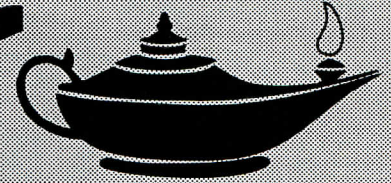


The SCAnner

SCA NEWSLETTER

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VOLUME 6, no.1

50 CENTS

FIRST QUARTER, 1995

BREAKING UP AND STAYING SOBER

by Jerome M. (NY)

I'm a dater. Yeah. (Maybe even a closet relationship addict. I'm working through that anyway.) When I got sober I was really eager to start dating. I had thirty days of sobriety. I remember an old-timer encouraging me not to date until I had ninety days. I think that's what he said (but heck I wasn't listening). I remember remarking how his tone was so patronizing and that his communication came across as telling me what to do. That approach doesn't work very well for

me. I prefer being gently guided and learning the lessons on my own, so that they'll really stick. Consequently, like a good little addict I took matters into my own hands. I thought, "Fuck, I haven't dated healthily in a long time — maybe never; let's give it a try."

What prompted me to come into this program was the status of my intimate relationships. I had friends, but they became continually distant as a result of my shrinking intimacy threshold. Perhaps you've been there too. I used to socialize with friends and then felt, "Ick! This is getting too close. better go out and have some sex." At this point my longest "boyfriend/lover" relationships (there were two) were over and I felt spent. "Nothing works in my life; I'm not doing what I want in my career; I'm not on good terms at all with my parents; I don't like the way I look; I'm tired of

the intimacy that has hurt me. No more." At that point I believed that getting along meant working to pay the rent, seeing friends occasionally, and continuing to have sex with strangers in place of relationships. That was the only answer. I was defective and this was my only alternative . . . Thank God, Higher Power, the goddesses, the Universe, whatever, for enlightenment. I was not defective and this was not my only alternative. (SCA, I love you.)

Yet it's only been through tapping into the gifts of higher power, namely letting go, that my life continues to grow and fulfill my heart, my spirit and my desire to connect with others . . .

few people in the program. I next grew intimate with another gentleman in the program for six months and I was sober (on my plan) the whole time. The list goes on of people I've dated in SCA. My last long-term relationship with a fellow SCA-er lasted about a year and nine months.

I've found there to be many gifts to long-term relationships. When two people get to know each other over an extended period of time there can be a certain comfortableness that develops, a certain awareness and sharing of styles: Knowing what the other likes to eat, to wear; sharing jokes and developing a common sense of humor; exploring comfortable sleeping positions and knowing the kind of hug or touch the other finds supporting

(continued on Page 7)...breaking

Thus started my recovery program and dating. At thirty days of sobriety I became intimate with a man in program. And then I dated a

EDITOR'S NOTE

Greetings, brothers and sisters in recovery! And since this is the first **SCAnner** in 1995, Happy New Year! I hope it will be a good one for you in recovery. The major news of this quarter is that **The SCAnner** will now be distributed on a subscription basis by Chicago-SCA, which has graciously offered to undertake this task. In other words, for those who have asked, you can now subscribe to **The SCAnner** at \$0.50 per issue, or \$2.00 a year. Big cities, like New York, Chicago & Los Angeles, will still have their Intergrroups order **SCAnners** and then distribute them at the meeting level. But for everyone else, and for anyone who just wants his/her own subscription, look for the order form in this issue. Or write to: S.C.A., Pennsicola Place, P.O. Box 138455, Chicago, Illinois 60613. In this issue, we have two major stories, Jerome M.'s, "Breaking Up and Staying Sober," an insightful article about dating, and an extended "Food For Thought" column by Richard K. about spirituality. On another note, I'd like to repeat that SCA now has an 800 information phone number: 1-800-977-HEAL (callers in NY or overseas 212-606-3778). This wonderful service effort was led by Brian K. of NY who is also in the process of producing an SCA public service announcement. Finally, If you are interested in submitting articles or information for **The SCAnner's** use, we invite you to do so by sending them to: **The SCAnner** c/o SCA P.O. Box 1585 Old Chelsea Station, New York, New York 10011

Yours in recovery, Joe F., Editor

THE SERENITY PRAYER

God, grant me the serenity
to accept the things I cannot change,
courage to change the things I can,
and the wisdom to know the difference.

and PIECES

[Editor's Note: A reminder to Intergroup secretaries: I need your Intergroup meeting minutes if you want any information about your group to go in **The SCanner**. Please send to me at: Joe F., The Scanner, c/o S.C.A. New York, P.O. Box 1585 Old Chelsea Station, New York, NY 10113-0935.]

CHICAGO, CHICAGO

SCANNER SUBSCRIPTION

The SCanner will now be distributed from Chicago. Groups and individuals will now have to subscribe (at \$0.50 per issue or \$2.00 a year—subscription form is included starting in this issue) by submitting your request to S.C.A., P.O. Box 138455, Chicago, Illinois, 60613. Larger intergroups will order a year in advance. New York authorized \$600 to pay for 300 **SCAnners** ordered for 1995. Discussion was made at the February meeting concerning distribution, and the problems therein, of **The SCanner**.

