



News from the Web...

By: Bob D.

# **BOB D. REMINDS YOU TO CHECK YOUR REGISTRATION STATUS VIA THE SAA WEBSITE.**

## **CHECK IT NOW!**

Do you realize that all meetings have to send in a meeting registration form periodically to be considered an SAA meeting? If a meeting fails to re-register by 12/31/00 and we haven't heard from it in a year, the meeting is dropped from the SAA meeting list. This means SAA Headquarters can't refer people to the meeting, the Web page listing (if there was one) is removed, and the meeting is deleted from the Fellowship Directory. Last year hundreds of meetings were dropped because they forgot to update their registration. (Most of them eventually did get re-registered.)

## **Don't let this happen to your home meeting!!**

"OK, so how do I find out if my meeting has re-registered?" you ask. Well there is a new 24/7 way to do it: Check the SAA Website. Click on "Has your meeting re-registered?" and you'll find a complete list of all the registered SAA meetings along with an indication if they need to re-register by year end. **(You can also download copies of the meeting registration forms, if you need them.)**

And by the way, don't forget to send in an SAA Website Information Form. You only have to list whatever details about the meeting you want. It can be as little as just a contact number or e-mail address or as much as the meeting time/location. Meetings are finding more and more new members over the web.

Bob D. SAA Webmaster

# FROM THE INSIDE

Dear PBR,

Hello! Terry K. here, with another poem for you. We all know how important friends are, but nobody knows that more than those of us in prison.

Prison has a way of letting you know how true your friends are - REAL FAST. A lot of times the ones you just KNEW would stand beside you... haven't. And the ones you didn't expect to... have!

I started thinking about my friends. The ones who HAVE stood by me. Not one of them condoned my actions, but they didn't abandon me for them either. If it weren't for their support I don't know what I would have done.

So I wanted to write something for them, to say thank you for believing in me. Thank you for being there for me. Thank you for being you!

If anyone would like to share this poem with their friends, please feel free. I would be honored

Good luck to one and all.  
One day at a time!

Terry K.

[See Terry's poem on page 5 of this PBR]

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"Bill" writes to the PBR, back in April of this year. This is not all of Bill's letter; we took excerpts from it hoping it would still convey many of his thoughts and work as they relate to his recovery while in prison.

April, 2000

Dear PBR,

Okay, here I sit. My addiction had made me an outcast and a loner almost all of my life. Suddenly I am in an environment where most of my addictive behaviors are not only accepted, but encouraged. I can buy, trade, and share pornography and be one of the guys. No longer an outcast. True, I have to be careful because some here don't like what I did [two rapes and one sexual assault] even though it was 17 years ago, and that I'm in recovery now.

Sometimes the pornography store in my mind gets opened. I browse and indulge and then feel shame and guilt. I justify using porn magazines for masturbation because those images are not as inappropriate as the ones in my mind.

Shame and fear keep working against me. Shame at my behavior and weakness, and fear at, and of the consequences. I wish to be able to be as open in my writings as I would be in a group. Shame of some of my fantasies and thoughts, and the fear of having them discovered, keeps me from writing.

I am learning to let grace replace shame and faith replace fear. If I can work my program here, I can work it anywhere. I only have to deal with today. With my Higher Power, I can. I can reach out to others for help. My hope is that the changes in me will continue to happen, and that I am not lying to myself. I am glad to have SAA.

"We will know peace...". I do, and pray you do too!

Your friend,  
Bill

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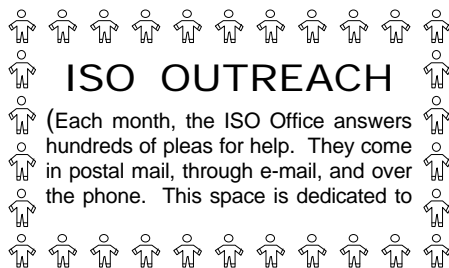
From "Shane C." April, 2000  
[Edited...]

Dear "M" [for the PBR],

...I am not very good at expressing my feelings and thoughts in writing... I'm not sure how far back I can remember. I had a bad childhood. My father was mentally and physically abusive to my mother and my younger brother. I had to believe it was the normal way to live. I knew no other. We moved a lot; my brother and I jumped from school to school. The first I remember of anything being inappropriate was by an older cousin of mine. I didn't know it was inappropriate; she didn't hurt me. The next time I remember it happening to me was by a man who I think was my brother's baseball coach.

We were taken to our grandparents home; my father never returned. He already had another family on the way with another woman. My mother married again. I grew up very shy with the opposite sex. I learned masturbation by age 11. I was almost 20 when I had my first sexual experience with a girl. At

(Continued on page 6)



Since early spring, when the campaign to raise funds for the production of public service announcements for TV was first publicized, the SAA fellowship's response has been fantastic. I will report on the specifics of that response but, first, I want to address some concerns as well.

Several times during the campaign, members have contacted the ISO Office to express either their own personal concerns or those of their group. Their questions boil down to two: "Don't PSAs on TV conflict with the Eleventh Tradition?" and "Why is it going to cost so much to produce these spots?"

Let's address the first question. SAA's Eleventh Tradition states that "Our

Bill W. explains that AA "wished to publicize its principles and its work, but not its individual members" (pg. 82)

Bill W.'s commentary on the Eleventh Tradition closes with the following: "To us, however, it represents far more than a sound public relations policy. It is more than a denial of self-seeking. This Tradition is a constant and practical reminder that personal ambition has no place in A.A. In it, each member becomes an active guardian of our Fellowship.

I think a thorough reading of the commentary in "The Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions" will provide ample evidence that the promotion being addressed the Eleventh Tradition is self-promotion rather than promotion of the principles of our program.

