



SSAY

February 1986

Post Office Box 300
Simi Valley, California
93062

HAPPY NEW YEAR!

And what a year we have to look back on and forward to!

● Sexual sobriety is on the increase in SA, and that's the best news of all. Sobriety as we have come to define it. And with roughly half our membership single, this is validating our stand on sobriety. It seems to take sobriety to make sobriety, and this is what seems to be happening. And the joy that results is beginning to be catching.

● There have been a record number of new SA groups starting, including one in Iceland. Also, several new S-Anon groups have been forming internationally; that has to be good news for suffering spouses.

● As Roy reported in Oklahoma City in December, SA has been self-supporting from its own contributions for the last six months! (See enclosed financial statement.) That's a first for SA, even though we closed out 1985 with some \$1700 in the red. We're finally coming up to being responsible to our Seventh Tradition. And the cry of joy that went up in Oklahoma City when the announcement was made indicates this is dear to our own personal recovery as well as the well-being of SA as a whole. We thank God for this consciousness raising and personal commitment of groups and individuals. It's really helping tie us together, make us one, and carry our message more positively and with one voice.

● 1985 had to be the year of Retreats. First it was the marvelous breakthrough in Seattle, then the Cleveland Marathon and the Vancouver Retreat, then Oklahoma City. Ahead of us in March 7-9 we'll have the Northwestern Regional in Portland, and our next International Retreat will be in Kansas City June 6-8. And they're beginning to talk about a Northeastern Retreat in New York now.

Group Update

B.C., of Apple Valley, Minnesota, writes, "Here is our check for GSO support....M.J. celebrated one year along with me just recently. We have had from four to eight members normally at a Friday evening meeting...."

R.P., of Kimberly, Idaho, says, "We have started an SA meeting in Twin Falls, Idaho. It has been going since January of 1985."

R.S., of SA of Boulder, Colorado, says, "We now have six regulars at our Monday night meetings in Boulder, all at different points in working the 12 Steps. The fellowship, love, and acceptance keep us 'Coming Back.' We appreciate what you are doing in the Central Office."

B.J., of Saskatoon, Sask., Canada, reports, "Enclosed is our group donation. Everything going well here. Real sobriety emerging. The group is stronger every month — stronger in commitment. As we have more to offer — numbers will increase. Our best to all of you."

C.B., of Eastridge, New York, writes, "We're going great — having good meetings. Many being helped. Everyone loves the SA Big Book."

T.O., of Cleveland, Ohio, says, "What an experience to be able to bring the 18 of us together, and from other states, to share our most secret selves with one another! To all be strangers yet to not feel strange at all — acceptance, honesty, and spirituality and recovery overflowed that day! We decided that this experience needed to be repeated in another Marathon so Cleveland SA will now sponsor two of these a year! All are welcome and the tapes with the four leads will be available soon! My sobriety was strengthened and hope was given to me that day! Thank God for SA!!!"

J.L., of Cleveland, Ohio, reports, "The Cleveland SA Marathon was the most enlightening experience I've had in recovery; the sharing was fantastic. Knowing there are so many who need and want this program I'm looking forward to the next one."

J.M., of Cleveland, Ohio, says, "The Cleveland SA Marathon was and still is a source of healing and hopefulness. Things that were shared there I've taken for my own and used them as a form of spiritual armor to thwart off the manifestation of my disease and its ramifications."

M.J.P., of Cleveland, Ohio, writes "The recovery shared at the SA Marathon in Cleveland was truly a spiritual experience for me. We laughed, we cried, we listened, we identified. I walked away from the marathon with such a great sense of hope and feeling very grateful."

T.M., of Cleveland, Ohio, says, "As a newcomer to the SA program, the Cleveland SA Marathon was an experience filled with identification and hope. After a number of years in other 12 Step programs, I finally felt as though I'd arrived home."

B.C., of Apple Valley, Minnesota, reports, "We had our first ever birthday cake for a member with 2½ years — a tremendous struggle for thirty days of SA defined sobriety and how grateful the group was for his presence with us through it all. Now another member just had a year and next week a two year SA birthday! We are family — through our brokenness God has richly blessed us and continually working His miracle of recovery."

G.S., of Edmonton, Alberta, Canada, says, "Four meetings a week — five regular members."

