

# The Check N

Volume XIV

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

Summer 2007

Dan M.

1951 – 2007

## A Man of Hope

Dan M., a faithful, longtime, contributing member of the Wednesday Night Methodist Meeting died June 13.

Even though there was no SAA meeting in his town, even though he was confined to a wheelchair for the last years of his life, even though dependable transportation was hard to come by, Dan was committed to his recovery.

Dan chaired the Wednesday Night Meeting regularly, served as the Secretary for many years and organized the group's library.

The thing that stood out most to me about Dan was the sense of hope that he brought to meetings. It was not easy to hear Dan's story and even harder for him to tell it. Like all of us, Dan had made some major mistakes in his life.

Nonetheless, he was working on not repeating those mistakes and making amends where he could. He shared with the group the power the program had in his life and that he hoped his story and his recovery could be of benefit to others. He was quick to take newcomers under his wing and to encourage every-one—especially the struggling addict.

The Wednesday Night Meeting will miss Dan. Our sympathy is extended to his wife Betty and to his family.

Mike C.



*. . . in the park*

The Indiana Fellowship will “meet” at Brown County State Park on Saturday, August 18 from noon to 6 p.m. for the annual IISAA picnic. This “meeting” will involve great fun, fellowship, and frankfurters!

This event is open to SAA and CoSA members and to their family members who are 18 years of age or older.

**Mike P.**, chair of the picnic, has scheduled the Strahl Lake Pavilion again this year. The pavilion sits at the base of the Strahl Lake dam. In addition to a large pavilion for protection from the elements, this site includes: modern restrooms nearby, access to Strahl Lake and its trails, plenty of open space for Frisbee tossing, volleyball, badminton, bocce ball, or other lawn games that anyone would like to bring.

The weekend park admission fee is \$5.00 per car. Fishermen will need a valid Indiana fishing license. Horseback riding is available at the park stables. The fee is \$25 for a 3.3 mile ride or \$15.00 for a 2.2 mile ride.

Intergroup will provide hamburgers, hotdogs, brats, tableware and drinks (water and soda). You are asked to bring a covered dish that would feed six to ten people. You may want to bring a lawn chair.

This is an outer circle activity. It provides an opportunity to participate in healthy fun with other recovering addicts and their families.

Don't let the cost of gas keep you from attending. Carpool with other members of your local group. You will save, too, on admission to the park—the admission fee is per vehicle, not per person.

The summer picnic is the oldest of our traditional social events dating to its sponsorship by the Sunday Morning Men's Meeting. Come rain or shine, the picnic is always a good time. We hope to see you on Saturday the 18<sup>th</sup>!

From the Editor

## What Do You Want?

The Indiana Intergroup of SAA is a meeting of representatives from those individual meetings that choose to belong.

According our bylaws, our purposes are:

- To help its member SAA groups carry the SAA message to the addict who still suffers.
- To provide shared and coordinated services and resources to individual members and the member SAA groups.
- To allow for the efficient use of SAA funds through SAA group purchasing.
- To provide support to the SAA membership that individual groups, acting alone, could not provide.
- To help disseminate information within the SAA organization and to coordinate the public relations of SAA in Indiana.

How we accomplish these purposes is up to individual SAA members and the member SAA groups.

All IISAA meetings are open to all members. You can tell us

what you want done and how you want it done by sharing your ideas directly with Intergroup or by asking your group representative(s) to relay your concerns.

Not only do we welcome your thoughts and insights, we **NEED** them. There is no other way that we can fulfill our mission of making SAA as effective as it can be for those sex addicts in Indiana who turn to SAA for a structured program of recovery.

- How can we better help your meeting group carry the SAA message?
- Are there services or resources that your group or its members need that are not being provided?
- How can we better disseminate information about SAA in Indiana so that more of the people who need our fellowship can gain access to it?

If **you** don't tell us what you and your SAA group want and need, it probably won't be provided. So, reflect on the question, "What do you want?"; then, let Intergroup know; and finally, hold us accountable.

