

# **General Service Association of ABA**

## **President's Report 14 March 2007**

**Tonight marks the fourth anniversary** of the General Service Association, and a pivotal point in our Society's history. Tonight will see the retirement of eight Board members, including seven founding members who have completed their second and final term of office. The entire Executive Committee will be replaced during tonight's election, and a second chapter in the story of the GSA will begin. It is therefore with an odd mixture of feelings that I present this, my final report.

It is clear that infancy has passed, both for the Board and for ABA as a whole, that we stand tonight at the entry point of a new phase of growth and development that can only be successfully directed by God alone. ABA and the General Service Association, the trusted servant of ABA, will need to look ever more steadfastly to our collective Higher Power as our sole source of wisdom and strength, and to listen attentively and wait with calm and patience for the guidance that only this Power is capable of giving us.

Although this could be a point where we lapse into fear, or even panic, and thence into absurd and futile attempts to control our growth process, there is no need for any of us to do that. Instead, we can contemplate the glorious evidence of how much we are loved and cared for by God, and sink into a deep and certain knowing that this amazing Power will *always* care for us, if we simply allow that to happen. If ABA ever fails, it will be because we are consumed from within by the cancer of fear, our collective disease, not because God's power is withdrawn!

### **GROWTH OVER THE PAST YEAR**

Let's begin, then, by examining the evidence that we have a God whose perfect love casts out all fear.

Interest in ABA around the world is increasing exponentially, and we at the GSA office watch it openmouthed with awe, even as we scramble to keep up with the demands resulting from this interest. Phone calls come in daily with one request or another, mostly for guidance and printed materials to start new meetings, and for long-distance sponsorship for people who are desperately seeking recovery. Thirty-three packages were sent out over the past year to individuals desiring to start new meetings, in locations as diverse as Australia, Ireland, Israel, and Dubai in the United Arab Emirates. This brings to seventy-five the total number of start-up packages that have been sent since we began providing them three years ago.

We currently have twenty-four registered meetings and Groups around the world, including six new registrations occurring over the past year (one locally, five in the U.S. in Texas, Kentucky, Florida, New York, and a telephone meeting based in Iowa). To date, only three meetings have folded (two in the past year, one prior to that). We are aware of many well-established ABA meetings, in a variety of locations, that have not yet registered with us.

The way ABA spreads is generally predictable. Someone stumbles across a meeting while visiting away from home, then calls us because they want to carry the message to their hometown. Or a copy of our textbook falls into their hands through a friend who knows they need help, or through a counsellor in a treatment centre, and they almost immediately know they are being guided to start a meeting in the city where they live. Invariably, the phone calls we get are from people who are on fire with enthusiasm for the ABA approach to recovery. Typical statements are, "I've been bulimic for thirty years, and this is the only thing that has allowed me to stop!" Or, "I've been in another Fellowship for twenty years, feeling like a failure because I just couldn't get it. Now, because of ABA, I'm sober at last." Or, "I've been sober in AA for ten years, feeling like a fraud because my food is so crazy and I'm so obsessed with my body, and now my Higher Power is working through the ABA book to give me hope that I can recover from my eating disorder too."

From every quarter we hear eloquent testimony about God's handiwork. For example, a young Israeli woman called in the middle of the night (confused about the time zones!) and spoke movingly about healing from anorexia through our approach and our textbook, which had been given to her by a friend who had acquired it while traveling in Australia! "I've been in hospital, and it didn't help. But when I got your book, I surrendered and allowed God to feed me through my mother. She's still doing that. It's not easy, but God is giving me the strength to eat, one meal at a time. We have a meeting here since two months ago, and there are eight of us participating. We are all sober except one young girl, and she's in the hospital right now."

Clearly, God is allowing the seed of our textbook to sprout wherever he chooses, and God himself is providing the water, sunshine, and fertilizer to tenderly care for these young shoots. It is truly fascinating to witness the way God does this. ABA cannot fail, with such a Power in charge of the master plan!

