

STRAIGHT

NEWSLETTER from Cincinnati

JUNE 1985

ATTENTION ALL PARENTS

When sending mail or payments of any kind to Straight, please use our Post Office Box number instead of our street address. We have no mail delivered to the building, so anything sent to the street address is delayed in reaching us. Please direct all mail to:

Straight, Inc.
P.O. Box 7394
Milford, OH 45150

Also, please notify staff or the front desk of any changes in your address, home or work phone numbers, emergency contacts, etc. - as soon as possible.

One more point: The Parent to Parent Hotline is in operation to serve parents in the community who are having trouble with their teenagers - a place they can talk anonymously to another parent who has experienced the hurt and frustration they are feeling. Please share the number with your friends: 575-2712. The number is not to be used by parents in the program to call and ask questions.

THANKS*THANKS*THANKS

Many, many thanks to all the people who helped in such a variety of ways to make the Straight Garage Sale truly GREAT. Special thanks to co-chairmen Jack A. and Ed. S., and Mary A. and Pat S. Not only parents helped, but phasers and siblings, too.

Over \$3300 worth of merchandise was sold at the May 25-26 sale. The food stand was especially popular. Mary A. said, "Working on a project like this is a unique experience. It is fun to spend time with parents who all share a common bond. You get a lot closer to people." If you haven't become involved in something yet, parents, now is the time to do it. It is important for your kids to see you involved, but it is even more important for your own growth.

"For an alcoholic, the best day drinking is not as good as the hardest day sober."
a common saying among A.A. members

WHAT IS REAL?

"What is REAL," asked the Rabbit one day, when they were lying side by side near the nursery fender, before Nana came to tidy the room. "Does it mean having things that buzz inside you and a stick-out handle?"

"Real isn't how you are made," said the Skin Horse. "It's a thing that happens to you. When a child loves you for a long, long time, not just to play with, but REALLY loves you, then you become Real."

"Does it hurt?" asked the Rabbit.

"Sometimes," said the Skin Horse, for he was always truthful. "When you are Real you don't mind being hurt."

"Does it happen all at once, like being wound up," he asked, "or bit by bit?"

"It doesn't happen all at once," said the Skin Horse. "You become. It takes a long time. That's why it doesn't often happen to people who break easily, or have sharp edges, or who have to be carefully kept. Generally, by the time you are Real, most of your hair has been loved off, and your eyes drop out and you get loose in the joints and very shabby. But these things don't matter at all because once you are Real you can't be ugly, except to people who don't understand."

from THE VELVETEEN RABBIT by Margery Williams

CHAIN OF COMMAND

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Winifred (Wini) Boyd

Jerry Delaney

Executive Trainee

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Group Staff Supervisor

Eileen F [REDACTED]

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Brian L [REDACTED]

Todd B [REDACTED]

Theresa R [REDACTED]

Cathy P [REDACTED]

Junior Staff

Amie V [REDACTED]

Greg C [REDACTED]

Jenni B [REDACTED]

Tom A [REDACTED]

Maren J [REDACTED]

Steve K [REDACTED]

Dawn S [REDACTED]

JoAnne W [REDACTED]

Staff Trainees

Todd A [REDACTED]

Jay P [REDACTED]

Kristin D [REDACTED]

Rodney R [REDACTED]

Tom D [REDACTED]

Kathy H [REDACTED]

Tony W [REDACTED]

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Heather S [REDACTED]

Ken K [REDACTED]

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Joyce S [REDACTED]

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Secretary

Linda S [REDACTED]

Receptionists

Peg K [REDACTED]

Barb S [REDACTED]

Administrative Coordinator

Pat W [REDACTED]

Newsletter

Editor: Marty C. 891-7429

Assoc. Ed.: Betsy S. 561-9430

PASS IT ON

It only takes a spark
To get a fire going
And soon all those around
Will warm up to its glowing.
That's how it is with God's love
Once you experience it.
You spread God's love to everyone,
You want to pass it on.

What a wonderful time is spring
When all the trees are budding.
The birds begin to sing,
The flowers start their blooming.
That's how it is with God's love
Once you experience it.
It's fresh like spring, you want to sing,
You want to pass it on.

