

*God grant me the serenity  
to accept the things I cannot change,  
courage to change the things I can,  
and wisdom to know the difference.*



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# Essay®

A Quarterly Publication of Sexaholics Anonymous, Incorporated

## THE MIRACLE OF RECOVERY

My recovery experience as a single woman in Sexaholics Anonymous has been deepened and enriched since my first year of sobriety. Many events compel me to share what I have learned in the course of over six years of sexual sobriety.

We sexaholics want the easier, softer way. Today, that means surrendering the lust on a daily basis, going to SA meetings regularly, attending international conferences and retreats, making myself available for service work, reaching out to other recovering sexaholics, and letting go of old ideas. To be happy, joyous, and free is our promise. Freedom to live in the Spirit, to walk with God, to yield and surrender to His will is a relatively recent experience. The most important lesson I have learned is to give myself the

privilege and experience of a strong, sound fellowship that is a channel letting God work in my life. This lesson took four years to learn.

I lost my home group before I was two years sober. My Higher Power saw fit to give me the opportunity to leave North Texas for a remote area of the state. Friends encouraged me to trust and stay close with the telephone. My fear was almost more than I could bear, but I saw that a door had opened. I would walk in faith to the other side.

Praise God! I found another sex addiction fellowship. I was home, or so I thought. The controlling sexaholic in me took charge of the meetings. No more “namby-pamby” sobriety – mine was the “real deal.” I still believe our fellowship in SA is the

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### IN THIS ISSUE:

Step Three  
Stopping or Slowing Down  
Sex with Self

### NEXT ISSUE:

“It Keeps Getting Better”  
Same Sex Issues in SA  
Recovery Tools: Step 4

## 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.*

## Share the Message Share your Story

Dear *Essay* Reader,

With two new brochures (To the Newcomer and SA as a Resource for Professionals), a third one on the way (regarding Lust), and our collections of stories and practical experience in the two volumes of the Quintessential *Essay*, our Fellowship is entering a new phase of its growth. Our hope is that our literature will pass on the Twelve Step program handed to us. Equally importantly, we will share our collective experience, strength and hope with recovery from sexaholism. Our readers continue to send excellent materials over a range of topics. Thank you!

The *Essay* is available by subscription (four issues) either as individuals (\$10/year US) or through your group (10 or more copies are \$8/year each USD). You can pay by credit card or check. Enclosed with this issue you will find an envelope and an order form. Please join our growing family of *Essay* reader/contributors!

You can contact us at [essay@sa.org](mailto:essay@sa.org) or by mail at

*Essay*  
PO Box 111910,  
Nashville, TN 37222-1910.

Thank you for your support of *Essay*.

Sincerely,  
*Essay* Editorial Committee

## 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. E-mail should be addressed to [essay@sa.org](mailto:essay@sa.org). All articles need to be in English. All articles must contain an address, telephone number, or e-mail 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.

only one for the true sexaholic, “those who have lose their legs and cannot grow new ones.” The curious and the uncommitted fell away. I found a woman in the group who sponsored me and taught me about the origin of this disease, the feelings we have that we try to cover up. She helped me to accept my womanliness and my body. All were rewarding lessons, but after a time, it happened again...no group.

What was I to do? I had “gone to any length,” or so I thought. However, I had over the years many good excuses for missing the international conferences. No money and no time...or was it no time and no money?! I had even registered early for one conference, agreed to chair a meeting, then backed out at the last minute with a “headache” – a term paper. By this time, my back was against the wall: live sober or die.

I received a notice for the 1986 St. Louis Conference with the arresting title, “Free at Last.” I was struck by the recollection that it was nearly identical to the phrase used in the 1981 Dear Abby column that “Twelve-Stepped” me. I read the word “sexaholic,” and I knew they had me. This was what I was, how I had acted. And I knew that no matter what the cost or how great the fear, I would have to break out of my isolation and join you people – the ones who were helping me, through God’s grace, to get sober and stay sober. So I went, still isolated, but I felt the “magic” – the Connection. I even glimpsed the “One Mind” mentioned by the old-

timers and found in the Bible.

Things began to change. I was invited to lead an SA spring retreat with another SA woman. No more solo recovery or “running the show.” The experience prepared me for a major surrender: I failed a critical exam in my university program. I no longer had the “crutch” of school, or even a career. The day I left on my journey to the West, I got a call from Central Office asking about my sobriety. I replied that I was comfortable. For by now, despite the sex drunks with whom I was working, I was beginning to have faith. I accepted the invitation to serve on an SA service committee, and three weeks later, I was in Los Angeles with old friends and new.

