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# Essay®

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A Quarterly Publication of Sexaholics Anonymous, Incorporated

P. O. Box 111910  
Nashville, TN 37222

December 1997

## SA Beginnings in Ireland

**The Belfast SA** group began after Chris B. went to the Waterford Conference in October 1996 on the advice of an American clergyman. Since then, SA meetings have been held every two weeks in a local parish center. For the most part there were only two people in attendance. Recently, however, two others heard about SA through other 12-Step fellowships and have been introduced to SA literature and meetings. The Belfast group also has made its existence known to a number of counselors and clergy. Sobriety in the group ranges from Chris B's two and a half years, to six months, three weeks and one week.

The first **SA meeting in Galway** took place November 18, 1996, with two members present. In March of this year, another member joined, and during the summer, another member began to attend. In September of this year, a second weekly meeting was started on Saturday afternoons. The numbers at meetings in Galway vary from as low as two, to five or six. The Monday night meeting is a Step meeting. The Saturday afternoon meeting has readings from the AA Big Book and the SA White Book.

**The Kingscourt SA** meeting has been going for a year and a half. Initially the meeting had two members, one of whom had to drive a considerable distance to attend. Occasionally members from other parts of the country attend. The local

member has found that the meeting is helpful even when there is no one else in attendance. Putting the SA box number in church bulletins has yielded some inquiries, as has sharing at meetings of other 12-Step fellowships in the area. In an *Essay* article last March, a loner member talked about closing his eyes and imagining members he had met introducing themselves at the beginning of the meeting. Then he didn't feel like a loner at all. This loner has been doing the same thing and it has made a big difference. When he pictures other loner members, he realizes he's not a loner at all. **Dara M.**

**SA in Dublin** -- I first heard of SA through another S-fellowship in Dublin. I met Fergus C., an SA member from the US, and was impressed with what he had. But it was in 1996, when living away from Dublin, that I first started using the SA meeting format with another member. When I returned to Dublin I was determined to start a SA meeting. I was prepared to pay the rent on my own, but Dara M. traveled 50 miles every week since the meeting began on October 24, 1996, and shared expenses. The group has seen people passing through, including SA visitors from overseas, mainly the US. Numbers are still small, but sobriety is growing, thank God. **Colm M.**

**SA in Waterford** started at the end of 1995 or the beginning of 1996

when I found another member through a priest. He stopped coming after a while. He has since died. I had another member who I contacted through NA. He stopped coming because he didn't want to work the Steps. I have carried the SA message to AA members, doctors, police and counselors. I find it difficult to get new members and I have been on my own for a long time. I had a new member at last night's meeting, but I was nervous of him because his "drug" was different than mine. Today I am sober three years, two months and 27 days. I make two phone calls each day. I am being brought through the Steps now for a second time. I am at Step 7.

Other SA groups have started in Cork and Kerry. Intergroup meetings are held on the third Saturday of every month in Athlone.

The first **Irish SA Convention** was held in Waterford in October 1996. The theme was "Working the Steps." Fifteen members attended. Some came from England, America and one from Australia. At this year's convention, seven members attended. The theme was "Quality Sobriety."

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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 16 - 18, 1998,** SA/S-Anon International Conference, Daytona Beach, FL.  
Theme: Our Primary Purpose, To Carry the Message to Those Who Still Suffer.  
Contacts SA: Allan B. at 904/767-2322, George F at 904/277-4041,  
or Jeff B. at 904/532-5118. Contacts S-Anon: Betty R. at 904/676-0367,  
or Mary Lee F. at 904/277-4041.

**March 27 - 29, 1998,** First European Convention, London, England, sponsored by SA UK.  
Details forthcoming. Write to SA UK, PO Box 1914, Bristol, BS99 2NE, England.

**April 25, 1998,** SA/S-Anon Spring Marathon, Cleveland, OH, by NE Ohio Intergroup.  
Call Larry N. at 216/381-1113 for information.

**May 1 - 3, 1998,** Southeast Regional Conference, by SA/S-Anon Atlanta.  
Theme: Hope for Freedom. Call Bret T., SA, 404/872-4801, Jeanie, S-Anon, 770/948-9995.

