

Essay®

A Quarterly Publication of Sexaholics Anonymous, Incorporated

Powerlessness Helped Me to Trust

Hi, my name is Mike, and I'm a sexaholic. I can still remember the first time I said that at an SA meeting. My palms were sweaty, my heart was pounding, my throat had a lump in it, and I could hardly speak—pretty much the same reaction I used to get each time I approached a prostitute, or did any of my addictive sexual behaviors.

Before SA, my life was full of those powerless episodes when “something” would come over me. My ritual would begin, and I would end up doing the same things I had said over and over again that I would never again do. How many times had I said, “Never again?” Whether it was going to prostitutes several times a week, spending hours in a porno arcade, or masturbating ten times a day; my life was con-

stantly filled with sexual fantasy and lust. It seems my every thought was about sex. Every woman who walked past was a lust object. When I was driving, I was always looking into the car next to me or scanning the sidewalk for something or someone to feed my lust, someone or something to help me escape from the real world.

I had somehow allowed this sexual addiction (I didn't know at that time that it was an addiction) to control and destroy my life. I could never get enough. I was always searching for the perfect fix, the right connection. I continually crossed boundaries I had set up. I would say to myself that I would never do this or that. But sooner or later I would. So I'd draw a new line;

(Continued on page 3)

**IN THIS
ISSUE:**

Step Four: Searching and Fearless
Lessons From My Dog
Just A Sexaholic

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.*

then I'd cross that. Who knows where the lines would have ended?

I had spent countless dollars and hours on this terrible addiction. I had lied to my family, my friends, and my employers. I had lost jobs, I had lost one marriage, and I was in the midst of destroying another family (and they didn't even know what was happening). I had been beaten up by pimps, I had gotten all kinds of diseases, and I had lost all self-esteem. I felt that I was the lowest scum on earth. I knew that if anyone knew the real me, they would be disgusted and I would be forever humiliated. But none of this made me stop. Nothing I tried ever seemed able to make me stop or to make the need go away.

I tried will power, will power, and more will power. I tried psychotherapy. I tried group therapy. I tried hypnosis. I tried religion. I tried New Age spirituality. I tried getting divorced. I tried getting remarried. I tried doing it over and over again until I got sick of it. I tried more and more will power.

All I got was more guilt, more shame, more self-doubt, more fuel for that ever-increasing downward spiral. Absolutely nothing worked—nothing. I didn't know where to go, whom to turn to. I was so alone, so ashamed, so afraid. Until I found SA. Then my life was turned around.

I can still remember the chills that went down my spine as I listened at my first SA meeting. These men and women were telling *my* story, and they had never met me before. They had been through it. They had the same problem as me. They knew the shame and guilt. They understood the powerlessness. *But they were in recovery.* I never dreamed there were others I could share this nightmare with, and I never dreamed that I would find a whole room full of people who were recovering from it. I thought I was going to be trapped in that desolate isolation and addiction forever. I thought I would die in it.

The fellowship and understanding were just the beginning. There were tools I could learn for my recovery, tools which would help end the domination my addiction had over me. I learned how to avoid the triggers which seemed to start my acting out rituals. I learned to surrender the lust and the urges. I learned to use the telephone to call my friends in SA when things started to get bad, or when things were good, or when things just were. Most of all, I learned to work SA's Twelve Steps of recovery.

And I do mean *work*. I worked harder at my recovery from the domination of this crippling disease than I ever worked at anything in my entire life. I continue to diligently work at my recovery every day of my life. But the

(Continued on page 4)

(Continued from page 3)

payoff has been a thousand times more than I ever dreamed possible.

It was not easy at the beginning. I went through terrible withdrawal symptoms, both physical and emotional. I was mad at the world, I felt sorry for myself, I was continually exhausted, I was bombarded by even more lustful thoughts. But, after about two months, it did get easier. The impossible did happen.

I didn't think it was humanly possible to never masturbate again. But I found that, contrary to my addictive thinking, the longer I went without, the easier it got. I found that, far from quenching my lustful desires, masturbation had actually been fueling them.

I thank God that I was at such a bottom when I found this program. Had I not already tried everything else, had I not been at my wit's end, I don't know if I could have accepted all that SA has to offer. Or, that I would have been willing to work so hard the Twelve Step program, which is simple, but not easy. I might have been my usual scoffing self. Fortunately, this bottom allowed me to accept my powerlessness. It allowed me to trust in those who had walked the same path to recovery before me. It allowed me to find my Higher Power and to learn how to use this Higher Power in my life. It enabled me to turn my whole life around—my *whole* life, not just the sexaholic part.

