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SEVEN MINUTES

a forum for smokers who don't smoke

Vol. I, No. 4

The Smokers Anonymous Quarterly

THIRD QUARTER 1988

BIG BOOK BEGINS!

Polling the fellowship of SA is the first step in putting together the Big Book of Smokers Anonymous. That's the decision of the SA Big Book Committee, and the result is the questionnaire on pages 3 - 6 of this issue of SEVEN MINUTES.

According to Committee chairman Jay L., the previous Big Book Committee attempted to adapt the Alcoholics Anonymous Big Book to SA, a task that was

soon abandoned. The current Committee decided to ask the fellowship to state its actual experience in living nicotine free rather than to try to impose the alcoholic experience on SA.

It is hoped that all members of SA will answer the questionnaire. Writing will probably be done as a group; Committee members have produced other SA literature this way. Publication could be by the middle of 1990.

'89 WORLD CONFERENCE SET FOR LOS ANGELES

Start your group or intergroup planning now to send a delegate to Los Angeles for the 1989 World Service Conference, April 21-23. The Conference is scheduled for Day's Inn near L.A. International Airport. Day's room rates for delegates are \$49 single, \$59 for 2 or more/room and include free parking and free airport shuttle. Registration fee is still not set, but will be in the \$10-15 range with banquet fees extra.

The agenda already includes literature approval, election of officers, outreach committee and protection of the SA name. Agenda is open still; send your ideas to SA World Services, 2118 Greenwich St., San Francisco CA 94123. More on Conference in next issue.

LOUISIANA IS 2ND SA STATE

New Orleans members of Smokers Anonymous recently incorporated, making Louisiana the second state - after California - to achieve legal status, to protect the SA name from infringement by non-12 Step users and to form a statewide Intergroup.

On August 5, Ruth M. and Lee P., with the help of attorney Katherine M., all members of the fellowship, filed the incorporation papers with the Secretary of State in Baton Rouge.

The address of the new Louisiana Intergroup of SA is 8817 - 27th Street, Metairie LA 70003. Current Director is Ruth McCloud. The Articles of Incorporation state that it is a nonprofit corporation "organized for the purpose of helping people gain and maintain freedom from nicotine and smoking addiction."

Profile . . .

GROUP: Hillview High School

PLACE: Santa Ana CA

FOUNDED: September 14, 1986

Hillview High School Smokers Anonymous began its third year of weekly meetings on September 14, 1988. Meetings are held during the regular school day. SA members and others interested in the program are excused from third period class every Wednesday to attend the meeting.

Because the meeting is held during the school day, it is open only to students in the Tustin Unified School District. SA members from other groups are occasionally invited to share their experience, strength and hope at the Hillview meetings - particularly members with long time sobriety, the one thing the Hillview group is short on.

Many, many members have stopped smoking since the group started two years ago. But after graduation, few members return. Michelle S. is an exception. One of the first in the group to stop smoking (almost two years ago!), she still attends a meeting once a month. Last year, three students celebrated 9 months of sobriety at the end-of-the-year SA party. Chips are awarded for 30 days, and monthly thereafter.

Although the majority of members come to the Hillview meeting because they want to quit smoking, the vice-principal occasionally gives students the opportunity to attend three SA meetings in lieu of suspension for smoking on campus.

A former smoker with 20 years of sobriety, this vice-principal not only refers students to the SA group, he also speaks at one meeting a semester about his own addiction and recovery. There wasn't a dry eye in the room last spring when he shared a story about his golf buddy who was a heavy smoker and who had just died of lung cancer.

Speakers from the Cancer Society and Lung Association are invited to Hillview meetings. Every year the group participates in the Great American Smokeout. Last year the balloon release with notes about not smoking was held during the regular SA meeting and the entire student body was excused from classes to observe the event.

Members of the Hillview group are encouraged to attend meetings off campus. Many not only attend other meetings themselves, they take parents, other relatives and friends. One Tuesday evening SA group receives regular monthly visits from a carload of Hillview SA members.

