

## CONFERENCE NOTEBOOK

### Notes from the "Out of the Darkness" Conference

*Out of the Darkness*, Nashville's 4<sup>th</sup> annual SA conference was a great success. Each year the conference grows as more people come from all over the region. This year the event attracted around 180 attendees from both SA and S-Anon.

This year's conference featured two main guest speakers, David H. from Franklin, TN and Robert M. from Charleston, SC. From their own experience each shared stories of strength and hope. Those listening likely connected to different parts of their sharing, but I thought I'd share a few notable pieces that I remembered.

#### BUILDING A UNITED FELLOWSHIP

Jim M. called this a "Traditions Topic". He shared how in his mind, Step 1 states the problem, Step 2 states the solution, and Steps 3-12 are the road map to get there. He said that he views the traditions in much the same way- Tradition 1 says, "Our common welfare should come first; personal recovery depends upon A.A. unity." This presents the problem. Tradition 2 talks about "one ultimate authority- a loving God ...". This is the solution. Traditions 3-12 are all about reaching this solution and bringing unity.

Jim also said that the key to this unity is putting "principles before personalities". Once you understand that we're very much the same and working on the same principles we become unified.

#### SPONSORSHIP THE EASY WAY

Robert M. has a fairly structured program for working the steps that he uses with his sponsees. He meets all of them at the same time each week and they have to commit to working the program. Robert thinks a week is enough time to digest a step and then move forward. He moves his sponsees through all 12 steps in 12 weeks!

These are just some of the highlights from the conference. There were many great breakout sessions and wonderful sharing. *-Peter B.*



Traffic coming to the "Out of the Darkness" conference.\*

## GRATEFULNESS: THANKSGIVING

### Realizing the gifts of sobriety.

I have been asking God to change the way I see. I want to see God, myself, others and the world around me differently. As I ask for a spirit of Gratitude my prayer is being answered. I see books on how to be grateful. It is amazing to me that I have to be taught how to be grateful. Since the home I grew up in did not know how to be grateful, how would I know how? Recovery literature reminds me that being grateful gets rid of self-pity. Thankfulness helps me to see what I do have and not focus on what I don't have.

*(cont'd on other side)*

\*Okay, it wasn't *quite* that bad... ☺

*GRATEFULNESS: THANKSGIVING (cont'd from other side)*

Usually, this time of year I am focusing on what Holiday parties I am being invited to (or not being invited to-self pity is sneaky). Or how much money I will have to buy people presents (or how much money someone else will have to buy me presents-self absorption is sneaky too). I am asking for a spirit of acceptance and joy as I am with family this Thanksgiving and Christmas.

*"...I have to be  
taught how to  
be grateful."*

I do not want to tolerate people anymore; I want to accept them. There are two less family members to be with this Holiday season. So, I might not enjoy every member of my family, but I can respect them as God's creation. I realize that they need what recovery has given to me: extended family, acceptance, love and grace.

A few personal things I am grateful for are: having a meeting to go to everyday, my sponsees, my sponsor, that God is surely for the Sexaholic, that any time of the day I pray the Serenity Prayer that most likely someone somewhere in this world is praying it too, that I finally found Recovery, for 7 years of sobriety-one day at a time, for the Blue Book, White Book and you! *-Rita B.*

## "Out of the Darkness" Quotes

"We're all little bits of 'God Stuff' floating around the universe."

"Resentment is a poison that I drink hoping the other guy will die."

"If you pray for strength you know what you get? Exercise."

-Robert M. (Charleston, SC)

## "OUR COMMON WELFARE"

International Conference

GREENSBORO, NC

January 12,13 & 14, 2007

The North Carolina SA and S-Anon fellowships invite the international "family" to join us as we explore what it means to put aside self-seeking and experience the joy of being part of a vibrant and living fellowship. Visit [www.CommonWelfare2007.com](http://www.CommonWelfare2007.com) for more info.

## WOMEN'S MEETING

Wednesdays 6:00 P.M.

## WOMEN'S STEP STUDY

Wednesdays 7:15 P.M.