The darkness, the fear, the shame, the isolation, and the slavery to my addiction are gone. The addiction is still there; it will always be there. But it no longer has a mastery over me and my life. There is no "other" me that has to hide in the shadows; no dark side that has to escape the shame and guilt of its disgusting behavior by doing that same behavior over and over again.

Instead, there is simply me. I'm still recovering and far from perfect. But the one I see in the mirror and the one the world sees are now one and the same. What a wonderful gift that has been, more freeing and joyful than I ever dreamed possible. I have indeed received it. Not only that, but as long as I continue to work the Twelve Steps of Sexaholics Anonymous, I am able to pass this gift along to others. What a blessing! What a miracle!

Future Issues of the Essay:

Thank you! We have had a good response to our request for your sharing in writing about the Twelve Steps and the Traditions. Please send any writings, meditations, and thoughts you have to:

SAICO – ESSAY,

PO Box 3565,

Brentwood, TN 37024-3565

U.S.A.

or by e-mail to essay@sa.org.

Thanks in advance, *Essay* Editors

MEDITATIONS

Acceptance

"I am not affected by other people's criticism because I am not affected by other people's praise."

Praise is wonderful. There are few greater joys than the affirmation and applause of my fellows. But what happens when the cheering stops? Where do I find my sense of self-worth when others fail to notice my good deeds? Or worse yet, when they humiliate or criticize me for my defects?

Acceptance of myself and others is what I strive for in recovery. There I find peace. Above all, I must remember that the God of my understanding is the only judge who matters. When I am secure in the affection of my Higher Power, I no longer need to demand it from others.

Prayer: *God, help me to remember that your belief in me is more important than anyone else's, including my own. Help me to know I am secure in your love.*



Relapse

Many people lose their sobriety or relapse back into lust and sexual addiction. Most of us have learned that relapse is a process that happens over a period of time. Slowly we let our priority of sober and lust-free thinking and acting be replaced by other things. Then we become ripe for relapse. Some of us say we had a slip. We have gone back to our disease and addiction. We have taken back our problem from our Higher Power. We stopped co-operating with God and started co-operating with our addiction again. This plight can happen to any sexaholic no matter how long we have been sober. It is not mandatory. It does not have to be. Relapse is optional.

Am I going to leave my problem in God's hands, or am I going to take it back from Him and co-operate with my disease?

Prayer: *God help me to co-operate with you today and not with my disease. Give me the strength and courage to surrender lust today. Thank you for the gift of sobriety from lust today.*

MEDITATIONS

Acceptance

*Give me your tired, your poor, your huddled masses yearning to be free...
Emma Lazarus*

I sought for thirty years for relief from my addiction through my church. My guilt and shame were too great. I felt that no one at church would ever understand, much less accept me. They kept dangling the proverbial carrot in my face that if I would confess my sin God, would just change me.

Tears came to my eyes as I heard the readings in my first SA meeting. "These people understand," I shouted within. I knew that I was home. As I shared in meetings, I experienced acceptance but I did not feel accepted. As I did service work, I experienced more acceptance and I began to feel more accepted by the group. From the sharing of other's experience, strength, and hope, I learned that they had no right to judge me. Nine months into the program I accepted the group's acceptance.

Then, and only then, did I feel that God would accept me. As I surrendered more and more specific behaviors, more and more of the load of guilt and shame left me. More and more of the grace of God came in killing the obsession. The acceptance of SA allowed me to accept the grace of God.

God, today I accept your grace, because you have accepted me.

The work in progress, *A Meditation Book for SA*, is about one-quarter complete. What is needed is your thoughts and writings. As you finish your morning meditation, as you enter a journal item, as you share with your home group, please consider taking a few extra moments to write it down, send it in, and thereby share with the entire fellowship. An entry into the SA meditation book would be a lovely legacy to leave behind for all time as a sign of your love for SA and those who still suffer. Send it to SAICO, and thanks.

Sunday School Teacher, Alcoholic and Sex Addict

My name is K. and I am a sexaholic. My story began in a small suburban town, a wealthy suburb of New York City. We were a large Christian family and my father was a Marine Corps Captain in World War II. My father grew up on the "wrong side of the tracks" and he was determined that all his children would succeed in the professional world. My mother was a perfectionist, which meant all seven children looking perfect on Sunday mornings and a spotless house. My brothers were football players and my sisters were cheerleaders. I was a mediocre athlete at best. They all excelled academically and I worked hard for my B average. As the youngest I never felt I could keep up with them—as if my family were a clique and I was not in it. Needless to say, I grew up very insecure and jealous of others.

