

Essay®

A Quarterly Publication of Sexaholics Anonymous, Incorporated

PO Box 111910
Nashville, TN 37222

March 1998

How to Take a Lust Inventory in Your Group or Intergroup

*(Editor's note: Following the call for lust inventories at the recent Daytona Beach Conference, the International Central Office reports that several SA groups have called and expressed a desire to follow through on taking lust inventories, and requested guidelines on how to do it. The following guidelines, written by **Roy K.**, are submitted by the North Hollywood SA group)*

In a business meeting, take a group conscience on when and where to have the session. We voted to devote a regular meeting to it to get the most number of members participating.

Read passages on lust in the White Book that show how our program centers on lust as the underlying problem and victory over lust as the solution: e.g. The First Step and Third Tradition; "What Is a Sexaholic and What Is Sexual Sobriety," page 3, "Lust," page 40. This is to point up the fact that without progressive victory over lust, we have no recovery and no program. Recovery from "acting in" is what makes recovery from "acting out" possible. It's the "acting in" that's killing us.

We found it helpful to begin with spontaneous prayer for honesty, openmindedness and willingness to see ourselves as we really are with lust, putting aside all lengths of physical sobriety, and leading with our weakness.

The leader starts by leading with his or her weakness, bringing to the light exactly where they are with lust today. Where do we currently stand? Generally, when one person gets absolutely honest, others will follow. Telling where we are with lust today might include different things for different members. Some suggested questions might be:

- Where am I in desiring to masturbate today?
- Where am I in playing the old tapes in my mind today?
- Where am I with the looking and "drinking" today? With TV and the Internet, with real people?
- Where am I with making the mis-connection today?
- Where am I with other forms of lust?

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When Waking Up Is the Pits**

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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 SAICO]

- March 7 - 8, 1998**, Middle Tennessee SA Women's Retreat, sponsored by SA Nashville. Monteagle, TN. Contact: Barbie at 615/383-0652.
- March 22, 1998**, SA/S-Anon Spring Conference, Manhattan, NY, sponsored by NY Metro IG. Theme: Willing to Change. Contact SA NYC voicemail at 212/459-4044.
- March 27 - 29, 1998**, First European Convention, London, sponsored by SA UK. Theme: Freedom. Contact Susannah at 44-181-209-0658.
- March 28, 1998**, SA/S-Anon Marathon, Glen Ellyn, IL. Theme: It Works If You Work It. Contact Chicago Intergroup at 630/415-0341.
- April 24 - 26, 1998**, Australia Conference, Camp Cottermouth, Canberra, ACT. Theme: The Real Connection. Contact SA Melbourne at 03-9506-6719.
- April 24 - 26, 1998**, SA/S-Anon Spring Retreat, Brighton Creek, WA, sponsored by Seattle IG. Theme: A Design for Living. Contact Steve at 206/244-9044.
- April 25, 1998**, SA/S-Anon Spring Marathon, Wickliffe, OH, sponsored by Cleveland. Contact Larry N. at 216/381-1113.
- May 1 - 3, 1998**, SA/S-Anon Southeast Regional Conference, Atlanta. Theme: Hope for Freedom. Contacts Bret T., 404/872-4801 or Catherine, 404/633-6423.
- May 1 - 3, 1998**, SA Convention, Darmstadt, Germany, sponsored by AS Deutschland. Theme: "Es Gibt eine Lösung." Contact Ruth P. at 49-0931-663437.
- May 15 - 17, 1998**, SA Men's retreat, Big Bear Lake, CA. Theme: Find God V. Contact Gary W. at 909/865-1645, Or Dale L at 562/691-6789.
- May 16, 1998**, SA/S-Anon Northern California Regional Conference, Sacramento, CA. Theme: Making Fundamental Changes. Contact Gordon at 916/851-9509.

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.

How to improve *Essay* circulation

Celebrate SA birthdays by making group donations of a subscription to the *Essay*! The *Essay* Committee.

Subscribe to *Essay*

A one year subscription costs \$10.00. Group subscriptions of 10 or more sent to the same address are \$8.00 each. Payment can be by check, money order, or credit card, MasterCard or Visa. Send subscription requests to SAICO, PO Box 111910, Nashville, TN 37222-1910.

