

The Check IN

Volume XXIX-3

“... Spiritual Progress Not Spiritual Perfection ...”

Summer 2022

Hybrid Area Assembly August 13

The Indiana Area of SAA will hold its fifth annual assembly on Saturday, August 13, at 2 p.m. in a hybrid format. The meeting will be held in person in Room DG434 of Methodist Hospital and via Zoom (check the IISAA website for log-in details).

The Assembly will entertain discussion of any issues that apply to SAA meetings in our Indiana Area. The group will also elect our Area Delegate to the 2022 ISO of SAA International Conference.

The main business of the Assembly will be to consider the business items that will come before the International SAA Conference in October and to arrive at a group conscience on each of the motions.

For SAA to be a truly representative organization, where decisions are made from the bottom up, it is important that each meeting have its **Group Service Representative** present to vote the group's conscience on the items that will be considered during the Assembly.



Bacon Eggs & Recovery Returns

On Saturday, August 27, our second annual **Bacon, Eggs & Recovery** event will be held at North United Methodist Church in Indianapolis. All “S-group” members are welcome to attend.

This in-person event will offer a quick, hot breakfast followed by a one hour recovery presentation. **Chris C.**, who has more than three decades of SAA experience, strength and hope to share, will be offering the topic, ***From Newcomer to Old-timer: Exploring our best practices for welcoming and retaining newcomers.***

Many people come through SAA meetings without ever staying long enough to engage with the program. This session will focus on sharing things that our SAA groups are doing to bring newcomers into the fellowship using resources of our groups and the local and international fellowship. Please come ready to share your groups' experiences and bring copies of any materials you may have developed to bring newcomers on board.

Please join us as we nourish our bodies and our recovery.

Saturday Afternoon at the Movies

Intergroup is sponsoring this new Outer Circle activity for our members and their adult guests (anyone over 18).



- The movie, **Unbroken**, based on a true story, will be the inaugural film on **Saturday, September 24th**.
- Chapel Hill United Methodist Church
- 963 North Girls School Road
- 2 p.m. – 5 p.m.
- Popcorn & Cokes will be provided.
- Anyone who would like to bring a dessert to share is welcome to do so.
- A brief discussion will follow the viewing of the film.



The IISAA Fall Retreat Planning Committee has decided to hold the 2022 retreat, **Random Acts of Recovery**, as a hybrid event again this year. Those who want to attend the retreat in person at Camp Pyoca will have the opportunity to do so. Those who choose not to be on site will be able to view some of the breakout sessions via Zoom. This hybrid approach will also allow for a broader cross-section of presenters and attendees.

See, **Retreat** page 6

From the Editor

Random Acts of . . .

The IISAA program-of-work theme for the coming year is **Random Acts of Recovery**.

If you were to do an online search by keying in the words, "**Random Acts of**", before you could key the word "**Recovery**", the search engine would insert the word "**Kindness**" and return some 21,300,000 results.

If you finish the phrase "Random Acts of Recovery", you will only get one or two results that don't insert the word "**Kindness**" into your search.

At first that may seem discouraging. Are there really so few ways to show random acts of recovery? Not at all, recovery is all about uniting with others to overcome a common problem. And, while one enters a recovery program, such as SAA, for personal healing, doing so inevitably helps the other members of the group. Much of the good that is accomplished while working a recovery program may be formalized Step work, but there are numerous opportunities to perform random acts that will benefit others while enhancing both parties' recovery. That is kindness in action.

What Are Random Acts of Recovery?

By definition, a random act of recovery is simply that: a spontaneous, thoughtful gesture just for the sake of being kind. Random acts of recovery speak to every addict's innate sense of humanity.

No matter the gesture, random acts of recovery are:

- **Spontaneous:** unplanned moments that can happen

anywhere, at any time.

- **Selfless:** doing something for someone when there isn't anything in it for you.
- **Beneficial:** helpful, complimentary, or encouraging acts to make someone's recovery a little easier.