Things began to change when I got to junior high. With boys I felt popular and smart. I began to live kind of a double life—a good Christian girl during the week and a rebellious teenager on the weekends. I found a group of parties, a crowd I finally felt comfortable with. I went into my mode of self-destruction, trying to keep up the image of a "good girl" during the day and a "party girl" at night.

I went to a small college in Pennsylvania. There I discovered fraternity parties, began to use birth control, and led

an Animal House lifestyle. Yet, I was still active in my college church group. This double life was a lot of work to keep up, but I thought this was normal behavior because everyone else I hung around with went through boyfriends year after year the same way I did. I managed to graduate and began a career. I always had a job, a car, and friends. How could I have a problem?

Working for the county in a small town, it became embarrassing to admit I had a "reputation". My boss said this was the wrong image to project to the community, but I continued to "sleep around" and my career ended after some more humiliating incidents.

My double life started to crumble. My friends were beginning to progress in their careers and settle down with husbands and houses. I behaved poorly at a best friend's wedding, went into a blackout, and the bride's mother has not spoken to me since. I did not know where to turn. I had tried the Women's' movement which was popular at the time, the Charismatic movement in my local church, and all kinds of encounter groups. These attempts were helpful, but they did not address the emptiness I felt inside or my compulsive behavior.

I was very good at covering up how insecure and fearful I was. I tried everything I could think of to help myself, to improve myself. I wanted so much to

be normal and, especially, to be happy. I tried going to church, going to school, going to a gym, going to the beach, drinking less, not drinking, reading self-improvement books, and taking trips. I tried nutrition, community involvement, psychiatrists, counselors, avoiding my parents, seeing my parents, being sweet and docile, or being a raging maniac. Nothing ever made me feel better for long.

In fact, most of these extreme behavior shifts exhausted me and sent me back to depression. I hated myself so much. I had reached that awful impasse of being afraid to live and afraid to die. I thought there was something intrinsically wrong with me.

In 1980, I became clean and sober in AA, Al-anon and OA. I finally found some peace. When you are a woman sober in AA, out of control sexual behavior is particularly humiliating. Things that go with promiscuity include lying and, again, the double life. After a while I began to believe my own lies. The people, places, and situations I had become involved with began to get worse and worse. It was only a matter of time before I would become suicidal.

After having been in the program for a long time, I began to pray that God would send me a healthy man to share my life. I was now working for a large company and I was transferred to a Western state in 1990. My future

husband was also transferred there and we were married in 1992.

My disease, the acting out part, went into remission for ten years. I remained active in AA, OA and Al-anon. I was able to sponsor women and be sponsored. Then, in 2002, my old behavior came back. The humiliation, shame, and extreme guilt came back with it. I was now a happily married woman. How could this be happening to me? I was the Sunday school teacher, alcoholic and sex addict. Finally, I attended my first SA meeting after nine months of insanity. My first meeting was a conference in a beautiful church. I arrived at the lunch break and tried to make small talk with these "people" until the first session at 1:00 pm. There was no way I could eat anything. Later at my first Sunday night meetings, I would throw up before I could get out of the house and drive over to them by 7pm.

Yet, I felt I had no choice; I had to go to meetings. Fortunately, I was given a woman's name and number right away— and I called her immediately. She has given me hope and encouragement ever since. As I celebrate nine months of sexual sobriety, I am grateful to the SA program, my home group and my higher power.

Lessons From My Dog

Tonight, as I walked my dog, I learned a lesson in recovery. She's still as hyper as a puppy at three years of age. Most of her time is spent either in a kennel or the small duplex we rent. I try to walk her around the block several times every day. I use a long retractable leash to let her roam a bit but keep her safe. Often she will end up at the end of the leash.

So, what does this have to do with recovery? If I turn it around and look at it from another perspective, God has given me a will (leash) and lets me roam wherever I want within that area of protection. If, like my dog, I keep playing at the end of the leash (seeking to do my will), sooner or later, he'll try to get my attention with a consequence (jerking the leash). If I get off the leash (acting out), I run with abandon without any regard for my own safety or other people's feelings.

Scott S., Columbus, NE

Time Takes Time

I can hardly believe that I have been in SA for an entire year. More unbelievable is that I have been sober the entire time. My sponsor always reminds me that it is truly a miracle. My sponsor is right; it is truly a miracle.

It has been a very full year for me. I am confronting emotional issues that I have managed to avoid even during the four preceding years while I was working another Program. I see and feel that slowly I am changing. My sponsors and other Program people tell me this. The absolute proof for me is that the people around me are responding to the changes. My life is getting shaken-up, which does not necessarily please me. Things are happening that, before Program, I would have gone to any lengths to avoid. Now I am willing to go to any length for my recovery. Still, change is hard for me. My unhealthy thinking wants immediate results and when I don't get it, I want to medicate my pain.