SPREADING THE NEWS

In September, Todd R. of the 12-Step Committee suggested that Intergroup brainstorm for some ideas for the function of the 12-Step Committee. These ideas could then be broken down into separate tasks and be completed by members of the fellowship. This avoids having one person or committee taking on the entire task. The following ideas were suggested:

1.Assist in organizing new meetings.
2.Handle hotline.
3.Provide resource for media.
4.Outreach to professionals.
5.Handle ads and promos in gay publications.
6.Collection of "My Story"s for ISO.

Mark L. volunteered to follow up on placing ads in gay publications to inform people about the SCA hotline...Frank T., of the 12-Step Committee reported in October that activity on the phone line had picked up and that there were inquiries concerning questions of meeting locations, as well as treatment center options. A discussion ensued concerning whether or not it is appropriate for SCA to be recommending treatment centers to people who call in on the hotline. It was Intergroup's consensus that if someone were interested in treatment we could refer him/her to individuals in the fellowship (not Intergroup) who were willing to provide that information based upon their personal experience.

ELECTION TIME

New SCA Intergroup officers for Chicagoland were elected this December. They include:

ISO RepresentativeTodd R.
Intergroup ChairmanBob C.
Intergroup SecretaryGreg O.
Intergroup TreasurerFrank T.
Literature ChairmanTom M.
Social ChairmanMark L.
12-Step CommitteePeter B., Gordon M.
.....Susan S., Todd R., Terry C.
Phoneline Coordinator.....Doug D., Susan S.

BIG SCA BOOK

Peter B. and Susan S. of the 12-step Committee (with the help of Robert S. as final editor) reported in October that they had gotten some people together to write a piece of literature entitled "Our Stories." They are willing to interview individuals and compile stories submitted by local SCA members, as well as present their own stories. As of February 1995, Peter B. informed Intergroup that seven people have committed to providing their story for use in the publication. All final drafts are to be submitted by the end of March. Hopefully they will be able to produce this collection by early summer.

FUN & GAMES

According to Marlon L. of the Social Committee, a Potluck Brunch was held in July at Tom M.'s house. The brunch was very successful with 20-25 people turning up. Also planned were a canoe trip in August, as well as a Halloween Pot Luck Dinner Party in October...Bob C. reported that St. Louis uses a format for social events which involves someone volunteering their home and planning a small social gathering of whatever type they would like. Frank T., in the spirit of things, volunteered his home for the first event on the third week of March. Intergroup unanimously approved of this format.

SPRING RETREAT

There's a possibility of a Spring retreat held jointly with St. Louis SCA at a location between St. Louis and Chicago sometime in April. Todd R., Paul H., Terry C. and John P. will coordinate the event. For more information, please contact Chicago Intergroup at (312) 589-5856 or St. Louis Intergroup at (314) 569-7702.

FAITS DIVERS

Todd R. suggested in October that Chicago SCA might write to several radio stations who conduct reports on sexuality and provide them with information about SCA. (It's probably time they got some healthy information about sexuality)...Bob C., Intergroup Chair, has offered to contact the New Town ALANO Club (an AA/Al Anon clubhouse) concerning the possibility of an open SCA meeting to be held on the first Wednesday of each month with a speaker panel format.

NEW YORK, NEW YORK

I WANNA BE ELECTED

Elections were held this March for new Intergroup officers for New York. They are as follows:

ChairmanMerle
TreasurerFrank
SecretaryDavid N.
DistributionRob S. (interim)
ISO repsBrian K./Bill K. (Philip-alternative)
Meeting ListDave G.
PhoneRob
LiteraturePaul
RetreatDavid N. & Neil L.
Special EventsPosition still open
12 StepJohn F./Aaron

NATIONAL COORDINATOR NEWS

The SCA National Coordinator, Joe S. in NY, who is in charge of responding to inquiries about SCA and coordinating meeting information worldwide, has received and sent out lots of information. Political groups requested opinions on sex offenders bills, but it was decided that we

have no opinion on outside issues. . . . In November, we received offers for pornographic T-shirts; requests from therapists interested in what we do; and, requests from prisoners about to be discharged who are informed about meetings in the areas where they live. . . . We now have contacts in Australia, and requests for meetings from Providence, NYC and Spain (for Spanish literature). Some new meetings being started in New York include: a Hope & Recovery study; an SCA AA Big Book study; Intimacy; Committed Relationships, and 5-Years Plus in the program. . . . The question was raised at an Intergroup meeting: Do we respond personally to requests or just send an information kit? Joe S. responded that normally we send a form letter to which the national coordinator may add comments, including: information about "S" meetings in their neck of the woods; the 4-fold; and, (for therapists) a copy of the **Blue Book**, and **Q&S**.

CLASS ATTENDANCE

In September there was a lengthy discussion of attendance at Intergroup meetings by group reps & committee chairs (and a certain laxness on their part noted by some members). This turned into a discussion of service, and people's obligation to doing service in SCA. While one member suggested that there be sanctions against chairs who didn't attend Intergroup meetings at least once a quarter, others were opposed to any "demerit" system. Frank H. made the comment that Intergroup is a business meeting and has all the difficulties of this type of meeting anywhere. He also pointed to Intergroup's positive accomplishments: conferences held, special events, literature produced, people getting sober. Jim S. stated his opinion that SCA is a therapeutic environment and that people are doing the best they can. The Program does not need to be perfect and is flourishing as is. Discussion resolved that Intergroup request all Committee chairs to report monthly and that on the third consecutive meeting without a report, Intergroup could take appropriate action.