J.H., of Highlands, New Jersey, writes, "New Jersey group now 5 strong — meeting weekly in ... and using our 'Big Book' as meeting material."

From **G.A. in Iceland:** "Dear fellow members,

My name is G.A. and I would like to tell you how SA got started in Reykjavik, Iceland.

Last July I was vacationing in Paris. Since I am an AA member I went to meetings held by the American groups in Paris. One evening I shared at a meeting and told them about my past, broken marriages and so forth.

After the meeting a man came up to me and introduced himself as an Australian who had been living in New York for some time. He asked me point blank: 'What's your other problem?'

I stared at him and said, 'Sex.'

Then he said, 'Come with me, I have something to tell you.' We went for coffee and he told me about SA and gave me the big book to read. I stayed up all night reading and felt as the sky had fallen on my head. I called my best friend in Iceland and told him about SA. We talked for almost an hour and then I called my wife whom I had left a year and a half ago and told her also. I was elated. I fell asleep about six in the morning and when I woke up I thought it had all been a dream. The next night the Australian and me had an SA meeting in my room. But I was really scared and confused the next few days when it dawned on me what I was facing. I wished I had never met the guy or seen the book.

As it turned out, I never did see him again and I still have his book, which I treasure.

I was scared to death that the custom people might discover the book and I would be the laughing stock in the airport when I went back home to Reykjavik. But I got through unharmed and locked up the book when I got home and didn't mention the book to anyone for about a week. Then I showed it to my friend who I had called from Paris. We admitted to each other that we were sexaholics.

We decided to start an SA group in Iceland and held the first meeting on the 26th of August 1985. Now there are seven of us, five men and two women and I am writing this letter on behalf of the group because we want to get in touch with you....

We are just a bunch of beginners but we love the program and are grateful for SA. Best regards from everybody in the group."

S.S. of Somerville, Massachusetts, reports, "On December 8, 1985, I will have eleven months of sexual sobriety thanks to God and SA and sexually sober people I've called nationally as well as our own group. I still feel in withdrawal because each attractive man I meet I over-respond to but my program helps me to not act out and my interactions with men are changing and new and I feel a lot of hope today! So mountains are moving and also our Cambridge group now has two meetings, one regular and one Step/Big Book (SA) and we now number eight regular abstinent people with one struggling member who keeps coming back, Thank God."

B.S. of St. Louis, Missouri, says, "We are trying at present to keep four meetings a week available for those who feel a need....Found Essay to be supporting and HOPE FILLED! Will pass it on."

L.W. of West Germany, writes, "N....brings all of our best wishes to Oklahoma....Things have changed here for the better. The meetings are better. We're doing things differently."

D.G., of Fairport, New York, says, "Our Rochester group has stabilized with about 9 members, one meeting/week with an average 5 attendees. Sobriety is growing with 4½ months longest and several with 3 months. We have several newcomers and the main emphasis is on building sobriety. There is a tremendous amount of gratitude for this program amongst the members and our participation in the Cleveland Marathon increased that many fold. We are looking forward to beginning to work the Steps more formally and ask your prayers both for our success and that of the entire program. The most important word in our vocabulary this day is THANKS."

From **J.H. in Aurora, Colorado:** "We've started a meeting in Denver on Saturday at 5:00 p.m.— the fellowship is growing."

J.R. of New York City, reports, "SA New York now has 15 meetings weekly....Sponsorship seems to be helping us a lot now. Recovery is coming slowly but surely. God bless all of you."

T.C. of Chicago, Illinois, writes, "Here's a small contribution from the Chicago groups of SA. The conference was a boost for us. This past Monday we had a meeting in which 5 of 6 attending had over 30 days sobriety. We are beginning a Wednesday night meeting on December 18, 1985...."

J. of Albuquerque, New Mexico, says, "Our group has been growing and we now have three meetings per week which vary in attendance from two to seven people.

We also have an S-Anon group that meets once weekly and has about two to four regular members.

Both our groups have suffered all the trials and tribulations that have been common to SA groups all around but I hope to grow along with our group."

D.B. of Richmond, Virginia, writes, "H., D., and I continue to meet on a regular basis and all are sober."

G.M. of Tenino, Washington, reports, "We are a growing group who has a lot of thanks for SA and its members. We are up to 19 members coming off and on and 10 full time."