I work a strong Program and have built relationships so that I have them to fall back on when I'm in trouble. My process keeps bringing me back to a place of surrender. I control my actions, G— controls their outcome. I need to be reminded of that often. It's amazing to me that I can keep forgetting such a clear reality. The G— of my understanding is always there running the universe, but often I need a human voice to carry His message to me. Thank G— that He sent me to Program and helps me to work it in good times and bad.

Claire, Jerusalem, Israel

Just A Sexaholic

I was well on my way to being an addict by age eleven. Pre-puberty masturbation was already a regular part of my life and it wanted more and more. By age thirteen, I was experimenting with sexual activity with my younger sister. We feared being caught and punished, so we stopped.

From here the next thing that became available was experimental sexual activities with other boys in the neighborhood and school. It may have started as experimentation, but for me it quickly became very serious and compulsive. Of course I knew it was wrong, but my addict convinced me it was okay if I just did it for a while.

Then came my big dilemma. By this time I had learned from my peers what "homosexual/queer," meant. I did not believe or want to believe that I was either of those. Yet, I was doing the same behaviors that they did. My value system told me it was wrong. Therefore, I guarded my secret from everyone. The only time I acted out was when my addict was triggered. When the acting out was over, I just put it out of my mind as though it had not happened. This was the only way I could handle my behavior. I believed someday I would no longer need it and I would stop.

As my addictive behavior continued to grow I pursued therapy, counselors,

and a few religious leaders. This was throughout the 70's and 80's when society was yielding to a more liberal agenda of tolerance of everything as long as it did not physically hurt anyone. I found myself bombarded with constant messages that I "should just accept who I am" and come out and leave my family and pursue a gay lifestyle. And yet there was nothing about the lifestyle that appealed to me except the acting out.

At about this time I found myself participating in a Christian support group for those who struggled with same sex attraction and desired to change. This group was confusing, because those who attended identified themselves with the Gay Lifestyle. One evening, after four years of participation with this group a fellow came who was in town for a month on business. He shared that he was also attending a local SA group. I knew nothing of SA. He explained it was group of all kinds of sex addicts who worked a 12 Step program.

I decided to wait until after he had left town to attend my first meeting. It was no problem for me to keep my secret, as that was the last thing I wanted anyone to know about me. I found myself so excited to be in a room full of all kinds of sex addicts who seemed to be accepting of each other and for the first time in my life to **know** what I was. I

was not gay. I was just a plain old sex addict who just happened to act out with the same sex. What a relief. SA also affirmed that to recover it was going to be my job to work the program and stop my addictive behavior.

I did not do a First Step for over three years. I wanted to belong to SA enough that my form of acting out would not be the issue when I exposed it, because the guys already would know me. In addition, I have a big problem with some forms of acting out and feel responsible to my SA group to keep those feelings to myself.

I know today that none of us went out and chose to be an addict and that our form of acting out grew more out of a bad habit. I am open and affirming and tolerant to all who seek to stop their overt form of acting out and progress in a healthy recovery.

Ron W., Seattle, WA



New Groups

USA

Alexandria, LA
Blue Ridge, GA
Columbia, TN
Cooperstown, NY
Indianapolis, IN
Oshkosh, WI
St Cloud, MN
Terre Haute, IN

Additional meetings

ONTARIO

Hamilton
Richmond Hill
Toronto

Philippines

Manila



General Delegate Assembly

Southwest Region
Northwest Region
South Midwest Region
North Midwest Region
Southeast Region
MidAtlantic Region
Northeast Region

Jerry L.
Judson R.
Jack F.
Vron J.
Betty R.
Peg V.
Pending election

International

Jenny M., SA UK

All General Assembly Delegates can be reached at SAICO, or email can be sent to Delegate@saico.org.

PRACTICAL TOOLS FOR RECOVERY

Step 4. Made a searching and fearless moral inventory of ourselves.

This Step is the beginning of a lifelong process of self-appraisal and accountability. If you continue in this journey, you will have many more opportunities to review your conduct, motives and shortcomings, and take action to change. I rarely listen to a sponsee's 5th Step without discovering another example of how my defects of character injured me or someone I love.

Pages 62 through 70 of the book *Alcoholics Anonymous* describe precisely how to do the 4th Step. There is an example of how we inventory our resentments on page 65. You will need a fourth column on this list. If you write in a form with two facing pages this may be easier.

