
Essay

December 1992

Post Office Box 300
Simi Valley, California 93062

FIRST THINGS FIRST

I am so very, very grateful for SA. This program has changed my life for the better like no other psychology, therapy, or self-help ideas ever could. Not that there is necessarily anything wrong with these things, they just don't work like SA does.

Last weekend I was privileged and honored to be a moderator at the Rochester SA group's "Day of Inventory." It was such a powerful, moving weekend. I was able to renew many friendships and meet newer members of Rochester SA. I also believe the "Day of Inventory" will strengthen and unify SA. The Rochester fellowship has such a wonderful and committed group.

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CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Events listed here are presented solely as a service to readers, not as an endorsement by ESSAY or the Central Office.

January 8-10, 1993 — SA/S-Anon International Convention, Long Island, NY. Theme: The Solution. For details, call Jerry J. (516) 379-7113.

April 16-18, 1993 — South-Midwest Region (CO, KS, MO, NM, OK, AR, TX, LA) Spring '93 Retreat in Wichita, KS. Host: Tulsa, OK. Contact Tom M., P.O. Box 702491, Tulsa, OK 74170, phone (918) 835-3385.

April 23-25, 1993 — Northwest SA/S-ANON Weekend Retreat. Located 20 miles west of Tacoma, WA near the Olympic Mountains. For details, call Steve (206) 775-1535.

July 9-11, 1993 — SA-S-Anon International Convention, Nashville, Tennessee. Theme: Tools of Recovery. For details contact Chair, SA Conference, P.O. Box 158009, Nashville, TN 37215-8009.

NOTE FROM THE CENTRAL OFFICE OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE

"We are running very close on balancing SA income and expenditures. We have no extra money for translations or other needs. We ask SA members and groups to continue to be faithful in their giving."

First Things First *(Continued)*

The most important point I learned, however, was the need, for my sobriety and recovery, to put SA Number One in my life! That's right. Number One. Ahead of my job, career, social life, etc. I can enjoy these things as well, and a balanced, well-rounded life is good, but I must "be willing to go to any lengths" to get and stay sexually sober. First things First. That means putting my sobriety and recovery and service to SA as my life's top priority. God will take care of the rest.

I have been sexually sober for three and a half years now, one day at a time, and yet this weekend at Rochester was so powerful for me because it helped me straighten out my priorities. When I put the program and service to SA as the Number One priority in my life, sobriety and recovery are sure to follow. J.B.

GROUP NEWS

Welcome to the Following New Groups

Casper, WY

Daytona Beach, FL

Enumclaw, WA

Fairbanks, Alaska

Hickory/Lincolnton, NC

Kansas City, KS

Kingsport, TN

Painesville, OH

Somerville, MA

Tokyo, Japan

Waldorf, MD

NOTE: If your group is not listed with the CO, call Pat at (805) 581-3343, or write to Post Office Box 300, Simi Valley, CA 93062.

Salt Lake City, UT: "Our New Beginners Meeting averages 45 each Monday night with five newcomers weekly. We are grateful to be part of this ever increasing fellowship which has given each of us 'a new pair of glasses' to work through our share of problems by being rigorously honest. Working Tradition Five now allows the message to be carried inside state prison facilities, where there are many who need recovery. In time, more members will experience the sights in sobriety through the importance of our primary purpose and of going to any length to maintain serenity. Nothing can so much insure immunity from acting out as intensive work with another sex addict; this works when other activities fail. Thanks for keeping us in touch through the *Essay*. Still Growing." M.S.

San Bernadino, CA: "The meeting is less than a year old and we are experiencing many wonderful challenges. It's a great opportunity for relatively new members, as well as long-time members such as myself, to do 12th Step work and face the reality of the condition from which we all suffer. Recently we faced a challenge to our understanding of the sobriety imperative regarding sex with a live-in girlfriend, who, it was claimed, 'is my spouse.' We did some heavy duty sharing about this (not comfortable

at all — in fact, quite painful to see one person doing his utmost to rationalize his behavior), and our unity was strengthened when we acknowledged that, for us, marriage is traditional, heterosexual and legal. Clean and simple. We did not, nor did we intend to, drive away the individual concerned. We simply made known our personal convictions and laid out our understanding of sobriety. We recognize this is not an easy program. But the greatest gifts are given to those who surrender unconditionally and quit trying to change SA to suit their own individual desires. Thank God for the strength and recovery of the past several years in our program!" S.M.

New Orleans, LA: "We are five members still 'trudging the road of happy destiny.' Our group wishes the national office many blessings and are grateful for SA's perseverance. God bless you." C.L.

