Essay®

P. O. Box 111910 Nashville, TN 37222

December 1995

(The following is an extract from a talk given by Roy K, at the Unity

talk given by Roy K. at the Unity Conference in Orange, CA, on October 8, 1995.)

Thank you for bringing us together. I surrender my ego, my fear, all of my defects. I surrender my preparation for this talk and we ask together for Your Presence above all else, that you will dwell in our hearts, be with us as we share together, the exalted, that we may be your servants, helping those who are lost in the tyranny of lust.

Something came to me recently from another member in Australia, who was at the Stepping Stones, which is where Bill and Lois had their last home. From the archives at Stepping Stones he received from the archivist a copy of what was on the flyleaf of Bill W's family Bible. They didn't have children, but over the years they apparently had a family Bible. I didn't know that. And these are the entries on that flyleaf that I'd like to read to you. Notice the date: they're all before 1935, when he was bottoming out. He tried ever since the service in WWI to quit and he couldn't. This one's dated October 20, 1928. It's in Bill's handwriting: "To my beloved wife that has endured so much, let this stand as evidence of my pledge to you that I have finished with drink forever." The next one is Thanksgiving Day, 1928. "My strength is renewed a thousandfold in

The Soul of the Sickness

my love for you"--I don't know the reference to that, was that another lapse or something? I don't know--Next year, January 12, 1929: "... to tell you once more that I am finished with it. I love you." The last one is September 3, 1930: "Finally, and for a lifetime. Thank God for your love."

What does this tell you? That Bill tried with every ounce of his being to stop drinking, and he couldn't stop. Folks, that was alcohol. How many here are recovering alcoholics?

News item: "A new plague has broken out on twentieth-century men. It has already infected most of the males in our world and has begun spreading to females. The virus-like entity is energized by an as yet unrecognized source of energy from within the male himself, creating a ravenous need for more and more of the person upon which to feed. The human immune system is powerless over this, the most virulent toxin the world has ever known."

What's that talking about? Lust...
This is a spiritual virus. And it's what you and I, most of the people in this room, are addicted to. I am helplessly and hopelessly powerless over lust and I'm 19 years sober sexually, with progressive victory over lust. I have no resources in myself for overcoming

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LITERATURE COMMITTEE NEWS

SA Literature in Spanish

Work continues on Spanish translations of SA literature. The work of publication has begun. The first publication expected will be the full version of *Recovery Continues*. A revision of the White Book is in the works also.

MEMBER STORIES

Very soon, the Literature Committee will be making an appeal for member stories. Guidelines about the format, length, etc. will be forthcoming. We want to add to the collection of success and recovery stories. These personal tales are valuable to our understanding of the problem, the struggle, and the joy of recovery.

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(continued from p.1) this supernatural, superpowerful force that I let into my life. The amazing thing is today I'm free of the tyranny of lust. I'm tempted to lust, just as you are--less often than I have ever been in my life; many many days go by and I don't even think of an image, a picture or anything else--and there's no temptation. But I'm a lustaholic. I today have no strength or resources or power to overcome my lust temptations or the lust that's out there. So how can I stand here and give you a recovering marriage and a recovering person? The burden of my heart is with the sexaholics who cannot get sober. A year ago we had another conference right in this hotel. Look at how many people who didn't come back. We can have a false sense of security and accomplishment and pride in our program by just looking at the numbers. They keep increasing all the time. It means nothing.

The problem of lust is the most difficult infection the world has ever known. And there's no cure. But thank God there's a reprieve and there's healing and cleansing and recovery. And I want to testify to that. I'm a little superstitious because when I talk like this I'm afraid I'm going to jinx myself, because after a year-and-a half of sobriety I had a slip and went on a three-month sex binge and got suicidal. It was all over. If the resources of my continued progressive victory over lust and fear and resentment and marital un-love resided within myself or my program ability, I should have great reason to be superstitious. I may not make it. I may not screw this program tight enough and make enough calls and do this and do enough writing and do enough of this, you know ... But the grounds of my

sobriety lie in a power greater than myself and that's what I want to talk about. Because the answer to the infection, the answer to this supernatural force of lust is a benign, loving Power that is available to us, who loves the sexaholic where he is.

Can you believe that? It's making a believer out of me and I am very reluctant. Coming from a super-religious addicted background, with all the belief, you know, believing everything right to the letter--and I was a worshiper at the temple of Aphrodite, a worshiper of the goddess of lust. One of the greatest impediments to my continued sobriety and your continued sobriety and certainly my sobriety in the early years, is fear-driven sobriety. Fear-driven sobriety. It worked. For a while. I want to tell you fear-driven sobriety is wrong. It is anti-program and eventually doesn't work. But it has the appearance of working. It doesn't work. And one of the fallacies is self-control.

I want to read a quote from George MacDonald, in 1885, (just to give it to you so that you hear something better than I can ever say); and, if you hear nothing else, hear this and assimilate it. The English is a little stilted because it's 100 years old: "I will allow that mere effort of will may add to the man's power over his lower nature, but in that very nature it is God who must rule and not man, however well the man may mean. From a man's rule of himself, however devout, arises the huge danger of nourishing by the pride of self-conquest something far worse than even the unchained animal self,--the demonic self. True victory over self is the victory of God in the man, not of the man alone. It is

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CALENDAR OF EVENTS

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

January 12 - 14, 1996 SA/S-Anon International Conference, Phoenix, AZ

Theme: Freedom to Choose Not To

Contact Tom McD (SA) 602/759-9157 or Linda McD. (S Anon) 602/759-9157

March 9, 1996

SA Area Conference

Milwaukee/Racine WI

Contact Jim O 414/637-7806 or Phil S. 414/632-3035

July 12 - 14, 1996 SA/S-Anon International Conference, Chicago, IL

Contact Kirk K. (SA)708/469-0822 or Rhonda K. (S Anon)708/469-0822

January 11 - 13, 1997
SA/S-Anon International
Conference, Oklahoma City, OK

Theme to be announced

Essay Editorial Guidelines

The Essay editorial function is answerable to the fellowship as a whole. Just as our SA group meetings follow guidelines designed to keep meetings on track, the following guidelines apply to the Essay.