DONATIONS FOR FOURTH QUARTER

Albuquerque, NM	48.00	Knoxville, TN	53.00	Washington, DC	573.35
Anaheim, CA	70.00	Lake Mary, FL	20.00	West Los Angeles, CA	300.00
Annapolis, MD	60.00	Lincroft, NJ	50.00	Wheeling, WV	32.14
Arlington Hgts, IL	50.00	Long Island IG, NY	500.00	Wichita Family Retreat	455.09
Arnold, MO	60.00	Los Altos, CA	78.00	Willow Creek, IL	378.00
Asheville, NC	37.50	Louisville, KY	25.00	Woodbridge, VA	75.00
Atlanta, GA	16.59	Mansfield, OH	100.00	Yardley, PA	57.00
Barrie, ON, Canada	100.00	Menlo Park, CA	30.00	Yorba Linda, CA	37.82
Beaver, PA	67.00	Midlothian, IL	10.00		
Boston, MA	30.00	Mill Creek, WA	40.00	Group Total	12,196.54
Bowling Green, KY	50.00	Milwaukee, WI	329.00	Individual Total	1,723.75
Buckeye Lake, OH	25.00	Montreal, PQ, Canada	26.24		
Camarillo, CA	36.00	Nashville IG, TN	512.00	Grand Total	13,920.29
Cambridge, MA	66.15	Nashville, TN	156.50		
Cmp Humphreys, Korea	10.00	Newberg, OR	3.00		
Champaign, IL	50.00	North Hollywood, CA	502.07		
Chicago, IL	90.00	NY Metro IG, NY	308.50		
Chino, CA	105.00	Oklahoma City Conf.	800.00		
Chula Vista, CA	21.00	Painesville, OH	50.00		
Cleveland, OH	100.00	Palm Desert, CA	150.00		
Colorado Spgs, CO	50.00	Pasadena, CA	101.22		
Columbus, OH	250.00	Philadelphia, PA	49.00		
Corona, CA	40.00	Pittsburgh Southside	51.00		
Crystal City VA	288.00	Pleasanton, CA	38.00		
Crystal Lake, IL	150.00	Portland, OR	91.53		
Dallas, TX	80.00	Racine, WI	20.00		
Darien, IL	27.00	Riverside, CA	15.00		
Daytona Beach, FL	50.57	Rochester IG, NY	311.27		
Denver, CO	105.00	Rockland County, NY	50.00		
Detroit, MI	243.00	Salem, OR	30.00		
Elk Grove Women's	60.00	Salt Lake City, UT	298.16		
Elk Grove Village, IL	270.00	San Diego IG, CA	150.00		
Elmhurst, IL	65.00	Saskatoon, SK, Canada	9.50		
Erie, PA	75.00	Seattle, WA	22.00		
Fairfax, VA	50.25	Silver Spring, MD	380.00		
Falls Church, VA	100.00	Somerville, MA	35.00		
Federal Way, WA	14.00	South Barrington, IL	300.00		
Fresno, CA	60.00	St. Charles, MO	60.00		
Galway, Ireland	100.00	Sudbury, ON, Canada	82.61		
Glen Ellyn, IL	100.00	Surry Hills, Australia	41.58		
Grand Rapids, IA	16.00	Timonium, MD	35.00		
Greensboro, NC	10.00	Toronto, ON, Canada	200.00		
Hacienda Heights, CA	50.00	Tri-State Conf, PA	84.30		
Herndon, VA	72.00				
Holly Hills, FL	4.60	Tysons Corner, VA	114.00		
22		Vancouver, WA	39.00		
Idaho Falls, ID	77.00	Vienna, VA	284.00		
Kansas City, KS	50.00	Villa Park, IL	45.00		

Calendar of Events

May 23, 1998, SA/S-Anon Retreat, Wheeling WV, sponsored by Steubenville/Wheeling SA
Theme: Sharing of the Fellowship. Contact Shawn S.at 740/283-9561.

May 22 - 24, 1998, SA/S-Anon South-Midwest Region Conference, Wichita, KS.
Theme: Carrying the Message. Contacta SA, Bob W., 217/835-2925; Kevin M. 314/331-8280, Ken K., 314/664-8129; S-Anon, Jane M., 816/822-2113

May 29 - 31, 1998, SA Convention, Athenry, Galway, Ireland.
Contact Tom L. at 353-91-756-520

June 12 - 14, 1998, SA UK Step Study Retreat, English Lake District,
sponsored by SA UK. Contact Nicholas at 44-1768-863-379.

June 20, 1998, One Day Marathon, Perrysburg, OH, sponsored by Toldeo SA.
Theme: Are These Promises Extravagant? We Think Not! Contact Tim B.
at 419/697-1499.

August 28 - 30, 1998, SA/S-Anon UK Summer Convention,
Ammerdown, Somerset. Contact Indrei at 44-1373-466-555.

October 30 -November 1, 1998, Southern California Regional Unity Conference,
Theme: To be announced. Contact Gary W. at 909/865-1645.

SA/S-Anon International Conferences

July 10 - 12, 1998, SA/S-Anon International Conference, Newark, NJ.
Sponsored by NJ/Eastern PA SA/S-Anon Intergroups. Theme: The Hope Conference.
SA contacts, Lloyd at 610/944-9393; Joalice, 732/263-1558; and Charlie, 732/776-6339. S-
Anon contacts are Madeline, 732/776-6339; Harold, 732/263-1558.

January 1999, Sacramento, CA

July 1999, Cleveland, OH

January 2000, Nashville, TN

Lust Inventory (continued from page 1)

After everyone has had a chance to bring their truth to the light, open the meeting to crosstalk on the following questions:

- What does this tell us about ourselves?
- What does this tell us about our group or intergroup as to where we are today?
- What does this tell us about SA and where SA is today?

Consider a follow-on meeting where we take what we discovered in the first session and see how to use that to better serve our individual and group recovery.

Have one or more members write up a brief synopsis and send it to the International Central Office for sharing in the *Essay*. Describe the effects this inventory had on your group.

Group News

Growth of SA in Northern Virginia

When I entered the program in 1992, there were two SA meetings in Northern Virginia -- one in Falls Church and one in Alexandria, which moved in 1994 to Crystal City. There were four people with more than a year of sobriety, one with five years, another with seven and two with over a year.

In the spring of 1994, there was an additional meeting in Woodbridge, Va., my hometown. Something else had happened: many of the people who came in when I did or were struggling when I came through the doors were sober for more than a year. Second, there were more younger members -- SA's who were in their late twenties or early thirties -- trying to get sober. These two phenomena gave this struggling young member some hope. By the end of 1994, we had two more meetings, in Stafford and Vienna. The meetings started and survived because of the need we had for daily contact with other lustaholics.

The summer of 1995 brought the international conference to Baltimore. For many, this brought a vision of the type of fellowship we could have in our area if we were willing to do our part and be patient enough to let God do his.

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The spring of 1996 saw two more meetings -- one in Centerville and two in Springfield, and that

summer produced meetings in Herndon, Fredericksburg and Tysons Corner. Many of these new meetings struggled to survive, but they gave committed sober members a chance to do service and an opportunity to tell their story to the many newcomers who came and went. 1997 brought four more meetings to Fairfax and an additional meeting to Tysons Corner.