Pompano Beach, FL: "We are a small group. Our attendance is three to four regular members. We meet at a church where the minister is sympathetic to our recovery. This is the only SA group in the whole of South East Florida that I am aware of at this time." C.T.

Tokyo, Japan: "The group in Tokyo began about three months ago and is a hundred miles from where I live, but I will try hard to attend the weekly meeting. Keep me and the group in your prayers." B.M.

Portland, OR: "The Thursday-East Group is pleased to note we celebrated two sobriety anniversaries. One member celebrates three years and another celebrates four years. We have acknowledged a number of 30-, 60-, and 90-day, and 6- and 9-month periods of sobriety. It is great to see the program work!" D.B.

Somerville, MA: "We have been in existence for about a year and after a rather slow start with most meetings drawing about five people or so, we have recently expanded and have had in attendance about 14 or 15 people for the last five meetings. Somerville is a northern suburb of Boston, and the meeting came into existence to fill a need for another meeting felt by

some of the Cambridge members. Our finances have been low until recently, but we are now proud to be able to donate to the Central Office." C.A.

Union City, NJ: "Once again we have accumulated a small sum from our member contributions in the course of our once-weekly meetings here. Again it is our group conscience that we give half of what we have to the church that graciously houses us and half to the SA Central Office." J.V.

Quebec City, Canada: "We have two groups in Quebec City, one on Wednesday (the Liberte Group) and one on Sunday (the Deliverance Group). I am responsible for both groups for the time being, and I am grateful, but at the same time, the responsibilities are heavy at times. (I have been so irresponsible all my life.) For the first six months it was mostly two of us, with a visitor once in a while, but now we average four to six persons per meeting. It's growing and I find it scary at times. The need for SA is out there, but as you say, 'It's not for people who need it, but for those who want it.' We are 'French Canadians' and most of us are not fluent in English, so we work with the translation of the White Book in French. If someone feels like writing to us, we sure would appreciate it." M.R.

Oklahoma City: "There's recovery in Oklahoma with God's help and through working the Steps in SA. The Oklahoma City Intergroup has broadened its area and is now the Oklahoma State Intergroup. There are now six meetings a week in Oklahoma City, three in Tulsa and one in Lawton. We have some loners who are praying to get another member in their area for a meeting. One in the panhandle has paired up with a couple of people in Liberal, KS, and is meeting with them once every two weeks. We attended a great regional retreat in Wichita, KS led by the Kansas City group. Good job, folks! We had a wonderful 'Family Reunion.'" D.T.

Casper, WY: "We started a new meeting. I'm excited because I have new work hours that have forced me to stop going to our regular meeting, and our new meeting is in the morning. Here in Casper we've talked about having two meetings for some time, so we've finally done it, even though we only have four steady members. I've stayed sober and it's *my* lust that I ask God to keep me sober from, not anybody else's. I've got 20 months of

SA sobriety and I've only started to see how dishonest I am now that I'm trying to practice honesty. My ego and fear seem to get in the way. But life has been terrific. I am the one who has to work this program, not anyone else." D.W.

Growing In Service at Vancouver

Our conference committee worked together as a team, with all of us considering that our meetings were as vital a part of our recovery as our regular weekly meetings. Over the past year the Vancouver group has grown considerably, to the point where in May and June we had seven birthday cakes for our members, four members with over two years sobriety, and very soon there may be two members with over three years sobriety. I believe the opportunity for all of us to work on an International Conference was a big part of our ability to stay sober.

As for the conference itself, we took over a small hotel in a quiet suburb of town, where the atmosphere was conducive to Progressive Recovery (our theme). We had approximately 125 people from all over North America with many years of sobriety. We had many speakers as well as focussed sharing in small groups. The evaluation forms that we received indicated that people felt the location and program were wonderful, and many of the participants stayed on for a few days afterward and joined us at our regular meetings as well.

Our faith in facing the challenge was richly rewarded in the best currency that a recovering sexaholic can receive — sobriety chips. In closing I have two suggestions for readers out there; firstly, consider the benefits to your group of hosting an International Conference, and secondly, come and visit us here in Vancouver anytime — we love to learn from others. G.K.

8th Annual Baltimore/Washington SA/S-Anon Marathon

In October the Baltimore/Washington SA Intergroup held its 8th Annual SA/S-Anon Marathon. The location alternates each year between Baltimore and Washington, D.C. and this year's Marathon was held in the Washington area. The theme this year was "Came to Believe."

The day began with a Speakers' Meeting featuring readings from SA and S-Anon, the Serenity Prayer, and sharing on the theme "Came to Believe" by three SA members and three S-Anon members from the region. The Speakers' Meeting was followed by two sets of five breakout sessions (four for SA and one for S-Anon) on topics ranging from "Comprehending Serenity/Knowing Peace" to "Basics of Getting a Sponsor & Taking the First Step."

