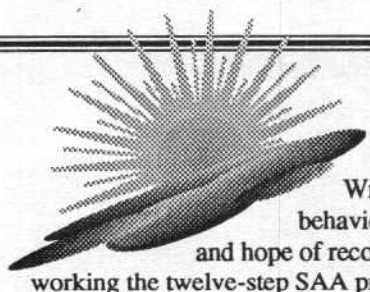


THE Plain Brown Rapper

The SAA Newsletter

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August, 1991 Edition

The purpose of the Newsletter is to be a voice of the SAA membership. Written by and for brothers and sisters recovering from compulsive sexual behaviors; to be informative, sensitive and expressing the experiences, strength, and hope of recovering members. It is intended as an additional tool of recovery for those working the twelve-step SAA program.

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Thought for the Month

I believe every adult should observe a child for at least an hour a week. There are many things we could learn (other than patience) if we would take the time to do so. Unfortunately, our society often says, "Children are the immature, incomplete version — adults are the completion." I think that's a mistake.

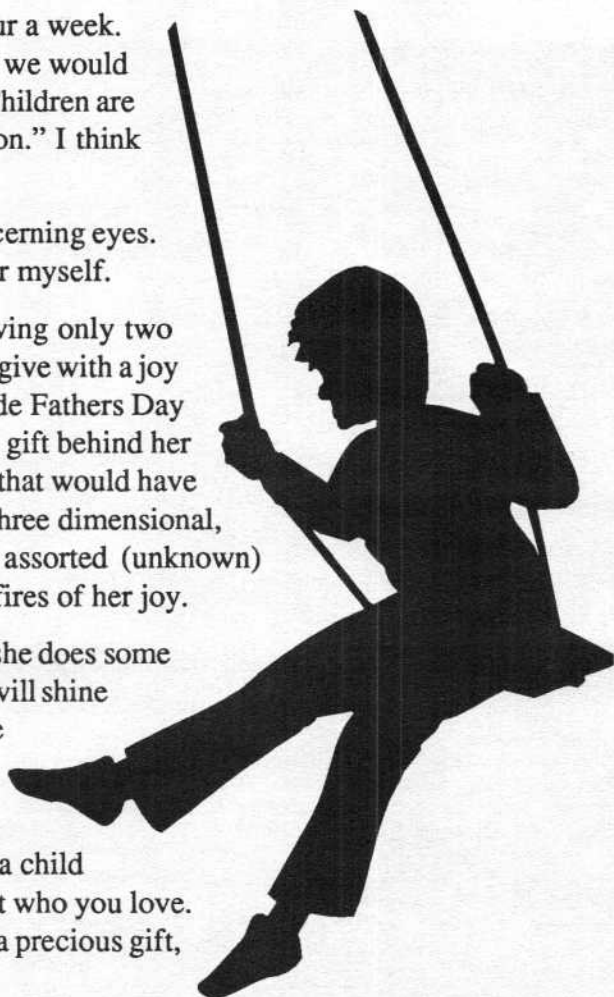
Lately, I've been trying to observe my daughter with more discerning eyes. In the process, I've noticed a few things I hope I can claim for myself.

One is the joy of giving. We often think of children as knowing only two words: "I want!" The truth is, if given the chance, children will give with a joy no adult can match. My daughter recently gave me a handmade Fathers Day card. As she slowly walked toward me, clutching the precious gift behind her back, her smile grew bigger and brighter until, with a flourish that would have made a conductor proud, she handed me a genuine fold-out, three dimensional, pop-up card, complete with little fishes, houses, and other assorted (unknown) crayoned figures. I could have cooked marshmallows on the fires of her joy.

Another is the joy of being. Watch the face of a child as he or she does some wondrous thing (like jumping high on a trampoline). That face will shine like neon exclaiming to the world, "There is nothing more wonderful than being alive!"

Still another is love — unadulterated, no-strings-attached, because-you're-you love. Try taking a tight, warm hug from a child who loves you, and giving that same hug back to another adult who you love. If you can pass on that same affirmation of love, you've given a precious gift, indeed.

Are these things unattainable because we're adults? I don't think so. I believe we have the ability to relearn what we've lost, to tap into our "inner child," and to give, to be, and to love as children. Yes, we have lots and lots of "baggage" so that we often give, be, and love with strings, brambles, and walls in the way. But I have hope. I think I can clean out the mess and get back to what life is really all about. And I believe you can, too. But if you need help, do what I do: get your knees dirty, get sand in your shoes, and go watch the real experts.