NO WAY ROBERT!

A motion was made at New York Intergroup in November to purchase, and use as reference, a copy of **Robert's Rules of Order**. It was suggested to use the parliamentary procedure and distribute it as a handout. Joe S. felt that such an arrangement violated the intent of the 9th Tradition (SCA ought never be organized). It was finally agreed that the parliamentary procedures handout be adopted as the rules of conduct for an Intergroup meeting with the chair becoming fluent with the procedures and implementing them. There was further discussion in December when Frank H. indicated his dislike for the Rules. He added that we've been able to get by without them, so far. Campion indicated that the Rules allow for equal time for those members not as dominating as others. Those not familiar with the rules are intimidated. The most interesting comment was that the U.S. Senate and House use Robert's Rules and do not necessarily proceed in an efficient manner.

HOLIDAY CHEER

As usual, the annual NY SCA holiday party was a big success. There was a gratitude meeting, dinner, a show and dancing until the wee hours of the morning. The show (**That's Sex**

(continued on Page 8)

SCANNER SUBSCRIPTIONS

The following is a letter from ISO to the fellowship at large:

ISO-International Service Organization of SCA

Dear SCA member/group and friend of the program:

As a tool of our program, **The SCanner** provides experience, strength and hope combined with creativity and information. We encourage everyone to support **The SCanner** by subscribing now. If you are interested in submitting articles or information for **The SCanner's** use, we invite you to do so by sending them to:

**THE SCanner c/o SCA , P.O. Box 1585,
Old Chelsea Station,
New York, New York 10113-0935**

In fellowship and sobriety,

Your **SCanner** service committee

The SCanner is a quarterly newsletter publication compiled by members of our fellowship to carry our message of recovery from sexually compulsive behavior. Beginning with the Spring issue of 1995, annual subscriptions will be available. You may receive your annual subscription by completing the subscription form enclosed. Your **SCanner** will be mailed to the address indicated, in a sealed envelope, to insure anonymity. Please indicate the number of copies of each issue you would like to receive, and verify your total payment amount. Payments may be received in check or money order made payable to: **S.C.A.** And mail your subscription to: **S.C.A. Pennsicola Place, P.O. Box 138455, Chicago, Illinois 60613**

THE SCANNER

(The Newsletter of Sexual Compulsives Anonymous)

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ISO UPDATE

ISO CONVENES IN ST. LOUIS

The International Service Organization (ISO) of SCA held their annual meeting in St. Louis in February 1995. SCA members inevitably ask, "What is ISO?" ISO consists of representatives elected by intergroups or individual meetings from all over the United States. This year there were representatives from New York, Los Angeles, Chicago and St. Louis. ISO is probably best known for developing and eventually publishing SCA "conference-approved" literature.

The meeting was a great success. Highlights of the meeting included reports about the SCA Public Service Announcements and the new 800 number (1-800-977-HEAL). Michael H. of NY was elected the new chair. Draft of a literature piece on characteristics was available for review. The SCA "Big Book" is now being developed and will be based on the 14 characteristics. ISO is also working on a "stories" book (I believe this is the same as the Chicago "Our Stories" project). There was a question of the confidentiality of shares at meetings or sponsor/sponsee. It was agreed that these shares are not protected communications. Minutes from the conference will be included in a later issue of **The Scanner**.

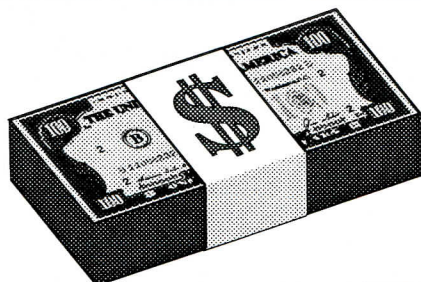
SCA NATIONAL COORDINATOR

My name is Joe S. (NY) and I am sexually compulsive. It is my privilege to serve as National Coordinator for our Fellowship, a position that I inherited from Brian K. (NY), who originated and served in this capacity for 5 years. The basic responsibility of national coordinator is to implement the first part of Tradition 11 which states: "Our public relations policy is based on attraction rather than promotion."

My main task is to respond to the many appeals for help that are mailed to our P.O. Box in New York. I send information on recovery in our Fellowship to individuals, prisoners, counsellors and therapists from all over the world.

It may interest you to know that my typical response to many requests is: "There is no SCA meeting available in your area at this time." Our need to expand and meet this demand for help is acute in this, SCA's 13th year. As directed by the recent ISO Conference, I am now sending a new piece of literature, "Starting Your Own SCA Meeting," to these people. Also, a loner's letter writing project is being initiated and I will presently be in contact with your Intergroups regarding this project. It should be a great opportunity for you to do 12-step service.

I'll try to keep you informed of our progress in every issue of **The Scanner**. Thank you.