**May, 1998,** SA Conference, Ireland, sponsored SA Eire. More details coming soon.  
Contact Tom C. at 01-03535-185-8771

### Future Sites for SA/S-Anon International Conferences

**July 10 -12, 1998, Newark, NJ** SA/ S-Anon International Conference, sponsored by NJ/ Eastern PA  
SA/ S-Anon Intergroups. Theme: Experience, Strength, and Hope. SA contacts: Lloyd,  
610/944-9393; Joalice, 732/263-1558; Charlie, 732/776-6339. S-Anon contacts: Madeline,  
732/776-6339; Harold, 732/263-1558. (Registration forms available from SAICO)

**January 1999 Sacramento, CA**

**July 1999 Cleveland, OH**

### 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 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.

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We read "The Invisible Monster" from *Recovery Continues*. The following day the theme was self-awareness and sexual dreams. Traditions One and Two were the focus for Sunday morning. Other readings and topics included "The Joy Response" from *Recovery Continues* and the reading on "acceptance" on page 449 of the AA Big Book. To put the emphasis on recovery and healing, the first to share were the members with the longest sobriety.

Another convention was held outside **Galway** in May of this year. This was attended by Irish and English members. It is hoped that these conventions will be regular events throughout the year. **Tom C.**

## Group News

It feels so wonderful to have at last a SA meeting here in Greensboro, NC. This meeting came about as a result of our Higher Power expressing himself through the group conscience process. Four weeks ago, after much prayer, discussion and deliberation, our Wednesday night SAA group held a group conscience and voted unanimously to become an SA meeting.

Ten to 12 members attend regularly and we seem to be growing slowly but surely. We are blessed with the fact that several SA members from other cities have moved to the Greensboro area. Their experience, strength and hope and recovery have helped to build a strong foundation for this meeting.

The meeting strongly stresses living in the solution rather than the problem. We are using the book study

format and chose to begin by first studying and discussing the *Practical Guidelines for Group Recovery* pamphlet. We thought it was important that our new meeting get a firm foothold in what SA suggests as recovery-oriented meetings. When newcomers come in, our study and discussion focus around the "Problem" and "Solution" readings. **Terry M., Greensboro, NC.**

The Millvale Group in Summerside is one of two groups on Prince Edward Island, Canada. We have approximately 15 members who attend regularly.

Recently one of our long-term members was having trouble keeping his sobriety. This was very frustrating for him, for the group and for his sponsor. With his permission, I had a conversation with Roy K. about this matter. Roy K. suggested that our group have a "check meeting" with this person. This was new to us, but it was explained that a check meeting is a small meeting with several sober members and the person who is slipping. The purpose of this meeting is to approach and listen to the person in a compassionate way in order to understand the background of his slipping. Next, based on the experience, strength and hope of the sober members, we identify unhealthy attitudes, question behaviors, offer suggestions and give advice. Afterwards, the member in trouble stays close to this small group and checks in every day for a period of time or until the member gets on his feet with a reasonable period of sobriety.

We were not comfortable with this approach so we asked Roy K. if he and a couple of other members from his group would join us via speakerphone, and he agreed. (continued on page 4)

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The check meeting was made up of three members from Simi Valley and three members from the Millvale group and the member who was slipping. This member was willing to go to any length to get sober and was willing to test out this idea of a check meeting. The evening proved to be a wonderful experience for our group and very rewarding for all of us. The meeting opened and closed with prayer and in between, there was gut-wrenching honesty and powerful sharing and listening. Even with the speakerphone, the meeting was very intimate. When it was all over, it was hard to say goodbye.

This is another example of people who would normally never meet -- especially since we are from two different countries and two different sides of the continent -- coming together to help another sexaholic.

The other good news was the success of bringing sexaholics together using a speakerphone -- an inexpensive device that connects to a telephone. We are the only SA members east of Quebec and north of Maine and there were times when we felt isolated from SA as a whole. It would be great if we could hook up with another group by speakerphone for a SA meeting. We could learn from each other. The cost for an hour-long meeting would be reasonable and could be shared by the two groups.

If you're a loner, this could be a way to get close to other sexaholics.