First, make a list of the persons, institutions and principles at whom you are angry. I recommend doing this on a separate page so that as new resentments come to mind while you are writing the inventory, you can add them to the list without losing your train of thought. List the persons at whom you are resentful and each cause in two columns on the left page. Draw a line down the center of the right page and label the third column "*Affects*

my." There should now be three columns labeled just like those in the book. Leave the fourth column empty at this point. The five items commonly used in the third column are listed on page 65: (1) self-esteem, (2) security, (3) ambitions, (4) personal relations, (5) sex relations. Follow the instructions thoroughly to complete the first three columns.

After you complete the first three columns, continue reading to the third paragraph on page 67. "Referring to our list again. Putting out of our minds the wrongs others had done, we resolutely looked for our own mistakes." This is what you will place in the fourth column: "Where had we been (1) selfish, (2) dishonest, (3) self-seeking, and (4) frightened?" For each example you have listed in the first three columns, you will now write in the fourth column which of the four mistakes you made in connection with the resentment. List as many as apply for each resentment.

In *Alcoholics Anonymous* we are instructed how to address our fears. You will want three columns for this part of the inventory. I recommend that you use the entire page for the first

column in which you write a description of your fears. Draw a line down the center of the right page, creating the second and third columns. In the second column write out what is affected: (self-esteem, security, ambitions, personal relations, or sexual relations.) In the third column write out the mistakes, as we did for our resentments: (selfish, dishonest, self-seeking.) We already know we are frightened. You have now reviewed your fears thoroughly and put them on paper.

“Now about sex”. This paragraph at the bottom of page 68 invites us to look at this area of our life in a realistic, non-shaming fashion. “Where had we been selfish, dishonest, or inconsiderate? Whom had we hurt? Did we unjustifiably arouse jealousy, suspicion or bitterness? Where were we at fault, what should we have done instead? We got this all down on paper and looked at it.”
(*Alcoholics Anonymous*, page 69)

These questions are *not* rhetorical questions. I found that when I made a list of the persons with whom I had sexual relationships and wrote a paragraph for each one answering these questions, I had a very useful insight into the nature of my disease. For those of us who have acted out anonymously, it may be useful to write about “the prostitutes”, “the anonymous partners”, etc. collectively in a single paragraph, using these questions to identify

recurring themes. If there are any particularly painful, disgusting, or arousing (yes, I still wanted to drink from that poisoned well) episodes, be sure to address them individually. Do not be afraid of seeming boastful; your sponsor can call you on this when you take the 5th Step. At this point be as thorough as you possibly can. It's the one thing you gloss over now that may take you back out next month or next year. Remember, when this work brings up overwhelming feelings, take a break and get support.

“In this way we tried to shape a sane and sound ideal for our future sex life. We subjected each relation to this test—was it selfish or not?”
(*Alcoholics Anonymous*, page 69)

After taking the 5th Step, you may wish to talk with your sponsor about *writing down* a sane and sound ideal for your future sex life.

After you have answered the questions, continue to the end of the chapter which suggests actions to improve future relations. The White Book also has an excellent chapter on the 4th Step. When you have completed this, you are ready for the next Step!

SAICO

SA INTERNATIONAL CENTRAL OFFICE

In Memoriam *

Earl H.

June 2003 Earl was our mentor, sponsor, and guide. Earl started SA on the Mississippi Gulf Coast. People from New Orleans to Mobile came to these meetings. He sponsored several of us as we continued to work our programs. Earl established a light that few of us expect to achieve. He attended national meetings and had years of sobriety; yet, he fought for each day just like the rest of us. He had the courage to change the things he could.

His name and his work should go beyond his self. He affected many in a positive way. Thus, we wish to send this gift in his name to the Central Office. He will be remembered and emulated for a long time. Ultimately, he had a heart attack and his fight is over. We pray for his serenity, to accept these things he cannot change.

Gulf Coast SA

Erik, Kurt, Tim, Frank, Scott, Alan, Mike, and many others

Jim P.

August, 2003 We are enclosing a gift in memory of our dear friend Jim P., a longtime member, who was taken from us suddenly. Jim's long-term sobriety; his attendance at meetings, conferences and retreats; and his tireless service were an inspiration to all those who were lucky enough to be in his presence. He was a stellar example of "it works, if you work it." He truly embodied the spirit of "attraction, not promotion."

Jim and his wife were the primary reason that the White Plains S-Anon Couples in Recovery meeting thrives today, sitting together many a Sunday evening waiting for another couple to show up. We were blessed with the gift of Jim P. for the last six years. Although we only had him for a very short time, his spirit will live within us for all of our days to come.

Joe & Betty L.

**In Memoriam* policies are in formation. We welcome such memories, especially from a group or service structure body. They will be edited and included in the *Essay* as space allows. Memorial gifts are welcome, though not required. *Essay* eds.

