

# The SCAnner

SCA NEWSLETTER

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## FOOD FOR THOUGHT

### Out Of Our Heads And Into Our Hearts !

by Paul M., SCA-NY

*[The SCAnner welcomes Paul M. of New York as our new "Food For Thought" columnist. We thank Richard K. for all his "Food" columns]*

I realize this opening may sound vaguely like a rallying cry for a radical splinter group of SCA, fraught with images of clenched fists raised high as we march chanting. But please bear with me while I attempt to explain myself (change out of that ACT-UP t-shirt and chill a while).

I recently started the process of dating, something I assumed that after one year and four months of relative sobriety, I was prepared for. Ha, ha, fooled ya.

I was introduced to this gentleman through a mutual friend (the fact that I actually knew my date's name was in no small way progress).

Our first date was a day trip to a bucolic mountain resort palisaded over the winding Hudson river. Being the middle of October, there was a definite chilly snap in the air. Bundled in my favorite Banana

Republic sweater, we set about exploring the grounds. Perched atop a railed precipice we admired the gold and red tinged vista that spread out before us. We spent the afternoon walking and talking while getting to know each other. Sounds perfectly lovely and appropriate, does it not? Well it would have been if I was actually attracted to him.

***Now don't get me  
wrong. He was a perfectly attractive man...  
his knuckles did not  
drag on the ground  
when he walked, and he  
did not drool at the  
table when we sat down  
to brunch. He even  
knew the correct fork  
with which to eat  
his salad.***

Now don't get me wrong. He was a perfectly attractive man. He didn't have a mole the size of Cleveland on his face with six coarse black hairs sticking out at jaunty angles; his knuckles did not drag on the ground when he walked, and he did not drool at the table when we sat down to brunch. He even knew the correct fork with which to eat his salad. Unfortunately there was just something missing. We spoke, but did not seem to communicate. It was as if he was holding back. I was not at ease around him.

As we continued the dating process my discomfort grew. The missing com-

*(Cont'd on page 11)*

#### EDITOR'S NOTE

Greetings, brothers and sisters in recovery! It is the end of the year and time to reconsider the year just passed, and somehow get through the holidays! This is the last issue of 1996, and like the first issue of 1996, a double issue. I am happy to report that we are now on schedule with the publication of The SCAnner. And now that we are on path, I would like to remind everyone to renew your subscription for 1997 if you haven't done so already. It only costs \$2.00 and you'll be sure to receive The SCAnner. Please fill out the subscription form in this issue and send it to: SCA, Pensicola Place, P.O. Box 138455, Chicago, Illinois 60613. I'd also like to take a moment to apologize to Jim M., ISO chair, for a typo in his piece, "The Chair Shares," in the last issue. Jim's sobriety date should read November 1985, not November 1995. Sorry to drop 10 years off your sobriety, Jim (hope it wasn't too humbling an experience). And also in the piece on the SCA Radio PSA announcement, the first sentence should have read "SCA Radio PSA Kits are now available...", instead of "not available." (Oops)

In this issue we have a new Food

*(Cont'd on page 9)*

#### THE SERENITY PRAYER

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



# BY Joe F. & David A-S NYC-SCA 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 them to me at: The SCanner, c/o S.C.A. New York, P.O. Box 1585 Old Chelsea Station, New York, NY 10113-0935.

## INTERGROUP MEETING TIMES

These are the usual scheduled times for intergroup meetings:

Atlanta--last Sunday  
Chicago--first Sunday  
Los Angeles--third Sunday (odd-number months)  
New York--third Sunday  
St. Louis--second Monday  
San Diego--last Sunday

## CALENDAR

The SCA calendar is also available online at:

<http://www.sca-recovery.org/calendar.html>.

Items are from various Intergroups and the International Service Organization. Please call the local Intergroup to see if plans have changed.

You may submit items for the SCA Calendar by e-mail to

[info@sca-recovery.org](mailto:info@sca-recovery.org)

or by regular mail to:

**SCA**  
P.O. Box 1585,  
Old Chelsea Station  
New York, NY 10011

## 1997

Jan 31-Feb 2---New York Retreat.

Feb 14-16-----West Coast Conference (Los Angeles): "The Gift of Recovery," register by Jan.15 for reduced rate.

Feb 21-23-----SCA ISO meeting, Los Angeles

April 11-13---Northeast Region Inte "S" Group Conference and Retreat (with SCA participation), Phoenicia, NY.

May 23-25---Los Angeles retreat.

May 30-June 1--New York conference

Sept 5-7-----Commitment '97, a 12-Step gay/lesbian roundup with SCA participation. Write: Commitment, POB 92794, Milwaukee WI 53202.

## SPANISH LITERATURE

Carlos, of NY, and his three city team (New York, Milwaukee & Los Angeles) have been working assiduously to move forward the translation, editing and consensus process on Spanish literature. ...In progress Secret Shame, Q&A, The Blue Book. The New York Spanish literature group is working on the final draft of the Fourfold....The pamphlet "Secret Shame" is to ready soon in Spanish.

## CALL FOR CORRESPONDENTS

ISO has established an e-mail conference call system that includes members from many cities. If your city is not represented and you are willing to do service in "carrying the message" to people at meetings in your area, please e-mail to [info@sca-recovery.org](mailto:info@sca-recovery.org) and let us know. Here are the cities currently represented: New York, Los Angeles, San Diego, St. Louis, Chicago, Milwaukee, Washington.

## WEB NEWS

For those with Internet Relay Chat, you might be interested in this new meeting which grew out of our web-based meeting.

**Wednesday, 5pm (EDT),**  
**irc server: us.undernet.org**  
**channel: #scameeting.**

## NEW YORK, NEW YORK

### CHRISTMAS PARTY FUND RAISER

New York SCA held a fund raiser (Oct 26) to raise money for the Holiday Party since this year the Holiday Party can not be held at the Gay and Lesbian Center. This means that the cost will be twice as much.

### LITERATURE

So far there has only been one story submitted in New York for the planned SCA Big Book. Anyone wanting to submit their story can do so by submitting it to The SCanner or to the web-site or P.O. Box in New York...Shelley is to receive comments from individuals who are critical of the masturbation piece of literature. She will summarize the comments and bring them back to Intergroup for discussion with the intention that the grievances finally be submitted to ISO...NY Intergroup has established a committee to study work produced by other 12 step fellowships on the Traditions, hold workshops, and report back to Intergroup.

### SUMMER RETREAT

New York's SCA summer retreat was held in August with 76 people attending. This is about as many as usually come. The next retreat will be held the weekend of Jan 31-Feb 2, 1997.

## "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 those of the people who gave 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



**12TH STEP**

The 12th Step Committee has prepared a letter about SCA to be sent to various organizations. After discussion, it was decided that the letter include an indication that SCA is one of several "S" programs, that each person defines their own sobriety, and that, though we are primarily a gay fellowship, we welcome all regardless of sexual orientation.

**SPEAKER GUIDELINES**

Guidelines for SCA speakers at non-SCA gatherings have been up-dated to include: "Individuals need to have one year in SCA and six months on their plan".

**800 NUMBER**

Bill K. has resigned as 800 number coordinator and Vito A. has been appointed by ISO to the position.

**CHICAGO**

**INTERGROUP** is having an Inter-S Retreat at Plano on December 27-29. This will be followed by a New Year's Eve Party on December 31 which will be open to all retreat participants.

**MEETING LIST CHANGE**

The All "S" meeting list is presently being up-dated

**MILWAUKEE REPORT**

Susan F. reports from Milwaukee: "Milwaukee had it's first official Intergroup sponsored SCA social in the form of a Halloween Fright Night on October 26, 1996...Thanks go to Paul N. and Jim W. Two more events are planned for December.