I settled in the West, to live for a time with my father. I needed to learn to live as one among many in the family and make amends for wrongs I had committed against them. I accepted my powerlessness over the addiction in all its forms, and I learned to detach from the sickness and dependency in family members.

Another major surrender I needed to make was the longing for a relationship. With a great wailing and gnashing of teeth, I turned to God in fury and sorrow and gave it up to Him. He hasn’t given it back to me. Sobriety has required me to discipline myself and at times, to experience loneliness that is profound. I used to believe that “if only” I had a relationship, this would not be so. Today I believe that the crying out of the soul to God, the

*(Continued on page 4)*

(Continued from page 3)

misplaced “love” we seek to give or take, is part of our fundamental truth of our experience as recovering sexaholics. I am grateful for the Steps, and especially to my sponsor who helped me break free of my isolation. I believe it is wise to avoid relationships. As a single sexaholic, I doubt I could have maintained my sobriety had I tried it my way. I began to enjoy my solitude and the impulse to get out of myself diminished. Today I take special pains to be nurturing to myself when I have feelings of being unloved and unacceptable. I need to honor the part of me who once sought refuge in the physical presence of others. I have become a person I respect and even love. I am trying to express this love to others unconditionally.

Fear has been the greatest scourge of my recovery. Fear that the lust would overtake me, fear of others, fear of others’ lust. Today I need never return to the bondage and the servitude my illness inflicted upon me. You people are loving me into recovery. I believe I am worthy of all His gifts – the sobriety, the fellowship, love, work, and play. Since they are free, I need only pass on what has been so generously extended to me.

The miracle of Sexaholics Anonymous has transformed a fear-driven person into a woman receptive to God’s love. My heart’s desire to marry has been fulfilled, and I now share my recovery with my husband, who is in the S-Anon fellowship. We are “walking this walk” together. How

can I say thank you for giving me this new life? I have been redeemed, and in Him are we made new, truly.

### ***Essay:*** **Future Issues**

The SA Literature Committee is preparing a pamphlet on our SA Fellowship’s experience with the Twelve Traditions. The Editors of the Essay would like to devote a future issue of the Essay to our experience, strength and hope with all of the Traditions.

The Trustees and Delegates are responding to a need for a publication offering a First Meeting Format or a meeting guide for a Newcomer Meeting. They requested a new brochure on this from the SA Literature Committee. The Editors of the Essay would like to include examples of these formats in the Practical Tools section. Please send your intergroup or local meeting newcomer format to

SAICO – ESSAY,  
PO Box 111910,  
Nashville, TN 37222-1910  
U.S.A.  
saico@sa.org  
With anticipation and thanks,  
The *Essay* Committee

### **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, films, and television.
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 A.A. 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 A.A. membership is a desire to stop drinking.
4. Each group should be autonomous, except in matters affecting other groups or A.A. as a whole.
5. Each group has but one primary purpose—to carry its message to the alcoholic who still suffers.
6. An A.A. group ought never endorse, finance, or lend the A.A. name to any related facility or outside enterprise, lest problems of money, property and prestige divert us from our primary purpose.
7. Every A.A. 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. A.A., 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 A.A. 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, 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

## The Twelve Steps of Alcoholics Anonymous

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| 1) We admitted we were powerless over lust — that our lives had become unmanageable.  | 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.  | 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 <i>as we understood Him.</i>  | 3) Made a decision to turn our will and our lives over to the care of God <i>as we understood Him.</i>  |
| 4) Made a searching and fearless moral inventory of ourselves.  | 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.  | 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.   | 6) Were entirely ready to have God remove all these defects of character.   |
| 7) Humbly asked Him to remove our shortcomings.   | 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.   | 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.   | 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.   | 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 <i>as we understood Him</i> , praying only for knowledge of His will for us and the power to carry that out. | 11) Sought through prayer and meditation to improve our conscious contact with God <i>as we understood Him</i> , 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  | 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  |

*The Twelve Steps and Traditions are reprinted with permission of Alcoholics Anonymous World Services, Inc. ("A.A.W.S.") Permission to reprint and adapt the Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions does not mean that AAWS has approved the contents of this publication, nor that AAWS 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, or in any other non-AA context, does not imply otherwise.*

# LETTERS & FEEDBACK



Dear Essay,

Last year at this time I picked up a newspaper and turned to Dear Abby for some unknown reason (I know now I was being lead). I hadn't read her column in 20 years. The column was about sex addiction and gave the SA website reference. After visiting the website and Passing or Failing (depending upon one's point of view) on 18 of the 20 questions, I thought I should find out more about it. Like a true compulsive I ordered every piece of literature from the SA website.