Some Hillview group members also belong to other 12 Step programs. However, for the majority of students, the Hillview meeting is their introduction to the 12 Steps, which are studied on a rotating basis. *Contact: Pat F., SA and Faculty Advisor, Hillview High School, 19061 Foothill Blvd., Santa Ana CA 92705.*

A SIMPLE PLAN

For 30 days, I promise myself:

- To go to one Smokers Anonymous meeting each week, even if I slip and smoke again. To try not to smoke between meetings.
- To introduce myself as a newcomer at every meeting I attend in my first 30 days of not smoking.
- To get phone numbers of oldtimers. **To use them.** To call and talk to someone **before** I smoke.
- To ask for a temporary sponsor.
- To give my phone number to newcomers after I haven't smoked for one week.
- To take an active interest in my SA group. To ask the secretary how I can help. To ask myself how I can help my group help the newcomer?

- To ask to go to coffee with members after a meeting. To be aware that we - yes, me! - are at coffee, chatting, without nicotine.
- To ask a permanent sponsor to help me take the Twelve Steps. To think of the Steps as a practical path to living happily without nicotine. If I have doubts about this, to do the Steps anyway. To think of them as a recipe or repair manual and follow the instructions specifically.
- To follow this simple plan exactly. To remember it has worked so well for others that they can live without nicotine and not miss it. To read these instructions frequently and ask myself "Am I doing these things?" If I am, I will not have to smoke today.

THE SMOKERS ANONYMOUS BIG BOOK QUESTIONNAIRE

Welcome to the Smokers Anonymous Big Book Questionnaire, brought to you by the Big Book Committee of Smokers Anonymous World Services. It's our idea that SA needs a Big Book unique to our program, not one derived from another program's book. (We do acknowledge our debt to Alcoholics Anonymous, from which our fellowship is adapted.)

We like to think of this as an interactive questionnaire. What this means is that we don't expect you to fill it out all by yourself. You can answer it alone, but we suggest that you do it with another SA member - your sponsor or sponsee, for example - or as a group project, devoting part of the discussion period of a meeting to each section of the questionnaire.

We enjoyed writing the questionnaire, and we experienced a deeper understanding of how each of us works the program. We can only hope that you will share that strength and joy. In this way, all of us - the members of Smokers Anonymous - will be writing our Big Book.

Smokers Anonymous Big Book Committee
Jay L., Big Book Coordinator

(Please Read Instructions at bottom of this page before beginning the questionnaire.)

WHAT IT WAS LIKE WHILE YOU WERE SMOKING:

1. What did you feel like when the morning alarm went off?
2. How long after the alarm until you first thought of a cigarette?
3. When did you smoke your day's first cigarette?
4. Then how did you feel?
5. How long before the next cigarette?
6. Was your morning smoking routine the same each day?
7. Did you associate smoking with certain (circle appropriate): emotions; activities; physical surroundings; times of day; people? Give brief explanation.
8. Did you smoke when you were nervous? If yes, did it help and for how long?
9. Were you troubled by the irrationality of your behavior?
10. Were you embarrassed to be a smoker or to be seen smoking or to know that people could smell smoke on you?
11. What effect did advertising have on your brand selection and loyalty? Did you choose a brand by its packaging design and color or by its tar/nicotine content?

12. Did the Surgeon General's warning have any effect on you?
13. At what age did you begin smoking continuously?
14. Did you have to learn to smoke? Describe briefly.
15. Did you feel peer pressure to smoke? Comment briefly.
16. Did your parents smoke?
17. Did you smoke more when drinking alcohol?
18. Did you smoke more when feeling (circle appropriate) lonely; tired; hungry; mad; hurt; happy?
19. Have you ever been told, while hospitalized, not to smoke and had to sneak about to find a way to have a cigarette?
20. Has your smoking stopped you from getting involved in certain activities? List them.
21. Has anyone indicated they thought you were weak because you could not stop smoking?
22. Have you ever lied about your smoking?
23. Have you ever stolen cigarettes?
24. Did you feel that you were a "serious" smoker, that while others could quit, you would smoke until you died?
25. Did you feel unattractive because you smoked?
26. Was it uncomfortable to be around non-smokers?

