



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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www.sa.org

2004, Issue Two

ESSAY®

A Quarterly Publication of Sexaholics Anonymous, Incorporated

Half Measures

All my life, all I wanted was to fit in, to be accepted, and to feel okay about myself. I grew up in a family of multiple addictions, and I was a loner. From very early on I hated myself. I felt trapped, always wishing and waiting to grow up so I could do what I wanted to and have the freedom to get away from it all.

I soon found a way to escape from the pain, fear, and sadness that were much of my early life. I discovered fantasy. Fantasy began with daydreaming about how I was a superhero and could bring justice to all. I would fantasize about being praised for all the good things I did and for saving the world. In fantasy I felt alive, powerful, and good about myself for the first time.

One day, while in bed fantasizing, I began fondling myself and had an ejaculation. Not knowing anything about sex, I panicked. I thought I had somehow injured myself. I kept it a secret. The next day I realized that I wasn't injured, and remembered the good sensation I had felt. I returned to my bedroom and did it again. I was hooked. From this moment on, I began looking for more and more opportunities to masturbate. It was all I thought about. Like fantasy, masturbation made me feel powerful. There seemed to be something magical about it.

I began showing my younger cousins and siblings how I could masturbate. Look what I could do! I would feel special as they watched me and envied me. Soon I started walking

(Continued on page 3)

IN THIS ISSUE:	Expectations	10
	Why I Don't Wash	13
	Step Six	14

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.*

Dear *Essay* Reader,

This issue of the *Essay* includes a powerful recovery story, examples of our developing literature, and a humorous look at meetings. You have something you can contribute to this quarterly. Would you subscribe for a friend?

The *Essay* is available by individual subscription or through your group. Individual subscriptions are \$12.00 annually; group rate, \$10.00. A subscription form is included with this issue.

Essay is now available by email subscription in a .pdf format.

You can contact *Essay* at saico@sa.org or by land mail at *Essay*, PO Box 3565, Brentwood TN 37024-3565, U.S.A.

Sincerely,
Essay Editorial Committee
June 2004

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.

The Twelve Traditions of Sexaholics Anonymous

The Twelve Traditions of Alcoholics 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.
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.
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(Continued from page 1)

down the street and exposing myself to others—still a youngster, yet feeling like a man! I knew I could get in trouble for such behavior, so I always kept enough distance not to be recognized.

Once I was old enough to drive, I bought a used car and sought to get away, to the freedom I always wanted. I still wanted desperately to fit in, so in spite of my childhood promises to myself to refrain from alcohol and other drugs, I began drinking and soon graduated to many other drugs. I also began dealing drugs, and for the first time in my life I had what I called “friends.” My parents couldn’t believe how many phone calls I was getting. I felt special—I had friends.

I then discovered that getting high *and* masturbating was more thrilling than just getting high or only having sex. With this discovery, my addiction really took off. I began cruising and masturbating in my car. I would spend hours driving around, lusting after people and searching for the most attractive ones. I desperately wanted a sexual encounter with someone, anyone.

Soon I began to expose myself from my car. I would get high first, because I was afraid to act out this way, but under the influence, I took many risks. At this point I didn’t see anything wrong with my behavior. I was young and had a powerful sex drive, and I really didn’t see myself as hurting anybody.

In a couple of years I became obsessed with thoughts about sex with strangers. I did little dating because I feared rejection by women. I only dated women who made it clear that they were interested in me first. I could not keep a relationship for more than six months. I feared sex with the women I dated because I believed I would be rejected for not being muscular and macho.

While cruising one day, I picked up a male hitchhiker and we got high together. One thing led to another and I propositioned him. He accepted and I crossed into another level of my addiction. After this experience, I felt ashamed and afraid, wondering what my friends would say if they found out what I did. I also questioned my sexuality. I was attracted to women, yet I found sex with men satisfying as well. I rationalized that nobody would find it out, returned to the area where I had picked up the guy, and discovered it was a cruising area for men. I began picking up men on a regular basis. I was now hooked on this new way of acting out—I couldn’t stop.

