



SSAY

May 1986

Post Office Box 300
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What a marvelous time we had in New York City April 26th! And Cleveland May 3rd! Two one-day SA happenings. The get-togethers got us together. It seems to happen every time.

How blessed we are to be getting this impulse to come out of our isolation and be with each other. And in between the smiles and sharing, the first-time greetings and seeing old friends, a larger Presence seems to be doing for us—together—what we cannot do alone.

Sexual sobriety! And unity! Five years ago, who would ever have thought it could happen, and that it could be this joyous? What a gift.

Instead of lust, resentment, and fear—our erstwhile companions in the shadow—we have freedom, gladness, openness, and light. What we always wanted but went looking for in the wrong places.

The Program is working! We are abandoning ourselves to God as we understand God, admitting our faults to Him and to our fellows, clearing away the wreckage of our past, giving freely of what we find, and joining one another in the Fellowship of the Spirit. This is our life and our joy.

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NEW YORK CITY GET-TOGETHER BRINGS UNITY AND JOY

Saturday April 26th was a day to be remembered in New York City SA. The following is a report from John H.:

"There were over one hundred persons in attendance. Represented were New York City and environs; New York state, including Eastridge and Rochester; New Jersey; Connecticut; Washington, DC; Baltimore; Boston-Cambridge; and others from as far away as Seattle and Simi Valley, CA.

"There was a tremendous good feeling of unity, that NYC is now more a full-fledged part of the national and international SA fellowship. There was a lot of momentum, and we're planning another one-day get-together for the Fall.

"S-Anon seemed to take hold, with some fourteen attending.

"Out-of-towners commented that they were grateful for the Step meetings, since they had none where they came from.

"Everyone enjoyed the final combined meeting. It began with memorials for two departed SA members, Janet and Jim H., then continued with Mike D. of Eastridge (four years sober), telling what it was like, what happened, and what it was like now. 'Jump Into the Steps,' he urged. 'Work them all as soon as you can and as hard as you can!' There were those who emanated happy sobriety, and there was unity, healing, and good strong sobriety.

"The NYC Planning Committee comprised five members, who met several times, with no egos dominating."

David B., master of ceremonies during the convention, said, "This has been a turning point in New York City SA; I know it has been for me. It feels like it's here to stay."

Group News

M.G., of Larned, KS, reports: "First off, we are a new SA group. At present we have two members and one social worker (sits in but does not talk—he's learning.)

"The men here at Larned are from the state prison system and have been arrested for some kind of sex act (in SA group only) and at present are receiving care and treatment for our problems. In the prison system sex crimes are the worst to live with, and to be blunt we could be killed if found out. So our weekly meeting is so important to us. In time we are hoping to open up the SA to the other wards so keep that in your prayers.

"My own stay here has been six months now and I have been involved in SA three-and-a-half months and sober for three months. With all the help here through the professional staff I must state that the SA life has helped me the most. Through my reading the SA book and prayer I am growing in sobriety and unity with God.

"We are a small group right now and we shall grow as time goes on. There is a song that goes 'Be not afraid for He has you in the palm of His hand.' Well He has this SA group in His palm and we are not afraid. If we can open up in a prison mental hospital we can make it. 'Be not afraid.'"

F.H., of Pharr, TX: "Greetings from SA in South Texas. We are still here. (Small - but still here)...."

R.H., of Geneva, NY: "Our Clifton Springs Sunday afternoon meeting has accumulated a small surplus. We are sending (our donation) to you for world service.

"We will also try to find a way to 'repay' the hospital's kindness by providing literature for them. That we might become more self-sufficient. The tradition of self-support being a way for us to grow up in responsibility and to not be just takers...."

D.G., of Richmond, VA, writes: "D.B. came to me as one of his wife's co-sponsors in AA and sat down to talk about himself....As his story unfolded, I found myself identifying somewhat, which gave me pause for thought.

"Thus began my research of self to find some of the whys that made me sometimes feel guilt.

"Knowing another man who had similar problems, I talked to him. This 'founded' my suspicions, and the three of us got together and formed our group...we have gone down the line with SA and feel that even though we have only three, we are solid...."

B.S., of Cottonwood, ID, says: "....Thank you for the information.... It really excites me to see others are interested in SA. Especially in other institutions....Three other inmates of the Kansas State Penitentiary were also interested in beginning an SA meeting, and they asked for my name and address. Praise the Lord, and only by the grace of God, I have arranged it to where I can keep in contact with these inmates from other institutions!

"Our SA meetings are now in the process of being extended to one-and-a-half hours every Thursday. 23 members showed up last week...."