Kindness in Recovery

Giving of your time or energy is often far more rewarding than people realize. In the same way that random acts of recovery can improve another addict's day, they can make you feel great, too.

Addicts working a recovery program need support and encouragement, and random acts of recovery can be a great way to help someone along on their sobriety journey.

There are plenty of ways for you to try your hand at small acts of kindness as you take your first steps in recovery. If you'd like to

practice kindness as part of your recovery process, here are a few ideas to consider:

- ♥ Smile at someone in your meeting group who seems down.
- ♥ Share your experience, strength and hope with a newcomer.
- ♥ Say, "I'm glad you are here" to another addict at your meeting.
- ♥ Compliment someone's courage for giving a Step lead.
- ♥ Send a handwritten thank you note to your sponsor, just because.
- ♥ Call to thank a person who encouraged you to attend SAA.
- ♥ Take time to really listen to another addict.
- ♥ Offer to drive someone to or from a recovery meeting.
- ♥ If they are open to it, hug a person who has shared openly during a meeting.
- ♥ Encourage other group members to "keep coming back".

Adapted, in part, from
The RecoveryVillage.com

Peace

Mike C.

Editor's Note:

For additional ways to do *Random Acts of Recovery* see the article on page 7 of this newsletter; and, watch for related articles in upcoming issues of *The Check-IN*.

The **Check IN** is the newsletter of the Indiana Intergroup of Sex Addicts Anonymous (IISAA) and is published quarterly.

The **Check IN** is provided free of charge to SAA members and others upon request.

Material for inclusion in the newsletter, permission to copy all or part of the newsletter, or comments for improving this publication may be addressed to:

Mike C.
P.O. Box 44090
Indianapolis, IN 46244

E-mail: iisaa.mikec@gmail.com
Phone: (855) 784-8739



Random Acts

Long before I found Sex Addicts Anonymous, I was an anonymous sex addict.

My bottom-line acting out behavior was anonymous sexual encounters. And, while I planned and schemed to put myself in places where I could find willing sexual partners, I seldom learned their names or ever saw them again.

My sexual encounters were essentially random, addictive acts.

As a single person, and with my acting out history, when I got to Step Four, there were very few named individuals. Instead, there were generic classes of people: hitchhikers, male prostitutes, men who frequented adult bookstores, etc.

While completing Step Four I had acknowledged hundreds of acting out partners; and yet, when I got to Step Nine and set out to make amends, there were very few of my victims who I could identify by name.

Rather than using my situation as an excuse to avoid making amends, I set about to “make direct amends wherever possible”; but, also to make nonspecific amends by doing random acts of kindness.

In my active addiction, I often preyed upon people who were down on their luck. I did this knowing that many of them were willing to engage in a sexual act in exchange for a beer, a meal or a few bucks. So, now, I volunteer at a local food bank to help

people avoid hunger, with no strings attached.

I took advantage of people who were much younger than myself (but of legal age) who were struggling to make ends meet. So, now, I donate to homeless shelters that focus on runaways and young people.

I spent countless hours cruising for sex. Now, I attend SAA meetings regularly and I spend countless hours in various service endeavors; thus keeping me off the streets and away from those who I might otherwise harm.

My addiction was fueled, in part, by a low sense of self-worth. Now, I make a point of complimenting random people and/or pointing out their positive qualities. Often times, I find that people are shocked to hear someone say a good word about them.

Making amends is never easy and saying that I am sorry will always ring hollow, unless I change my behavior going forward. In the few cases where I am still in contact with the persons I have harmed, they may witness my efforts to grow and live my life congruent with my values. Hopefully, they will understand that I am truly trying to change.

When, however, my acting-out partners are random victims of my addiction, I am left to undertake random acts of repentance. My goal is not to seek approval from or try to rebuild trust with these unknown individuals. Rather, my goal is to truly atone for my previous bad actions.

Behaving better in the present is the only true amend for my past actions.



