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March 1991

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This supplement to the March 1991 *Essay* is a new feature. In it are items of interest to the fellowship regarding Central Office matters and issues affecting the fellowship at large. Contents of this issue are:

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Goodbye to Nan

On the 28th of January Nan bid farewell to her job of almost seven years as non-sexaholic secretary, then manager of the SA Central Office. Nan began her work at the Central Office (then Roy K.'s study) April 1, 1984 and quickly won a place in the hearts of many in SA for her conscientious efforts to get inquirers connected with the fellowship. Her dedication and willingness to go the "extra mile" for both newcomers and members was a great blessing to all. SA would not have been what it is today without her. Nan had been considering leaving for some time, knowing that her husband's upcoming retirement would eventually mean a move for them. Goodbye Nan, and God's richest blessings on you and yours; the fellowship is grateful and will miss you!

A Glimpse at Central Office Activity

Literature disbursed (Fourth Quarter):

1,110	<i>Sexaholics Anonymous</i>
31	<i>Meeting Guides</i>
5,922	<i>Brochures</i>
204	<i>Member Stories—1989</i>
360	<i>Recovery Continues</i>

Donations received:

The Central Office received \$7,835.53 in donations during the fourth quarter of 1990.

Average of Number of Phone Calls and Letters:

Currently 54 phone calls per week average and 77 letters per week average.

Hazelden's Decision to Sell SA Literature

Hazelden has just placed their first order for SA literature (all three of our books, plus brochure), to be listed in their April catalog. A couple of years ago, at the suggestion of members in the SA fellowship, the Central Office advised Hazelden of our new book *Sexaholics Anonymous* and provided copies of our literature. We understand that our literature then went through extensive editorial and consultant review cycles before inclusion in the Hazelden catalog. For those who aren't familiar with Hazelden, it is one of the foremost U.S. suppliers of publications and services to the Twelve Step community and related fields. For example, Hazelden publishes the ubiquitous *Twenty-Four Hours a Day* book, used by so many members of AA and other fellowships.

Oklahoma City Convention Business Meeting Report

[Convention planners decided that the convention business meeting, traditionally dealing only with matters pertaining to conventions, would, in this case, also bring up other matters. It was stated at the beginning of the business meeting that any suggestions or recommendations made on such other matters would be suggestions only, not binding on the fellowship.—Ed.]

The following report is from Jean P., who chaired the business meeting, held in two sessions:

"At the business meeting of the Oklahoma City SA conference, January 12, 1991, the following motions were made and passed:

"1. San Diego's bid for the January, 1992 conference was accepted by acclamation.

"2. It was suggested that the fellowship investigate the possibility of having only one SA-wide international conference a year, in June. A motion was approved to ask Harvey A. of Nashville to appoint a committee to examine this possibility, to be composed of members on both sides of the issue, and to request that this committee report back to the business meeting of the July conference in Chicago.

"3. Following a discussion of SA's sobriety statement, a motion was made that this conference business meeting go on record as recommending that SA's sobriety statement be left exactly as it is now written in the SA manual. After extensive discussion, this motion was passed 36 to 1, with 3 abstentions.

"4. After some discussion of the current status of the International Group Conscience Committee (IGC), a motion was made to request the current members of that committee to meet together for the purposes of determining what went wrong with the IGC process and developing suggestions for either improving the process, or terminating it altogether; to ask the committee to report back to the Chicago conference and to the fellowship as a whole on those suggestions; and to request that the Central Office fund meetings of the IGC for that purpose. This motion passed (I don't have a record of the exact vote).

"5. Finally, a motion was made to request the Central Office to report to the January, 1992. Conference on possible ways of improving communications between the CO and the fellowship as a whole. This motion also carried (again, no record of the exact vote)."

On the Sobriety Survey and Why It Was Not an IGC

By letter of 12 December 1990, I invited all SA groups to express themselves regarding the interpretation of SA's sobriety definition. Although the letter was from me, it was written with and received the unanimous consent of the Central Office Advisory Committee on 8 December 1990. The actual wording of the statement was suggested by members of that Committee. (A brief sketch of the origin and service of the Advisory Committee is included in this mailing.)

As new members and groups have come on the scene since 1981, there has been less direct encounter with the spirit of SA's origins and principles. One result is that some people and groups have different views and conduct about SA's fundamental principle of sexual sobriety, yet continue to call themselves SA. This has raised serious issues regarding trademark and copyright infringement involving unauthorized changes to SA's Traditions, Steps, literature, and statement of sobriety. (See Report on the NY Legal Issue.) Thus it became necessary to determine whether

SA as a whole—the majority of groups—did still in fact hold to SA's interpretation of sobriety.