When the material arrived there was a notification of the SA annual meeting in Virginia that same week. I called for plane and hotel reservations that afternoon and walked into the ballroom Friday night to my first SA meeting. Knowing a deer in the headlights when

he saw it, a man (from the Rochester group) asked me if it was my first convention. I said that not only was it my first convention, but it was my first SA meeting! After the initial shock wore off, he said, "Well, then you are the most special person in this room tonight... why don't you come sit at our table." By Saturday night I had taken my First Step. I had come home.

For the first six months my sponsor was in Rochester and we worked totally over the telephone. Another member and I would get together in the basement of a church rectory for our weekly meeting until we were able to join a fledgling group in the southern part of the State. It is not easy for us in Maine. Some of us travel two hours for a meeting, which is difficult in Maine winters. There are only about 15 of us, but we "keep coming back."

It is now one year later. I have taken all 12 Steps and now even have two sponsees. With the Grace of God, I am still sexually sober, one day at a time. I decided today to get another plane ticket and fly to Oregon to pick up my one year chip at the Portland international convention.

Sincerely,  
**Larry P., Maine**

[ Ed. Note: He received a one year chip in Portland.]

## What Is Sex With Self?

Over the years I have become more aware of how many people in our fellowship have limited the term "sex with self" to mean masturbation to orgasm. I believe this is a problem. I could never consider limiting the definition to merely meaning masturbation to orgasm.

In our fellowship isn't sex with self touching oneself for the purpose of sexual stimulation with or without an orgasm? Isn't sex with self watching internet pornography for the purpose of self stimulation? Isn't sex with self any act one does while alone with the motivation for sexual stimulation?

Those people who wonder why they repeatedly relapse might consider that they have never really gotten sober. Yes, they stopped masturbating to orgasm but nothing else changed. Some continued stimulating themselves but not to orgasm. Others continued watching internet pornography and others live in sexual fantasy while letting themselves become aroused. If this is not "sex with self" then what do we call it?

I call this behavior sex with self. Is it not analogous to the situation in Alcoholics Anonymous years ago when people would call themselves sober in AA while still smoking marijuana? Although nothing officially deals with this situation in the AA big book, the

general feeling in meeting rooms, to the best of my understanding, is that these people are really not sober.

What is the solution? Do we itemize each form of sex with self? Do we define it specifically for each other? Do we merely continue to ignore this problem as a fellowship and just say it is part of progressive victory over lust? No. I do not believe that these are the solutions.

I believe the solution is in the statement "To thine own self be true." Our "top plates" are revealed as we become more honest with ourselves. We then discuss these top plates with our sponsor. We say something like this, "I do such and such behavior to sexually stimulate myself. This is a form of sex with self. If I do this behavior again, I will call it a loss of my sobriety." For some it might be so obvious that they know their sobriety has already been lost. Either way, this behavior needs to be confronted and not swept under the carpet of denial.

Lately I have been hearing the term "technical sobriety." I have heard stories where people will say "I have this amount of time of technical sobriety and such and such length of time sober from internet pornography." I do not believe this is being honest with ourselves. Is our behavior sex with self or isn't it?