I wish for you my friend
This happiness that I found.
You can depend on Him,
It matters not where you're bound.
I'll shout it from the mountain tops,
I want my world to know
That the love of God has come to me.
I want to pass it on.

BOOSTER CLUB EARNINGS

The total amount earned by the Booster Club for the first three weeks in May is \$978.74.

LIVING IN THE PRESENT

I believe that only one person in a thousand knows the trick of really living in the present. Most of us spend 59 minutes an hour living in the past with regret for lost joys, or shame for things badly done (both utterly useless and weakening) or in a future which we either long for or dread. The only way to live is to accept each minute as an unrepeatable miracle, which is exactly what it is - a miracle and unrepeatable.

by Storm Jameson

NO TALKING BEHIND BACKS: WHAT DOES IT MEAN?

No talking behind backs, positive, negative or neutral, either directly or by implication. This is probably the most misunderstood, the most widely interpreted, the most baffling to parents, the most vexing and one of the most important rules in the program.

What it means is: no one is to say a word about another person in the program unless that person is in his/her presence and can hear every word. Exceptions include parents discussing their own children, siblings discussing their parents and their siblings in the program.

Parents may mention another parent in business discussions where needed for information exchange or communication purposes. In other words, talk about business, period. Nothing about the family situation.

Parents and kids may use others' names when working out permissions or drop offs. For example, one Mom to another, "Jane C. and I are having lunch tomorrow. Can you meet us at the restaurant?" Kid to Dad, "Ralph and I are working out a permission to go to the Zoo. Would you like to call Mr. J. and come with us?"

Parents and kids may use the names of others when working out host-outs, drop-offs, and other common sense situations. Information beyond that which is needed to accomplish the purpose isn't allowed to be given.

Parents may use one another's names when discussing Straight projects, if needed. A new parent in the program may go up to another parent and ask to have his committee chairman, John K., for example, pointed out or introduced to him:

Parents are not allowed to ask where another parent is if they haven't seen them in a while. That is the purpose of dime therapy - so we can call and keep up with each other out of care.

Kids in the program may tell their parents how they related in group and how they felt about it. They may not tell parents how anyone else is doing, how the group as a whole is doing or in any other way talk behind group's back. If they have a sibling in group, they may say how they feel about their relationship, but only in a general way and in no way indicate what that sibling has said in group or how she/he is doing on their program. Nor are parents allowed to ask about any of these things.

As we put this rule into our life, we are responsible for developing our own conscience about it. Applying "common sense" is an easy way to circumvent the spirit of the rule if that is our intention.

Using our MI's is a good way to search ourselves and find out why we're breaking the rule. Reaching out to our group is a way to get the help we need to change.

We also have a responsibility to other parents. We need to consider if following our conscience may be a stumbling block to another who may need more strength in this area. No talking behind backs can be a springboard to enormous self-improvement. It is part of the strong foundation of the program that is saving our children's lives.

from the Straight-Atlanta Newsletter

HOW TO HAVE A COFFEE

"Have a coffee?" you say. Well, sure, a nice social get-together for neighbors, friends, church gang or bridge club is fine. But....a STRAIGHT coffee? Yes! There are several good reasons to have a "Straight" coffee. It's a great way to answer questions of friends and neighbors who would like to know what's going on, and a good way to let them know the "what, why, and how" concerning your involvement in Straight. Having a coffee is an easy way to inform parents of your child's druggie friends about the drug epidemic and how it may be affecting them and their family. Community awareness may be raised if those in positions of leadership, authority, or administrative roles or professionals are invited. They'll learn firsthand about the best help around for hurting families, the victims of drug abuse, and chemical dependency. Of course, you're using Step #7 and spreading your own awareness.