Please write answers to questions on separate sheet(s) of paper. **Number answers to correspond to questions.** Type or write legibly, please. When finished, return answer sheet to:

Smokers Anonymous Big Book Committee
2118 Greenwich Street
San Francisco CA 94123

SEVEN MINUTES

27. Did you feel guilty about smoking?
28. Did smoking mask fear of anything?
29. Did smoking affect your performance (circle appropriate) professionally; athletically; during leisure time; sexually; when with friends?
30. Did you have to make a choice between cigarettes and (circle appropriate) jobs/promotions; friends; lovers; sports?
31. Did you feel increasingly isolated when you smoked?
32. Did you experience a "high" feeling when you smoked?
33. Would you go to any lengths to get a cigarette?
34. Did you ever think of yourself as "less than others" because you couldn't quit smoking?
35. Why did you start smoking?
36. What support did you get to keep smoking?
37. Did you see yourself as a nicotine addict while still smoking?
38. How did you try to control your smoking?
39. What is the worst consequence of your smoking?
40. Did societal pressure to modify your smoking bother you?
41. Did you have conflicts with others as a result of your smoking? If so, describe such an incident in detail.
42. How many times did you try to quit smoking? How long did you last each time?
43. Did the immediate cost of smoking worry you? Was it clear to you what the cost was? Did you know how many dollars per year you spent on cigarettes?
44. When you had stopped smoking, what event(s) or feeling(s) provoked you to smoke again?
45. Were you defiant toward any person, regulation or propaganda that suggested you should quit?
46. What was your emotional reaction when you failed to stay stopped?
47. Did you smoke to alleviate shyness?
48. Did you want to create a smokescreen around yourself? If so, for what purpose?
49. List some words that describe how you saw yourself when you smoked.
50. While still smoking, could you imagine life and your usual activities (e.g. telephoning, sex, dinner) without cigarettes?
51. Did you have medical problems connected with smoking?
52. Did you ruin clothes, bedclothes or furniture with burns or ashes?
53. Did you wreck a car due to smoking?
54. Did you lose time on the job due to smoking?
55. Were you honest?

56. Were you a reasonably happy and well-adjusted person or did you seem to have more than your share of problems?
 57. Were your problems the result of other people's malice and mistakes?
 58. Did others have to change in order for your life to be all it should be?
 59. Did you promptly attend to disagreeable chores or did you usually procrastinate?
 60. When faced with too much to do, would you escape into a drug?
 61. Did you make use of alcohol or drugs for recreation?
 62. Did smoking make you feel more secure socially?
 63. How did smoking regulations affect you?
 64. How did your smoking affect those around you?
 65. Were you bothered by other people's smoking?
 66. Did you have any physical symptoms resulting from smoking?
 67. How did you try to overcome the smell of smoke on you and in your home?
- WHAT HAPPENED:**
68. Did you stop smoking before or after getting to your first SA meeting?
 69. Did you tell many people beforehand that you were going to stop?
 70. What other methods or organizations did you use to try to stop smoking before you came to SA?
 71. What kept you coming back to SA?
 72. Was there a particular situation, person or place related to your doing something about your nicotine problem?
 73. Did anyone intervene?
 74. Did you find that your recovery in another 12-Step program was contingent on quitting nicotine?
 75. Was nicotine threatening your job? Your love life?
 76. Did a doctor tell you you had the beginnings of emphysema or some other ailment?
 77. Did you start feeling like an air polluter? Did tossing cigarette butts begin to bother you?
 78. Did you feel victimized by the tobacco and advertising industries?
 79. Did Humphrey Bogart's or Yul Brynner's public anti-smoking testimony have any effect on your decision?
 80. Did you experience a sudden "moment of clarity" about your smoking? If so, please describe.
 81. What made you realize that "NOW" is the time to stop?
 82. Any particular "last straw"?
 83. Was there a unique "miracle" that led you to SA? Describe.

