



# Summer Newsletter 2023 Ohio Valley Intergroup



## Editor's Corner

For some of us, Summer is a season where we pour on the tanning lotion and mosquito repellent to avoid life's pesky details. For others, we enjoy relaxing days at the beach, a hiking trail, or visiting our favorite fishing lake. Wherever we go, we will always be sure to take our recovery with us. So, why not take a copy of this newsletter with you as well since there is so much to read here.

To start, we present a current plea from the ISO. They have a need for more recovering sex addicts willing to write to prisoners.

Next, see what business motions our Area 14 Delegate will be faced with at the 2023 ISO Conference in October. Also, take an early look at the upcoming 2024 Convention in Columbus: Keep Coming Back!

Following these, a friend in recovery writes of his experience in a poem *From Darkness to Hope*.

Lastly, join us as we explore the remarkable journey of the Green Book from an idea in 1996 to a Conference approved piece of literature in 2016 all through the eyes and ears of one recovering sex addict. This recounting of all the satisfaction, sadness, progress, joy, anxiety, and lots of hard work will require two newsletters to accomplish. So, here we present Part I of two parts. Part II in the Fall Newsletter will complete this lengthy account.

Read on!  
(The OVIG Newsletter Team)

## Important Messages from the ISO:

Time to get out the stationery and pencils (or the word processor) and consider service work that can really benefit recovering sex addicts who are incarcerated.

The ISO has recently informed us that the number of prisoners who have requested a letter writer or sponsor continues to increase. However, they don't have enough correspondents to keep up with the demand.

So, why not volunteer to help?

This is a great way to engage in service and to carry the message of recovery to the addict who still suffers.

Want to know more? Click on the link below to the ISO service website and use the username and password listed below.

<https://www.saa-iso.org/mbrs/po/index.php>

Username: path

Password: freedom

## Important Fellowship Items



### ISO Delegate Conference Houston, Texas | October 7-8, 2023

The ISO Delegate Conference in Houston, Texas is rapidly approaching. The conference takes place on Saturday and Sunday October 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup>.

Mark R the Area 14 GSR from Marietta will not only be our Delegate but will also be multitasking as a member of the Conference Steering Committee (CSC), Nominations Committee (NomCom), and other service tasks.

This years' pool of Business Motions is lighter than normal and are as follows:

#### 2023-D001

This motion is for approving seven pamphlets formerly approved by the Literature Committee.

#### 2023-D002

This motion is for Conference approval of four PI/CPC related pamphlets.

#### 2023-D003

This motion is for the dissolution of the Area Coordinating Committee (ACC) at the end of the 2023 Business Conference.

#### 2022-D007

This is the second-year vote (ratification) of last year's motion whereby literature must have a 2/3 vote at Conference to receive Conference approval and that only Literature Committee can submit literature to the Conference for approval.

Need more information about the business motions? Go to the website for business motions shown later in this article and use the ID and PW names if asked to sign in.

Next, want to know more about what a GSR is and how to become one? Glad you asked! Just go to the GSR Website shown later in this article and use the ID and PW words to log in.

Also, should you be curious to know more about the 2023 Conference business motions or, as a GSR, need to download copies and print for your meeting, visit the Business Motions site shown below and use the ID and PW words shown.

GSR Website

<https://saa-iso.org/mbrs/gsr/>

Business Motions

<https://saa-iso.org/main/mbrs/delinfo/index.php>

ID: path

PW: freedom

## Keep Coming Back in 2024!



Consider this your first reminder of the upcoming 2024 ISO Convention at the Hyatt Regency in Columbus, Ohio USA next June 5<sup>th</sup>, 6<sup>th</sup>, and 7<sup>th</sup>. This time it will be face-to-face so start talking it up in your groups.

Remember, this is YOUR Convention since it is close to YOUR home. So, let's have a great turnout from Ohio as we **Keep Coming Back** in 2024!

# From Darkness to Hope

We met as darkness covered the day and my resistance melted away – all those years ago.  
My innocence was suddenly lost, peace of mind suddenly tossed – all those years ago.  
Troubles, temptations, self-hate brought me to your door.  
I sampled your false care, your pleasures, I only wanted more – all those years ago.

Twisting and turning through my life, I lost my job, my friends, my wife – not too long ago.  
You betrayed me! And yet, you swayed me back into your arms – not too long ago.  
Then, my bottom I finally struck. My life was shattered; it hit me like a truck – not too long ago.

Facing reality one day at a time, I now turn from you, my addict. I stop on a dime – for today.

As I believe in and give my will to a Higher Power, my sobriety grows, it begins to tower – for today.  
Through inventory and admittance, I am clean from my past, though the cache of my character defects was vast – for today.  
Being entirely ready for your removal, I now humbly ask, with your approval, to empty that addictive stash – for today.  
Using a list of those I had harmed; I make amends through the courage with which I was armed – for today.  
As I complete the steps, I now feel the scope of my experience, my strength, and my hope – for today.

Jason T.