E.F. of Bryn Mawr, Pennsylvania, says, "SA in Philly going strong with five meetings and some excellent recovery. Higher Power hard at work!"

S.O. of Lincroft, New Jersey, says, "I am a member of a new group in New Jersey. There are currently five of us. It has been a wonderful experience."

B.S. of Stuart, Florida, writes, "The 'Port Salerno Group' of SA (three members) meet here regularly.... We have been meeting since January 3, 1985."

Members' Comments

R.K., of Tucson, Arizona, reports, "In addition to our Sunday night meeting, we have started a wednesday night meeting recently. SA has, in a sense, given me back my life."

B.S., of Cottonwood, Idaho, writes, "My name is B., a sexaholic, alcoholic, and drug abuser. By the Grace of God, I have been sober from aacohol and drugs for 16 months, and sexually sober for 14 months.

I was elected last night as secretary for the SA program. One-third, about 40 inmates, are in here on sex crimes. We now have 29 of them attending the SA program.

We are thankful for this SA program, and it goes hand in hand with our 'Men's Group,' for sex offenders....

Also we've found that, 'A Vision For You,' encourages us to realize that only God can restore us to sanity. And the program has been very spiritual for us....

We hope that (our experience)...will help other institutions to tap into this successful SA meeting...."

B.H., of Victoria, Canada, says, "We meet twice a week/ 3 or more members present....Now we have 4 members with over 30 days of sexual sobriety. I myself am 19 days this time and doing better, keeping active in SA....It's one hour at a time for me. Our group has 7 members, 5 men, 2 women; 6 are committed to sexual sobriety. We have reached a core of sobriety. We now give chips to encourage sobriety."

M.R., of Vancouver, Canada, reports, "I am very grateful for SA; I will have one year of sobriety January 8, 1986. We have 3 meetings (one in the medical center). Last week we have 3 newcomers. A new meeting is forming. Total membership of about 6 regulars, 2 with one year of sobriety...."

SPRING RETREAT

S.P., of Sommerville, Massachusetts, reports, "Enclosed is a donation from the Friday afternoon Boston SA group. We're still going strong, one of us just celebrated her one year anniversary on January 5, 1986."

P.C., of Arlington, Virginia, says, "Although we have had an SA group meeting here in Washington, DC, on Thursday and Saturday nights, in the last two weeks, both groups have agreed to become administratively independent in the selecting of a place of meeting, arranging for a meeting leader, and governing of finances....It is my understanding that since about May or June of 1985 the SA meetings were attended by about 6-8 people; at this time, I know attendance is averaging around 11-12 per meeting. A clear indication that our message is being heard....I'm sure you sense the need for SA in this area and the benefits that come from a little nurturing...."

Members' Comments

J.A., of Baltimore, Maryland, writes, "....So often I think I am the doctor writing the prescription and that God is merely a pharmacist — my pharmacist. Only the other day I prescribed my cure and sent it in to be filled. The result was a disaster. So today I pray that God's will be done and that I be given what I need, not what I want or think that I need. But there are times when I can ask that a character defect be removed...."

R.E., of Rochester, New York, says, "I have taken ten steps backwards in the past five months but I am trying to turn it over and start going ahead again. Keep up the good work."

D.I., of Petersburg, Alaska, reports, "Yes! Doing Fine! Just celebrated two years sobriety in July (sex and drugs). Honesty is a winner!"

No meeting here in town yet but am corresponding with
1) a Seattle group 2) another loner in Canada 3) a member in Hawaii who started a meeting from a pamphlet I sent! GOD BLESS SEXAHOLICS ANONYMOUS! Sent/scattered pamphlets all over Alaska via mail and in person to professionals, law enforcement, and the Alaska Sexual Abuse Network...."

W.E., of Fairfield, Connecticut, "There is a lot of natural, life-giving wisdom at the meetings I attend in both New York City and New Haven, CT. The frank sharing of others and getting my own secrets out, is helping my sobriety."

E.W., of Dayton, Ohio, says, "I'm blessed to have just celebrated my second anniversary of sexual sobriety after 25 years of active addiction. With God all things are possible."

J.W., of Boones Mill, Virginia, writes, "The struggle to not do it one day at a time has been transformed into the gift of a chaste life — one day at a time. Thanks be to God and SA."

