

SCA DC NEWSLETTER

Volume 1, Issue 5

By SCA Metro DC Intergroup

September/October 2006

My Story

By Gordon H.

I learned early in recovery to say "yes" to service work even when you might want to say "no." So, here I am writing my story for the newsletter. I attended my first meeting in Sedona AZ in February of 1996. I went to both an AA meeting and S meeting that week and knew I belonged in both. Since that week, my life has been changed one day at a time.

I was a "binge" addict. I would binge and purge. I have lost the same 30 pounds at least ten times, quit drinking and sworn off masturbation, porno, bathhouses, bookstores, anonymous sex and affairs only to pick right back up where I left off several months later. So why did I do this...because, I am an addict and when given the chance, I will.

In recovery, I learned physical sobriety is not enough for me. It leaves me angry, depressed, frustrated, isolated, and resentful just waiting for a chance to kill the pain once again with the compulsive use of food, sex, work or alcohol. Recovery for me has to be about maintaining my emotional sobriety as well.

As long as I can remember, I have felt unimportant and always on the outside looking in: whether with my family, in school, at work or with my friends. Over the years, I created two lives; one driven by a need to prove my right to exist through my professional achievement, marriage, children, work, church and military service and, the other, driven by a need for sexual intrigue, satisfaction and acceptance to dull the pain and shame I felt about myself.

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NEWS

The 12th Step Committee: Reaching out to the Addict Who Still Suffers

During the past few months, the DC-SCA Intergroup has stepped up its efforts to reach out to people in the Washington area who are seeking help dealing with their compulsive sexual behavior. This goal – a key element of Step 12 – motivates the work of the Intergroup's newly revived "12th Step Committee," which includes Susan F, Craig B, Dave M, Robert B, and Ron L, with Ryan M serving as chair. In June, the Committee established an outreach strategy, based on the Twelve Traditions of SCA, with four main elements:

- Mailing out information packets, including an area meeting list and SCA literature, to key professional communities (psychotherapists, law enforcement officials, clergy) who interact with sex addicts and may be willing to refer them to our

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What is Healthy Sexuality?

For some people, this is like asking the question, "How does it feel to live on the moon?". Some of us may have never experienced such a thing. Yet our program tells us that we can be both sexual and healthy at the same time. Some of us may have experienced aspects of healthy sexuality, but we have not yet identified those experiences as such. As we continue to our lives in recovery from sexual compulsion, we begin to move away from our shameful, addictive sexual patterns and we start to claim for ourselves more fulfilling, deepening, and, enjoyable sexual experiences.

Below are the differences between sexuality that is addictive and those which are healthy (from Patrick Carnes' book, *Sexual Anorexia*; page 123). As you read through the Addictive Sexuality list, circle those feelings/behaviors that have been a prominent part of your sexual past. Then, as you read through the Healthy Sexuality list, underline those traits that you most want in your life. Asterisk those that you believe you have experienced, however briefly they may have been. Ask yourself and others what specific steps you can take to experience those traits with more frequency. Then, when you are ready, review your sexual recovery plan and consider what parts of your plan that you believe you should change to experience healthy sexuality more consistently in your life. Share these proposed changes with your sponsor and/or other program members and ask for their feedback.

Healthy sexuality is a goal that is within our reach as we make progress in our program by working the steps and applying the tools that are offered to us.

Addictive Sexuality

- Feels shameful
- Is illicit, stolen, or exploitive
- Compromises values
- Draws on fear for excitement
- Reenacts childhood abuses
- Disconnects one from oneself
- Creates a world of unreality
- Is self-destructive and dangerous
- Uses conquest or power

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My Story continued

Although, I have always been aware of my spiritual nature, I became more acutely aware of how unhappy and depressed I had become in my mid-forties. Taking this as a sign for needed change, I began to explore more intentionally the source of my pain. The next years led to therapy, divorce after 20 years, a public “outing”, the loss of my job and finding my way into the rooms that week in Sedona.

When I returned from Sedona and went to my first S meeting in Dallas, a guy came up to me and said, “Welcome home.” Over the last ten years, I have come to more fully understand the power of that simple phrase. When I actively work my program I am “at home” with myself and enjoy the many gifts of recovery -- one integrated life, no secrets, no extremes, and no need to prove my right to exist to anyone, especially myself. So, today when I feel angry, unimportant, resentful and depressed, I need only to once again “come home” to this simple twelve-step program and the unconditional acceptance of my higher power to find the real relief and reassurance I need.

News continued

program

- Posting notices about the fellowships in local newspapers
- Informing other 12-step fellowships in the area about the work of SCA
- Identifying key websites, blogs and other internet-based forums where it would be appropriate to publicize SCA

To date, 60 mailings have gone out to the law enforcement community in Virginia. With the gracious help of the Wednesday night fellowship, a mass mailing to more than 200 area therapists is ready for distribution later this month. SCA postings and small ads are now appearing regularly in the City Paper, Washington Blade, and Metro Weekly, and occasionally in the Post Tuesday Health section. In addition, three SCA members shared their strength, hope and experience at a workshop during the AA Capital Area Round-Up in August.

Over the long term, the Intergroup hopes that these efforts will succeed in encouraging some of the many non-recovering sex addicts in the Washington area to seek help through our fellowship. If you're interested in becoming involved, please contact Ryan M. So far, most 12th Step service opportunities have taken only an hour or two at a time. We would welcome your participation!

One tool that can help one's recovery is to participate in **DC SCA's Blog site**. Members have found this site as a way to remain connected while at work and between meetings. If you are interested in becoming a member of the blog site, email dcscablog@verizon.net.

Please contact your editor, Rod F. at rodf@rodandtom.com, if you would like to share your story or contribute in other ways to the DC SCA newsletter.

Healthy Sexuality continued

- Serves to medicate and kill pain
- Is dishonest
- Becomes routine
- Requires a double life
- Is grim and joyless
- Demands perfection

Healthy Sexuality

- Adds to self-esteem
- Has no victims
- Deepens meaning
- Uses vulnerability for excitement
- Cultivates sense of being adult
- Furthers sense of self
- Expands reality
- Relies on safety
- Is mutual and intimate
- Takes responsibility for needs
- May bring legitimate suffering
- Originates in integrity
- Presents challenges
- Integrates most authentic parts of self
- Accepts the imperfect