SUMMARY REPORT: ISO INCOME & EXPENSES 2/1/95-4/3/95

The following chart indicates the income and expenses of the SCA International Service Organization (ISO) as presented by Frank T. of Chicago, ISO Treasurer, at the ISO convention in St. Louis February 1995.

INCOME EXPENSE

INCOME

7th Tradition:	
Chicago.....	\$100.00
Los Angeles.....	482.00
Milwaukee.....	30.00
Total 7th Tradition.....	\$ 612.00
Literature-Sale.....	\$ 270.50
The SCANNER-Sales.....	\$ 10.00
Balance Brought Forward.....	\$ 7,581.10
TOTAL INCOME.....	\$ 8,473.60

EXPENSES

Convention:	
Meals.....	\$ 227.25
Travel.....	\$ 150.00
Total Convention.....	\$ 377.25
Nat. Coordinator.....	\$ 75.00
Office:	
Phone.....	\$ 14.12
Postage.....	\$ 149.00
Printing.....	\$ 27.00
Total Office.....	\$ 190.12
Phone.....	\$ 109.22
Total SCANNER Postage.....	\$ 55.68
TOTAL EXPENSES.....	\$ 807.27
TOTAL INCOME/EXPENSE.....	\$ 7,666.33

READY TO WRITE?

New York Intergroup is looking for SCA members who would like to correspond with sex addicts who live too far from a meeting to attend.

For these isolated "loners," this may be their only regular contact with recovering sex addicts. For those of us in SCA who correspond with them, this Twelfth Step work can help strengthen our recovery.

The New York Twelfth Step Committee is coordinating this effort in the Eastern United States, pursuant to the ISO initiative approved in February. We will provide some guidelines for letter writers.

We plan to ask pairs of SCA members to do this work, rather than "going it alone." If you want a letter-writing partner, we will pair you with one. As *Hope and Recovery* says: "We make a point of not going on Twelve Step calls alone because we don't want to place ourselves in situations that might set us up to act out again."

If you are interested in this work, please write to:

SCA 12-Step Committee
Box 1585, Old Chelsea Station
New York, NY 10113-0935

WE WILL SEE HOW OUR EXPERIENCE CAN BENEFIT OTHERS

by Carol (NY)

Had I not been led to read books like **Out of the Shadows** and **Lonely All the Time**, I think I would have died five years ago. At that time, the extremity of my loneliness, and my fear of other people, made suicide seem like the only solution. Intimacy terrified me. I couldn't tell the difference between anxiety and arousal. I was addicted to physical pain and danger.

I had never heard of the "S"-fellowships. In exile, ashamed, afraid, unable to imagine any other life, I was tortured by the life I led, and powerless to change it. I was tormented too by the awareness that a part of me did not want to change. I preferred isolation to the loss of control I associated with contact with other people.

It is in retrospect that I realize how healing it has been to be gradually integrated into a fellowship that prizes honesty, conflict, and struggle as much or more than day counts and anniversaries. Alone, I could not come to terms with the bewildering complexity of my experience. I was at cross purposes with myself, wanting and not wanting to live my life differently. I could tolerate accomplices, but I yearned for friends. I wanted to be close to others, and yet I drove people away. I punished myself for undermining myself. And of course this made everything worse.

Listening to others has helped me to understand that being divided within myself just means I'm human. I am learning to acknowledge and respect the multiple motives that simultaneously seek to change and to maintain this painful, purposeful loneliness at the center of my life. I am learning to accept and to forgive myself for wanting to change, but not too much, and not too fast. I am trying to befriend my anxiety and conflict and to accept them as evidence that I am in the process of recovery, rather than as triggers to act out.

In my own life, I have found that respecting what divides me has had a healing effect. I am not yet able to disentangle anxiety from desire, but today I can tell them apart. I can want, with less self-hatred. I can embody desire, without immediately ruining it. Recognizing needs that I can't satisfy alone makes me anxious. Acknowledging that I need what I fear, and that I depend on people I cannot control, has made it possible for me to want and wait, rather than self-destruct.

Anxiety and ambivalence are triggers, and they are vital signs. When we ask God to grant us serenity, courage, and wisdom, we do so in order "to accept...to change...and to know." Pray for serenity; be plunged into conflict! I could wish it to be different, but then I would always be the same.

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

by Richard K., SCA-San Luis Obispo, CA

LETTERS NEVER SENT...

Sunday

Forgive them; for they know not what they do....

Hi God:

This recovery business is a lot harder, and a lot more confusing, than I ever thought. For one thing, I never really thought that recovery was, and is, my responsibility. At first, I thought that my sponsor, the guys in the meetings, and the Program itself would somehow take care of that. All I had to do was go along for the ride. I see now that it certainly doesn't work that way. I got myself into this *dis-ease*, and it's strictly up to me to get myself out of it. My sponsor, the guys in the meetings, and the Program are tools. They are a big help, but without my active participation in my recovery, I might as well just forget it.

Jesus said on the cross: "Father forgive them; for they know not what they do." Well, I'm not a big fan of the Bible, but I see how that thought applies to me and my life—right here and right now.