**Paul R. PEI, Canada**

## Physical Healing from Sexaholism

(Repeated by request of **Mike O**)

The Solution states that "We saw that our problem was threefold: physical, emotional and spiritual. Healing had to come about in all

three." A number of us have found that the emotional and spiritual are well dealt with in meetings and in the literature, but that there is not much discussion on the physical aspect of recovery.

From the Physical Healing Break-out meeting at the Regina International Conference, a number of themes emerged:

- \* Physical problems caused by acting out (including depression, fatigue, chemical imbalances);

- \* Physical harm and danger of harm from acting out;

- \* Dealing with health problems while trying to work the program, such as low energy, depression, or anxiety, making working the program difficult and slow;

- \* Abuse trauma;

- \* Over-attention to physical attributes, such as self-image and perception of other's appearances;

- \* Neglect of our physical well-being because of the acting out;

- \* The physical aspect of praying.

There are some of us who have experienced these aspects of physical recovery and healing and we would like to communicate with others with similar experiences. If you are interested in physical healing, please contact: **Mike O., c/o Central Office.**

## New Groups

Welcome to the following new groups:

Ashland, VA.  
Lancaster, OH.  
Portland, TX  
Evansville, IN.  
Longwood, FL.  
Cowichan Valley, B.C., Canada

Additional Meetings in:  
Calgary, Canada  
Toronto, Canada  
Birmingham, AL

## Member News

### A Reflection on the Freedom We Have

At a recent meeting several people bemoaned the fact that they acted out against their own self-interest. They did not want to act out but felt compelled to do so.

It seems we almost want to wallow in our inability to change our behavior. Why don't we do the good we would do and why do we do the evil we do not want to do, as Saint Paul said.

I think in recovery that I have found something of an answer. What is pleasurable is attractive. The pleasure we once experienced is implanted in the imagination as a way of getting high. How does one conduct oneself before this pull of the imagination on the will? I know that in a certain situation I am helpless and will act out, just as the alcoholic who finds himself in a bar will drink. He has no freedom once he is in the bar. He will drink and get drunk. Everyone will admit he has no freedom in such a situation.

But I can avoid the steps that lead up to acting out. The alcoholic has some freedom in the steps that lead up to going into the bar. "I will not go down that street where the bar is. I will avoid the fellow drinkers who seduce me into drinking. Therefore I must focus on where I am still free and act at that level. I must choose to not go down the street where the bar is."

So I, too, must focus on where I am still free and not on where I am not free. By focusing on where I am not free I wallow in helplessness. In fact, I am abdicating responsibility for assuming the modicum of freedom I have.

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Freedom of choice, for me personally, consists in:

- \* Not taking alcohol;
- \* Not drinking in images or people who are triggers for me;
- \* Being fully alert and sensitive to what is dangerous and to act responsibly and *immediately* in a positive way when these triggers appear in my consciousness or field of vision;

- \* Turning to God immediately with the cry of a drowning man: "God, please help me, I'm powerless."

God will judge me by what I do with the freedom I have and not by the freedom I do not have. His grace is sufficient for me in the moment of choice. After a while good habits develop and carry me along and save me from a crisis-choice in every new situation. **Paul C. Wash., D.C.**

## Working the First Three Steps

The Third Step has been the hardest and most confusing for me. It would have been much easier had I better understood and practiced the first two Steps from the start.

For two years I had been desperate for a solution to my aberrant sexual behavior -- in my case, cruising for and using prostitutes five nights a week for six to eight hours a night while traveling as a salesman. I saw a psychiatrist; he said, "Just stop." You can imagine how well that worked. Then I stumbled across a book on sex addiction in the biography section of a bookstore. I learned in 60 seconds of skimming -- I had to look; after all, the book mentioned sex on the cover — what I was and how I could finally get help and stop. It was a biography —mine.

For the next 11 months, I worked the first three Steps the best I could.

And they really helped. There was no S-fellowship in my small town, just a sympathetic, wise and supportive priest at my church. I read lots of books on sex addiction. They were all sort of therapeutic in nature. My goal was to stop my aberrant sexual behavior and get on with life.