An important concept of SAA recovery is the Three Circles Diagram. After identifying what behaviors belong in each circle, the goal becomes to eliminate time spent in Inner Circle and Middle Circle activities, while increasing the time spent in the pursuit of healthy Outer Circle activities.

In the spring issue of The Check-IN, a suggestion was made that a recovery-centered book club might be a healthy Outer Circle activity for avid readers.

After the newsletter came out, **Steve J.** called to inform me that such a club already exists.

He provided the following information:

There is a group of us that meets via conference call every other Monday night at 7:00 as a book club.

It is relatively informal and laid back. We have read some specific sex addiction related books; some general addiction; some general self-help; and, a lot on spirituality.

If anyone is interested in joining, they can call or text Steve J. at **317-922-5886**.



Cycling Back to Brussels Sprouts

Thanks to *Spencer A.* and *John T.* my life cycled back to Brussels sprouts.

Life is full of cycles, including addictive cycles. It can also be full of recovery cycles.

On an overcast, chilly Sunday afternoon in May, I joined Spencer and John for the monthly Cycles to Cycling, outer circle activity.

We bicycled from 96th & the Monon Trail south to Broad Ripple, where we had lunch at the Half Liter Barbeque and Beer Hall.

Among the sides offered with their very tasty barbeque were *Hot Honey Brussels Sprouts*.

Having had a few bad experiences with this particular vegetable, I had not tried them in decades. My most recent experience was from college, where they were referred to as ‘stink balls’ and used in cafeteria food fights. However, both Spencer and John raved about them and urged me to give them another try. I gave them a taste and, much to my surprise, found them to my liking.

Life and recovery can be like that. Something happens that is unpleasant, even traumatic; so, we do our best to avoid repeating that experience in the future. But, as life unfolds, we discover new things and ways of seeing our past experiences in a new light.

My mother tended to overcook nearly all vegetables; the college chef boiled Brussels sprouts in plain water and served the fowl smelling ammo in heaping bowls.

My perception of Brussels sprouts was skewed by poor

preparation and presentation. Given the chance to taste properly prepared Brussels sprouts, I came to realize that I had needlessly shunned them.

Looking back on my life and my addiction, I realize that my perceptions of them may have been skewed as well.

It is only with the passing of time, the learning of new life lessons, and being exposed to the insights of others who have traveled similar, yet different, paths, that I am able to cycle back and re-experience life anew.

Brussels sprouts have not suddenly become my new favorite side dish. But, not being afraid to sample them again, with more mature taste buds, allowed me to recycle my former experience with a different outcome.

Looking back on my addiction and recovery, I see that doing the same with them could be beneficial.

CYCLES TO CYCLING



Spencer A. and *Jose F.* are “recycling” the monthly gathering for SAA members who would like to add biking to their list of outer circle activities for 2022.

Rides are currently scheduled for **July 24** and **August 28**.

All bicycle ability levels are welcome. We will ride at whatever pace and for whatever distance is comfortable for everyone who shows up.

If you do not have your own bike, one can be rented at several locations along the Monon Trail. Spencer can assist you in locating a bike rental facility.

We will ride along the Monon Trail, leaving from the trailhead at 96th Street and the Monon Trail.

Free parking, restrooms and water bottle refilling stations are available at the 96th Street trailhead and along the trail; but, please remember to bring your own water bottle.

We will embark as soon as everyone shows up, so please RSVP with *Spencer A.* (**225 341-0980**) to make sure you aren’t left behind.

We will bike together to a predetermined location, have some sort of fellowship/talk recovery, and then ride back.

Please contact *Spencer A.* at **225 341-0980** to be added to a group text message or for more information.

3,500 Professionals Contacted

In its ongoing effort to “*carry its message to the sex addict who still suffers*”, the ISO of SAA has developed a program of outreach to the professional community.

IISAA voted to take part in the program in which ISO produced, addressed and paid to mail an informational postcard to some 3,500 mental health professionals in Indiana.

The mailing has been completed and, so far, the response from the healthcare community has been positive.