84. Did stopping nicotine use correspond to a "getting in shape" program you set out upon?
85. What role, if any, did a feeling of dishonesty to yourself play in your decision to stop?
86. Did you become sick and tired of being sick and tired?
87. Did the probable reversal of damage to your body encourage you to stop?
88. Have you slipped since coming to SA? If so, what did you learn?
89. Did you feel utterly hopeless about quitting nicotine?
90. What role, if any, did friends stopping play in your decision?
91. When you first came to SA, did you think you could quit?
92. How long did your acute physical withdrawal last?
93. How long has your emotional withdrawal lasted?
94. Was SA your first 12-Step program?
95. What were your earliest impressions of SA?
96. How did you learn of SA?
97. Were you afraid to quit?
98. How long before the 12 Steps began to make any sense to you?
99. Do you have a sponsor? Are you someone's sponsor?
100. Did you have trouble with the concept of "powerlessness"? What happened to give it meaning for you?
101. How did you initially relate to the concept of a "higher power"? Has your attitude changed? Describe.
102. Describe "hitting bottom" as you experienced it.
103. Did you believe you had to be off nicotine before going to your first SA meeting?
104. Did you go to your first meeting alone or with a friend or relative?
105. Were you surprised to learn that SA is a spiritual program and not a smoking cessation program?
106. Did you feel welcome at your first SA meeting?
107. If you had a slip after joining SA, did you avoid meetings or keep coming to them? How long did the slip last?
108. If you've had a year or more of sobriety, do you still attend SA meetings on a regular basis?
- WHAT ARE YOU LIKE NOW?**
109. Are you a member of another 12-Step program? If so, do you find that you need a separate participation in SA?
110. What attitudes have changed in you as a result of coming to SA?
111. Do you feel more honest? How, if at all, do your feelings about your honesty relate to your continued

freedom from nicotine?

112. What is your understanding of the Serenity Prayer:
a. What are the things you cannot change? Are you able to accept them? How?

b. What are the things you can change? Have you the courage? Where does the courage come from, or has it always been there?

c. How do you know the difference between the things you can and cannot change?

113. Is your main concern still with avoiding nicotine?

114. Has your life improved or worsened since coming to SA? In what ways?

115. Have you learned, through meetings, things about living that you're glad to know? Describe.

116. Do you believe in miracles?

117. Have you had a spiritual awakening?

118. Do you feel safe - that you won't smoke again?

119. Did/do you crave sugar or sweets?

120. Do you feel more anger than you did while smoking? If so, how do you deal with it?

121. If you feel more anger, are you afraid of losing control? How do you handle that?

122. How do meetings help you remain nicotine-free?

123. Have you been a speaker at an SA meeting?

124. Are you particularly concerned with helping the newcomers?

125. Do you feel safe at SA meetings?

126. How do you work the Steps?

127. Have you been secretary of a meeting? Do you do any other service? If so, what?

128. Do you socialize with other members of SA? If not, would you like to?

129. How does your spouse/ significant other feel about your involvement with SA?

130. If you moved to a place without a SA meeting, would you start one?

131. Would you be interested in writing your story for possible inclusion in the SA Big Book?

132. How has your physical health changed?

133. If you have made new friends in SA, how have these friendships helped in staying stopped?

134. For those belonging to other 12-Step programs, how do you handle frequency of meetings for your respective programs?