During my "so-called" recovery, I remained fixated on getting ahead and measuring up. Use this 12-Step thing, get back to normal sexual behavior -- i.e., acceptable lusting -- and get back on the ladder of success.

First Step? Piece of cake. I knew I had been living in hell with the prostitutes. Fix that and my life would be real manageable.

Second Step? Heck, I knew God led me to that book. Of course God will keep me sober. And I taught Sunday school, too.

Third Step? Well, I turned all my sexual acting out over to God. That's what the Third Step means, doesn't it? I moved to a new town, found a small SA group and hit the ground running. I had been sober for four years. Those others? Bunch of slippers, the poor guys. Sponsor? Nice to get some well-meaning advice now and then. I was pretty unteachable. I was "sober."

But my work-life was hell. I had been through five jobs in five years. Something was wrong. Belatedly I realized the Third Step says, "turn our will and our lives over to the care of God as we understood Him." Will? Lives? Pretty all-inclusive language. It didn't say to turn over just sex or lust. Well, I tried turning it all over. I tried hard. It didn't work. I spent two years doing this.

Then I went to an open AA meeting and heard some real recovery. I spoke to someone who had what I wanted. He said, "If you're stuck on a Step, that means you didn't work an earlier Step correctly. You have to back up a Step. The Steps are in order for a reason." Naturally I

argued and disagreed. But his words sunk in.

I began to see that God and I agreed on just one thing -- sobriety. Other than that, I didn't trust him. I saw him as judging, distant, disappointed -- curiously, just as I saw my parents. He didn't want me to succeed. He wanted to punish me. I could never get straight with God.

Of course I couldn't work the Third Step! Who could turn their life over to a *hostile* power? I tried to come up with a new understanding of my Higher Power, but couldn't. So back up another Step. At this point, Steps One and Two blur together. In essence, my value system -- "measure up, be the best, do it yourself, etc." -- was really my Higher Power. My unmanageable approach to life, my ego — which was my Higher Power. I had two Higher Powers — the real thing for sobriety and a me-puppet for everything else. Giving up sex and lust was almost easy in comparison to giving up this "power driver" approach, but I had to.

With time, grace and help from others, I have come to see my real problem was me and the acting out was just one manifestation of a deeper, much more pervasive spiritual disorder. I have to fix that. Every day.

I have come to see that a real Higher Power -- the same one that kept me sober -- would help me with everything else too, but in his way, not mine. And to my surprise, his way is better than anything I come up with. Now it's a lot easier to surrender everything. I'm still lost and confused a lot, but that's okay, God is navigating. I just have to follow him.

**Al B.**

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## Feedback Corner

### Free Books for Newcomers?

The reason the SA International Central Office sells the White Book at a 300 percent markup [see *Essay*, Dec. 1996] is because not enough groups and individuals are sending an adequate amount of money to Central Office. Most of the meetings in our area pass around two baskets at 7th Tradition time. One goes to pay for local expenses such as rent, literature purchases, and an intergroup donation (which helps pay for our phone line, pamphlets and stamps for public information and outreach). The second collection goes straight to Central Office, no questions asked. The quicker Central Office becomes self-supporting through contributions by members, the quicker our book prices will come down. This is simple economics. Let's take care of the real problem; not just place a Band-Aid on it. **Erich L., N.VA**

### Tradition Three: Requirement for Membership

*(Enclosed is a copy of a letter I was asked to write in response to an inquiry that came to the Southern California Area Intergroup (SCAI) concerning a): minors attending meetings as sexaholics, and b): minors attending open SA meetings with a parent. Our Intergroup chair encouraged me to send you a copy for publication in the Essay newsletter.*

I am writing in response to a letter you sent to SCAI requesting input concerning minors in SA meetings. The issue was discussed at our meeting of December 27. You realize we can only offer opinions, suggestions and very little experience,

strength and hope for this particular subject.