The Promises of Continuing to Act Out My Addiction

If I walk away from my recovery, I will be amazed when I find myself exactly where I was when I first admitted to having a sexual addiction — or more likely I will be amazed to find that my disease will have progressed even further.

I will again know that same old sense of slavery that had filled my life before recovery.

I will regret the past and I will wish to shut the door on it.

I will comprehend the word “madness” and I will know agony.

No matter how far down the scale I have gone in the past, I will see I can continue endlessly down that scale, and it will all feel horribly meaningless.

That feeling of uselessness and self-pity will return.

I will be interested in selfish things.

Self-seeking will pervade my life.

My whole attitude and outlook upon life will become delusional.

Fear of people and of economic insecurity will worsen.

I will miss out on the chance to learn how to intuitively handle situations which baffle me.

I will someday realize that I have denied myself from the grace of God.

Changing Fast

Changing fast on that search for the child inside

Have to give up the teenager that's hot with excitement for young bodies

Sex

Sex

Sex

Talk to the man about the responsibilities of finding a solution

Talk to the broken hearted man inside about the tear drop from a crying child's eye

Find the solution

Love

Love

Love

Take good care of me, treat me well and keep my mind open and willing

— Joseph D.

The following discussion is a response by an individual to the "Level Three Behavior Guidelines" recently drafted by the N.S.O. Literature Committee and published in the PBR. It is presented to further encourage discussion on this important topic.

A Statement of the Handling of Level Three Sexual Behavior

Definition

I define Level Three sexual behavior to include the following behaviors:

- Rape
- Incest
- Child Molestation

I believe there is a general cultural consensus as to the legality, morality, and definition of the above behaviors. I acknowledge the victimizing effect of other behaviors, but believe the above list represents the activities most usually included in definitions of Level Three behavior. Limiting our definitions to the above list helps ensure that SAA does not become involved in controversial moral judgments and legal arguments concerning what constitutes Level Three behavior.

Discussion

Recovery from sexual addiction is an individual process, and cannot be dictated at the group level. The recovery of the Level Three addict is no exception. As with any sex addict, recovery is only accomplished one step at a time through the building of individual trusting relationships, and specifically through the sponsor/sponsee relationship that is the backbone of 12-step recovery.

Acceptance and support of fellow group members allows the addict to come out of isolation and begin to shed the cloak of shame and secrecy. As acceptance gradually turns into real trust, a space is prepared for the honesty that is necessary in order for the addict to begin to come out of denial. SAA must always provide a place for the addict to develop this trust without fear of reprisal or rejection.

The steps to sobriety may be more difficult, halting, and necessary for the Level Three addict to take than for any other. Perhaps more so than other addicts, it is imperative that he "keep coming back." Obviously, threats and confrontations will have the opposite effect.

Therefore, SAA groups must forever be safe havens for the addict who still suffers. If we truly believe "Each group has but one primary purpose — to carry its message to the addict who still suffers," then none may be turned away — or turned in. This principle must remain unaltered so that the primary mission of SAA can continue. Our recovery depends upon it.

I can foresee no circumstance in which a group need act as an enforcement agency to control the behavior of its members. Recovery must be left to the individuals from whence it comes, with the help and guidance of a Higher Power that works through those individuals. The group only exists to serve this higher purpose.

Therefore, I believe the sponsor/sponsee relationship is still the best way to proceed with the recovery of any and all sex addicts. Individual and community interests are best served by helping addicts recover, no matter what their drug of choice.

There need be no change in the workings of the SAA program. "It works if you work it."