- * Articles from SA members and SA groups or intergroups are invited, although no payment is made, and material is not returned.
- * The Central Office provides Essay editor with copies of letters and other materials of potential use in the newsletter.
- * Submissions, selected by the editor, are subject to correction of spelling and grammar (*The Chicago Manual of Style* is the standard) and may be condensed to accommodate space limitations. Selections may be edited for style and clarity.
- * The principles of SA's Twelve Traditions guide editorial philosophy.
- * Articles are not intended to serve as statements of SA policy, nor does publication imply endorsement by either SA or the Essay.
- * SA's sobriety definition is not debated, since it distinguishes SA from other sex addiction fellowships. *Essay* is not a forum for non-SA sobriety and non-SA principles.
- * The Essay is not a fund-raising mechanism, although from time to time SA's needs may be made known.
- * General Guidelines for Submissions:
 Where possible, articles are submitted for publication should be typed and double-spaced. If articles are submitted on disk, check with Central Office for software compatibility. Send articles to the SA Central Office, attention of the Essay editor. When an article speaks for a group or intergroup, it should have the prior approval of that group or intergroup. Articles should observe common standards of friendliness and good taste. Discussions involving therapy or religion are discouraged.

(continued from p.2) not subjugation that is enough, but subjugation by God. In whatever man does without God he must fail miserably, or succeed more miserably. No portion of a man can rule another portion, for God, not the man, created it. A man may develop a self-satisfaction which in its very nature is the root of all sin; doing the thing God does not require of him he puts himself in the place of God, becoming a law giver unto himself." We can do that in the Program. Become a law giver to ourselves. Very insidious form of selfworship, playing God. "...becoming a law giver unto himself, one who commands, not one who obeys." Now it closes with this: "The diseased satisfaction which some minds feel in laying burdens on themselves is a pampering of the most dangerous appetite of that self which they think they are mortifying."

Self will doesn't work. It worked for me for a year-and-a-half. Addiction to meetings and socialized spirituality kept me sober for a year-and-a-half. We've got men in this meeting tonight who have sobriety in AA for years, newcomers, God bless their souls, I love them, and they are a testimony to how long I was in this program and didn't see the real problem. A 40-year AA man in Australia said the same thing a few weeks ago, and now he's six months sober in SA and says that his experience is like being born anew.

The best thing I can do is bear witness to my experience, to help you find the power, the Higher Power that can solve this dilemma and bring healing to this lust disease, this incredible virus. And I'm going to take a chance, I'm going to do it by doing an

experiment. Just recently in meetings I kind of had a light go on and it has raised a question. Some of you were in the meeting where I raised the question: I wonder if any of us can truly enter recovery without not only spilling the beans on our First Step sexual history--that's kind of easy, that's what we did--but what was going on in our souls while we were in the trance. What was I doing on the bathroom floor with the picture of a woman when I was masturbating? What was I doing inside my soul? If I can sense and come clean on that, if I can truly see what that is, then I've got a small little handle on the nature of this illness. So I'm going to take the masturbation scenario which, as far as my experiences go in SA, of all the different kinds of acting out that we have and do, the common denominator to all of it, for 99.9 percent of us, seems to be masturbation, and most of that seems to be masturbation to images or memories of images. Any debate on that? [Laughter]

I think there's a reason for that. We're living in a different world. The camera was developed in the 1820s and '30s in France and England, but by 1910, Kodak put film on a roll and Box Brownies sold for a dollar apiece. So from the turn of the century to the present day there has been. a revolution in the human species on planet earth the like of which makes all of the other revolutions--the Neolithic revolution, the Guttenberg revolution, printing, the Industrial Revolution bringing us into the modern age, the Technological revolution--- all those pale into insignificance [by comparison] on their impact on you and me as human beings and sexual human beings and on our sexuality.

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So what we have today is a new kind of lust. We've always had lust in the human race. But there's a new kind of lust which makes it incredibly more powerful--image-driven lust. And that image-driven lust has somehow produced in the air in which we live and move and have our being, a spirit of lust that it connects with.

By the way, you know where I should be this weekend? My 50th high school anniversary is going on in Van Nuys this weekend. And I have to lead with my weakness; I was going to forget to do this and then it just occurred to me, I've got to tell you where I am today. Anyhow, I decided I wasn't going to that, you know, for a year I knew I wasn't going to go. They start drinking--there's so few left anyway [laughter]--they start drinking right away and unless you're drinking, you don't fit in with the crowd. I'd love to see some of those people, but I decided not to go until, just the day before this weekend, who calls up but my former high school friend, the girl who lives next door, calls up my wife--- I'm glad I didn't answer the phone, somebody's looking out for me--and says, "Is Roy going to the reunion?" And my wife said, "No." But it happened to be Susie, my next door neighbor, and I used to peep through the breakfast room curtains at her across the fence. She was one of my first peeping experiences. But anyhow, she called me suddenly and I start thinking: "I want to go to the reunion!" [Laughter]

Why? That's so innocent, right?
Why? I want to be lusted after. Passive lust. I'm powerless over it. I was powerless over that temptation.... I have no power over when a

temptation comes but thank God, I was able to surrender it, many times and got over it and I'm here today and didn't have to cut out.... I'm still powerless over lust but I want you to believe me that there is a Presence in my life today, in here, that is my shield. A personal, loving Presence. A cleansing, delivering Presence. He's my sobriety. He's my faith. How did I get there? How did I get there from a religious addiction, where I had all the belief but was worshipping the goddess of lust, to today where I don't have religious connections with the institutional forms of religion, and I have a saving power, a Friend?