Tradition Three states: "The only requirement for [SA] membership is a desire to stop lusting and become sexually sober." It does not specify age, sex, origin, religious affiliation, marital status, etc. Tradition Three from the AA Twelve and Twelve says, "You are an AA member if *you* say so. You can declare yourself in; nobody can keep you out. No matter who you are, no matter how low you've gone, no matter how grave your emotional complications -- even your crimes -- we still can't deny you AA. We don't *want* to keep you out. We aren't a bit afraid you'll harm us, never mind how twisted or violent you may be. We just want to be sure that you get the same great chance for sobriety that we've had. So you're an AA member the minute you declare yourself." If SA is modeled on AA and we follow the same Traditions, then we may assume that AA's experience strength and hope can help us as well. I encourage you to read Tradition Three from the Twelve and Twelve. It will explain why they arrived at the above conclusion: the ever-paralyzing fear. Step Twelve does not say we tried to carry this message to certain sexaholics.

I know from my own experience that if I was aware that such an addiction existed at 14 years of age, or 16, or even 25, I may have saved myself years of misery. We cannot be responsible for our members' actions. We are responsible for our sobriety, not the sobriety of another member. However, if we are concerned about another member's behavior, we do not turn our heads, we confront them.

If SA is going to have "open" meetings, it should be expected that members would bring their children. What is "age appropriate" as a topic of discussion at an open SA meeting is something we could discuss all day.

The fact remains that an open meeting is open to non-SAs.

We all agree that as SA grows and reaches out to more desperate sexaholics such as ourselves we will see an increase in the numbers of minors at meetings. I personally know several AA members who came into AA when they were only 14 years old. One of those members is now 14 years sober; another is 27 years sober. AA has young people's meetings, and conventions. As the numbers increase in SA, we too can host young people's meetings.

Let us not allow fear to keep us from carrying the message of Sexaholics Anonymous to all who *want* it. **Denese B., CA**

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## Spotlight on Service--Leadership in AA

*(The following article is taken from the AA Grapevine, September 1997.)*

The Second Tradition states: "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."

From this I deduce that there ought to be leaders in AA; that these leaders ought to consult the group conscience regularly; that these leaders ought to be trustworthy; and that these leaders ought not to be governors, dictators, or prescribers. This brings to mind the word "good" in the Ninth Concept for World Service: "Good service leaders, together with sound and appropriate methods of choosing them, are at all levels indispensable for our future functioning and safety."

If I want to stand for election as a leader, I ought to take an inventory of my motives. Do I truly want to be the executive arm of the group conscience? Do I want to serve -- or do I want power? Am I searching for status? Do I think that a service leader in AA is a higher class of member than the ordinary members? If my answers aren't clear, it may be better for me and for AA that I don't stand for election.

A person's sobriety does matter -- but not length in years. (My observation is that some members who are, say, ten years sober are in fact only one year sober, ten times repeated.) What really matters is that I've used my time to work on my ego. The book *Alcoholics Anonymous* says that "selfishness and self-centeredness are the root of our troubles." It is not for nothing that the service Step, Step Twelve, comes after eleven other Steps -- these eleven are supposed to make my ego smaller so that I can serve better.

The Third Step Prayer in the Big Book says, "Relieve me of the bondage of self, that I may better do

Thy will." And the Big Book, in treating Steps Eight and Nine, clearly states the ultimate purpose of our program: At the moment we are trying to get our lives in order. But this is not an end in itself. Our real purpose is to fit ourselves to be of maximum service to God and the people about us."

Because a leader ought to see to the "future functioning and safety" of an AA group (Concept IX), he ought to be in AA long enough to have done as many of the Twelve Steps as possible, so that his ego is troubling him minimally, and he has become as serviceable as possible. If I want to stand for election as a leader, I ought to take an inventory of my practicing of the Twelve Steps. How much have I really worked on my ego? How many of the Twelve Steps have I done consciously? Is my ego small enough so that I am serviceable enough to fill this service position? How trustworthy am I? How consistently do I distinguish between principles and personalities in all of my affairs?

If I'm standing for election as a leader, I ought to see to the "common welfare" of a group of AAs, so it is necessary that I know the Twelve Traditions. I ought to have experienced how they are being applied. It's even better if I've learned to apply them myself, both in my group and in all my affairs. I ought to take an inventory of my knowledge of the Twelve Traditions. Which Traditions have I experienced being applied? Which Traditions have I myself applied consciously? To which Traditions does my group not pay enough attention? (With what results?) To which Traditions do I not pay enough attention? (With what results?)