The mushrooming distribution of our textbook provides a further index of ABA's success, with nearly 1400 copies sold and shipped over the past fiscal year. A fifth printing of the text is now in progress to replenish our dwindling inventory. A significant number of these books are purchased by ten or twelve U.S. treatment centres that are among our regular customers. Gurze Books, our U.S. distributor, complains that it cannot keep the book in stock, and frequently places orders for forty to sixty copies. (Most of these books are sold individually to U.S. customers ordering it through bulimia.com, the Gurze on-line catalogue of eating-disorder literature.)

I had an opportunity to personally carry the ABA message to Philadelphia in November, and was hosted by folks who are working to establish the Fellowship more solidly in the Eastern U.S. After my visit, a meeting sprang up in Bryn Athyn, PA, and has been flourishing ever since. Some ABA members came down from New York City to meet me while I was there, and invited me on the spur of the moment to speak at their regular meeting three days later. This I did, and was deeply moved to address twenty or thirty women and men crammed into a tiny

apartment high above Manhattan. What a joy to meet them and to share our mutual experience, strength and hope over dinner after the meeting!

Our growth has also been shown in the increasing number of people who come to Edmonton to acquire first-hand experience of how ABA works here. We have hosted visitors from New Zealand, Luxembourg, England, both eastern and western Canada, and several U.S. locations. These folks are welcomed into our homes, transported to meetings, supplied with contacts and phone numbers, and lovingly treated as the precious treasures that we know them to be. God brings them into our midst, and local ABA members here rise to the occasion of their visits in a stunningly generous way. Thank you to all who have participated in hosting these folks, and in taking them on as long-distance sponsees after their departure. The real gift is ours, as we all know, for our sobriety deepens immeasurably when we stretch ourselves to attend to a fellow sufferer.

### **BOARD ENDEAVORS OVER THE PAST YEAR**

Much of our work will be detailed in the individual Committee reports tonight, so I will mention only a few of these activities here.

The Literature & Outreach Committee completed the production of our new pamphlet, "ABA For the Compulsive Eater" and of a new CD set comprising the speakers at our 2006 Retreat. This Committee also prepared a January mailout to all our Groups dealing with a number of issues pertaining to ABA unity.

The Personnel Committee has been fully occupied with hiring, and then replacing, an Administrative Assistant to assume primary responsibility for the growing workload of our office.

The Retreat & Conference Committee did a spectacular job organizing our Fourth Annual Retreat, our largest one to date, which hosted ABA members from three continents at Pigeon Lake last October. It has already begun planning for our Fifth Annual Retreat at Pigeon Lake Oct 20-22, 2007, and for our First International Conference Aug 28-31, 2008, to be held at Providence Renewal Centre here in Edmonton. This Conference will celebrate ABA's 15th Anniversary.

The Phone Committee has been bravely carried by Donna K, who has attempted to find long-distance sponsors and check-in buddies for the large number of people requesting them.

Finally, the Public Information Committee continues to distribute ABA posters and pamphlets and to organize speakers to provide information about ABA wherever it is requested.

Board activities as a whole over the past year include development of Terms of Reference for each of our Committees. Three of these have already received Board approval, while two remain to be approved by the new Board at their first meeting.

The Board has made a number of important financial decisions, including the hiring of an Administrative Assistant and the recent formal acquisition of rented office space to warehouse and ship our books and other merchandise, to receive calls and faxes (and, in the near future, emails) from all over the world, and to house our new computer system.

! ively discussions have occurred over many issues, for example liability insurance \-jf ABA-sponsored events, solicitation of financial support from our Groups, and establishment of a local Intergroup structure.

