



Winter Newsletter 2023 Ohio Valley Intergroup



Editor's Corner

When referring to a new movie or comic magazine, some used to use the term “action packed” to describe them. Well, we might be remiss if we didn't use that phrase or a similar one to describe this quarter's newsletter. There is quite a lot in this edition, and we will admit that it is somewhat longer than usual.

So, where to start in describing what you will find below? We start by mentioning that the ISO is looking for someone who has experience with

editing and collecting stories to fill the shoes of the *Outer Circle* newsletter editor. (See below)

Next up from the ISO is an announcement for the 2023 Convention in NYC followed by OVIG-related activities such as a potluck meal with social opportunities in March, followed by our spring retreat in May all described below.

Next, the newest pamphlet to be published by the ISO, *Is Your View of the Twelve Steps Distorted?* is introduced in the article *A Pamphlet on the Fast Track*.

Lastly, we present two stories submitted this quarter. The first one, *The Committee*, shows how one busy author's mind faces meditation time. The second one was written by a counselor who is in recovery himself and describes the feelings that are a part of his requiring to have a counselor for his own addiction.

So, enjoy and be informed.

Read on!
(The OVIG Newsletter Team)

An Important Message from the ISO:

ISO Job Announcement

Calling all writers/editors! Is the idea of creating or editing news or recovery-based articles as alive in you as the drive to engage in meaningful service work for an entire fellowship?

If so, the ISO is searching for an experienced writer/editor to serve as editor of *The Outer Circle*, the bimonthly newsletter of SAA.

If you are interested, please contact the ISO via mail or email using the information below.

Attention: Director
P.O. Box 70949
Houston, TX 77270
director@saa-iso.net

Important Fellowship Items



A PATH TO FREEDOM

**June 9 -11, 2023
New York, NY**

When in recovery, we are certainly on a path to freedom. So, the theme for this year's 35th SAA International Convention is also *A Path to Freedom* and will be held two weeks after Memorial Day Weekend.

So, for those who are usually busy on Memorial Day weekend and can't attend a convention, this is your big chance!

For more information, go to the website below. If you are asked for a password, enter "pathtofreedom" all as one word. Also, be sure to print copies of the convention flyer to take to your groups and distribute them to spread the word of this great recovery opportunity in June.

<https://saa-convention.org/>

OVIG Potluck Social



The Ohio Valley Intergroup is planning a potluck social on Sunday March 19th at the Linworth Road Church from 5 P.M. to 8 P.M.

Please bring a side dish as the meat will be provided as a main course. There will also be interactive games for fun.

Please note that this event is for SAA members only. Any questions? Please email Mel F or Zach R at the email addresses that follow.

fmellissia@hotmail.com

zach.ruppel@gmail.com

The OVIG Spring Retreat

Here is an advance notice for the upcoming Ohio Valley Intergroup Spring Retreat *Together We Are One*.

It will be held on May 13th, 2023, from 8:30 - 3:30 at the Maple Grove Church in Columbus.

Please note: at this point, volunteers are still needed. Should you be interested in helping us make this one of the best retreats ever by providing your talents, please contact Bruce G at the email address or text the number below.

Bruce G – OVIG Retreat Chair

stvlc@sbcglobal.net

Txt – 614 790 0995

Is Your View of the Twelve Steps Distorted? A Pamphlet on the Fast Track

So, unlike the pamphlets described in past newsletters, this one seemed to move through its development from an idea to approved literature at a breakneck pace. With most of the development time for this work standing astride the COVID-19 pandemic, some think that there may have been more time to “stay inside” and work on literature. Truth is that this pamphlet was so much fun to work on that it held a guaranteed spot on almost every month’s agenda for the Authors Group.

A basic timeline for the development follows:

October 2020 – The pamphlet is outlined with the format and rough content agreed upon. The starting title is “Disease Version of the Steps.”

February 2021 – Version 5 of the document is ready for review. The pamphlet content begins to change more rapidly with new ideas forming and some changes to language that was felt to be borderline triggering or too “negative.” The title is now “A Diseased View of the 12 Steps.”

September 2021 – The title is changed to “A Distorted View of the 12 Steps” in Version 10 as the document continues to get edits to make it a better read.

November 2021 – The members of the Authors Group run a straw poll to determine if everyone felt the document was ready for submission to the ISO Literature Committee. The votes were all “Yes” and so the pamphlet was submitted.

June 2022 – The title is changed once again to *Is Your View of the Twelve Steps Distorted?* and a subtitle “Moving from Shame to the Solution” is added.

January 2023 – While the printed version of *Is Your View of the Twelve Steps Distorted?* is not yet available for purchase, it can be read for free on the SAA website at the link provided below.