*Mike C.*

## Four Rules To Live By: Drink, Steal, Swear & Lie

I met this guy while I was in Albuquerque who has a motto he lives by everyday. He said listen carefully and live by these four rules: Drink, Steal, Swear, and Lie.

I was shaking my head "no", but he then told me to listen while he explained his four rules. Here they are:

1. "Drink" from the everlasting cup of God's grace every day.
2. "Steal" a moment to help someone who is in worse shape than you are.
3. "Swear" that you will be a better person today than you were yesterday.
4. And last, but not least, when you "lie" down at night, thank God you live in America and have freedom.

I am not as good as I should be;  
I am not as good as I could be;  
but **thank God**, I am better  
than I used to be.

Adapted from the Internet  
Author Unknown

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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### 2007 Calendar

#### July

**14** IISAA Meeting, 4 p.m.

#### August

**11** IISAA Meeting, 4 p.m.

#### September

**8** IISAA Meeting, 4 p.m.

**30** Check **N** Deadline.

#### October

**13** IISAA Meeting, 4 p.m.

**19-21** 13<sup>th</sup> Annual Fall Retreat

# An Honest Open and Willing Meeting

By Jim G.

My home meeting is the Thursday Night Open Meeting, held at the AA Club in Indy. I get some puzzled and surprised looks when I say that to other SAA members. Many have said, "The Open Meeting? I couldn't talk if a non-addict were in the room." Others have said, "Isn't that meeting really meant to bring newcomers in so they can be sent to other meetings where they can really work recovery?" We do sometimes see non-addicts in our meeting, and a steady trickle of newcomers passes through our room. But our meeting is much like your home meeting in that it is a critical part of its members' recovery where we share our experience, strength, and hope with one another and encourage recovery activities. Sex addicts find recovery in our little room if they want to take it.

Every week, our meeting includes a topic discussion and check-in. We began our topic discussion last year and chose to devote a full year to discussing the Twelve Steps, one step at a time. When we finish The Steps this summer, we'll move on to other recovery topics. After the topic discussion, there's plenty of time for check-in, which has long been our meeting's hallmark. Those of us who have called the meeting home over the years have gotten to know each other well through our check-ins. It has helped form the bonds of friendship that have helped many of our recoveries.

We feel it's important that people with an interest in sexual addiction recovery have a way to experience

a meeting to see part of the recovery process in action.

Visitors were frequent years ago, but today we see them only once in a while. When we do have visitors, they are most often spouses and significant others. Most come once and never again, but in the past a few attended regularly and became familiar friends to our group. We offer all visitors the same chance to speak as any addict. Frequently, these partners' words have touched us and helped our recoveries. Once in a while, counselors and social workers visit us, as do students of counseling, social work, and criminal justice. They usually share with us the reason for their interest in sexual addiction but otherwise sit and just listen politely. Almost all of them thank us after we close and then leave.

Everyone who calls the Thursday Night Meeting home has faced some amount of nervousness about sharing in front of non-addicts. A few never get comfortable speaking in front of visitors and find other meetings. We respect that. Most of us, however, have seen how sharing openly and respectfully seems to benefit our visitors, showing the reality of our disease and the hope our recovery offers. We also take comfort in the anonymity of the program. I decided long ago that in a city of 700,000 people, I'm not likely to bump into one of our visitors at the store, and even if I did, so what? It's a small discomfort for the chance that our sharing might encourage the professionals who visit to send us addicts they encounter who are suffering.

Four years ago, when my head was still spinning after bottoming out, I first came to the Thursday Night meeting. There were easily 25 people in the room, including several old-timers with good recovery. One of them, a founder of our meeting, encouraged me every week simply to keep coming back, and I did--in no small part because he seemed genuinely pleased that I was there. I could see how some in the room seemed to be happy and healthy and clean; and, I sure wanted some of that. The meeting's vitality lifted me early in recovery.