## **CHALLENGES TO OUR UNITY**

One of the Board's most important tasks was accomplished last spring through its debate and unanimous decision around how best to welcome compulsive eaters who may find recovery through the ABA Fellowship. The Board opted to complete and distribute the new pamphlet addressing the compulsive eater, and to definitively *halt* any further move to broaden ABA's name or existing literature at this time (including the "*Preamble For Meetings*" on pp 142-148 of our textbook) to further address compulsive eating disorder. The Board's decision rested upon **four interconnected core issues**: the content of ABA's First Step; ABA's singleness of purpose (Tradition 5); the overwhelming importance of the good of the whole (Traditions 1 and 4); and the vital importance of remaining autonomous and independent of other 12-Step Fellowships, even those dealing with eating disorders (Traditions 6 and 10).

Because this matter is so important and carries within it the potential for dissension among us, I will take the unusual step of expanding upon it in this Report, which will be distributed to all registered Groups around the world and to all future registrants. Let's look at the four points mentioned above, one at a time.

### **1. ABA's Step One: "We admitted we were powerless over our insane eating practices—that our lives had become unmanageable."**

ABA originated solely because **anorexics** could rarely find recovery in pre-existing eating-disorder Fellowships. Anorexics were dying in the rooms of those Fellowships, so a merciful God gave us the ABA Fellowship in 1993 and our unique First Step in 1995. No other eating-disorder Fellowship shares our First Step; all others state they are "powerless over food."

We in ABA are not powerless over food! We are not addicted to food! We do not talk about "using food"! **Our "drug" is not food, but rather the insane eating (and purging and exercise) practices that allow us to feel in control of our food and weight and body shape** (ABA text, p 62). That drug is what we in ABA must give up, one day at a time, in order to recover.

This crystal-clear definition of our drug, along with our single, pristinely simple definition of **"sobriety"—surrender to a Higher Power of all control over our food and our weight and our exercise and our body shape** (ABA text, p 64)—is the *only* thing that truly distinguishes our Program from that of other eating-disorder Fellowships. It is the one precious gift that God gave exclusively to ABA in

1995. It is what attracts people to our book and to the rooms of ABA. It is what allows us to fully and deeply recover, physically and emotionally and spiritually, from anorexia and bulimia.

We do not use the negative concept of "abstinence" from specific foods or even from specific eating practices. We use only the positive concept of sobriety. And sobriety is the same for all of us in ABA, regardless of the specific way any one of us as individuals manifested our disease. Sobriety is *not* eliminating specific foods, nor adherence to a food plan through willpower, nor is it surrender to another person's control over our food. We are only sober if we have **surrendered to the will of God** regarding our food **and** our weight and our exercise **and** our body shape. A sober person is one who is surrendered, one who has **given over control to God**, in all four areas.

We all learn that Step One is the "100% Step" (ABA text, p 85). Unless the individual lives in Step One 100% of the time, relapse *will* occur, sooner or later. And unless ABA as a whole resides in the truth of our First Step 100% of the time, resisting the lie (for us) of "powerlessness over food," we as a Fellowship will collapse and die.

**If ABA survives, it will be because we stand united on our First Step.**

**2. ABA's singleness of purpose as embodied in Tradition Five by our pioneers in 1995: "Each group has but one primary purpose—to carry its message to the anorexic or bulimic who still suffers."**

From these truths, detailed above, about Step One, we arrive at **the vital and utterly unique core of the ABA Program: Its very nature, its true essence, the one thing that sets ABA apart from other Fellowships, is to define our "drug" and our sobriety solely by the anorexic side of the coin of eating disorders.**

**The ABA Program is tailormade for anorexics, who could identify with no other 12-Step Fellowship!**

All people in 12-Step recovery know that the key element allowing the miracle of healing to unfold is the phenomenon of **identification**. All members of the group stand united on the First Step. Without that, recovery simply cannot happen. We need to become part of the "we" in order to be supported by others as each of us walks the 12-Step path with a sponsor guiding us. It is not possible to have a "generic" or "no-name brand" 12-Step Program. We need to know that we are powerless over alcohol, or drugs, or food, or sex, or gambling, or msane eating practices, and that we are among others who understand precisely what our problem is and can thereby accept us exactly as we are.