Here's the experiment I want you to think about. The failure of your sobriety or recovery from lust is due to the fact of misconnection or no connection with the power great enough to do it. It's that simple. If you want to try an experiment, go through your own lust trance, the thing that's going through the inside of your soul you don't want to tell anything about--you know, you can tell about the acting out, but not what's going through your soul-- and go through that and see what it is and then on the next column write what kind of a Higher Power against each of these attributes of my lust trance-do I need to give me not only victory, but cleansing. So I'm going to tell you about my trance. And I hope you understand what happens but I'm going to give you the anatomy of my masturbation scenario, the pictures.

It starts with a look. Compulsion strikes. The ritual begins. I'm gone, right? Somehow the neurology, whatever, has done it. It can be any kind of stimulus whatever. The ritual begins and I become under the control of the

force. I haven't done a thing yet, haven't bought a magazine, nothing else, but I'm under the control, so I've got to score a connection one way or the other. And with me typically in those early years before prostitution, it was the magazine rack. If you were to see me in there, on my shoulder, one magazine after another, just like the other johns, going through one picture and then another, snatching this or that, and sometimes I'd go out with a pile of magazines losing a whole lot of money, just to get that right connection of an image.

What is the image? Is there anything there? It's dots of ink on paper. It's two-dimensional. It's nothing. So why does it attract me? Why does it connect me with a force that I'm under the control of? Then the next thing I do after I get one is I hide, in secret, lock the door so nobody can see me. The trance begins. As I stare at that image I open my soul, and the consumption begins. I begin ingesting. Catherine McKinnon, the attorney [against] pornography, uses this term and she's dead right: "the consumption, the consumers," we are consumers. What are we consuming? What am I taking in? Now it has the feeling of a life-giving sustenance, just like food and water. It's the same thing if I'm doing this to the image of a woman, a mistress, a prostiture or even my wife. It's giving me a spiritual connection. Spiritual sustenance. Giving me some kind of food. But, is it real food, is it going to satisfy? That is spiritual intercourse. And there's nobody else there but me. What am I having intercourse with? It's a spiritual connection of my soul with a higher power. Possession. A presence has possessed me. I'm

(continued from p4) overcome. It offers life. What is this but an act of worship? That's what I was doing, folks. A worshipper of the only God in church but a worshipper of my true God every day, every single day, could not live without the infusion of this spiritual force that I open my soul to.... I think today the temple of Aphrodite is in every home in America and is in the air about us. It's an invisible temple. We enter it all the time. Because it is our world. It is the spirit of lust in our world today.... In that trance I was in intercourse with that image and with the spirit, whatever was possessing it. I was taking that woman. I was feeling her-body, I was taking the spirit of lust that was emanating in that body through those eyes, through that figure, through the connections, the neural connections I had set up in all of the thousands of masturbation [experiences/rituals]. I was perverting. What was I perverting? Sure I was perverting the image, but hey, I was perverting myself. I'm a recovering sex pervert. I was misusing. Now, how easy do you think marital recovery is going to be for somebody like me?....

That's the most damning thing about this illness--blinding me to the truth about myself. And if you can't see the truth about your other defects, you're never going to make recovery or sobriety.

For to see that truth would be to fall down and cry, "God--! Be merciful to me!"

The cry of the sexaholic.

So what kind of a Higher Power do you think that needs? Okay, let's go back from the trance, the elements of

that spiritual intercourse and try to extrapolate just logically what kind it needs. First of all, I'm going to need a Spiritual Power, because it's a spiritual force. Nobody was there but me. Next thing is that Power has to be more powerful than lust. It's got to be a super-natural Power. Another thing is that Presence, that Power, has to be able to take lust and its death if I'm going to have within me a spiritual presence that will overcome lust--that Presence has to be able to take it. Can you take lust? I can't take lust anymore. So your Higher Power has to be able to take it, it has to be personal. This Presence has to know me. Sorry, folks. I am very demanding on the One who I have to have. He's got to know me just as I am, even beyond the layers of my kidding myself, my fooling myself. So, He's got to be a revealer. He's got to see what I can't see. That's the only way I can get out of this.

The next is I've got to be cleansed from this virus infection. I need a spiritual cleansing. I need a healing from it. And, above all, I'm a person, a human being. What I was doing was in pursuit of love, wasn't it? So, what I need in my spiritual Presence, personal presence, is someone who loves me just as I am in the most difficult moment of my temptation. Not waiting for me to be good first. I don't need a God where I've got to be good first. I need a God who takes me just where I am. On the phonecall from the girl from the reunion.... I need the Life Giver. I'm dead in lust and I need life.

I'm getting life. Every time I connect, say, "Come on in; just as I am." Finally, how did I discover this One who works for me?

By agonizingly, slowly, grudgingly, incorporating twelve simple principles into my being. We call them Steps. They aren't really Steps, they're principles of being that take character change to incorporate slowly and I've just begun the process. But it's working. Even imperfectly, it's working. A great admission, I'm lost, I'm powerless over this temptation right now--that's the thing that opens the door. When I say that upward, that opens the door to know that He can restore me to sanity because He's restoring others.

You know what I do every morning? I want to share this with the married couples. I used to do my quiet time alone, never talked to Iris, never brought her into my program.... I started out five minutes at a time. When my sponsor told me in the late seventies, do this thing every morning, I'd go in the garage and I could last a couple of minutes just praying or reading the 24 Hour A Day book or whatever, and then my mind would race with lust and images and memories and I'd have to get out of there.... But I did it. Five minutes, then six minutes, I don't know what it was but slowly over months and years it has developed into the most precious time of my day. I get up, take half a thyroid with a glass of water, go into the. garage and that's my time. It's before any phone calls, any newspaper, any wife, anything, I'm there. And that's heaven.

