
Essay

September 1991

Post Office Box 300
Simi Valley, California 93062

NOTES FROM CENTRAL OFFICE

Roy K. Leaves the Central Office

At the Chicago Conference, Roy K. announced that he was severing his administrative connection with the SA Central Office. His reasons for doing so are listed in "Roy Steps Away From the Central Office," one of three papers he submitted to the Fellowship at the Conference, copies of which appear in *Box 300* with this issue of *Essay*. In "Invitation to Service" and "Reasons Why I Believe Those in National Service Should Be of One Mind and Heart on SA Sobriety," Roy has given his concept of a blueprint for fellowship self-responsibility. "With such a concept implemented," he says, "almost any organizational structure will do the job. Without such a concept," he adds, "the finest organizational structure we can devise will fall short." He urges all members to consider the proposal, saying "It's the best I have to offer SA."

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CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Events listed here are presented solely as a service to readers, not as an endorsement by ESSAY or the Central Office.

October 4, 5 and 6, 1991 — Third Annual Southern California SA & S-Anon Unity Conference. "Sobriety: Wanting It, Getting It, Keeping It!" Inn at the Park Hotel, Anaheim, CA. Conference cost: \$45.00. Mail checks to Barry W. - SA Conference, 1398 N. Driftwood Ave., Colton, CA 92324.

October 4, 5 and 6, 1991 — Tulsa, Oklahoma Retreat. Host: Oklahoma City. Spiritual Life Center in Wichita, KS.

October 4, 5 and 6, 1991 — Victoria, BC Retreat.

October 19, 1991 — SA-S-Anon Baltimore/Washington Marathon. "Making the Real Connection." One day, Saturday, in Baltimore, MD. Contact: Jay M. (301) 588-0494.

October 19, 1991 — SA-S-Anon Regional Conference. Nashville, TN. One day, Saturday. Contact: Russ C. (615) 292-8090.

January 10, 11 and 12, 1992 — San Diego International Convention.

May 2, 3 and 4, 1992 — Tulsa, Oklahoma Retreat. Spiritual Life Center in Wichita, KS.

July 1992 — Vancouver International Convention.

October 1, 2 and 3, 1992 — Wichita, Kansas Retreat. Spiritual Life Center in Wichita, KS.

NOTES FROM CENTRAL OFFICE (Cont.)

New SA Publication

Discovering the Principles, Our Growing Experience with the Traditions, is our latest piece of SA literature, and will be available from the Central Office for \$2.00. From the Foreword: "These articles reflect the growing experience of Sexaholics Anonymous in matters bearing on the principles and Traditions on which our fellowship is based." Included are:

- *Group Conscience Meetings and the Twelve Traditions*
- *What's a Group Conscience?*
- *Meeting Quality and Use of Non-SA Literature*
- *Publicity and the Twelfth Step*
- *Some Additional Questions and Thoughts on SA and the Media*
- *What Can We Say to Newcomers in Relationships?*

Other Literature News

Currently, the Central Office has over 7,000 copies of *Recovery Continues* on hand. This volume of "loose literature in process" continues the story of recovery first described in our book *Sexaholics Anonymous*. It is available at \$8.00 a copy.

The C.O. also has copies of *Sexaholics Anonymous*, the *SA Meeting Guide* and *Member Stories—1989*. We currently have a backlog of literature and we are encouraging groups to purchase books. To make this process easier, we are including an order form on page 23 of *Box 300* for your convenience.

Chicago Conference 1991 Tapes Now Available

Audio tapes from the Chicago Conference are now available from Shooting Star Productions, 269 Cayuga Ave., Elmhurst, IL 60126. There are a total of six tapes at a cost of \$6.50 per tape, which includes shipping and handling.

Central Office Appeals For Funds

Due to increased publication costs and the need for new office equipment, the C.O. is asking for a one-time, modest contribution to help meet the fellowship's financial needs.