Today there are five morning meetings, two noon meetings and nine evening meetings in Northern Virginia. This is not including the five noon meetings and three evening meetings in Washington, D.C. For various reasons, many of these meetings weren't announced in the "New Groups" section of the *Essay*. As I speak, we are losing two of our outlying meetings to an intergroup that is being started in Richmond, Va., which now has seven meetings a week and had none until the summer of 1995.

In Northern Virginia we have about 16 members with over a year of sexual sobriety, one in double digits and five with over four years. This isn't counting those who live in D.C. and

suburban Maryland, many of whom frequent our meetings as we do theirs.

The number of younger single sexaholics has increased; we have a 19-year old who attends one

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 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.

The Twelve Steps of Sexaholics Anonymous

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

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

of our meetings. We have a small number of women who are staying in the fellowship. We also have had an influx of members from other S-fellowships who needed our focused approach on recovery from lust. Many of those who left our program have come back and many who were chronic slippers for years are now getting sober and carrying a message of hope to others who are struggling.

Meetings that struggled in 1996 are maturing slowly in sobriety and numbers. The meetings that were here when I arrived have become the sober anchors that later meetings have looked to for guidance. Only our Creator knows what is in store for Northern Virginia in the next five years. **Erich L., N. Virginia**

Louisville SA Group Growing

When I returned to my hometown of Louisville, KY in 1996 from San Diego, I desperately needed to connect with an SA group. Unfortunately, the eight or nine men that made up the Louisville group had strayed far from the SA meeting format I had grown accustomed to. The group hosted members with various addictions, including sexual addiction, and the emphasis was on Bible study. I tried to get the group back on track, but over a period of time the men dropped out and Louisville SA became a group of one.

Undaunted I became the contact person for the Louisville Hope Eternal Group and I continued to hold meetings on a weekly basis in my home, waiting for some new members. I was beginning to lose hope when a prospective new member was referred by the ICO in October 1996. I trusted in God and the SA guidelines and the new member kept coming back. Together we met on Tuesday evenings and Saturday mornings in my living room, read the White Book, and shared our experience, strength and hope.

On a couple of occasions the humble Louisville group of two was visited by SA members from other parts of the country as they passed through. They were in need of a meeting and found a warm welcome in Louisville. They always encouraged us to persevere and gave sound advice on how to grow

a solid SA group.

The real turning point came when I received a scholarship to attend the Nashville Conference in May 1997. I stayed in the home of Bill S., who became my sponsor, and I was able to connect with many SA members. The encouragement I received during the conference was just the booster shot I needed. The Nashville Intergroup later approved a request for support to fund a telephone voice mailbox for the Louisville group.

During this time I had begun counseling with a Louisville therapist who agreed to circulate SA brochures with our voice mail phone number to her colleagues. Our group of two began to pray that a few of the many people suffering with sexual addiction in the Louisville area would call, and God answered our prayers. The first two new members to join called the voice mailbox on the same evening within five minutes of each other. Although both were seeing the same therapist, they had never met.

Over the next several months, our group grew to 12 members. Our youngest is a college freshman and the oldest is over 70. We still have a Monday evening meeting in my living room, but we have moved the Saturday noon meeting and our new Wednesday evening meeting to a family care center to accommodate our growth. Within the next month we hope to add a Thursday evening meeting at yet another location, possibly in neighboring Jeffersonville, Indiana.

Here is a group that knows SA works, but only when we surrender to God's plan and not our own. **Steve G., Louisville, KY.**

Member News

When Waking up Is the Pits

At 5:45 this morning I woke to the sound of music from the house opposite floating through our open windows. I was in one of those headspaces, which have plagued me on waking up, since I got into recovery. I tried to go back to sleep; I didn't really want to get up and take the actions.

Then I remembered: "A fear to gratitude list."

With the fear list, my state of mind cleared. The negative messages hanging in my head were:

- I have failed my parents;
- I'm all alone in my mid-forties -- this proves I have messed up my life. This proves me wrong and my mother right about me;
- No one cares or knows about me.

Then the prayer:

God, these fears are based on self-reliance, and self-reliance has failed me. I now put my trust in infinite God rather than finite self. I ask you, God, to remove these fears and direct my attention to what you would have me do. As I humbly rely on you, I ask you to enable me to match calamity with serenity.

Then the gratitude list:

- There are people in my family who care about me;
- There are people in recovery who care about me;
- It is important that I care about them, too. They also need this.

That was enough. My state of mind lifted and I felt in touch with God again. Jose Maria R., Spain.

Taken from *SAUK news*, an SA newsletter published in the UK, issue eight, Jan. 1998.

New Groups

Boca Raton, FL
Cerritos, CA
Childs, MD
Roselle Park, NJ
Sullivan County, NY

Heidelberg, Germany
Quito, Ecuador

This committee provides a forum for SA members who have special needs in getting to meetings, such as childcare or physical handicaps. Patrick N., a blind SA, shared briefly about how the fellowship in Nashville had helped him overcome obstacles to attending meetings. He stressed that knowledge and sensitivity are key factors.

Essay

How do you like our new magazine format? Feedback is welcome. Unfortunately, however, subscriptions have been falling. Several options are being studied to improve circulation. Articles, member stories, and group news should be sent to Central Office, addressed to *Essay*. *Essay* is a gold mine of SA experience and recovery, and is a continuing source of inspiration to members at all points of recovery.

the publication of *El Libro Blanco*, the Spanish White Book. New equipment purchases have improved computer operations. Email is coming in from around the globe.

Finance

1998 Budget for SA is \$148,000. Bob R. noted that SA is still not self-supporting through contributions. He suggested groups to send monies above the "prudent reserve" to Central Office to support work done at the national level. Roy K. pointed out that individual contributions could be made also. Several committees had to be pared--Literature and SA Corrections Committee. Copies of the budget are available from Central Office.