— Dan
Atlanta, GA

SAA ORDERING INFORMATION — Summer/Fall 1991

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

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

National Service Organization Approved Items

QUANTITY	TOTAL AMOUNT
_____ S.A.A. Group Guide	@ 4.50 _____
_____ Abstinence and Boundaries in S.A.A.	@ 2.50 _____
_____	or 12 for 25.00 _____
_____ First Step to Recovery	@ 1.25 _____
_____	or 12 for 10.00 _____
_____ S.A.A. Self-Assessment Brochures	@ .10 _____
_____	or 12 for 1.00 _____
_____ NEW! The Bubble	@ .25 _____
_____	or 10 for 2.00 _____
_____ The Plain Brown Rapper (1 year)	@ 6.00 _____
_____ The Plain Brown Rapper group subscription rates (1 year, each)	
_____ 10 or more to the same address	@ 3.00 _____
_____ S.A.A. Fellowship Directory	@ 3.50 _____
_____ S.A.A. Medallions	@ 2.50 _____
_____ Blank _____ 6 MO _____ 18 MO _____ 4 YR _____ 7 YR _____ 10 YR	
_____ 1 MO _____ 9 MO _____ 2 YR _____ 5 YR _____ 8 YR _____ 11 YR	
_____ 3 MO _____ 1 YR _____ 3 YR _____ 6 YR _____ 9 YR _____ 12 YR	
_____ NEW! Aluminum S.A.A. Medallions	@ 1.50 _____
_____ Blank _____ 1 MO _____ 3 MO _____ 6 MO _____ 9 MO	

"CARRYING THE MESSAGE" CONFERENCE - AUDIO TAPES

QUANTITY	TOTAL AMOUNT
_____ 1. The Founding of S.A.A., Pat C.	@ 6.00 _____
_____ 2. Multiple addictions: Barbara B.	@ 6.00 _____
_____ 3. Measuring and Celebrating Progress, Rich S.	@ 6.00 _____
_____ 4. Exploring Healthy Sexuality, Douglas P.	@ 6.00 _____
_____ 5. Sharing our recovery — Three stories: S.A.A., COSA, and a Couple	@ 6.00 _____
_____ 6. Sharing our recovery Part Two	@ 6.00 _____
_____ 7. Personal Stories, Gregory M., Linda M.	@ 6.00 _____
_____ * Order any six tapes for the price of five	@ 30.00 _____
_____ "Carrying the Message" T-shirts in _____ large or _____ extra large	@ 5.00 _____

Twin Cities S.A.A. Intergroup Items

_____ Getting Started in Sex Addicts Anonymous; a beginner's packet for recovering sex addicts	@ 2.50 _____
_____	12 for 25.00 _____
_____ NEW! Exploring Healthy Sexuality	@ 3.50 _____
_____	12 for 35.00 _____

Other Recovery Items

_____ Answers in the Heart (meditations)	@ 9.00 _____
_____ Out of the Shadows (Carnes)	@ 11.00 _____
_____ Women, Sex, and Addiction (Kasl)	@ 11.00 _____
_____ Hope and Recovery	@ 12.00 _____
_____ Hope and Recovery Workbook	@ 11.00 _____
_____ A Male Grief: Notes on Pornography (Mura)	@ 4.50 _____

Mn. residents add 6.5% sales tax

Total Enclosed

Make checks payable to SAA literature

Ship to (please print clearly):

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____

State: _____ Zip: _____

The Way of Peace

Easter Sunday. April 15. I went in search of the resurrection. My feelings after a quarrel with my wife were dead on a stick.

I drove up to a cherished place, the Washington Cathedral, hoping for solace in its stone serenity. So crowded I had to park in the Bishop's spot. No matter — I'll only be a few minutes.

I stepped out into the sound of pealing bells emanating from somewhere in the massive heart of that old building. Celebration of Christ's day. People were spilling out from giant doors into the sunshine, in whites, and pinks, and reds, like flower petals rustling across a spring lawn. Service was letting out.

A tiny girl in white, broad-brimmed Easter bonnet with satin ribbon ran down the sidewalk to the end, fretted for a second, and then, hand on bonnet, twirled and twirled.

I climbed the steps and entered the Cathedral. The bell sounds faded and there was a thick, musty quiet. At the south end, halfway up the walls, a great flowered circle of colored glass flamed in sunlight, hope rising from the souls that designed it, and paid for it, and prayed by it.

To the east, the stations of the cross in gloomy recesses, warmed though by fresh Easter lilies. And there, a kaleidoscope of colored glass picturing the dead Christ in his mother's arms, gray face to gray face, while a shining angel rose above them, joy in death somehow.

And to the north, grand hall adorned at the end with the figure far above on the cross, visitors drifting in and out across the dark floor, and a woman kneeling at a tiny altar to the side, with a Christ's head above it in crown of thorns, or was it man's face breaking through the sun, strange man, forever insisting on creating other images when his own is miracle enough.

