

4th EDITION 2009

NEWSLETTER



SURVIVORS OF INCEST ANONYMOUS
WORLD SERVICE OFFICE
P.O. Box 190
Benson, MD 21018
(410) 893-3322
www.siawso.org
<http://siawso.flyingcart.com>

MISSION STATEMENT:

We empower those who have survived child sexual abuse (who are not abusing any child), who want to become survivors and thrivers. Using our experience, strength and hope, we do this by:

- offering referrals to SIA, self-help, support groups
- providing information to start SIA groups, intergroups, and national service offices
- creating and distributing SIA information tools (literature, newsletter, electronic media)
- offering a speakers' bureau
- guiding SIA's public information efforts worldwide

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RECOVERY WORK

LINDA'S THOUGHTS

CONSENT

As always, take what you like and leave the rest.

In light of media coverage concerning "consensual incest", I'd like to share my thoughts.

Others' denial need not direct our paths. We may be further along in recovery than others. Their denial can be frightening because we may feel as if we are losing ground in our own recovery. Just because someone can act or sing, doesn't guarantee that they are more knowledgeable about abuse. If they are still looking at the abuse through

the eyes of a child, they will have the facts concerning shame and blame distorted. Our opinion is sufficient as well as superior to many who are still minimizing, rationalizing and/or taking the blame.

I look at people who are clearly in denial with sadness and prayer. I've been in denial. Some days, I wish I could get my denial back! (That was a joke.) If I get scared when I hear someone else's denial, I know I have some doubt in my own mind as to the veracity of their claim and perhaps about my own. I can't remove an actress' doubt, but I do have the power to remove my own.

Most of us, one way or the other, believed that we magically controlled the child sexual abuse through "consent," or we may have believed that we enticed the abuser; the list is endless. When we tell ourselves that we caused the abuse, we are in denial. Whether others call it that or not, it is still denial. Children don't cause pedophilia! I often ask people, "Pretend you walk into a room and someone is doing to your own son/daughter/beloved niece or nephew what was done to you. How would you react?" If it's inappropriate behavior for someone to do this to your own child, niece or nephew, it was inappropriate for someone to do it to you.

DRUGGED CHILD

If a child is drugged, they may not remember the abuse. That doesn't mean that it didn't happen quite the opposite. It suggests suspicion that something else, inappropriate, is being covered up. Why would an adult drug a child? And what healthy parent would ever want to engage in sexual activity with their child regardless of the age of the child? Parents have power even over their adult children. Psychological power is just as real and powerful as physical prowess.

CONSENT

Consent, according to the dictionary, means, "voluntary allowance of what is planned or done by another; permission, agreement and acceptance as to opinion or a course of action." Equal power and ability to consent must be present for someone to consent. A child cannot consent anymore than a comatose patient can consent. Both minds are unable to understand what they are "consenting". Whoever has the ability to say "yes" must also have the ability to say "no". Was there a viable choice? I don't think so.

And for sure, the sexual abuse is not for the benefit of the child. The adult knows what s/he wants and is able to manipulate a child to give it to her/him. It's very easy to manipulate a child, especially if the

abuser is in a position of authority or there is an age difference.

AGE DIFFERENCE

If the abuser was old enough to baby sit us, there wasn't equal power. However, we can't always look at age. I've spoken to victims who were actually older than their perpetrator, but there wasn't an equal balance of power in the family structure. In one instance, when it was revealed that she was pregnant by her brother, she was shunned, shamed and ostracized as one who wanted to destroy him. I believe she was victimized by her brother and her family even though she was the older sibling.

OVER-SEXUALIZED CHILDREN

Do we become over sexualized as children? Of course. How could we not? If a child sexually approached me, I would assume that child had been abused by someone. I would *not* take advantage of the situation. I would not *want* to do that! I would get that child help. I would assume s/he is acting out something that happened to her/him that s/he can't understand. I'd find a therapist, call the police and follow through making sure that the child got the needed help.

WHAT TO DO WHEN TRIGGERED BY OTHERS' SHARING

If I smile on Little Linda and comfort her by explaining that she was powerless as a child, then she's not powerless anymore. Why? Because we aren't little anymore. I, the adult, have the mental ability to heal her. We're making choices as to how we will view the abuse. I will treat Little Linda with the same respect I'd give any other child on this planet. I always sign off "Be gentle with yourself". If that means, turning the station when someone on TV or radio is in denial, then we need to do that. If our little girl or little boy feels inappropriate guilt, we can:

- 1) call an SIA friend or sponsor
- 2) call your therapist
- 3) journal
- 4) pray to your higher power

My *loving* Higher Power would never want a child feeling guilty about being abused!

Be gentle with yourself,

Linda D.

Co-founder/Executive Director

See you at the SIA retreat in February!

your **group, intergroup, or individuals** in your group, would like to make a tax-deductible donation, please do so now. Any amount, large or small, will be greatly appreciated!!

Please consider supporting your World Service Office! **If groups don't support their World Service Office, who will?** We don't accept outside funding.

Your group may consider **passing the basket a second time** or have a **special container** for donations to the WSO.

SPECIAL THANKS to the following **6 groups** that donated in the last 3 months. The WSO is extremely grateful for the financial support:

PHONE MEETINGS: Corsicana TX. phone meeting

CALIFORNIA: Pasadena Monday; * **San Jose CA-087;** SIA Oakland Mandana Way, 6 pm; Monday Pasadena.

MARYLAND: Fallston Meeting;

TENNESSEE: * **Men's Sunday Nashville**

TEXAS: Corsicana

- * **\$100 or more**
- ** **\$200 or more**
- *** **\$300 or more**

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**MATCHING GIFT?
AUTOMATIC DEDUCTION?
DONATIONS FOR YOUR TIME?**

Does your employer have a matching gift policy? When you send in \$50.00, your employer will match it. So, **your \$50.00 donation becomes \$100.00!** Please check it out.

Does your employer have automatic deductions for non-profits? If so, please consider **designating SIA World Service Office as the beneficiary.**

☺**Thank you** for anything you can do to help!

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WHAT DO YOU THINK?

Some have suggested that we change our name. There are pros and cons. Below are the two we hear most often:

* Our name has been in the public for 26+ years so we shouldn't change it.

* Our name keeps people away because they see the word "incest" and don't believe it applies to them.

So,
How does your group feel about changing the name?

Does your group have a suggested name change?

Some have suggested a sub-title: e.g. Survivors of Incest Anonymous: For Adult Survivors of Child Sexual Abuse

Please write down your thoughts and send them to the WSO or send an email to:

edleparr01@comcast.net

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**RECOVERY MEDALLIONS AND LITERATURE
ON SALE**

Visit <http://siawso.flyingcart.com> for more details!

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VOLUNTEERS – MOST APPRECIATED

We love volunteers at the World Service Office. General office work is needed. If you can get to Exit 74 off of I-95, we would love to have you help out. **If you can volunteer once**, we can use the help! Please call 410.893.3322 and leave a message for Linda. (The # button by-passes the long answering machine message.)

Thank you!

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Looking for Help Chairing a Meeting?

Why not use SIA literature to start the meeting? There's a wealth of wonderful, healing information in our literature.

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**DID YOU MOVE? DID YOUR AREA CODE OR
PHONE NUMBER CHANGE?**

If so, please notify us so we can save on postage, and survivors will be able to find your group.

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