SCA has grown so much in Milwaukee that the Milwaukee meetings have formed an Intergroup with a first official meeting held on July 21, 1996. Intergroup will oversee outreach activities such as the phone line, PSAs, and contact with the community. The Milwaukee SCA Intergroup will also oversee the ordering of SCA literature as well as coordinating greater SCA social activity. Milwaukee based its formation of Intergroup on the experience of

Chicago, St. Louis, Los Angeles, and New York. Thanks to everybody for all of their help. We're looking forward to being a voting force at ISO this year.

The Milwaukee hotline has a new number: (414) 299-0755."

**MEET ME IN ST. LOUIS**

Tom M. (self-proclaimed St. Louis Internet Maven) reports from St. Louis: "This note is to remind you that the St. Louis number will change on Nov. 22 to 314-253-4085...Secondly, we have a new meeting, specifically for newcomers. St. Michael and St. George Church, Monday evenings at 7:30 p.m. This meeting has an average attendance of 8, including oldtimers and all newcomers....We now include the homepage address in our voice-mail announcement and will include it on future informational flyers..."

**INDIANAPOLIS SPEEDWAY**

Steve D. reports from Indianapolis: "Greetings from Indianapolis!: After finding your on-line meeting (and finding it very helpful), and after ordering start-up materials through my counselor, I am pleased to be able to tell of an SCA meeting here in Indy. Although we are still a 'baby' group, I'm very hopeful of our continued service..."

*SCA Lifestyles* (temporary name)

Tuesdays, 7:15-8:30 pm

The Diversity Center

1112 Southeastern Avenue

Indianapolis, IN 46203

Contact: Steve D. 317-291-8531 (co-chair & literature) Tim C. 317-823-9158 (co-chair) Bill J. 317-781-9625 (treasurer) Format: Topic and workshops (varies)

I was humbled that our very first meeting had five in attendance. As there is no current SAA meeting on Tuesday night, and SAA had been discussing the need for a gay group, although ours is not closed (so far, member majority is not gay, in fact), I think we will fill a valuable need in "S" groups here, at least that is our prayer so far."

(Cont'd from page 1)

For Thought writer, Paul M., New York. Paul writes about the foibles of dating, in a lively piece entitled "Out of Our Heads and Into Our Hearts!" He replaces Richard K., San Luis Obispo, former editor of The SCanner, who has written the column for over 5 years. Richard feels that he needs a little breather. I wish to thank you, Richard for your service, and let you know that your material is always welcome in these pages. We also have a My Story feature from Frank C. of New York entitled "Staten Island Inferno." David A-S continues his series on the Traditions with Tradition Two. He hopes to ultimately include this in an SCA publication. (The SCA Big Book project is ongoing and one can submit stories to me at The SCanner.) At last year's New York conference, "Continuing the Journey," David A-S led a Higher Power workshop. As a result of that, Tra & Steve H. from New York have submitted their "Higher Power Thoughts." And finally, I have written about my experiences with sexual abuse and a high school teacher--emotions that came up at my 20th high school reunion--in "Making Peace Again."

There are reports on the New York ISO meeting, and the upcoming ISO convention in February in Los Angeles. There will be a full report of that meeting in the next issue of The SCanner. Also L.A. is gearing up for their annual convention, "The Gift of Recovery," February 14-16. Milwaukee has formed their own Intergroup, and there are reports from St. Louis, New York, L.A., Chicago, and a newcomer, Indianapolis.

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, NYC



# Interfellowship News

## INTEFELLOWSHIP FORUM

**November 16/17, 1996**

**Blackstone Hotel**

**Chicago, Illinois**

*by Jim N., Milwaukee, SCA*

This is a summary of the second meeting for dialogue between Fellowships dealing with sexual addiction. Present were members of Sexual Compulsives

Anonymous (SCA), Sex Addicts Anonymous (SAA), Sex and Love Addicts Anonymous (SLAA) and Sexaholics Anonymous (SA). Sexual Recovery Anonymous (SRA) was invited but chose not to participate.

### BACKGROUND

The meeting convened at the invitation of SCA. We had previously met in Chicago at the invitation of SAA. At that time, SAA's National Convention

established dialogue with the other fellowships as a national goal in 1990 arising from advisory comments made from the floor at the Houston Convention in 1989. The NSO (National Service Organization) Board of SAA voted to extend an invitation to dialogue to the Service Boards of the other three (at the time) fellowships. The initial letter was followed up in March 1991 when SCA made a formal

## Dating Tips

*by Joe F, NYC.*

For those of you who are confused about dating (and I certainly am!), here's some advice from that wellspring of knowledge, the magazine, "YM" (formerly, Young Miss, now Young & Modern). Since I feel like an adolescent when I date, I decided to go the source, and see what teenagers have to say:

### hook, line, and sink him

Want to score a date? Here's what to say to get his attention.

- "Would you mind talking to me for a sec? I'm trying to lose this creepy guy."
- "If we were on Singled Out together, you'd be my dream date."
- "You must work out a lot--could you recommend a gym?"
- "Are you wearing contacts? I can't imagine anyone's eyes are actually that blue."
- "You look like you could give a really good hug."

### kind kiss offs

Uh-oh! A skeezy guy invites you to the monster truck show. How do you (nicely) ditch the dud?

**Tell a white lie:** It's tons better than the truth--that you feel zero attraction toward him.

**Stick to your story:** If you claim you want to fly solo, don't let him spot you with another guy the next day.

**Be cool:** Say hi the next time you see him. If you give him the ice treatment, he'll feel like a total loser.

**Keep your lip zipped:** Don't blab to the world that he asked you out and you said no--it could get back to him. Ouch!

## YOU ARE MY SPONSOR

*By David A-S (NY)*

*(to the tune of "You Are My Sunshine")*

*[This song was used in the New York 1996 Holiday show]*

*The other night Steve when I was slipping  
I called you up and you were home.  
You listened carefully to all I said  
and made no judgments at all.*

*You are my sponsor, my only sponsor.  
You bring me back to reality  
when I am wanting to go and act out  
you help me feel my feelings instead.*

*You told me we're all in this together  
No-one can do it on their own.  
There's meetings, steps and some fellowship  
but mostly you've got to let go.*

*You are my sponsor, my only sponsor.  
You give me back my intimacy.  
When I am feeling like I don't matter  
you show me how to build up my strengths.*

*After we talked for 3 or 4 hours  
I feel much better I have to say.  
What's even better I'm much too tired  
to want to go and act out.*

*You are my sponsor, my only sponsor.  
You make me want my recovery.  
Even if I wanted to act out now  
I could not remember how.*



response. SLAA also adopted a goal and established a National Interfellowship Committee in 1991. Exchange of participant observers between SCA and SAA took place in 1990 and 1991.

At SCA's ISO (International Service Organization) meeting in Los Angeles, there were participant observers from SAA's NSO Board and SLAA's Interfellowship Committee (National). At that time, further discussion of the proposed meeting for Chicago took place. The meeting had been proposed for Chicago because it was neutral territory and a central location. It was also a location where some cooperation already was occurring between fellowships. Groups in the Chicago area conduct shared retreats and publish a common meeting list.

It was clear then that some members of all the fellowships sought, at least, a greater cooperation between the fellowships. Indeed, that cooperation was occurring on the local level in some areas where multiple fellowships were established. Several had commented that multiple "S" fellowships are confusing to newcomers seeking recovery. Why are there multiple fellowships using the same Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions to deal with sexual addiction? In areas where more than one fellowship exists, many individuals attend meetings of more than one fellowship and express benefits gained from the varied perspectives.

The 1991 interfellowship meeting was documented in a similar fashion to this meeting. For the same reasons used in 1991, the meeting was held in Chicago. All were delighted that SA was a participant in this conference this time.