It is this laser-like focus on a specific addiction that is enshrined in the Fifth Tradition concept of singleness of purpose.

**ABA works for anorexics...** Anorexia is all about a perceived need to control our weight. Anorexics are people whose minds are dominated and lives devastated by an entrenched, intense, relentless, overwhelming fear of getting fat.

**...and for bulimics...** Bulimia is all about a perceived need to binge. Bulimics are people whose minds are dominated and lives devastated by an entrenched, intense, relentless, overwhelming fear of being empty, alongside some fear—less intense than the anorexic's—of getting fat. The **only** reason why our Program works for bulimics is because all bulimics have at least some degree of **anorexia** in their thinking. In other words, **all bulimics experience a deep need to feel in control of their weight.** Otherwise, they would not purge (ABA text, p 40). Our textbook states that the bulimic "fix" comes from the purge, not from the binge.

**...and for some, but not all, compulsive eaters.** Compulsive eating disorder is all about a perceived need to be full. Compulsive eaters are people whose minds are dominated and lives devastated by an entrenched, intense, relentless, overwhelming fear of being empty.

Anorexics and bulimics founded ABA. As time went by, we were joined by people who named themselves compulsive eaters. They joined us solely because they somehow **identified** with what they heard from us about our intense **need to feel in control of our weight.** Most of them had been classical anorexics or bulimics in the past, but had "flipped the coin" and taken up residence on the other side of it (ABA text, pp 38-39). Later, we were joined by other compulsive eaters who were unaware they were *potential* anorexics until after they came to ABA, because their eating-disorder history had been dominated by their unrelenting need to fill up their inner emptiness with food.

Out of this melting pot of anorexics, bulimics, and those compulsive eaters who **identify with anorexic thinking**, emerged our "Loonie Theory", detailed in our textbook (pp 37-44).

Even a cursory reading of the ABA textbook reveals that the entire book is written for anorexics and bulimics, with just enough information inserted here and there to allow **those compulsive eaters who belong with us** to identify and thus gain entry.

"Pure" compulsive eaters—those who have never flipped the coin, those whose core need is to fill up their inner emptiness rather than to control their weight, who experience little or no anorexic thinking—can find no solution in the ABA Program and no home in our Fellowship, because the central truth of our approach, the essential nature of our Program, is unable to address their problem.

**In other words, unless people identify with the intense need to feel in control of their weight, and have made concerted attempts to get this control, they will never fit in at ABA or recover through our Program. We in ABA have no solution for people whose inner truth is that they are powerless over food.**

Compulsive eaters, and many bulimics, often find deep and lasting recovery in other eating-disorder Fellowships (OA, FAA, EDA, the OA spinoffs like OA-HOW, etc). If people were not recovering, these Fellowships would not have reached the size and success they have over the past 40 years. OA, for example, is a thriving international Fellowship, is well organized, and continues to grow. I personally have dozens of friends (mainly compulsive eaters, some bulimics, one anorexic) who love OA the way I love ABA. I am delighted for them and would never consider trying to woo them into ABA. Who am I to say what another person needs? To dictate to God how he should be working in their lives?

**Our textbook is very clear. The Preface, on p xvi, states that we invite anyone who desires to hear our message to check us out, and to join us if they identify with us as they read the book, and if they have not yet found elsewhere a solution for their eating disorder.**

Some ABA members may think that *all* compulsive eaters possess a deep need to feel in control of their weight, that there is no such thing as a "pure" compulsive eater. They are wrong. We have many ABA members, some with double-digit sobriety, who are "pure" anorexics, who have never flipped the coin to compulsive eating. Just so, there are many compulsive eaters who have never tried anorexia. In fact, as someone who, in my professional career, has worked with hundreds of people with eating disorders over the past fifteen years, I have found that only a *minority* of compulsive eaters deeply need and attempt, in any real or meaningful sense, to get in control of their weight. I have therefore invited to ABA only a few compulsive eaters, those whose histories suggest they may be anorexic thinkers. Yet even out of these, the majority do not find a home with us. I would never consider inviting most of my compulsive eater clients to ABA, for I know they would not identify with us. Were I to suggest they come, they would probably be insulted and hurt by my lack of understanding of their real problem, and I might damage any further chance of being helpful to them.