D.H., of Henryetta, OK, reports: "Here's the Tulsa Group's gift for February and March, 1986. We have five regular attending members—one is in a drug treatment program and will be back soon. Also, there are four or five who attend occasionally. We have from two months (the least) to one year and three months sexual sobriety of the regular attendees. We are having some very good 'positive sobriety' meetings. May God continue to bless you in this work."

G.A., of Reykjavic, Iceland, tells us: "Everything is going fine, we have a wonderful, strong group which puts sobriety first."

A.S., of Newport News, VA, says: "We have a small group of regulars who are really working, and we have others who come infrequently. Help us with your prayers and we also pray for you."

P.C., of Arlington, VA, reports: "Things seem to be going pretty well here in the Washington, DC, area. That is to say, we now have SA groups meeting on Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, and Saturday nights. The largest of these seems to be the Thursday group with about 18-20 members, followed by Saturday and Tuesday with about 8-10. The Monday group will have its first meeting this coming week. Who says that there isn't a need for sexual sobriety?"

"We are also beginning to receive a number of requests for information from several local psychologists and physicians who seem to feel that this program may be appropriate for some of their patients. We are providing them with copies of the SA Book, Literature List, SA Summary Folder, and contact information (Central Office address).

"At any rate, the Thursday group is pleased to again make a contribution to the larger work. Enclosed please find a check for...which represents our February excess of contributions over expenses.

"Many of the Thursday members are unable to receive SA mail at their homes but would like copies of ESSAY. Can you send us about 15-18 copies that we can distribute to those interested? For many of the people who have glanced through it after a meeting, it seems to provide a strong sense of support and general information."

N.J., of Macon, GA, says: "...The other \$60.00 is \$20.00 each for November, December, and January with love, to carry the SA message. We now have one man who has six months' sobriety. We have had four members for the last three months. We remember you often in our prayers.

D.B., of New York, NY, writes: "We're feeling better than ever in New York....Most of the groups are consistently well attended, and it's easier than ever to find speakers with the sobriety requirement. We feel so good about our solid group of members who are staying sober one day at a time.

"A lot of us feel it has something to do with sponsorship.... For me it's particularly encouraging to see the growing numbers of sober gay members—AIDS is claiming so many of our friends, and thanks to SA, a lot of us are removing ourselves from that game of Russian Roulette....One thing I've noticed that's kind of painful to see is how difficult it seems to be for members to get sober after a slip. A couple of my favorite friends in the program, some who'd put together months of sobriety, some years, have slipped....It must be true when they say, 'It's easier to stay stopped than to get stopped.'....By the grace of God I'm fast approaching my second anniversary of sexual sobriety. It's a whole new world, isn't it?"

J.M., of Cleveland Heights, OH, says: "I'm writing you this letter in my eighth month of sexual sobriety and my 11th month of quitting smoking, and I'm attempting to stop my 'popaholism.'

"Our two groups in Cleveland seem to be in a transition period, and we need some guidance from our Higher Power and people in the program who are willing to step forward. We have a solid core of people who seem to be making the attempt at being sober—they have the desire. Thank God in all the meetings I've attended only one has been disrupted by a newcomer.

"Maybe you could pass the word to those interested to remember our groups in their meditation...."

D.W., of Robbinsdale, MN, reports: "....We as a group feel good about being a part of the SA movement—we voted to try and send \$15.00 a month instead of \$10.00—we will see how it goes...."

Members' Notes

D.K., of Stamford, CT, tells us: "I think that every time any of us carries the message to a newcomer, each of us founds SA anew. Each of us does this to save ourselves, to learn a way of life in between the misery of succumbing, and the agony of resisting, a way of life that is peaceful and free from lust. We are brothers and sisters seeking, as much as we can and as best we can, this way of life....I went to a meeting last night where the speaker said that he was interested in recovery, not sobriety and that he came to SA for intimacy, not celibacy. I try to come to SA to receive freedom from lust and if that means celibacy for some period or for the rest of my life, I need to stay conscious of the misery of lust so that I will prefer celibacy. In addition, it seems to me that there must be a way to live so that the absence of sex is not only not a problem but a great joy and freedom. Someone said that by getting sober in AA they got everything they ever sought from alcohol, and I think that by getting sober in SA we can find the intimacy with other people and the union with God that we sought from sex."

D.L., of Cottonwood, ID, reports: "SA is working. Keep it up, we need it."

W.M., of Abbotsford, B.C., says: "Thank you for SA. I now feel that I will not re-offend as long as I follow the 12 Steps. I definitely could not control my lust. SA has given me hope. It fits in well with our program here."