Before launching the campaign, the ISO of SAA Board contacted the General Services Office of Alcoholics Anonymous and asked the staff about AA's

position on PSAs on TV. Their response was to send us a copy of the videos they have produced to be aired on television. As in many other areas, we are grateful for AA's guidance.

In regard to the production cost, estimated to be between \$15,000 and \$20,000, this is what we have learned by talking to people who produce top quality videos on film for use on TV. Certainly, videos can be produced much cheaper, but as the cost goes down so does the quality. And, from what we have been able to find out, the higher the quality, the better the chance the video has for airing because the quality of the PSA reflects directly upon the TV station.

This does not mean that the ISO will spend \$15,000 - \$20,000 no matter what less expensive resources are available. Perhaps there will be the opportunity for donated services from SAA members who work in the film industry. Perhaps the script that is chosen will be one submitted by a member who gives it as a gift. Perhaps the producer will be a member willing to work at a reduced fee.

The point is that SAA cannot accept donations, including donated ser-

vices, from the outside. If it wants to have top quality PSAs, it must be prepared to pay for them.

Should we be able to come in below the estimated cost, so much the better. Any excess money raised can still be used for outreach or, if the fellowship agrees, perhaps to help in the production of the Large Book. This decision that could be made by the ISO of SAA delegates.

Now for an update: As of September 29, this is how the campaign stood:

Region	Challenge Donation	Matching Donations	Total Donations*
Great Lakes	1000	1470	2470
Intermountain	1000	360	720
North Central	1000	988	1976
Northeast	0	1252	1252
South Central	2000	2190	4190
Southeast	1000	530	1060
North Pacific	1500	280	1580
South Pacific	0	657	657
<b>TOTAL</b>			<b>14,105</b>

\*Total reflects only the portion of the challenge donation that has been matched, e.g., the North Central Region has matched \$988 of the \$1,000 challenge, so its total is 988 + 988 = 1,976 rather than 1,000 + 988 = 1,988.

If all challenges were met at this date, the total would be \$15,227, but the ISO is liable for the return of the unmatched portion of a challenge donation.

The ISO has also contributed \$7,765 to the general Publications Reserve. This money is not designated for the PSA and is being used for expenses related to editing the Large Book. The ISO portion comes from the sale of non-SAA literature, interest earned, and half of convention surpluses.

Jerry B., Office Manager

## ON THE ISSUE OF- PUBLIC SERVICE ANNOUNCEMENTS [PSA's]

public relations policy is based on attraction rather than promotion; we need always maintain personal anonymity at the level of press, radio, TV and films."

To me, it seems the possible conflict with PSAs arises from focusing only on the first half of the tradition, the part about "attraction rather than promotion." If the tradition stopped there, surely we would be left without guidelines of any kind. But that is not where we are left. The tradition does provide guidelines, and the fact that it does cannot be ignored.

Immediately after telling us "our public relations policy is based on attraction rather than promotion," the Eleventh Tradition goes on to explain what this means: "we need always maintain personal anonymity at the level of press, radio, TV and films.

The key words in this second half of the tradition are "personal anonymity." This emphasis does not originate with me. It comes from "Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions," in which

Where are you and  
your group in this  
effort?

Perhaps time to do a  
7th Tradition for the  
cause, eh???

# SPONSORSHIP CORNER ....

## HELPING A SPONSEE GET

### S - T - A - R - T - E - D

It's fun to watch. Maybe sometime after a few weeks, the newcomer stays around after a meeting looking uncomfortable and waiting for that moment alone with the experienced member of the program. As shy as a junior high student trying to negotiate the first dance, the SAA newcomer asks, "Would you be OK with sort of being my sponsor?" A "yes" begins a new adventure for both parties, one that can teach each one a lot about recovery.

Many times after saying that yes my next thought was, now what? What do I have to offer and what does this person need to develop a growing recovery? For the next few columns we will explore this topic, how to help a new sponsee.

My sponsors and sponsees have taught me that there are two basic needs each program newcomer has:

- 1] to get help in stopping all addictive behaviors, and
- 2] to begin working the Twelve Steps.

These needs come in many different disguises. The disguises are the motives that lead people to SAA in the first place: finding support after yet another relationship falls apart, getting a legal or work problem eased, or finding a sympathetic person to make the pain stop. The temptation as a sponsor is to try to fix the problem rather than offer this person the unique gifts of the program.

I ask my sponsees to begin with the basics: call me or someone else in the program daily, go to as many meetings per week as possible, obtain and read program literature daily, pick up some kind of spiritual activity and begin Step work.

I also make sure that the sponsees actually want to quit acting out all their sexually addictive behaviors. If not, I suggest they find another sponsor. Stopping addictive behavior is ultimately a gift from one's Higher Power. Since it helps to know what to ask for when seeking a gift, I suggest sponsees begin by recognizing the extent of their acting out.

Usually there are a few manifestations of the addiction that are most prominent and are causing most of the problems. Still, there are others that can easily replace the most conspicuous ones and cause just as much pain. So I ask sponsees to make a written list of all the manifestations that they recognize. One tool they can use is to listen closely at meetings when others check in and ask themselves, "Have I ever done that?" If so, put it on the list. Another is for them to look at the survey in the appendix to "Don't Call It Love", and to review their lives for these (and other) behaviors. I encourage them to take some time and to focus on being honest and thorough in their search.

Next, I ask them to look at the "Three Circles" pamphlet and begin to figure out which of the behaviors they have identified belong in their inner circle (the "compulsive behaviors from which we feel it is necessary to abstain"). Then I ask them to review the list again and identify which of the behaviors fit into their middle circle ("those sexual behaviors which fall neither in the category of demoralizing addictions, nor of ideal behavior"). I encourage them to connect middle circle behaviors to inner ones; that is, to identify the pattern of behaviors that lead up

to acting out. Usually this helps them begin to identify more of the middle circle behaviors, too. At this point, we spend little time on the outer circle; most just aren't ready to see that there is such a thing as healthy sexuality.