The afternoon breakout meetings were followed by the closing Speakers' Meeting, where an SA and an S-Anon member shared on the topic "God is Doing for Us What We Could Not Do for Ourselves." The day ended with an opportunity for all members to share their thoughts, feelings, and reflections on the day, followed by closing readings and the Lord's Prayer.

This year's Marathon was an opportunity for us SA's and S-Anons to come together for one day and share our pain and our joy as we recover from our disease One Day at a Time. It was a shared celebration of victory over our disease and through victory, our coming to believe that our Higher Power can restore us to sanity. **R.B.**

MEMBER NEWS

Bottom Line Sobriety

Sobriety is critical for me in my recovery, and even though I attend some other 12 step groups that deal with sex addiction, I find that without a bottom line definition of sobriety, it doesn't work for me. It seems to promote a progressive denial of the addiction. My original home group was in Camarillo, and the acceptance, care, and honesty of the group was critical for me at a time of great suffering and self recognition. I will always be grateful for the experience of that group starting me on my recovery. **C.T.**

Reaching Out

I attended our SA Family Reunion retreat in Wichita last weekend, and it was a wonderful time of renewal and seeing dear friends in SA again. I want to remain an SA contact for SE Kansas. I want very much to get a group going in this area again. I have many who say they need the program, as I speak freely of my involvement with SA at AA meetings. Please do refer inquiries from this area to me. I keep reaching out to others. I'm grateful for the SA program and my sobriety. **R.T**

Please send me any dates, times, places of any large gatherings of SA in the near future. Your contact proved to be invaluable. I've now survived about seven weeks and feel, especially mentally, 110 percent better. I was starting to slip into the realm of "predatory" with my acting out. SA meetings are my biggest need now. Please put me down as contact for SA. **R.B.**

From Members in Prison

I wish to extend my appreciation for the book that you sent to me. The information that I have gotten from the book has shown me that your program would be a big plus in my future. I will notify you upon my release.
W.J.

I don't know where to begin. At last I have found that I have a choice. There is a way of recovery and there are others who not only can, but are willing to help me. For the first time in my life I have hope! Thank you! I am a sexaholic, and I have been for a very long time. Thank you very much for the White Book as well.

I currently am in prison as a direct result of my addiction. I knew I had a real problem with my sexual behavior even before I came to prison, but I did not know what the problem was, or even if it had a name. I hit bottom when I entered the prison system two years ago. I lost my wife, three children and everything I owned, which added up to everything I cared anything about. This is when I realized I could no longer keep living my life the way I had in the past. I knew something was definitely wrong and I became hellbent on finding out what it was. I went to all the prison doctors and counselors thinking that they would help me find out what my problem was. But to my surprise they all assured me that there was nothing wrong with me that nine years in jail couldn't fix!

I did not let this slow down my search for understanding and help. I knew I was a real sick puppy, because I couldn't stop acting out for any length of time, no matter how hard I tried. This is when I realized my life would never be worth anything to me or anyone else until I found my problem and started overcoming it. About a year and a half ago I bought two books on sexual addiction. I realized after reading them that I was a sex addict. That is when I started looking for help from 12 step groups. Because I am in prison the only groups I can attend are the AA and NA groups. So I bought their recovery books and started attending meetings. I can relate to some of the things said in their books and groups because I too am addicted to a drug. My drug is called lust! But these groups do not and cannot fulfill my needs as a sex addict because they will not allow me to talk about my addiction in the groups.

When I received your book *Sexaholics Anonymous* I knew I had found my home. This is what I have been looking for and have needed for a long time. Please help me make contact with members of your fellowship by mail. I desperately need contact with other recovering sexaholics like myself to be able to share and relate to others. I am asking for your help. I would greatly appreciate any help, aid or guidance you may afford me. I cannot say this strongly enough. Please help me! With sincerity and in fellowship,
W.P.

FEEDBACK CORNER

The following includes extracts from an informal study that was submitted to the Southern California SA Intergruop by committee members M.S, C.U., M.S. (West L.A.), B.W., and S.M. It also includes material that was submitted to the Essay in response to an appeal for sharing on selected subjects.