SACFC NEWS

SA CORRECTIONAL FACILITIES COMMITTEE

Service Opportunities for CFC

Is your 12th Step alive and well? Are you looking for an opportunity to carry the message and provide a service to those who still suffer?

If so, correctional facilities work may be just right for you. Here are three ways you can get involved.

Sponsor-by-Mail: If you have worked most of the steps, have been sober for a year or more, and are willing to share your experience, strength, and hope through letter-writing, this may be for you. We have instructions and a Step guide for your use. Every letter is a lot like sharing in a meeting. Keith S. reports that 75 SA members are sponsoring 294 prisoners by mail, in 33 states.

Prison Meetings: If you are within driving distance of a receptive prison unit, you may wish to help with a regular weekly meeting on the inside. Committee members can help you get started, share our experience with prison meetings, and suggest approaches that may work for you in your state.

Parole Connections: You may want to establish a relationship with parole officers in your locality and provide SA brochures so that they can make referrals to your local meetings. The Committee will be glad to offer some useful suggestions.

If any of these activities appeal to you, or if you want to explore any other ideas for service to our fellows who have been convicted, please contact the SA CFC through the SA Central Office.

Just a reminder: Keith S. is collecting information about SA meetings being conducted in prison units. If you have information, please send it to him at SACFC, PO Box 3565, Brentwood TN 37024-3565.

Ray S., Tucson, AZ

Dear Essay,

I was in denial for 40 years. My wife didn't think I was that bad. Now, I have a Higher Power. I have been working the steps. I have a sponsor. I am attending the SA meetings.

I am incarcerated. I had never attended a SA meeting before prison. We have an SA meeting on Monday from 7:00 pm – 8:20 pm. There are about 16 – 18 regulars. We have from 1 – 3 volunteers. I am grateful for these meetings.

It is with a feeling of wonder that I am writing you this letter . I had written you. The following week I noticed an address change. I wrote again. Both letters received a response. Thank-you.
Dale A., July 2003

Dear SA International Central Office,

I've just been elected Secretary of the Saturday afternoon fellowship meeting at our facility, and thought that I'd touch base with you. We were very proud to hear that we are the largest SA meeting in a correctional facility. Keith S. of the Troy meeting and others put so much hard work into getting our meetings started and pairing us with volunteer "sponsors by mail," along with volunteers from the Downriver meeting who join us when they can. Everyone involved made – and continues to make – sacrifices and we thank them all.

But, realistically, our volunteers have obligations to work and family that prevent them from coming to Adrian prison as often as we would like. We do understand that and thank them as well. We hope to see more of them in

the future.

Those of us in the prison fellowship face special challenges. Most of us have acted out our addiction in a criminal manner against other people. This causes shame and rejection by others. But SA's Steps help us to break the sick habit of hurting ourselves, others, and God. We look forward to meeting some of you on the Road of Happy Destiny. May God bless and keep you all. Our Parr Highway Correctional Facility meetings are: Thursdays 7:00 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. Saturday 1:30 p.m. to 3:00 p.m.

In Recovery,
Travis T.

SA Haiku

I do my own thing
Pretending I own myself.
God alone owns me.

Keith S.

Calendar of Events

*[Events listed here are presented solely as a service
and are not endorsed by Essay or SAICO]*

October 24 - 26, 2003, SA / S-Anon Convention, Waterford, Ireland, sponsored by SA Ireland. Contact them at 051 317388.

November 28 - 30, 2003, SA / S-Anon Meeting, Kempten, Germany, sponsored by Kemptner AS Gruppe and Peissenberger S-Anon.
Theme: We are going to know a new freedom and a new happiness.
Contact Hans at 08326 7795 or Christian at 0160 8418945.

December 5 - 7, 2003, Third Annual NorCal Unity Men's Retreat, Sonora, CA.
Contact Bill at 925/998-8458.

Upcoming International Conventions

January 9 - 11, 2004, SA / S-Anon International Conference, San Diego, CA,
sponsored by San Diego Intergroup. Theme: There is a Solution.
Contact Mike S. at 619/668-6931
or send email to unityconf@sasandiego.org

July 9 - 11, 2004, SA International Convention, Oklahoma City, OK,
sponsored by Essay Oklahoma, with the participation of S-Anon.
Theme: Spiritual Awakening. Contact OKC at 405/424-1400.
More details and a flyer with the next issue.

Your event mentioned here. Submit information to SAICO 90 days in advance.

[Please note: Since international calling protocols differ from country to country, we include only the country codes, area code, and number given by the local contacts. Please consult an international operator for guidance on making international calls.]