The final part of this exercise is to begin setting boundaries around the middle circle behaviors. While it may seem we should be focusing on the inner circle, it is the behaviors that lead up to acting out that need to stop. Understanding that we are trying to get abstinent from both inner and middle circles, I explain that the **middle circle is the beginning of the addictive rituals** and that if they intervene early in the process then they usually don't get to the inner circle.

What does this do for the sponsees? For one, it helps them get an accurate picture of what the addict looks like. Though we spend a lot of time with the addict, most don't really know it very well. In the act of getting to know the addict, an important Step One activity happens when sponsees begin to see how powerful their addictions are and how powerless they are in the face of it.

While the above can seem like an intellectual effort, when done as a soul searching exercise, a lot of honest emotions come out. This is one way to begin to work with sponsees.

**Are there sponsors out there who would be willing to tell us what you do with your sponsees at the beginning? Will some of you people who have had helpful sponsors please share what they asked you to do at first?**

Please send contributions, questions or any other feedback to:

**Sponsorship Corner**

**PBR/ISO of SAA**

**P.O. Box 70949**

**Houston, TX 77270**

**e-mail: PBR@saa-recovery.org**

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## POET'S CORNER

### "MY FRIEND"

A friend in need is a friend indeed;  
I'd heard you often say,  
But never fully understood,  
Until that fateful day.

As my whole world turned upside  
down;  
My life, it fell apart.  
Those things I did, I knew were  
wrong;  
Deep down within my heart.

Yet when all the others turned their  
backs;  
You stood there by my side,  
When no one else would listen to  
me;  
In you in could confide.

You never judged or lectured me;  
Or condemned me like the rest,  
Instead you stayed through thick and  
thin;  
Which I know was quite a test.

And so my friend, this is for you;  
Words sometimes hard to say,  
But were it not for all you've been;  
I'd surely have lost my way.  
By: Terry K.

### Regular Poetry Column in Question

As printed in the last newsletter, there are some concerns about the type and quality of poetry to be printed in the PBR. For those of you who like, or love poetry, or who have a passion for writing poetry, you are encouraged to let us know your feelings and desires. We have heard from several who question not only the quality of the writing, but its pertinence to recovery. Unless we get a continuance of acceptable, even good, material, poetry may only appear selectively, NOT regularly. It's up to you!

## Child Sexual Abuse: A Look From Both Sides

A female survivor/perpetrator  
shares her story at workshop at the  
1993 S.A.A Convention in Louisville.  
by Jill S.

My name is Jill and I am a recovering sex addict and an incest survivor/perpetrator. I believe that by the age of three I was incested by my father. By the age of three I saw the world through the distorted lens of incest. Every male and female were a maze of body parts and body sensations. I craved touch but I was terrified of the sensations I'd experience in my body. I turned to chocolate, I turned to masturbation, exhibitionism, and seduction before I was five years old.

As the years went by I felt desperately alone. The abuse continued and I added self-abuse. I sucked my thumb until I was 11. My oral need was so strong that even food became sexualized. My father sexually abused me until I was 16 years old. He raped me at least twice as far as I can remember. As I entered my teens, boys became my entire life. I never was one of "girls." I was the one who drank, wore heavy makeup, and had sex with college guys I didn't know and never saw again. I was lonely, I felt alone, and I thought sex was the only way I could ease the loneliness. I got used to being referred to as "Jill—you know what she does when she's alone with a guy?". My anger at my parents—my father for abusing me, by mother for abandoning me—was vented through my sexual acting out I started attending SAA almost 4 years ago. SAA was not on my wish list that year. What happened to me was that my sexual behavior was so out of control that I had lost all I cared about. My marriage of 21 years fell apart. I was acting out and couldn't stop.

The most painful moment of my life came when I admitted that I had been sexually abusing my son for 8 years. I knew that "it" was happening and I couldn't tell anyone. I didn't know it was incest but I knew it was sexual and I couldn't stop. To make a long story short, I was re-

ported for child sexual abuse. The police came after me, and went to my son's school and pulled him out of class in front of all his friends. The biggest legal and personal consequence of my behavior was the loss of custody of my two sons. This led me to treatment and another "S" program. After 15 months of unsuccessfully trying to get sexually sober I ended up in S.A.A.

Today I have over 3 1/2 years of Sexual Sobriety and am an active service member. I attend two meetings regularly and read literature on sexual addiction. Therapy is very important to me. I have done work on incest issues through both group therapy and 12 step groups for incest survivors. I AM A MIRACLE! I am amazed that I am still around after surviving extensive damage to my sexuality, to my ability to feel and express emotions, and spiritual bankruptcy.

I am rebuilding my life slowly. I am healing my wounded relationship with God. I have returned to college to turn my career around to work in the addiction fields.

As for my sons... I don't see them much but we talk on the telephone fairly often. It is real hard still, and I cry and cry. My husband is still avoiding therapy and recovery work. My father, who will soon be 84, insists that I'm crazy and that he never molested me. My mother says, "the past is past, let's get on with life."

When I think of life's miracles, I can honestly say that despite all my wounds. I am sober with alcohol, drugs, bulimia, anorexia, and compulsive overeating. Most meaningful to me is that I am sexually sober. All I do is work the Twelve Steps to the best of my ability. And funny as this may sound, my sobriety from all my other addictions are maintained by my sexual sobriety. Thank God, Grace happens!

Jill S. 1993.

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[Ed Note: Jill S. served on the NSO [ISO] Board in 1992-93. How great it would be to hear from her! Are you out there, Jill?]

## MORE FROM THE INSIDE

(Continued from page 2)

23 I was desperate for a loving relationship. I met my wife when she was only 16. We quickly married when she became pregnant, and moved to Houston.