Facing the Slipper Syndrome

1. It is important to recognize that the real problem is lust, not sex, and thus acknowledge that the problem is spiritual in nature.
2. Groups can explore ways to practice accountability, communication and networking so they can grow collectively. Groups can encourage the following:

a) sponsorship	d) reading SA literature
b) meditation	e) attending meetings
c) practicing the steps	f) surrendering the disease
3. Recognize and surrender the tendency to use too much psychological jargon that might somehow undermine the credibility and effectiveness of SA as a program.
4. Make sure we are supporting the program, not the disease. It is observed that where there is strong sobriety, sobriety tends to grow. Where slipping is the norm, slipping tends to persist.
5. Consider the sharing of oral First Step inventories as a tool in surrendering lust and getting and staying sober.

Assisting Slippers in Recovery

1. Get recent slippers involved. Consider a statement encouraging members to reach out to one another to get away from isolation.
2. Drunks have a tendency to talk too much, to dump during meetings and rationalize their slipping. Whatever the rationale is, slipping is not a sign of getting better. It is a signal that something went wrong, something needs to be done.
3. Groups need to explore courses of action to assist the slipper in getting back on the road to sobriety. Drunks usually are not aware of what's going on, often being full of anxiety and fear.
4. Let us not lose sight of what the program offers. The focal point is getting and staying sober. Avoid copouts like "I just slipped, but it sure feels good coming to the meeting!" Meetings are not to make us feel good, but to help us stay sober.
5. Emphasize the positive side of sobriety. It is not so much a matter of denying ourselves the luxury of lust (deprivation, repression) as much as it is acquiring the freedom to live happy and fulfilling lives away from the bondage of sexual obsession and compulsion.
6. It is extremely difficult for one who has had a long period (a year or more) of sobriety to return easily into the community of SA. He or she passes through a painful period of anger and frustration and mixed feelings. Such a member may actually feel broken off from the community, not a part of.
7. Slippers who have lost long-term sobriety need an opportunity to move through a blaming stage into acceptance. They may need a process or situation to assist their reassimilation into the group. Perhaps a meeting can be considered to help people with acute problems to move through what might be termed a "mourning stage" so that they may adequately express their grief at having lost their sobriety.

8. A "Sobriety Hour"-type meeting may include a ritual that might help bring these members back to the community.
 - a. Such a setting allows each person to fully acknowledge his or her recent (or long-past) slip, or even near slip.
 - b. Members who have been slippers and are now sober can maintain sobriety by sharing their story and welcoming back recent slippers (help in transition back to sobriety).
 - c. Recent slippers need a chance to speak about what they need from the fellowship, what progress they are making, and where they are in their recovery today.
9. It is important to maintain communication with the recent slipper. Ask questions like:
 - a. What led to the slip?
 - b. What were the feelings before, during and after the slip?
 - c. What is the ritual involved? Are you in the ritual now? What can you do to change it?
10. Keep in touch. Call those who have been absent from meetings even if just to see how they're doing and to say you missed them. Be available, just be there even on a non-program basis.

The "A Team" Concept

The A Team concept is an idea we have put to use a few times to help some fellow suffering sexaholics. Until now each case has involved someone struggling to get started with sobriety, but it could conceivably be used for other purposes, such as a crisis in someone's life. It is really a simple application of Step Twelve in which we join forces with others to help the sexaholic who still suffers.

A group of three to six SA members come together for an hour-and-a-half in a quiet place in order to help another who has asked for special help. The member in need of assistance is given up to 30 minutes to state his full case — what is troubling him, how it started, what he thinks is causing it, how it is affecting him, and what he wants to change. Then for up to an hour, the others discuss the situation informally. They may ask for information or lead the member to think. They may make observations about patterns they see or principles they think apply. They may suggest plans of action, including follow-up suggestions. Possible solutions or other insights are tossed into the forum. Much encouragement and affirmation is given to the troubled member. The greatest power in this seems to come from the fact that the addict realizes that someone cares for him, without thought of gain.

There is no "official" A Team. Any member that cares to call his friends together needs no one's permission to do so. There is no elite group "qualified" to be members of an A Team. The team is a one-shot enterprise, not an ongoing organization. A sponsor may ask someone he is sponsoring if they need the help of such a group. The essentials are simple. Someone must want help and ask for it. Those asked must have begun their spiritual awakening and be willing to share it in the spirit of Step Twelve. **L.B.**

Proposal For A New Type Of SA Meeting

This proposal calls for SA meetings where we can relax the rule against crosstalk and allow feedback. Members could invite some SA friends together and outline a problem they are having — how to make a difficult amends, for instance, or what to tell the children — and ask for feedback. In this way we could put into practice what otherwise are just meeting topics — honesty, trust, openmindedness — and solve problems. In addition to sharing insight and knowledge, we would share experience, strength and hope, and solve common problems.

Of course having a problem should not be a prerequisite for attending a meeting. The new meeting would include time for prayer, and periods of silence, if desired.