And then after I do that, I come in, and I'm bringing Iris into my recovery now. We will sit down together and read a portion of our devotional literature. Right now we're in a Harmony of the Gospels. You want to know (continued on page 6)

what this morning's reading was?
"It's not what comes into a man that defiles him by unwashed hands, it's what comes out of his heart. For out of the heart proceed fornications, thefts, murders, adultery, etc., etc...."

And we hold hands together and we pray. We ask God to keep us sober in our marriage just for that day. We don't have a marriage tomorrow. God ain't through with us yet. I don't have sobriety tomorrow. We ask him to guard us from un-love.

I ask him to keep me from misperceiving Iris; she's a couple of years older now than she was when I married her, and I'm a couple of years older. We ask God to keep us from misperceiving and un-love and then we pray for the family or whatever. We give up all our possessions, our family and SA to God every day. We give up the little house I'm working on that I love so much, that I'm beating myself to death over, exhausted every night, it's gotta be right. And I give up my manuscripts that are unpublished and just take back what he gives us today. And it's marvelous and I'm beginning to share with her some of my inner stuff that I would never dare do before.

So it's slow but it's working, and you guys,-- you know, don't take that long!

And the Steps, the principles, that's how. I didn't work these twelve principles. I had to come to places where I was forced to change. Looking back on it I was incorporating that Step, that principle without knowing it just in the pain of the marriage. Like the Ninth Step amends. At first all I could do was write a note to Iris and

say I was wrong, it was so hot. Of course she never answered the note [laughter].

But these principles, you know them, I don't have to go through them. Each one of these is something I have to continually incorporate into my being to have this continued reprieve and joy and recovery. And there's no way I can do it for you and there's no way anyone else can do it for you. It's as private and personal as the masturbation ritual. The essence of your program eventually is going to wind up with you alone--with sponsors and meetings and books and literature, that's all tools--but, eventually, if you don't have what you thought you were getting on your knees in that bathroom like I was, in yourself, you don't have it. So the question. What is recovery for the sexaholic? What is recovery? Don't cheat yourself. This is the most difficult, impossible malady the world has ever known. We're lucky because it is. Because we have to find the One who can handle it. Thank you.

(Copies of this talk are available through Glenn K Audio Tapes)

GROUP NEWS

Welcome to New Groups

Lower Bucks County, Yardley, PA

Eureka, CA

El Cerrito, CA

Charlotte, NC

Darwin, Australia:

Dear SA,

Just to let you know that our SA group here in the far tropical north of Australia is thriving. We have four to five solid members with recovery of up to six weeks according to the SA definition. Previously affiliated with another sexual recovery fellowship, one of our members travelled to the USA and discovered SA. Now we all read the white book and unanimously voted to adopt SA's group structure, readings and definition of sobriety. The spiritual awakening had by us all has been fantastic. New members are appearing, drawn by the unspoken strength--attraction rather than promotion.

We meet Monday nights; but, we all have frequent contact with each other and all have paired off as sponsors and are working the Steps with a new intensity. Thank God for SA and for the generosity of members in the USA who gave us their experience, strength and hope from afar. The tapes are great--lifesavers. We have made contact with the other SA groups in Australia and some of us are trying to get to the conference in Phoenix! P.M.

Davenport, IA:

The enclosed check is a group donation from the Quad Cities Sexaholics. Anonymous. We are happy to report that although we remain small in numbers, we now have four meetings a week. Just as the Nashville 1990 "Courage To Change" conference was the impetus for our original meeting, the 1995 Baltimore conference inspired us to start two additional meetings. On page 158 of the White Book, it is suggested that we go to "meetings, meetings, meetings, meetings,

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meetings." Well, we're getting there!
And best of all we're experiencing
progressive victory over lust.

Recently a number of us were able to attend a spiritual retreat sponsored by the Chicago-area intergroup. Not only were we renewed in spirit individually, but we also felt the presence of God in our fellowship. All who have gone before us and paved the way should know that they have made a great difference in the lives of many people. God bless our pioneers! G.L.

Calgary, Alberta Canada -

This Fall has been exciting for our group here in Calgary. Recently, we celebrated the group's one year anniversary with a large turnout. We added another meeting out of a need, bringing the weekly total to three, which are going strong. In September, a retreat was held, which 25 men attended, including a couple of out of town members from Vancouver. We plan to make this an annual event due to its success and strengthening of our commitment to sobriety. Our thanks to Mike C., from Chicago, who shared his experience, strength and hope with us. Overall, the Calgary group is going strong and continuing to grow. G. S.

Member News

Through the grace of God and the fellowship and Steps of Sexaholics Anonymous, I have experienced countless victories over lust. Also, I have not found it necessary to act out upon my sexual addiction since July 16, 1991. For this, I will probably never be truly grateful enough.

Lust has always been my drug of choice. Ever since I was eight years old and I began looking through adult magazines that my brothers would bring home, I was hooked. Mostly it was fantasy, masturbation, trying to "connect" with girls and women I met, pornography, and television/videos. I lusted and wanted to be lusted after. Later on, in college, alcohol and marijuana seemed to be great enhancers to my lust. I was much more determined to go "further" with a date when drunk. Therefore, there are a lot of shameful memories.

I bottomed out from alcohol and drugs in 1983 and joined AA. During the next eight "sober" years (many of them were only "dry") from chemicals, my lust continued to grow and get stronger. "Flirting" (lusting) all day at work, I'd come home and put undue pressure on my wife for sex. She was as if an object, a "tool." My advances continued over the years, and we grew apart.