### THE MEETINGS

We met in Chicago at the Blackstone Hotel, Saturday and Sunday, November 16 and 17, 1996. The participants included: Jim M. (representing SCA as a voting member), and other SCA members, Brian K., Frank T., Jim N., John F., Todd R.; Mark N. (representing

SAA as a voting member), and other SAA members, Bill S. and Kevin O.; Jacquie R. (representing SLAA as a voting member); Kirk K. (representing SA as a voting member), and other SA members, Roy K. Sexual Recovery Anonymous (SRA) was invited but chose not to participate.

### REGARDING "REPRESENTATION"

Jacquie made it clear that she was not there as a "representative" of SLAA, but to investigate and bring back to their fellowship what was going on. That notwithstanding, it was clear that as an interfellowship, we desired one person from each fellowship to actively participate in the decisions of this forum. We recognize that the discussions at this meeting are NOT binding upon any fellowship. Those who attended, and helped forge decisions in this forum did so as trusted servants of their respective fellowships.

Because of the investment in time and money to enable representatives to attend this Interfellowship forum, those who attended expected that what was brought back from the forum would be given attention and serious consideration by their fellowships. It is recognized that continuing expression of each fellowship at future Interfellowship forums is a matter for further dialogue in each of the fellowships.

While Sexual Recovery Anonymous (SRA) was not represented at this forum, all agreed to forward copies of this paper to them. We recognized that they are a relatively new fellowship, and that matters of an Interfellowship Forum are likely more than a new organization can handle right away.

### ATMOSPHERE OF AWE

As those in 1991 documented in their summary, we were humbled and awed by the historic event in which we were participants. It was a spiritual experience. We sensed we were there as an act of faith. With the 1991 forum as a

launching point, we knew we were continuing that process, and desired to build upon that work. At the same time, we recognized that much time had passed since that meeting, and that there was little continuity between that meeting and this one. Still with uncertainty about "where we were going to land," we all had a sense of accountability to bring back something worthwhile to our respective fellowships.

### PRODUCT AND PROCESS

We began the Saturday session with the Serenity Prayer and took time to share something of our personal stories of addiction, recovery, and our experience in 12-Step work. The atmosphere was warm, respectful and cooperative.

We continued by (re)establishing the goals of the meeting and reviewing the 1991 document so that we would have a sense of continuity between then and now.

SCA related their experience with their Web Page. A time was planned, after encountering technical difficulties in the hotel, to demonstrate this page to those who had not seen it. The statistics (100+ people visit the SCA site each day) and costs (\$17.00 per month) were shared. Discussion included answering how people find the site (newsgroups, FAQ pages, search engines), and, how business was conducted on the site. We considered including links to other fellowships on our web sites. SCA makes meeting information available to visitors on their site, once visitors have the user ID and password. This protects disseminating meeting information to casual visitors.

We continued our discussion regarding sharing meeting information. We learned that each fellowship has different methods of keeping meeting information. Larger fellowships indicated that keeping a list of meetings current is impractical as 'lists' are out of date upon publication. We also recognized that sharing meeting information might touch upon some boundary issues. All fellowships agreed that the sharing of meeting information with



(Cont'd from page 5)

each other and on the web was a matter to be discussed at their respective service boards.

After lunch, we developed a structure, as a group, for conducting the remainder of the meeting. Below are headings for Recommendations and Open Discussion Topics. These reflect the issues we discussed, and whether we recommended the respective boards take action (Recommendations); or whether we discussed the topic, and need to continue that discussion (Open Discussion Topics).

### RECOMMENDATIONS FROM IF

1. We suggest individual boards give out URL/Links on their web sites for other agreeing fellowships. That is, the Interfellowship Forum agrees in principle that links to other sexual recovery sites is a desirable thing. But, we recognize that whether "to link or be linked" is up to the individual fellowship service boards.
2. We encourage each "S" fellowship service board provide to all other "S" fellowship boards any or all of the following: a) International Meeting Directory b) Regional Contact Phone Numbers c) Central Office Phone Numbers d) 800 Numbers along with any restrictions on the use of this information. This in the spirit of the 5th Tradition goal of getting information to the still suffering addict.
3. We suggest each fellowship exchange directories of meeting information to each other's central offices and with the agreement that, when contacted, we acknowledge the presence of a particular fellowship in a particular location along with a phone number of how to get more details.
4. We recommend that each fellowship be encouraged to provide a brief statement to be used by other fellowships in referral and information work. This statement should describe their

fellowship including their distinctive attributes.

5. We propose we continue the Interfellowship Forum annually, hosted in turn by each "S" fellowship from year to year.

6. We recommend that each "S" fellowship provide a self descriptive statement of the literature/merchandise they sell to the other "S" fellowships who, at their discretion, may distribute this information to their members along with contact information.

### BACKGROUND

1. We discussed that each fellowship who hosts an IF include a presentation to the others present some essential aspect of their fellowship. That is, bearing witness to the truth of their experience as a fellowship.

2. In the interest of mutual communication and cooperation, all "S" fellowships invite 1 guest from the other "S" fellowships to their annual business meetings as a nonvoting participant.

3. Minors in meetings: SAA has some experience addressing this issue. It began with one group inquiring about admitting a 15 year old into their meetings. Generally, the thinking is to work to establish meetings for teens, separate from adult meetings. The experience so far seems to indicate that groups composed of 12-14 year olds seem less effective than 15-18 year olds. But, it was recognized that this is based upon limited experience. Most of these meetings are occurring in youth correctional facilities. We would like to continue discussing experience in meetings for minors in subsequent IF.

4. Long term recovery: How do fellowships keep people coming back? SA has a new pamphlet about helping GROUPS to recover.

5. Public Service Announcements: SCA shared their new PSA kit along with information about distributing this to radio stations. The hope with this kit is to help smaller meetings carry the message better by using public service announcements on local radio stations. So far, a few of these kits have been distributed (individual meetings purchase them); but it is too early to report about the success of this venture. As part of carrying the message, SAA in Indiana has had success using community resource books to give health care providers resource information.

6. Budgets and Contributions: AA strives for a 50% Seventh Tradition contribution in their budget. All of us reported difficulty achieving this level of contribution. Still, we are concerned about putting money as our focus rather than recovery. As fellowships, do we help our members so that contributions are a natural result; or are we asking for money directly? What are the merits of each approach? Demerits? How are we compensating Service Board travelers? SA has developed a pamphlet called "Discovering the Principles" which may be of interest to the other fellowships.

7. Staff Issues: How have office staffs for the fellowships come into existence? Each fellowship (who has any office staff) shared their experience. SAA has had success using community service workers in Houston, working on nonconfidential work.

8. Media: SLAA receives calls in their office from magazines, talk shows, etc. Those who sound sincere often don't follow through with the article, spot; or fail to give a contact number at the end. We had some discussion about whether to involve the media in any fashion, or concentrate on members carrying the message.

9. Copyrighting: Do we agree to respect the copyrights of each other? Are we informed enough of copyright issues so that we know we're complying?



# The "S" Fellowships

**Adapted from work  
by Rich Salmon**

*EDITORS NOTE: The following does not express the opinion of SCA as a whole. It is merely offered as information and is neither endorsed nor condoned.*

**P**eople often ask why there are so many fellowships and how they differ. The nationwide fellowships originated between 1976 and 1982 in widely separated parts of the country. Most had already begun taking shape before learning of the others. As a result, they developed differently, and most formed separate networks. The differences have much to do with the personalities and needs of the founding members, especially the experience, strength and hope penned by their founders in their pamphlets and texts, often called in the AA tradition their "big books".

They have in common a problem with sexual addiction and compulsivity. They also have a common belief in the 12 step, 12 tradition program originated in 1935 by Alcoholics Anonymous. The following information was taken with permission from Sex addiction problems organizations. How they started and why they differ, a "Take What You Can Use" Publication, flyer published by the Colorado Service Group, P.O. Box 284, Englewood, CO 80151, phone 1 303 427 0176.