The idea is to put God and Program back into the fellowship of Sexaholics Anonymous. Often it seems that the regular SA meeting is not the primary tool of recovery for SAs. Judging by the large number of SAs in therapy, some of us are more comfortable talking about life problems one-on-one with someone outside the program. Regardless of our good motives and the benefits of therapy, the spiritual consequences of this are not good for our meetings.

Sometimes we seem to have it all back to front. If the early AAs are our guides, then it's SA that should be carrying the message to the therapists and the judges and the clergy, making amends for the lies we told them and the trouble we caused, and telling them of the freedom we found in Sexaholics Anonymous. Somehow it's hard to imagine the early AA members going back to whatever they tried before they discovered AA, be it medical remedies or religion, unless it was to carry the message of their recovery.

This proposal may appeal to those of us that are looking for deeper fellowship at whatever price to our ego, who are not interested in crusading against therapy, or religion, or anything else; and who have enough sexual sobriety and have seen enough miracles to have an inkling of the potential for growth in spiritual fellowship. It is directed to those that are prepared to ask God for a lot of help, and the courage to use that help when it is given.
L.M.

Singles And Dating

Earlier this month our local area intergroup held its annual one-day marathon, an all-day series of break-outs, speaker meetings and fellowship for our region. The theme of the Marathon was "Came to Believe." There was powerful sharing by members on the role of faith, in helping to face overwhelming and sobriety-threatening circumstances and emerge with recovery. As an addict, I suffer from fear. One area where my disease can really get a foothold is in my fear of loneliness. The faith that I have learned in SA has helped me to stay sexually sober even as I struggle with dating.

Looking back, I see that because of sexual sobriety, I have learned a lot about dating. The main thing that I have learned is that sober dating is a process. It is clear to me that I am a romance and relationship addict, and that, in my disease, I want what I want when I want it. When, after I had been sexually sober for a number of years, it was suggested to me that it would be appropriate for me to try sober dating, I envisioned a whirlwind romance where I would get everything I wanted and *fast*.

When I came into SA, it was because I had, one more time, gotten involved with a man who was not really appropriate, and I had crossed over the line into physical intimacy. This pattern has led me to feel suicidal in the past. SA gave me a disciplined structural approach to relationships with men: no sex outside of marriage. In the beginning, I borrowed the faith that if I just stayed sexually sober, everything would work out.

Sober dating seemed strange to me when I first heard about it in SA. It seemed inconceivable to me that one could date, and then perhaps form a true partnership with another human being without having to act out sexually first. I never thought anyone would want to spend any time with me without having sex. I also began to recognize, with some time of sexual sobriety, that I did not know how to be in social situations with men. Just spending time with a man, especially as I got to know him better, without perceiving myself and him as sex objects was an alien concept to me. I did not know how to have an honest conversation about my feelings without involving sex.

I feel that the safe haven of Sexaholics Anonymous has allowed me to experience the full range of feelings about dating, and especially about myself, without having to act out sexually. It has required faith, though. I have had to have the faith and the willingness to do what was suggested to

me by sober people in SA. It was suggested to me to do group events rather than go out with a guy alone. It was also suggested to me to take God with me as my partner to social events when I felt self-pity for not having a boyfriend.

I have had to learn that "No" is a complete sentence, especially when a man is not hearing that I am not interested in sex outside marriage. I have had to have faith that saying no, even when I am terribly afraid of losing that person's affection and attention, will not kill me.

I still have fear of loneliness. But what I am learning to do, what I was taught from the very beginning in SA, is to pray for God's will. I have begun to replace the fear and self-pity with a spirit of service and fellowship. I now really enjoy group events, and I have become an instigator of fun among my church and program friends. Today I share with women in the SA meetings about how to be joyful and giving in social situations as an antidote to the selfishness and possessiveness that characterizes my lust-relationship addiction.

I have faith today that I am enough and I can set dating relationship terms that promote self-esteem for me and, most likely, for my date. Self-esteem, I have learned, comes from estimable actions. We act our way to positive thinking. I am learning to take the actions of love in sober dating. **B.T.**

SA'S THIRD TRADITION: THE ONLY (TWO) REQUIREMENT(S) FOR MEMBERSHIP

The wording of the Third Tradition in SA is different than in most other Twelve Step programs. The Third Tradition in AA is: "The only requirement for AA membership is a desire to stop drinking." In SA, however, the Third Tradition is: "The only requirement for SA membership is a desire to stop lusting and become sexually sober." I believe SA's formulation of the Third Tradition involves a two-part membership requirement — a desire to stop lusting and a desire to become sexually sober — and that both parts are equally important to the spiritual health of the fellowship and the quality of meetings.