Toward the end of my addiction, my nightly ritual was to feign a good mood (always scheming) and make some lustful suggestion to my wife. She would usually decline, and I would park myself in front of the "idiot box" and pout . "What's wrong?" she would ask, "Are you mad at me?" (Ooh, that question again!) I would deny it (to protect my "stash" for future use) and tell her to go on to bed-that I wanted to zone for a while. I would then proceed to flip through all 60 cable channels we had--over and over again, looking for triggers. During the day, my little son would never even think about asking to play with me--Daddy was an isolated, distant, forgetful piece of furniture. (Like my Dad, and his Dad, and his Dad, etc.)

My last week in addiction included some of our loudest arguments. Both objects and harsh words flew in our house, and left three of us with a lot of tears. The pain got so bad that one day I told a therapist everything that I had been doing. I said how much this felt like alcohol did eight years ago--a real hell. Then I asked him if this could be an addiction, too--just like booze was--and he said, "Oh yes! Absolutely!" Thank God he did. The next night, on July 16, 1991, I was at my first SA meeting.

I felt so ready for sobriety. In fact, I cried many times that first week --but this time it was out of relief. The old-timers told me to make sure I really was ready--that wishy-washy starts in the program just don't cut it. "If you're not sure, go out and try some more pain," they said. They asked me if I felt I had any options other than to stop completely, and I had to say no.

I hooked up with a sponsor immediately and his suggestion of calling daily was a big help. "Stick with the winners," he said. It's a good thing that he did say that, because I was not capable by myself of dealing with life on life's terms. He also was my guide through the Twelve Steps.

Every Sunday morning, a group of four of us (two old, two new) would get together for breakfast and Step work. I was never motivated enough to take the time to understand the Steps until then, and it was a terrific way to learn. I was told to do Steps One through Eleven in an efficient, non-stop manner. After writing out each thoroughly, we would read them out loud on Sunday mornings. It was

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(continued from p. 7) a beautiful and glorious way to learn how the Steps inter-work with each other. I was told that the Twelve Steps were a group of principles--spiritual guidelines by which to live. That once a person learns One through Eleven and begins practicing them, they will have a strong desire to share their story and to help others (Step Twelve). This is the very reason why I wrote this story. Today, my life is very different. I have been given selfconfidence and a sense of purpose that I never dreamed possible. My productivity and attention span have improved dramatically both personally and professionally. In fact, I never could have handled the position I have now if I was still acting out. Most of all, though, I have a family.

My son actually wants to play with me--we spend a lot of time together and share many things. My wife and I are best friends. Things are a lot more pleasant around the house, and our relationship is more loving and giving than ever before.

I am truly blessed.

My sponsor taught me several important things I'd like to pass on to you:

- 1. Don't act out, no matter what.
- 2. Always work the Steps.
- 3. Surrender your lust to God and to your sponsor frequently.
 - 4. Go to meetings often.
 - 5. Get involved with Service.
- 6. Call sober members--especially if you don't want to.

Everywhere in the news lately we hear about sexual offenders and it seems like it's all such a mystery to

everyone. There are so many people in the world who are suffering from this malady and they don't even know what's wrong. We have the ability to help. God has blessed us with these Twelve (perfect!) Steps, and if we work them, he will use us as he sees fit--in his own time, in his own way.

My friend, stay in contact with sober members. Call them, write them, visit them--do whatever it takes to stay sober. I promise you, the rewards are incredible! God bless. Anonymous (Submitted by a SA group from Nashville)

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Feedback on Essay Newsletter

"I like a newsletter that talks to me, and find it encouraging. Also like the fact that feedback is welcome-found it helpful." R.P.

"Wonderful. It is a meeting in print-each small article speaks to me personally as if the person were writing to me. I got this [subscription] form at the Orange Unity Conference, which was a miracle-it is like a breath of fresh air." R.G.

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Donations for the Third Quarter -- 1995

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Abilene, TX \$ 20.00	Los Angeles, CA	\$ 278.25	Syracuse, NY	115.00
Ada, OK 33.00	Lower Bucks Cty, PA	133.75	Timonium, MD	25.00
Alhambra, CA. 63.53	Makati, Philippines	20.00	Torrance, CA	20.00
Anaheim, CA 100.00	Manhattan Beach, CA	100.00	Trinity, IL	100.00
Atlanta, GA 93.55	Menlo Park, CA	112.00	Troy, MI	102.10
Baltimore, MD 80.00	Millvale, PE, Canada	40.25	Tulsa, OK	260.05
Baltimore/DC 2500.00	Milwaukee, WI	88.50	Warner Robins, GA	30.00
Binghampton, NY 90.00	Montreal, PQ, Canada	151.36	Washington, DC	225.00
Bozeman, MT 15.75	N Hollywood, CA	260.00	West LA, CA	228.94
Brea, CA 43.39	Nashville Intergroup	100.00	Wichita, KS	200.00
Calgary AB Canada 59.00	Nashville, TN	240.84	Willow Creek, IL	97.00
Camarillo, CA 140.00	New York, NY	75.00		
Cambridge, MA 25.00	Newberg, OR	30.00	Group Total	\$ 14,086.07
Cedar Falls, IA 5.00	NJ/E PA Intergroup	300.00		
Chicago, IL 100.00	NY Metro Intergroup	15.00	Individual Total	895.39
Chino, CA 200.00	Olympic, CA	4.78		
Chula Vista, CA 54.48	Painesville, OH	50.00	Grand Total	\$ 14,981.46
Cleveland, OH 222.00	Pasadena, CA	362.00		
Columbus, OH 60.00	Pasco, WA	25.00		
Crystal City, VA 500.22	Penn Hills, PA	82.86		
Crystal Lake, IL 100.00	Philadelphia, PA	27.00		
Daytona Beach, FL 73.00	Phoenix, AZ	9.50		
Downers Grove, IL 125.00	Pleasanton, CA	35.00		7
El Paso, TX 22.00	Pompano Beach, FL	12.45		
Elk Grove Village, IL 120.00	Portland, OR	201.38		
Elmhurst, IL 52.00	Puget Sound Intergroup	12.05	nerve ner do rendun kraus delle h	
Encinitas, CA 20.35	Punta Gorda, FL	2.97		
Erie, PA 100.00	Quebec PQ, Canada	35.00		
Escondido, CA 30.00	Rapid City, SD	70.00		
Evanston, IL 60.00	Redlands, CA	45.00		
Florence, AL 74.00	Rochester, NY	344.82		
Fremont, CA 102.00	S CA Area Intergroup	300.00		
Ft. Collins, CO 20.00	Salt Lake City	120.97		LANT RELEASE SE
Glendora, CA 120.00	San Diego, CA	400.00		n tan toll.E things a
Grand Rapids, MI 75.00	Savannah, GA	20.45		
Hacienda Heights, CA 50.00	Seal Beach, CA	21.50		
Houston, TX 25.00	Seattle, WA	200.00		
LA Unity Conference 2089.02	Silver Spring, MD	275.25		
Lancaster, CA 25.00	Stafford, VA	50.00		
Laurel, MD 22.50	Steubenville, OH	2.40		
Laurei, MD Long Beach, CA 217.86	Sunnyvale, CA	100.00		
Long Beach, CA 217.00				

