

"We will be taken care of and given exactly what we need for our spiritual growth."



How to Contact SA

Sexaholics Anonymous,
Incorporated
PO Box 111910
Nashville, TN 37222-1910

Phone: 615/331-6230
Fax: 615/331-6901
Web Site: <http://www.sa.org>
E-mail: saico@sa.org

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saico@sa.org

2001, Issue Three

Essay®

A Quarterly Publication of Sexaholics Anonymous

Flirting Was A Real High For Me

*An updated story from Member Stories
1989*

When I was a little girl about five years old, I remember sitting on my grandfather's lap and combing his hair. It gave me such happy, good feelings. My grandfather died when I was seven. I had trouble in school from that time on. I couldn't concentrate, I would day-dream, and I had headaches. I was a very lonely child after I lost that special relationship. I didn't know how to get that love from anyone else, so I comforted myself in my fantasies where I was a fairy princess and my Prince Charming would come and carry me off. We would live in the land of happiness forever doing wonderful deeds and sharing our love.

I was a middle child. My older sister did well in school and was very dependable.

My younger sister was very pretty and precocious, so people always gave her a lot of attention. I set out to be all those things my sisters were. I worried about how I looked and I tried to make lots of friends. I never fit in with the really popular people, but I found I could always have a group of friends by going with the less popular ones. Thus, I became very social. When I reach my teens, I found that if I flirted, I could also have lots of boyfriends. The feelings I found from having all this attention were the feelings I remembered from the days I spent with my grandfather.

Flirting was the only way I knew how to communicate with the males in my world. I felt guilty and ashamed for flirting the way I did, but I didn't think I was smart enough to talk about anything that

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IN THE
NEXT ISSUE:

FEATURE: "Glimpses of Sanity"

THEME: What is your experience with the internet and the world-wide web?

This is SA's meeting
in print.
We need your group news,
articles, and personal stories.

Sexaholics Anonymous...

is a fellowship of men and women who share their experience, strength, and hope with each other that they may solve their common problem and help others to recover.

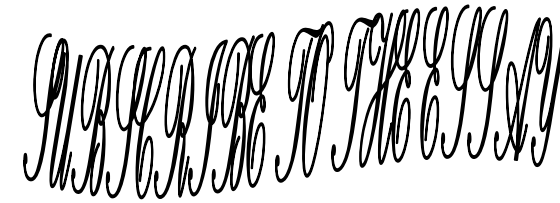
The only requirement for membership is a desire to stop lusting and become sexually sober. There are no dues or fees for SA membership; we are self-supporting through our own contributions.

SA is not allied with any sect, denomination, politics, organization, or institution; does not wish to engage in any controversy; neither endorses nor opposes any causes.

Our primary purpose is to stay sexually sober and help others to achieve sexual sobriety.*

Sexaholics Anonymous is a recovery program based on the principles of Alcoholics Anonymous and received permission from AA to use its Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions in 1979.

**Adapted with permission from the AA Grapevine, Inc.*



The *Essay* strives to be a source of experience, strength, and hope to sexaholics as one part of our Fellowship's Twelfth Step work. The *Essay* is also a source of information about Fellowship activities and needs. The *Essay* is issued four times per year. Expanding the *Essay's* circulation will also expand the range of articles, letters to the editor, and special sections to benefit our readers.

SA members can subscribe individually and through their groups. One year (four issues) costs \$10.00 US. A group subscription of 10 or more copies sent to the same address cost \$8.00 US each. Payment can be by credit card (MasterCard, Visa, Discover), check or money order. An order form and return envelope are enclosed with this issue. For your convenience, you may also order your *Essay* online at www.sa.org on the publications page.

Future issues of *The Essay* will focus on the internet, Steps 7 through 12, and the Twelve Traditions as they work in our lives as well as in our Fellowship. Articles from around the world are welcome.

Thank you for reading this issue of *The Essay*!

The Interim Editors: DM, GP, KL
September, 2001

Essay Editorial Guidelines

The *Essay* is answerable to the fellowship as a whole. 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 SA International 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 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. We like to receive articles electronically for ease of editing. Send articles to the SA International Central Office, attention of the *Essay* editor. Email should be addressed to saico@sa.org. All articles need to be in English. All articles must contain an address, telephone number, or email address so that authenticity can be verified. This information will remain confidential. 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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might interest them. I was torn between wanting the attention and feeling guilty about the way I was getting it. I had a secret place between the church and my house where the clover grew high. I would sit there and cry for hours. I felt so inadequate and lonely. The more inadequate and lonely I felt, the more my need for the attention and the high I got from flirting kept growing. I found that flirting led to petting, and even though I felt high from the sexual feelings and the attention, I would feel even more guilt. Then I would go to my spot and cry from loneliness and guilt. Looking back, I can see the painful downward spiral I was becoming trapped in.