Although happy in my marriage of two years I was introduced to the "Adult Book Store." I liked what I saw and became hooked. I got into doing things I thought were harmless, and that I could control. My bookstore visits came more often and my marriage had problems. We divorced after 5 years and I was devastated at the loss of my wife and daughter.

I occasionally drank and smoked marijuana for a while. I met another woman who was interested in me. I moved in with her and her three kids. I was "in love" and temporarily away from the bookstore. But the relationship was going sour and I was in love with a woman and my addiction. My kids started visiting us also. Then I sexually abused my daughter. She spoke up. I was arrested.

I had called a number in the yellow pages for some help but no return call from them. I was given a number for referral to group therapy but still was drawn back to my place of refuge, the bookstore. But I was enjoying group meetings, learning of my addiction, and attended for two years until I ended up here for my crime. I was too late in seeking help.

I remembered those nights returning late to the home of my girl friend, after spending all that time in the bookstore, crying, since I knew she was waiting for me. What excuse this time?

I'm incarcerated for a long time, struggling to keep a relationship with the woman I dearly love. My addict talks to me more than ever now. It seems to be all I have to turn to. I miss the group members I once knew, my family.

I look someday to get out and being involved in an SAA group. I don't think I'll have that chance; society doesn't want people like me out there. I forgive all the people that were abusive to me when I was young, including my father. They must have had something wrong in their childhood.

Yours,

Shane C.

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Greetings from Brazil!

Back in the Dec'99/Jan'2000 issue of the PBR there was a poem by "R.S." called "A Victim's View". I wanted to send a letter of support since we are both imprisoned for the same sort of crime. After 7 years in prison, I know how isolated and helpless we feel. And I realize just how important it is that we work toward sobriety and not create other victims. [Ed note: Here Heath asks to forward his letter. Unfortunately we cannot do that; it is in the province of the Prison Outreach Committee to assist, if possible, in handling such correspondence]

I'll share a little with you about my own recovery here. The PBR is truly my meeting in print and only source of 12 step help that I have. There are no group meetings or treatment available in Brazilian prisons. Through the PBR, I've met another prisoner in the U.S. With weekly letters, we work our steps and have learned so many new things.

The Twelve Steps are the primary source of recovery work, and other sources help with things like growing spiritually, victim empathy, relapse prevention plans, setting safe boundaries, and communication skills, which, as a prisoner, need desperately.

Jerry sent me my first PBR and my First Step materials in April of 1998. I've been growing and healing. It's very slow and hard. I've had a lot of resentments and ego problems to work on over the years. I've finally reached the point where I trust in my H.P. and am thankful for all the strength, hope and experience that I've received.

Four months ago I sent my first step to Robert S. with permission to publish. I would hope it might help others dealing with similar problems.

In closing, I would exchange letters with anyone who would write. Feel free to print my address.

Thank you again for all the kind help and support that you've offered me over these years, and thousands of miles!

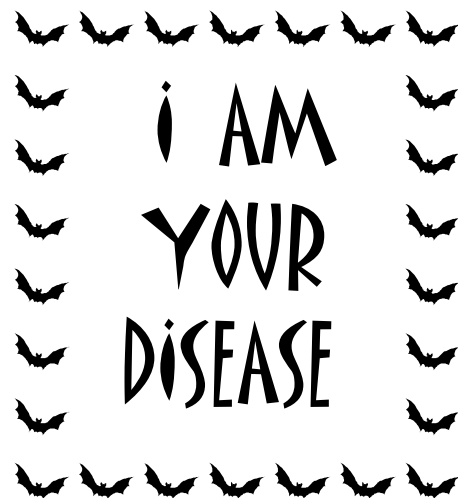
May God bless you and guide you in your recovery.

Yours in Recovery,

Heath G.

[Ed note: We no longer print addresses in the PBR. The Prison Outreach Committee can be contacted through the ISO Office, address on page 12]

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Submitted by Roger D.

Hello... just in case you forgot me... I am your disease.  
 I hate meetings... I hate Higher Powers... I hate your program.  
 To all who come in contact with me... I wish you suffering and I wish you death.  
 Allow to me introduce myself, I am the disease of addiction. I am cunning, baffling and powerful.  
 That's me. I have killed millions and I am pleased.  
 I love to catch you with the element of surprise. I love pretending I am your friend and lover.  
 I **have** given you comfort, haven't I? Wasn't I there when you were lonely?  
 When you wanted to die, didn't you call on me?  
 I love to make you hurt. I love to make you cry. Better yet, I love to make you so numb, you can neither hurt nor cry.  
 When you can't feel anything at all, that's my true gratification.  
 All that I ask from you is long term suffering.  
**I've been there for you always.**  
 When things were going right in your life, you invited me. You said you didn't deserve these things, and I was the only one to agree with you.

(Continued on page 7)



# Integrating multiple Programs

Louis D., SE Region

My world has changed so much since my first SAA Meeting, I pause in wonderment. I went to that first meeting in desperation and fear. I was at one of the lowest emotional times of my life. I needed the support of those that greeted me at my first meeting. I wanted the help of others. My addict had robbed me of my will to live. I remember stating that I didn't even know who I was anymore. The addiction had progressed to the point that acting out was all I lived for.

The members at my first meeting reached out to me, making me feel valued. I didn't know how to love myself, so the group nurtured me until I could. Group members reached out to me on a regular basis. I was given phone numbers to call. I was invited to moderate and chair meetings. Members would invite me to dinner, movies, or coffee. Just a simple Birthday Card was a well-received gift, because it showed that others cared.

I had never had a place where I could talk about sex as candidly as I could at meetings. As an addict coming in from denial, this was the beginning of peeling the 1<sup>st</sup> layer off the onion. Six months of meetings later, I realized I had been abused as a child. I had suffered sexual, emotional and physical abuse. I knew I needed a therapist so I could go one on one with the fears that were coming up for me.