Second Quarter Donations April - June 2003

Akron, OH	210.00	Glen Ellyn, IL CFC	200.00	Pittsburgh, PA (SS)	201.00
Ann Arbor, MI	100.00	Glendale Hgts, IL	20.00	Pittsburgh Autrnn Conf	100.00
Annapolis, MD	40.00	Glendale Hgts CFC	20.00	Pittsburgh IG	85.00
Arlington Hgts, IL	265.00	Golden, CO	42.87	Pittsfield, IL CFC	20.00
Arvada, CO	100.00	Green Bay, WI	50.00	Red Bank, NJ	25.00
Asheville Marathon	288.50	Greensboro, NC	45.47	Roswell, GA	117.00
Asheville, NC	500.00	Gulfport, MS	100.00	Salem, OR	230.71
Baltimore, MD	30.00	Halifax NS Canada	17.24	San Diego, CA	216.50
Bannockburn, IL	137.00	Hermosa Bch, CA	25.00	San Diego IG	600.00
Bannockburn CFC	81.00	Hermosa Bch CFC	25.00	San Jose, CA	15.00
Beacon, NY	20.00	Herndon, VA	212.00	Sandy, UT	50.00
Bellevue, WA	85.00	Houston, TX	25.00	Savannah, GA	75.00
Beltsville, MD	111.00	Hyattsville, MD	26.00	Silver Springs, MD CFC	365.00
Bryn Athyn, PA	200.00	Idaho Falls, ID	41.50	Somerville, MA	7.25
Bryn Athyn CFC	50.00	Irvine, CA	250.00	So Cal Area IG	2,000.00
Calgary AB Canada	284.02	Jersey City, NJ	35.00	Springfield, VA	125.75
Camarillo, CA	250.50	Jonesboro, AR	20.00	Springfield CFC	26.25
Central Ohio SA IG	100.00	Laguna Niguel, CA	10.00	St Charles, MO	100.00
Central VA IG	50.00	Lancaster, CA	25.00	St Louis, MO	100.00
Centreville, VA	72.90	Langhome, PA	200.00	St Louis CFC	150.00
Centreville CFC	8.10	Lincoln, NE CFC	44.00	Stratford, NJ	50.00
Chatsworth, CA	250.00	Lincroft, NJ	20.00	Sudbury ON Canada	75.00
Chatsworth CFC	50.00	Little Falls, NJ	100.00	Tacoma, WA	100.00
Chicago, IL	253.00	Longwood, FL	25.00	Timonium, MD	170.00
Chicago CFC	179.00	Los Angeles, CA	96.00	Trenton, MI	224.00
Colorado Springs, CO	65.00	Mars, PA	10.00	Tucson, AZ	240.00
Columbus, OH	100.00	Marysville, WA	40.00	Twin Cities, MN	299.50
Concord, MA	88.00	Mid-Hudson Valley, NY	15.00	Twin Cities CFC	44.00
Cranberry Twp, PA	10.00	Milwaukee, WI	235.00	Vancouver, WA	52.92
Crystal City, VA	484.09	Montreal PQ Canada	180.00	Washington DC	383.65
Crystal City CFC	23.84	Mt Clemens, MI	135.00	Washington DC CFC	147.00
Crystal Lake, IL	80.00	Mt Ranier, MD	125.00	Whatever It Takes 2003	3,133.04
Darien, IL	50.00	Mt Ranier CFC	40.00	Wheeling, WV	30.00
Darien CFC	35.00	Nashville, TN	500.00	Wheeling/Steubenville Ret	60.00
Davenport, IA	50.00	North Hollywood, CA	100.00	Willow Creek, IL	450.00
Daytona Beach, FL	54.50	Northern CA SA IG	355.62	Woodbridge, VA	100.00
Daytona Beach CFC	12.50	Norwalk, CA	74.00	Woodland Hills, CA	110.00
Denver, CO	125.29	Oklahoma City, OK	2,000.00	Woodstock, CA	85.00
Eastern PA IG	1,062.91	Omaha, NE	13.00	Yonkers, NY	55.00
Essington, PA	95.00	Painesville, OH	50.00	Yorba Linda, CA	60.00
Fairfax, VA	93.60	Palm Desert, CA	70.00		
Fairfax CFC	10.40	Pasadena, CA	140.20	Group Total	22,516.14
Ferndale, MI	712.52	Penn Hills, PA (Fri)	171.64	Individual	1,965.25
Franklin, TN	60.00	Penn Hills, PA (Weds)	101.75	SACFC Total	1,331.09
Frederick, MD	50.00	Pensacola, FL	25.00	SA Net Total	130.00
Fredericksburg, VA	131.50	Philadelphia, PA	33.20	Grand Total	25,942.48
Fresno, CA	140.00	Phoenix, AZ	50.00		