When I was 17, I met a guy who drank. I had never been out with a guy who drank in front of me. He got drunk on our second date, and I decided then and there that he needed a nice girl like me to help him not to drink so much. He was the first man I had sex with, and I got pregnant. We got married in a big church wedding, and he came late and was drunk. I swore I would get a divorce after the baby came. I felt angry and lonely much of the time. He was always gone with his drinking buddies, and I became more lonely. I tried to search for the God of my childhood to comfort me, but I didn't know how to find Him. I started flirting again and found I felt better. Flirting became my drug whenever I felt bad.

As the flirting progressed, I started thinking again that there was a Prince Charm-

ing out there who would make me feel whole. I progressed from flirting to having affairs. Every time I had an affair, I would fall madly in love. The excitement of the chase was often followed by the heartbreak of being used and then by obsessing about a person I couldn't have. Guilt, shame, and remorse were feelings I had to cope with every day. I would promise myself I would stop what I was doing, but I couldn't. I was searching constantly for the love I needed and hating myself for the men and the sex and not being able to stop. I prayed so hard, and then I would curse God because I couldn't stop; I thought God wasn't listening to me. I felt so hopeless I wanted to die.

I tried taking tranquilizers to stop the pain I was in, but it didn't help. I quit the drugs and went to a psychiatrist, who helped some. I was able to look at my behavior more objectively; I realized that many people were doing what I was doing. I decided that if so many people were having affairs, it must be normal. I took permission from this rationalization to start searching again. Just before coming into recovery I became obsessed with one man and stayed obsessed.

I hated being so obsessed and constantly fought for control. This man and I were in a constant battle for supremacy. I could not get enough of him. The lust was so strong it was destroying me. I hated him. I loved him. I needed to please him so badly, but never felt I was able to please him enough. I felt like a junkie ready to

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come out of my skin when I didn't get a call from him. I hated the way I was living, but I couldn't stop. I felt so inadequate and alone. I thought I knew what Hell would be like. Finally, God answered my prayers by showing me a solution. I knew when I first heard about Al-Anon that it held an answer for me. My family situation had become really crazy. I had a daughter who was a drug addict, and my husband was an alcoholic. We went for help, and all of us wound up in different treatment centers. The counselors told me I was going to treatment because I was codependent, but I knew my problem was men and sex. I had tried to stop my sexual behavior most of my life, and by this time I knew I couldn't control it. My problem controlled me.

I worked the Al-Anon program one day at a time to control my lust. I continued to flirt with other men. I thought flirting was all right, and my life did seem to be getting better all the time. I didn't have the highs anymore, but I also didn't have the lows. However, I was still having some problems with my feelings. I went to a meeting one day and heard about Sexaholics Anonymous. I

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“Our stories disclose in a general way...”

Most articles in the *Essay* are sent in by members and by SA groups. We are always interested in short articles on how we apply the Twelve Steps, Twelve Traditions, and Twelve Concepts in our daily life and service to others, our families, and the Fellowship.

The *Essay* is our meeting in print. Your contribution on working the Steps and Traditions and the impact of your recovery on family, finances and friends are always of interest. The *Essay* also has themes from time to time, such as on our sexaholic experience with the internet.

Deadline for submissions for the next issue is November 1, 2001.

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The Twelve Traditions of Sexaholics Anonymous

1. Our common welfare should come first; personal recovery depends upon SA unity.
2. For our group purpose there is but one ultimate authority--a loving God as He may express Himself in our group conscience. Our leaders are but trusted servants; they do not govern.
3. The only requirement for membership is a desire to stop lusting and become sexually sober.
4. Each group should be autonomous, except in matters affecting other groups or Sexaholics Anonymous as a whole.
5. Each group has but one primary purpose--to carry its message to the sexaholic who still suffers.
6. An SA group ought never endorse, finance, or lend the SA name to any related facility or outside enterprise, lest problems of money, property and prestige divert us from our primary 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 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.)