All around me people are just being themselves and doing their thing. A lot of that really burns me out. Pisses me off, in fact. I used to think (and still do much of the time) how nice it would be if my partner would only come round to my way of thinking, and do things my way. He really bugs me a lot of the time; our opinions clash. His daily actions often embarrass and mystify me.

And other people. Wow! Sometimes I just can't figure out where they're coming from, why they do the things they do, why they react to me the way they often do. Why can't they be nice and peaceful like me? And those jerks in politics and in charge of the way things are run around here. Man! If only they'd let me...

Well, God, my Friend, I think I'm finally beginning to figure out the way You mean for things to work. I'm not meant to run things and have things go totally my way. Amen! Now I'm not saying that I'm practicing this all the time, but at least I'm more aware of it. That's a good start isn't it?

I can exist very well, thank you, no matter how others react toward me. No matter what they do to bug me, or put me down. No matter that they don't act the way I'd like. Who am I to figure out what You've got in mind! Should I be bothered when someone

doesn't like my shirt, or the cereal I eat, or the way I comb my hair, or leave a few little crumbs in the sink? That's just the way I am. They'll have a hard time trying to change me. And I'll have an even harder time trying to change them.

Each and every person around here, God old Buddy, is doing the best he can with what he knows how to do at the moment. He's living and acting just as You've planned, even though it's pretty hard to understand. Pardon my blasphemy.

So, God, I'm slowly learning that the best thing for me is to look at everyone else with love and peace. Look at them as brothers and sisters. Maybe they do the things they do out of ignorance of what's really right and best for them. At the moment, they just don't know any better. That's fine. I can feel hurt by what someone does or doesn't do or say. But I'm not going to wither up and die.

I certainly have a right to let them know that what they're doing or saying affects me. But I don't have a right to step in and say, "Hey, get a life! What's with you,

anyway? When are you going to wise up?" Those things are between You and them.

You know, God, I like that way of thinking... How's about helping me really accept and live it. I've got a lot of garbage to get rid of before I can adopt that principle. Know any good trash pickup outfits?

Love you,

Thursday

Forgive me; when I know not what I'm doing...

Hi God:

Well, it's me again. I've been thinking a little more about what I wrote in that last letter. You know, there's a lot of times when I don't know what I'm doing either. Like when I hit the tearooms, looking wildly for some kind of attention (read that SEX) no matter what the danger, or how filthy the place. Or when I booze it up a little too much. Or spending time on the computer bulletin boards getting off with a stranger whom I'm not likely to ever meet. Anonymous! You bet. Just about as anonymous as I can get. Just having fun! After all, I've been working really hard, and I deserve a break.

Or when I spend a lot of time ogling that straight hunk walking down the street. The poor guy doesn't know it, and if he did, I

(continued on Page 8)...Food for Thought



For information on SCA meetings, or listing a new meeting write to:

SCA New York, PO Box 1585 Old Chelsea Station, New York, NY 10113-0935, or

SCA Southern California, 4470-107 Sunset Blvd., #520, Los Angeles, CA 90027, or call the New York Information Line.

National(800) 977-HEAL
In New York or International call
.....(212) 606-3778

SCA INFORMATION LINES

recorded message and call-back):

New York.....(212) 439-1123
Los Angeles(310) 859-5585
Chicago(312) 589-5856
Orange County, CA.....(714) 664-5105
San Diego, CA(619) 685-8540
Odessa, TX(915) 560-5240
Milwaukee, WI(414) 963-1189
St. Louis, MO(314) 569-7702
London, England.....44-81-914-7599

For information on SLAA and SAA meetings in the USA and overseas, write to:

SLAA, PO Box 199, New Town Branch, Boston, MA 02258;
Phone.....(617) 332-1845

SAA, PO Box 3038, Minneapolis, MN 55403;
Phone.....(612) 339-0217

THE SCAnner IS YOUR NEWSLETTER...

The SCAnner is published and distributed quarterly by the International Service Organization of SCA as a means toward unifying the fellowship and getting the SCA word out. The opinions expressed here are of those who made them and do not necessarily reflect the principles and traditions of SCA. Take what you like and leave the rest. Your contributions and comments are always welcome and are sincerely invited. Send them to: The SCAnner, c/o SCA, NY PO. Box 1585 Old Chelsea Station New York, NY 10113-0935

LA Convention: The Power of Fellowship

The annual LA SCA convention kicked off on February 17 at the Sheraton Universal (no problems with the earthquake this year). There were three days of fun and fellowship with people coming from San Francisco, D.C., Phoenix, and St. Louis. Members from St. Louis even performed in the Friday night variety show. The theme of the conference was **The Power of Fellowship** and it was billed as "an opportunity to join in the collective wisdom, strength, and hope of SCA."

Those involved with service for the conference included:

Chair.....Jud W.
Co-Chair.....Dennis B.
Treasurer.....Mark B.
Secretary.....Neil B.
Co-Secretary.....Manuel F.
Fundraising.....Chris D.
Hospitality.....Dennis P., Tom N.
Workshops/
Speakers.....Dave P.
Entertainment.....Tim S.
Talent,
Visual Arts.....John S.

Next year's committee includes:

Chair.....Jimmy G.
Co-Chair.....Craig W.
Treasurer.....John M.
Secretary.....John Mc
Co-Secretary.....Rob R.

