light;

And where there is sadness, joy.

*O Divine Teacher, grant that I may not so much seek to be
consoled as to console;*

To be understood as to understand;

To be loved as to love;

For it is in the giving that we receive;

It is in pardoning that we are pardoned;

And it is in dying that we are born to eternal life.

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 & hopes of recovering sex addicts. Unless otherwise noted, the content of the PBR reflects the opinions of the writers & editors & not necessarily of the NSO, Literature Committee, or Sex Addicts Anonymous as a whole.
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PBR Subscriptions
NSO of SAA
PO Box 70949 Houston TX 77270.
713-869-4902

Editor: DavidG

*Waiting for loneliness to go,
Waiting for happiness to show*

*I wish I was someone I loved.....
or even liked
I could be as playful as a kitten.....
fly like a kite.
My heart is heavy.....
I have a bevy,
of questions.....
unanswered.*

*I want Love
I want to see Love be love and be loved
I need affection direction and protection
from God above*

THE EDITOR'S OPINION

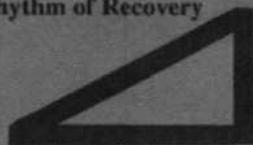
Being of service here is a great privilege and an opportunity to use the tools of our program of recovery. One of those tools is to give what we can of our recovery, as I am told that the only way to keep this serenity is to give the program away. You are going to be hearing more and more about giving away the program over the next months, as we continue in our journey together. . . but it is not just you and I, it is your regional representatives, your intergroup representatives, all of the trusted servants and all of the members of SAA we have working with us. By the way, when I say you are going to be hearing more and more - it will not usually be coming from the PBR, but from your trusted servants in your area. I will be calling them once each month to see what articles we are getting. We are reconstructing the format of the PBR to focus on the tools of the program each and every month. To make this work, we will need all - or as many as can possibly provide input, to do so. Please bring this up at meetings. Let everyone know that we are not alone - only if we reach out to one another. The PBR can be a great way to reach out to each another - a great tool of recovery; but just like the phone, if it is not used, it does not accomplish much. Please keep the following topics in mind when you are writing (but more important than the topics, we keep in mind our recovery- together):

**The Circle of Steps
Recovering Lives**

**Living Traditions
Internationality
OutReach - The Key**

**Rap Around the World
Rhythm of Recovery**

Your Trusted Servant,
DavidG





Living in Recovery



Do I really have to say I'm gay?

That question has been on my mind all my life, either on a conscience or subconscious level. It has been a secret that has fueled lots of my behavior — sex addiction being one of them. For you see I am gay and I am a sex addict. The two are entwined together, yet as time goes by, and recovery happens, the two are becoming distinct and separate.

When I got to SAA I was out of control sexually and could not stop myself. I couldn't stop the pattern of anonymous sex. As much as I tried, and I did try very hard and long, I could not stop myself. My self-will was shot, my self-esteem was badly battered and I was caught in a vicious cycle, which I felt I couldn't stop or tell anyone about. That was part of the problem- I did not tell anyone. I didn't tell anyone much of anything. The secrecy contributed to my sex addiction.

Do I think I am a sex addict because I am gay? No, of course not! Do I think not talking about being gay contributed to my sex addiction? Absolutely. It was the shame and fear that helped fuel my acting out — to medicate those very feelings. Now I recognize my pattern:

1. An uncomfortable feeling
2. Not want to feel it
3. Look for ways to avoid feeling it
4. Go to the bookstore
5. Connect with a willing soul so I would not feel so lonely
6. Have anonymous sex
7. Leave the bookstore
8. Start to feel lonely (back to step 1) Repeat the cycle all over again.

Would I be a sex addict if I were straight? I'm sure I would have created other issues to act as secrets to fuel my behavior. Shame fed my addiction.

When I got to the point in my life when I was no longer able to deny the reality of my life, I did not like what I saw. I was a 30 year old man incapable of having an intimate relationship, yet desperately wanting one; fearful of being gay, yet wanting to be OK with it; in denial about my feelings and unable to express them. When I could no longer hide from reality, my recovery started. I had to acknowledge and speak the truth.

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My internal homophobia drove my sex addiction to the point where I could no longer deny I was gay. The first person I told was my sister. She cried — I cried. She cried because I had been so honest — I cried because I had said it out loud. Next I told a few close friends. Though I could tell them I was gay, I dared not mention the sexual acting out. As I continued to disclose and come farther out of the closet, my acting out became progressively worse. Not until I mentioned the sexual acting out to an acquaintance I met at a bookstore, did things begin to change. I began to become aware of the magnitude of my addiction.

I came out to close friends first, a few friends at work and then my parents. My parents were not pleased, proceeding to eject me from the family. I was not allowed to call, write or visit. I plunged into my last serious acting out period.

On January 3, 1993, I was at a local bookstore cruising when a guy from my office came into the booth area. My blood ran cold and I thought I was going to faint. It was at that point I knew I needed some outside help. The next week I went to my first SAA meeting and picked up a desire chip.

By the grace of my higher power that was the last time I acted out with anonymous sex. I began to tell close friends and people in recovery the truth of my sexual behavior. I felt relief every time I spoke the truth about being gay and about my sexual behavior. As I unloaded my shame my life improved. I was able to sustain sexual sobriety. Along the way I have subsequently come out of the closet to all my friends as well as all my family - that was some newsletter I sent out with a picture of my boyfriend on the front!

SAA has been as gift from my higher power to allow me to tell the truth about myself: I am a proud gay man with twenty two months of sexual sobriety capable of having intimate relationships, acknowledging my feelings and being hopeful about my future.