For those wanting more detail about the national fellowships, a 12 page booklet titled "Twelve Step Resources for Sexual Addicts & Co Addicts" (1989) can be ordered for \$2.00 from the National Council on Sexual Addiction/Compulsivity, P.O. Box 161064, Atlanta, GA 30321-9998, phone 1 770 968 5002. The booklet contains seven parallel columns listing information about the fellowships such as: meeting practices, beliefs, adaptations of AA's 12 Steps, and fellowship literature.

## S.L.A.A.

The Augustine Fellowship of *Sex and Love Addicts Anonymous* ("SLAA") was founded in Boston in 1976 by a

musician and his wife and several other women and men with AA backgrounds. SLAA has always had a broad paradigm embracing both male and female compulsivity, and incorporating relationship and codependency issues. This has resulted in the largest representation of women among all addict groups. A 1989 SLAA survey reported 42% women which compares to 15% or less in the other addict fellowships.

From the start SLAA founders got comfortable enough about their recoveries to make public their meeting information much like AA, times and locations usually published in area meeting lists, via phone messages and often cited in the weekly events section of the local newspaper. Unlike the other fellowships, SLAA has permitted their big book, *Sex and Love Addicts Anonymous*, to be distributed by HAZELDEN, a major retail book outlet. The revenue from literature sales has pushed their annual fellowship income to twice that of the others. In 1989 a monthly periodical, *The Journal*, came into being patterned after AA's *Grapevine*. Stories submitted by members are shared and members in remote places can experience "a meeting through the mail" for a \$15.00 annual subscription fee. Their concept of recovery expects each woman and man to make a personal list of "bottom-line" behaviors which are causing havoc in their lives. Being sexually sober means not "acting out" those sexually intriguing or abusing rituals. By the thirteenth year (1989) an SLAA survey revealed a membership with an average of 18 months in the Program and an average of 13 months sobriety; 43% had completed Steps 45, plus 22% completing Steps 69. Sexual orientation of members was: 63% heterosexual, 11% bisexual and 26% gay/lesbian.

## S.A.A.

*Sex Addicts Anonymous* ("SAA") originated in Minneapolis, MN, in 1977 when a group of ten men (psychotherapists, clergy and one judge) began a very clandestine weekly meeting. They had an acute need for confidentiality

and cautiously put the word out among other professionals only. To this day, most of their 560 meetings are careful not to publicize meeting locations, offering access only by a post office box or a published phone number and then meet inquirers at a local restaurant before escorting them to the first meeting. Meetings that were either male only or femaleonly characterized their start, but today the majority meetings are mixed, with women numbering 15% or less of the membership.

This fellowship has become a very safe and supportive place for recovering sex offenders, although those individuals comprise a small minority. With a broad diversity of heterosexual, homosexual and bisexual behaviors being addressed, the fellowship developed from its start a concept of each member defining her or his own "boundaries," separating sober, healthful sexuality from the old sexually compulsive rituals. Individuals are urged to respect the sobriety definitions of others no matter how much they may differ from one's own.

Their monthly publication, *The Plain Brown Wrapper*, contains recovery stories, opinions on various issues as well as announcements. SAA also has a new periodical by and for women called *SISS* ("Sisters In Sexual Sobriety").

## S.A.

*Sexaholics Anonymous* ("SA") grew out of the search of a Silicon Valley technical writer in California who found sexual sobriety through the support of recovering alcoholics. From the start in 1978 he used his writing talents to record their experiences. Carefully patterning everything after Alcoholics Anonymous they coined the name "sexaholics", specifically defined sexual sobriety for themselves, and like the founders of AA, began passionately sharing this journey with others. Their anonymous selfpublishing led to attention by the media of that little California fellowship. A 1980 mention of SA's address in a "Dear Abby" column resulted in a deluge of 3,000 inquiries. Responding took almost a year and from that grew little pockets of SA



meetings across the USA and Canada.

In June 1984, SA began a practice of semi annual gatherings held each time in different cities. A big book and other literature, including a quarterly newsletter, "Essay", met the need for a "written word" to support struggling little groups separated by hundreds of miles. Gradually, regional conferences also came into being across the USA, Canada and Germany as personal recoveries deepened and networking broadened.

SA's goal has long been "progressive victory over lust", which is a focus on elimination of sexually destructive thinking. They state that "any form of sex with one's self or with partners other than the spouse is progressively addictive and destructive". This fellowship defined sobriety definition keepgoals simple for newcomers and they have found that "it works". Today within their 6,000 membership are perhaps a thousand with two or more years of continuous SAdefined sobriety as well as a group of old timers with more than ten.

### S.C.A.

Sexual Compulsives Anonymous ("SCA") began in New York City in 1982 out of the discontent of several gay men with the other programs shaped primarily by non gays. From their "S" group back grounds plus AA, OA, and AL ANON, they formulated a concept called the personal "sexual recovery plan". Adopting and adapting the writings of AA, SLAA and outside books like Out of the Shadows (Patrick Carnes, CompCare 1983), they spread gradually in the gay communities of New York City and Los Angeles. Their 29 page booklet and three other titles contain a rich expression of the recovery process in the language of the gay subculture. Their quarterly newsletter, The SCanner, reports 110 weekly meetings. While made up predominantly of gay men, SCA has a growing number of other men and women.

At the national level in 1995, SCA took a step further in recognizing inter-fellowship purpose by publishing 1800 977HEAL, a national hotline that provides information about meetings listed with the various national organizations, i.e. SAA, SLAA, etc.

## ISO Update

### NEW YORK ISO MEETING

*John F., NYC-SCA*

The New York International Service Organization (NISO) meeting was held at the Village Star restaurant in Greenwich Village on 10/20/96. Present were: Philip E., Joe F., John F., Brian K.

Brian suggested that an important topic for the forthcoming Interfellowship Forum is the issue of shared meeting lists. In particular the extent to which SLAA is willing to let people who are traveling know about their meetings.

John suggested that this be put in terms of interpreting the Traditions. He noted that the Sixth Tradition in Al Anon, for example, specifically mentions cooperating with Alcoholics Anonymous while remaining a separate entity. He suggested that this could be a starting point for a discussion of cooperating on meeting lists and other topics. This also raises the issue of SCA cooperation with the "Anon" S programs specifically: Should we list "Co" meetings on the Website? What do we do with the SCAAnon mail that arrives at the ISO post office box?

John also mentioned during the course of the ensuing discussions that some other topics fall under the Traditions. For instance, the self identifying statement adopted by ISO as part of the interfellowship process could be considered part of the unity specified in the First Tradition. John also felt it is important for the Interfellowship Forum to discuss acceptance of one another's Third Traditions. For instance, the SLAA Third Tradition refers to a desire to stop "living out a pattern of sex and love addiction," while the SCA Tradition refers to a desire to stop "having compulsive sex." It would be good, he said, if each fellowship would acknowledge that qualifying for one qualifies for all.

We discussed the Web site's online meeting. Joe said it might bring up many of the same Tradition issues that we were talking about: accountability; is it SCA only, or SLAA, SAA. John said it was just another SCA meeting in the

sense that it is autonomous under the Fourth Tradition and has its own Group Conscience that states it is an SCA meeting open to all people in sexual recovery. He noted that some people do mention recovery in other fellowships (principally in the Fellowship area, not in the main meeting) and that he has never edited these comments. The only things he has removed are individuals' e-mail addresses, which is in accordance with the Group Conscience.

Philip raised another Sixth Tradition issue with respect to the piece of literature from an SAA meeting in Colorado, "Measuring & Celebrating Progress." Perhaps the Interfellowship Forum would be an appropriate publisher of this literature, as it consciously tries to be an interfellowship document.

Brian mentioned that SCA New York Intergroup had just voted to request a close look at the piece of literature, "What About Masturbation?", both in terms of content and in terms of the authorship statement. New York Intergroup might ask ISO to consider changes. Joe suggested that this literature should be considered published, that the time for changing is past. Brian raised the issue, also mentioned in the Intergroup meeting, that our literature is a living document, subject to change and growth.