As Dennis B., the Chair, stated: "Jud W. and I, the Chairman and Co-Chairman of the 1995 LA SCA convention (**The Power of Fellowship**) would like to thank everyone involved for their support in making the convention a beautiful, spiritual experience. Hopefully next year, some New York and Chicago people can come out. The weather was clear and in the nineties!! (92) — I take it as God shining on our recovery efforts!!" Friday night included registration and an opening meeting with Marshall L. of SCA-LA as speaker celebrating 10 years of recovery in SCA. This was followed by a Variety Show, "Out of the Shadows and Into the Light!", with members from LA and St. Louis sharing their talent to kick off the weekend in style. As the brochure stated: "After all, this is Hollywood!" This was followed by a shaping meeting to help members get grounded after all the hoopla. Saturday was filled with workshops, including: Journaling; Masturbation, Pornography, Phone Sex; Absolutely Positive (Faith, Fear & The Positively Addicted); Dating; and Tools That Turn Fools Into Jewels (do you think I would make that one up?). After a Dinner Break, there was... another show!! entitled "Recovery Hospital" ("lampooning soap operas, musical comedies and the 70s, Recovery Hospital will answer the earth shattering questions: "Will Nurse Wretched foil Dr. Fleshman?". . .) Sunday concluded with Spirituality and Meditation workshops, a closing meeting led by Jim M., followed by Brunch and elections for next year's convention committee. Congratulations to all!

SPONSOR

I.

*Amorphous
glops of shame
seek freedom
with each exhale*

*inner voices
unprotected
suction fear
to inward blow the mass*

*explosive scatterings
of oatmeal bits occur
to recreate confusion's wall
the feel of pseudo protection*

II

*Hark
the voice
steadfast comfort*

*returning courage
regroups the glop
releasing it
with conveyor belt precision*

*in dread
familial chorus withers*

*suddenly
vibrating stillness
heralding
nectar
of
self-containment
— Caesar L. (NY)*

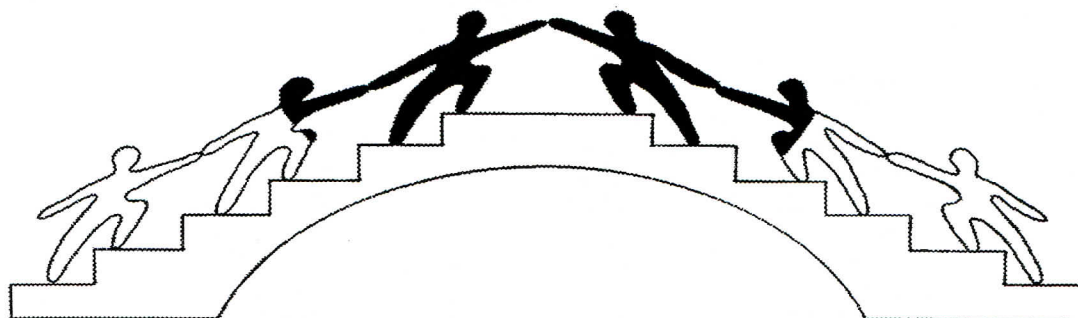
SPONSÉE

*when you
cradle
holding you
myself nourishment
daring*

*innocence
sparks
intelligence
Caring*

— Caesar L. (NY)

UPCOMING NY SCA CONVENTION: JUNE 2-4, 1995



BUILDING A BRIDGE TOGETHER

LOCATION	DATE: JUNE 2, 3 and 4	CONTRIBUTION
The Center 208 West 13th Street New York City, NY 10011	Registration — Fri. 6-7:30pm and Sat. 9:30-10:30am Opening Meeting — Fri. 7:15pm (Network Room, Third Floor)	\$15 in advance (Deadline is May 24th) or \$20 at the door. Scholarships available on a limited basis. Call 212-496-6376 for info.

Please detach and send this form with your payment.

Make checks or money orders payable to "SCA."

Mail both to: David N., 160 W. 77th Street, Apr. #7D, NYC, NY 10024

Name: _____ Phone: _____

Address: _____

Would you like to lead a workshop?

Yes _____ Possible topics? _____

Would you care to contribute to the scholarship fund?

Yes _____ Amount enclosed: _____

Are you willing to house a participant?

Yes _____ Which nights? _____ # of persons? _____ Smokers? _____

If you are from out of town, will you require housing?

Yes _____ Which nights? _____ # of persons? _____ Smokers? _____

(just "holding hands" is one I like). In addition, participating as a couple in activities such as sports, games vacations, outings with other friends and couples can be rewarding when intimacy is allowed to grow and blossom.

Ahhhh . . . sounds simple. Right? But we all know better. It's difficult. As addicts (as humans), many challenges arise. How do you have sex with someone when you know them? How do you express your anger to a partner and at the same time maintain your boundaries in spite of how she or he may react to your feelings? (SCA-Anon, you've enlightened me with this one; I love you, too.) And safe sex. What the hell is that? Negotiating over that topic can be a real experience. And HIV and AIDS. Oh. . . I take a deep sigh at the mention of this devastating disease. Need I go on? The list can be endless. When the mood hits, I could probably go on for hours about all of the challenges that relationships have offered me. That's what we're on this earth for: To work through blocks - to learn to grow, to love. And sometimes that path leads to breaking up an intimate relationship, or perhaps, more gently put, changing its form. It did in my case.

