



# COALITION FOR SEXUAL OFFENSE RESTORATION

*Though I have fallen, I will rise.  
Micah 7:8*

7<sup>th</sup> Edition

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CSOR Newsletter  
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## The Death of Craig Martin Tessier



Craig Martin Tessier of Smallwood New York died on Sunday February 22, 2015 in a Hospice at Canon City, Colorado. He died of Lou Gehrig's Disease (ALS – amyotrophic lateral sclerosis). ALS is a very rare neurological disease that is named after the famous baseball player Lou Gehrig. Mr. Gehrig began to notice that he could not lift the bat as well, or hit the ball, and was eventually diagnosed with ALS. If you have not seen the inspiring story of his life, it is definitely worth watching.

Craig died in his beloved Colorado Rockies where he spent his last years. He created landscape gardens in Colorado and New York. He hiked the entire Appalachian Trail one summer and loved the outdoors. He was a Christian and in the last seven years found peace and solace in his faith. He knew death was coming and faced it with grace and faith in his Savior.

He was born on July 11<sup>th</sup> 1959 in Smithtown, Long Island, New York. He is survived by his mother Charlotte Tessier, his brothers Robert, Joseph and Gary, his four nephews Robert Oliver Martin and David and an Uncle, Aunts and Cousins.

Note: The above memorial tribute was written by his brother Bob who was able to spend a couple of days with him before he was taken to be with his Lord.

In lieu of flowers, please make donations to the Coalition for Sexual Offense Restoration (CSOR), P.O. Box 27051, Denver, Colorado 80227 or on the following link:

<http://www.csor-home.org/donate-now/>

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Craig was convicted of a sexual offense many years ago, and was undergoing treatment at Arrowhead Correctional Facility when he became ill, and needed assistance from his peers in the treatment program to get around and write letters etc. as the disease progressed over the months. Thank you to all who assisted him!

The diagnosis was made, and unfortunately the disease had already progressed quickly through his body. This is a touching matter to me, as my father Reverend Stan Watts, became ill with Lou Gehrig's at 36 and died my senior year in high school at 41 years old. Craig's disease moved much more quickly than my Dad's, and post diagnosis, he was transferred to the CDOC Medical Facility, Colorado Territorial Correctional Facility, where he was able to take advantage of an infirmary setting and in his last few days, the facility's licensed hospice.

I had arranged for him to be admitted to Denver Hospice, as his wish was to die at hospice outside of prison, but the disease moved so quickly that he did not live long enough for his parole hearing which was scheduled for March 11.

Craig's beautiful article "Reaching out from a Bleeding Heart", was published by my son Mark's prison ministry, The Cell Church, and is available to read on The Cell Church's website, [thecellchurch.org](http://thecellchurch.org). The article is described as "An Exhortation and Meditation from Scripture...". If you don't believe that God can change someone's heart, read this article and you will understand that He can!

### **Standards and Guidelines Rewrite So Far**

The Standards and Guidelines of the Sex Offender Management Board are being rewritten by a committee of SOMB Board Members and people from the public who were chosen to represent their particular group of interested persons. For instance, Laurie Rose Kepros is representing Colorado Public Defenders, and I am representing advocacy groups and individuals supporting those who have offended. The committee is made up of 14 members. Board staff Cathy Rodriguez, Adult Standards Coordinator, Jesse Hansen, Staff Researcher, and Jeff Geist, Chair of the Board are either on the committee or assisting the committee with the rewrite.

Work done so far includes rewriting new Guidelines through #9. I thought you might be interested to see the difference in tone of the newly proposed Guidelines compared to the old Guidelines. Here are a couple of examples. Note that the numbers of the old and new Guidelines are not in the same order.  
(continued on page 3)

### **GO REST HIGH ON THAT MOUNTAIN**

I know your life on earth was troubled  
And only you could know the pain  
You weren't afraid to face the Devil  
You were no stranger to the rain

Go rest high on that mountain  
Son your work on earth is done  
Go to Heaven a shoutin'  
Love for the Father and the Son

Oh, how we cried the day you left us  
We gathered round your grave to grieve  
Wish I could see the angels' faces  
When they hear your sweet voice sing

So go rest high on that mountain  
Son, your work on earth is done  
Go to Heaven a shoutin'  
Love for the Father and the Son

So go rest high on that mountain  
Son, your work on earth is done  
Go to Heaven a shoutin'  
Love for the Father and the Son

Go to Heaven a shoutin'  
Love for the Father and the Son

Songwriters  
Gill, Vincent Grant

Published by  
Lyrics © Kobalt Music Publishing Ltd.