The sobriety survey was thus intended to provide a "sense of the Fellowship" on how SA's sobriety was being interpreted by its groups. It was not intended to discriminate. It was not intended to suggest a change in SA's literature. It was not a vote to see what SA wanted for a sobriety definition; that was settled in 1981. It was to get the sense of the percentage of groups adhering or not adhering to the commonly-held view of SA sobriety.

Let me reemphasize: SA, as always, is *inclusive*, welcoming those from any sexual experience "who want to stop lusting and become sexually sober."

We decided the 12 December survey should go to groups instead of individuals because SA decisions in the past have been made on a group basis. It was also felt that members might want to know where groups stand on the sobriety issue.

A number of groups felt that a more "formal" vote should have been taken, such as by the IGC. But the status of the IGC is still unresolved, with only two active (?) members remaining; the fellowship should be dealing with that shortly if it investigates what went wrong. It would have been totally against its Procedure to ask that divided and incomplete IGC to conduct any vote in its present condition at this time. The IGC was so divided on the sobriety issue that it could not function. How could it conduct an objective IGC on the sobriety definition?

Since the IGC was not functioning and this matter had to be brought to the fellowship now due to the current legal issue (see the above-mentioned Report), the only option was to have the Central Office initiate the survey. Not to have acted on the NY issue would have been giving tacit approval to copyright and trademark violations, setting a dangerous precedent, and betraying the fellowship's trust. The Central Office action in taking the survey followed the precedent of how SA group consciences were taken prior to the IGC, since 1981.

The survey indicates that SA is *vitaly concerned about the issue of how sexual sobriety is defined and interpreted*. Over 170 groups responded to the survey (whereas as recently as 1989, only 31 groups voted to institute the IGC Procedure). This rivals any survey, expression of opinion, vote, or determination ever taken in the fellowship of SA.

Roy K.

On the IGC Committee

A bit of background: I asked for the IGC to be implemented in Bozeman in 1987; it was to be the beginning of a new attempt at self-responsibility in SA (we had tried it before in 1983). As of July 3, 1990, the IGC Committee has been stalled due to internal division within the Committee on the sobriety issue and other matters (refer to memo of the chair 3 July 1990 and my 27 August 1990 letter to the fellowship). The five who continued meeting on their own are now down to two, the other three having left the IGC, SA, or both. After the split stalled the IGC, I felt that the CO should not continue to fund conference calls while that incomplete and dysfunctional condition persisted. (The IGC Procedure is based on a full committee of nine representatives.) What made it such an important decision was that the IGC split was based on irreconcilable differences concerning SA's most fundamental tenet—sobriety. SA monies are a sacred trust.

I support the motion from the recent Oklahoma City convention, that the IGC

“try to determine what went wrong in the IGC procedure as it has so far been implemented, and to offer suggestions for improving the process in the future, or else to offer the recommendation that the process be discontinued.”

Unless there are fellowship objections, the CO intends to fund the investigation per the above motion. I do suggest that the investigation might be better served if an independent group of SA members prepares the final evaluation, that all IGC members past and present be involved, and that SA members be allowed to submit any questions they want answered in the investigation. (I myself have a list of questions.)

In the light of the recent sobriety survey, I believe it would be inappropriate for the IGC to go back into business as usual in its existing condition, divided as it is on SA sobriety. Since SA is divided (75% for and 19% against) on its interpretation of sobriety, we have some real soul-searching to do, both as a fellowship and as individual groups and members. Some groups are choosing to leave SA and affiliate according to their own principle of sobriety. I feel this is the conscionable thing to do and that we should have an understanding and cooperative attitude about this. Let no one be misdependent on SA. Thank God, no one is

being left out in the cold, and we can at the same time be true to our own individual principles.

I challenge us to become of one mind and heart on our most fundamental principle first—sobriety—before we set the existing divided situation into organizational concrete. Perhaps this hiatus in the IGC has served a purpose, seeing as we do now the full extent and impact of the division within SA on sobriety. (See “Group and Member Comments On the Sobriety Survey of 12 December.”) After we come to be of one mind and heart on sobriety—whatever that takes—then let’s start taking a long hard look at the future needs of SA self-responsibility, including means of doing what the IGC was intended to do, but also covering more of what tomorrow’s needs will require. We can learn from our current experience. More about this in the future. For now, *First Things First* is the way I see it from here.

Roy K.