There are degrees of responsibility in AA: in the beginning I'm

responsible only for myself and my own sobriety. After a while, if I've worked sufficiently on my ego, I'm fit to function as a service leader in my home group. When I've worked in my AA group for a while (and my ego hasn't been mortally wounded by criticism), I'm fit to function beyond the group level. And after I've served, it's good for me to become a very ordinary member of my group once again. If I want to stand for election as a leader, I ought to take an honest and humble inventory of my true talents versus the talents demanded by such a service position. For example, the secretary of a group must be able to spell and must have overcome procrastination. The chairperson must know something about meeting procedures. A member of the literature committee must know something about printing. I must remember: enthusiasm is no substitute for talent and skills.

If a leader-to-be has asked himself or herself all the questions above, then quite possibly he or she might exclaim: "What an order! I can't go through with it." But I keep something in mind from "How it Works": "Do not be discouraged. No one among us has been able to maintain anything like perfect adherence to these principles. We are not saints. The point is, that we are willing to grow along spiritual lines...." And so I come to what, for me, is the most important characteristic of an AA leader: does he or she continue to be willing "to grow along spiritual lines?"

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## 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 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 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 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.

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## Donations for the Third Quarter

Akron, OH	\$ 64.00	Laurel, MD	29.00	St. Charles, MO	60.00
Albuquerque, NM	7.50	Little Falls, NJ	61.05	St. Louis, MO	50.00
Anaheim, CA	50.00	Livingston, MT	15.50	Steubenville, OH	3.00
AS Deutschland	1080.19	Long Beach, CA	120.00	Syracuse IG, NY	100.00
Atlanta, GA	144.98	Long Island IG, NY	4.45	Tamuning, Guam	40.00
Baltimore, MD	60.00	Long Island, NY	53.25	Timonium, MD	158.00
Barrie, ON, Canada	100.00	Los Altos, CA	40.00	Torrance, CA	55.50
Beaver, PA	28.00	Manhattan Beach, CA	57.50	Tucson, AZ	10.00
Binghamton, NY	68.50	Menlo Park, CA	30.00	Tyson's Corner, VA	35.00
Bozeman, MT	40.00	Mill Creek, WA	18.00	UK IG, England	73.28
Brea, CA	98.00	Millvale, PEI, Canada	24.50	Vancouver, WA	29.52
Bryn Athyn, PA	50.00	Milwaukee, WI	141.00	Vienna, VA	194.00
Cambridge, MA	40.50	Montreal, PQ, Canada	15.00	Villa Park, IL	25.00
Centreville, VA	220.80	Nashville Intergroup, TN	450.00	Waldorf, MD	30.00
Chicago, IL	105.00	Nashville, TN	152.50	Washington, DC	865.51
Chino, CA	65.00	N Iowa IG, IA	50.00	West Los Angeles, CA	198.00
Chula Vista, CA	38.50	NE Ohio IG, OH	150.00	Wheeling, WV	19.68
Clayton, MO	97.00	NE Rural Omaha, NE	120.00	Wheeling/ Steubenville	57.00
Corona, CA	30.00	Newberg, OR	100.00	Willow Creek, IL	179.00
County Cork, Ireland	32.09	North Hollywood, CA	40.80	Woodbridge, VA	58.00
Cowichan Valley, BC	5.00	N California IG	325.00	Woodstock, IL	75.00
Crystal City VA	213.00	NY Metro IG, NY	125.00	Yardley, PA	37.00
Crystal Lake, IL	125.00	Oklahoma City Conf.	4047.33	Yonkers, NY	7.00
Cuyahoga Falls, OH	102.00	Palm Desert, CA	4.00	Yorba Linda, CA	38.58
Dallas, TX	20.00	Pasadena, CA	100.00		
Davenport, IA	50.00	Penn Hills, PA	155.00	<b>Group Total</b>	18,468.93
Daytona Beach, FL	138.52	Philadelphia, PA	99.00		
Denver, CO	50.00	Phoenix, AZ	24.00	<b>Individual Total</b>	696.00
Downers Grv, IL	30.00	Pittsburgh Southside	56.44		
El Cajon, CA	50.00	Pleasanton, CA	32.00	<b>Grand Total</b>	19,164.93
Elk Grove Village, IL	90.00	Portland IG, OR	300.00		
Erie, PA	20.00	Portland, OR	102.75		
Eugene, OR	25.50	Ravenswood, IL	30.00		
Falls Church, VA	131.00	Redlands, CA	20.00		
Federal Way, WA	68.00	Regina Conference	2819.26		
Fremont, WA	145.00	Rochester IG, NY	178.85		
Fresno, CA	60.00	Rockland County, NY	50.00		
Glen Ellyn, IL	160.00	Salem, OR	30.00		
Grand Junction, CO	100.00	Salt Lake City, UT	407.60		
Greenwich, CT	200.00	San Diego IG, CA	20.00		
Hacienda Heights, CA	53.00	San Diego, CA	121.00		
Ina, IL	15.00	Santa Barbara, CA	20.00		
Irvine, CA	150.00	Silver Spring, MD	470.00		
Jersey City, NJ	20.00	Somerville, MA	30.00		
Knoxville, TN	57.00	South Barrington, IL	219.00		
Lake Mary, FL	60.00	Springfield, VA	54.00		