To view a copy of the outreach postcard content, see *Outreach* on page 5.

Outreach, from page 4

Front of Card

SEX ADDICTION RESOURCES FOR PROFESSIONALS

Do you have clients or patients who are struggling with problematic sexual behavior even in the face of serious consequences? The fellowship of Sex Addicts Anonymous (SAA) is here to help.

Members of SAA share their experience, strength, and hope with each other so that they may find freedom from addictive sexual behavior and help others recover from sexual addiction.

SAA complements professional treatment — we welcome your referrals.

SAA is dedicated to cooperation with the professional community to achieve our common goal of assisting people suffering from obsessive sexual thoughts and compulsive sexual behaviors.

The SAA program can enhance your client's recovery. SAA members voluntarily support each other with ongoing-accountability between your clients' professional appointments. We have seen many of our members recover from a wide range of problematic sexual behaviors using the SAA program. As a result, many professionals refer their clients to SAA as a complement to professional treatment. We welcome your referrals.

Free resources for the professional community

Resources available for you as a professional include:

- Free email subscription to our bi-monthly newsletter, *The Outer Circle*
- Client referral packets—a collection of pamphlets and a welcome letter to the newcomer, customized for your local area
- List of SAA members willing to talk to your clients, if available
- SAA speakers and informational presentations virtually or at your office or facility
- Open meetings that you, your colleagues, and other interested persons may attend
- Exhibitors and/or speakers for professional conferences
- SAA literature

To refer your clients to SAA or obtain resources, contact
IISAA: 855 784-8739; e-mail info@indiana-saa.org

What SAA offers to its members.

- **Acceptance and support** - Members receive acceptance and understanding of their problems from people who have experienced the same or similar issues. This supportive community offers the kind of help and encouragement needed to achieve and sustain recovery.
- **Recovery tools** - The SAA program of recovery provides the tools, guidance, accountability, and community support needed to overcome sex addiction.
- **Hope** - SAA offers hope of a new way of life— free from compulsive sexual behavior.

Back of Card



About SAA

Sex Addicts Anonymous® is a twelve-step recovery program and has but one primary purpose — to carry its message of recovery to anyone who suffers from sexual addiction.

- SAA was founded in 1977 in Minneapolis, Minnesota.
- SAA offers over 2000 meetings in many countries.
- We do not charge dues or fees.
- The only requirement for membership is a desire to stop addictive sexual behavior.
- We practice strict anonymity and confidentiality so that our meetings are a safe place for all.
- We welcome members of any gender identity or sexual orientation.

SAA is not therapy or treatment and has no opinion on outside issues, such as therapy, religion, or politics. SAA is not affiliated with any outside organization or cause. Neither does SAA endorse or finance outside organizations or causes. SAA does not compete with anyone. We offer no clinical, professional, or scientific expertise. Our unique contribution is to share from our own personal experience of recovery from sex addiction using the Twelve Steps of SAA.

Retreat, from page 1

Registration for the October 21 – 23 retreat, ***Random Acts of Recovery***, will open on Saturday, August 13, following the August IISAA meeting. Registration forms will be distributed at the Intergroup meeting for the reps to take back to their meeting groups. On-line registration will also go live that day.

Conducting either an in-person or on-line retreat is a big challenge. Offering both simultaneously is an enormous undertaking. Many volunteers are needed to successfully plan and present the retreat. If you are interested in helping, please give **Mike P.** a call at **765 228-6865**.

Paper Archives Destroyed

The Indiana Intergroup of SAA has been in existence since at least 1990.

In that time, minutes of every Intergroup meeting, other reports, every issue of our newsletter, and other paper documents have been collected and maintained.

Several years ago, it was decided to digitalize all of those records; 1) to preserve them for history; and, 2) to reduce the space needed to store them.

At the time that **Keith P.** created the digital files, Intergroup voted to retain the paper copies and **James U.**, from the Bloomington area, offered to store the collection at his home.