(Continued from page 4)

knew I needed this program, but I was also afraid about what I would have to surrender. I was on an emotional roller coaster the week before the meeting. I went to my first Sexaholics Anonymous meeting and found that my flirting was a high and I would need to stop it if I was to be sexually sober. I also thought masturbation was all right, but I found the program said no. I learned how flirting and masturbation, followed by guilt, had kept me emotionally stirred up and had prevented me from knowing true recovery. When I became willing to let go, God did his part by relieving me of the obsession. Since then, I've found that when I'm not working my program, I'm in emotional pain; and when I'm in emotional pain, my old behavior creeps back into my life. But God has given me a way of letting Him take over, and I don't have to deal with my obsession. He does it for me.

Today God has worked several miracles in my life through the Twelve Step programs of recovery. My husband and I are still married. We understand the balance between taking care of ourselves for our marriage and giving of ourselves to the marriage. We have a relationship with God first because that relationship fills the emptiness we were all so frightened of and searching to fill. With the freedom we've found comes the ability to love each other in a new and exciting way. My relationship with my husband, son and daughter is warm and different and growing all the time.

My husband and I went into business to help recovering people. We put everything we had into that venture, both financially and physically. We trusted God to replenish our resources. We both believed in the recovery process offered by Twelve Step programs and were dedicated to helping others find their way to these programs. Our daughter is also in recovery and was involved in our business. Though we have moved on now, the knowledge that we were able to help others for many years is satisfying.

We have three wonderful grandchildren whom we see often. I continue to operate my hair dressing business, perhaps in honor of my grandfather. Our son used to hate me for what I had done. Today he calls me and tells me his problems. I can say that the twelve promises have come true for me. My family has grown and developed. Fear of economic insecurity has left me (well, mostly!) We have grown spiritually. What used to be a life of mistrust has fallen away. I have no regrets and look forward to what each day brings. God has removed much of my selfishness and has given me peace in my belief that I will be taken care of and be given exactly what I need for my spiritual growth. My prayers have been answered because I am taking the steps that allow Him to work in my life. I feel that my hopes for finding love and doing good things for others are being fulfilled -- one day at a time.

Letters & Feedback

"Keep It Simple?"

I recently attended an SA meeting that is not in my regular circuit, due to its time and location. However, I had directed a newcomer there and thought that as I had the day off from work, I would make the effort to meet up with him.

The meeting began as most meetings in this area do, with a reading of the SA Purpose. I began to settle into a place of comfort and security as I listened to those familiar words being read. Next we went around the room and introduced ourselves and stated our respective lengths of sobriety. This further added to my feelings of peacefulness as I listened to quite a few members share their sobriety dates beginning in the last century.

But my feelings of serenity were soon short-circuited as the chairperson next lighted a candle, turned off the lights, and said that we would now have "Five full minutes of Silent Meditation". My mind began to race uncontrollably with thoughts such as "What is this, a séance? Where am I, in church? What happened to the SA meeting I sat down in a few moments ago? I hope these guys don't pull out a Ouija Board and try to bring back Jess L. I wonder what the new guy thinks about all this?" Thankfully, when

the candle was finally extinguished in what seemed like five hours later, we returned to the SA meeting and members began to lead with their weakness.

On leaving I began to wonder "Are those guys turning SA into a cult, or a worship service?" As this was not my home group, I decided to dismiss my concerns, rationalizing that this was probably an isolated incident and would not affect SA as a whole.

The other night I rode with friends to an SA meeting a little closer to my hometown. Imagine my surprise when the chairperson pulled out a pack of matches and asked for a volunteer to light the candle so that we might begin the four-minute silent meditation period. On the ride home I mentioned my discomfort to my sponsor. He then cautioned me about another local meeting that has extended their opening ceremony (and I use that word intentionally) to include a full fifteen minutes of silent meditation. "Oh no, the cult is spreading," my mind screamed!

Don't misunderstand me; I have nothing against candles or silent meditation. I use both in the privacy of my home when I am seeking quiet time alone with my Higher Power. But at the group level, we need to be aware of the message we are carrying to the newcomer.

Calendar of Events

[Events listed here are presented solely as a service to readers,

not as an endorsement by Essay or SAICO]

29 September 2001

SA/S-Anon Toronto Marathon, Scarborough, ON Theme: "Recovery Continues" (celebrating 10 years of SA and 5 of S-Anon in Toronto)

Contacts: (SA) Joe, 416-696-0239, <mailto:aljoto@hotmail.com>; (S-Anon) Terri, 416-505-1229, <mailto:terrim@maxium.net>

6 October 2001, SA / S-Anon Marathon Day, Daytona Beach, FL, sponsored by Daytona Beach. Theme: Honesty Openness Willingness. Contact Mark at 386/736-2436.