I am sharing them with you not in number order but in order of subject matter that matches in the old and new versions. **Of course, when the committee is done with the Guidelines, they will go to the Board to be “re-hashed”, so there is no guarantee that the re-write will look exactly as below.**

**Example One:**

Old # 3: Community safety is paramount.

New #1: The highest priority of these Standards and Guidelines is to maximize community safety through the effective delivery of quality evaluation, treatment and management of sex offenders.

**Example Two:**

Old #1: Sexual offending is a behavioral disorder which cannot be “cured”.

Sexual offenses are defined by law and may or may not be associated with or accompanied by the characteristics of sexual deviance which are described as paraphilia's. Some sex offenders also have co-existing conditions such as mental disorders, organic disorders, or substance abuse problems.

Many offenders can learn through treatment to manage their sexual offending behaviors and decrease their risk of re-offense. Such behavioral management should not, however, be considered a “cure”, and successful treatment cannot permanently eliminate the risk that sex offenders may repeat their offenses.

(Note: There was a rewrite of this Guideline in the last 1 ½ years which never actually made it into the printed Standards and Guidelines).

New #4. Offenders are capable of change.

Responsibility for change ultimately rests with the offender. Individuals are responsible for their attitudes and behaviors and are capable of eliminating abusive behavior through personal ownership of a change process. While responsibility for change is the offender's, the therapeutic alliance between the offender and the therapist is a predictive and important facet of responsibility leading to behavioral change. An empathetic therapeutic approach contributes to an offender's motivation to change, as does the supervising officer's positive working alliance with the offender.

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Different from previous re-writes of this document, as each section is finished by the committee, it will be taken to the Board for discussion, changes and approval. In the past, the whole document was finished before the new version was put in print.

It has taken six or seven months meeting once a month for three hours, to get to #9 in the Guidelines; it is a long and painstaking process, as all parties present from D.A.'s, victims' advocates, advocates of those who have offended, therapists, probation and parole officers etc. must come up with a version that they agree on! I hope you see the change in tone, especially in the second example. There has been a real effort on behalf of many of us to take the “punishing” tone out of these Guidelines. We will keep you apprised of updates. Hopefully by the time the September Newsletter comes out, the Guidelines will be finished and we can present them in their entirety (probably pre-Board review). We'll see what happens!

"Have I not commanded you? Be strong and courageous. Do not be terrified; do not be discouraged, for the Lord your God will be with you wherever you go". **Joshua 1:9.**

Knowledge comes, but wisdom lingers. It may not be difficult to store up in the mind a vast quantity of facts within a comparatively short time, but the ability to form judgments requires the severe discipline of hard work and the tempering heat of experience and maturity. -**Calvin Coolidge**

## CONCEPT EDUCATION (C.E.)

### (Created by Men at AVCF while Waiting for Treatment through SOTMP)

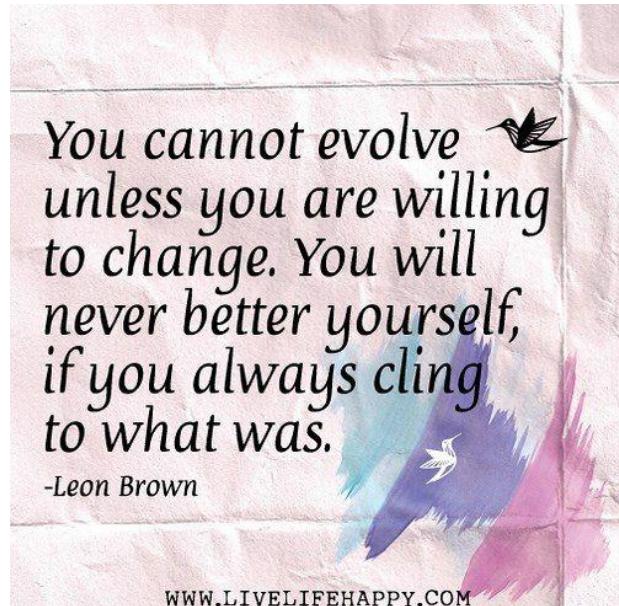
In 2014, a group of folks from AVCF frustrated with the slow pace of entry into SOTMP, came together and developed a voluntary peer-run group aimed at beginning to restore (rehabilitate) themselves. They hoped to do this by learning, understanding and then teaching others Care Concepts of sexual offense treatment.

With the support of creative SOTMP Therapists at AVCF, members began to work at understanding and identifying concepts such as Criminal Thinking Errors, Distorted Core Beliefs, High Risk Factors, Cycles, Victim Empathy, Healthy Communication and many more concepts and ideas involved in a strength-based approach toward sexual offense restoration and rehabilitation.

One participant stated, "I'm learning concepts from other members of C.E. who are in Phase I and Phase II. It makes a lot of sense to me, learning from men who are currently in group, or who have previously been in group. I feel ahead of the game and ready when SOTMP does call me".