135. What meeting formats do you like?

136. What factors do you think keep people coming back to meetings?

137. Why do you think some people stop coming to meetings?

138. Do people who smoke react negatively to your having stopped? If so, how do you handle them?

SEVEN MINUTES

139. Do you reveal your SA membership when the subject of smoking arises?
140. Do you live or work closely with someone who smokes? If so, how does this affect you?
141. Do you do anything now for entertainment that you couldn't or wouldn't do while smoking?
142. Are you a smokers' rights advocate?
143. What are you like now?
144. Do you feel that you have more time now? What, that is new, are you doing with your time?
145. Did you notice an increase in putting something in your mouth?
146. Do you feel increased physical energy?
147. Have you begun a regular exercise program since stopping smoking?
148. Do you think that your physical appearance has improved. If so, does this play an important role in keeping you off nicotine?
149. What new emotions have cropped up? What SA tool or message, if any, do you use to deal with these new feelings?
150. Do any of these feelings endanger your continued sobriety? Which?
151. Have your concepts of "God," however you define the term, changed since you came to SA?
152. How, if at all, do you get the concept of God to relate to you and your daily living?
153. Did you meditate on a regular basis before coming to SA. Do you now? If your practices have changed, describe what happened.
154. Did you pray on a regular basis before coming to SA? Do you now? If your practices have changed, describe what happened?
155. What about SA was most important for you during initial detoxification?
156. What about SA is most important to your maintaining freedom from nicotine?
157. Has your self-esteem improved?
158. Do you ever experience cravings for nicotine?
159. Do you have a relationship with a higher power?
160. Are you more in touch with your feelings now?
161. Have you gained weight?
162. How long do you expect to need meetings?
163. Do you use the phone to call someone when you need help?
164. Have you become involved in another 12-Step program since coming to SA?
165. Do you think that SA places enough emphasis on the Steps and spirituality?
166. What do you get from going to meetings?
167. What about SA would you change?

168. Do you feel that you (circle appropriate): Have more energy? Are less tired? Look better? Look younger?
169. Do you have different friends? Do you still associate with smoking friends?
170. Do you move away from smokers in public places?
171. Do you experience fewer mood swings?
172. Are you more tolerant?
173. Do you feel less volatile, edgy?
174. Would you say your general health is better? Describe.
175. Have you cultivated new interests? Describe.
176. Overall, are you more interested in life? Describe.
177. Do you think your sex life has benefited? Describe, if you wish.
178. Have old friends/relatives come back into your life?
179. How often do you crave a cigarette?
180. Have you substituted some positive action for smoking? Describe.
181. Did you have to give up some habits that accompanied smoking in order to give up/stay off nicotine?
182. Do you have more confidence in your inner self? In your outer self?
183. Do you think you're smarter, i.e. can comprehend faster? More?
184. Have you become evangelical about not smoking? About SA?
185. Is not using nicotine a daily struggle? An occasional one?
186. Do you know of others who have been inspired by you to quit?
187. Do you work with newcomers? How?
188. How many SA meetings per week do you attend?
189. Are you glad for your powerlessness over nicotine and for what it has brought into your life?
190. What do you feel when you see a person smoking?
191. Do you feel fortified by the recent public reactions against smoking? Irritated by them?
192. What, if anything, do you do for your health (besides not smoke!) that you didn't do before?
193. Tell us whatever else you think is important concerning "What it is like now" for you in your freedom from nicotine.

**The End of the
Questionnaire...
...and the Beginning
of the Big Book.**

LETTERS TO THE EDITORS

69.85 Years Old

Burbank CA 26 July 1988

I attend three meetings a week on the average now. I last smoked on October 22, 1986. I was attending the Sunday North Hollywood and the Saturday Sherman Oaks meetings for the five weeks preceeding my quit day in the Kaiser Stop Smoking Class. After that I added the Canoga Park Thursday meeting. When the Tuesday North Hollywood meeting started I added that, then the Wednesday Sherman Oaks. I have been active in all.

I feel my regular attendance at SA meetings and staying in-

volved is critical to my continued peace of mind and freedom from nicotine. I love SA. I love not smoking. I am 69.85 years old, but better late than never. **Jim F.**

[We had the pleasure of visiting with Jim on his second birthday, which coincided with the Southern California Intergroup's seventh birthday picnic. Jim was a delegate to the World Service Conference in San Francisco last April and it was nice to see him again.]

SOLVENT IN FLORIDA

Fort Lauderdale FL 1 June 1988

Patricia O. here reporting from the Fort Lauderdale chapter of SA, Wednesday evenings at the Gateway Club. Proud to report we've been in "business" eight weeks. Have netted about a dozen people weekly. Have a core of "committed five" around which we do our business meetings - half an hour before regular meeting.

We've been solvent *a la* Seventh Tradition re: rent and coffee. Rent's \$45 / month. And we're a miracle to this club, to be able to pay our first month's rent. Usually Gateway gives three months leeway for new groups.