6 October 2001, SA Marathon Day, Sacramento, CA. Theme: Showing Up & Looking Good. Contact Sacramento Intergroup at 916/491-1772.

19-21 October 2001

SA/S-Anon Regional Unity Conference, Irvine, CA, Theme: "Happy, Joyous, and Free

Contacts: (SA) Mark, 760-408-9426; (S-Anon) David, 661-297-6641, or Robyn, 818-888-6663

26-28 October 2001

SA South Midwest Family Reunion Retreat, Wichita, KS

Contact: SA Wichita, 316-942-9041, or Richard B., 316-942-1197

27 October 27, 2001, SA / S-Anon Fall Marathon, Bowie, MD. Theme: An Attitude of Gratitude. Contact Jeff at 410/329-6318; Bill 410/870-6546, or Paul 410/768-6083.

26-28 October 2001, SA / S-Anon Autumn Convention, Waterford, Ireland. Theme: Group Recovery. Contact Aidan at 041 9845818 or Dara 0429667958.

11 – 13 January 2002, SA / S-Anon International Conference, College Park, GA, sponsored by Georgia State Intergroup. Theme: Courage to Change. Contacts are SA at 678/717-2637, S-Anon at 678/717-2638, or email to courageconf2002sa@earthlink.net.

12– 14 July 2002, SA / S-Anon International Convention, Portland, OR, sponsored by Portland area SA / S-Anon groups. Theme: Discovery. Contact Intergroup at 503/2249840 or send email to discovery_portland@email.com.

[Please note: Since international calling codes differ from country to country, we include only the country codes, area code, and local number for all contacts. Please call your local operator for guidance on making international calls.]

Seventh Tradition

Donations for Second Quarter April - June 2001

Akron, OH	150.00	Herndon, VA	190.00	Reston, VA	72.00
Albuquerque, NM	29.25	Idaho Falls, ID	60.25	Rochester, NY	312.16
Alexandria, VA	33.00	Ireland	300.00	Rochester IG	290.69
Alexandria CFC	56.00	Kansas City, KS	450.00	Rockford, IL	100.00
Ann Arbor, MI	152.50	Kansas City CFC	200.00	Salem, OR	65.00
Annaoplos, MD	180.00	Kirkland, WA	20.00	Salt Lake City, UT	13.00
Arlington Hts, IL	40.00	Knoxville, TN	30.00	San Diego IG, CA	211.00
Arlington Hts CFC	35.00	Langhorne, PA	64.00	San Jose, CA	30.87
Atlanta, GA	200.09	Lincoln, NE	42.94	San Jose CFC	61.74
Baltimore, MD	24.00	Lincoln CFC	29.00	Sandpoint, ID	5.00
Bellevue, WA	86.61	London, UK	70.00	Seattle, WA	50.67
Birmingham, AL	125.00	Los Altos, CA	50.00	Seattle SACC WA	50.67
Bozeman, MT	54.50	Madison, WI	50.00	Silver Spring, MD	200.73
Brooklyn CFC	55.25	Manchester, NH	40.00	Springfield, VA	171.75
Buffalo, MY	25.00	McLean, VA	80.00	Springfield CFC	30.75
Calgary AB Canada	111.00	McLean CFC	10.00	St. John NB Canada	10.00
Camarillo, CA	76.40	Melbourne, FL	10.00	St Louis, MO	146.24
Central VA IG	75.00	Milwaukee, WI	100.00	Stafford, VA	74.00
Centreville, VA	131.40	Mississippi IG	100.00	Steubenville, OH	27.00
Centreville CFC	14.60	Monroe, LA	20.00	Toronto ON Canada	63.94
Chatsworth, CA	53.00	Montreal, PQ, Canada	85.00	Torrance, CA	33.00
Chicago IG	453.60	Mt Rainier, MD	24.00	Trenton, MI	125.00
Chicago IG CFC	287.20	Mt Rainier CFC	8.00	Troy, MI	400.00
Colorado Spgs, CO	483.60	Munster, IN	35.00	Tucson, AZ	100.00
Corona, CA	20.00	Nashville, TN	235.00	Twin Cities IG, MN	200.00
Crystal City, VA	458.00	Nashville IG, TN	200.00	Twin Cities CFC	35.00
Crystal Lake, IL	46.00	North Hollywood, CA	110.00	Twin Falls, ID	15.00
Dallas, TX	150.00	Northern CA IG	225.00	Vancouver, WA	50.52
Darien, IL	50.00	Oakland CFC	111.00	Ventura, CA	44.00
Darien, IL CFC	30.00	Oklahoma City, OK	10.00	Vienna, VA	175.00
Davenport, IA	100.00	Orlando, FL	28.17	Vienna CFC	35.00
Daytona Beach, FL	76.67	Penn Hills, PA Fri	55.00	Villa Park, IL	10.00
Daytona Beach CFC	76.66	Penn Hills, PA Wed	60.30	Washington DC	336.00
Deltona, FL	50.00	Peoria, IL	200.00	Washington DC SACC	345.00
Downers Grove, IL	50.00	Philadelphia IG	25.00	West LA, CA	120.00
Erie, PA	39.26	Philadelphia IG CFC	716.00	Wheeling, WV	36.00
Essington, PA	50.00	Pittsburgh IG CFC	25.00	Wichita, KS	42.00
Fargo, ND	10.00	Pittsburgh Southside PA	25.00	Willow Creek, IL	155.40
Frederick, MD	45.00	Provo, UT	150.00	Willow Creek CFC	103.90
Fremont, CA	129.58	Queens, NY	37.00	Windsor ON Canada	50.00
Fremont CFC	64.79	Queens CFC	37.00		
Ft Collins, CO	15.50	Ravenswood, IL	30.00		
Glen Ellyn, IL	365.00	Ravenswood CFC	15.15		
Grand Rapids, MI	100.00	Redlands, CA	100.00		
Greenwich, CT	75.00	Redondo Beach, CA	35.00		
				Group Total	12,957.59
				SACC Total	2,363.71
				SA Internet Total	50.00
				Individual Total	1,679.75