Much of the increased publications cost has been incurred through the introduction of the *Box 300* supplement to *Essay*. While there are no plans to discontinue the supplement, future editions are not expected to be as lengthy as those in the past. The C.O. also hopes to continue to make the supplement and the newsletter available to the fellowship free of charge.

Additional funds are needed for office equipment and communications' costs. Money is needed for conference calls, express mailings and the one-time purchase of fax machines to make possible more effective communication between members of the newly formed SA service committees (see Business Report).

Your contribution is greatly appreciated, and we have enclosed a self-addressed envelope for your convenience.

SECOND QUARTER 1991

Literature Sales

<i>Sexaholics Anonymous</i>	953
<i>Recovery Continues</i>	256
<i>Member Stories — 1989</i>	157
Meeting Guides	33
Brochures	2,430

Donations

Individual	\$1,831.91
Group	\$,390.27
Total Donations	\$6,222.24

Correspondence and Letters Received by Central Office (January through June 1991)

	<i>Calls</i>	<i>Letters</i>
Jan	265	313
Feb	228	313
Mar	235	300
Apr	252	474
May	256	441
Jun	227	396

GROUP NEWS

Welcome to the Following New Groups

Astoria, OR
Burley, ID
Longmont, CO
Metuchen, NJ

Pasco, WA
Santa Rosa, CA
Salem, OR
Jamison, Act. Australia

Long Beach, CA: "Very seldom in *Essay* have I seen contributions from any of the original groups in the Los Angeles area. The Long Beach meeting was one of the original three meetings in the Los Angeles area — along with the West Los Angeles and Alhambra — and has been through many changes in the past 7 or 8 years.

"Within the past year there has been an upsurge in attendance, and there became a need to rent a second room at our location...about 3 months ago, an earlier meeting was started at the same location. This meeting came about because there were a lot of 'early risers' who found it difficult to attend the regular 8 pm meetings....The early meeting has a core group of 5-6 people, and has had as many as 12 in attendance. The 8 pm meeting is still going strong, and even after the introduction of the earlier meeting, the 8 pm group averages 20-25 a night.

"A lot of this group can be attributed to our newcomer's meeting, which is sandwiched between the two groups at 7:30 pm. We average 3-5 newcomers a week, and it seems that most are staying. Also, there has been a marked improvement in the quality and quantity of recovery of the group: 1 regular member celebrated his 3rd year birthday a while ago, and we had 3 one-year cakes during the past few months. Also, many regular members are getting and maintaining increasing lengths of sobriety, with more than half a dozen exceeding 6 and 9 months.

"Our group, in response to a need for more writing and sponsorship, has initiated a written first step inventory, matched members up on a one on one basis, and provided time and privacy for sharing the step. If this project works, and it seems to be, we will continue, with group conscience, of course, with other writing projects. We also sell a great deal of SA-approved literature, especially the White Book, and the 12 + 12. In order to learn more about working the steps, the last Monday of the month we read from the 12 + 12.

"It has been exciting for me to see all these developments, since I first became sober and started the SA recovery program at Long Beach over six years ago. It has been a real pleasure to share my experience, strength and hope with the newcomers as they come into the program for the first time. Even though my own recovery has been filled with ups and downs, I can honestly look the newcomers in the eye and tell them 'keep coming back, it works!' " M.S.

Binghampton, NY: "We total 7 people in our group, with an average attendance of 4, and we adhere strongly to the definition of sexual sobriety as: no sex with oneself or others outside of marriage in the traditional sense. We are struggling, but feel that it's worth it." A.

Glen Ellyn, IL: "We continue at 20-25 average attendance. Several have celebrated a year's sobriety. It works when we work it." J.R.

Meriden, CT: "Many thanks for this second shipment. Wish we had as many active members as we have sold books..." R.L.

Galveston, TX: "Our membership is down to 5 and we will lose one more at the end of the school year, but we hope to still be here for the next newcomer. Thank you for sharing the miracle!" C.D.

