

The Check IN

Volume X

“... *Spiritual Progress Not Spiritual Perfection.* ...”

Spring 2003

Workshop Planned for April 26

The theme for the Eighth Annual IISAA Spring Workshop is “Sponsorship In Recovery From Sex Addiction.”

This one-day workshop is dedicated to the sponsor-see relationship for people recovering from sex addiction and is open to members of all fellowships that deal with sex addiction.

It will be held April 26, 2003 at Northwood Christian Church, 46th Street and Central Avenue in Indianapolis, from 9:00 a.m. until 3:00 p.m. EST.

The fee for the day, including continental breakfast and a full lunch, is \$15.00, nonrefundable.

The program will consist of two plenary and three breakout sessions. The opening plenary session will include an introduction to the workshop and the some time to reflect on the value of the sponsor-see relationship. The closing plenary session will be organized into home groups to share what individual meetings are doing to promote sponsorship and to offer help to groups that need sponsorship support. The last part of this session will allow individuals to connect with sponsors at the workshop.

In between, we will have three breakout sessions organized into three tracks, with each addressing the sponsorship needs of sex addicts or their significant others. The tracks are:

- 1 Newcomers -- for people with less than 12 months in their fellowship. This track will explore how to best use a sponsor and introduce some tools of the recovery programs.
- 2 Sponsors – for people with more than a year in their fellowship and who currently have a sponsor. This track will help people prepare to become sponsors or to become more effective sponsors.
- 3 Long Termers – for people with more than one year in their fellowship who have never had or do not currently have sponsors. This track will help people address their resistance to getting a sponsor and help resolve some of the problems that arise from not having a sponsor.

At the end of the day, we will ask for feedback to help shape the IISAA Fall Retreat, October 24 to 26.

This is an intensive, no frills workshop. Please bring your experience, strength and hope to share with others as well as questions or problems you have faced regarding sponsorship. If your group has printed materials related to sponsorship, please bring enough copies to share.

Volunteer . . . presenters must be a sponsor and have a sponsor.

Volunteer presenters are needed; presenters must be a sponsor and have a sponsor. To present, please contact Chris C. at 317-414-1296 before the workshop. Volunteers are needed for other duties as well (set up, clean up, food service, etc).

Registration brochures are available at any Indiana SAA meeting or on line at <http://www.indiana-saa.org>.



From the Editor

Carrying the Message

Each group has but one primary purpose—to carry its message to those who still suffer. (Tradition Five)

Intergroup does its best to carry out Tradition Five in every activity it undertakes.

IISAA reaches out both to the current members of our fellowship and to the addict who has yet to find our program.

In addition to providing the holiday party, workshop, picnic and retreat, your Intergroup completes periodic mailings to caregivers, publishes this newsletter and the Indiana SAA Fellowship Directory, and maintains the Information Line and our website.

Mike C.

Website Hits 2002 - 2003

Jan 194	Aug 279
Feb 198	Sep 339
Mar 187	Oct 229
Apr 227	Nov 384
May 224	Dec 547
Jun 168	Jan 298
Jul 246	Feb 106
	*as of 2/10



A Tribute to Norm B.

by Richard S.

Norm B. passed away on January 29, 2003.

He had been on my mind for weeks and I was wondering how he was doing. Battling cancer and shortness of breath, he had not attended a meeting for about 18 months.

Being in a recovery program and the anonymity contained therein sometimes it is not easy to learn a lot about someone.

What do I know about Norm? He was a husband, father, brother and grandfather. He loved his home, caring for it and tending to his ponds filled with fish.

He had made some decisions along the way that had adversely affected his relationship with his family

members and like many addicted people wasn't wise enough to see this until he had "bottomed out".


Norm joined our meeting group on November 22, 1998 after having attended counseling sessions at Broad Ripple Counseling center. He last attended our meeting sometime in late 2001 because as he put it, "he just couldn't get enough air".