Report on the NY Legal Issue

One motion made in Oklahoma City suggested more communication between the Central Office (CO) and the fellowship. The sobriety issue is currently the top news in SA. Hundreds of SA members have received letters from New York City on the sobriety issue and the role of the Central Office in relation to NY Tri-State Intergroup. This has caused considerable confusion and misunderstanding. The following is an outline of what has been transpiring with the copyright, trademarks, and Tradition Three sobriety issues in New York City.

Every letter and action summarized below (except Roy's 12 September letter) was taken after full consultation with and concurrence of the CO Advisory Committee. (An outline summary of the history and service of the Advisory Committee is included in this mailing.)

8 July 1990: CO letter to Tri-State advising that their recent publication *Suggested Meeting Format* changed SA Steps, Traditions, and literature without fellowship approval. "In the spirit of unity and loving fellowship, we ask that Tri-State Intergroup Association New York, New Jersey and Connecticut and 'New York SA' change their principles, literature, and practices to be in harmony with SA's."

22 August 1990: Tri-State returns the 8 July CO letter, stating that it was inappropriate for Roy K. or the Advisory Committee to make such a request.

12 September 1990: Roy K. personal letter to officers of Tri-State, a second attempt. A personal suggestion that Tri-State change their literature and seek proper reprint permission. There was no response to this letter.

22 October 1990: CO to Tri-State. Advised that AA's attorney for copyright and trademark infringements had been consulted, that Tri-State was in violation of several federal laws, and that the *Suggested Meeting Format* did not represent SA, asking Tri-State again (a third time) to withdraw its publication and cease illegal use of SA marks. Declared the Tri-State entity that was responsible for the publication to be non-SA, requesting compliance with requests determined by legal counsel. (AA's legal counsel for these matters has since become SA's.)

The legal summary included the following: Tri-State's representation that its views and activities are those of SA is false, misleading and deceptive to the public. Tri-State's acts constitute trademark and service mark infringement and unfair competition under the Lanham Act, 15 U.S.C. Sections 1114(1) and 1125(a). Tri-State's other express and implied representations that they are Sexaholics Anonymous constitute unfair competition under Section 43(a) of the Lanham Act. Tri-State's mutilation of SA's principles and other written works also violates the Lanham Act. Tri-State's use of copyrighted materials without permission constitutes copyright infringement under Title 17 of the U.S. Code. These activities also violate various state laws.

11 November 1990: David B. to hundreds of names taken from SA convention lists. The letter took the Central Office, the Advisory Committee, and Roy K. severely to task and outlined the history of how they in New York City voted to change the sobriety definition there. David's letter put the following question to the fellowship: "Is our program in New York something other than SA? We don't know. We rely on the group conscience of SA to help us come to terms with who we are and what we should do next."

3 December 1990: Tri-State submits revised and reprinted Suggested Meeting Format, asking permission to reprint. (The publication was reprinted without permission.)

12 December 1990: Following advice of legal counsel and that of the Advisory Committee, Roy K. writes to all SA groups, inviting them to respond to the sobriety survey so the sense of the fellowship on interpretation of the sobriety statement can be determined. (The IGC was incomplete and inoperative at the time.)

12 December 1990: Roy writes to David B. in NYC asking if he is willing to make copies of all responses to his November 11 letter to the fellowship available to the SA fellowship. David's 21 December response repudiates this request.

18 January 1991: CO to Tri-State, requesting copies of other Tri-State literature "that have been or will be made available to members or inquirers." There was no response to this letter.

22 February 1991: Results of the 12 December sobriety survey are in. Of the 170 groups responding to the survey, 128 (75.3%) affirm the statement, 32 (18.8%) do not affirm, and 10 (5.9%) chose not to respond.

25 February 1991: CO to Tri-State. Based on legal counsel's advice, permission to use SA marks or reprint literature is denied; this is because of Tri-State's continuing militant stand against SA principles. Advisory Committee and Roy K., following legal counsel, suggest that they not call themselves SA. The letter welcomes "all in the NY Tri-State area and elsewhere who are in accord with SA's newly revalidated Tradition Three to remain in SA. We will do all we can to cooperate in any transitional phase that may follow both in Tri-State and in the rest of the fellowship worldwide."

[Copies of full correspondence available on request.—Ed.]

SA Trademarks

As has been previously announced, the SA logo (gender symbols on a circle) appearing on our literature is a trademark, registered with the U.S. Trademark and Patent Office. In future reprintings of SA literature and letterheads, the TM symbol will be changed to the R symbol, indicating the mark is now duly registered. Due to current legal issues and to safeguard SA's principles and interests, the marks SA, Sexaholics Anonymous, and Essay have also been registered.