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# SAICO

SA INTERNATIONAL CENTRAL OFFICE

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## #7860291

This may strike you as an unusual title for an article in the *Essay*. The reason is that I'm writing to invite you to consider becoming part of SA's outreach into prisons. As you may know, the prison system often identifies inmates by a number. This didn't mean all that much to me until I became friends with one of those numbers.

One day he came to the church where I was a part-time staff member. When my supervisor heard he was on parole for a sex-related offense, she suggested he call me. She thought I might be able to help him because she knew some of my own struggles with sexual addiction.

Several days later I received a phone call from him. We quickly established rapport as we talked about some of our common experiences. He soon became actively involved in our church and we saw each other often. Six months went by. Then I returned from a weeklong retreat to find that my friend had been picked up for violating his parole.

No one knew where he'd been placed within the prison system. I spent the next several days trying to locate him. It was in this process that I learned how important his number was for any level of contact between us.

My friend asked me and several others to testify on his behalf before his parole board. Upon our arrival at his hearing, I was stunned to see my friend standing in prison garb with chains around his hands and feet. When I was given the opportunity to speak to the board, I realized I really

had nothing to say in my friend's defense regarding concrete steps he'd taken to address his sexual addiction. I could only say he'd been actively involved in our church and had become a friend.

At the time I'd heard of Sexaholics Anonymous myself and had gone to a few meetings. But I hadn't become a member of the fellowship. When my friend violated his parole, I started going back to meetings, got a sponsor and started working the Steps so that when he got out of prison I could help him. It wasn't long before I realized that I needed the program every bit as much as I thought my friend did. The next time he was released on parole I was ready for him. I was a zealous convert to SA and started forcing myself and the program on him. Naturally my friend resisted this approach and never went to any meetings. Six months went by. And again he was sent back to prison for violating his parole.

In the correspondence that followed, my friend complained that I'd never taken the time to tell him my whole story. "Why are you a member of SA?" he wanted to know.

When he was released on parole again, we set up an appointment right away so that I could share my First Step inventory with him. I'd planned to read it to him, but inadvertently left the written text on my desk at home. Now I'd have to tell him my story from scratch.

Beginning with my earliest sexual memories, I retraced, step by step, the relentless progression of the illness in my life. Once again I found myself in

touch with the feelings of rage and despair which gripped my mind and heart during the final stages of my sexaholic behavior. I wept.

When I'd finished, my friend looked me straight in the eye and said matter-of-factly, "You could've been going to death row when I was coming out of prison."

I'd never had anyone tell me that before. But then I'd never been so honest with anyone before. Not even in my First Step.

My friend came away from our time together with a clear picture of where he was headed unless he got help. I came away with a renewed appreciation of Dr. Bob's four reasons for spending so much time passing on what he had learned to others in the early days of Alcoholics Anonymous:

1. He was motivated by a sense of duty.
2. It gave him pleasure.
3. He was paying back his debt to the person who had taken time to pass the solution on to him.
4. He was taking out a little more insurance against a possible slip.