"Okay, that sounds good, but how do I do it?" It's easy. First, choose a date and time. Pick a time when the group you invite would be able to come. For example, all non-working moms you could invite during the weekday. For a group of men and women who work, an evening, Saturday morning, or Sunday afternoon would be good. Second, call the building to schedule the date and time and to receive the "how to" information packet. The speakers, who are parents and phasers, will be set up for you. Third, get out your invitations. Write or call people early, several weeks in advance and plan to follow up with a call about the middle of the week before the coffee. In the information packet there are sample letters which others have used to give you ideas. Think about inviting community officials, doctors, police, teachers, ministers, psychiatrists, friends, neighbors.

Again, be sure to follow up on the first invitation. Some people, especially parents of druggie friends, may feel threatened and scared. Even if they don't come to the coffee you'll have a good opportunity to talk with them because of the invitation.

Now, you're all set. The day of the coffee, put on the coffee, tea or lemonade. Have a simple snack or dessert. I had fun doing it together with another family once. We held the coffee at my home. I served the coffee, some fruit juice and my friend brought some casserole and coffeecake. It was a Saturday brunch.

As guests arrive introduce yourself (host and/or hostess) and the guest parents and young people from Straight. When people are seated you basically explain the purpose of the coffee - to share the awareness you've gained at Straight and the help available. Then the parent speakers talk about what it was like living with their druggie kid in the past, what it is like now, what changes they've made as a family. The young people introduce themselves, their drugs, their past, changes they've made and goals for the future. Sound familiar? After this have time for discussion, questions and answers.

So....next time we're asked in Open Meeting "How many have had or been involved in a coffee?" lots and lots of hands should go up. Have a coffee and feel satisfied that you've spread some awareness and reached out a helping hand to others.

by Betsy S.

NFL ALUMNI EVENT

Soon the parent group will be called upon to sell tickets to the NFL Alumni Celebrity Golf Outing Banquet. Straight has been selected to receive the proceeds of this charity outing this year - as much as \$50,000, maybe more. Parents, let's all pitch in to do our best for this event - and for Straight.

7-Step News

MORE APRIL 7-STEPPERS

A sincere and HUGE apology to the group of people who 7-stepped on April 5th. Your names were inadvertently left out of last month's newsletter. Congratulations to Steve K., Carolyn K., Ned U., and JoAnne W. and to their families.

STILL MORE 7-STEPPERS

At the May 17th Open Meeting, the announcement of six new 7-Steppers was celebrated. Congratulations to Kathy H., Amy H., Jill H., Heather S., Diane L., and Dave D. and to their families.

7-STEP PROFILE - JULIE H. [REDACTED]

Julie lives in Lansing, Michigan and attends Lansing Community College. She was working toward an associates degree in Psychology but recently decided to open her career goals to other areas. Presently she works for the media department on campus and is looking for a full-time summer job. Going to school, work, and attending meetings keeps Julie busy, but in her free time she runs, rides her bike, and likes to lay out in the sun. She enjoys outdoor sports and hopes to do a lot of swimming this summer in Michigan's beautiful lakes, along with some camping.

Nineteen-year-old Julie has been 7-Stepped for 19 months after being in the program for 10 months. She used drugs for 4 years. Since 7-Stepping, Julie says one of the biggest changes she has seen has been "my inner reliance on my higher power. God has become my best friend and supporter. I had a hard time finding out who Julie is and what she feels comfortable with, and my God is guiding me to this freedom point. My whole life I have wanted to please others. I've been discovering that I am the only person who needs to be happy with me, and happiness comes from within."

Narcotics Anonymous and Alcoholics Anonymous are Julie's support groups. She attends about four meetings a week and calls a sponsor usually daily. She has two sponsors and "they are two of my best friends." Julie plans to continue with college full-time in the fall. She hopes to continue growing, doing her best each day. "For so long I was striving for perfection. High expectations can get me high just as quick as low ones, so I am striving for a balance. It is nice to have a future today to talk about."

Julie said she would tell a new 7-Stepper to "Get hooked up with AA/NA as soon as possible, and get a sponsor. I couldn't grow and stay sober without my meetings. I can't handle it alone and I don't need to anymore. I hope everyone can find the freedom that I've found in sobriety."