To prevent our marks from being put to risk, we must ask that our SA logo, as well as these marks, not be used on printed matter without prior written permission from the Central Office. This includes, for example, use of ESSAY, E.S.S.A.Y., *Essay*, or Essay on such things as local meeting directories, convention flyers, stationery, printed or copied material, etc. Such use without permission implies, for example, that the publication carrying that title authoritatively represents the Essay or Sexaholics Anonymous as a whole.

The sole exception to the foregoing is that it is permissible to use the letters SA or the words Sexaholics Anonymous, but not the logo or Essay, on meeting directories, bulletins, or intergroup newsletters as part of the title. Any excerpts of SA literature in any printed matter would require prior written permission, however.

In legal terms, "use of our marks without permission constitutes trademark infringement, unfair competition, and dilution under federal and state law." Our legal counsel (the same firm used by AA) says she is glad to see SA take hold of its marks and copyrights early on to hopefully avoid

problems such as AA and NA have been having in the last few years with their marks and copyrights. Far from seemingly placing an unnecessary burden on groups, we are told, a policy of care and caution now will save untold confusion and legal fees in years to come.

So far, most groups and intergroups have found ways of working within these guidelines, and for that we are truly grateful. If there are any questions, don't hesitate to call or write the Central Office. When in doubt, please contact the CO.

Notes on the Origin of the Central Office Advisory Committee

[Many have asked about the Central Office Advisory Committee, what it is and how it came about. The following is taken from Roy's taped conversation with another member 9-15-90.]

I went to the Bozeman SA Convention of July 1987, having just completed a six-month period seeking discernment concerning what God's will was for me in my future relation to the Central Office (CO) and to SA. There I announced the results of that process: That I no longer wanted to manage the CO but that I would remain as servant in SA if the fellowship so desired. Based on that decision, on my growing need for help, and the desire to implement fellowship self-responsibility, I told the fellowship of my decision and asked that there be a CO Oversight committee and a committee to prepare a proposal for an International Group Conscience (IGC) Committee, dealing with matters affecting SA as a whole.

My suggestion was discussed in that Bozeman business meeting, and the motion passed unanimously that I appoint the first slate of members to these two committees. I left Bozeman with a clear responsibility, so I started trying to get members into these two committees. Filling positions for the IGC proposal writing went well; I think everyone I asked agreed to serve. It turned out that the IGC slate thus appointed represented all areas; and there were two women, and the various types of acting out were also represented.

For the CO Advisory Committee, the opposite happened. There was no success in finding takers. In lieu of this, I increased my delegating of various aspects of CO work to different persons and groups. The time

frame here is fuzzy, because I had previously tried out various groups/persons for different tasks the CO needed help on: computerized mail list, editing various issues of Essay, doing the CO finances, helping in management consulting and hands-on office work, etc. Some members were deliberately tested without their knowing it, and some were asked to help from the necessity of the moment. For whatever reasons, and there were many, there did not arise persons who would responsibly oversee the various CO functions.

Thus, after Bozeman, the CO did not have the Oversight Committee I requested, but the IGC proposal Committee was hard at work in a spirit of unity, writing their proposal. I stayed out of their effort. Their proposal was eventually completed and presented to the fellowship for feedback and approval.

Here's how the CO "Advisory Committee" originated. Various matters came to the attention of the CO after Bozeman that I wanted feedback and advice on; since I was still in the position of supervising the CO. I believe one of the first was the Australian TV offer. But the Oversight Committee had not materialized. I'm the kind of guy who thinks in terms of "the shortest distance between two points being a straight line." It dawned on me that the most immediate body of representative members from whom I could get help with the Australian decision was right in front of my nose, working on the IGC proposal. I picked up the phone and starting calling them, the result being that we had a conference call on the Australian TV matter.

To backtrack a little: From the beginning of SA, the way I would operate in getting fellowship feedback and help, was to write letters to all groups or call the groups or various leaders, etc. I believe the first time I went to the whole fellowship, was in 1981, when I invited every member of SA to our first Conference in Simi Valley the weekend of July 25th. That was the conference where we hammered out our statements on sobriety, wording of the Steps and Traditions, etc. Another early example was in the matter of obtaining non-profit status for SA with the IRS. In November of 1981 I again went to the whole fellowship in the matter of our proposed dialogue with another organization and the related Statement of Principle, now called The Sobriety Definition (in the back of the SA book). (The current sobriety survey is at least the third time the fellowship as a whole has expressed itself on our definition of sobriety.) The vote of each group was tallied, and the national group conscience derived. More

details of the history of my relation to the fellowship are described in my Notes on the Origin and Early Growth of SA (available from the CO).