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 person 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 mediation to improve our conscious contact with God as we understoon Him, praying only for knowledge of His will for us and the power to carry that out.
- 12. Having had a spirtual 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 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. A 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.

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 whenever 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 ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS: 1. Our common welfare should come first, personal recovery depends upon AA 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 AA membership is a desire to stop drinking. 4. Each group should be autonomous, except in matters affecting other groups or AA as a whole. 5. Each group has but one primary purpose—to carry its message to the alcoholic who still suffers. 6. An AA group ought never endorse, finance, or lend the AA name to any related facility or outside enterprise, lest problems of money, property and prestige divert us from our primary spiritual purpose. 7. Every AA group ought to be fully self-supporting, declining outside contributions. 8. Alcoholics Anonymous should remain forever non-professional, but our service centers may employ special workers. 9. AA, as such, ought never be organized but we may create service boards or committees directly responsible to those they serve. 10. Alcoholics Anonymous has no opinion on outside issues; hence the AA 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.

Group Conscience Meetings and the Twelve Traditions

(Reprinted from <u>Discovering the Principles</u>)

Available from Central Office. See order form on back page

SA is ten years old at the national level today. Many groups in SA are getting to the place where there is continuity of membership and sobriety for the first time. Increasingly, various matters are coming up requiring decisions that should be made by the group as a whole. Group conscience meetings, proven invaluable in AA, are now becoming a way of life for us in SA.

Group conscience meetings are to the group what the tools of the program are to the individual. The healthy functioning and growth of the group are vital to the healthy functioning and growth of individual members. We find that without participating in the fellowship of recovery we cannot survive for long. Thus, we dare not take the group for granted, regardless of what stage of growth it is in. "Our common welfare should come first; personal recovery depends on SA unity." (Tradition One).

Group conscience meetings happen when group members get together and discuss and act on matters affecting the group. They take their rise from the decisions that must be made any time two or more sexaholics get together to meet. Since, "for our group purpose our only ultimate authority is a loving God as He may express Himself in our group conscience," we simply get together and decide matters by group conscience. "Our leaders are but trusted servants; they do not govern" (Tradition Two).

Why Group Conscience Meetings?

Group conscience meetings bring into play the principles of the Twelve Traditions, and without the Traditions, we would not last long either as a group or as a fellowship.

One of the most important aspects of our recovery program is a willingness to be part of the business--and stresses--affecting the group. An experienced friend in AA says, "If people are not committed enough for business meetings, you don't really have a group.; all you have is a social or psychological group of some sort-not a program group. One's commitment must be to meetings and to others making up the group. Thus, the importance of being committed to regular attendance at a home group. Merely taking from the group without making a direct contribution to its functioning is no good for the individual and no good for the group."

Another reason for regular group conscience meetings is that the group needs a sense of history. We need to know that we are part of a larger whole, a family. Engaging in the day-to-day life of grandparents and younger children and grandchildren makes one part of his or her larger biological family and gives a feeling of security and belonging. So many of us wander about as aliens, isolated and alone, even attending meetings. The difference is when we actually become part of the group as spiritual family. And being involved in the

mission and responsibilities of the group is one of the best ways to do this.

We've found that just as with the individual, getting our own house in order as a group must come first if our primary purpose is to be achieved. And each group has but one primary purpose--"to carry its message to the sexaholic who still suffers" (Tradition Five). Notice that this says the message the group carries is its message. I as an individual may bear witness to the truth of my own experience to another individual one-on-one, but when that person comes into a meeting, it's the message of the group he or she gets. And what is the message of my group? Is it sobriety or insobriety? Support for the sickness or support for recovery? This is another reason why we need regular group conscience meetings, to periodically reassess the condition and orderliness of our own house. Just as the only thing to which I can really bear witness is the truth of my own experience, whatever that is, so the group only bears witness to the truth of its own experience. For this reason, some groups do periodic group inventories, measuring themselves against each of the Traditions.

How Do We Conduct Group Conscience Meetings?