New York Intergroup formally named Vito as a new ISO rep, replacing Bill K., who resigned.

Brian led a discussion of a proposed agenda for ISO 1997.

Respectfully submitted,

*John F.*

More detailed copies of notes of ISO conventions can be accessed on the internet at:

<http://www.sca-recovery.org/iso94.html>,  
<http://www.sca-recovery.org/iso95.html>,  
 and  
<http://www.sca-recovery.org/iso96.html>.



## UPCOMING ISO AGENDA AT L.A. CONVENTION

by Jim N., Milwaukee

SCA-ISO 1997 Convention  
February 22, 1997, Los Angeles, CA

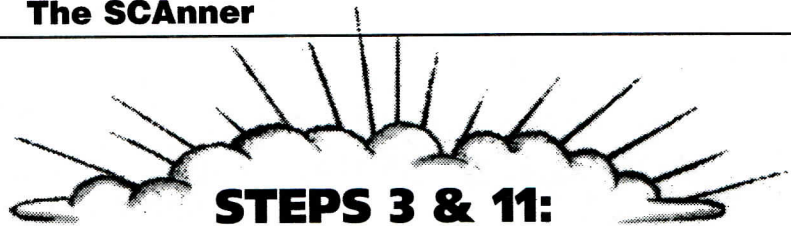
Besides the usual reports on treasury, literature, by-laws, and officer elections, the following items will be discussed on the agenda at the 1997 ISO convention.

### PROJECT REPORTS

- a. Spanish translation
- b. SCANNER obtains desktop publisher
- c. Interfellowship with other "S" groups
- d. Library of Congress
- e. SCA Big Book project
- f. How To Start A Meeting pamphlet. Publication and printing
- g. SCA-ISO Archive
- h. SCA & the 12 Steps, individual meetings discuss
- i. Progress not Perfection publication
- j. World Wide Web, startup, committee
- k. Online meetings
- l. Safety at Meetings/Anonymity/legal issues
- m. SCA logo
- n. Spanish PSA, look into translation

### NEW PROJECTS

- a. Accountability and support of people in public positions such as the 800 Number Coordinator and the National Coordinator
- b. Interfellowship Forum
- c. Self Identification statement
- d. Publications:
  - i. Revision of Masturbation piece
  - ii. Measuring & Celebrating Progress
  - iii. International meeting list
  - iv. Phone number on literature
- e. Permanent SCA-ISO office?
- f. Ongoing communication from ISO to fellowship at large



## STEPS 3 & 11: HAVING HAD A SPIRITUAL AWAKENING

### Higher Power Thoughts,— Part I

by Steve H., SCA -NY

*[This article came about as a result of a workshop at the 1996 New York SCA Conference, Continuing the Journey, led by David A-S]*

"Made a decision to turn out will and our lives over to the care of God as we understood God." These days, it is good for me to remember these words and try to act on them. In the past two weeks, I went through the process of applying for a job and waiting to find out whether it would be offered to me. As I waited I thought a lot (not always with much serenity) about whether I should take the job if it were offered to me. How would I know when something was God's will? I sometimes fear that what I am doing is just falling into whatever opportunity comes along. It's hard to tell the difference between that, and being open to what my higher power sets in my path as part of a plan for me.

A few years ago my partner and I moved to Chicago so that he could do theater work there. I really didn't know what I wanted to do, but hoped to find something arts related, as that was my background. I heard of a job in a gallery and decided to apply. I got a cover letter and resume ready to drop off. Oddly enough, all I knew was that there was a job at a gallery. I was not at all familiar with the city, nor did I know anyone there. Just roaming around and randomly asking for job didn't seem like the most effective plan, but I didn't have a better idea.

That morning I did something which I didn't often do. I prayed very consciously and said to God: "please direct my actions today, and show me what to do and where to go". And then throughout the day I tried to listen for directions.

So I dropped off my application - the gallery was in a fairly remote part of town - and then decided to go down to the River North District, where there are many galleries. I took the train and got off at

what seemed like a convenient station. I wasn't familiar with the area, so that when I came out of the train stop, I just stood and looked around for a moment.

I was next to a building in which there were several galleries and one of them had a sign out front that I liked - red and black, a nice graphic design. It seemed to be a good sign, so to speak, so I went in.

There were two women at the front desk. After looking around for a while, I went over to them. I said that I was new in town and was scouting around for work - had they heard of anything? We chatted for a while and one of them asked where I had moved from. When I said Oregon she said she had lived there once too. After talking a while longer she asked where in Oregon I had lived. I named the smallish town and she remarked with surprise that she had lived there too. It took us just another moment or two to recognize each other. We had been best friends in early grade school, and neighbors a few houses apart, but had not seen each other in years. It was amazing to recognize this person, whom I'd thought was a stranger, as the friend I knew in the second grade.

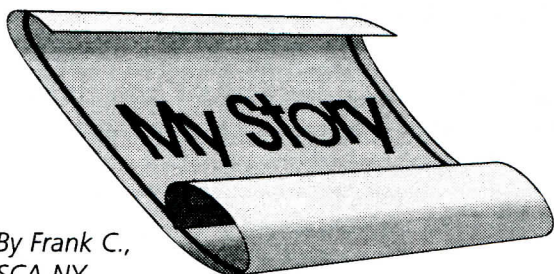
Is the moral of the story that she offered me a job on the spot, just because I'd asked God for directions that morning? No. I worked temp jobs for the first few months in Chicago, but she and I became good friends again. It turned out that her husband was in another program that I'm in and he and I went to meetings together. And not long after I met her, she got a job at an art magazine and when there was an opening on the staff she thought of me. Soon I was working there too. I continue to write and edit for that magazine even though I no longer live in Chicago.

At that time it was rare for me to make such a conscious effort to ask God each

(Cont'd on page 15)



# STATEN ISLAND'S INFERNO



By Frank C.,  
SCA-NY

In recovery, each of us has, not only different identities, but a different experience, strength, and hope.

My story begins in the ethnic world of Staten Island, with a hard-working, Italian Catholic family where sex was not discussed. There was Catholic school and breaking away to find the American Dream. Sex was a fearful secret which I did not discover until college. In the meanwhile, there were straight Italian men who were great cops and construction workers. However, although they were hunky, they were kind of dumb. This made me feel anxious. Thus, my strategy was to become the All-American college boy.

I escaped to Manhattan's east side and Hunter College. Park Avenue was so aristocratic, so "Fortune 500." I got my B.A., earned an M.A. in upstate New York, and started teaching on Staten Island.

City University is a weird trip though. It is totally "New York City." I had no sororities or fraternity brothers and a school like Hunter had absolutely no understanding of college football. I was hot and I wanted something. My family and community instilled me with poor social skills which Hunter

College only reenforced.

Because of my innocent Catholic school-boy experience, I was in denial about sex and had no idea what a homosexual was. With this background, I stumbled into college bathrooms. Pure instinct brought me to the intoxicating beauty of a major Manhattan park. I rambled that far from Staten Island! I was isolated with no close or intimate male friends. As a political science major, my only lover was Machiavelli and his Prince.

There were times when different church groups and a girl friend would temporarily dry me out. However, I was now addicted. This also applied to my career. I couldn't be a proper role-model as a teacher. Moreover, I had used sex to get a job administering an \$800 million pension fund for

***I was lost in my addiction.  
I was powerless. I descended  
to the secret dark  
underworld of Dante's  
twisted souls all crying  
for honest love.***

my first Fortune 500 employer. This was the beginning of my being a debtor (and having to turn to the grace of Debtor's Anonymous).

This business relationship led to my first lover--the boyfriend from hell! He took me halfway around the world to Hawaii, where we almost killed each other in a hotel room. Unfortunately, he was alcoholic and I wasn't sober.