My friend began coming to SA meetings regularly after that. He liked to say he went back to prison the first time for my sake; the second time for his own. Not long ago he celebrated his second year of being out of prison and the first of being released from parole.

However, both of our stories are still being written. Last week, I received word that my friend was once again picked up by the police. He may now face a much longer term in prison. (*continued on page 11*)

(continued from page 10)

This turn of events has only strengthened my resolve to participate in the service work of the SA Corrections Committee. For our friendship has helped me to see two truths. The first is that sexaholism leads to insanity, prison and death. The second is that SA offers us a way out of this fatal progression. So it was fitting that several days after hearing of my friend's incarceration, I was on my way with three other members of our fellowship to take a SA meeting into a prison in our area.

Upon our arrival, we walked through the electronically controlled gates of two chain-link fences topped with barbed wire to get into the facility. Then we passed through heavy, sliding doors and headed down a long enclosed corridor as cameras viewed our progress. Another sliding door was opened and we were at the base of a fortified control room operated by a prison guard. He opened one more sliding door and we were inside that part of the prison where the inmates were housed and our meeting would be held. We met for the next hour and a half with two regulars and two newcomers to the program. Then it was time to leave. As we went back through the sliding doors and walked down the lonely corridor past the chain link fences into the fresh air of freedom, I was reminded of my friend's response when I once commented how great it would be to take SA meetings into prisons together. He said taking a meeting into a prison would indeed be a rewarding experience, but what he'd really appreciate would be the freedom to leave the prison after the meeting was over.

It is out of my appreciation for that freedom that I now write to you. I hope that by hearing our story you may be motivated to join those of us who are helping to carry the SA

message into prisons. Not only did my experience of participating in this service work help me get sober; it has helped me stay sober. And it has the added benefit that my life has taken on new meaning and purpose.

The SACC needs members who are willing to correspond with and sponsor inmates. We need members who are willing to take meetings into prisons. We need members to represent SA's work with prisons at local SA meetings, in intergroup meetings, and at regional, national and international levels. In short, *we need you!* **William R.**, Chair, SACC.

If you wish to participate in the SACC service work in any way, or have helpful suggestions, please write to us at: SACC, P.O. Box 283, Bellevue, WA, 98004. Or E-mail us at [SACC@sa.org](mailto:SACC@sa.org).

## Service Opportunities

Many service opportunities are open at the national level. All committees need members from the fellowship to come forward and serve. Some service requires special talents--such as, the Legal Committee. Most committees just need time and the willingness to serve.

Can you make a phone call or write a letter? The Loners Committee needs your letter writing talents. Loners are found all around the world. Expand your horizons. Share some experience, strength, and hope with a member who is without a group.

In addition, the position of Chair of the Loners Committee will open next summer. Michael J. has given faithful service to Loners for the last two years. It is time to pass this service to another member.

If you feel called to the Loners Committee, write or call Central Office.

## Become an *Essay* Representative

Service in SA is a tried and proven way to maintain and enhance sexual sobriety and get progressive victory over lust. With this in mind, being an *Essay* representative is another good opportunity to do service at the group level.

\* The *Essay* representative serves the group by making members aware of the *Essay*, the quarterly newsletter/"meeting in print" of Sexaholics Anonymous.

\*The *Essay* rep serves the *Essay* by making sure that copies of the *Essay* are available on the literature table at all times, even after the initial group subscription is sold out. The rep promotes each issue, and encourages group and individual subscriptions.

\* The *Essay* rep is engaged in active Twelfth Step work. The *Essay* contains personal recovery stories, group news, and a calendar of events and good solid SA tools, and is an extremely helpful resource to members at all levels of recovery. The *Essay* rep may also bring stories from the *Essay* to the group's attention as possible meeting topics.

If you're interested in serving your group in this way, all you have to do is volunteer at your next business meeting, or let your group know during the announcement section of your next meeting. For more information, write to the *Essay* Committee, C/O the International Central Office.