Part I of our textbook provides only one story of a member who regarded herself as a "primarily compulsive eater" (pp 41-42), and she went through phases of pure anorexia and pure bulimia in the course of her illness. This section concludes that, "**some** compulsive eaters have found what they need in our Fellowship." (emphasis added)

The challenge for the GSA, then, has been to attract into the rooms of ABA those compulsive eaters who *can* identify with anorexia and thus recover through our approach, while still safeguarding the integrity of our Program and Fellowship. Our new pamphlet serves this purpose. We trust God himself to bring in all who can recover using the ABA Program. It remains the responsibility of our individual Groups to warmly welcome *all* who come through the door, regardless of their weight or the specific details of their insane eating practices or the label they currently claim for themselves. Tradition Three is clear: "The only requirement for ABA membership is a desire to stop unhealthy eating practices." All who come to ABA decide for themselves whether they belong or not (ABA text, pp 10 and 70). Their decision is nobody else's business!

We as a Fellowship must let go of any deluded and arrogant notion that we have a solution for all people with eating disorders. We do not. In particular, we can offer no help to those who are powerless over *food*. If we think we can, and engage in misguided, futile attempts to be all things to all people with eating disorders, we will lose our integrity and simply disappear. And that will be a tragedy, not only because many of our current members will die without ABA, but because this rare and precious gift entrusted to us by God in 1993 will simply fade away, its demise largely unnoticed. Few will be left to mourn its passing. The world will be deprived of all that might have been, of all the lives that might have been saved had the ABA Program been preserved as God gave it to us and, obviously, intended it to be.

**Our primary purpose remains as it was written in 1995: to carry the ABA message to the anorexic or bulimic (including the anorexic or bulimic in some compulsive eaters!) who still suffers.**

**If ABA survives, it will be because we confine ourselves to the one thing we know: anorexia and bulimia, and the recovery program specific to anorexia and bulimia that God entrusted to us in 1993.**

### **3. The overwhelming importance of the good of the whole.**

Tradition One states: "Our common welfare should come first; personal recovery depends upon ABA unity." And Tradition Four states: "Each group should be autonomous, except in matters affecting other groups or ABA as a whole."

The AA *Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions* (which we in ABA also have claimed as one of our basic texts) is clear that alcoholics will either recover together, or die separately. Therefore, no personal sacrifice is too great to ensure that our Fellowship remains united.

This issue has come to the forefront this past year, as news has reached the Board of serious violations of ABA Traditions by a few Groups scattered about the North American continent. Specifically, it has come to our attention that some Groups have taken the liberty of re-typing some of our printed materials, in particular the "*Preamble For Meetings*", and modifying it by omitting some sections and altering the wording of other sections. This is a grave violation, not only of our copyright, but also of Tradition Four. It is critically important that people walking into an ABA meeting anywhere in the world find there the same literature and message carried by all of ABA. If our message is diluted or altered at an individual Group level, the newcomer has no way of knowing that this is not representative of ABA's true message.

Most tragically, those Groups that decide to toss aside our Traditions are writing their own death warrant, for they cut themselves off from the whole, like a branch severing itself from the vine (ABA text, pp 166-167). A severed branch withers and dies, and a Group that cuts itself off from the vine of ABA by violating ABA

Tradition rarely survives for long. It is no longer an ABA Group, of course, and no longer accurately represents ABA for its members or for the newcomer. In its death throes, it can do great harm to its members and to the newcomer.

