

Out of the Fog

An update on events, outreach and other news of the Bay Area Fellowship, published by Intergroup, made possible by your 7th Tradition contributions.

A Quarterly Newsletter

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Out of the Fog and Into the Frogs

The annual SAA Camping Trip will be at beautiful Wright's Lake in the High Sierra. Fellowship, meetings, campfires, hiking, swimming, stargazing and more. Look for flyers at Bay Area meetings to register. **August 26 - 28**

Did You Know?

The North Bay Fellowship of SAA does a group hike the second Saturday of every month. If you're interested to participate or learn more, send an email to newsletter@bayareasaa.org and we'll get you in touch with the organizers. Upcoming hikes: **August 13, Sept. 10**



Help us save money and the environment. Download this newsletter online at: bayareasaa.org/intergroup

Save the Trees!

Sign up to receive this newsletter via email. The digital version will be sent as a pdf file attached to a quarterly email. If you want to be added to the distribution list, send your request and email address to: newsletter@bayareasaa.org

Inspirational Words

"The most fundamental aggression to ourselves, the most fundamental harm we can do to ourselves, is to remain ignorant by not having the courage and the respect to look at ourselves honestly and gently."

-- Pema Chodron

SAA Intl Convention 2011

Why I like SAA Conferences

by Joanne B.

I wanted to write about going to the Houston conference of SAA and maybe encourage some of you to try it for yourselves next year in beautiful Vancouver.

Each time I go the experience is completely different and I return a changed person. Now, I like that! I seek out experiences that will re-organize me and give me the opportunity to look at life and recovery in a new way so that my program doesn't get stale. Last year I got changed at an amazing workshop called Movement Meditation. What would it be this year?

This year I was a Delegate and so before the

workshops, meetings, lunches, dinners, talent show, brunch, and all the good stuff, there's a lot of plain, good old-fashioned hard work. Even more for Board and LitComm members. I was so busy – convenient huh? - that I didn't see it coming, but it happened on Friday night ...

I realized I had cut it sort of fine to get to the opening night meeting and speaker, and in order to eat first, I would end up showing up late. I knew that if I did that I was going to be sitting at the back alone, and I suddenly saw that I was going to feel horribly lonely. Where had **that** come from? **A feeling?** I've been around enough to know that all those months of weekends working and missing my home group meetings, and now being surrounded by love were resulting in bringing up **actual emotions**, even though with all this convenient busy – ness I hadn't had the time to even notice. And here I was – e-moting...what to do?

So as I ran off to a restaurant I saw some friends walking in to the talk and asked them to save me a seat and honestly told them I didn't want to sit alone because I was feeling shaky. One friend, without hesitation, told our friends to go on ahead. He had just eaten but would sit with me while I ate. I instantly started to feel myself returning to my body, slipping out of my head.

Tears started to fall as I ordered my food and the sweet guy at the restaurant pretended not to see. My friend put his arm around me while I talked like I hadn't been able to talk for months. I cried and cried. We both had a lot going on and both needed that time. As it turned out, my friend needed to talk more than I did. You know there are no coincidences. Two addicts in recovery. True spirituality in an Indian restaurant in a shopping mall in Houston.

After that every moment of the weekend was exquisitely delicious. Every breath I took was alive with joy. I got what I came for.

Canada, anyone?



Vancouver Harbour

Outreach

Reaching out in our communities to help the addict who still suffers

Follow-Up Report: Bay Area SAA Newspaper Ad Campaign

As promised in our last issue, we wanted to let you know the results of our newspaper ad campaign. The ads ran in *SF Weekly* over a six-week period in March and April of this year. The free newspaper has a readership of 80,000 and we published our simple ads in the 'Adult Services' section where we felt we were most likely to reach other sex addicts. The total cost to run the ads was approximately \$800. Unfortunately,

they generated little interest - just 2 to 13 responses per week, or 0.0025% to 0.016% of the overall readership. As a result, the Outreach Committee recommended to discontinue the program. Intergroup agreed that the results were not a good return on our investment and the campaign has been discontinued.