Just how do we go about doing it? As well as we can! Half-measures avail us nothing in our own personal sobriety, and half-measures get us just about as much for the sobriety of the (continued on page 12)

(continued from p.11)
group. We need some structure when
we get together to discuss these matters, just as we need a regular meeting
format. Without structure, group conscience meetings can degenerate into
chaos, where resentments may be ignited.

The home group I took root in used a very simplified form of common parliamentary procedure as a guide to assure democratic process and order. It saved the day many a time.

A group conscience meeting should have a Chairperson and Secretary. The Chairperson moderates the meeting, using the procedure and format the group has decided to use. The Secretary takes notes on items discussed and voted on, prepares the minutes for the record, and reads the minutes for approval at the next group conscience meeting. The notebook containing these minutes forms the essence of that group's history. There will be times when reference will have to be made to those minutes to clarify prior decisions. Usually the group's Treasurer reads and posts the financial report at each business meeting.

A group conscience meeting format can be very simple, but there should be a format. Something as simple as the following usually proves adequate:

Chairperson calls the meeting to order.

Open with the Serenity Prayer.

Reading of the Twelve Traditions.

Reading of the minutes of the last business meeting.

Vote on approval of the minutes. Financial report.
Old business.

New business. Closing prayer.

It seems to work best if groups designate a minimum sobriety requirement for *voting* on business matters, even though all members may attend. This not only helps uphold our sobriety imperative but brings to the decision-making process a degree of experience and temperance that would otherwise be lacking.

It works better if we do not mix a group conscience meeting with the SA meeting itself. Such business discussions and votes should take place either before or after regular SA meetings or at some other previously announced time and place. This preserves the integrity and quality of the meeting itself for its primary purpose--to share our experience, strength and hope with each other for our common problem and carry our message to those who still suffer. It is tempting for the group leader to deal with such matters on the spot when members are right there already in a meeting, but we've found that we're mixing apples and apricots. SA meetings are for Program; group conscience meetings are for business. Thus, when items come up for immediate group decision, the secretary can state, for example, that there will be a group conscience meeting after the SA meeting to deal with it. Items affecting the group significantly, such as election of a new group secretary and other important issues, should be announced far enough ahead of time for all members to be well informed.

Summary

Group conscience meetings test our program, our sobriety, and our

serenity, but like life itself, they are necessary for our growth. If we can discover, through our get-togethers, the tools and strength to-live and work together--and God does for us what we cannot do for ourselves--we prepare ourselves, our groups, and our SA Fellowship as a whole for what God has in store for us next. Yes, there may be trial-by-fire, and our own group conscience meetings are often the place where we feel the heat. But then we were never the kind of folk who were satisfied with the humdrum. The practice we get in relating to others in group conscience meetings seems to be part of the process of recovery and growing up.

If we are faithful to the little we have in each of our groups today, we will be ready for what tomorrow will bring. Our larger decision-making process at the intergroup and national levels will grow out of our experiences in getting our own houses in order in our local groups. As always with us, it is from the inside out.

1 January 1986, rev 3/89, 3/91

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A Note from the Service Structure Committee

Dear SA Intergroups:

This is an announcement of of SA's First Annual Oversight Assembly to be held January 12, 1996 at 2:00 PM, at the Freedom Conference in Phoenix. The location of the meeting will be in your conference program.

Enclosed is Service Structure information for your consideration and review. The format is very simple. A representative is needed from each region. Please elect your representative to attend this historical meeting.

The suggested reading list for those doing service work is:

The AA Big Book
The 12 Steps and 12 Traditions
AA Comes of Age
The AA Service Manual (which includes the 12 concepts for world service)

These books are all available from AA.

Thank you,

Service Structure Committee
SA-International Central Office
Central Office Oversight Committee

See page 14 for the proposed SA Service Structure chart.

VOLUNTEER NEEDED

The SACC, SA Corrections Committee, is looking for volunteers. There is still a need for a Chairperson. If you are willing to serve in this area, please contact the Central Office.

Thank you.

SA SERVICE STRUCTURE

SERVICE ENTITY	WHEN	FUNCTION	REPRESENTATION DUTIES OF ELECTED REPRESENTATIVE	TO NEXT LEVEL SUGGESTED REQUIREMENTS FOR SERVING
Group Attended by members	Usually once or twice weekly	Twelfth Step Work with individuals; maintain phone list, enough literature for group needs, etc. Elect IGR (Intergroup Representative)	IGR attends monthly Intergroup meetings; communicates group needs to Intergroup; reports proceedings back to the group	To be established by group; usually two years SA sobriety; at least one year term of service
Attended by IGRs from each group	Usually monthly.	Service work on an area level establish "hotline", local meeting lists, plan SA events; discuss issues/vote on matters affecting SA groups in the area Elect RD (Regional Delegate)	RD attends Regional Assembly; communicates Intergroup issues to regional level; reports proceedings back to Intergroups	To be established by Intergroup; two year term of service, two years SA sobriety
Regional Assembly Attended by R Ds from each Intergroup	Annually	Service work on a regional level, e.g., discuss issues/vote on matters of concern to groups and intergroups in the region. Elect OR (Oversight Representative)	OR attends Oversight Assembly; communicates regional issues to national level; reports back to region, Intergroups and groups	To be established by Region two year term of service two - five years SA sobriety
Oversight Assembly Attended by O Rs from each Region	Annually, in conjunction with semi-annual conference	Service work on a fellowship-wide level; discuss/vote on issues of concern to regions and matters affecting SA as a whole; give direction to Oversight Committee Elect OC (Oversight Committee) from candidates suggested by O Rs in attendance	See below for "duties" of the Oversight Committee	Established by fellowship (1/94) Oversight Committee to consist of 9 members-five sexaholics and four non-sexaholics; term of service 3 - 5 years; five years SA sobriety for sexaholic members
Oversight Committee Elected by Oversight Assembly	Three times a year Once at each semi-annual conference, and once in Nashville	Carry out the agenda of Oversight Assembly; i.e., oversee International Central Office function; monitor/report on workings of additional committees (Publications, Prisons, etc.) Report back to regions, intergroups and groups via elected representatives		

Box 300

P. O. Box 111910 Nashville, TN 37222 December 1995

International Central Office Announcements

Contact Information

Your Central Office needs help with updating local contact information. Our records need to be as up-to-date as they can possibly be, so that people are not given incorrect information, or told that no meeting or contact person exists in their area when in fact, there IS a meeting. A group information form is being included with this issue of the Essay. Please take this to your local group, or check with them to make sure that correct information for your group is on file at the Central Office. If you have any doubt, please fill out this simple sheet and send it in, just to be sure.