## The Green Book: One Recovering Sex Addict's Story – Part I

I'm Chris J. and I'm a grateful recovering sex addict. I want to start by saying that I don't use the term "grateful" lightly. In my experience over nearly thirty years, I certainly have a lot to be grateful for. Of all the gifts I have received from my Higher Power, the Green Book stands out as one of the best. Not only does it represent the single best tool I use in my program of recovery, its development, initial editing, review, and production afforded me a remarkable number of opportunities both direct and indirect, for service and recovery.

What follows in this, and the Fall newsletter is my story as accurately as I can recall. Please note that while some dates I give for events regarding the Green Book's journey may be accurate, others are likely an approximation. You know what they say: it's progress rather than perfection.

### Summer 1996 - Fall 1996

About this time, I first heard that the SAA fellowship would be moving toward having some type of "Big Book" of its own. I was vaguely aware of the AA Big Book and aware of the earlier SAA literature available such as the "Sex Addicts Anonymous" basic pamphlet (© 1990), Three Circles (© 1991), Abstinence and Boundaries in S.A.A." (© 1986), and "Getting Started in Sex Addicts Anonymous" (© 1991). But a full-sized book for my fellowship? That seemed like an audacious move.

### Fall 1996 - Winter 1997

In this approximate time frame, I recall seeing a copy of a request for stories for the upcoming SAA "Big Book." I recall having seen a copy of *From Shame to Grace - Stories of Recovery from Sex Addicts Anonymous* (© 1994). I recall only two feelings I had at that time. First, I wondered why they wanted more stories when *From Shame to Grace* already had a good supply, and second, having been in SAA recovery myself for only about 2-1/2 years, I declined to contribute a story of my own.

## **February 2001**

The time between early 1997 and early 2001 was likely filled with a lot of writing, rewriting, and perhaps some strong differences of opinion that I was completely unaware of. From stories I would later hear, Pat C. and another individual had written the first version of Sex Addicts Anonymous, which, after some review, was experienced as being too therapeutic. Members of the ISO Literature Committee of that time felt that changes were needed. Lots of work would follow for many months.

For me, most of this happened during what I would describe as my recovery dormancy between early 1997 and early 2001. I call it that since my fellowship experience was limited to a few Dayton meetings, I still had no sponsor after seven years, and my service work was limited to making coffee at meetings, providing cookies, and occasionally being a meeting Chair.

Then, the day came when that dormancy would begin to melt away. Upon a suggestion from a friend in recovery, Gary C., I had driven to the home of Ed W., one of the founding members of the Dayton area groups. Ed had prepared a wonderful pot of stew and had baked some corn bread for his guests. Now, as much as I enjoyed the food, the guests who would pay a visit would be the reasons my recovery was about to accelerate. For the first time, I got to meet members of groups outside of the Dayton area. We had Elizabeth S. Morris B., and Ken S. of Indiana in our presence for almost two hours. It turned out that Elizabeth was one of only two members of the Literature Committee, along with Chris D. of Arizona, who were entrusted to carry copies of our basic text around to as many meetings as they could to have the book read and receive feedback for further improvements. So, as we devoured Ed's stew, we passed the book around so each person in the circle could read a paragraph and make suggestions. What started that day as a rag-tag, three-ring-bound, wrinkled stack of text, would be shaped into our main fellowship document within a few short years.

## **March 2001**

Elizabeth, Morris, and Ken returned to Dayton and this time to the Get Real Sunday night meeting in Yellow Springs. It was a special night with most of the meeting time dedicated to the group reviewing the contents of the three-ring-binder and making any further suggestions.

## **October 2001**

I attended my first IISAA retreat (first of many, that is) at camp PYOCA in Brownstown Indiana. One of the first things Gary and I did upon arriving was to borrow the three-ring-binder from Elizabeth and go to the basement of the main lodge to read through a few more chapters.

## **April 2002**

Following the retreat of the year before, I wanted to experience even more fellowship time with my new recovery friends in Indiana. This time, I attended a spring workshop that focused on working the early steps and upon sponsorship. Remember the old recovery phrase "If you want what we have and are willing to go to any length to get it?" At that workshop, I had found someone who had endured similar tribulations to mine and yet had a remarkable length of sobriety. Before the close of the workshop, I asked him if he could be my sponsor and help me in recovery. He had said "Yes" and that ended almost eight years of trying to work the program on my own.

## **October 2002**

For a second year in a row, Gary and I met in the basement of the main lodge at PYOCA, reading through the still-improving SAA basic text which remained in a three-ring-bound notebook with the crinkly pages of text becoming worn from all the reviews.

## **May 2004**

My next big step forward in my recovery was to finally take part in my very first SAA Convention. This was in Dallas at the Marriott Quorum by the Galleria, and I was astonished at how many recovering sex addicts were

present. I was also astonished by all the workshops, meetings, and activities. I was as impressed as I felt humbled.

It was also at this point in my life that an old favorite quote of mine seems appropriate: “There is nothing more powerful than an idea whose time has come.”

I feel my higher power had a hand in being sure I would live that quote.

During the 2004 Convention, a Regional Caucus was held for each of the eight regions that made up the ISO business structure. The caucus would take care of yearly business and allow for the election of new officers. Each region had but four officer positions at that time, Board representative, Alternate Board representative, Literature Committee representative, and Alternate Literature Committee representative.