Loners

Michael J. has served faithfully and well for the last two years and now is ready to go on to another committee. A new Chair for the committee will be needed in July. The Chair maintains the Loners Mailing List for members who wish to be added to the list. Those members on the list correspond by letters and phone calls to other members in isolated areas.

SA Corrections Committee

In the spirit of "being of maximum helpfulness," the Committee is seeking group and intergroup sponsorship of prisons and inmates. Literature for prisoners can be purchased and shipped at cost. The need is great. The message needs to be carried by a person to a person. SACC can be contacted at PO Box 283, Bellevue, WA 98004. The Email address is sacc@sa.org.

Literature Committee

Work is proceeding on *El Libro Blanco*, the Spanish White Book, and three new brochures. The brochures are *To the Newcomer*, *SA as a Resource for the Health and Helping Professional*, and *SA Telephone Service Guidelines*. The brochures are still being edited and polished. The goal is to have all these

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new items available in Newark in July. The next major project will be an *SA Step Study Guide*. Groups and Intergroups that are currently using some locally produced guide are urged to send a copy to Central Office for the Literature Committee to review and consider in construction of an SA guide.

Internet

The Internet serves the extremely useful purpose of getting the message out to a great number of people. The SA Net group numbers over 100 and is truly international. Inquiries from the Internet outnumber land mail. On line order entry is now available in English, Spanish, and German. Help is needed to start work on other languages. Their Email address is internet@sa.org.

Special Needs

SA Around the Globe

For years, SA outreach around the world depended to a large extent on occasional visits outside the US by sober members, and regular telephone outreach in response to inquiries, carried out almost entirely by Roy K. The first task of Indrei R. and Jose-Maria R., as co-chairs of the International Committee, was to work out a modus operandi between ourselves as Roy's successors and to set up a network of international contact members around the world. The means we employed are: referrals from Central Office; telephone cards; mail, and increasingly, e-mail.

Building on the precedent set by the senior SA fellowship outside the US -- SA's German-speaking Intergroup, which covers some 35 meetings in Germany, Switzerland, Austria, The Netherlands and Luxembourg -- we have provisionally divided up our responsibilities on linguistic grounds, Jose-Maria covering Spanish and Portuguese-speaking countries, and Indrei covering English and German-speaking countries.

We share a concern for French-speaking areas and those parts of Eastern Europe where we currently have loners -- Poland and Romania.

Currently there are SA meetings in 14 countries around the world, besides the US and Canada. They are: Austria, Australia, Brazil, Germany, Ireland, Israel, Japan, Luxembourg, The Netherlands, Puerto Rico, El Salvador, Spain, Switzerland, and the United Kingdom.

The largest SA communities outside North America are in German-speaking Europe (80 - 100 members); Australia and the UK (around 60 members each); Ireland and Japan (six meetings each); and Austria and Israel (two meetings each). The German-speaking groups, Australia, and the United Kingdom and Ireland also have fully-fledged Intergroups which organize conventions, publish newsletters and run phone lines.

SA literature has long been translated into German and also French (by Canadian members). In 1997, Jose Maria R. put a major effort into producing a full translation of all the SA literature into Spanish. We hope that with the arrival of metropolitan French-speakers, a French translation agreeable to all will be available some time in 1998-9, followed by a Japanese version.

SA's e-mail meeting, to which newcomers with e-mail access are referred by Kay at the Central Office, now has in excess of 120 members. French and German groups are also said to be in operation on the Internet. SA's website, which is constantly updated by Deke S., Jose Maria R. and many others, can now be consulted in at least two languages, with more to come, and the volume of inquiries from this source is expanding rapidly. Many of us SAs seem to value the low-threat medium of e-mail communication, particularly when we first come in. **Indrei R., Sommerset, UK.**

Report from Australia

The listing of Sexaholics Anonymous in eight capital city phone books in Australia is now complete. This has led to an increase in inquiries -- as well as hang-ups and set-ups. Distribution of inquiries to the various cities is being handled by e-mail wherever possible to minimize costs.

In November, the Minniewater retreat was held for the third successive year. The Australian Intergroup is operating very loosely, currently meeting once a year at the Australian SA Conference.

SA around the Globe--Australia (continued)

(See Calendar of Events, p. 2, for information on this year's conference, April 24 - 26.)

As most groups are small, there is no formal Intergroup service structure. The Intergroup is made up of those who turn up at the conference. The business agenda items, however, are circulated to all groups and loners prior to the conference.

Groups and lengths of sobriety are growing slowly. Melbourne remains the strongest area with three meetings a week and five members with over a year. Contact between groups and individuals across Australia remains strong, with interstate and overseas sponsorship in a number of cases. The average number of members attending meetings each week across Australia would be between 50 and 60.

The "SA Aussie Extra" newsletter is produced quarterly and distributed in Australia as a supplement to the Essay. **Paul H., Canberra, Australia**

Rule # 62

"A Freudian slip is when you say one thing and you mean your mother." Anon.

"Cross dressers are clothes-minded." Anon.

You Know You're a Sexaholic When ...

- With zero sobriety, you walk into your first meeting with a plan. A real sexaholic always has a plan. "Three months and I'm out of here."
- With two weeks in the program, you think, "These people are crazy!"
- With 30 days, the spouse is still beating you, but you say, "Please don't leave me!"
- At 90 days, the real sexaholic says, "I love my Higher Power, and my Higher Power loves me -- me, and only me."
- At your first year birthday, you say, "I bet these people don't think I'm crazy any more."
- At two years you walk into your Intergroup with lots of bright ideas, such as, Let's change the voicemail message to this:
 - Press one, and keep pressing one, if you're obsessive-compulsive.
 - Have someone press two, if you're co-dependent.
 - Press 3, 4, 5 and 6 if you have multiple personality disorder.
 - If you're depressed, don't press any buttons because we won't call you back.
 - If you're schizophrenic, wait for the voice to tell you which buttons to push.
 - If you're paranoid, wait right there. We know where you are and we're coming to get you.