Northfield, MN: "It has been quite some time since our struggling SA group has been able to contribute to the C.O. Our average number of participants at each meeting is generally only about 5 or 6. At times it may reach as high as 15. But the three of us who were able and blessed to attend the SA/S-Anon International Convention in Oklahoma City gained a wealth of rich and new insights that we are trying to implement in all our meetings now." V.N.

Kalispell, MT: "...We all agree that before SA, we devoted about 98 percent of our waking hours to the destructive side of lust and only two toward necessary survival needs such as eating, drinking, exercise, etc. We also agree that with sobriety, that percentage has been turned around; that sex is not a need, but only a desire. Sobriety through sharing our experiences, strengths, and hopes really works!" H.B.

Portland, OR: "...Please find enclosed a contribution from the Saturday SA group in Portland. This is the proceeds from our second collection that is taken at every meeting. I hope everything is going well at the Central Office. We are grateful for the caring service you give to the Fellowship." H.B.

Portland, OR (Friday night group): "The Friday night Portland group is alive and well with about 10 members in attendance each week. We are a book study meeting; we manage to get through the White Book once or twice a year, depending on how much we read per meeting. Another feature of Friday night is the time we spend together at a local restaurant after the meeting; sometimes some of the best sharing happens there!" R.P.

Portland, OR (Sunday night east): "Greetings from the Sunday Night East group in Portland, OR. Here's a couple of checks to get us current in our C.S.O. contribution. We're smaller now, having split into two groups at the beginning of the year. But, God is good and we average 12-14 people with one or two newcomers each month." F.M.

Lawrenceburg, TN: "...There are currently six loyal members attending and from time to time an interested one or two will come in and check us out. We strictly adhere to the Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions and we carry our message to those who still suffer. The group...thanks you for our newsletters and essays. They are very helpful to our recovery process." K.

London, G.B.: "Our group started out with just three people two years ago and we are now a regular 8-10 members with 2 meetings a week. We have one, two and three years' sobriety with many members struggling but who keep coming back. God knows how we all need each other and we strongly adhere to the SA definition of sobriety and the traditional meaning of marriage.

"Many of us are beginning to discover a new freedom and a new understanding of each other as we each continue to hand our wills and our lives over to the care of a loving Higher Power.

"We all enjoy reading *Essay* as sometimes we can feel isolated. Reading the issues of *Essay* always helps us to feel that we are not alone and are experiencing the same teething problems as others....

"Through the grace of God, the guidance of SA and the support of our SA fellows across the world, all of us here continue to grow in commitment to our sobriety and our spiritual lives. May we here in London send our love and prayers to all our fellow SA members everywhere." C. & Z.S.

North Iowa: "...We are growing slowly, we gain and lose members regularly, but we are still here after five years. Thank you for your support." R.T.

Longmont, CO: "...We are 5 members strong, meeting regularly, and experiencing solid, sober recovery. Now we seek to spread the new hope we have found.

"Our group did not get to participate in the big sobriety definition debate, but after reading about and discussing the struggles, we are very pleased that the definition stands. We are proud to call ourselves SA!" G.W.

Cleveland, OH: "Enclosed is a contribution from the Cleveland Friday Nite 'New Beginnings' group. We are a growing fellowship and have close to 20 people on a regular basis. Several of our members are building long-term sobriety and are encouraging others to do the same. We are all moving forward in recovery with God's grace." T.D.

Redlands, CA: "Dear Roy K. On behalf of the Redlands, CA, Thursday Night Group, I would like to thank you for all the time and energy you have put into the survey of membership on the sobriety definition.

"May your Higher Power restore the energy and give you blessings. As each of us is able at this point in our recovery, we want to be with you on this road, as you have been with us.

"We also say, 'Thank You!' to your staff." K.M.

MEMBER NEWS

Papua, New Guinea: (May 9, 1991) "Now that you have gladly welcomed me into the fellowship of SA, I feel very happy to walk with you in the Happy Destiny of sexual sobriety. Of course I have my own story to tell, a story of progressive defeat by lust since the early years of my childhood until that bright day when I admitted my powerlessness and turned my will and my life over to the care of God as I understand Him. How I wish I could be in an SA meeting to share my experience, strength and hope in this issue of my life. I am confident and unafraid of any sexual temptations of today, for I am one with all the other members of SA in the world who are trying to recover from this disease, one day at a time."