CSOR's part in all of this was corresponding with a group leader regarding C.E., and based on his request, supplying the group with materials about R.N.R., as well as the Outside Evaluators' Reports for both the S.O.T.M.P and the SOMB. These reports provided major insights for the group in terms of current best practice and research supported approaches to sexual offense treatment.

The group hopes that progressive treatment providers throughout CDOC will consider allowing other facilities and willing participants to begin Concept Education Groups while they are waiting for a place in the official treatment program!



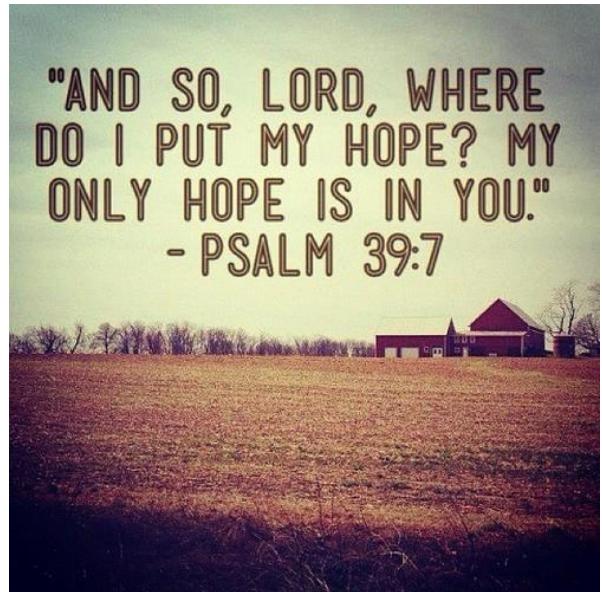
WWW.LIVELIFEHAPPY.COM

### Recent News Items of Interest

- 1) CDOC has hired a new Director of Parole. Her name is Melissa Roberts. She comes to Colorado from Wisconsin Department of Corrections where she most recently served as an executive team member. She begins her work in Colorado June 1, 2015. Soon to be Director Roberts states that she "has a keen interest in the successful re-entry of offenders and will incorporate the most cutting edge reintegration solutions".
- 2) The FAC (Florida Action Committee), a non-profit led by Gail Colletta, has filed a complaint to the United Nations Human Rights Council on behalf of 170 registrants living homeless along the railroad tracks in Miami. These men were either sent there by their probation officers, or were evicted from a trailer park nearby which was said to be within 2500 feet of a daycare. The article points out that the research shows very clearly that residency restrictions are not an effective tool in the management of people with sexual offense backgrounds. It also states that these things are happening not just in Miami-Dade but across the United States.

It is interesting that in Colorado, the SOMB has taken this literature seriously, and has done a great deal to try to stop residency restrictions in areas where they are not present, and has also tried to get municipalities to embrace the literature that so clearly shows this approach to be non-effective in terms of protecting children. FAC is also an Affiliate Organization of RSOL, and this article was posted by Gail on their website.

- 3) The Colorado Legislature just passed a bill (HB#1341) making possession of child pornography a Felony 5 instead of a Felony 6. There are no mandatories with the bill thanks to the hard work behind the scenes of Maureen Cain, Liaison to the Legislature from the Colorado Criminal Defense Bar.
  
- 4) A Vermont legislator was recently arrested for three felony counts of sexual assault and three misdemeanor counts of prohibited acts. State Senator Norm McAllister (Republican) pled not guilty to six charges, some of which apparently related to allegations that he accepted sex in place of rent. In Vermont, each of the sexual assault charges can carry a maximum sentence of life in prison, as well as lifetime registration. This article was also posted on the RSOL Website by the RSOL Representative from Vermont. We'll see how this plays out!
  
- 5) The SOMB Registration and SVP Committee which has not met for several months now, will begin meeting again this month to discuss and enhance policy suggestions made to the Colorado Legislature when the SOMB delivered its yearly report to them a couple of months ago. The reason the committee has not been meeting is that we have been waiting for suggestions regarding another SVP assessment from Kim English at DCJ that would fill in for the one that the outside evaluation said does not accurately assess SVP status. Ms. English is still assessing the possibility of creating a new, more effective tool. Until the legislature considers going to a tier registration system, however, and removes the requirement of an SVP designation in Colorado, a substitute instrument of some kind will be needed. This is the reason that the committee is shifting its focus for the moment from the SVP to the refinement of policy suggestions made to legislators.
  
- 6) Six of us from Colorado are planning to attend the RSOL Conference June 25 – 27 in Dallas, Texas. Four of us are going by car, and two by plane. We are looking forward to some great sessions, and wonderful conversations with like-minded folks!