C.D., of Statesville, NC, says: "I need some more literature but wanted to reach out to you as well. Thanks to God, SA, and my sponsor, I have been sexually sober since January 3, 1986....Thank you all again for your help—I feel and look a different person since I first read our Big Book and some literature on January 3."

J.F., of Buffalo, NY, reports: "SA has officially started in Buffalo, NY....We currently have four members and with God's help, we'll be able to expand.

"As regards to myself, I'm still taking things one day at a time; having been a sober member of AA for 11 years, I've found there's no other way. It is a struggle and far more difficult than my AA experience and a bit more than I envisioned, but I'm beginning to recognize the benefits of the struggle.... I'm grateful that SA has been made available to me, through God's grace.

"If I can ever be of any assistance, please let me know, and of course I'm open to anyone you might refer."

L.M., of Karlsruhe, West Germany, says: "God is helping us."

R.F., of Schenectady, NY, writes: "...Realizing alcohol often triggered my lust, I attended my first AA meeting last Sunday and have decided to abstain from alcohol for the next ninety days. So far, I've made it through a lust-free, alcohol-free week!

"My minister has been tremendously supportive as he was delighted to discover how completely the 12 Steps conform to the tenets of our faith...As I continue to attend more AA meetings I hope to glean more of the meeting format...."

A.O., of Battlesville, OK, says, "Coming into the program in OKC approximately three years ago brought a new way of life for me....Finally attending meetings in Tulsa has brought the strength I needed to achieve my now 30 days' sobriety. Please put me on your mailing list. Just finished reading ESSAY shared by D.H. I don't want to miss another one."

M.F., of St. Clair Shores, MI, reports: "....I enjoyed reading the new SA ESSAY....January 15th I celebrated my first year anniversary in AA and six months clean time in NA. Plus continued my OA membership of eight years and now 125 pound weight loss. I believe all this was possible due to getting down to core issue with my one year association with SA. I am ENJOYING SEXUAL SOBRIETY."

A.A., of San Angelo, TX, reports: "This group has come into being on its own. One of the member's AA sponsor told him to talk to me about SA. At the time, he told me there would be no way he could meet in a mixed group. Well, tonight he celebrated his sixth week of sobriety! He told the group (three male, two female) that being celibate has opened up his life to God as nothing has ever done before, including surrendering alcohol and drugs. The other members of the group are all admitted sexaholics. Three of us have over 30 days sobriety. It blows my mind because God has brought all of this about without me having to do anything except surrender my right to lust to Him one day at a time....I decided to abstain from sex (in my marriage) for a period. Immediately I have felt a new calmness. Now when I touch her or hold her I know that it is a gift of me to her with no strings attached of sex or dependency. For me I have found I had to remove sex from the equation to see what we have going for us. A new adventure has begun! I did not think it was possible to stop masturbating before SA. Now, just seven months later, I have stopped sex altogether. Unbelievable, but it is happening in my life one day at a time.

"The extra money from the dues is a contribution from a grateful recovering sexaholic."

R.L., of Rochester, NY, says: "Thanks for the information on hostility. It helps me so much to look at my defects as being a kind of spirit that comes upon me. Thoughts just come and go it seems. But if I kind of step back and see it as something I can't control, they lose their power, and I don't feel so guilty knowing that I don't create the thoughts. Not acting on them even lessens the guilt.

"I always considered my sobriety in AA as being so important, but I don't think I knew what powerless meant. Now I'm learning what it is and I'm excited about what's to come with surrender and abstinence....

"Today I have 20 days sobriety. The longest time sober in one-and-a-half years. I'm kinda scared about turning my old ideas over absolutely."

J.B., of Jemez Springs, NM: "Could you please send me as many copies of your manual as possible? I enclose a check for \$15.00. Perhaps that is just enough for one, maybe two or three. Whatever! I came across your manual last night and it struck me with the power of a revelation! Even if all I ever do is read it (though I hope to do far, far more) I will forever be grateful. It spoke to me like almost nothing else has in all my life. And, God knows how I need the message. There are a few others here, too, who want to learn more. Who knows-- maybe the Lord will surprise us in ways we do not expect. He's good at that! I will keep SA in my daily prayers...."

B.E., of Fairfield, CT, reports: "Last night I just finished reading the most recent Newsletter. I had no idea the SA network was so massive. That's a comfort to know that others struggle, triumph, make mistakes, and strive for a healthy rhythm. SA has been a consistent call to health for me, and helps me believe that sobriety is possible. My own sobriety is growing and I am grateful....I'm also enclosing a donation to support the coordination work you do."