Recently, James informed Intergroup that he was moving and asking what to do with the documents. Subsequently, Intergroup voted to shred the documents so as to protect the

anonymity and confidentiality of all Intergroup members.

Jeff H. has now retrieved the documents from James U. and properly disposed of them.

Picnic “Brats” of Fun



What makes one picnic different and more enjoyable than another? One defining factor is the picnic fare. Again this year, our grill master, **Jeff H.**, expanded the menu with the addition of Brats.

The summer picnic, our longest running annual social event, was held on Saturday, June 25 under the spacious, outdoor pavilion at Moose Lodge 17.

The 34 people who attended brought delicious dishes to complement the burgers, hot dogs, pulled pork and brats that Jeff H. grilled to perfection.

Despite high humidity and pesky gnats, the day provided a fun-filled outer circle experience complete with horseshoes, bocce ball and board games

Thanks to **Jim F.**, for serving as our on-site host and to Jeff H. for making this year’s picnic “brats” of fun.

ISO Conference

The 2022 ISO of SAA Conference will be held October 7 and 8. The ISO website **saa-recovery.org** has complete details.

Even though varying time zones around the world make it difficult to include on-line participants in conference business discussions, the 2022 conference will be held as a **hybrid** event.

Why Pride?

Why does Intergroup sponsor an information booth at Indy Pride? It does so to fulfill its primary purpose as stated in its bylaws and in accord with the Fifth Tradition, “*to help its member SAA groups carry the SAA message to the sex addict who still suffers.*”

Why doesn’t IISAA sponsor a booth at other major cultural events, such as **Black Expo** and **Fiesta Indianapolis**, the premier Latino cultural celebration in Indiana? On numerous occasions in the past, IISAA has applied to participate in both events. Each time, our request has been denied.

The SAA booth is available for any event where a welcome door can be found for SAA to reach the public. Intergroup will gladly offer the canopy, booth equipment and recovery literature to any member who would like to make the arrangements and organize the volunteers needed to carry the SAA message to any such event.

As for Pride, this year there were over **35,000** paid entries to the Indy Pride Festival. **Ranga N.** and **Phil B.** co-chaired the event, **Reena W.** and **Mike C.** helped staff the booth. Together, they were the face of the fellowship as they answered questions, distributed **120** pieces of SAA literature, gave out candy, and even accepted requests for a photo op with the SAA banner.

Once again, IISAA successfully carried the SAA message.

Random Acts of Recovery At Meetings

Arrive on Time

Simply showing up for a meeting on time sends a strong message that you respect the program and those who work it with you.

Welcome a Newcomer

Tradition Five states that, *“Each group has but one primary purpose—to carry its message to the sex addict who still suffers.”* There is no greater act of recovery than to let another addict know that he/she is not alone and that there is hope through the SAA program. Simply saying “hello” and assuring the newcomer that he/she is in the right place is huge.

Chair the Meeting

Serving as a meeting chair is easy. Every group has a written format that the chair can follow. Knowledge of **The Traditions** will be very beneficial, as they address how our meeting groups operate.

Give a Step lead

In every meeting that I have ever attended, the most powerful sharing occurred during a lead and/or in the discussion that followed. It is in our stories that the commonality of our addiction and recovery becomes clear.

Join in the Discussion

Your experience, strength and hope matter. They are unique, yet, universal. What you share may clarify addiction/recovery for both you and your listeners.

Bring Cookies

Recovery is hard work and success is hard fought. All of the spent energy needs to be replaced.

Recognition by others is also a great motivator to keep working a strong program.

Acknowledging other members' successes will help to create a family-like bond within the group.

Adhere to The Twelve Steps and The Twelve Traditions

An SAA group consists of two or more individuals who, using the Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions of SAA, meet regularly for the purpose of recovering from their addictive sexual behavior. (Sex Addicts Anonymous, p. 10)

It is incumbent on every SAA member and group to adhere to the principles upon which SAA and every other 12-Step program were founded.

Before one can uphold the Steps and Traditions, one must learn them by reading recovery literature and/or from other members. If a meeting begins to stray from its roots, concerned members can gently guide it back on track.