As sober and recovering members of SA, we have a responsibility to give back to the newcomer the same SA program that was freely given to us when we first came into the rooms. Our 5th Tradition reminds us that "Each group has but one primary purpose --- to carry its message to the sexaholic who still suffers". That message is recovery from lust and sexual sobriety. I believe that we fail that purpose when we start mixing our personal meditation practices into our group-meeting format.

Picture this. After living in the shame, secrecy, and darkness of the addiction for many years, a man (or woman) finds the courage to reach out for help. Upon calling a number in the telephone directory, they are directed to a noontime meeting in the downtown section of a big city. Their anxiety level begins to rise as unexpected traffic congestion delays their arrival at the meeting location. Leaving the bright sunshine of the mid-day sun, they enter

the dimly lit interior of the church and find their way to the basement stairs. Their body is full of fear, as they don't know what to expect from a room full of sex addicts, but they have promised to themselves that they would go through with this. Their heart is pounding in their chest as they turn the doorknob and step into the room full of...darkness? A burning candle? Total silence? Indistinguishable faces in the flickering light? "The hell with this, I'm outta here!"

AA has a saying that is referred to as the 'Responsibility Statement' and it goes something like this: "When anyone, anywhere, reaches out for help, I want the hand of AA always to be there. And for that I am responsible". By maintaining a pure and simple form, AA has managed to be there for nearly seven decades. I would like to think that the hand of SA would be there for future generations as well. I am

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SACFG NEWS

Twenty-five Inmates Start Prison SA Meeting

In June, 2000 a inmate from the Adrian Temporary Correctional Facility in Adrian, Michigan USA wrote requesting help in starting an SA group for convicted sex offenders. The Troy, MI group offered to help. Regular mail contact began with two members of SA. Contact was also made with the program director at the Adrian facility. A four-page constitution was provided as well as the name of a local SA sponsor.

In February, 2001 an SA program proposal was submitted by the inmates to the Michigan Department of Corrections. By the middle of March all the necessary approvals were received. SA manuals and brochures were provided by the SACFG.

On May 10, outside SA members met with 25 inmates and gave them an overview of SA and how to conduct a meeting. On May 17 three SA members participated in the first SA meeting. The inmates ran the meeting and only needed occasional promptings to conduct a bona fide meeting following the format in the White Book. The

sharing and participation by the inmates was worthy of the best SA meetings. After an hour and one-half, fifteen minutes of fellowship followed.