The breakup of this business relationship, and with my lover, began the downward spiral to a Dante-like

Inferno of sexual acting out. For a period of about ten years, I did it all! There were phone-lines, bathrooms, parks, backrooms, cars in parking lots, masturbation, poppers, pornography, and a certain movie theater, (since torn down). I was lost in my addiction. I was powerless. I descended to the secret dark underworld of Dante's twisted souls all crying for honest love.

However, my Higher Power decided that I was burnt too "well done" and got me out of that Inferno. I swear, it must have been my old Italian grandmother. Regardless, one night, while cruising the pathetic empty streets of Staten Island for sex at 2 o'clock in the morning, a light went off in my brain. The flash was like a voice saying: "You know, you are a sick fuck. You need help. Call the Center and see if they can help you." So Monday morning, I called the Lesbian and Gay Community Center in New York and told them my problem. Their response was: "Boy, do I have something for you."

Well, it's six years later. I'm still doing my time in SCA, but my life is totally different. I got off Staten Island and live in Manhattan. I earned a professional designation from the University of Pennsylvania and I am in a monogamous loving relationship. I am now, in the process of becoming a licensed insurance agent with New York Life Insurance. Most importantly, I'm working my recovery, "One Day at

a Time."

Although I'm a little closer to Dante's Paradise, I still struggle. I have fallen and I have slipped too many times to count. However, my secret to getting better is simplicity. I have an overwhelming belief that I am a sex addict and that by working the steps and the tools, I can stay out of the sex addict's Inferno. To newcomers, my suggestion is "Keep on coming back." "It works if you work it." I mean, if I can do it, so can you. Remember, "it's progress, not perfection."



(Food For Thought Cont'd from page 1)

ponent remained elusive. I expressed these feelings to my sponsor. He encouraged me to stay in the experience, to get to know the person better. Time would reveal the hidden facets of his personality.

While the dating process unfolded, I ignored the dis-ease I felt when I was with him and boldly went where no Paul has ever gone before. I began to intellectualize the experience. Perhaps I simply need to give him more time to open up. Perhaps I have horrible intimacy problems. Perhaps his molestation by his father made him reticent to open up (the only personal info he ever shared). Could it be that I need him to be more needy, so that I can be attracted to him? I could wax on like this endlessly, but suffice to say I made myself insane. I talked myself into staying in the process. In a space of five weeks I watched my addict grow from mild mannered Dr. Bruce Banner to a raging incredible hulk (green really looks terrible on me!). This process ended up in my acting out on a crowded public conveyance, an experience that could have easily ended in arrest.

What the hell was I thinking? In a blinding moment of clarity, I realized that I was simply not attracted to this man. I was so focussed on obtaining answers and trying to understand every nuance of my behavior, that the obvious escaped me. I need to go through this learning process with someone whom I am actually attracted to, not just a warm body.

You may want to ask, as did Glinda the Good Witch of Dorothy in the Wizard of Oz, "What have you learned?"

For me, recovery has to come from the heart, from an emotional and spiritual connection to self and Higher Power. By intellectualizing this situation, I negated my emotional connections to my recovery. I abused myself by staying in a situation that I did not want to be in, by disconnecting from painful feelings that were trying to tell me that something

was seriously wrong. My emotions told me to let go of the relationship. My intellectualizations allowed me to hang on. I dated this man for six weeks in total before I broke the relationship off.

Things are never as simple as I would like. There was, of course, more than one lesson to be learned in this situation, like the lesson of trust. My anxiety level was so high because I did not trust my ability to use the tools that this program has given me. I did not trust the process. Not only was I concerned about my well being, I was co-dependently concerned that my rejection of this man would crush him completely. Breaking off the relationship seemed impossible.

I have well defined boundaries. I have a terrific sponsor. I have loving friends who will share their honest opinions with me. There are meetings where I can put out and share all the crazy thoughts that mosh through my mind. Using these tools, I can trust my ability to navigate this process unharmed.

When confronted with an uncomfortable or abusive situation I can, at any time, get myself out of it by simply expressing my true feelings using these tools. I will be all right, as will the other person. As long as I remain honest and open, the process, and time will work all the details out.

As my trust in the process grows so will my level of serenity. To cop a phrase from that darling little demagogue of style, Martha Stewart, "That's a good thing."

As a rallying cry, we could do worse than Out of our heads and into our hearts. It reminds us that when situations are becoming painful or abusive, we need not rethink or rationalize them. We need to listen to that voice in us that is connected to Higher Power and tells us to "Keep it simple." Letting go is an act of divine self love. Besides it makes a charm-

***What the hell was I thinking? In a blinding moment of clarity, I realized that I was simply not attracted to this man. . . I need to go through this learning process with someone whom I am actually attracted to, not just a warm body.***



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

SCA International Service Organizations  
P.O. Box 1585,  
Old Chelsea Station, NY, NY

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

Web: <http://www.sca-recovery.org/>  
E-mail: [info@sca-recovery.org](mailto:info@sca-recovery.org)

SCA INFORMATION LINES  
(recorded message and call-back)

New York.....(212) 439-1123  
Los Angeles.....(310) 895-8659  
Chicago.....(312) 935-3573  
Orange County, CA.....(714) 664-5105  
San Diego, CA.....(619) 685-8540  
Midland/Odessa, TX.....(915) 560-5240  
Milwaukee, WI.....(414) 299-0755  
St. Louis, MO.....(314) 253-4085  
Phoenix, AZ.....(602) 340-3081

SPANISH:  
Los Angeles.....(213)-368-4814  
New York.....(212) 388-9124

SCA is not affiliated with SLAA or SAA, but maintains a list of meetings in cities and countries without SCA meetings. Contact ISO for this information at least 2 weeks in advance. The following is provided in the spirit of interfellowship.

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

SLAA, PO Box 650010, West Newton, MA  
02165-0010 .....(617) 332-1845

SAA, PO Box 70949, Houston, TX 77270  
.....(713) 869-4902

For SCanner subscriptions:

SCA SCanner, P.O. Box 138455,  
Pennsicola Place, Chicago, IL 60613-8455

For other SCA literature:

SCA/ISO Literature,  
P.O. Box 931181,  
LA, CA 90093-1181



# Making Peace Again

By Joe F. (SCA-NY)

This has been a time of reconciliation with my past. I have been in the program many years. My work on the steps and the rest of the program has opened me up emotionally to the point that I could make peace with many parts of myself and my past this year. That has included: my high school, my ex-lover, my father, my church, and sexual abuse with a high school teacher. I had prayed about and released so many layers of anger. Thus, I was humble enough to be open to the reconciliations as they happened. I would like to focus on my healing from sexual abuse this year.

In the beginning of May was my 20th high school reunion. I had managed to avoid all the other reunions, and may have stayed away from this one if I had not pushed myself a bit. I thought: it will be boring, full of all those people I hated in high school; it will be dorky and wholesome and joyous, all attributes I had abhorred in high school (and beyond); it will be painful; I will feel like such a loser, comparing and despairing.

I had gone to a fairly prestigious high school. I felt that I didn't measure up, I didn't go far enough in my career. Everyone else would have wives, children, two cars, houses...they would be lawyers, doctors, financial wizards, rocket scientists. I was a failure. Now I know that I am not a loser--through my program and from what people in the program have told me. I have a higher power in my life today. I have rebuilt so much of life. I am sober for many years with sponsors and sponsees. I am creative, have lived in foreign countries, had a lover for 10 years. If "not acting out" is the only thing I accomplish today, that is enough. I am a winner. But I didn't have that material sta-

tus that I felt would prove me valid in society's eyes. (Sometimes I feel I would gladly trade spiritual progress for some material gain). And going to my high school reunion, those old "you're a loser" tapes came back strong.