And the vine itself is affected when a branch severs itself. At the very least, we grieve for those who are lost when an ABA Group decides to forge its own path.

**If ABA survives, it will be because we stand united in our literature and by our Traditions.**

#### **4. The vital importance of remaining autonomous and independent of other 12-Step Fellowships, even those dealing with eating disorders.**

Tradition Six states: "An ABA group ought never endorse, finance, or lend the ABA name to any related facility or outside enterprise, lest problems of money, property, and prestige divert us from our primary purpose." And Tradition Ten states: "ABA has no opinion on outside issues; hence the ABA name ought never be drawn into public controversy."

These Traditions spell out ABA's autonomy, not only from facilities and enterprises such as hospitals and treatment centres, but also from all other 12-Step Fellowships. For example, although we have the highest respect for Alcoholics Anonymous (since it is the birthplace of 12-Step recovery), we do not endorse it, nor does AA endorse us (ABA text, copyright page). The fact that in our recovery we use the AA "Big Book" and *Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions* does not imply our endorsement of the AA Fellowship or by the AA Fellowship.

**Similarly, we are not allied or affiliated in any way with other eating-disorder Fellowships.**

The Board is concerned that some ABA Groups have taken the liberty of including literature and prayers from other eating-disorder Fellowships in their meeting format, and of using non-ABA terminology specific to those Fellowships (e.g. "abstinence" and various types of food restriction and control). One such meeting (one that has not yet registered with the GSA) has gone so far as to name itself "Anorexics and Bulimics and Overeaters Anonymous." Such a confusing hodgepodge is potentially damaging to the newcomer (violation of Tradition 5) as well as to ABA as a whole (Tradition 4), and these violations must be clearly named as such by the GSA.

This point is so important that the GSA has recently approved an amendment to the *Preamble For Meetings*, which will now include the statement, "ABA is not allied or affiliated with any other 12-Step Fellowship or organization." This statement will be placed in bold type in the introductory paragraph. The upcoming fifth printing of our textbook will include it, and an amended master copy of the *"Preamble For Meetings"* will be distributed to all our Groups.

We respect other Fellowships and their work in leading people to recovery, yet we hold no opinion regarding the specific tenets of their approach to eating disorders. If we are focused on our own recovery in ABA and on what God is asking us to do in carrying the message to others who desire to hear it, we have no time to form opinions about others or to meddle in their affairs. Looking after our own backyard is a full-time job! If we attend to that, the ABA name will never be drawn into public controversy on these issues.

**If ABA survives, it will be because we carefully guard our autonomy from all other 12-Step Fellowships and outside organizations.**

To conclude this discussion, it is clear that ABA is entering an adolescent phase and that further storms lie ahead. The new Board will be responsible for weathering them, for guiding the ship of ABA safely through them. Our Higher Power will make this possible, so we need have no fear.

The paramount importance of our common welfare must be kept in mind at all times by all of us, not only by our trusted servants on the GSA Board. The welfare of ABA itself hangs in the balance.

## **EXPRESSIONS OF GRATITUDE**

Because this is my final report as President, I cannot conclude without taking the opportunity to thank all who have supported me over the past four years. I could not have done my job were it not for all of you.

To those seven Board members who are retiring along with me, I offer thanks. Denise L as Vice-President has always generously offered her service experience in another Fellowship and thus helped keep us on track. Pat Mackay as Treasurer has worked with great patience to keep our records in order. Without her efforts, our Society could not have retained our non-profit status. Mania Ollivierre has valiantly managed the work of Secretary for the past two years, despite her busy life as a new mother since last summer. Hats off to you! Annand Ollivierre has quietly taken on the drudgery of auditing our books for four years now, in addition to supporting Hania in ways too numerous to mention. Annand, your contribution has been invaluable. Kim O functioned as Secretary for our first two years, and has encouraged me when my energy flagged. For being my stalwart friend, I thank you. Ingrid M has always been willing to pitch in where she is needed. David Wright has brought his wisdom from another Fellowship and humbly taken on many small tasks. Thank you, Ingrid and David!