However, he had an opportunity to fly a couple of times and reconcile with his family members who lived out of town. And he was very happy about that.

Whenever I spoke with him on the phone he was very pleased to speak with someone from the program because he missed seeing his recovery friends from the meetings. Because of that, he was very happy to host the last two Indiana Intergroup picnics. If you didn't get to attend either of these functions, you missed an opportunity to meet a very kind and gentle person. The last time I spoke with Norm was to call and thank him for hosting the picnic last year.

He had been on my mind the last couple of weeks and I had thought about checking up on him, but I didn't. I feel sad that I didn't make that call and check up on my recovery friend. Norm was, is, a recovery friend for what I learned from him I shall have with me the rest of my life.

He is gone but not forgotten.

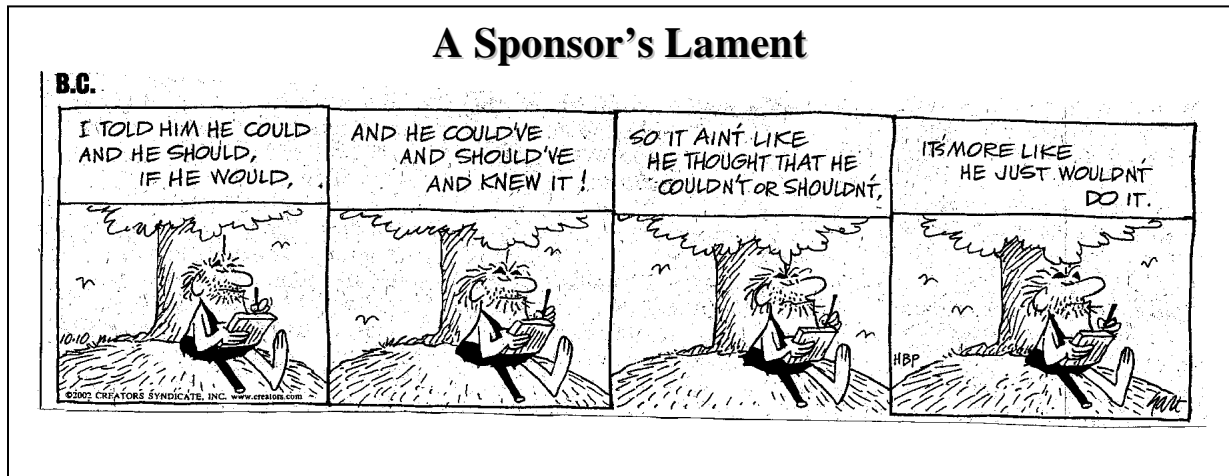
The Check  N is the newsletter of the Indiana Intergroup of Sex Addicts Anonymous (IISAA) and is published quarterly.

The Check  N is provided free of charge to SAA members and others upon request.

Material for inclusion in the newsletter, permission to copy all or part of the newsletter, or comments for improving this publication may be addressed to:

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Suggestions for Meeting Discussions on Sponsorship

by Chris C.

April: ***What do I look for in a temporary or permanent sponsor?***

Suggestion: Given that sobriety is a fundamental requirement of a sponsor (sobriety is abstinence from all addictive behaviors coupled with spiritual growth), what other characteristics are desirable in a temporary or permanent sponsor?

May: ***What can our group do to encourage sponsorship?***

Suggestion: Take a brief group inventory:

1. Does the group have any written material on sponsorship?
2. Does the group do anything in our outreach to newcomers that makes them aware of sponsorship?
3. What do other meetings that our members attend (SAA or other 12 Step) do to encourage sponsorship?
4. Do we need to ask for support from the Intergroup or other SAA groups for help on sponsorship? If so, what help do we need?

June: ***What are the boundaries of the sponsor/sponsee relationship?***


Suggestion: For people new in the program, encourage them to talk about what they fear **discussing with a sponsor. For old-timers, encourage them to discuss what their** experience has shown them is or is not appropriate for sponsorship relationships.