So do I have to tell them I'm gay? Yes sir I do—its part of who I am and part of my story.



Jeff P.





The Key

It was in January of 1992 that I attended my first state intergroup meeting. I was very grateful to SAA for the gifts I had received and wanted to do something to repay the fellowship for those gifts. Also, I wanted to see if carrying the message would enhance my own recovery. I sat in three meetings without saying very much. In July, 1992, at the Michigan Intergroup meeting, Arnold D., the prison outreach Chairperson for SAA stated that he needed some help with letter writing to prisoners who had asked our fellowship for support for their addictions which had cost them their liberty. This seemed like something that I could do; write a few letters myself, and try to convince others to do the same. I volunteered to take this project on in West Michigan.

Our letter writing program in West Michigan had some limited results, when out of the blue I received a letter from the Brooks Correctional Facility of Muskegon Michigan, inquiring as to the possibilities of establishing an SAA group at that facility. I waited no time in contacting the Assistant Deputy Warden who had written the letter. I told her that we would do our best to find volunteers for her facility, and that if we could, we would be

willing to chair meetings on a weekly basis. I was able to recruit four other men besides myself. Bill G. had already been involved in prison outreach in the past, although he had not been allowed to conduct meetings at another prison, also in Muskegon. Bill was very supportive of our outreach to brooks. Dan D., Ken B. and Bill L. were also to become volunteers at this prison. We were all given background investigations, were all sent through an orientation by the facility, issued ID cards and scheduled our first meeting on October fourth, 1992.

One of the most memorable nights of my life happened as we first-stepped eleven inmates into SAA. For those who read these lines, and believe that this would be a very frightening experience, I can assure you it was: - for the inmates! After all, our fellowship deals with some very painful and personal issues — issues that these men had never discussed frankly with anyone. It took a few meetings, but trust was built by the inmates for each other and for the volunteers. I have often thought back to that first night at Brooks and marveled at the various places Prison Outreach has taken me.

Since that time, Michigan SAA has conducted meetings at eight prisons. We in Grand Rapids are currently involved at four. One of my favorite recollections is the first SAA meeting in the prison Bill G. had

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been initially refused. In 1993, on August fourth, Bill G. chaired the first meeting there. The promises state that "sometimes quickly, sometimes slowly, that they will always materialize." I have come to believe them.

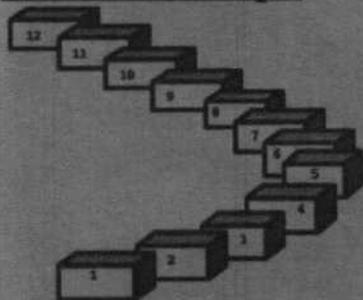
I was a woman hater, and I was able to facilitate a successful outreach to a woman's facility at Coldwater, Michigan, the Crane Facility. What a gift for me to be able to help in this way! I will

always be proud of the efforts made by the female volunteers at Crane. They did not receive the support of the psyche staff at Crane, and so the group that was established there eventually died because of a lack of referrals. The volunteers hung in, though, and this was especially impressive as the drive for most of them was over one hundred miles one way. Someday, God willing, Crane will have a group.

I feel that I should explain why I do this type of service work. I never believed that sexual addiction could ever be of any use to myself or anyone. Yet, here was an opportunity to put that addiction to use in a positive way. I can chair meetings for people who want desperately to change, people who want more than anything to believe that there is hope. I feel privileged to chair meetings for child molesters and rapists, partly because they do not want to change.

I also believe that if men and women who have committed an act of molestation can abstain from their behavior, then perhaps a potential victim need never suffer the horror of being a victim of sexual abuse. If only one person is spared by all our efforts in Prison Outreach, than all of our efforts are worth it and we have made amends. I know in my heart that we will do a lot better than one; we already have.

Circle of Steps



In January there will be a new addition to the PBR - The Circle of Steps

One and one half pages of every issue devoted to the steps and how we use them in our daily lives. Share how you use the 1st - 2nd - 3rd or all twelve steps. Lets build a library of Experience, Strength and Hope. Imagine being able to have a need to talk to someone and not be able to - except through the articles in the PBR... the ones from the PBR's you have been saving all of these years!! A friend did that service for our group. Why not do the same for ourselves!

Friends of the Literature Committee (FOLC)

The Literature Committee is made up of elected representatives and an alternate from each region, up to three at-large representatives, and the editor of the PBR. We want to involve more SAA members for literature work. Fill the form out to connect to the network of people interested in creating and distributing recovery literature. Send it to Friends of the Literature Committee, c/o NSO of SAA, P.O. Box 70949, Houston TX 77270.

Name _____
Address _____
City _____ State _____
Zip _____ Phone _____ Fax Number _____
Email Address _____ Intergroup _____
Do you have a computer? Mac PC Modem?

Friends of the Literature Committee (FOLC)

Some projects we are working on:

- *Plain Brown Rapper* — increase the distribution of PBR in local areas and intergroups and finding local group or intergroup news contacts
- A booklet on sponsorship
- A short guide to working the 12 Steps
- A book on the 12 Steps (to be published in 1997)
- Translations of our literature into Spanish and French (We are looking for translators and reviewers of material already translated)

Do you have ideas for new literature? Send us your ideas or literature you have published for use by your meeting or intergroup.

NSO of SAA

P.O. Box 70949

Houston, TX 77270.

713-869-4902 - Messages can be left any time

Office hours are between 10 am and 6 P.M.. Central Time

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