## SA Financial Snapshot

2002 2nd Quarter through June 2002		2002 June YTD Budget	
Contributions	35,765.39	Contributions	40,500.00
SACFC	4,476.30	SACFC	3,500.00
Conventions	4,030.00	Conventions	6,200.00
Literature Sales	11,572.83	Literature Sales	3,000.00
Discounts	00.00	Discounts	.00
Refunds	00.00	Refunds	.00
Interest	693.76	Interest	2,500.00
<i>Essay</i>	1,831.00	<i>Essay</i>	3,500.00
Prudent Reserve	8,000.00	Prudent Reserve	8,000.00
Total Revenues	66,369.28	Total Revenues	67,000.00
Bank Charges	14.00	Bank Charges	50.00
Credit Card Fees	298.36	Credit Card Fees	50.00
Conference Fees	735.00	Conference Fees	2,200.00
Depreciation	863.44	Depreciation	800.00
Interest Expense	.00	Interest Expense	0.00
Liability Insurance	444.00	Liability Insurance	1,250.00
Legal	5,039.59	Legal	750.00
Accounting	2,320.00	Accounting	2,000.00
Literature expense	1,013.35	Literature Expense	2,500.00
Payroll	30,445.60	Payroll	32,650.00
Payroll Tax	2,228.77	Payroll Tax	2,950.00
Pension	.00	Pension	2,300.00
Postage & Freight	2,391.77	Postage & Freight	2,250.00
Office Expense	908.47	Office Expense	1,000.00
Printing	5,628.03	Printing	2,500.00
Rent	3,900.00	Rent	3,900.00
Maintenance	533.71	Maintenance	450.00
Supplies	292.56	Supplies	750.00
Sales Tax	8.60	Sales Tax	250.00
Taxes & Licenses	117.68	Taxes & Licenses	100.00
Telephone	3,953.71	Telephone	4,250.00
Travel	5,144.13	Travel	8,500.00
Total Expenses	66,280.77	Total Expenses	71,450.00

## Second Quarter Donations April - June 2002

Akron, OH	75.00	Flint, MI	20.00	Provo, UT	60.00
Akron CFC	81.00	Fredericksburg, VA	97.00	Rochester, NY	46.70
Albuquerque, NM	39.00	Fremont, WA	49.91	Rockford, IL	75.00
Anaheim, CA	60.00	Fremont CFC	49.91	Riverside, CA	100.00
Ann Arbor, MI	100.00	Gaithersburg, MD	65.67	San Diego, CA	158.00
Annapolis, MD	40.00	Georgia IG	830.12	San Jose, CA	30.00
Arlington Hgts, IL	160.00	Germany	10.00	San Jose CFC	15.00
Arlington Hgts CFC	78.00	Glen Ellyn, IL	1,114.00	Sandpoint, ID	5.00
Asheville, NC	705.00	Grand Rapids, MI	100.00	Sandpoint CFC	65.50
Atlanta, GA	206.34	Green Bay, WI	11.00	Silver Spring, MD	320.50
Baltimore, MD	15.00	Greensboro, NC	40.00	Silver Spring, MD CFC	95.50
Bannockburn, IL	260.00	Halifax NS Canada	31.65	So Barrington, IL	275.00
Bannockburn CFC	100.00	Herndon, VA	162.00	So Barrington CFC	25.00
Barrie, ON Canada	100.00	High Point, NC	20.00	Springfield, VA	57.75
Bellevue, WA	128.00	Irvine, CA	200.00	Springfield CFC	24.75
Beltsville, MD	91.00	Ithaca, NY	50.00	St Charles, MO	50.00
Bethesda, MD	210.00	Jacksonville, FL	50.00	St Louis, MO	460.00
Bloomington, IN	20.00	Jonesboro, AR	5.00	Tacoma, WA	31.80
Boston, MA	158.00	Kirkland, WA	150.00	Tacoma CFC	21.20
Boston CFC	58.00	Lake Mary, FL	25.00	Troy, MI	300.00
Brooklyn, NY	40.00	Lakewood, WA	75.00	Tucson, AZ	20.00
Brooklyn, NY CFC	65.00	Lancaster, OH	25.00	Twin Falls, ID CFC	40.00
Bryn Athyn, PA	191.25	Langhorne, PA	30.00	Vancouver, WA	13.24
Bryn Athyn CFC	63.75	Las Vegas, NV	25.00	Wallingford, CT	20.00
Buffalo, NY	35.00	Lincoln, NE	78.50	Washington, DC	204.14
Camarillo, CA	30.00	Lincoln CFC	31.00	Washington DC CFC	48.02
Cape Girardeau, MO	15.00	Long Beach, CA	300.00	West LA, CA	625.63
Chatsworth, CA CFC	100.00	Longwood, FL	36.00	Wheeling/Steub Retreat	250.00
Chicago, IL	530.00	Manassas, VA	200.00	Windsor ON Canada	100.00
Chicago IG CFC	366.00	Manhattan Bch CFC	100.00	Woodbridge, VA	130.00
Cleveland, OH	40.00	McLean, VA	179.20	Yonkers, NY	68.00
Crystal City, VA	529.45	McLean CFC	10.80	Yorba Linda, CA	110.00
Dallas, TX	115.75	Milwaukee, WI	341.25		
Darien, IL	60.00	Minneapolis CFC	54.00	<b>Group Total</b>	<b>17,959.00</b>
Darien CFC	50.00	Nashville, TN	1,296.00	<b>Individual</b>	<b>110.00</b>
Davenport, IA	50.00	New York, NY	595.75	<b>SA CFC Total</b>	<b>1,903.43</b>
Daytona Beach, FL	90.90	New York CFC	300.00		
Daytona Beach CFC	61.00	North Hollywood, CA	60.00	<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>\$19,972.43</b>
Delmar, NY	150.00	Oklahoma City, OK	1,500.00		
Denver, CO	42.00	Omaha, NE	20.00		
Downers Grove, IL	180.00	Paducah, KY	77.50		
Edmonton, AB Canada	10.00	Pasadena, CA	473.25		
Elk Grove Village, IL	50.00	Penn Hills, PA (Weds)	15.00		
Erie, PA	13.25	Pensacola, FL	25.00		
Fairfax, VA	146.00	Pittsburgh, PA	320.00		
Fargo, ND	25.00	Portland, OR	621.50		