Sexaholics looking for this program will thank you!

Tax Issue Report

The State of California has presented its bill for back taxes due, related to employee issues.

Central Office began in November to pay off the total due. The final bill is expected to be between \$7,000.00 - \$9,000.00. Payments will be in monthly installments until the total is paid.

Literature Order Form

Please take a minute to glance at the Literature Order Form on the back of your *Essay*... The order form has been updated, and this is now the ONLY order form containing correct information.

Please don't use the old forms; if you see any, throw them away (or recycle them)!

Pay with Credit Card

At the November 19th meeting, COOC approved a six month trial of credit card use.

Beginning January 1, 1996, your Central Office can accept credit cards as payment for orders. The new forms for English and Spanish orders have been altered to reflect this change.

Accepted cards are: MasterCard, Visa, and American Express.

Credit Card orders must include Name as it appears on the card, card #, and Expiration date.

We hope this will be a valuable and useful service to the fellowship.

Summary of COOC Meeting Nov 1, 1995

Spanish translations: Central Office now has the disks of *Recovery Continues* in Spanish (which will be available as soon as appropriate software is located) and Jose Maria R. is now working on *Member Stories* and the *Working Paper*.

COOC welcomed our new Central Office Manager, Kay Shotwell.

Service Structure: discussion of how to facilitate inauguration of the new structure in Phoenix, including time for a formal installation of Regional reps and COOC will meet at 2:00 pm, Friday, Jan 12, to begin this process.

Following the advice of a concerned SA in Australia, a motion passed to change the name of Central Office to International Central Office.

Motion passed to authorize a retainer of \$1,000 to Raymond Meyers, a lawyer, to carry through the incorporation of SA.

Discussion of a kit to send to professionals requesting information about SA; discussion of how much free literature to send. Suggestion that we ask for payment if the person can afford it, or otherwise regard it as 12th Step work. Kay was asked to track her 6-month outlay of literature and to determine how much of the expense goes for shipping and handling.

Submitted by M.C.

Spanish Literature Available

Two official items, the White Book (el Libro Blanco), and Discovering the Principles (Descubriendo los Principios) have been translated into Spanish. The prices are \$8.00 for the former and \$2.00 for the latter, plus shipping and handling charges (check order form). The two non-official items distributed by the Central Office, "Notes on the Early Growth of SA" ("Notas sobre los comienzos de SA"), and "Some Opinion, Medical And Personal, On The Physiological Aspects Of Male Sexual Abstinence" ("Algunas Opiniones, Medicas y Personales, Sobre Los Aspectos Fisiologicos de la Abstinencia Sexual Masculina") are also available in Spanish. And all literature can be ordered from Nashville Central Office. A bilingual order form and the Spanish brochure are included among the material usually sent to inquirers from Spanish speaking countries or to Hispanics in the USA. We ask all our readers to share this information with all the Spanish speaking members they might know. We are sure that using the tool of reading program literature in their own language will be very helpful to all of them, and will strengthen their own sobriety.

- JM, Madrid, Spain

Appropriate Shipping and handling charges will be added to each order depending upon the country of destination and the shipping method selected.

HOJA DE PEDIDO (Order Form)

Los pagos se han de efectuar en dolares USA y MasterCard, Visa, American Express

SA

P. O. Box 111910

Nashville, TN 37222

Estados Unidos de America
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Por favor, escriba con letras mayusculas o a maquina.

Nombre	adt word	Latell Lan bomban ment	(Name)
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Cantidad Quantity	Precio Price ea	Titulo Description	
	\$ 8.00	Sexolicos Anonimos	
	\$.30	Folleto de SA (SA brochu	re)
	\$ 2.00	Descubriendo los Principi	ios
	\$.50	Notas Sobre los Comienzo	s de SA
	\$.25 As	Algunas Opiniones, Medio pectos Fisiologicos de la Ab	cas y Personales, Sobre los stinencia Sexual Masculina
	\$	Deduccion del 20% (n	nas de \$200)
	\$	(Residentes CA .0775	%) (Residentes FL .0600%)
	\$	Gastos de envio (shipp	oing & handling)
	\$	PRECIO TOTAL (O	RDER TOTAL

SEXAHOLICS ANONYMOUS

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Payments must be made in U.S. funds only. Check, Money Orde Name	er, MasterCard, Visa, American Express
Street -	
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Telephone (Group	
(If your order or donation is for a group, please INDICATE ENGLISH OR SPANISH TRANSLATI	
Blank. If not indicated, blank will be sent \{\$8.00 Span hard bound \} 14 ounces SA Brochure - Problem, solution and 20 questions \{30\notine{ Spanish \} 1 ounce Member Stories - Twenty-one recovery stories \{Recovery Continues - Important articles crucial to recovery \{\$8.00 English \} \{\$2.00 Spanish - not hard \text{ Discovering the Principles - SA's growing experient Traditions \{\$2.00 English - under revision \} \{\$2.00 Spanish - under revision \} \{	Repeat Order

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