July: ***How does a sponsor help me work the 12 Steps of SAA?***

Suggestion: It is first and foremost the sponsor's job to help each sponsee do the Steps. Go around the room and have each person respond to this question: How do I use my sponsor this way?

For more resources on this topic, attend the spring workshop April 26, 2003.

Belonging to ISO

Every so often, the question is asked, "Why should our SAA meeting register with the International Service Organization of SAA?" The Check  N posed that question to Jerry B., ISO's Office Manager. Here is his (edited) response:

As you know, the ISO of SAA, Inc. is the service corporation that serves SAA member groups and individual members of those groups. As a corporation, it has by-laws that, among other things, establish criteria for belonging to the organization. In other words, there can be SAA groups that do not belong to the ISO, and they are still SAA groups. They simply are not member groups.

The part of the by-laws that deals with member groups and membership is Article II. I think the two key sections of this Article, as it applies to groups, are these:

Section 1, A): An SAA group is defined as: two or more addicts meeting together regularly for the purposes of recovering from their sexual addiction and reaching out to others suffering from sexual addiction, who are self-supporting and have no other common affiliations.

Section 1, B): An SAA member group is an SAA group that has registered itself with the International Service Organization of SAA, and follows the 12 Steps and 12 Traditions of SAA.

Article 4, Section 4 of the by-laws gives the Board of Trustees the power to interpret the by-laws when ambiguity occurs. The Board has used this authority to establish specific directions in order to monitor compliance with Section 1, B).

These directions are that ISO registration will be renewed annually, thereby taking into account the dynamic nature of SAA groups which are subject to periodic change in meeting location, day, time, and members and also insuring that our primary purpose of carrying the SAA message to the addict who still suffers is being carried out with accurate group information.

The registration directions also provide a vehicle for each member group to annually affirm its adherence to the 12 Steps and 12 Traditions of SAA.

Among the advantages to being an ISO member group are the following:

Member groups are authorized to seat a voting representative at the ISO's annual meeting. This gives each member group a voice in the business of the ISO and, by extension, in the development of the SAA fellowship which consists mostly of ISO registered groups.

Members of the ISO Board of Trustees and the ISO Literature Committee are elected from among the membership of registered groups.

Registered groups are grouped into regions, each one represented by a member and alternate on the Board and the Literature Committee. These groups then have a representative who is accountable to them and a direct voice in the daily operation of the ISO and, by extension, the SAA fellowship.

The ISO coordinates international activities for its member groups and also provides support to these groups. Most important of the support given is referral of prospective members through the ISO Office or the ISO website.

Registered groups automatically receive the ISO newsletter and other ISO mailings that can affect them.

Registered groups are (to the extent they wish) listed in the ISO Fellowship Directory and posted on the website.

Groups that fail to renew their registration are dropped from the ISO database and do not participate in or receive any of the benefits listed above.

I hope this is helpful. If you have further questions, please let me know.

In your service,

Jerry B.


ISO of SAA
P.O. Box 70949
Houston, TX 77270

1 (800) 477-8191

E-Mail: info@saa-recovery.org

Conducting a Group Inventory

Groups have found it helpful to take an inventory from time to time to provide a thoughtful review of how the group is doing—a group Tenth Step, as it were. Information from an inventory helps the group make decisions about ways to improve the group based on the group conscience.

One group inventory form was shown in the Winter 2003 Check  N; another form, using a question and answer format, is illustrated below. The form can be copied and distributed to the members a few weeks ahead of a scheduled inventory meeting to encourage thoughtful consideration of each question.

Experience has shown that careful planning and guidance must be practiced or the inventory can run too long or not be complete enough to be helpful. Your group may want to set aside an entire meeting to do an inventory or it may want to spend a set amount of time (i.e. 30 minutes) each week until the inventory is completed.