Bob R. Sacramento, CA

(For an explanation of Rule # 62, see the AA Twelve and Twelve, p. 149. - Ed.)

especially susceptible to burnout. Rotation of trusted servants is crucial.

Interaction with the media

Do you use any non-addict representatives to speak about your fellowship? SCA and SAA do not have non-addicts on their boards. SAA grants interviews with the media. They allowed a reporter to interview members at their recent convention in Houston. SLAA has non-addict members on their board, but they do not represent SLAA. SLAA has a pamphlet on dealing with the media. All requests are sent first to the board. If approved by the board, then the Public Information Committee (PIC) receives the request. If the PIC approves the request, they forward it to the Speaker Bureau that assigns a member to the interview. SCA has a public service announcement kit that includes a broadcast quality tape and printed information.

Conclusions

1. SA needs to focus on 12-Step recovery and SA's sobriety definition. SA needs to deal with lust, sex outside of heterosexual marriage, and masturbation. Having those issues in our sobriety definition makes us different from other S-fellowships and able to help addicts who want recovery in those areas.

2. Other S-fellowships carry their message of sexual recovery more effectively than SA. We need to learn from the other fellowships.

3. SA will benefit from friendly and open relationships with the other S-fellowships. We need them. They are earnest about recovery and working the Steps. Understanding their differences helps us. If we isolate ourselves from the other fellowships, we might feel more of an obligation to be all things to all people. In isolation, SA could become proud and start to believe that SA has a corner on God.

SA Today Meeting in Daytona, FL

New Delegate Assembly Members

Introductions were made of the newest Delegates, Dorene S., CA, Southwest Region, and Art B., GA, Southeast Region.

COMC

A new lease was negotiated for Central Office. SA has a home for the next five years, with an option to renew for another five years. Work continues on

might want to hear about the program. Then they might ask you to make a presentation to the prisoners.

SAA related how they pressed to make a presentation to the inmates in a facility for teenage boys convicted of sex crimes. The people running the home said the boys could not possibly comprehend anything the members of SAA would say. The professionals doubted that the inmates would focus on or stay with the presentation.

The presentation lasted three hours. SAA reported that the boys were respectful, focused, sincere, and interacted genuinely with the SAA members.

Focus on the 12 Steps

SCA and SLAA gave the highest priority to keeping recovery focused on the 12 Steps. This is a reaction to people not having sponsors, using language associated with therapy in meetings, and ignoring the literature by discussing whatever is on the member's mind even when the participants have been directed to discuss their experience as it relates to the literature .

The SCA delegates asked if the Steps are merely some of the tools or if they are the total program. That led me to ask, what is the program? How do we explain the program to a newcomer? What do we have to offer? When do we present our solution? In what form do we present it? How do we describe the program of action? What should we include in the description of that program? What sources should we draw on for information for the newcomer?

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St. Louis has a weekly inter-fellowship meeting that focuses on working the Steps.

This relates to the issue of a fellowship publishing guides to working the Steps. The other S- fellowships publish Step study guides. However, delegates from these groups turn to AA to learn How to work the Steps. The Step study guides that SA has in the works contain material that could be considered outside issues or non SA-related issues. I

believe, and the experience of the other S-fellowships seems to prove the point, that adding to the list of Step study guides does not help people work the Steps and can in fact delay or distract someone from the simplicity of the program as laid out in

Alcoholics Anonymous.

SA has often missed an underlying tenet of recovery -- we believe there is a solution. We are held together by our common problem, but that is not enough to keep us together. We have to hold a solution in common (*Alcoholics Anonymous*, p. 17). The SA web site, on the page entitled "For More Information," says only that our common problem unites us. I believe that we have lost our focus on a simple application of the Steps. We are trying to embrace anyone with a sex or lust problem rather than focusing on those who want our solution.

Two members of another S-fellowship reported they were discouraged because the meeting they were attending focused on the problem instead of recovery through the Steps. Rather than push for a political solution, the two determined privately to focus their sharing on the Steps. It has brought the meeting to a stronger focus on the answer rather than the problem. They are satisfied with their contribution to their meeting.

How do you inventory your fellowship? How would you assess recovery as opposed to mere sobriety? Do you differentiate between sobriety or abstinence from recovery? Do you measure objectively or subjectively the impact you are having? Inventorying a fellowship could be done by comparing the group to or measuring it against the

promises in *Alcoholics Anonymous*, p. 83, or using the inventory questions in "What is an AA Group?" How can we encourage people to move on from mere sobriety to a healthy sexuality? We do a better job of helping people set boundaries rather than just stopping behaviors. Some in the other S-fellowships see themselves as more inclined to offer a negative sobriety than a positive recovery. Also, some who do service get over-extended and stop being involved. Those who put on conferences seem

Member Stories

Only a Deluge of Grace Could Free Me

Fourteen years ago, on a Memorial Day weekend, I was finishing my third hour in a porno shop. I had spent the three-day weekend in almost total obsession. Finally someone entered my viewing booth for sexual contact.

The three-day lust trance was over. Now reality: the smell, the dirt on the walls, the peek holes, the degradation of myself and another human being. "Pitiful and incomprehensible demoralization." Waves of shame, then hate -- hate of me.

This was the last time of "sex with another." But only the beginning of understanding the "heroin factory" that the lust drug had created in my head since first flooding my body, mind and spirit and polluting the ground water of my soul.

I was a child of four when my tent of innocence was ripped open by the sexual abuse of an older boy. I had been tricked into being degraded, but a magical new "buzz" rose within me. This feeling rising within me, even to this day, announces the coming of lust.

I was an only child, born in the middle of the Depression, in 1935. My mother was 19, my father 31, when they were married. He was alcoholic and the son of an alcoholic. When I was eight, my mother died suddenly of a massive heart attack.