I also wish to address the six Board members who will continue their service to the GSA as the new Board takes shape tonight. You are all critically important, for you are the bridge between these first two chapters in our history. Whether you have been with us for one, two, or three years, your experience is invaluable. God has been grooming you for what lies ahead, and I thank all of you in advance for your willingness to embrace the future. Donna K is willing, by the grace of God, to step into the role of President for the next two years, and I am inexpressibly

grateful for that, as well as for her work as Chair of the Public Information Committee and Phone Committee over the last two years. Bless you, Donna! Terry K will become Vice-President and thereby support Donna in her work. Phyllis Woolley is willing to become Secretary, a job she has already practiced when Mania was unavailable. Thank you, Phyllis, for your quiet competence and generous spirit. Bill Adams has brought his skills to the Chair of the Personnel Committee, has audited our books for the past two years, and has become a precious ally of ABA. Chrystal F has worked tirelessly as Chair of the Retreat & Conference Committee, and appears to have endless energy and creative talents to accomplish the tasks associated with that position. Ron Boer has brought his wisdom from another Fellowship and has investigated a number of issues that came up for discussion and reported back to the Board.

To all thirteen of you who have constituted the GSA Board over the past year, I offer my gratitude, my love, and my prayers. My life has been enriched by your presence.

### **WHAT LIES AHEAD?**

Tonight we will elect another six or seven people to the GSA, two of whom are ABA members. The new Board will coalesce gradually, under the grace of God, and assume the tasks that lie ahead. I can already envision some of this work; the remainder will be revealed in God's perfect timing.

I urge every ABA member to consider how they can support our Board, what talents and time they can offer in keeping the GSA alive and well. We are in great need of Committee members, as there is no shortage of work to be done. I encourage you to ask yourselves how important ABA is in your life, then step forward and participate in Committee work.

There is much to be done. We are in desperate need of long-distance sponsors and check-in buddies, and sober people all over the world can participate in this endeavor. Our new Pjione & Internet SupppjrKTgjiimjttee is also mandated to develop telephone and orvTme meetings; tedirioToglc^al expertise will be needed for this, as well as commitment to participate and keep participating! The Retreat & Conference Committee will need a great deal of manpower, especially as it plans and prepares for our First International Conference in 2008. Further literature needs to be developed: perhaps a booklet on sponsorship and a pamphlet welcoming men into ABA. Perhaps work can begin on a daily meditation book specific to our Fellowship. The Public Information Committee has ongoing tasks, many of which are hidden and humble—the best fodder for spiritual growth!

Our financial picture is very rosy at the moment, mainly because our expenses have been exceedingly low for the past four years. That is about to change as the GSA office, which has been housed in donated space for four years, will begin this month to pay rent. Our Administrative Assistant will be paid a modest salary every month. We have a comfortable financial cushion resulting principally from the sale of our literature, but this will gradually shrink over the year ahead. Many

Groups are already contributing financially to the GSA, and we offer our sincere gratitude to them, even as we ask other Groups to consider beginning this practice as they are able.

In conclusion, I foresee another spectacular year ahead for the GSA, and for ABA as a whole, as we continue, one day at a time, to stay sober and show up for service. Our Higher Power is the one who keeps us sober and draws us into union with him through one another. As we step forward in service of God and others to keep the light of ABA radiant in the murky world of eating disorders, we will enter ever more fully into that joy indescribable by human language. With God as our source of Power, we cannot fail in the mission he has given us!

I see the whole truth of ABA encapsulated in these words from Celtic author Nancy Cocks:

"(This) Community draws such people who otherwise might never meet into moments where love and courage make new beginnings possible.... God works with us *in community* in transforming ways, drawing us beyond private interest and personal need, to discover who we can be and what we can offer to the world together."