My first therapist helped me to get in touch with feelings, anger, and opened the door to my admitting that I was alcoholic. Realizing that I would blackout after two drinks helped me to understand why I would wake up in bed with total strangers. I couldn't remember how we had met, what was said, or what we had done together. The alcohol was another clue to my acting out, trying to numb the pains of fear that went back to early childhood.

I fought with God about going to AA Meetings. My father was the alcoholic, and I did not want to be like him in any way. I was reminded of the help I needed in that area of my life. I included AA Meetings into my weekly schedule. I fought every thought of being an alcoholic.

A member approached me after a meeting and asked me to forget the differences, and look at the similarities. A new world opened up to me and I have been sober from alcohol almost 5 years. By not drinking, I clear up blacking out, meeting strangers, and waking up in bed with them.

Most recently, another issue has come to surface concerning my sexual sobriety. I remember using drugs with lovers and sexual partners whenever we would have sex. My problem was that I wanted to bond with the other person, even if it meant using drugs with them. The strongest drug I remember was pot, but also amyl nitrate. Another onion skin revealed, making me aware of how far I would go when acting out sexually. I felt the need to understand why I would go this far when acting out. I have attended some NA Meetings and relate to the issues at hand. Sexual addiction is a powerful beast. The deception of using sex freely, because we are sexual beings, will bring one to death's door. My sexual addiction has been arrested by the willingness to continue addressing other issues. I feel that the abuse, alcohol, and drugs were just more fuel for the fire to keep me acting out. Awareness of these issues, and dealing with them, help keep me sober sexually. I encourage members to keep an open mind when it comes to issues other than acting out. For me, the integration of multiple programs are what keep me sexually sober today.

Louis D.  
SE Region SAA  
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(Continued from page 6)

Together, we are able to destroy all the good things in your life.

People don't take me seriously. They take strokes seriously, heart attacks, even diabetes they take seriously. Fools. Without my help, these would not be possible.

I am such a hated disease, and yet **I do not come uninvited.**

You choose to have me. So many have chosen me over reality and peace.

More than you hate me, I hate all of you who have a 12 step program. Your program, your meeting, your Higher Power, all of these things weaken me, and I can't function in the manner I am accustomed to.

Now I must lie here quietly. You don't see me, but I am growing bigger than ever.

When you only exist I live and when you live I can only exist. I am here... waiting... until we meet again. If we meet again, I wish you suffering and death.

Sincerely,  
**YOUR DISEASE**

## MANIPULATING OTHERS

"I am certainly not so stupid as to revert back to my destructive behavior now that I have become aware of it."

Having had this vision of truth, they [we] may elect to leave treatment [or the program] because they [we] "no longer need it."

Nonsense. Years of addictive thinking and behavior do not melt away overnight... The tragedy is that addicts have conned themselves into believing they have achieved instant recovery.

from: Addictive Thinking by  
Abraham J. Twersky, MD.



I am now in the process of finishing my 10<sup>th</sup> step. I know that I have been much slower than most of the people doing their step work - I started just about four years ago. One of the reasons for the length are large gaps between my effort to work my steps. These gaps are probably a lack of motivation that can sometimes be a 'character defect', which I freely admit to. I have too often lowered the priority of my recovery program (which I know I am not supposed to do) and since I left my job, I have not been doing daily meditations. My rededication of to recovery should be an ongoing process and not a series of events.

But admitting I have made mistakes and taking responsibility for them is indeed part of the 10<sup>th</sup> step which I am doing right now. The step mainly concentrates on the prompt admission of wrongdoing. But doing something wrong and then simply admitting my mistake, suffices for the 10<sup>th</sup> step, but does not in itself prevent me from doing it again. If I am indeed a person full of compulsiveness and a person of powerlessness, then how can I possibly improve myself? Aren't I destined to just repeating the same mistakes over and over again?

Well one of my understandings to the answer of this question is in the 10<sup>th</sup> step itself. I make the mistake but I am not just admitting the mistake to myself and moving on. The 10<sup>th</sup> step does not specifically say to whom I admit my wrong, but I understand that the target of my wrong doing should receive the admission of wrong, the apology.

The 12 step recovery program continues to emphasize throughout the need for the recovering addict, me, to resist isolation. From its onset, my step work emphasized working with others - both human and higher power. As I progressed through my program of recovery, at each juncture, I had to constantly interact with something outside of me. This interaction was intended and was meant to be continuous throughout my step work and

## "I AM NOT WRONG ALWAYS"...

Step 10 from another view... By Joel

my future life. Like all other addicts, I came from an isolating and self-centered background. Ridding myself of my tendencies to work alone does take time but I must work on doing so constantly. Otherwise, as I go through the 10<sup>th</sup> step, I just admit my faults to myself and go one. Then later, I wonder why my faults are repeating. Doesn't admitting them, rid them? Not anymore than saying I'm going to stop acting out and therefore it just goes away!

So admitting I made a mistake must be done with others and be done so promptly. Is that all there is to the 10<sup>th</sup> step? On the surface, one would say 'yes'.

But for me, there is still something missing. You see, for me, the 12 step program is not just a 'spiritual awakening' as I will soon see in step 12. Sure, I get the secrets out, admit my powerlessness and understand the need to give up control to something outside of me - the essence of the first three steps. But then I get into a program of self-understanding, of enlightenment and I share my inner self with others in various ways. First, I work with my sponsor to fully understand my defects, my resentments, and my basic values. Then I apologize for the hurt I caused to others and even after doing that, realize that I am still defected and constantly admit my wrongdoings as they occur. So I start spiritually, but then I proceed into an understanding of myself, and the way I impact and interact with others. It is only with step 11, that I re-emphasize the need for spirituality.