But there was another deeper reason why I hesitated. In my last year of high school, I had sexual affairs with two male teachers, one of which I considered abuse. I only considered it abuse after years of meetings, talking to therapists, and reading about abuse. I did not think it was abuse because I had instigated the affair. Because I was 17 years old. Because I liked the sexual thrill. But as my therapist said, this

*Our acting out had been very exciting: but it was also guilt-ridden, shameful, and emotionally destructive for a boy who did not have the adult capacity to deal with sophisticated sexual situations.*

teacher had abused the trust of the teacher-student relationship. I believe now that it is the adult's responsibility to say no. In fact, I taught young adults for three years in the 1980s and realized that, indeed, there were students I found attractive. This was a scary thought, but I found sharing and accepting it, helped me put it in perspective. Even if these students had been very seductive, I would not have slept with them. It is my responsibility to say no. But that was after many years of recovery, and with fellow addicts supporting me. I do realize that "there but for the grace of God go I," and my teacher was indeed like me a suffering sex addict, who didn't have a program to guide him. I am indeed fortunate that I didn't repeat the abuse.

But this still didn't lift all the anger I felt at this man. All I felt was sadness and compassion for the poor confused gay boy, who was looking for affirmation, friendship, love, understanding. What I had received was an illicit affair held during school hours, in semi-public places, without reciprocation.

I realized that I didn't go back to my high school, because I was so afraid of seeing him. This would be the first time I would be back in 18 years. My school had planned a class day on the Friday before my reunion. The last time I had been in the building, two years after I left high school, I had acted out again with this teacher in the history book room, where we had acted out many times before. I felt so powerless over this man's advances, and was always afraid I would act out again with him if I saw him there. So I deprived myself of connecting to my past--to my high school, to my friends and resources I had there--in order to stay away from this man. Low self-esteem, sex addiction, and abuse all

mixed together into a powerful brew. Our acting out had been very exciting: but it was also guilt-ridden, shameful, and emotionally destructive for a boy who did not have the adult capacity to deal with sophisticated sexual situations. At that time in my life, I had already started cruising the bathrooms of a public library, and was certainly a very confused adolescent. This year, with the help of my therapist and the program, I was going back for me. I wasn't going to allow this abuse to stop me from re-connecting.

The day turned out to be an emotional rollercoaster. I felt anxious walking to my high school. I walked by a major acting out park (where I acted out for years) and I didn't go in. It was scary to walk through the doors of my



high school. There were children, who were the age that I had been when I had my "affair." They seemed so young. I walked by his classroom, the history bookroom, the guidance office--all the places I had acted out in. It was difficult, but I had a reason to be there, so I persisted. I saw people I knew--did they know? I tried not to be so self-absorbed and to take my rightful place. But would I see him?

I went to an HIV workshop led by a gay acquaintance who was two years older than me--he is HIV +, as I am, and had started a gay/straight alliance at my high school. I admitted my sexuality and my status in my high school. That in itself was amazing. My gayness had always been such a area of shame and confusion for me, something that unfortunately this teacher had manipulated against me. He used my shame and confusion as a guarantee of secrecy and collusion (though he was probably more vulnerable in his position than me). I spoke to my friend after the workshop and we talked generally about the school and people we knew in common. Finally, I mentioned the name

of this teacher, and, my friend's immediate response was, "Oh did he abuse you too?" I was overwhelmed. It seemed that this teacher had abused many gay boys, picking up on their vulnerability and bewilderment. He had been asked to leave the high school three years earlier when the headmaster had been confronted with many accusations from former alumni, and one in particular whose therapist had told him to confront this teacher.

I felt very emotional. For the rest of the evening, I cried, I grieved. I was overcoming a very painful part of my past. I, who had felt like an outcast, a per-

vert, a faggot, an HIV+ sex addict...now all my secrets were out of the closet. I felt accepted for who I am. I had made a tremendous amends to myself, and to my high school. It was a very powerful experience. I felt so bad, so beyond hope or understanding, that I didn't want to dare expose myself to the judgement of my peers. I had rejected them before they could reject me. I cried many tears, realizing that I wasn't rejected so much by others, as I had rejected myself. And to be accepted as I was, for all my faults, was very healing and significant in my recovery.

*I felt so bad, so beyond hope or understanding, that I didn't want to dare expose myself to the judgement of my peers. I had rejected them before they could reject me.*

That evening there was a dedication to Leonard Bernstein, another gay man, and I silently wept as the school choir sang Somewhere. Sure, they were out of key. In fact they had to restart since they got lost, but it didn't matter. I was healing.

Ironically, before this weekend, I had written a letter never sent to my former teacher in which I said: "Our relationship wasn't appropriate and I feel you used me and abused your power over me as a teacher and authority at high school. I've thought about it often since then and have felt alternately thrilled, angry, ashamed and sad--but ultimately angry and ashamed for the boy that I was and your transgression of the teacher-student-bond of trust...This letter is not meant to judge you, though I've been angry and have wished to. It is to say goodbye. I am ending our relationship and do not wish to see or speak to you again. I believe you are a sick man and suggest that you seek help...I wish you well and goodbye." It was a very freeing letter. Maybe I will send it one day.

## PEN PAL PROGRAM EXPANDS

*By John F., National Coordinator*

With the entry of SCA onto the Internet, our "pen pal" program has gone there, too. If you would be interested in this service, we ask you to make a commitment to send one letter a month. Here's how it works:

- 1)** We pair you up with another member of SCA. We ask that both SCA members have at least one year in the fellowship and six months on a recovery plan.
- 2)** The two SCA members are paired with one "loner," someone who lives too far from an SCA meeting to attend.
- 3)** The SCA members decide for themselves how to divide up the work. Sometimes one will do the writing while the other will read over the letters to be on guard against inadvertent provocation, intriguing, etc. Sometimes the two will alternate months. You decide.
- 4)** To maintain anonymity, we do not send out identifying information, including home addresses or identifiable e-mail names. (Anonymous e-mail is O.K.)

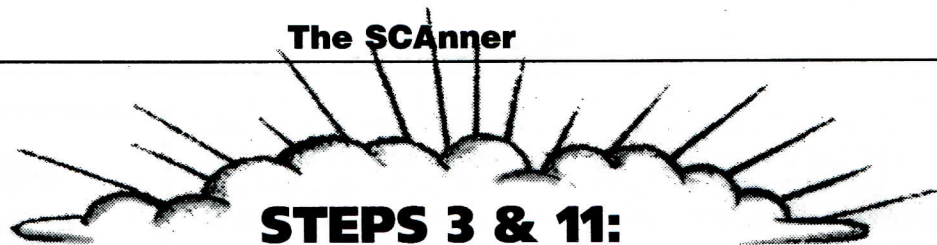
If you are interested in the e-mail version of the "pen pal" program, write to: [info@sca-recovery.org](mailto:info@sca-recovery.org).

If you want to join the regular mail version of the program, write:

### SCA Pen Pal

P.O. Box 1585,  
Old Chelsea Station  
New York, NY 10113-0935





## STEPS 3 & 11: HAVING HAD A SPIRITUAL AWAKENING

### *Higher Power Thoughts — Part II*

by Tra D., SCA-NY

*[This article came about as a result of a workshop at the 1996 New York SCA Conference, Continuing the Journey, led by David A-S]*

When I was about 4 or 5 years old I was hit by a car. My father rushed me to the hospital. They operated on my foot. My parents were told that most likely I would never walk again. At best I would have a severe limp. I told my parents not to worry because God would take care of me. Despite what we were told I walk perfectly well today. I have no limitations whatsoever, only a very ugly scar. The accident had torn the flesh off the top of my foot. The doctor thought they would have to graft skin from my hip. I was very frightened about this and prayed for help. To this day I am the only person I know of who grew skin on bone with no flesh. The doctors had no explanation.

My mother had a huge growth on her neck when she was a teenager. Her mother took her to a doctor. He was going to lance it in his office. My mother begged him for one more day. He finally agreed. That night she prayed all night. The next day when she went to the doctor it had reduced in size by half. He decided not to lance it. Years later she went to another doctor who looked at her throat. From this second doctor she found out that as a teenager she had had Balbar Polio and that if the doctor had lanced the growth she would have died in the chair.