A local hospital wants us to bring our SA meeting to their



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Thanks to Rodney of Maynard MA for the SA logo atop our masthead.

smoker's clinic. We're anxiously looking forward to that at the end of this month. Any input you can give us about beginner's meetings would be appreciated. **Patricia O.**

Please check the article on a newcomers' meeting on page 8.

IN MEMORIAM

Virginia Wright lost one lung to cancer and smoked for three more years. She then came to SA and never left. She was an enthusiastic supporter of SA, secretary of a meeting and she always had time for the newcomer. Virginia had over 18 months in SA when her cancer returned, and she accepted the pain bravely. Sometimes when people in SA become seriously ill, they wonder if it is "worth it" to continue not to smoke. Virginia knew it was worth it because the quality of her nicotine-free life made possible her spiritual strength and enhanced her conscious contact with her higher power.

Virginia died in June of this year, free from nicotine, with dignity, and spiritually whole. She was an inspiration to know and it was a great honor to have been her sponsor.

Phyllis L., San Francisco

SEVEN MINUTES WILL DIE WITHOUT YOUR HELP! SET UP TO NETWORK SA GROUPS ACROSS THE COUNTRY AND AROUND THE WORLD, SEVEN MINUTES DEPENDS ON READERS' LETTERS TO FILL ITS PAGES. PLEASE WRITE TODAY ABOUT YOUR GROUP & YOUR PROGRAM.

SUBSCRIPTIONS:

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*Dan Webster,
Sponsor*

"When I begin to sponsor a guy, I always see to it he has a copy of Webster's dictionary. There's no better sponsor than Dan Webster." With this quote from Brian M. of New York City begins a new SEVEN MINUTES column. Today' word: humble.

humble *adj* [ME, fr. OF, fr. L *humilis* low, humble, fr. *humus* earth] 1: not proud or haughty : not arrogant or assertive 2: reflecting, expressing, or offered in a spirit of deference or submission < a ^ apology > 3: ranking low in a hierarchy or scale: INSIGNIFICANT, UNPRETENTIOUS **syn** HUMBLE, MEEK, MODEST, LOWLY *shared meaning element* : lacking all signs of pride, aggressiveness, or self-assertiveness.

We tend to think of ourselves as humble or not humble in relation to other people. If we think of this definition as descriptive of ourselves in relation to the universe and to a higher power, the word sounds more positive.

Around the program,

humble and humility pick up synonyms beyond the dictionary's. One sponsor points out the etymology's reference to earth, saying that, when we become humble, we become like fertile ground ready for a seed to be planted. Others say that humility is teachability, that the mind has become receptive to the seed of a new knowledge.

Humble, in case you were wondering, is the key word in Step 7.

* * * * *

Overheard at a meeting's 8th Step discussion: "A friend once said I was a deep river filled with dead bodies. I didn't like that. But, once in the program, it began to seem true. The Steps help me clean se the river."

* * * * *

An oriental adage that seems to apply to the Steps as action or as intellectual exercise:

I see and I understand.
I hear and I understand.
I do and I know.

**Don't Forget The
Great American
Smokeout Nov. 17.
Adopt a Smoker!**

**Events &
Announcements**

**SAN DIEGO MARATHON
PLANNED FOR NOV 19**

San Diego CA Smokers Anonymous, together with the American Cancer Society, has scheduled an "All Day Continuous Marathon Meeting" for the Saturday after the Great American Smokeout. Meetings will be held from 11 a.m. until 9 p.m. at 2251 Old Town Avenue. Speakers include Rodger F., SA's Chairman and Jane R., SA Alternate Secretary. For information, call Jack T. @ (619) 562-6318.

BEGINNERS' MEETING

A new meeting directed at the beginner in SA and called "Newcomers and Others" began in San Francisco's Presbyterian Medical Center on Sept. 4.

The meeting format is speaker/discussion. Newcomers are given notepads to write questions on and the last 10 minutes of the meeting are devoted to answering them. For information contact Jay L. @ (415) 931-5250.

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No meeting schedule
this time. Revised
schedule next issue.