So as I went from step 4 through 10, I learned more about myself but perhaps in a very negative way. I learned what made me tick, but mainly in the light of resentments, defects, wrongs, etc. It is a wonder that doing these steps have

not significantly lowered my ego, my self-esteem and made me feel almost worthless! With all these problems, how can I possibly move towards a better and improved me - a person who does not act out, a person with fewer and less occurring problems?

Back in the late 1960's, there was a famous British, rock/blues group called, "Ten Years After". One of the songs on their first album in 1968 was a great blues song entitled, "I May Be Wrong, But I Won't Be Wrong Always". That title perhaps should be an alternate or perhaps an additional description for step 10. As step 10 is the culmination of my step work concerning understanding myself and my relationship with others, as step 10 concentrates on admitting fault and guilt, step 10 also needs an uplifting part.

Healthy recovery requires BALANCE. Fault and guilt lower self-worth and self-esteem. But understanding and emphasizing mistakes are but a small fraction of my overall experience. Step 10 suggests that I consider my faults 'in context', that I realize I OCCASIONALLY make mistakes and fail. But so as not to negatively impact what I do well THE MAJORITY OF THE TIME, I rid myself of them promptly. This is the healthy context of step 10. I am good, I am worthy of recovery, people do admire me for who I am and for what I do. While I am not perfect and I make mistakes, I AM NOT WRONG ALWAYS.

So continue to embark on the journey of self-realization, make mid-course maneuvers as necessary, but know that the journey is headed in the right direction -- that is to me the message and the work of step 10.

We're all worth it!

Joel

## YOUR LITERATURE DOLLAR ...Just where does it go?

When you buy recovery literature through the ISO of SAA, where do the proceeds go? In fact, why **are** there proceeds at all? Why not just sell at cost or a little above?

### Good Questions!

First, in order for the ISO of SAA to carry out its work of service to the fellowship and to the still suffering addict, there has to be a place, phones, a staff, utilities to be paid, supplies, insurance — all the expenses of operating an office. There are also costs related to the Board and Committees, particularly the Literature Committee which is responsible for SAA literature. **Plus** our bimonthly newsletter, the PBR, is mailed free to every registered SAA group, to inmates, and to anyone else who requests it.

**The way we stand today**, income from member contributions provides approximately 40-45% of what is needed. Although the annual convention can also be a source of income, the amount varies greatly and, realistically, it might be counted on for about 20% or less. This means that **as much as 40% of the bills must be paid out of proceeds from literature sales.**

**in addition** to meeting its other expenses, **the ISO reaches out**, sending SAA literature and a literature catalog to all who request information about the program. It is not unusual to receive 3-5 calls each day. Free literature is also supplied to all inmates who request it, and their numbers continue to grow each year. When you purchase literature from the ISO, you are paying for the literature that these suffering addicts desperately need. For most, it is their first contact with recovery. For many, it is their **only** support in recovery. [July, 2000, catalog]

## Literature Committee at WORK - and how !

### Literature Committee Work Intensive for Coming Months

The Literature Committee is engaged in perhaps the most intensive efforts in its history. Not only are the subcommittees charged with their regular responsibilities, but the work of the "Large Book" are adding to the work.

Chris D., Chair of the Lit-Com, has assumed the tremendous task of doing all the proof-reading and putting it on a special web-site for the Committees use. Other Committee members are asked for their input on this process as well. This is a word-by-word, sentence-by-sentence, paragraph-by-paragraph, page-by-page job, making corrections and/or suggestions on the book draft.

Elizabeth S., Chair of the Large Book Subcommittee, presented a six point proposal for the coming work retreat in New Orleans in October. Those members at this meeting will be expected to make concrete, detailed, and specific suggestions on the structure and content of the draft of the Large Book, with the goal of providing an extensive and detailed list of suggestions for revisions to the authors.

Following the retreat, the Chair and Co-Chair, Susan W., will communicate these recommendations to the authors, and remain in contact with them as necessary to bring about any revisions. They will ask the ISO Board to set a timely deadline for the authors for revisions, as per the contract. Funding the work will be requested from the ISO Board.

As already determined, any member is invited to the retreat

meetings, at their own expense. All deliberations will be open. Chair and Co-Chair expect that all members of this subcommittee will provide a list of their top concerns for revision, content or structural. The meetings begin October 25<sup>th</sup> and end October 29<sup>th</sup>.

In other business, Vic K., Chair of the "Guide to the 12 Steps" subcommittee, has set a deadline for feedback as January 2001. [See notice for feedback on page 12 of this PBR].

The PBR reports a continuing need for pieces of 300-800 words. Lengthy first step pieces are too difficult to edit, and often contain material more suitable for a meeting, or given to a sponsor, as opposed to printing in the PBR. What has been suggested is that a writer take a portion of a first step, then elaborate on how his/her work on this issue has enhanced recovery.

John H. has written a piece, an "Internet Pamphlet" and will circulate the piece in his locale. He notes also the piece presented by Bruce B. in 1997. Work will continue on the project.

The "Welcome to SAA" piece has about 15 spelling and punctuation errors in it. The Lit-Com will set about correcting all literature, and place the date of origin and any revision dates on pieces in the future. Chris to investigate the process.

The other items on the agenda were tabled to the next meeting to be held by teleconference at 5:00 PM, Central Time, on Sunday, December 3, 2000..

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October, the tenth month in the currently used calendar, is a month for "chain yanking" in my life. I've long since stopped trying to figure out "who" is doing the yanking, or "why" it's being yanked. Of course in my addictive cycles, when engrossed in one or more [usually more] of them, I alluded this to "God", in that HE was trying to tell me something. It was October of 1989 when I came to SAA, at the end of a chain. Not really willing to come, not ready to come, not wanting to come. I was two and a half months into a sexual relationship with a person outside my marital situation, and the cycle was spinning out of control. Like me watching myself go down the drain with the bath water after the plug was pulled. Yes, someone pulled the plug.