Despite the Northeast Region in which I resided representing sixteen states, there were only five of us filling the caucus room. Five of us were present when all four positions needed to be filled. My nerves were on end. I had experienced service at the local level but never at the international level and now there was a higher-than-average possibility that I would be elected to something.

There was no place to run, no place to hide.

So, when all was said and done, I had reluctantly raised my hand to be the new Alternate Northeast Literature Committee representative as Tom K from Virginia agreed to be the new representative, taking the place of the departing Tony Z. of New York.

I decided to shed my worries and work toward a positive attitude that I would carry with me into my very first Literature Committee meeting. It turns out that Elizabeth S. was attending the closing Literature Committee meeting and before everyone left, she handed me a neat, printed galley of *Sex Addicts Anonymous* to take home for a final review. I was almost in tears. It took a moment or two before I could thank Elizabeth for a wonderful last-minute opportunity.

#### **August 2004**

Consider how different things were nearly twenty years ago. There was no “Zoom” for ISO committees, let alone sub-committees to connect with. In fact, a simple voice-only teleconference was so expensive that only three per year were held at that time for Literature Committee. In those days, they met face-to-face in May at the Conference and then met in August, November, and February via telephone. Each of the telephone meetings was three hours in length. Talk about a sore ear!

So, I had found a few ‘minor’ points of feedback in the three months since the Conference. I sent my feedback to the Literature Committee via email. Now, I was sitting in my bedroom with a transmitter phone to my ear hoping that the battery would hold so it could continue to communicate with my land-line base unit. Toward the end of the meeting, a vote was taken. Since the Northeast representative Tom K was present, I did not vote as an alternate but was present for what I would like to view as a historic moment. While I can’t recall if the vote was unanimous, it was certainly in favor of granting *Sex Addicts Anonymous* Literature Committee Approval. With the text of this huge document approved, the production process could soon begin.

Being present for that was a huge gift given to me by my Higher Power. Next year’s gift, however, would be bigger!

#### **May 2005**

One thing I can say is that the Convention team in New Orleans knew how to make everyone feel welcome at the 2005 SAA Convention/Conference. Even the business sessions of Wednesday and Thursday before the Convention officially started were comfortable at the New Orleans Marriott.

Still being like a kid in a candy store, I chose to stay after one of the business meetings with two new acquaintances, Jim L. and Jeff W. and assist in stuffing printed labels into dozens of what I now called the “Green Book” due to the pea green color chosen for the dust jacket. The labels were placed inside the front cover to remind the reader to submit feedback on the text. I had heard from other committee members that the books would be presented the night of the Convention banquet. I could hardly wait.

Saturday night was unforgettable. The banquet was not held inside the Mariott but on board a huge river boat that contained a banquet hall large enough for all attendants. Everyone marched down a gangplank behind the Convention Subcommittee Chair and into the boat. The dinner was, itself, memorable, but what was waiting for us when we all marched back up to the hotel was even more so.

We all entered the main ballroom of the New Orleans Mariott to see tables set up for guests, surrounded by blankets covering what many knew were piles of the new *Sex Addicts Anonymous* texts. Pat C. was a guest speaker that night as well.

When the time came, the covers came off, exposing several beautiful stacks of pea green books. Many of the books were bound in a special fashion such that the inside of the front cover had a label applied on which signatures of Board members and Literature Committee members could be written. Being a member of the Board of Trustees, my friend, Gary C., got his free copy first. Then per the protocol of the evening, Gary presented me with my first copy of the book which was also free. To be honest, I still get emotional when I look back on that moment. It meant so much to me.

I recall feeling that the long journey of the “Green Book” was finally over that evening in May of 2005. But as I now know, the journey was far, far, from over.

[To be continued...]



# OVIG Highlights

The Ohio Valley Intergroup (OVIG) stays a cohesive unit of single SAA groups in both Ohio and West Virginia. As with most intergroups, the OVIG was formed to share resources, supply service talent, and offer activities that single groups may not have the wherewithal to provide.

As such, there are a good number of notable accomplishments the OVIG has achieved over the last several months. Below is a list of these accomplishments so everyone can know that we all remain busy.

- Note! The OVIG Fall 2023 retreat is in the planning phases. More information coming later.
- The Venmo account for OVIG continues to be a convenient way to make donations to the intergroup. The account for donations is now @Mark.Laughlin13@venmo
- Funds continue to be collected from groups to be used for professional outreach purposes.
- A plan is in place for the Ohio Valley Intergroup website to be updated. Help is needed for this!
- When possible, the intergroup aids the Area 14 Assembly in recruiting and registering new Group Service Representatives (GSRs).
- The intergroup continues to keep a supply of literature and display organizers for outreach purposes.
- The ISO Board of Trustees has approved the Hyatt Regency as the hotel for the 2024 Convention in Columbus. We are going to do this!

It's easy to see from the above bullet list the many ways that OVIG serves the groups, the fellowship, and the still-suffering sex addict.

(The OVIG Newsletter Team)