Today, our meeting has dwindled to just four of us who call this meeting home. Typical attendance is between two and four; we haven't seen more than eight people in our little room in well over a year. We are in no danger of folding, but with so few people we can't provide the kind of vitality that, just a few years ago, encouraged at least this addict to stay, get a sponsor, and work the steps. We would like to provide more structure to encourage newcomers, such as having people willing to offer at least temporary sponsorship. That's difficult at our attendance levels. Our low attendance also reduces our effectiveness in sharing our message with non-addicts.

The Thursday Night Open Meeting is listed in the Fellowship Directory. It serves a real need for addicts and non-addicts. I'd like to encourage you to visit us and see. And, when you encourage newcomers to try other meetings, I hope you'll specifically refer them to us.

## I Don't Do Enough for My Recovery

I would like to think that I am ready to “go to any lengths” for my recovery. The reality is my best intentions don't always translate into action.

One recovery decision that I am glad I made though was to attend the 2007 IISAA Spring Workshop. While two men drove in from out of state, only ten others from Indiana took advantage of the opportunity—what a lost opportunity.

While I cannot share all of the notes I took or the handouts I received, I would like to share some major points that I found worth considering:

There is a difference between the *group* and the *meeting*. The group is a collection of people who come together to share a common *problem*. The meeting is that same group of people seeking *solutions* to the problem.

Healthy meetings maintain an atmosphere conducive to recovery. By focusing on the experience, strength, and hope of its members, the meeting emphasizes the solution rather than the problem.

Sponsorship is the most important of all Twelfth Step work. Sponsors have a duty to move their sponsees into sponsorship, when they are able.

Those who are reluctant to become sponsors need to remember: It is not the sponsor's duty to “fix” the sponsee. When the sponsor gives his/her very best to his/her

sponsee, there is no harm that the sponsor can do that is any worse than letting the sponsee die of his/her addiction.

Group members' needs change and meetings need to adapt. When a group is not meeting the needs of its membership, it should change. A group inventory is one good way to determine when change is needed.

True service for old-timers may mean stepping aside so that others can become involved in service work within the group.

Service work is required to complete the Twelve Steps. However, if service work detracts from my ability to work my recovery program, I need to back off. This is another example of setting boundaries.

And, finally, I was reminded that, “recovery is an imperfect journey”.



. . . *an act or process of withdrawing, especially from what is difficult, dangerous, or disagreeable.*

What in your life is “difficult, dangerous, or disagreeable”? Is it your addiction, your job, your relationship, or all of the above?

Whatever “it” is, the 13<sup>th</sup> annual IISAA retreat is intended to provide a retreat from “it”.

The retreat will continue IISAA's 2007 focus on the theme, *Healthy Meetings for Healthy Recovery*. It will be held the weekend of October 19 – 21 at beautiful Camp Pyoca.

The official registration materials will be available following the August Intergroup meeting.

Now is the time to place the dates on your personal calendar and to begin thinking about what *you* can contribute to the discussion of this topic. Every SAA member enters the program by attending a meeting. That is because ours is a “we” program. Our best efforts to overcome our addiction failed; we then turned to the collective wisdom of others to help us succeed where our individual efforts had come up short.

Since every SAA member is first and foremost a member of his/her home group, every SAA member no doubt has an opinion about how well (or poorly) the meeting(s) that he/she attends supports his/her recovery. It is your experience, strength and hope, as it relates to your meeting group, that qualifies *you* to be a presenter at this retreat!

Here are a few ideas for workshop topics. You are free to pick from these or to use them as a starting point for developing a topic of your own.

- 💡 Revitalizing meetings
- 💡 Newcomers at meetings
- 💡 Meeting on the solution rather than the problem
- 💡 Group inventories.
- 💡 Meeting formats
- 💡 Meeting after the meeting

If you are willing to present at the retreat or if you would like to be the Program Chair, please contact *Mike C.* (see complete contact information on page 2).