Then I lived with my father and his 80-year old mother, my grandmother. I resented her. My father was often absent drinking. One time in my early teens when he came home in the middle of the night, I physically and verbally abused him and disowned him as my father. Resentment had moved to expressed rage.

When I was 11, a friend's older brother initiated

us into masturbation. The habit took root with a vengeance. Not the ordinary developmental thing. Repeated masturbation, with the added excitement of risking discovery in the classroom. My outlet for rage, pain and loneliness was now in place.

As I entered high school, self-hatred grew and shame pervaded my very being. I relied on a friend to help me feel of value. He was my idol from grade school, now a popular athlete, handsome, and spiritually inclined. Because he was my friend I felt more worthwhile.

When I was a sophomore in high school, a number of events converged to bring about a religious conversion in my life. I drank my first hard liquor at a New Year's Eve party and passed out. In fear of the disease that killed my grandfather and was destroying my father and uncle, I resolved to stop drinking.

I friend with whom I carried papers was killed two weeks later. In March of that year I went on a

retreat led by a priest who worked with prisoners. A former World War II chaplain, he heard "soldiers' confessions" -- reviewing one's whole life -- way into the night as long as anyone came. Love radiated from this man in the pulpit and toward me as I, in his presence, confessed the sins of my life up to that point. I was sixteen.

This experience -- my first Fifth Step? -- helped me feel and believe in a way I never had before, that God was a God of love and compassion and I had met him and could count on him in

my struggle with lust and life. I followed the directions of this priest who had heard everything

“They have found the way to change humiliations into humility and thus be readied for a deluge of

I ever did: I began to go to Mass daily, to examine my conscience regularly, and I found a spiritual director. I saw him every week and I was open with him about every aspect of my life and sexuality.

I entered into an extended period of celibacy. I began to expand my network of friends. My sense of self-worth grew. I began to dream of doing for others what had been done for me through those who publicly gave their lives to God.

At 17, I graduated from high school and with great relief, left home to begin the adventure of entering religious community. Early on there was intensive spiritual training and much structure and discipline. Masturbation was not a part of my life at this time and had not been since my high school conversion and my use of prayer and spiritual disciplines that flowed from it. Lustful literature was not available to me nor was alcohol. Always, however, there was a romantic, or idealized male relationship that "fed" me.

After four years of this protected environment, I went from the country to the city to study for my degree. Alcohol was now available. I began to drink and eventually, to masturbate. Within six years I was into compulsive masturbation, even with objects. Next I began to sexualize friendships with classmates. I wanted to be lusted after and became a tease.

After I was ordained a priest, the pressure of the public role and the split between my secret actions and that public role created a stress that I numbed out with more masturbation and infatuation. After a three-week manic high, I was hospitalized for a month.

The basic pattern of the addiction is clear from my early history. Now the progression starts. Photographs of hard core pornography were made available as exhibits in a post-graduate sexuality class. I returned again and again to view the same photos. The fire was lit. Some years after this I went into a porn shop for the first time in a city some 10

distance from my own. A conflagration took place within me; the forbidden, the dangerous, and moving pictures. I went for same-gender porn. I found it more lustfully stimulating.

I determined I would never go into a porn place in my home town. Within a year, I did. Now was added the danger of discovery and recognition. The next boundary crossing was while I was on vacation in the city where I grew up. For the first time I attempted to proposition a man in a dangerous part of town. I was unsuccessful and was pursued by two cars full of men ready for violence. I totaled my car in another part of town fleeing to safe territory. A lawyer friend of a friend took care of this for me. Another decade of progression was to come.

I tried a geographic cure. I had been challenged by co-workers at staff meetings about angry outbursts toward authority figures when drinking. I moved a long distance away to an isolated part of the country. The drinking was curtailed. Acting out with others and self seemed to recede when I was in place, but intoxicated anger, without alcohol, gradually increased.

When I traveled, I was filled with total lust obsession, and part of the cruising pattern was voyeurism and exhibitionism. I would leave for three days of rest, then come home hungover from a one- to three-day lust fed by rest stops, malls and cruising areas.

Now came the terrifying realization: all of this was occurring without alcohol. Alcohol had been my cover for 20 years. I could always blame it on having "one too many." Now "it" had a life of its own. The life of lust obsession without alcohol progressed for three more years.

After the incident in the porno shop, superiors separated me from my work and my living community. I was sent to an urban area to seek help. There I was with my closest friend, one of the intimate friendships in my life that I had not sexualized. I had always told myself that when I was with someone I really cared about, who knew me and I them and we felt affection for one another, "I never had

any problem."

After two weeks, I was into voyeurism and cruising a local mall.

A key delusion was now dead. No one, no matter how good, caring or loving, and no friendship, no

SA stressed that lust is the issue. We have a prescribed definition of sobriety. For my part, I wish I had said more about sex not being a necessary part of life. It is optional. I believe that sex is only a part of sexuality. My sexuality includes everything I do or experience to be intimate with people in appropriate ways. For me as a single sexaholic, that does not include a physical relationship. Delegates from other S-fellowships seemed to equate sexuality with genital contact. Their programs allow non-married members to include sex in their recovery plans.

To many in other S-fellowships, the experience of human sexuality requires sex. So to those who believe that, to be fully alive means among other things, to experience sex. That conviction leads many to have sex plans or programs that allow sex outside of marriage. SA promotes the belief that sex is optional. I believe I can experience my sexuality by participating in appropriate levels of intimacy with the people who surround me without involving them with me in sex. I am experiencing my sexuality to a satisfying degree without having sex.