R.L., of Rochester, New York, writes, "I drive 40 miles on Sunday afternoon to a small SA meeting in Clifton Springs. I was there today and was given the copy of ESSAY by another member who said there was an article about hate in it from R.S., of Marina del Rey, California. Thank God there is someone who was able to put into words how I feel. Hate has totally consumed my life ever since I can remember. I'm sober in AA 6½ years and it was such a struggle to attend because I would just take everybody's inventory as they spoke and go home hating everyone. Intensely! At work I would come home totally exhausted from hating everyone all day. And I lost my last three jobs cause of it. I have had much trouble staying sexually sober in the last year and hated everyone even more cause I couldn't do that. I tried every way I know how to stop hating, and it just got worse. And people just kept pushing my button with a simple, 'Hello' or 'How 'ya doin'.' Anything would set me off! People have asked me for years, 'What are you so angry about?' Psychiatrists, counselors, Fellow AAs. I never could answer them or if I did have an answer they would assure me that I shouldn't be angry about it. Well, I don't know if there is a reason or what. But I do know now that I'm powerless over hate. I give it to God and if He loves me enough to take that burden from me then I really do believe that He does know how many hairs are on our head. Thanking God every day for SA...."

J.M., in Salina, Kansas, says, "I'm still working on my sexual sobriety. The meeting in Salina folded due to some people playing with the program. I hope to get some real interested people and start again. Thank you from my heart."

J.M., of Cleveland Heights, Ohio, reports, "....Many benefits have already been gained from the correspondence. I count the fellowship through the mail as a primary one! And it shows — I'm approaching six months sobriety — Thank God!!"

A.G., of Miami, Florida, says, "It's good to know I'm not alone. Thank you for everything."

R.B., of Ft. Lauderdale, Florida, writes, "I want to express my appreciation for the latest ESSAY. I really enjoyed reading about the other groups around the country. Ft. Lauderdale does not yet have any other members other than myself, but Ft. Lauderdale and Miami have joined forces and have started the SA of S.E. Floriday and there are three of us who have had four meetings and plan to continue weekly meetings and a growth in membership. B.S. from Stuart, FL, has visited our meeting twice. I never knew the meaning of fellowship, love, and honesty until I met the other SA members, got abstinent, and got an SA sponsor. I now can see the light at the end of the tunnel and it is not a train. Thank God for SA."

S.S., of Lubbock, Texas, writes, "To me, the idea of no sex (even with self) really makes sense; I think that it's tantamount to the alcoholic trying a 'little controlled drinking.' I think, for me, it's taken some time for me to discover what lust really is at the gut level. I could intellectualize it and had been doing that, but it took some time for me to look inside and to discern how I felt and more importantly how I felt about the other person when I felt lust."

D.K., of Stamford, Connecticut, says, "I have been sober for almost 9 years in AA, and have been sexually sober in SA for 9 days today....I've read the (SA Manual) and the stories were very helpful for me in identifying the nature of this disease. It is clear to me that lust was the first method of finding an easier way of receiving stimulation and a semblance of life than being intimate with people. This obsession has continued to result in a marriage that has been severely tested, but not, thank God, broken, and a life with an awful lot of time wasted in obsession, guilt, remorse, fantasy and projection. I am very grateful that SA exists and that I have joined...."

R.K., of Simi Valley, California, writes, "....Speaking for myself, I see that the great key to my serenity and recovery and sobriety is anchored in the realization of my powerlessness over my lust. This powerlessness — just as true today as it was nine years and ten months ago — is what energizes my surrender of my lust and other defects to the only One who has the Remedy. The longer I am sober the more I see, year after year, the true nature of my defective self as it is revealed in my relations with others. This defect of self is at heart being a rebel against God, a self-centered arrogant child who sees himself as the supreme being in his world. This self-centered self-sufficiency is what fueled my addiction and all of the other diseased processes that I was programming into my being. The progressive awareness of my defective self goes hand-in-hand with the progressive revelation of the application of the Remedy. But only as I see truly the defective spiritual incapacity of my being, can I reach out in my extremity and desperation to the One through whom I can do all things. I remember that One whose birth we celebrate this Christmas said, 'Of myself I can do nothing....the Father doeth the works.' For me to rest in my goodness has been the faulty belief that kept me from surrender, sobriety, life, and joy.