A GROUP INVENTORY *The Q and A Method**

1. **Primary Purpose**

- What is the basic purpose of the group?
- According to the Fifth Tradition, each group has but one primary purpose: to carry its message to the sex addict who still suffers. How is outreach being addressed by our group?
- Is the group attracting addicts of different backgrounds, genders, and orientations? Are we seeing a cross-section of our community?
- What more can the group do to carry the message?

2. **Staying rooted in the Twelve Steps**

- Are the steps being discussed in the group?
- Does the group give adequate time and support to First Step presentations?
- Are we emphasizing practicing the steps?

3. **Knowledge, adherence, and fidelity to the Twelve Traditions**

- Are principles kept above personalities in our group?
- Are we providing adequate financial support and service to our group and our fellowship (Indiana Intergroup, International Service Organization)?
- Are we always mindful of anonymity and confidentiality?

4. **Newcomers**

- Are 12-Step calls (to the Info Line) being answered in a timely fashion?
- Is attention being given to the needs of the newcomer?
- Are we taking temporary sponsorship seriously?
- Do new members stick with us, or does the turnover seem excessive? If so, why? What can we, as a group, do?
- How is the safety of the group and the newcomer protected?

(Continued on Page 6)

*This form was adapted from a handout of unknown origin.

The Q and A Method*

(Continued from Page 5.)

5. Oldtimers

- Do long-term members of the group give back to the group by sponsoring new people or holding service positions?
- How is the recovery of oldtimers nurtured by the group?
- Do long-time members of the group stick with us? If not, why not? What can we, as a group, do?

6. Service

- Mindful that our group's officers are trusted servants who do not govern (Tradition Two), but that office-holding is a great responsibility not to be viewed as the outcome of a popularity contest, are we choosing our officers with care?
- Are necessary offices being filled? What can we, as a group, do to encourage service work?

7. Meetings (Please write in suggestions for improvement.)

- Topic or Step presentations
- Attendance
- Format
- Location
- Safety of meeting and meeting place
- Filling the needs of the fellowship, as a whole

8. Check-ins

- Are check-ins kept on track and focused on recovery?
- How are others' check-ins respected by the group? Is there crosstalk or advice-giving?

9. Tools of the program

- How are these tools of the program being used by the group?
 - Sponsorship
 - Literature
 - Phone List
 - Medallions
 - Other

10. Miscellaneous

- Is there anything else about the group you would like to affirm or point to for improvement?
 - The group's sobriety
 - Fellowship outside the meeting
 - Other

Starting Over

by Gary B.

Like many addicts, starting over is a process I know intimately. Before I got into recovery, I started over so many times that I lost count. Dozens, if not hundreds, of times I found myself in such despair that I decided I needed to make a fresh start. At such times, I would make pledges that were doomed from the outset. If I had moved to a new community, I would promise myself that I would not act out in the new community. If I had bought a new car, I might promise that I would not act out in the new car. Other times, I would try to bargain with God saying if only this situation or that one would happen, then I finally would be able to break free from my acting out behavior.

Unfortunately, all these new starts came to naught, because I was powerless to control my addictive behavior. Sometimes, I was able to keep from acting out for a few months after starting over. But, always, the old patterns would begin to creep in little by little. It could not hurt to take just a peek at a magazine. One little fantasy would not hurt a thing. It's not like I was going to act out based on what I might see or fantasize about. And I probably did not act out on that occasion, but the camel's nose was inside the tent. So, my latest fresh start was doomed once again. Each time such a period of abstinence ended, I came crashing down and went on a binge, OD-ing on pornogra-

phy and masturbating as many as 5 or 6 times in a day.