Action Items

When sending checks to the Central Office without any correspondence, would you please make a memo on the check saying whether it's a donation, literature purchase, or whatever. Also, if you're sending payment for a literature order someone else in the group made, would you please let us know? Our records indicate the name of the person placing the order, not always the group.

As usual, we're trying to update our files. Would you take a moment to let us know the current contact person, address, and telephone number? We would also appreciate an alternate contact in the event the contact person moves or loses his/her sobriety. For those who may not know, here's what happens at the Central Office before an inquirer is given any contact with a local group: For the first-time inquirer, we send only our SA brochure and a form letter, saying to write back if they wish contact with a local group. When they write back the second time, we send a personal letter welcoming them to SA and giving them the first name, last initial, and telephone number of the contact who has given us prior permission. We follow that up with a lead card sent to the contact person, giving him/her the inquirer's full name, address, and telephone number if provided. It's a simple system, but so far, it's working. To our knowledge, no one's anonymity has been broken.

NYC CONVENTION APRIL 26th

John H. of NYC is making available for \$2.50 each tapes of the final combined session, including Mike D.'s talk and other sharing. Place your order by writing SA, Post Office Box 1542, New York, NY, 10185.

FIRST STEP INVENTORY

Roy is still asking for feedback on the First Step Inventory. Are you using it? How? With what results, short-term and long term? Should group feedback be a part of it? Are you using it for newcomers only? We're trying to get a fuller picture of what place this is actually playing in SA and whether the original three-page description should be put back in the SA manual. The only place it exists now (condensed) is in the suggested format in the Meeting Guide. Previous member feedback on whether we should use it has proven inconclusive on this matter.

GERMANY TAPES

Anyone interested in transcribing the eight tapes of Roy's SA seminar in Germany last October, please contact the Central Office. These tapes have Roy speaking in English with someone translating in German. Only the English transcript is required, though there have also been requests for the German. Cassettes are standard size, and access to a transcribing machine with a foot pedal would probably be necessary

NEW SA MEETING GUIDE IS OUT

The newly-revised Meeting Guide is now in two parts. One part, bound in a separate cover, contains suggested meeting formats and the standard readings used in meetings, such as portions of Chapters 3 and 5, A Vision for You, the 12 and 12, etc. The second part, also separately bound, contains Suggestions for New SA Groups, Meetings—How They Work, What is the SA Program (18 January 1984 letter), and the paper, "Publicity and the Twelfth Step." Price is still \$3.00.

CENTRAL OFFICE QUARTERLY REPORT

BOOKS

First Quarter 1986	546
First Quarter 1985	397
Last Quarter 1985	316

MEETING GUIDES

First Quarter 1986	37
First Quarter 1985	33
Last Quarter 1985	39

BROCHURES

First Quarter 1986	2268
First Quarter 1985	3018
Last Quarter 1985	1830

DONATIONS

First Quarter 1986	\$1330.63
First Quarter 1985	\$ 495.00
Last Quarter 1985	\$2649.99

FIRST QUARTER 1986

Expenses	\$6654.05
Credits	\$5612.38
First Quarter Deficit	\$1041.67

Central Office handled 1116 letters, and sent out 1214 Newsletters during the first quarter of 1986

*For your information, approximately 15% of SA groups contribute to the world services 12th Step work of the Central Office.

\$ \$ \$

JUST IN FROM THE CLEVELAND MARATHON

Tom O. reports that twenty people attended the May 3rd SA Marathon at St. Peter's church in Cleveland. This included three women, and areas represented were Rochester, Detroit, Toledo, Dayton, and Cleveland.

There were discussions on what other groups were doing on such subjects as how meetings are run, how the Steps are implemented, business meetings and elections, newcomers, and publicity. Tom reports that all groups represented are basically working along the SA guidelines of upholding the sobriety imperative and using the 30-day format.

Tom adds that the spirit of the gathering was warm and open, ending with two leads, sharing, and expressions of gratitude. He concludes that such get-togethers strengthen SA as a whole and increase communication between groups. Cleveland is planning another one-day happening in October.

LITERATURE-IN-PROCESS

Enclosed with this mailing are a couple of new pieces Roy is sharing from his own experience. These and other items on the list titled "Pieces on Various Subjects" are made available for whatever shared benefit they may have. As always, feedback on these from SA members and groups is requested in light of the possibility of their becoming future pieces of SA literature in some way. If you think any of these items should ever fall into that category, or if you have any editorial comments, please let us know.

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