SA Financial Snapshot

June YTD Budget 2003

2003 June YTD

Contributions	40,000.00
SACFC	5,000.00
Conventions	7,000.00
Literature Sales	5,000.00
Discounts	.00
Refunds	.00
Interest	250.00
<i>Essay</i>	2,000.00
Total Revenues	59,250.00

Contributions	38,760.97
SACFC	3,054.83
Conventions	7,093.04
Literature Sales	5,794.22
Discounts	.00
Refunds	.00
Interest	1,281.15
<i>Essay</i>	2,204.00
Total Revenues	58,188.21

Prudent Reserve 7,100.00

Prudent Reserve 2,417.69

Bank Charges	.00
Credit Card Fees	300.00
Conference Fees	850.00
Depreciation	900.00
Interest Expense	.00
Liability Insurance	1,250.00
Legal	700.00
Accounting	1,950.00
Literature expense	1,000.00
Payroll	31,350.00
Payroll Tax	2,800.00
Pension	2,300.00
Postage & Freight	2,250.00
Office Expense	750.00
Printing	6,000.00
Professional Fees	50.00
Rent	4,500.00
Maintenance	550.00
Supplies	250.00
Sales Tax	100.00
Taxes & Licenses	50.00
Telephone	4,250.00
Travel	4,250.00

Bank Charges	15.00
Credit Card Fees	349.57
Conference Fees	683.00
Depreciation	863.44
Interest Expense	0.00
Liability Insurance	1,694.00
Legal	79.50
Accounting	2,597.00
Literature Expense	(868.73)
Payroll	29,193.30
Payroll Tax	2,209.98
Pension	2,134.00
Postage & Freight	1,962.09
Office Expense	2,481.57
Printing	3,541.19
Professional Fees	250.00
Rent	5,179.50
Maintenance	690.72
Supplies	4.36
Sales Tax	11.51
Taxes & Licenses	120.60
Telephone	3,810.62
Travel	3,603.68

Total Expenses 66,350.00

Total Expenses 60,605.90

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.
 - 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.
 - 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

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.

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

The Twelve Traditions of Alcoholics Anonymous

- before personalities.
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

***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. 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.

Share the Message Share your Story

Dear *Essay* Reader,

In the past few months we have received a number of meditations, reflections on the Steps and the Traditions, and fascinating personal stories. We always desire more! Please keep the *Essay* in mind and send us your experience. We promise to keep working on improving our “meeting in print.”

Subscriptions to the *Essay* are now available through the SAICO web site store, Publications page, at www.sa.org

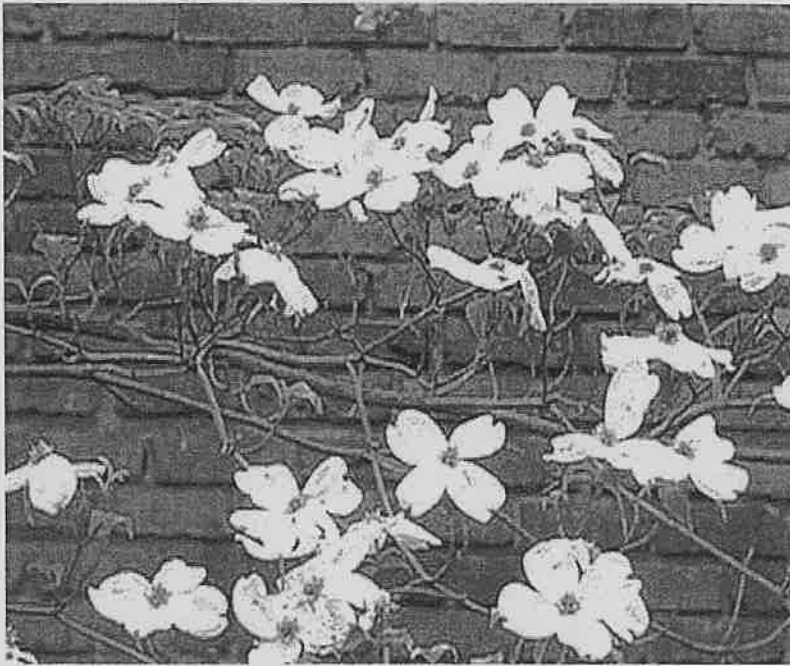
Have you found something helpful in this issue of the *Essay*? Do you have something you can contribute to our quarterly? Would you urge another sexaholic or a local group to subscribe?

Please contact us at essay@sa.org or by mail at

Essay
PO Box 3565
Brentwood, TN 37024-3565
U.S.A.

Sincerely,

Essay Editorial Committee



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.

Copyright © 2003
All rights reserved
(Copies of *Essay* may be reproduced
for distribution to other members.)