CAROL A WINNER

Congratulations to Carol K. [REDACTED] who recently won a \$50 US Savings Bond from the Cincinnati Enquirer in their Classified Story Contest. Students created a story based on a classified ad personally selected from The Enquirer or Post. The entries were judged by a panel of editors and teachers. Carol's story appeared in the May 26th Enquirer.

STEP ALIVE '85

It's almost here - The 7-Step National Convention in Cincinnati - June 28, 29, and 30th. Be sure to get your reservations in right away if you have not done so.

WHAT MY BROTHER WAS LIKE IN THE PAST

My brother used to be a druggie. The drugs he did were pot, alcohol, glue, liquid paper, and aspirin. He used to run away a lot and yell and scream at my parents. I remember the first night he ran away. I stayed up and waited for him to come home. Finally at about 12:00 midnight or 1:00 AM he came home with the police. I was real, real scared. I remember another time when I just got back from a soccer game and I went downstairs to watch T.V. with Jeff, my brother. I noticed something weird about him. Then I saw that he was throwing up! I felt scared. I ran to my mom screaming, "Jeff is throwing up! Jeff is throwing up!" Later, I found out that he drank some wine.

Now my brother is in a drug rehab called Straight, Inc. He has been there 18 months (maybe more). He has run away 4 times. He is nicer to me now. I like the way he is now. I love him. I am not scared of him anymore. I am not scared of him running away anymore.

In the future, I think he will seventh-step. This means he will come out of the program and stay home for good. I think I will also go to a lot of places with him. I can just see us walking hand in hand through the mall thinking how great we are and that we don't have to do drugs to have fun.

by Megan C., a sibling

FOR SALE

Ladies 10-speed bike. Excellent condition. \$50.

Also - 14 x 70 Mobile Home. 1.1 miles from Straight. 1983 Redman Empire. 3 bedrooms, 2 baths. Call Pat or Lyn, 575-0508 or 575-2673.

WANTED TO RENT

House - 3 bedroom, or apartment. Single parent, 2 boys, mid-price range. 20-30 minutes from Straight. Call Rosemary K.-home:742-5215, work: 961-3240



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STRAIGHT BIKERS TO RIDE 100 MILES

Several Straight families are riding in the MS 100 this weekend, June 1 and 2. Bikers sign up sponsors and the money collected goes to help fight Multiple Sclerosis. The riders will begin at Kenwood and wind around to the Countryside YMCA in Lebanon. Once there, they will participate in a wide variety of sporting events (or maybe just read a book), spend the night at the Y and bike back the next day for a total distance of 100 miles. Good luck to all participants.

STRAIGHT RUNNERS JOURNEY TO DAYTON

A contingent of "Straight" runners participated in the 8-mile Ponderosa Spring River Classic run at Dayton, Ohio on May 4th. Everyone had a great time, competing, being together and sharing their awareness. Marty C. placed fourth among the women in her age bracket and finished ahead of the male contingent from Straight. Running is an excellent rejuvenator of body and spirit and a good excuse for getting together. Anyone that would like to participate in some informal fun running in the greater Cincinnati area this summer is invited to contact Dick B. (489-2349), Gary S. (793-7790), or Marty C. (891-7429).

submitted by Dick B.

WHAT STRAIGHT MEANS TO ME

Straight means a place to come for comfort and assurance; where I can relate to people and feel wanted. I came here with a bad attitude and had trouble accepting the program, but there are people who looked beyond the mask I put up and saw how scared I really am. They came back to give me love when I had rejected their friendship and hugs. I want to make amends to them for I really love Straight and believe that this is where it is and I want to be a real great Straight mom. So please accept my apology and amends and thank you again for not giving up on me when I was hurting the most. I especially want to thank Staff for keeping me talking and not letting me sign my son out. God bless you all - it's no fun to cry alone.

Rosemary K.

A CHILD'S COMMANDMENTS TO PARENTS

1. My hands are small; please don't expect perfection whenever I make a bed, draw a picture, or throw a ball. My legs are short; please slow down so that I can keep up with you.
2. My eyes have not seen the world as yours have; please let me explore safely; don't restrict me unnecessarily.
3. My feelings are tender; please be sensitive to my needs; don't nag me all day long. You wouldn't want to be nagged for your inquisitiveness.
4. I need your encouragement, but not your praise to grow. Please go easy on the criticism; remember, you can criticize the things I do without criticizing the things I do without criticizing me.