My arrogance during this period prompted behavior that was nowhere near humble, and I would browbeat anyone, including my former wife, as if it was anyone but me that caused the problems in my life. Blame, if it works. Intimidation, if it works. Threats, if they work. Obsequiousness, and boot-licking, if they work. Stupidity, if it works. Whatever works.

And some of that stuff worked for me in my family of origin, in my nuclear family [I had the control - I learned it in the family of origin...], and, some of it worked well in my profession and other business pursuits. It wasn't working that October. Then "God" was at fault too. And I wasn't happy about any of it.

As I look at some Octobers of note, and those of recent date, I think of what I do in **September** that seems to prompt some of the chaos of "Octobers". One is that my committed companion of 11 years, and my wife of 7, [one in the same person] reports back to her work after being off for 2 ½ months in the summer. Don't know what that signifies, but I'm alone during that first month of her work. And I'm preparing for the Iowa Retreat. I'm preparing for my annual trip to Minnesota for the sugar beet harvest. Added to those this year is the LitCom trip to New Orleans in October for the "Large Book" editing project..

Three years ago in September while at the Panorama, Iowa Retreat, I got shingles. Bad stuff. In bed for about 3 months was I. Lost 55 pounds. Last year a trip to the old homestead to close it down; all occupants gone to death or nursing home. Every year it's the month to do the Oct-Nov PBR, prepare in September, publish in October. This year I had to sell the old home place in September. Prepare for an auction sale

# STEP TEN

## What better time than now?

next June23rd as well. The summer construction, clean up, grand-kids, great grand-kids, two trips to Denver, three trips to Minnesota, miles and miles, run here, run there. Augusts and Septembers are wild.

The outcroppings of all that happens in October? I'm a jerk. I'm an ogre. I'm a nut. I yell at the children. I give short shrift to those I care about. I'm not a person that people give a damn to be around.

And further, as I look at my own recovery efforts, I see that they are merely head-trippings and facades. It's been two years as of yesterday that I entered a word in "A Gift to Myself". My daily readings are in conjunction with meetings or as needed for some "specific" reason, not for my daily maintenance.

For me to come off this "high horse" is hard to manage, hard first to admit, then to begin the step 10's that are necessary to all involved. Resentments have eaten my lunch again.

On Saturday, the last of a two day stay with us, a series of events found me yelling at two of my wonderful grandchildren. In a hurry, finding fault with them. I was in a tizzy and bound to be late to register for an event I and my wife wanted to attend. But first I had to take my grandson home, and my granddaughter to a birthday party. Only to find when I went to register for the event, THE EVENT WAS FOR THE NEXT WEEK!!!

My wife and I determined to take a ride on the cycle to "cool it". We rode through the Southern Black Hills to view the recent fire damage to 82,000 acres. It was a saddening sight; black trees and burned grass and underbrush. It made me think a bit about my invincibility.

Upon moving through the area, we came upon a county sheriff half across the road, door open, shotgun and megaphone out, and two federal marshals with shotguns, pointing to two persons in a vehicle, insisting they come out with hands high. WE STOPPED a hundred feet in front of the action. I shot 15 pictures while waiting. We were first on

the scene. One of the pictures was in this morning's paper. It was a sobering experience although we didn't think we were in danger. That 4 hour cycle ride seemed to speak to me about my behaviors of this day.

It tells me that my behavior of past days, is still inappropriate in so many ways. And that it all has a genesis, perhaps better labeled as a set of "relapse dynamics". These for me, as evidenced in daily life, are those of "overload", still in addiction to the frenzy of anxiety and involvement. And if I awaken in time, perhaps my tenth step responsibilities will be accepted by those I care for most.

I called my grandkids as my pictures of the "arrest scene" were being developed, and asked them if they had enough time for me to stop and speak to them. They said, "OK." I made my amends to them in the presence of their father, my son. And I felt pretty crappy. I told them they had a right to tell me how they felt when I yelled at them, and anything else they wanted to say, without any interruptions. They chose not to. I wish they had, and I hope they will. And also they find courage enough to say, "STOP" if I or anyone else speaks to them like that again.

This step, like all the rest, is for me. I find myself doing the same step 10's to the same persons, for the same reasons. It's like crying "wolf". This continued behavior may ultimately sever the links between those who really wish I'd do it for myself, and who would still admit they're a part of my life.

Time for me was running out before adolescence; how much shorter now, to be able to truly know serenity, and commitment, and the spiritual connections with loved ones. I continue to take personal inventory; I am wrong, I admit it. May your steps tread a smoother path from day to day.

Robert S.

PS. And tonight at supper, 30 minutes ago, I spilled the sliced cucumbers, vinegar, sugar, salt and water, all over the kitchen floor. Easy...

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## HELLO...???

Hope you haven't forgotten some of the tools of recovery available at the ISO Office. Like TAPES! There are STILL some deals out there for multiple purchases. Are you using all the pamphlets and recovery materials that are listed in the Literature Catalog? Hey - Hey... Get on BOARD!

## CONVENTION CHANGE...Fear propels some to addiction, some to retribution. Perhaps an "outside issue" as per Tradition 10... Read on -

### CONVENTION SITE CHANGED

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Recovery,

The Board of Trustees of the ISO of SAA voted on September 2 to accept the action of the [\*\*\*\*\*] Convention Committee to rescind its invitation to host the 2001 Conference and Convention. This action was precipitated by the hotel receiving a letter which declared that there was a group which would establish a public confrontation with our convention and its attendees. This would take the form of contacting local and national media, handing out flyers in the community, video taping the activities of our convention and its attendees, and doing everything possible for this group to make that local community aware of our convention. Sex addiction was depicted from a highly negative and fearful point of view. In the face of this threatening action the [\*\*\*\*\*] Convention Committee voted to withdraw its invitation to host our convention.