Once I remember someone in a meeting saying that they were in a relationship, and that if they thought closeness with others in the "rooms" was challenging, being in a relationship must be the next level of intimacy. Everyone laughed in understanding. I followed that share and said I agreed and now believe that *breaking up* with someone is the next level after that. I got a laugh too. That's what it's all about, isn't it? Laughter, recognition. It was difficult.

Breaking up was hard. It was building up over a period of time for me, for us I believe. And then one day, we were in a park. I remember it well. I do remember what I felt at least. It was painful. Oh, the fear of making a change. Listening to Higher Power—this isn't working anymore, too many challenges, not enough willingness. Yes sure, willingness to work through some issues but not on others. Our needs became different. Our path split. I was going one way, he was going another. It was building up for some time . . . It happened so quick. The park, the leaves, the trees, business

people on their lunch break fading into the background as my body became weak. I felt like I wanted to faint. Here is someone I really love . . . but I can't be with anymore. (The tears continue as I write.) And then another talk on the phone. No, we weren't taking care of each other's fears anymore, including my fear of abandonment. It was evident that it was over.

Staying sober through this breakup has been my greatest challenge to date. As addicts, we are prone to use anything as an excuse to act out, let alone separating from someone. For me, separation brings up anxiety. And even though I knew that this breakup was (and still is) healthy for me, the anxiety still crept in. And of course the resulting feelings were painful and it seemed as though it would be so much easier to avoid them. And I can tell you I tried.

I remember dabbling in a gray area. When I say "gray area," I mean that it is a type of

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sexual behavior that isn't on my plan, yet is something I really don't want to be doing—because ultimately it's compulsive and not very empowering. However, I've been able to stay sober a day at a time, because I haven't put everything on my plan at once; so consequently, there are some gray areas. I fell into one. And I didn't feel great. (It wasn't a slip on my plan, yet I made a mental note to pay attention to it, so that I'd have a choice to put it on my plan in the future.) In addition to that, I masturbated frequently. And besides the sexual side of my addictive nature, I ate sweets more and drank more alcohol than I had in many years.

The end result was the reality that the longer I stayed in program, and the longer I continued to be aware of my shit and dedicated to my own self-efficacy, the more acting or dabbling at the fringes of addiction didn't work. Those feelings inside of me longed to be expressed. The more I thought about not really wanting to deal with the reality of my separation, the more painful it

got. Thanks to recovery it was ultimately easier and more worthwhile to feel than to avoid my emotions by numbing out.

One could say I admitted my powerlessness. In meetings, at this juncture, I revealed my feelings of embarrassment that I had failed. I felt incapable. I felt angry. I felt judgmental. I felt sad. I felt as though I had lost my best friend in the world. We shared so much together. I missed our physical affection (still do). It was as though something died and it was necessary to admit my powerlessness.

Powerlessness . . . It brings me to the notion of *Letting go and letting God*. I remember Marianne Williamson once saying that we create the ills of this world and sometimes we can get so stuck into thinking that we can cure them. But in reality, we create the ills of this world and God can cure them. Letting go for me during this time proved extremely helpful. It came in the form of accepting support from others. I was so rigidly controlling myself. I wanted to feel better and get through it all on my own. But that was so painful. I remember crying in therapy when I realized I was trying to do it all alone. I wanted to grieve alone. I was isolating. I had been getting in touch with my higher

power through meditation; however it wasn't until I accepted support from others that I could really feel a shift. And to tell you the truth, I don't really know what shift actually occurred. Sometimes these breakthroughs occur beyond the conscious mind, without the ego's help. (Help? Sometimes I don't know if the ego is capable of helping.)

I can remember one thing that does stick in my mind. I learned that when people offer me support, it is best that I just receive it, just listen to it and become aware of the love and concern that is coming through instead of what is actually being said. It is very easy for me to get wrapped up in the content of what someone is saying. And when that occurs, I can become judgmental and say things inside of my head like, "What would you know, you've never been in a long-term relationship," or, "You still have a boyfriend, so bug off." I learned that when I could tap into that loving higher-power-ish energy from others and receive it, I was empowered. The burden of going through my breakup actually lifted when I allowed myself the freedom to

...Food for Thought

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doubt if he'd appreciate it at all. But I can dream, can't I?

Or when I judge other people by my own set of "values," however screwed up these might be. Thinking they are wrong, and I'm right. Or when I put someone else down, just because there's something about them that bugs me, or rubs me the wrong way, or I didn't get what I thought I needed from them.

Yep, there are times, when I don't really know what I'm doing. Later, I realize that I really went bonkers, big time. Just who do I think I am when I go off the path You've laid out for me and wander out into left field?

So I guess what I'm saying here, good Buddy, is that I sure could use some of Your help in knowing just what I'm doing when I'm doing it, or - better yet - when I'm just about to do it. Guess that's what the Program means when it says that it's good for me to turn my life and my will over to a power higher than myself. That's You, isn't it? Why is that so hard to do? How about it? Help me out here, OK?