Listen Respectfully

Persons in active addiction tend to be judgmental. It is easy to bring that negative quality into our meeting rooms.

Learning to listen, without judging, may take time and practice. However, it is in

coming to understand how addiction reveals itself in others' lives that we better recognize and understand our own experience of it.

While there is probably no one best way to listen respectfully, it may help to remember that both **'LISTEN'** and **'SILENT'** contain the same letters

Listen and silent are
spelled with the same letters.
Think about it.

Serve the Group

While Step 12 is often referred to as the 'Service Step', one need not wait until arriving at Step 12 to offer service to the group.

Becoming the group secretary, librarian, or GSR are all examples of how one might get outside of one's self and serve the group.

Keep Coming Back

Many recovering addicts consider the first meeting they ever attended, or the one they attend most consistently, to be there 'home' meeting

A person who has attended that meeting once or twice and then disappeared may eventually return.

Your still being present attests to the fact that stability in recovery is possible. It also helps to create the feeling that a meeting group is a safe place to work recovery.

ISO Launches New Website

The ISO of SAA has unveiled a new mobile-friendly website, **SAA Connect**.

The name, **SAA Connect**, was chosen to emphasize that **connection** is the opposite of **addiction**.

Here you will find some selected audios from past conventions; the complete volumes of **Voices of Recovery** and **Tools of Recovery**; a calculator to measure your sobriety down to the second; and, in the near future, all of our past newsletters, **The Outer Circle**.

This is a public viewing site for our content. A member area will be revealed in the near future. The member area will be accessed via a username and password. Members will have access to expanded content and to a forums area for discussion of topics like sponsorship and Step work.

Access this new website at **saa-connect.org**.

Be sure to check back often, as there may be some small tweaks to the website in the near future and more content will be added.

Original Meditations Sought

The **Meditation Corner** feature is seeking original meditations written by SAA members. Please do not submit meditations you have found elsewhere.

Submissions should be limited to 350 words, reflect your own experience, strength and hope and be sent to **iissa.mikec@gmail.com**

C
O
R
N
E
RM
E
D
I
T
A
T
I
O
N

My Role Model

Chris C.

“... I had to change my **modus operandi**.” (Green Book, p. 201)

For a number of years my family had a small dog. When she was about five years old, she developed a hacking cough that was due to irritation from her internal organs pressing on her esophagus. We asked the vet if the constant coughing bothered her and he said, “**No. Dogs are not like people. They don’t hold onto irritations.**” With that, I realized I had my role model for letting go.



The vet gave us medicine for her and sometimes she still coughed. Yet, she remained her loving and playful self.

Everything has to be perfect for me to be half that sweet. If I have any kind of frustration, forget about it; I am touchy and impatient. While dogs naturally forget frustrations, people have work to do and choices to make if we want to be happy. For me, that means letting go of each annoying event as it happens.

I have to look inside myself for why something bothers me. I frequently find the belief that I

should not be subjected to irritations, and that my life should be hassle-free. I do not think our dog believed this.

Surrendering this idea is the starting place for letting go of events that bother me. It allows me to see that events are just events. They are not happening to me, they are happening around me. I have been able to go from seeing life as a series of events aimed at bothering me to just experiencing life as it occurs.

A little dog taught me how to take life on life’s terms.

As I let life come as it comes, I can surrender my irritability and experience serenity.

Step 11

Sought through prayer and meditation to improve our conscious contact with God as we understood God, praying only for knowledge of God’s will for us and the power to carry that out.

2022 Calendar

July

9 IISAA Meeting, 4 p.m.

August

13 IN Area Assembly, 2 p.m.

13 IISAA Meeting, 4 p.m.

27 Bacon Eggs & Recovery

September

10 IISAA Meeting, 4 p.m.

30 **Check  Deadline**

October

8 IISAA Meeting, 4 p.m.

21-23 Fall Retreat,
Random Acts of Recovery