Unlike other Twelve Step programs that allow each member to define sobriety in his or her own way, the definition of sexual sobriety for all SA members is determined by the fellowship. In AA there is very little if any controversy over what it means to "stop drinking." While there may be questions as to whether one is truly sober and in recovery as opposed to merely dry or, worse still, on a dry drunk, it is still commonly accepted in AA that you may consider yourself "sober" if you abstain from drinking alcohol. Thus, a desire to stop drinking equates with a desire to become sober.

The lines are not so clearly drawn, however, in the case of sexual addiction. There may be those who desire to stop behaviors they consider destructive or unhealthy, but who have no desire for sexual sobriety as SA defines it. If we do not have as a membership requirement a desire for SA-defined sexual sobriety, then we belie our contention that it is important for the fellowship rather than the individual to define sexual sobriety. If we count as SA members individuals who do not want to become sexually sober, then our primary purpose is no longer that of achieving sexual sobriety and helping other sexaholics to achieve sexual sobriety. Our membership requirement must include a desire for sexual sobriety as SA defines it.

The other part of the membership requirement — the desire to stop lusting — is equally important. As strongly as I believe in SA's sobriety imperative, I also believe that exclusive focus on it can be counterproductive. I have occasionally observed in myself (and, I believe,

in other SAs) a phenomenon whereby I want to maintain bottom line, calendar sobriety for the perceived status it carries in the local or national fellowship, but without a sincere desire to stop lusting. I use my willpower to stop short of acting out according to the SA bottom line, while still giving myself permission to take lust drinks to smooth out life's rough spots. You've heard all the terms and phrases: "I've been teasing the disease." "I had a half-slip." "I'm not mentally sober but I am technically sober," and several others. When I use these statements I am attempting to cling to my calendar sobriety as a sign of SA status, while being unwilling to put down the mental and spiritual drug of lust as well as the physical drug of acting out.

The Third Tradition, by requiring a desire to stop lusting, recognizes the unique nature of sexaholism. An alcoholic who fantasizes about a drink but stops short of actual taking one has at least not allowed alcohol to enter his or her bloodstream and begin its physiological damage. I am convinced, as a sexaholic, I do not enjoy that luxury. I feel myself change physiologically (not to mention spiritually and emotionally) when I lust. This is where the analogy between AA and SA begins to break down. In AA they say that stinking thinking leads to drinking. In SA, lustful thinking *is* drinking. Refraining from acting out while continuing to lust is analogous to an alcoholic continuing to drink but trying not to binge.

Look at SA's First Step. Lust — not sex — is the drug I am addicted to. If I do not have a desire to stop lusting, I do not have a desire to stop using my drug. I know that it is progress, not perfection, and I know that victory over lust is progressive. But I also know that, just as *I* had to stop acting out, *I* have to stop wilfully lusting. As it says in the white book, I can't expect a therapist, or the fellowship, or even God to do the stopping for me. If I maintain an attitude of unwillingness (disguised as inability) to surrender lust, then I do not have a desire to stop lusting, and I place in jeopardy my right to membership in SA. **B.K.**

Box 300

December 1992

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CENTRAL OFFICE OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE NEWS

Since the Vancouver International Conference the COOC has met about every six weeks. Major issues have included the following: exploring areas of SA service such as translations of our literature and outreach to imprisoned or isolated SAs; organizing a special meeting at the next conference to encourage such service opportunities; utilizing our COOC replacement process following the resignation of Harry B. from the Northwest region; maintaining our literature stocks and considering handling audio tapes of talks and conferences; and assisting the Long Island SA Conference in publicizing the conference. We also review the financial well-being of our Central Office and concerns of the staff.

The COOC is the interim solution to managing our SA affairs until a General Service Board structure is in place. Individual COOC members also assist with correspondence and calls to the Central Office, serve as liaison to the *Essay*, the CO operations staff and the General Service Board Committee, and cooperate with other special SA projects. Sexaholics interested or concerned about such areas are urged to contact any COOC member: Betsy T. (Washington, DC), Larry M. and James M. (New York), David M. (Nashville), Sylvia J. (Oklahoma City), Jim O. (Chicago area), Dan N. (San Diego), Dave B. (Los Angeles) or Harry B. (Portland, OR).