Thank you to all who have placed your trust in me to serve the GSA as President for the last four years. They have been the richest years of my life.

Respectfully submitted  
Joan M Johnston, President 2006-2007



**GENERAL SERVICE ASSOCIATION OF ANOREXICS  
AND BULIMICS ANONYMOUS**

**Statements Of Operations and Net Assets  
For The Year Ended January 31, 2007  
(Unaudited - See Notice to Reader)**

	<b>Current Year</b>	<b>Previous Year</b>
<b>Revenue</b>		
Book Sales	\$ 17,082	\$ 13,351
Donations/Gifts	2,049	797
Medallions	183	32
Brochures and CD sets	1,638	419
Retreat Registrations	6,152	
Prepaid Shipping	4,184	2,545
Interest/Exchange Income	<u>1,856</u>	<u>1,717</u>
	<b>\$ 33,143</b>	<b>\$ 18,862</b>
 <b>Cost Of Sales</b>		
Opening Inventories	\$ 12,473	
Printing & Publishing Costs	1,555	
Shipping/Freight	<u>4,233</u>	
	\$ 18,261	
Less: Closing Inventories	<u>(7,891)</u>	<u>9,248</u>
	<b>\$ 22,774</b>	<b>\$ 9,615</b>
 <b>Expenses</b>		
Bank Charges	\$ 49	\$ 45
Bad Debts		236
Casual Labour		159
Engraving Costs	68	26
Insurance		208
Meeting Expenses/Rent	140	120
Office	996	457
Professional/Legal Fees	750	550
Retreat Expenses		4,437
Telephone & Web	<u>419</u>	<u>362</u>
	<b>\$ 7,462</b>	<b>\$ 1,560</b>
 <b>Excess of Revenue</b>	 <b>\$ 15,311</b>	 <b>\$ 8,055</b>
 <b>Net Assets</b>		
Net Assets, Opening Balance	\$ 23,963	\$ 15,968
Prior Year Adjustment	-	(59)
Excess from above	<u>15,311</u>	<u>8,055</u>
 Net Assets, January 31	 <b>\$ 39,275</b>	 <b>\$ 23,963</b>

**SMS**

Certified General Accountant

**GENERAL SERVICE ASSOCIATION OF ANOREXICS  
AND BULIMICS ANONYMOUS**

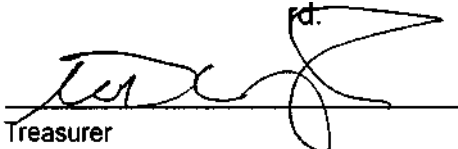
**Balance Sheet  
As At January 31, 2007  
(Unaudited - See Notice to Reader)**

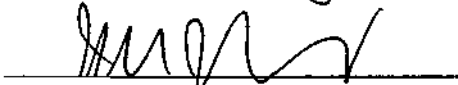
	<b>Asset s</b>	<b>Current Year</b>	<b>Previous Year</b>
<b>Current Assets</b>			
Cash and Bank		\$ 27,987	\$10,987
Prepaid Expenses		2,060	87.38
Accounts Receivable		2,216	1,158
Inventories		<u>7,891</u>	<u>12,473</u>
<b>Total Assets</b>		<b><u>\$ 40,154</u></b>	<b><u>\$ 24,705</u></b>

**Liabilities and Net Assets**

<b>Current Liabilities</b>			
Accounts Payable		<u>\$ 879</u>	<u>\$ 742</u>
		\$ 879	\$ 742
<b>Net Assets, Per Statement</b>		<u>39,275</u>	<u>23,963</u>
<b>Total Liabilities and Net Assets</b>		<b><u>\$ 40,154</u></b>	<b><u>\$ 24,705</u></b>

Preset

Acting   
Treasurer



**SMS**  
Certified General Accountant