## The Problem

### You, My Lust . . .

You have been my faithful companion. You gave me a feeling of security. When I panicked, you calmed me down. You gave me highs. With you, I really felt alive. You gave me strength. At last, I was on a power trip. I could control something. I could do whatever I wanted, no matter what others thought or said. You proved to me that when I wanted to do something, no one could stop me.

### But You Hadn't Told Me . . .

But, you didn't tell me that I would always be alone. That my unfaithfulness would make me anxious. That I would always be worried about getting caught. That I would have to lie continually, not always remembering my last story. I had to be silent.

But, you didn't tell me that I'd lose my peace of mind. That I would be nervous, anxious. That I would not be able to relax any more. I had trouble sleeping. I had to fall asleep from exhaustion in order to not feel the fears that assailed me.

But, you didn't tell me that I would not be able to face my fears. That I would remain immature, condemned to mediocrity, unable to finish what I began. Condemned to always repeating the same work routine. Unable to

How will people want what we have if we are not willing to get honest with ourselves concerning our own sexual sobriety?

I do not have all the answers. However, this is definitely an area where more is being revealed. I merely know what has worked for me for over 18 years of sexual sobriety. What has worked is for me to have a clear definition of sexual sobriety concerning sex with self that is more than merely masturbation to orgasm. Let's begin to talk about this subject at all levels of our fellowship. Let us search for a language and application of our principles that will help us help one another move out of denial - a denial that can keep us from experiencing the full freedom of mature sobriety. Let us bring light to this subject and let us truly face what is sex with self.

**Harvey A., Nashville TN**

*Share Your Story*  
*Share the Message*

become someone who takes his life, his relationships, his choices in hand

But, you robbed me of my freedom. I can't work on my dreams because I think only of you. You take all the room, even my own. You make me forget about others. Because of you, I will have to forget about being really happy. I'll have to make do with my routine and have a lesser income.

But, you didn't tell me that I would withdraw into myself, alone with few friends, living in an imaginary world where all seems well. A prisoner of my fears. You are but a brief escape.

But, you didn't tell me that by giving me immediate gratification, you would prevent me from undertaking long-term projects.

But, you didn't tell me that I would lose interest in life because I wouldn't be able to settle my fears and my torments. You kept me from facing them.

But, you hadn't told me that I would never be on time, no matter how much I tried. That I would drift into dreamland when I should have been alert. That I would not be able to meet my deadlines, my commitments, forgetting clients, not giving it my all. You didn't tell me that I would never be able to live up to my full potential.

But, you didn't tell me that I would be obsessed by everything that entered my life. As long as you're in my life I

will never be responsible. Because of you, I can't surrender to one woman, my wife. As long as you will be there, I will never be able to live a true, peace-full relationship!

## The Solution

### Stopping vs. Slowing Down

When I first started going to SA, I just wanted to slow down. I was so deep into my lust that I did not see it as a problem. I just wanted to stop masturbating compulsively and have a real relationship with a woman instead of the paper doll variety. I did not realize I would have to stop lusting; that lust was the real problem. It took a lot of meetings and relapse to come to the realization that it was just one day at a time.