The Board of Trustees voted to hold the 2001 Convention and Conference in [\*\*\*\*\*]. The arrangements have been made with a hotel in [\*\*\*]. We are able to avoid a financial cancellation penalty through the use of a hotel in the same chain. We are fortunate to have a cadre of persons experienced and willing to serve on a

convention committee in [\*\*\*\*\*]. [\*\*\*\*\*]

We believe we have the resources in place to provide our fellowship with a safe and secure convention.

This has been a difficult time for the people on the [\*\*\*\*\*] Convention Committee, the staff of our office and the members of the Board of Trustees. These persons have been confronted with fear and hatred. The presence of our Higher Power was sought as the available options were considered. Your trusted servants made the best decision available for us to make. In living out this experience, the fullness of the Serenity, the Courage, and the Wisdom for which we pray has been shared.

Let us have the confidence of being with each other in a safe and secure location. Let us all continue to grow in our recovery as we face our challenges.

Your trusted servant,

Roger B.

Chairperson, Board of Trustees

[Ed Note: The following is from Ben S [Buddy] who was the Convention Chair for the [\*\*\*\*\*] 2001 Convention, now moved to [\*\*\*\*\*]. Refer to the letter above from Roger B. for the reason. The [2001\*\*\*] Convention Committee secured advance registrations and promised a drawing on behalf of those registering, the winner to be awarded a free registration. Buddy's letter explains the process, and the winner. Also, respecting COSA's plans to be in [\*\*\*\*], he comments on actions of the Convention Committee to support their situation in a gathering at the next SAA Convention]

From Ben S.

Before all the other business on Sunday, we voted as a committee, to have the drawing for the win-

ner of the 2001 convention tuition lottery at the Choices Tuesday night meeting.

Tonight, I drafted two members who were not directly involved with the convention. One held the legal sized envelope with all the tickets and the other drew a ticket from the bunch. The winner is "CHADWICK", who left a phone number on his or her ticket. We promised that we would call the winner and I shall do that tomorrow, Wednesday 8/30/00. We also promised that the winner would be announced in the PBR. I am requesting that this be announced in the next issue of the PBR.

For Your Information Concerning COSA....

Ruth B. from COSA had

made contact with the [2001\*\*\*\*] Convention Hotel so as to have a small gathering from COSA there during our convention. By the time this PBR is read, arrangements will have been made through Francie and others so the same conditions for their attendance will be the same in [\*\*\*\*] as they would have been in [\*\*\*\*\*].

I spoke with our group tonight about the possibility of trying for the Convention again in 2002. While I did not get any firm answers, their comments were of the positive nature.

Yours in recovery  
Buddy

## ISO INFORMATION

**BOARD - LITERATURE COMMITTEE - OFFICE - STAFF - WEB - EMAIL**

Area	Board Member	Liason Function	Board Alternate	Liason Function	Litcom Member	LitCom Alternate
Great Lakes	Roger B[chr]	Intergroup Communications	Ken S.	Intergroup Communications	Elizabeth S	Vic K.
South Pacific	Peter B[Sec]	International Development	Bill S.		Susan W.	Thom C.
At Large	Leo H.[Treas]	Oversight/Fund Raising	none		none	none
Inter-Mountain	Carolyn L.	Internet Serv/Internat. Dev.	Steve H.		Chris D	Kenton J.
North Central	Dave B.	Outreach	Lonnie S.		Jerry A	vacant
South East	Francie E.	Interfellowship Relations	Bruce B.	Fund Raising	Joseph T	David G.
North Pacific	Frank B.	Outreach	Joel D.		John H.	Tom B.
South Central	Judy N.	Literature	Claude E.		Greg G.	Mike L.
North East	Peter M.	Prison Outreach	vacant		Tony Z.	vacant
					Robert S	n/a
					PBR	

### Staff

Jerry B. Office Manager  
Klaus P. Asst Office Manager

### Office Hours [Central time]

[Staffed-M-F] 10:00 AM - 6:00 PM

Phone answered at all times except when staff is on the phone. Leave Message; call will be returned, usually within the hour.

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e-mail: [info@saa-recovery.org](mailto:info@saa-recovery.org)

PBR: [PBR@saa-recovery.org](mailto:PBR@saa-recovery.org)

**WILL YOU PLEASE?** Remember the needs of the SAA Fellowship at the international level? This newsletter was provided for you by those doing their own Step Twelve and Tradition Five work. And by one full time/one half time, paid staff member. There are important programs of outreach, many of which are represented in this publication. Outreach of all kinds, prison and all other. Materials are provided free to those who cannot afford them; i.e., prisoners. It costs dollars to maintain the central facility through which our efforts are maintained. For you who downloaded this, or have received it via "snail mail", we hope you will strongly consider sending your periodic contributions to the ISO office. **YOU** are the answer to total Outreach! Thanks !!

## SPECIAL PROJECT NOTICE - LOOKING FOR HELP AND FEED-BACK

A draft of A Guide to the Twelve Steps of SAA is being circulated for feedback. This book is a grass roots project that has been in process for over six years. It is similar in concept to Hope and Recovery and the first half of Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions.

SAA Groups and intergroups have permission to copy this manuscript for the purpose of giving critical feedback.

If you would like a copy, please request one by writing to Harry S., 25245 Maplebrooke Dr., Southfield MI 48034 or e-mail [harry@eaglesolutions.com](mailto:harry@eaglesolutions.com).

If you would like to work on the committee receiving feedback, please contact Vic K., PO Box 1258, Bay View MI 49770 or email at [Vknowl@aol.com](mailto:Vknowl@aol.com)

The draft manuscript includes instructions on how to give critical feedback.

**Now!!**

You can order materials and make donations, using your VISA, MC, Discovery or AMEX !!!!