(May 25, 1991) "...it is an amazing spiritual experience. God giving me, a sexaholic, a new vestment of purity and love. I am in the kingdom of Freedom at last. One day at a time, I unite myself with SA as I keep and share this with the next suffering sexaholic. I am sending the copy of my personal story as a tribute to SA and as a sign of my honesty. I am very grateful to God, who is doing this marvelous thing in my life through the fellowship of SA." B.S.

Kensington, PEI, Can.: "During the past 2 years I've been an active member of SA and able to maintain my sobriety one day at a time. All credit goes to my Higher Power and the principles and fellowship of SA.

Before SA, I could spend hours trying to make a connection. The objects and rituals of my lust addiction varied over the years. My behaviour depended on what I was doing or where and with whom I was living. At certain times I was poor and other times I had lots of money to spend on my addictions. I always kept my lustful desires and sex activity to myself and other interested parties. I surely did not want these sex games known to a family member or people who were not inclined to my behaviour. Managing this secret enforced my denial that anything was wrong. I could not accept the fact that I lusted after my own sex — men. In marriage, I would often gratify my addiction through fantasizing, masturbation or simply day dreaming. I would wait impatiently for the times when I was alone or when I travelled. Many times I felt petrified that this deceit would be exposed. Two years ago, I hit bottom. I was desperate, spiritually bankrupt and willing to be honest. My whole being was affected. I had no sexual attraction for women, including my wife, because lust perverted my mind. Some people

may believe I am bisexual because I am married, have children and sought homosexual sex. However, I believe I am insane. I wanted to appear straight so I went to great lengths to create this image of a loving husband, responsible father and community-minded person. My attraction for men and for anonymous sex is the result of insane beliefs. I learned this when I did the 2nd Step. I am sure if I allowed lust to continue I would be without my family today. I probably would have surrendered this straight-guy facade and continued my denial with some gay-is-okay rhetoric. Today I'm a person trying to become sane. With the help of my Higher Power, SA and the willingness to be honest, I began to change. Today I'm sober and seeking recovery. I'm learning to love and respect others, including myself. I find my wife attractive and I can enjoy her company without being distracted. Sometimes, like yesterday, I slip a bit but then I remember what it was like, what happened and what it's like now." P.R.

Bountiful, UT: "... I went into treatment for alcoholism, but soon found out I also had a sexual addiction. What a relief to find out I was a sexaholic, that I was not crazy, that I was not a pervert, gay, morally corrupt, bisexual or any of the other names that I called myself. Now I know I do not have to be like that...." G.K.

"I just want to thank the fellowship of SA for a recent birthday. No, it was not another year of sexual sobriety (though I'm grateful for the five years that I have), but an ordinary 'navel' birthday whereby I turned 30 years old. And why am I grateful to the fellowship of SA for this particular birthday? Because I honestly don't believe I would be alive had I not found these marvelous programs.

"By the time I was twenty-five, I was a periodic binge drinker and drug user (with one of the episodes leading to the unfortunate amputation of my right leg), I had eaten myself to an excess of 220 pounds (normal 150), and my sexaholism had escalated to the point of obscene phone calls, compulsive sex with self and prostitutes, and spending thousands of dollars on hardcore pornography. The only possible solution for me at this particular point in my life was suicide.

"Well, I didn't take my own life; I joined SA. And since surrendering to the principles of our wonderful program, I have not had to drink for over

four years. I have maintained a seventy pound weight loss for some time now, and I have not had to give in to my violent, self-destructive lust since February 18, 1987. For this I am grateful.

"I thank you, I love you, and my only hope now is that others will join me on this marvelous journey. A journey that promises us not only sobriety, but that wonderful, unique experience called life!" **Anonymous**

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