Reaching Out to Marriage/Family Therapists

In the last fiscal year, Intergroup spent about \$750 to send postcards to 1100 MFTs (Marriage/

Family Therapists) all around the Bay Area. The cost covered the purchase of mailing lists as well as postage and labels. ISO provided us with a free postcard with a succinct message that answered the question: "What is Sex Addicts Anonymous?" We reached 320 therapists in San Francisco, 360 in Marin and 420 in Alameda and Contra Costa Counties - all of whom now have the information to offer SAA as a tool to clients who may be sex addicts and who

can benefit. Six to eight members of Intergroup had an enjoyable hour at Café Trieste across from the Alano Club. We add postage, mailing labels, and our web address to the ISO postcards, while having lunch, drinking tea or coffee, and enjoying fellowship while doing service.

To learn more about service opportunities with the Outreach Committee, send an email to: newsletter@bayareasaa.org



Inreach

Activities and ideas that enrich and strengthen our recovery

Outer Circle Committee

At a recent Intergroup meeting, not one but two members stepped forward to chair this exciting new Committee. Their vision is to create opportunities where members of the fellowship can participate in outer circle activities together. Ideas that sprung immediately to mind included hiking, bowling, picnics, going to a baseball game, hosting board game nights and so on. The benefits of these activities, in

addition to empowering our sobriety, include getting to know more people in the fellowship and helping those of us who may feel isolated. Be on the lookout for an upcoming announcement about our first formal meeting. All are welcome to participate! If you have ideas to share for outer circle activities, or want to simply be a part of this group, send an email with your comments to: newsletter@bayareasaa.org

22nd Annual Puget Sound Retreat August 25 - 28

Organized by the SAA and COSA Fellowships of the Puget Sound, members of both groups are welcome to attend. The retreat will be at the Sound View Camp & Retreat Center in Longbranch on the Key Peninsula. Costs range between \$50 (for 1 day) and \$130 (for the weekend, if you register early). For more information, go to: soundretreat.org

The Step Corner

Every quarter we'll publish experiences, hope, and hints about completing a step. If you have suggestions, please drop a note to: newsletter@bayareasaa.org.

Step One: Admitted we were powerless over sexual addiction, that our lives had become unmanageable.

Working with our sponsor, we begin our journey into recovery by agreeing to write our First Step. We start with the rose colored pamphlet, "First Step to Recovery."

There is no right or wrong way to prepare a First Step. Some begin by answering the first 12 questions in the First Step pamphlet. They will then incorporate these 12 answers into the autobiographical question 13.

Hints:

Writing Meetings. Utilize 'writing meetings' to give yourself some focused time to work on Step 1. Writing Step One can be an intense experience. Many times we are recalling triggering behavior that may be exhilarating, or shameful. Being at a meeting gives one a safe place to share those feelings.

Writing Buddy. Look for a writing buddy in the fellowship who is also working on Step 1. Having a buddy can help motivate you, as well as give you a sounding board if you get triggered while writing.

A Memo Pad. When I open myself up to a step, I never know when I'll recall something that I want to include in my writing. By carrying around a small



memo pad, I can jot down a thought starter about a memory or person that I can then expand upon later when I am sitting down to do my step writing.

Easy Does It, But Do It. If I am writing an intense part of my story, I give myself the option to stop writing after 5-10 minutes. Small amounts of daily writing, add up to a completed First Step.

Bookends. If we place 'bookend' calls before and after Step One writing, we can release any triggering memories to our recovery brothers or sisters.

Pray. It can be helpful to recite the serenity prayer before doing step work. We can ask for help from the universe to be present for our writing.

Share. Be sure to share at meetings that you are working on your First Step, especially if some part of the First Step questions or your story is triggering.

Sponsor. Rely on your sponsor and/or program friends for their experience, strength and hope around writing a First Step.

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