If I stay connected to my SA program, get a sponsor, work the steps around anger, fear, and guilt, chances are I will not set myself up to lust, one day at a time. I can't, God can, so I'll let Him.

Lust is powerful, cunning and baffling. Without God's help, it's too much for me.

**Will L., Denver, CO**

## Calendar of Events

**October 25 - 27, 2002**, SA Fall Retreat, Bragg Creek, sponsored by Calgary, AB, Canada IG. Theme: We Were Home. Contact Calgary at 403/229-0304 or send email to [essaycalgary@hotmail.com](mailto:essaycalgary@hotmail.com)

**November 15 - 17, 2002**, Fall Retreat, Issaquah, WA, sponsored by Puget Sound Intergroup. Theme: Working With Others. Contact Puget Sound Intergroup at 253/939-2696

### Upcoming International Conventions

**January 10 -12, 2003**, SA / S-Anon International Convention, Newark, NJ, sponsored by NJ / NY area SA / S-Anon groups. Theme: Whatever It Takes. Contact Tom at 908/351-3876.

**July 11 -13, 2003**, SA / S-Anon International Convention, Chicago, IL, sponsored by Chicago area SA / S-Anon intergroups. Theme: A Program of Action: Maintaining Our Spiritual Condition. Contact Intergroup at 630/415-0341 or see web site <http://www.geocities.com/ProgramofAction>

**January 2004**, SA / S-Anon International Convention, San Diego, CA. Sponsored by SA / S-Anon San Diego Intergroups. Contact Intergroup at 858/495-2446.

*[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.]*



## Calendar of Events

*[Events listed here are presented solely as a service to readers,  
not as an endorsement by Essay or SAICO]*

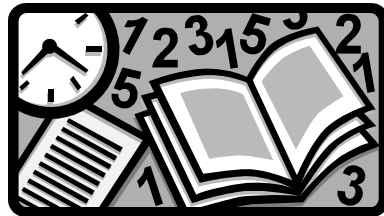
**September 12 -14, 2002**, SA Women's Fall Gathering, Santa Cruz, CA.  
Theme: Making the Real Connection.  
Contact PO Box 619, Fremont CA 94538

**September 14, 2002**, SA / S-Anon Autumn Workshop, Wexford, PA,  
sponsored by Pittsburgh IG. Theme: Wake Up Call, Facing Reality.  
Contact Pittsburgh IG at 724/224-0877 or send email to  
pghsaig@yahoo.com.

**September 28, 2002**, A Day of Unity, San Jose, CA,  
jointly sponsored by N California IG and Los Altos S-Anon.  
Contacts 510/273-9878 or see the local web site  
www.sexaholismbayarea.org

**October 5, 2002**, SA / S-Anon Marathon, Toronto, ON, Canada,  
sponsored by SA Ontario IG. Contact Joe at 416/696-0239  
send email to aljoto@hotmail.com.

**October 11 -13, 2002**, SA / S-Anon Regional Unity Conference,  
sponsored by So California Intergroups.  
Theme: Here are the Steps We Took.  
Contact David S. at 310/643-9262.



## Summary Main Motions passed by the General Delegate Assembly in Portland, Oregon July, 2002

Approved the request of Northern Indiana groups to move into the North Midwest Region. Any other group or intergroup that has a request should notify Central Office. Regional alignment feedback presented at this Assembly will be forwarded to the Regional Alignment Committee.

A new SA web site approved with same address: www.sa.org. The site will contain excerpts from the SA brochure; will enable online purchase and donations; will point interested buyers to SA Publications; and will have meeting information

Questions were revised and standardized to be asked of prospective and existing trusted servants at the international level in the capacity of Trustees and committee chairs.

Moved that all AA literature, *Sexaholics Anonymous*, *Recovery Continues*, *Member Stories*, and the SA brochure are fellowship approved literature.

## New Groups

### USA

Blacksburg, VA  
Champaign, IL  
Hanover, PA  
Hunsville, AL  
Lebanon, TN  
Manassas, VA  
New Martinsville, WV

### Australia

Cairns, Queensland,

### Additional meeting

Columbus, NE  
Portland, OR  
Salem, OR  
Seattle, WA  
Toronto, ON Canada

## PRACTICAL TOOLS FOR RECOVERY

### 3. Made a decision to turn our will and our lives over to the care of God *as we understood Him.*

[This is a continuation of an article on the Steps begun in the December 2001 Essay]

I was able to make this decision only after I had identified my false beliefs about God, let go of those old ideas, and identified the beliefs and ideas by which I was going to live my life from that moment forward. As a friend of mine suggested, "You've got to start living as if you believe what you believe, and stop acting as if you believe what you don't believe." Whatever you write in the "Truth" column of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Step, you need to begin living it. But how? If I could have lived as I thought I should, I would not have come to SA.