During fellowship one inmate shared that since dealing with his addiction in prison he feels more free while in prison than he ever did before. The inmate who led the meeting had initially considered breaking into smaller groups. But after hearing the open and honest sharing by the inmates, he decided there was too much strength and support in the group to consider breaking up.

We were surprised to learn that there are 23 inmates waiting to get into the SA meeting, which is limited to 25. Is this the largest initial SA meeting? They are certainly off and running. They are meeting every Thursday evening. Outside SA members will join them every third Thursday of the month. Although they certainly don't need us, we want to meet with them as much as they want us to come.

Keith S. for the SACFG

have what you are looking for. Don't be afraid. I will protect you. I have the answers you seek. Lean on Me, and I will give you peace in the midst of the storm. I know your fear. Stretch your hand out to Me, and I will do the rest. Yes, become willing to turn to me. I will do the rest. You've fought this battle too long alone. Come into My camp, and we will strive against these desires together."

And so, after agonizing over which way to go, I turn to Him. "Yes, yes." I say. "You are right. I am weak. I cannot do this on my own. I don't know how I got so far without you. Please, save me from myself. I cannot."

And that, for me, is how it starts. First one time, then another, then yet another. Until, finally, it becomes more natural to surrender to the God of my understanding than it is to my brokenness and woundedness. One incident at a time. One day at a time.

Mike S., Long Beach, CA



A Little Prayer

God grant me the sobriety
to seek the truth from
you;
the faith to trust the
answer;
and the strength to follow
through.
I try to remember to say
this little prayer every
time my thoughts begin
to stray.
May it help others.

Richard G., CA

New Meetings!

- ◆ Cincinnati adds a fifth meeting
- ◆ Oakland adds a meeting on Friday night
- ◆ Houston adds another meeting

- ◆ Meadville, PA
- ◆ Seneca Falls, NY
- ◆ Toms River, NJ

PRACTICAL RECOVERY TOOLS

Tucson SA

TO THE NEWCOMER

The Tucson SA Fellowship approved the enclosed statement for local use with newcomers. In fact, we have printed it on the back of our Step 1 Guide, which we give to newcomers along with the SA brochure. We thought you might like to report this development and/or print the entire statement in the Essay. Ray S., Tucson, Arizona USA

Welcome to the fellowship of Sexaholics Anonymous, and to the opportunity to build a new life in sobriety and recovery. As soon as you can, we urge you to make a commitment to do the following things:

1. Set priorities.

Make sobriety and recovery the very highest priorities in your life. Without these, every other aspect of your life will progressively deteriorate.

2. Attend meetings.

a) Regularly – at least once

every week, more often as needed to stay sober and make progress on the Steps.

b) Punctually – on time, but if you cannot avoid coming late, that's much better than not coming at all.

3. Get a sponsor.

a) At your first meeting, exchange phone numbers with at least one member and call before the next meeting.

b) At each of your early meetings, listen for members you could relate to best.

c) Within a month or so, select a sponsor who seems to have what you want: Sobriety – usually at least a continuous year. Recovery – usually progressing well into Steps 9, 10, 11.

4. Read the White Book

a) Through page 76 as soon as possible.

b) Each “Step” section as you

prepare to work each Step.

[Editor adds: c) Overcoming Lust and Temptation at page 158]

5. Work the Steps.

With the help of your sponsor, the White Book, and the Step guide, work each Step in order, and present them to the group at meetings, as advised by your sponsor.

6. Make phone calls.

If you are having difficulty with temptations, emotions, or just life, call you fellows. Or, call to just stay in touch.

General Information

1. Our Problem – we all suffer from the same two-part problem:

- a) obsession. Thinking about sex too much of the time.
- b) compulsion – Behavior we have tried to stop, but cannot.

2. Our Solution – sobriety and recovery through the Fellowship and the Twelve Steps.

3. Sobriety Definition – the SA

sobriety definition is:

a) no sex with self – no masturbation.
b) no sex with anyone else but your own spouse. (Of course, we also want to avoid persons, places, things and activities that may well lead us to act out.)

4. Withdrawal symptoms – our initial struggle with temptations, emotions, and life gradually reduces as we participate in the Fellowship, stay sober and work the Steps.

5. Cautions – we offer two important cautions:

- a) look for similarities, not differences, between your story and others.
- b) don't try to make amends before you get to Step 9.

6. Fair chance – to give yourself a fair chance in SA, plan to attend meetings for at least six weeks, try to stay sober, and decide to present your First Step at a group meeting.