This vicious cycle was my life for more than 30 years. However, in the summer of 1995, I started over for real. That was when I got into the program. I would never suggest that my struggles were over at that point. Nevertheless, I did put together 15 months of clean time as I began my recovery. But, inevitably, that clean time did end. On the other hand, this time there was a difference. I did not come crashing down and go on a binge. While I was still hurting from my loss, I was able to go to the fall retreat, which helped me pick myself up and get back into recovery. The difference was the program and my brothers and sisters in recovery. They helped me to get back on my feet without having to fall all the way to the bottom. This time, I did not have to start from scratch, and I did not have to do it alone.

My recovery has not always been smooth. For much of my time in the program, I have not worked the program much at all. Yet, I have put together several lengthy periods of clean time from my bottom line behaviors. All of these have ended as I made foolish choices. However, as one of my mentors in the program told me, when a period of clean time ended, I had not thrown it away or lost it. It remains a part of me, something I have achieved. And as I continued in recovery, whenever I slipped or relapsed, I found that the point from which I started

over was farther down the road toward recovery.

Recently, I started over once again. I had been lukewarm about my recovery for some time and had been complacent about occasional acting out. I surrendered once again to my higher power, and, with his help, made some important decisions. I am working on my spirituality by increased study and prayer; I am working on my recovery by journaling once again; and, I am prayerfully determining the best approach to use in working the 12-Steps. Since making these changes a few weeks ago, I have felt more at peace than I don't know whenever. With the help of my higher power, I will continue to know peace and serenity. My prayer is that each of you will know it too. After all, **"You're worth it!"**

Acronym Alley

SLIP

=

S obriety

L osing

I ts

P riority

Meetings on the Move

From Bloomington:

In a series of unrelated and unexpected events, all of the Bloomington meetings have been forced to relocate. As of the publication deadline for the Check-IN, no permanent new meeting sites had been found.

Anyone planning to visit one of the Bloomington meetings is urged to call before you go.

Ken S. (812) 339-4570
Morris B. (812) 339-7579

From New Albany:

The New Albany meeting has moved across the Ohio River into Kentucky. The meeting is now an affiliate of the Louisville Inter-group.

Contact: (502) 254-8004

From Indianapolis:

The new Thursday Night Westside meeting is looking for a new, less expensive meeting location. A church, near the current meeting site is under consideration. First time attendees may contact:

Brian M. (317) 247-1625

From Shelbyville:

There is a meeting site available in Shelbyville for a CoSA, RCA, or similar meeting. For more information, contact:

Kim B. (317) 398-7071

2002 Retreat Reflection

The following "Thought for the Day" was shared at our 2002, *Prayer and Meditation*, retreat. It is from an E-mail received by a member of the fellowship.

*If God had a refrigerator,
your picture would be on it.*

*If God had a wallet,
your photo would be in it.*

*He sends you flowers
every spring.*

*He sends you a sunrise
every morning.*

*Whenever you want to talk,
He listens.*

*He can live anywhere
in the entire universe,
but he chooses your heart.*

*Face it, friend,
He is crazy about you!*

*God didn't promise:
days without pain,
laughter without sorrow,
sun without rain,*

*but He did promise:
strength for the day,
comfort for the tears, and
light for the way.*

*Living is a
process of becoming
rather than a
state of being.*

Calendar

April

26 Spring Workshop
*Sponsorship in Recovery
from Sex Addiction*

May

10 IISAA Meeting, 4 p.m.
24-26 ISO
International Convention
Portland, Oregon

June

14 IISAA Meeting, 4 p.m.
30 Check **IN** Deadline

July

12 IISAA Meeting, 4 p.m.

August

IISAA Picnic

October

24-26 Fall Retreat
Stepping Into Sponsorship

F. Y. I.

A new meeting of Recovering Couples Anonymous (RCA) has formed. It is meeting at the First Baptist Church of Indianapolis at 6:30 p.m. on the first and third Thursday of each month. Interested couples may contact Charlie H. at (317) 441-8855 for complete details.

A program incorporating the 12 Steps, a belief in Christ and Aikido, a martial art, has been developed. For a prospectus, contact Mike F. at (765) 640-4156 after 5 p.m.