### Fundraising for Services, Training and Education and Risk Reduction

Many of you and a few of your families have been great about assisting CSOR with financial donations and stamps. It costs a lot to produce, print and mail the newsletter to all of you, and I appreciate everyone who is willing (and able) to assist with stamp donations. Keep them coming as you can. No-one will ever be turned down for a newsletter because they do not have the resources to send stamps.

A bigger area of challenge is engaging your families in the support of CSOR. Small but regular donations (as well as large donations from those who can provide them) are needed to help the organization grow in its ability to provide additional assistance to more people. We have tried to develop a small budget this year, but so far do not have regular enough giving to be able to really develop the budget. No-one at CSOR is paid for their work. My time, my gas etc. are paid for by me. The people who lay out our newsletter and who design (and will continue to design) our newsletter, work for nothing. The board did vote this month to give them a yearly stipend of \$150.00 which in the real world would pay for an hour or two of work. We also give \$150.00/year to WGA/Beyond Containment for allowing us to hold our meetings in their building. Our bookkeeper provides his services for nothing and will not accept anything from us.

I would like to attend the ATSA (Association for the Treatment of Sexual Abusers) Conference this year if God provides the money to do this. So far, we have raised just under \$1,000. It is important that I hear from the great researchers in our field regarding the latest approaches and best practices, and not just trust what I hear in our own state (although things

are improving here). If you can help, or have friends or family who might help with this trip and with ongoing and enhanced services for those in the system for a sexual offense, please do so! If we do not raise the money this year, we will keep track of what has been sent, and perhaps try to attend next year. Thanks to those who already have given. It is greatly appreciated. Donations can be made on the website, or can be sent to Susan Walker, CSOR, P.O. Box 27051, Denver, CO. 80227.

### Making the Most of Tough Times

This is a personal note, written from my heart to all of you. Once again, it is necessary for me to say how sorry I am that I cannot get back to you as quickly as I would like. Your letters are all so important, and many of you have written that you understand that I get tons of letters, and that I do not have to apologize. However, when I open a letter or come to a specific letter in the stack of letters, and find that I missed responding before a parole hearing or something else of equal consequence, it makes me feel really bad.

Besides a great deal of ongoing work that needs to be done on a regular basis for CSOR, my husband who is 21 years my senior and will be 90 this coming October, has suffered both physical and cognitive setbacks. He is experiencing regular falls due to peripheral neuropathy, and has had a number of small strokes in the brain (called t.i.a.'s or multi-infarct dementia). His 62 year old daughter is in the process of being diagnosed with early stage Alzheimer's or some other dementia (she sees vivid hallucinations daily), and she is living with us at this time. It has been a challenge to spend the time I would like to be spending on CSOR and all of you, but it is obviously important that I care for my family as well.

While working with people with dementia was my life's work (I have a Masters in the study of aging (Gerontology), it is always more difficult when it is your own family. I continue to work on getting through the stack of letters that I have to answer, and have three volunteers that are working with me to try to stay on top of things.

Here are some ideas that might help all of us:

- 1) Send a card or a one page letter instead of a 3 – 6 page letter.
- 2) If you are writing by hand, take your time and write legibly. This makes it much easier for me to read easily and respond more quickly.
- 3) Don't send legal paperwork and don't explain all the facets of your offense in your letter. I am not an attorney and do not have an attorney that works for CSOR. While I am very interested in knowing each of your stories, I would prefer short, bulleted accounts for the time being. There are very few pro bono attorneys who will take on your cases, sad to say and most of you already have the names of those people who might.
- 4) If you have a parole hearing coming up that you believe will result in your release, write to me at least 4 months ahead of that hearing. Mark the envelope with "parole hearing – time sensitive" or something similar. Then realize that I may not open that letter the day I get it, although I do try to at least take a quick look at the mail when I get it from the P.O. Box. A reminder letter a month later with another time sensitive – parole hearing etc. note on the front is helpful. Please don't put time sensitive unless it really is time sensitive! Thanks.
- 5) If you have what you believe may be a serious medical illness (such as cancer, Lou Gehrig's Disease, multiple sclerosis etc.), and don't feel that you have received expedient attention from CDOC's medical team, I am happy to see if I can help move things along. In that case, write medical – time sensitive on the envelope. Or, you can have a family member call me to get my attention quickly. There is very little that I can do about conditions that are typical for all of us as we age, such as arthritis, neuropathy (incurable and irreversible), cognitive conditions such as dementia of all kinds, ongoing diabetes etc.
- 6) Pray for me and for the CSOR Team. We are all volunteers at this point, and everyone cares a great deal. We are spread thin, but are very committed. If you are not a person who prays, please support us with your best thoughts and an occasional inspirational card or letter. You might try praying – some of us think it works pretty well!