I realize that this conviction of mine runs counter to much current psychological thinking, but I firmly hold this to be true for me and am more convinced than ever this is the way it must be through my own experience. The beauty of our First Step is to see that we truly have nothing in our hands as we make our surrender to God. I see that I am absolutely powerless over me and that my life is unmanageable by me; and this is as true today as it was ten years ago. But today I do have the choice that I never had before, and this choice has come through a daily surrender so that I can do all things through Him who strengthens me...."

T.H., of Lothian, Maryland, writes, "Last night I twelve-stepped a young woman; I drove sixty miles to talk with her for fifteen minutes. She identified strongly with our first step; God and sobriety helped me convey the message simply and sincerely. The joys of recovery outweigh the necessary pain that accompanies it. I am beginning to laugh and dance again in my sweet relationship with my Lord....

I have been practicing...(the) suggestion (in the big book) when my husband and I have a disagreement, of concentrating on my wrongdoing, my part in creating the disharmony. It works. It also leaves him free to discover I am a valuable person; I am shedding the destructive guilt of the past. God has been very good to me...."

D.P., of Whitney Point, New York, says, "After about 35 years of lustful sexual addiction, I came into contact with SA. Much to my surprise, I was not alone. I carried my 'bottle' in my head, and with the help of the 12 Steps I have found a way to keep it bottled tonight. I have been saved by the grace of God from the worst effects — I still have my family and the love of my wonderful wife and a good job along with the respect of my neighbors, church-goers, and co-workers. And I have been granted the greatest gift of all — a group that listens to me and can speak from years of experience. I had arrived at the point of no return — either change or see everything go down the drain, and once again (God has graced me before, allowing me to arrive at this point) God's grace moved in to open up the door to my salvation in SA. It has taken four months, but I have finally torn all the layers of hidden filth away, and now I can rebuild myself and my relationships anew. I do not (at this time) sense any further layers of self-deception ('I'll just keep this; this is harmless') in my mind. Maybe I have more, but I will just keep on 'one day at a time' and see what God reveals to me.

I have been very fortunate in making contact with the group at Hankins, New York, even though it is a 75 mile trip each way. Many of the group have been sexually sober for 10-15 or more years, following the basic program layed out by AA. Most are cross-addicted, but a few are like myself,

sexual only. My co-sponsors (2) are both of this background. It has been a miracle to encounter those who have been free for so long and to be able to join them for so long as God and I each do our part.

I know that I must reach out to other fellow sufferers if I am to remain sober. I am praying everyday on this and am asking for guidance....."

News Items

Are you including Traditions Meetings in your local meeting schedules? We're finding increasingly a need to study the Twelve Traditions as part of our group process of recovery. Some groups will alternate once a month in the Step Study meeting by holding one meeting a month on the Traditions, reading from the Twelve and Twelve one Tradition and then sharing it (see enclosed paper regarding meetings).

Results of using the newly suggested format (the "Santa Barbara" format, implementing the sobriety consciousness in meetings — see Newsletter dated August 24, 1985) are still coming in. And results are very positive, even though there are various objections from some members. Once the decision is made to try to uphold the sobriety imperative in meeting format, groups seem to get stronger.

Suggestion: Your group might want to try it out for a time and give it a chance.

Comment from one group: "The ratio of newcomers and those with less than 30 days sobriety to those with longer term sobriety is such that meetings usually end with those who are not sober or with very little sobriety ending the meeting. We're wondering if perhaps we can have leaders allow room toward the end of meetings for sober members to share or call on them to share. This can help end the meetings on a positive constructive note and also be helpful to those not sober."

REGIONAL RETREAT FOR NORTHEASTERN U.S.

is being planned. This is in the initial planning stages. If you are a group or individual interested, please contact Jeff R. at (212)570-7292.

SPRING RETREAT

Remember the Oklahoma City promise: "We will bring the sobriety, you arrange the Retreat." We have. So come to the Pacific Regional Retreat, **March 7, 8, and 9, 1986.** Where: The Franciscan Renewal Center in Portland, Oregon. Bring yourself, your sobriety, and your desire for sobriety. We will pick you up at the airport/train/bus or greet you at the beautiful Retreat site. Registration from 2:00 p.m. Friday — the snack bars will be open. From 3:00 p.m. enjoy a continuous "Get Acquainted and Fellowship" meeting until dinner at 6:00 p.m. At 8:00 p.m. Tandra will introduce the Retreat theme: "Rest in the Spirit." After more sharing, enjoy the coast's best climate for sleep — or talk all night if you wish.