On that Australian TV conference call we had a marvelous demonstration, I thought, of a group conscience in deciding not to accept the offer. (At first we were all for it, but by the end of the call, we were all convinced SA had to carry its own message, and today, SA is firmly established in Australia!) This worked so well, that I began to use the IGC proposal-writing committee for other CO matters as they came up. These persons were at hand, and the process was working. Eventually I began to be less formal with my use of the IGC committee. For example, when there would be a matter on short notice that needed an immediate response, instead of giving the committee weeks of prior notice, I would begin to call whoever was available and get my guidance.

Some members of the IGC committee began to feel that they should be given more formal notice and that all should always be on the call. I felt we were making good decisions and that the process was working but agreed. I kept using the IGC proposal writing committee for help with CO issues even after they were finished with their IGC proposal. Somewhere along the line—I don't remember who used the designation first—the name "Advisory Committee" got stuck on those members I was using for feedback and help in decision-making. Thus, by default, so to speak, this group—the original IGC—was also doing the job of the CO Oversight Committee which had never materialized.

Many persons do not realize that it was I who started the process of seeking fellowship involvement in responsibility, and very aggressively since 1983. It is difficult for anyone who has not worked there to imagine the large and diverse volume of day-to-day work in the Central Office. (And it was volunteer work on my part; I was employed elsewhere at the time. Without Nan coming in seven years ago, I would have gone under.)

After Nan came in, I increasingly backed away from managing the CO and even began testing the Advisory Committee's autonomous operation. Somewhere along the line, this Advisory Committee wanted a little more formal structure, so in one of the conventions, a chairperson was elected, they asked for prior notice and agendas, and seemed to gravitate more toward a formal approach. There were times where I either did not or could not give prior notice so the Advisory Committee chair could set up the call, etc., and there were times when there was no clear prior agenda. However, the system was working, serving the needs as they arose.

Once the IGC Procedure went to the fellowship for vote, the IGC Committee began operating on its own as the IGC. It felt the fellowship had validated the IGC proposal it had written. At the same time, I was still using the original IGC proposal-writing group as the CO Advisory Committee. Over time, various of these members resigned and were replaced by the Advisory Committee itself electing the replacements. There were different chairpersons, and the last chair to be elected by the Advisory Committee was Dave G., who currently presides.

Unlike other organizations, ours in SA has been a *process* that is still going on. We aren't "there" yet; we seem to be progressing slowly, from the inside out, instead of lowering onto SA some full-blown structure before we know fully who we are and where we're going. Looking back on it all now, I think this was wise. Even our recent IGC experience is teaching us useful lessons, especially now that we see SA is divided on sobriety.

Under Dave G.'s chairing, the Advisory Committee has come back to a median position between the early spontaneity and the later formalism. This is what we have today. Dave moderates our conference calls. Instead of meeting periodically, as in the prior formal arrangement, we now meet on an as-need basis. Since roughly July of 1990, members of the IGC Committee who chose to hold off IGC deliberations until the divisive issues within the IGC Committee could be resolved have been invited to sit in on Advisory Committee conference calls in a non-voting capacity. Their presence has proven valuable.

Some members look at SA's structure and wonder why we aren't as fully developed as AA, for example. We forget that it was some twenty years before AA became representatively self-responsible. I see the Advisory Committee today as an interim and transitional mechanism, looking forward to the time soon when SA organizational structures serving today's and tomorrow's needs will grow into place. The existing situation is not what SA's future organization will be, but it's all we have at the moment that is working. Personally, I think SA today needs something different than what we needed in 1987 when I asked for fellowship responsibility to be implemented with the CO and IGC committees. More about this in the future. For now, let's look at what went wrong with the IGC and settle the priority question facing us today—becoming of one mind, heart, and action on just what is SA sobriety. This is the first priority for each of our groups today.

14Feb91

Roy's Germany Tapes

In 1985 and 1988 Roy K. was asked to give seminars at the Walther Lechler Psychosomatic Klinik in Bad Herrenalb, Germany. He told his story and discussed the program of recovery to mixed audiences of persons in various Twelve Step programs, including SA. From time to time, SA members have asked if these tapes would ever be made available, as they are in Europe. After testing the tapes out on the Literature Committee and other members, it was decided to make them available to any who might want them. The original talks, including the German translation, are now available from the Central Office. Each set of six cassettes (six for 1985 and six for 1988) is nine (\$9) dollars. An edited printed transcript of the English only should also be available later this year. Many thanks to Lawrence M. of Alexandria, VA for all the work that went into transcribing the tapes and editing the transcripts.

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