I believe that my thoughts, feelings, and choices comprise a major part of my will. My actions and relationships encompass the greater part of my life. If I have come to believe in a loving and gracious Power who desires the best for me, why would I hesitate to turn my will and life over to His *care*? When I was running the show, my thoughts were out of control and regularly devolved into delusion and fantasy. My feelings were generally fear, despair, shame, and

self-loathing. My choices had created many of the consequences I had listed in my 1<sup>st</sup> Step. Many of my actions were a source of shame and revulsion; and I had poisoned the relationships with those closest to me. What did I have to lose?

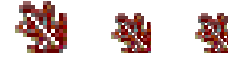
When I was struggling with this Step, my sponsor suggested that I walk out to the nearest main thoroughfare, flag down the first car that would stop, and turn my will and life over to whoever was driving. He asked me if I thought they could do any worse than I was doing. A later sponsor suggested that if I had awakened someone sleeping on a park bench, their suggestions *couldn't* have been much worse than my best thinking. Talk about tough love! Finally, I realized that I was making a decision to continue the Steps in an effort to develop a relationship with this newfound Friend who could and would restore me to sanity if He were sought.

Pages 60 through 63 of the Big Book are devoted to Step 3. The first

Canada, and one in Australia. Our committee contacts these people when there is something related to prisons in their area.

**William R.**

SA Correctional Facilities Coordinator



### Meeting Celebrates One Year Anniversary

On May 10, 2001 Sexaholics Anonymous held its inaugural meeting at the Parr Highway Correctional Facility in Adrian, Michigan. A year has come and gone, and SA continues to thrive at our facility. We now have two weekly meetings, one on Thursday evenings and the other on Saturday afternoons. At the suggestion of one of our trusted servants, a combined meeting was held for regular participants in both meetings. We were joined by two members of SA who have served as volunteers for our groups, coming into the prison from the outside world. Both offered insightful sharing of their stories, and the meeting touched all that participated.

SA has made a big impact here. Through the efforts of Keith S., who was our original outside "sponsor," more than 60 men have been a part of SA during the year. Some men have been paroled, and continue to participate in SA after their release. Those still here benefit from the weekly

meetings, the sponsor-by-mail program, and the fellowship that is found at the meetings. This special combined meeting was a way for all of us to say "thank you" to the outside volunteers who have given so unselfishly of themselves, as well as a chance to strengthen the bonds of fellowship for the members of the two meetings. We look forward to our second anniversary next year!

**Theodore J. L.**



#### Service Opportunity

If you would like to be a CFC Representative, please contact SAICO at (615) 331-6230 or send email to [saico@sa.org](mailto:saico@sa.org).

Please consider sponsoring an inmate by mail. We need more SA volunteers to do this important 12th Step work. We can send you a Sponsor-by-mail packet that will help you sponsor an inmate. If you are interested write to

Keith S.,  
Sponsor-By-Mail Service  
P.O. Box 99667  
Troy, MI 48099

# SACFC NEWS

SA CORRECTIONAL FACILITIES COMMITTEE

[Excerpts from the SA Correctional Facilities Committee Report from the SA International Conference July 2002 in Portland, OR]

SACFC Committee Members are: Earl H., Southeast; Allen L., North Midwest; John C., Northeast; Keith S., North Midwest; William R., CFC Coordinator

## Sponsor-by-Mail Service

Keith S., MI, reports that there are currently 215 inmates from 32 states who are receiving sponsorship from 57 outside SA members. In the last five months 38 more inmates signed up for this service. Nine more outside SA members have volunteered to sponsor inmates. We now have one female SA member sponsoring a female inmate.

## Literature Service

In the first five months of 2002, SA Publications has mailed 118 SA handbooks to inmates and correctional officials, in the U.S. SA Publications sends these books out at cost paid by SAICO. Your donations to the CFC Fund make this possible. The International Central Office has sent each of these inmates an introductory packet

that includes several member stories. Forty-three of them are subscribing to the *ESSAY* newsletter.

## International Report

Canada: In Toronto several members have visited an incarcerated member.