Saturday, March 8th: Meditation at 7:30 a.m., breakfast at 8:00 a.m. Welcome members who are driving at night to get here. From 9:30-11:30 a workshop: "Spirit of the SA Traditions" by Lee H. and a selected speaker for each Tradition. Lunch at noon. From 1:30 p.m.-4:30 p.m. "Self-Searching; Spiritually Powerless" 1st Step workshop by Lynn C. including small inventory groups with Lynn, Tandra, Lee, etc. as leaders. There will be a break between sessions. At 5:00 p.m. separate meetings for men and women. At 6:00 p.m. our banquet and speakers meeting: Harry B. will be the keynote speaker and an S-Anon and another SA speaker. More will be revealed when more register for the Retreat. We have about 25 "promised" including 8 registrations.

Sunday 7:30 a.m. meditation and 8:00 a.m. spiritual breakfast. Tandra will conduct the closing meeting, "Sharing your Spirit" as we all share our love and experience of the Retreat before parting to carry the message back home. Adequate smoke breaks and places will be provided to compensate for the "No Smoking Retreat" — for those who "suffer in the spirit." Our Higher Power will control the weather and the Retreat.

For further information, please call:

Harry B.
(503)223-4922 (W)
(503)289-9075 (H)

Our book, Sexaholics Anonymous, has been translated and printed in German. It is titled Anonyme Sexaholiker, patterned after the German edition of the AA Big Book, Anonyme Alkoholiker. Our SA brochure has been out in German for some time now.

**ADVANCED ADVANCE NOTICE
KANSAS CITY INTERNATIONAL RETREAT**

June 6, 7, and 8
further details in future Newsletters

"Special Request"

During February 6-13 one of our SA members must stand trial in a very serious matter involving his own family. He requests our prayers.

~~SA~~

RESERVATION FOR PACIFIC REGIONAL RETREAT, PORTLAND, OREGON
March 7, 8, & 9

REGISTRATION FEE: \$25.00 per person, transferable but non-refundable. Balance to be paid at the Retreat.

Name: _____ Phone () _____

Address: _____

City/State?ZIP: _____

_____ Single Room

_____ Double Room

Please make check payable to:
SA Conference Committee and mail to:
Lynn C.
5524-A S.E. West Fork
Portland, OR 97211

ACTION ITEMS

● The number of S-Anon inquiries to the SA Central Office has been steadily increasing, along with the SA inquiries. Usually, wives of sexaholics call or write in asking for help. From the beginning of SA, we have been referring them to the closest group or individual with whom they can talk or meet. When S-Anon got their own Post Office box, we began referring these people to that address in Phoenix. With no regular staff people there, this has occasioned delays in response to inquirers, and with the recent departure from Phoenix S-Anon of those previously handling the S-Anon inquiries, the situation was worsened. Once again, the Central Office has begun to make the referrals and try to hook people together, as we did before.

Our non-sexaholic secretary, Nan, has offered to handle these inquiries with no cost or obligation to SA. She would be connecting up inquirers and sending out the brochure as we did before. It does seem logical that inquiring spouses contact the SA Central Office, and most inquiries have always come in this way. Nan is willing to handle it.

We feel this is something all SA and S-Anon should know about. How do you feel about this?

● We have taken the liberty of quoting excerpts from SA Member letters for ESSAY as, for example, we have done in this issue. We have not always sought prior permission; as one can imagine, that can be a time-consuming task, and we're not known for fast responses. We hope this meets with member approval. Let us know how you feel.

WARNING!

This has to be our final mass mailing — our next Newsletter goes only to those who have returned coupons or asked in other correspondence to remain (or added to) our mailing list. If you wish to continue receiving correspondence from us, **this is your last chance to let us know!** Thank you.

The following various pieces, materials in process, are available from the Central Office.