Your kid,

Saturday

Forgive me; when I forget who I am...

Back again, God, my Friend:

Been thinking again. And it's not all that dangerous. Really!

When I do weird things, like acting out and such, I'm really forgetting who I am. I'm forgetting all the things I've learned over the years from the Program and other places, about how I'm one of Your creations, just like everyone and everything else. That makes me feel pretty special. And I see that when I screw myself up with these activities, that I'm not living up to that concept.

Here I am, shining in Your light and basking in Your love. You're not judging the stuff I do; no matter how weird or destructive. You must get pissed off now and then at me, but no bolt of lightning has zapped me yet (and there's a lot of people who think I really deserve a bundle of them). And You keep coming back to me - right here inside, here near my heart, whispering *things* that are "right" for me to do. Things that are healthy for me. Things that maybe won't get me into

from Page 2 and PIECES

Addition! was divine. It was a take-off of SCA in the movies, with spoofs of **The Sound of Music**, **Oklahoma**, **Sunset Boulevard**, and an absolutely stunning finale/tribute to **Priscilla, Queen of the Desert** with three cast members in Priscilla drag, complete with 2 foot-high bee-hives with letters that lit up and spelled S-C-A to the tune of "Finally." Well done!

12-STEP NEWS

The New York 12-Step Committee met in December and discussed among other things: what to do with responses to our new 800 number; requests for speakers; loners; press releases; and, how to deal with therapists, prisons, courts and institutions.

Nice-O

NISO (or New York delegates to ISO) had their first meeting, since last year's San Diego ISO meeting in February, at the Peacock Caffe in November 1994. Topics were discussed for the upcoming ISO meeting in St. Louis in February. Michael R. has resigned as ISO Treasurer, Frank H. as ISO Chair, and Maciek as ISO Secretary. Congratulations to all for a job well done.

FAITS DIVERS

In February a space was found for an SCA archives to assemble historical Intergroup minutes and program material. It was voted to elect an archivist.

Alex hosted an informal April Fool's day pizza party in Cobble Hill in Brooklyn. The invitation stated that the party was intended for "sex addict fools," and

Heaven, but help me realize that Heaven can be right here and now, this minute, if I let it. Things that You meant for me, when You put me together out of all those molecules and atoms floating around Your Universe.

So what do I do? I go act out. Out of frustration? Meanness? Loneliness? Fear? Doubt? Cussedness? Who knows? I guess You do, but I sure don't. I forget who I am, Your loving creation, and go off and do my own thing. And create my own Hell. As I see it, when I screw myself up, I get punished by being miserable - some might look at it as Hell on earth. And when I finally get on the right track, then I am rewarded by living and seeing just how great and beautiful life is and can be. That's the way things work. That's the way You set up the rules. Right?

Now, all I have to do is live more and more by Your guidelines, some call it God's Will. Pretty soon - who knows - I just might get as close to being like You as is possible. Well, maybe not in this existence, but someday... Hey, You know, that sounds really good. Help me to get there, OK?

Your loving son,

there were 30 in attendance.

A motion was made in October to form a committee to compose a piece of literature about Intergroup. The piece would be presented at the February St. Louis ISO meeting...Michael H. informed me that there is now a newsgroup on the Internet for sexual compulsives (in recovery, that is). The address for you cyberfans is alt.rec.add.sexual.

SOME SERENITY PLEASE

New York Intergroup voted in January that anyone present at an Intergroup meeting may request a Serenity Prayer at any time during the meeting. The group will then stop and those who wish will say it.

LA STORY

ELECTIONS!

The following persons were elected for 1995 as Intergroup officers:

Chairman	Bill D.
Secretary.....	Kevin P.
Treasurer.....	Gary S.
12-Step.....	Steve K., Marshall L.
ISO rep.	Michael K., Maciek K.
Literature	Doyle S. (until new person elected)

MEET ME IN ST. LOUIS

FUN & GAMES

Neil G. was thanked in December for organizing two social events for St. Louis SCA, namely a Thanksgiving party at Jim M.'s and the Welcome part at Phillip B.'s. In addition a New Year's Eve party at Randy's was planned.

...breaking from Page 7

receive. The feelings were still there, but there existed a lightness and fluidity when I let go and let higher power come to me, in whatever form. And for me it came in the form of everyone who stepped into the rooms, and everyone who listened.

I am grateful. My friends in SCA are gifts in my life. Being vulnerable about my feelings to my sponsees during this time was intimate and so rewarding. And, of course, words can't even express the thanks I have for my sponsor. The patience and unconditionality of his support is priceless. The love I feel for the people in this fellowship, as well as that which I have received, has kept me sober, and eventually led me to the other side of darkness, to the light.

It's been over six months since my ex and I broke up. Of course, I still have feelings about him and the relationship. I now know that a healthy breakup takes time and can't be rushed. I've dated other people since the breakup. I had more feelings when I did that. And I've survived and stayed sober. I really should say I've thrived. I give myself credit for my dedication and willingness. Yet it's only been through tapping into the gifts of higher power, namely letting go, that my life continues to grow and fulfill my heart, my spirit and my desire to connect with others.