Adapted from PARENTHOOD WITHOUT HASSELS*
WELL ALMOST. by Kevin Leman

JUNE 1985

| Sunday | Monday | Tuesday | Wednesday | Thursday | Friday | Saturday |
|---|--|---|-----------|---|---|--|
| <p style="font-size: small;">MAY 1985</p> <p style="font-size: x-small;">S M T W T F S</p> <p style="font-size: x-small;">1 2 3 4</p> <p style="font-size: x-small;">5 6 7 8 9 10 11</p> <p style="font-size: x-small;">12 13 14 15 16 17 18</p> <p style="font-size: x-small;">19 20 21 22 23 24 25</p> <p style="font-size: x-small;">26 27 28 29 30 31</p> | <p style="font-size: small;">JULY 1985</p> <p style="font-size: x-small;">S M T W T F S</p> <p style="font-size: x-small;">1 2 3 4 5 6</p> <p style="font-size: x-small;">7 8 9 10 11 12 13</p> <p style="font-size: x-small;">14 15 16 17 18 19 20</p> <p style="font-size: x-small;">21 22 23 24 25 26 27</p> <p style="font-size: x-small;">28 29 30 31</p> | | | | <p>OPEN MEETING</p> <p style="margin-top: 10px;">6:30 PM</p> | <p>RAPS: 1</p> <p>Siblings ^{10AM}</p> <p>7-Steppers 7PM</p> <p>7-Step Parents Only - 7PM</p> |
| 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 |
| | <p>OPEN MEETING</p> <p style="margin-top: 5px;">6:30 PM</p> <p style="font-size: x-small; margin-top: 10px;">HOLIDAY (Republic of Ireland)</p> | <p>RAP:</p> <p style="margin-top: 5px;">7-Steppers 6 PM</p> | | | <p>OPEN MEETING</p> <p style="margin-top: 10px;">6:30 PM</p> | <p>RAPS: 8</p> <p>Siblings 10 AM</p> <p>7-Steppers 7 PM</p> |
| 9 | 10 | 11 | 12 | 13 | 14 | 15 |
| | <p>OPEN MEETING</p> <p style="margin-top: 10px;">6:30 PM</p> | <p>RAP:</p> <p style="margin-top: 5px;">7-Steppers 6 PM</p> | | | <p>OPEN MEETING</p> <p style="margin-top: 10px;">6:30 PM</p> <p style="font-size: x-small; margin-top: 5px;">FLAG DAY</p> | <p>RAPS:</p> <p>Siblings 10 AM</p> <p>7-Steppers & Parents 7 PM</p> |
| 16 | 17 | 18 | 19 | 20 | 21 | 22 |
| FATHERS DAY | <p>OPEN MEETING</p> <p style="margin-top: 10px;">6:30 PM</p> | <p>RAP:</p> <p style="margin-top: 5px;">7-Steppers 6 PM</p> | | <p>RAP:</p> <p style="margin-top: 5px;">5th Phasers & Parents - 6:15 PM</p> | <p>OPEN MEETING</p> <p style="margin-top: 10px;">6:30 PM</p> | <p>RAPS: 22</p> <p>Siblings 10 AM</p> <p>7-Steppers - 7 PM</p> |
| 23 | 24 | 25 | 26 | 27 | 28 | 29 |
| 30 | <p>OPEN MEETING</p> <p style="margin-top: 10px;">6:30 PM</p> | <p>RAP:</p> <p style="margin-top: 5px;">7-Steppers 6 PM</p> | | <p>RAP:</p> <p style="margin-top: 5px;">4th Phasers & Parents - 6:15 PM</p> | <p>OPEN MEETING</p> <p style="margin-top: 10px;">6:30 PM</p> | <p>RAPS: 29</p> <p>Siblings 10 AM</p> <p>7-Steppers 7 PM</p> |