## CFC Fund

Through May, 2002 SA members contributed \$4,006.75 to the work of the Correctional Facilities Committee. We thank all of our members and groups for their generous support of our efforts to carry the message to incarcerated sexaholics.

## Facts

We have been contacted about prison service work from 47 states and 4 countries. (Ireland, England, Canada, and Australia).

More inmates from New Jersey have written to our fellowship for help than any other state: 149

· 87 prison officials have contacted us since we began to keep a record. 7 have written this year.

We have 34 Correctional Facility Representatives in the U.S., two in

paragraph of page 63 describes the results we can expect when we take this Step. I refer to these as the "Third Step Promises". I especially liked the idea that I would "...lose [my] fear of today, tomorrow or the hereafter." After discussing the results of my Second Step and my willingness to continue the spiritual program with my sponsor, I was ready to take the Third Step. Many of our fellowship take this Step publicly at a meeting, with other members joining in the prayer. Others may wish to do this privately, or with their sponsor or other spiritual guide. The important thing is that we make this commitment sincerely, and that we follow it with action.

God bless and keep you as you trudge this road of happy destiny.

## How to Contact SA

SA International Central Office  
PO Box 111910  
Nashville, TN 37222-1910

Phone: 615/331-6230  
Fax: 615/331-6901

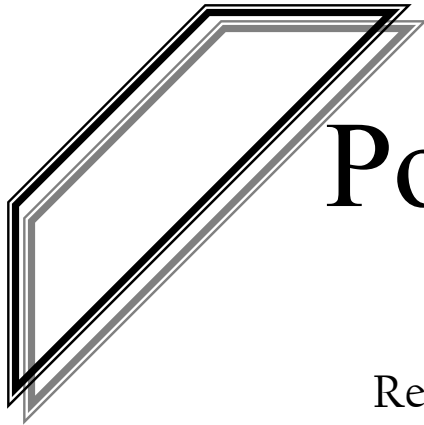
Web Site: <http://www.sa.org>  
E-mail: [saico@sa.org](mailto:saico@sa.org)

## "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 same sex issues.

The deadline for submissions for the next issue is November 1, 2002.



# Poetry Corner

## Relapse No More

My addiction  
came visiting today,  
I didn't let him in the door;  
I knew what to say!

He tried hard and strong;  
he knows his trade.  
I've done too much hard work  
to let him unravel the progress I've made!

I have everything  
going right for me,  
I turn it over to God, work the 12 Steps  
and stay loyal to my sobriety.

He tried to make me  
feel like I did before,  
I now have tools to work with  
to keep me from going near that door!

**James S. Clearmont, Florida**

# SAICO NEWS

SA INTERNATIONAL CENTRAL OFFICE

“Practical experience shows that nothing will so much insure immunity from drinking as intensive work with other alcoholics.” (pg 89 *Alcoholics Anonymous*)

Service work is the greatest gift you can give another sexaholic. This is the practical application of the Seventh Tradition in its purest form. We give money to keep the facilities going; we give of ourselves to keep the fellowship going.

Several service opportunities are identified throughout this issue in boxes such as the one on this page. Central Office would be happy to discuss any of these opportunities with you.

Specifically, the Internet Committee needs the talents of people who understand MySQL and PHP. Work continues on the new site. It will require the ongoing service of members to update and maintain the databases underlying some of the information on the site. If web technology is your talent, please contact Central Office.

The Nominations Committee is looking for a few good members with flexibility, tolerance, vision, and leadership abilities to be Trustees. As it often happens, people of such sterling character do not put themselves forward, or

recommend themselves for the job. Very likely, they are already busy with the business of the fellowship at the local level. It is the duty of the local members to notice and point out the needs of the larger fellowship and call those members to service at the international level. One's local group or intergroup can recommend any member with at least five years continuous SA sobriety to be a candidate for the position of Trustee. That recommendation and a service resume should be sent to Central Office. The Nominations Committee draws from the pool of those qualified candidates to select nominees for vacancies on the Board of Trustees. Your assistance with this selection process would be greatly appreciated.

### Service Opportunity

Your experience, strength and hope with the Twelve Steps and the Twelve Traditions.

Mail your writings to: SAICO, PO Box 111910, Nashville, TN 37222-1910

Email goes to [saico@sa.org](mailto:saico@sa.org)

SUBJECT: Twelve Steps or Twelve Traditions.