One Sunday at church we were given a prayer to say if we were ever confronted by a demon. That night I prayed to God to send the devil because I was not afraid since I had this prayer that would protect me. In the middle of my prayer the wall paper behind my bed tore away from the

wall. I, of course, forgot the prayer and threw the covers over my head. After a while I got enough strength to run out of my room. I told my mother and she told me not to worry about it, and that she would fix it in the morning. The next morning when we went into my room the wall paper was torn in 5 strips down the wall.

When I was a child I wanted a bird as a pet. I asked my mother for one but she told that we couldn't afford to buy one. In turn I told her it was okay. I would pray to God and God would give me a bird. About a week or two later my older brother came home with a baby bird that had fallen out of its nest. I raised the bird for several weeks and then released it when it was old enough.

When I lived in Utah, I needed a pair of shoes, but my mother didn't have the money to buy some new shoes for me. So I prayed to God for some shoes. A few days later one of our neighbors asked if I wanted a pair of shoes. She had bought them for her son at a clearance sale and they didn't fit him. Because the sale was final she couldn't return them. They fitted me perfectly.

On December 28, 1995 I decided that I could no longer go on with my life. It was three days after my 27th birthday, and I had been on a three day sex binge. I would go home to take a shower and to rest a bit then go right back to a sex club. I had a bag full of sex toys. My life was reduced to shit. I had tried suicide once before but failed, this time however I knew what I had done wrong on previous attempts. With three bottles of pills and a bottle of vodka to wash them down I headed for home. My decision was final. I had lived my life hanging on to the end of a rope and I could no

longer go on. I let go of the rope. That's when God reached out and grabbed my hand. I knew I wanted to die but I was still afraid. Once I took certain steps it would be final. So while I was on my way home, I was wandering aimlessly and wound up at the Gay and Lesbian Center. I don't know why I ended up there I had no plans to go there. I walked into the Knight's Room not knowing what meeting was going on there, I had missed the opening statement and qualification. I heard people sharing and I couldn't believe what I was hearing. I heard myself over and over again. At the end of the meeting they asked if there were any newcomers. I felt God was there too and I actually raised my hand, and was called on to speak. I had no idea what to say. What came out was "My name is Tra, I'm a sex addict and I need help!" Then I burst into tears and could say no more. After the meeting Joseph P. sat down with me and talked to me for over an hour. That was my first SCA meeting and I have been to a meeting almost every day since and my life is no longer shit. Praise God, for without him and the program I would not be telling this story or any other I would have been dead by my own hands.

On many occasions while I was growing up we didn't have enough money to buy food. Most of the time we could manage with lots of beans and rice. But on one occasion in particular we were really broke. Our electricity and gas had been cut off. We had no money to replace the food that went bad without refrigeration. We were so hungry. It had been 2 days since we had eaten last. Then we hear a knock at the door. When we opened the door there was no-one there. But there were 7 boxes of food on the door step. We never found out who had delivered the food or how they found out how bad off we were.



(H.P. Thoughts Cont'd from page 9)

day to direct my actions. But that day I did and something miraculous happened. I don't believe that had I not talked to God that morning that something terrible would have happened or that I would have missed my one opportunity in life for rewarding work. But I did and something good happened.

I believe that if I am praying and trying consciously to hear and act upon God's will for me than what happens - the choice I make when it comes time to make a choice - will be a right one. I don't believe - as much as I used to - that there's only one right answer and that if I don't manage to guess what it is then the results will be disastrous. I believe that if I'm acting from a place of trying to do God's will, then whatever I choose will take me further along a road of safety and goodness. There won't always be an obvious miracle, but there doesn't need to be.

## SCA RADIO PUBLIC SERVICE ANNOUNCEMENT

SCA Radio PSA Kits are now available. The kit contains a pre-recorded audio tape and script for a 30 second and 60 second radio spot about sexual compulsion and how to get in touch with SCA via our 800 number for help. A step-by-step instruction sheet on getting the spots aired by local stations is included with each kit. This sheet also explains how to alert the 800 number volunteers who pick up and return calls, of any special instructions, phone numbers and meetings you'll want passed along to people seeking help in your area.

This project grew out of a desire

to provide assistance to small, fledgling meetings and intergroups who were contracting ISO for ideas on how to let their communities know of their existence...initially to increase their membership just to stay alive. Larger intergroups then become enthusiastic as they saw the PSAs as a 12 Step tool that could reach those who might not otherwise hear about the program.

The kits cost \$12 for the first and \$10 each for additional kits. Order a kit for each station you hope to have air the spots. Make checks payable and mail to: SCA/ISO LITERATURE, P.O. Box 931181, Los Angeles, CA 90093-1181

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# The Traditions

## Learning to Live and Work with Others, A Path to Intimacy (Part II)

by David A-S, NY-SCA

### Tradition Two

*For our group purpose there is but one ultimate authority--a loving God as may be expressed in our group conscience. Our leaders are but trusted servants, they do not govern.*

The First Tradition gives us back a sense of belonging and helps us to recover our sense of community (common, unity - the second and last words of the First Tradition), both of which we lost when we felt unable to deal with our feelings openly and fully in the communities and families to which we belonged before we started to act out. The Second Tradition pushes us even further back into the quagmire of emotions and involvements that we tried to escape by compartmentalizing our lives. With sobriety in our grasp and a new found sense of community, we are more able to deal effectively with our feelings and the feelings of others as they may manifest in group interactions.

Tradition Two primarily teaches us about negotiation and the equality of all participating members. One of the reasons I chose, or unconsciously moved towards acting out, was because I felt I had no choices in life. Certainly I didn't feel an equal member of anything. My childhood experiences of abuse left me feeling that I didn't matter and that there was always someone willing and eager to control and manipulate me to their own ends. Basically I was an object in other people's worlds. I had no

power. Tradition Two further states that no one has any power, that it is only the interaction of everyone together that produces movement and achievement. Everyone is part of the process but no one person is fully responsible. This idea was both frightening and expansive. It meant that everyone had to be included. No one could reap the benefits unless everyone did. I had a lot of resistance to this tradition. It meant being visible, taking up my right to be heard and participating in life and in particular in my own life. I had become so used to

*...Everyone is part of the process  
but no one person is  
fully responsible...*

being silent, fuming, making judgments and then slipping out the back door unseen and unheard to act out that now given the understanding and opportunity not to continue acting in this way, I became full of fear and misapprehension. Through service, that incredible tool that pushes us into unknown territory--always before we feel we are ready to go there--I learned to speak up and to consider everyone, including myself as an equal. Paradoxically it was through speaking on behalf of others that I first learnt to begin to start to speak for myself too. Tradition Two taught me to take risks in being assertive, to ask for what I wanted and needed, in spite of the possibility of rejection, and

to accept the outcome as an expression of a higher power and not the world (or "they") getting back at me.

My willingness to involve myself fully in the process of my own life made it imperative to scrutinize one of my acting out behaviours: pornography. While I wasn't "speaking with the world" because "it had done me wrong," pornography (which had kept me silent, isolated and let me refuse to allow others to impinge on my perfect world) now seemed a little incongruous. If I was now learning to listen to my own needs and beginning to ask for what I wanted then it followed that I no longer needed to act out in silence with partners who were not only not real, but could in no way be part of the process. This seemed like a dead end now that I was beginning to exist in the

real world. It became clear to me that I had to get rid of all my pornography in order that I could continue to involve myself and interact with real people and deal with the pain of rejection and the pleasure of involvement. Not an easy choice, and I still resent having thrown out all my pornography but there was no choice for me in this matter. I am such an aesthete and always want to hold onto the "perfect frozen moment" which pornography so perfectly accommodates. Tradition Two however teaches me to be in the flow of the moment, to let go again and again in order to find better and better options which come through negotiation and trust in a power greater than myself.