The Twelve Steps of Sexaholics Anonymous*

1. We admitted we were powerless over lust — that our lives had become unmanageable.
2. Came to believe that a Power greater than ourselves could restore us to sanity.
3. Made a decision to turn our will and our lives over to the care of God **as we understood Him**.
4. Made a searching and fearless moral inventory of ourselves.
5. Admitted to God, to ourselves, and to another human being the exact nature of our wrongs.
6. Were entirely ready to have God remove all these defects of character.
7. Humbly asked Him to remove our shortcomings.
8. Made a list of all persons we had harmed, and became willing to make amends to them all.
9. Made direct amends to such people wherever possible, except when to do so would injure them or others.
10. Continued to take personal inventory and when we were wrong promptly admitted it.
11. Sought through prayer and meditation to improve our conscious contact with God **as we understood Him**, praying only for knowledge of His will for us and the power to carry that out.
12. Having had a spiritual awakening as the result of these Steps, we tried to carry this message to sexaholics, and to practice these principles in all our affairs.

*The Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions are reprinted and adapted with permission of Alcoholics Anonymous World Services, Inc. Permission to reprint and adapt the Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions does not mean that AA has approved the contents of this work, nor that AA agrees with the views expressed herein. AA is a program of recovery from alcoholism only. Use of the Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions in connection with programs which are patterned after AA but which address other problems does not imply otherwise.

THE TWELVE STEPS OF ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS: 1. We admitted we were powerless over alcohol — that our lives had become unmanageable. 2. Came to believe that a Power greater than ourselves could restore us to sanity. 3. Made a decision to turn our will and our lives over to the care of God as we understood Him. 4. Made a searching and fearless moral inventory of ourselves. 5. Admitted to God, to ourselves, and to another human being the exact nature of our wrongs. 6. Were entirely ready to have God remove all these defects of character. 7. Humbly asked Him to remove our shortcomings. 8. Made a list of all persons we had harmed, and became willing to make amends to them all. 9. Made direct amends to such people wherever possible, except when to do so would injure them or others. 10. Continued to take personal inventory and when we were wrong promptly admitted it. 11. Sought through prayer and meditation to improve our conscious contact with God as we understood Him, praying only for knowledge of His will for us and the power to carry that out. 12. Having had a spiritual awakening as the result of these Steps, we tried to carry this message to alcoholics, and to practice these principles in all our affairs.

The Twelve Traditions of Sexaholics Anonymous

1. Our common welfare should come first; personal recovery depends upon SA unity.
2. For our group purpose there is but one ultimate authority — a loving God as He may express Himself in our group conscience. Our leaders are but trusted servants; they do not govern.
3. The only requirement for membership is a desire to stop lusting and become sexually sober.
4. Each group should be autonomous, except in matters affecting other groups or Sexaholics Anonymous as a whole.
5. Each group has but one primary purpose — to carry its message to the sexaholic who still suffers.
6. An SA group ought never endorse, finance, or lend the SA name to any related facility or outside enterprise, lest problems of money, property and prestige divert us from our primary spiritual purpose.
7. Every SA group ought to be fully self-supporting, declining outside contributions.
8. Sexaholics Anonymous should remain forever non-professional, but our service centers may employ special workers.
9. SA, as such, ought never be organized; but we may create service boards or committees directly responsible to those they serve.
10. Sexaholics Anonymous has no opinion on outside issues; hence the SA name ought never be drawn into public controversy.
11. Our public relations policy is based on attraction rather than promotion; we need always maintain personal anonymity at the level of press, radio, TV and films.
12. Anonymity is the spiritual foundation of all our Traditions, ever reminding us to place principles before personalities.

THIRD QUARTER LITERATURE REPORT

<i>Blank Cover</i>	551
<i>Full Cover</i>	423
<i>Meeting Guides</i>	34
<i>Member Stories</i>	102
<i>Recovery Continues</i>	199
<i>Developing the Principles</i>	78
Brochures - English	3,077
Brochures - Spanish	80
'85 Tapes	16
'88 Tapes	23