Outside again into the air electric with bell sounds and sunlight, I was looking for a phone now to call my wife and make peace and arrange to meet soon for a walk along the river. Around the corner, under the steps, there was a pay phone, and miracle? She answered and agreed, and said yes, she could hear the wonderful bells.

Back out again and down along the giant's east side to the entrance to a favorite cubbyhole in the Cathedral — the Bethlehem Chapel, at ground level marked by the words, "the Way of Peace," balm today and balm on other trying days and nights over the years to a person whose torments rise and fall within like waves before a storm.

Kneeling there at the center of the railing, and looking up — in churches, somehow, you must always look up — to the scene in stone: the babe in mother's arms, the wise men, the donkey and the cow, the cherubs looking on.

Tears, why tears, always at moments like this. Beginning in my mind the Lord's prayer and from in me another, steady voice says it along with me, and the Hail Mary, and the Glory be to the father. That voice, from somewhere inside. Crazy, crazy? No.

Simply my soul, anchor in my life, the winds of that soul in all of us, of all of us, for us to hear.

A soft knock on the rail: someone has kneaded against it to my left. Who, who joins me in this mighty moment? Prayer over now, and the anxiety invades, the anxiety of being with another there, my inmost feelings exposed. My right hand sped from forehead to chest to left shoulder to right, in Catholic sign of the cross, little practiced ritual now, and I stood up, glancing, glancing: Pretty young black-haired woman, and she had trusted me enough to join me in this awe.

Outside, and down to the garden, steps through hedges off to the mammoth's side. In memory of Christ's garden, Gesthemene? I didn't remember. Wandering, wandering, I saw a statue at the other end. Then looming up, two couples, old friends. Pleasantries and then we said good-byes. Now I stood in front of the statue, carving of a young man tenderly enfolded in an older's arms. Not Christ this time. The Prodigal son returned. And I, the Prodigal son. Accept me? I moved back to the end of the square of hedges and looked again, sunlight then shadows flitting over the stone as spring clouds passed overhead.

Those years of pain and hell, hospitals and jails from an illness, divorce, failures. How could I have been welcomed back? And yet, and yet, a job, a marriage now, a fruitful relationship with my sons. Indeed, I am returning, and find a warmth. I am acceptable. I qualify as human life. That voice: You have been the unpardoning one; you must forgive yourself.

I left soon. The bells still pealed. Children and parents and lovers still drifted across the square. I had found the resurrection, indeed, in a thousand spring blossoms, in those bells, in those hearts, in my own heart. Grand cathedral; grand day.

And now, wisdom, to go share it in a walk with Anne — the way of peace.

— John H.

Denial

I have been the
Dean of Denial.
My shades
have begun to fade.
The joy
is beginning to clear.
I confused who was my friend
and who was my foe.

The night
keeps calling me back.
What I see
is not always pleasing to me.
I now can feel
what I repressed for a lifetime.
I can breathe better
since coughing up the infection.

— Bob
Oregon

The Precious Gift of Today

If I sit in regret or bitterness of my yesterdays
and fret in worry of my tomorrows,
I will have only robbed myself
of the precious gift of my today.

Forgiveness of myself and others gives me
God's precious gift of today.

The Patience of a Child

Who can test the patience of a child?
Who can love the impatience of a child?
With my heart wrenching and twisting to have it's way,
God lays his hand on me.
Little child, little child,
Come and sit.
The river runs by here.
The lambs play here.
Come and sit.
Quiet your restless spirit.
Quiet your broken and haunted soul.
I will restore you,
To the child you were meant to be,
To the child who see beauty
In my clouds,
In my meadows,
In herself.

— Marea N.



Do you have a story, a poem, an experience of growth, or would you just like to share your emotions and feelings? Please write The Plain Brown Rapper. Your brothers and sisters in SAA would like to hear from you. We have much to share with each other. Please write to PBR Editor, c/o SAA, P.O. Box 3038, Minneapolis, MN 55403. If you have a modem, or can submit your writing on a computer disk (either Macintosh or IBM), that would be greatly appreciated. For more information concerning telecommunicating your article, please call the NSO office. Please submit all writings for the September newsletter by July 21, 1991.

Unless otherwise noted, the content of all articles, stories, and poems that appear in the *Plain Brown Rapper* reflect the opinions of the respective writers. Those opinions are not necessarily shared by the N.S.O, S.A.A., or the Literature Committee. Discussion of the contents of this newsletter is encouraged.