<https://saa-recovery.org/literature/view-twelve-steps-distorted/>

So, if you haven’t done so already, give this pamphlet a read and find out if any of your early thoughts regarding Step work were at all “distorted.”

Oh, and just one little request here on behalf of the Authors Group. Should you read the document, please leave feedback by clicking on the phrase “Find the feedback form here”, filling in the form, and clicking on the “Submit” button. Your thoughts and feelings are greatly appreciated!

Chris J.

Story #1

The Committee

“The committee will now come to order,” the protector said as he tapped his gavel. Yet the chatter and chaos continued. The gavel banged louder, and the phrase was repeated several more times with the same result. Then a new approach was tried. The protector took three slow deep breaths, counting to four while inhaling, counting to four while holding the breath, and counting to six while exhaling. Then he addressed the committee with a quiet whisper. “May I have your attention?”

Now the meditation could begin. The busy chaotic flurry of thoughts calmed, and a sense of peacefulness settled. I can now listen to various parts of my nervous system to check-in with their feelings of anxiety, joy, sorrow, tension, anger, grief, gratitude, and peace. I am centered and present to experience and own each emotion for what it can tell me about my state of being without judgement. This is information only. It does not require immediate action. My committee parts may be telling me how some past action or event has affected my body/nervous system when it landed so swiftly that I had not fully acknowledged it as it happened, and then unconsciously compartmentalized it. Now in the silence, I can feel the resonance of its importance as I sit calmly and quietly. A time for action will come later along with the wisdom to know how best to handle it.

Jerry S.

Story #2

A Therapist's View

A therapist in therapy is an interesting thing to be. I have been in SAA since 2015 and was referred to the program by my therapist after admitting to being a sex addict. Like most of us, it took major consequences to admit I had become powerless over this addiction. Later, while in therapy myself, I had to leave my therapist's hat outside my sessions to deal with my shame and accept that I was now the client. I became a better therapist for that process as my therapist and I worked through *A Gentle Path* by Patrick Carnes.

As a therapist I also knew that this was not a recognized diagnosis within a manual called the DSM-5. In my profession, sex addiction is a proposed psychological disorder in which people engage in excessive sexual behaviors leading to a negative impact on their lives. Although it's a commonly used concept among laypersons and professionals alike, not all psychologists agree that hypersexuality is a disorder. It's not mentioned in the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM-5) published by the American Psychiatric Association. However, Compulsive Sexual Behavior Disorder is included in the International Classification of Diseases (ICD-11) by the World Health Organization.

So, there's an ongoing debate in the psychiatric community about exactly how to define unhealthy sexual behavior because it's not always easy to determine when sexual behavior becomes problematic.

The basic tenant of our SAA program states that meetings are not group therapy but for me, at least, they are experienced as therapeutic. I often joke by referencing a quote by Groucho Marx, "I won't belong to any organization that would have me as a member". This has significance to me in reference to joining organizations that can have a negative "groupthink" which is the opposite of SAA meetings.

In SAA, my higher power gives me a place to relate to fellow addicts in a safe, encouraging, and supportive way.

I have included an excerpt that speaks to this issue from a therapist perspective in the December 21, 2012, issues of *Psychology Today* by Alexandra Katehakis Ph.D., MFT.

"Throughout my career, I've met numerous therapists who questioned the validity of sexual addiction until they came face-to-face with it in their therapy office. Ironically, most of these therapists quickly learned that they didn't have to scrutinize every other client as a possible sex addict because the signs and symptoms were fairly obvious. These therapists learned to look for patterns of personal, emotional, financial, relational, legal, or professional problems as a direct result of someone's sexual behaviors."

Dr. Katehakis is the author of *Erotic Intelligence*, a book with a forward by Patrick Carnes. I recommend this book to any interested in a more detailed account of Dr. Katehakis' treatment and research on sex addiction as well as her other publications. As we all continue our spiritual journey together in this program, we will find the

strength and hope needed to overcome our past by being in the present with hope for the future. While sex addiction may not be a disease in a professional context, it is clearly a Dis-Ease in a spiritual context.

Joe C

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 in 2022 and at the start of this year. Below is a list of these accomplishments so everyone can know just how busy we have been.

- Note! The OVIG Spring 2023 Retreat is Saturday, May 13th from 8:30 A.M. to 3:30 P.M.
- Note! The OVIG Potluck Social event is Sunday March 19th and arriving soon.
- The Venmo account for OVIG continues to be a convenient way to make donations to the intergroup.
- Funds continue to be collected from groups to be used for professional outreach purposes.
- The OVIG recently helped a new group purchase literature and chips to get them started.
- 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 OVIG website works to stay up to date with new meetings being added and inactive meetings being removed.

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)