LIST OF DONATIONS FOR THIRD QUARTER

Akron OH	60.00	Lewiston ME	45.00	Syracuse NY	50.00
Alexandria VA	40.00	Long Beach CA	15.00	Tacoma WA	44.00
Alhambra CA	61.50	Long Island NY	300.00	Toms River NJ	52.75
Anaheim CA	35.00	Los Angeles CA	24.00	Toronto, Canada	50.00
Arlington Hts. IL	3.00	Milwaukee WI	183.85	Torrance/Del Amo CA	30.00
Arlington VA	30.83	Montgomery AL	5.00	Tulsa OK	35.47
Asheville NC	15.75	Montreal, Canada	177.00	Union City NJ	60.00
Atlanta GA	25.00	N. Hollywood CA	364.08	Vancouver, Canada	76.50
Baltimore MD	140.00	Nashville TN	231.27	Villa Park IL	65.75
Barrington IL	200.00	New Orleans/Slidell LA	30.00	Virginia Beach VA	15.00
Bellflower CA	4.00	Northridge CA	57.00	W. Los Angeles CA	76.50
Bowling Green KY	11.20	NY Tri State Intergroup	20.00	Westfield NJ	40.00
Bozeman MT	37.00	Oklahoma City OK	718.00	Wheeling WV	20.00
Brooklyn NY	20.00	Olympia WA	30.00	Wichita KS	162.48
Brooklyn/Tri State NY	33.50	Orange CA	30.00		
Cairns, Australia	4.00	Paramont CA	15.00	Subtotal Group	
Camarillo CA	130.00	Pasadena CA	28.00	Donations	\$7,136.76
Cambridge MA	150.00	Penn Hills PA	100.00	Subtotal Individual	
Casper WY	20.00	Phoenix AZ	19.00	Donations	2,555.68
Chicago IL	126.50	Portland OR	214.62		
Chula Vista CA	45.00	Redlands CA	35.00	TOTAL	
Crystal Lake IL	40.00	Rochester MN	20.00	DONATIONS	\$9,692.44
Dallas TX	50.00	Rochester NY	247.00		
Decatur IL	21.00	Roseburg OR	9.75		
Deerfield IL	4.60	Salem OR	69.50		
Downers Grove IL	238.25	Salt Lake City UT	15.75		
El Cajon CA	46.48	San Angelo TX	40.00		
Elmhurst IL	53.00	San Bernardino CA	84.00		
Encinitas CA	20.00	San Diego CA	233.77		
Escondido CA	20.00	Santa Fe TN	10.00		
Fairbanks AK	7.56	Santa Monica CA	160.75		
Ft. Collins CO	25.00	Saskatoon, Sask, Canada	50.00		
Glen Ellyn IL	80.00	Seattle WA	222.05		
Hacienda Hts. CA	10.00	Seattle/Ballard WA	20.00		
Houston TX	40.00	Shreveport LA	25.00		
Huntington Beach CA	25.00	Simi Valley CA	95.00		
Idaho Falls ID	50.00	St. Louis MO	65.00		
Kittanning PA	25.75	Suitland MD	250.00		
Laurel MD	50.00	Sunnyvale CA	100.00		

The Central Office has taken every effort to make the above list correct. If the group name was not noted on the check, the donation is totalled under "Individual." To assure proper credit, please make sure to designate exactly who the donation is from.

This is the Third Quarter only. All donations received after 9/30/92 will be in the next Essay.

STATEMENT OF INCOME AND EXPENSES FOR THE PERIOD ENDING SEPTEMBER 30, 1992

	<i>Current Period</i>	<i>(%)</i>	<i>Year-to-Date</i>	<i>(%)</i>
INCOME				
Contributions – Unrestricted	\$7,626.92	100.0	\$71,650.19	100.0
(less) Refunds	0.00	0.0	0.00	0.0
TOTAL INCOME	\$7,626.92	100.0	\$71,650.19	100.0
EXPENSES				
Misc. Expense	0.00	0.0	45.00	0.1
Salaries & Wages	0.00	0.0	0.00	0.0
Auto expense	10.00	0.1	127.12	0.2
Bank Service Charges	91.39	1.2	145.68	0.2
Courier & UPS	0.00	0.0	22.00	0.0
Education & Seminars	0.00	0.0	211.50	0.3
Insurance – General	0.00	0.0	0.00	0.0
Legal & Accounting	0.00	0.0	1,665.74	2.3
Miscellaneous Expense	0.00	0.0	100.00	0.1
Office expense	75.87	1.0	1,617.90	2.3
Outside services	3,604.94	47.3	36,357.13	50.7
Postage expense	1,555.83	20.4	7,685.45	10.7
Printing & Tape Duplication	1,771.44	23.2	6,297.85	8.8
Refunds	124.41	1.6	124.41	0.2
Rent Expense	0.00	0.0	6,400.00	8.9
Repairs & Maintenance	0.00	0.0	499.30	0.7
Supplies Expense	125.07	1.6	946.61	1.3
Taxes – Payroll	0.00	0.0	0.00	0.0
Taxes – Other	0.00	0.0	591.00	0.8
Telephone	577.90	7.6	5,658.49	7.9
TOTAL EXPENSES	7,936.85	104.1	68,495.18	95.6
NET OPERATING INCOME (LOSS)	(309.93)	(4.1)	3,155.01	4.4
NET INCOME (LOSS) BEFORE TAX	(309.93)	(4.1)	3,155.01	4.4
INCOME TAXES				
State income tax	0.00	0.0	0.00	0.0
NET INCOME (LOSS)	(\$309.93)	(4.1)	\$3,155.01	4.4

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