Sex and Love Addicts Anonymous (SLAA) members deal with sex or love addiction, or both. They have identified social, emotional and sexual anorexia as avoiding interaction on any of those levels to the point that it damages the individual. Each member of SLAA has a bottom line that identifies what is unacceptable behavior for him or her. Each member also writes a sexual or relational "top line" that constitutes the member's ideal or how they would like to behave in a relationship (see *Alcoholics Anonymous*, p. 69). Sexual orientation is not an issue. Sixty percent of their members are men.

Sex Addicts Anonymous (SAA) is a fellowship based on helping people who are addicted to sexual behaviors they feel are destructive. Abstinence for each member is whatever he places in his inner circle as the behavior he wants to stop. Obsessive thinking can be the inner circle. Ten percent of SAA

members are women.

Disclosures of illegal acts at meetings

Discussion also focused on what to do when a member confesses to an act that constitutes an illegal act. SCA said that reports of illegal acts are so rare in their fellowship that it is not an issue. SAA raised concerns about disclosures by inmates during meetings in prisons. Some statements by prisoners might have to be repeated to prison officials. A suggestion was offered: tell offending sex addicts who are facing legal proceedings or are in prison not to tell members of the fellowship anything about the illegal act, but to talk about the act with a lawyer alone. In some states, revealing anything in the presence of a third person while talking with a lawyer eliminates attorney-client privilege. Also, tell offenders to talk to a priest.

Some groups confront the person, tell him or her to remove themselves from the possibility of repeating the act, and tell them to turn themselves into the authorities. Some say, "We are going to the police together so you can turn yourself in. You don't have to do anything alone now that you are in recovery."

Prison Work

SAA has meetings in eight prisons in Michigan. There are other prison meetings in Texas. Some recommendations for starting meetings in prisons:

- Approach the person in charge of programs or volunteers at the institution.
- Tell your whole story. SAA members tell the prison officials their whole names and stories right from the start.

- Use references. SAA will serve as a reference for any other S-fellowship that wants to begin prison meetings. Just tell the prison staff initially that other S-fellowships have meetings in prisons in other states. [Call Gary W. of SA at (909) 865-1645 for contact numbers].
- Make a presentation. The staff of the prison

supply directories of meeting information to the other fellowships' central offices. SA would, on the other hand, supply central office phone numbers to the other fellowships as well as a brief statement that the other fellowships could use in referring people to SA.

SA's sobriety definition

Having attended meetings of other S-fellowships in other cities and spending a weekend with delegates from the other fellowships, I developed some strong convictions about our distinctions. I don't believe SA is the "straight" fellowship or the "fellowship of one religion." SA's distinction is that we have a sobriety definition that leads us away from lust and sex outside of marriage between a man and a woman. SA is a place where a gay man who wants encouragement to live without a gay relationship can receive that support.

We need to continue to provide a unique place for the sexaholic who wants to live without lust and compulsive sex. I have met other gay men who, after visiting other S-fellowships, decided SA was the best place for them to receive the help they want. The sobriety definition was what persuaded them to join SA.

Changing or blurring our sobriety definition would eliminate a unique option. SA is the fellowship that allows a gay person to consider his or her sexuality in a setting where there is the chance to make choices free from the tyranny of lust.

I have heard many rationales for modifying the sobriety definition. One rationale, I believe, is that straight people want to give permission to or encourage gay people to pursue same-sex relationships that would be analogous to the ones straight people enjoy. Whether some gay people do enjoy long-term, monogamous relationships is not the

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issue here. My experience has been in the realm of the gay experience where promiscuity dominates the culture. I never experienced or observed relationships that were analogous to heterosexual

relationships. I believe that by encouraging gay men to pursue a sexual relationship, straight people are in some cases assigning the gay person to a hell that the straight person usually does not comprehend. Eliminating the SA distinctive would rob gay people who experience hellish sexual addiction of a chance for freedom.

Another way to look at it would be opening the door to a hell that only the rare straight person understands. Besides, if a person is in a long-term or monogamous relationship, he or she can participate in any of the other S-fellowships and design a sex or abstinence plan that allows them to enjoy their relationships.

When a member who attends both SA and another S-fellowship attacked SA as the anti-gay fellowship, I responded that anyone who believes that may contact me because I am gay and have attended SA for 10 years and endorse the sobriety definition. Immediately a delegate asked if I would pursue a gay relationship and if I did, would I stay in SA. I believe they asked these questions because their paradigms require a person to have sex, to be in a relationship, and to have only the options of being gay or straight as a defining and fixed quality of one's personality.

What is unique about each fellowship?

Sexual Compulsives Anonymous (SCA) does not want to be portrayed as a gay fellowship. They want to be purposely gay friendly. SCA in St. Louis is not a predominantly gay fellowship. In cities other than Los Angeles, Chicago, and New York, SCA attracts more straight members than gay. According to their stated purpose, they want to let members feel free to resolve any issues about their sexuality without any pressure to conform to religious or social dictates. In one of their publications,

Fourteen Ways to Avoid a Slip, SCA warns that compulsive staring or compulsive watching of TV or movies are preludes to a slip. Therefore they are, in their own way, identifying lust as a part of the problem.

matter how significant in my life, could enable me to control lust. Indeed, lust was slowly eating away at my capacity to relate on any real level to those who really cared for me.

I went to a city where I knew there were 12-Step groups for sexual recovery and other resources. Someone told me there was a fellow trying to start an S.A. group. I called the number given me and asked, "Was it true?" "Sure, we need you," was the reply. "Show up tomorrow night." I went and found three others. This was the fourth meeting of SA in this city. I was home. I felt safe. The date was December, 1983. I have not found it necessary to act out since that day.

During the first year, I attended five to seven meetings a week and spent hours with my sponsors and other recovering members. My sponsor, over two years sober, assured me that a day would come when I would be able to begin to tell the difference between "chemistry" and intimacy.

Six months into sobriety, I tapped the buried grief from my mother's death, 41 years after her passing. For over an hour, tears rose up from a depth I had never before experienced. Healing. Freedom.