1. "Another Look at Lust" (1)
2. "Some Suggested Book and Program Evaluation Guidelines" (3)
3. "Free at Last" (5)
4. "Defects Continued--Hostility" (1)
5. "The Resentment-Lust Connection" (1)
6. "Some Opinion, Medical and Personal on the Physiological Aspects of Male Sexual Abstinence" (1)
7. "Masturbation and Sexual Sobriety" (1)
8. "Sexual Detox" (1)
9. "Sobriety and the Sea of Relativism" (1)
10. "Sobriety and the Self" (3)
11. "Publicity and the Twelfth Step" (2)
12. "Some Suggestions for New SA Members Without SA Groups" (1)
13. "What is the SA Program." (2)
14. "Relationships" (1)
15. "Business Meetings and the Twelve Traditions" (2)
16. "What About Romance and Passion in Marriage After Sobriety?" (2)

Cost of this material is ten cents per sheet; number of sheets is noted in parentheses.

● **Groups and individuals:** Please advise of those with one year or more sexual sobriety (per SA definition only, please). ESSAY is considering a "Birthday Corner." What do you think?

Oklahoma City Retreat

S.J., of Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, writes, "I enjoyed everyone being here for the Retreat. It was a real spiritual high for me. Thanks for coming."

H.A., of Nashville, Tennessee, reports, "I feel like a very blessed man to have received the gift I received this weekend. The gift from my Higher Power was being able to attend the conference in Oklahoma City. As J.P. said to me after the meeting, 'H., I have never seen you cry before.' She was seeing tears of joy. She saw the tears of my realization that God has had to put me through a strange and intricate journey for me to have finally found what I have always been looking for. The Twelve Steps, the fellowship, and God as I understand Him, all working simultaneously in my life, if I permit it, is doing for me what I never thought could be possible...."

J.E., of Minneapolis, Minnesota, says, "....Oklahoma City was a marvelous experience for me. So very solid in the step sharing sessions format....I think I began to relate for the first time to those who seem to be able to identify with ease 'I am a grateful, recovering sexaholic.' I felt privileged to be able to share my story both on the panel and in written form. It is awesome and beautiful that words that come out of my life can be made to be words of witness to the power, love, and mercy that gives us life. For this I am grateful."

T.O., of Cleveland, Ohio, writes, "The three days were intensely therapeutic to say the least. I went with a willingness to take a deeper look into self and my sobriety and a look is what I got. The conference, the fellowship, and nine months of sobriety is showing me things my sexual addiction has buried for years. With reliance on God and SA, I'm walking through this stuff sober and GRATEFUL!!! Thanks to all who opened up honestly and shared their weaknesses and recovery. I need to know you are like me inside; it's the only way I get the courage to keep on! One day at a time."

R.K., of Simi Valley, California, says, "SA's history tells me what a precious thing we have in the fellowship of the Spirit, and that I dare not take it for granted.

The sobriety imperative undergirded the whole thing (even though there was some insobriety there) and set the tone. The birthday party Friday night was a great idea, though we could have clarified what this precisely meant for us. Because of this foundation, I believe, there was purpose, unity, clarity, strength, serenity, hope, goodness, joy, and love.

Showed how the inner landscape (where we were spiritually) was the controlling influence, and not the outer landscape. The externals don't make the internals."

N.H., of Weinheim, West Germany, reports, "Overwhelming. A lot of honesty. I found defects deep inside me. Learned when hugs were OK and when they were not OK. Discovered prayer in SA meetings. Now we do it in Germany, and when we are on the phone with each other too. Must confess to disappointment when I saw that SA is not perfect. Now I see the reality. Dirty dishes are cleaned in dirty dishwater and come out clean!"

L.H., of Lynwood, Washington, writes, "Joy multiplied by the warmth of recovering sexaholics sharing and growing together. Lots of unconditional love and evidence we are together with God.

What I liked best: meetings on Steps, private sharing, lightheartedness, meeting facilities, price.

What I would like to see improved: less host group control of chairing. More sharing of chairs, speakers. More meditation (optional), less food.

The prime phenomena: It's clear God is doing for us. We are more relaxed, less controlling SA. We went international. Our first SA mass (ecumenical). We seem to listen to each other more. The Steps are clearly the key."

Group Update

Please make ESSAY available to all members of your group by:

1. Ordering extra copies, or
2. Providing names and addresses of those wanting it to the Central Office.

Since it does not come out regularly, ESSAY is free, expenses covered from general contributions.

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