I reconnected with the remnants of my mother's family and reached out in gratitude to the men who had been significant mentors to me in my life. I made conscious, intentional space for friendship, especially for the friend who had been with me and helped me make the decision to go to any lengths to seek recovery after my last acting out. Over the years he has taught me how to be a friend. My sobriety has helped our friendship grow from dependency to one of mutual respect. Forty-five years of faithful, caring presence in my life.

Most important, I discovered sex was indeed optional. I began to experience a celibate life as a way

to express my faith and love in the service of others. The joy and freedom to actually live this lifestyle was an experience that was more and more me. I was who I am. What a gift to be with sober married men who were also choosing periods of extended celibacy for the sake of healing in their marriage relationship.

The blessings of sobriety have been abundant. I began to learn a new language; I started a significant research and writing project. After four years in recovery, I risked and found a friendship to blossom with a woman who has become a cherished friend in my life, a friendship I could never have experienced without the close mentoring and support of my SA guides and my community. She was an artist and she drew out the artist in me. I began to paint and write poetry. She awakened in me feelings I had never before experienced.

I was near 10 years in recovery when I got a surprising phone call from a superior who knew my story. I was asked to present myself for an office of major responsibility and trust. Might you guess I've always been a bit marginal? And now I am asked to take a most sensitive position of trust, doing work for which absolutely everything in my life to that point helped to prepare me. I was supported in this by my sponsor and my community and friends who knew my story. "You are the one to meet this need," they told me.

I am now in my sixth year in this position. It has not been easy, even with all the support I have received, yet I am growing and happy. My sponsor has challenged me to new levels of surrender in finally accepting that my depressive episodes and periodic highs do indicate that I have a chemical imbalance carried by three generations on my mother's side of the family. After three years of resisting, I am now following my doctor's suggestions. Yes I have a physical as well as an emotional and spiritual disease.

My inclination to play God in other people's lives, trying to fix and control them, created a second bottom in my recovery. The pain drove me to

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seek help from S-Anon and others.

I had decided not to start an SA meeting when I moved to the city in which I am now working. I had too many things to do. Well, God had other plans. Within two months, he sent me two fellows in incredible pain. I wasn't too interested in sponsoring anyone. I thought I would take a year and "observe" in other 12-Step groups. But I said to

the two in pain, "Call me tomorrow if you want to stay sober another day." I wasn't expecting that to go on for long.

But they started calling and kept calling and they stayed sober! They asked me to repeat the questions I asked them the day before. "What questions?" I said. "The ones about desiring sobriety." So out of this evolved our "Daily Desire for Sobriety Renewal:"

1. Can you admit you are powerless over lust?
2. Do you desire sobriety for today?
3. Are you willing to protect and strengthen this desire for one day, one hour, one minute, one second at a time?

One day a caller unexpectedly threw a surprise at me -- "Are you willing to hand over your will and life, just for today, to the one who kept you sober yesterday and protected you from the full consequences of your lust in the past?" "Yes."

Although I have been spared many public consequences of my disease, the humiliations I experienced have been real and sufficiently painful. What one of AA's early non-alcoholic friends said of AA members surely applies to us: "These fellows have a specialty. Their specialty is humiliations; and they have found the way to change humiliations into humility and thus be readied for a deluge of God's grace."

Through that deluge of grace I have come to know my true identity and your true identity: we are beloved of God. Always and everywhere, even in the depth of our insanity, we belong to that Love.

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SAICO

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March 1998

Inter-Fellowship Forum

*(Editor's note: The following is a report on an Inter-Fellowship Forum held November 8 - 9, 1997, in Ann Arbor, Mich. The purpose of the forum was to promote a spirit of cooperation among 12-Step fellowships that offer recovery from sex and lust addiction -- so-called S-fellowships -- with a primary purpose of reaching out to the addict who is still suffering. The report is submitted by **Gary W.**, who took part in the two-day event on behalf of Sexaholics Anonymous.)*

Discussion of the Internet web site

The S-fellowships agreed to link all of their web sites on the net. SA, however, needs to include a disclaimer beside any links to the web pages of other fellowships, such as, "This link is not an endorsement, it is merely an attempt to provide access to information about other programs of recovery. SA neither endorses or opposes any other fellowship."

One delegate pointed out that if a fellowship does not define itself, it will be defined or portrayed, accurately or not, by others. The delegate asked, "How can I tell you how I am different from you if I don't know you?" SA needs to communicate to the other S-fellowships how we see ourselves and then try to see clearly and accurately what role each fellowship can play.

Carrying the Message on Hotlines

Among the questions raised was, How does SA respond to a request for help from a sex addict? Do we give out the numbers of other S-fellowships? What statements about or

descriptions of other fellowships will SA give? If SA has no members or contacts in an inquirer's region, will the Central Office give the inquirer the phone numbers of other fellowships on the chance that one of them will have meetings or contacts in the inquirer's area?

The spirit of the recommendation from the 1996 Forum was to give information about other S-fellowships to an addict who wants help and who is in an area where the fellowship receiving his or her call has no members. In other words, when a fellowship receives a request for a meeting referral in an area where that fellowship has no meetings, we suggest that we acknowledge the possibility of meetings of other S-fellowships in that area.

SA submitted a statement of purpose, but it was found to be too long. A one-paragraph description to read over the phone to those requesting help was preferred. To conserve time and other resources, SA as well as other S-fellowships need a cursory understanding about the differences between the fellowships. That would enable the fellowship receiving the call to give the caller enough information for them to make a preliminary decision about which fellowship to choose or where to start to find help. Also, a collection of the descriptions could be published and distributed to all the S-fellowships for distribution to Intergroups or meetings.

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For SA's part, it was decided that SA would not supply an international meeting directory or regional contact phone numbers to the other fellowships. It was also decided that SA would not