My life and thinking were becoming more and more centered around sex; how many partners I could get, how often I could have sex, and how I could keep this secret life of mine from being noticed. I began spending more and more time cruising, started building a pornography collection, and kept a log

(Continued on page 4)

(Continued from page 3)

of how many sexual encounters I had. I would leave my house to go to a family function or a party and never make it there, in spite of having every intention of attending. I was losing more and more control over my behavior, and I couldn't stop.

Around this time I was arrested for the first time for exposing myself in public. I couldn't believe this happened to me. I was so afraid, ashamed, and depressed. My parents bailed me out and found out about my secret life. I could hardly face them. However, they said little about it. The police blotter in the community newspaper included some minor details of my arrest, and I was devastated. This was it. No more acting out. I swore off all this behavior, began Twelve Step meetings for my drug addiction, and really thought that was going to be the end of my sexual acting out. No way was I going to allow it to happen to me again.

Within a month I returned to acting out on the streets, rationalizing that as long as I avoided the area where I was arrested, I would be okay. About a year later, I was arrested again. Once again I couldn't believe it happened. I really wasn't a criminal. I wasn't violent. Why were they doing this to me? I was so far into my addiction that I could not see the wrong or the dangers of my behavior. I became suicidal and tried to kill myself.

Needless to say, about two weeks

later I was back on the streets again. I managed to stay away from exposing myself and limited myself to picking up willing partners off the street. Herpes was becoming a big scare at that time and it became harder to find street partners. I became more desperate. I had sworn to myself that I would never pay for sex because that would mean something was really wrong, if I needed it that badly. However, I began picking up prostitutes and paying for sex. Soon after descending to this new level of acting out, I was arrested for solicitation.

In the course of my addiction I was arrested seven or eight times, each time promising myself and my family that this was it—no more, only to return to it almost immediately. I also got sexually transmitted diseases four times. Fortunately they were curable. Each time I swore I would stop acting out. What I failed to see was that I couldn't stop. On two occasions I even had guns put to my head for approaching people who I mistakenly thought were cruising. After talking myself out of being shot, I resumed soliciting a block away. That's how insane I had become. Despite being in Twelve Step recovery for drug addiction, I had no idea that I could be addicted to sex as well. I thought I had become the evil person my parents said I would. In utter despair, I was again suicidal.

I was ordered to get counseling for sexually dysfunctional behavior, and I

(Continued on page 5)

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.

Calendar of Events

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

June 12, 2004, Relapse Prevention Panel, a seminar sponsored by Central Valley Fellowship. For information, contact Sacramento at 916/491-1772.

August 27 - 29, 2004, Ammerdown Convention, sponsored by SA UK. For details, contact Bill at 44 7753 821520.

September 11, 2004, Step Workshop, Riverside, CA. Bring your Big Book, pens, and highlighter. Contact Bob at 909/634-8865.

September 17 - 18, 2004, Toronto Marathon, Scarborough, ON, Canada. Contact SA Toronto at 416/410-7622 or satoronto@reptiles.org.

October 23, 2004, Fall Marathon, Centreville, VA, sponsored by DC Intergroup. Theme: A Lifetime of Recovery. Contact Intergroup at 703/866-6929.

Upcoming International Conventions

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.

January 7 - 9, 2005, SA International Convention, Daytona Beach, FL. Theme: The Real Connection. For details, call Jim M. at 386/676-3954, or send email to moseleyjb1@netzero.net.

July 2005, SA International Convention, Philadelphia, PA. For more details, call Philadelphia at 215/564-3272.

[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.]

was referred to an “expert” therapist. This counselor knew very little about addiction, and proclaimed that I should find a nice girl and settle down, and my sexual needs would be met in this relationship. I liked this idea, because after all this is what I really wanted as well. So I agreed to weekly counseling and continued to work with her for the next three years. I found a nice girl in the Twelve Step program I was attending and we began a relationship. I thought I finally had the solution. I was feeling better about life and my acting out diminished to masturbating with pornography at home only.

I also entered seminary. I thought if I gave myself to God, the strong urge for sex would diminish. For a while everything seemed to be going well. I thought I had found the answer.

The girl I was dating lived about 45 minutes away, and after several months it began taking me longer and longer to get home. I began to cruise again, but at first only to look. Before long, I was picking up street partners again, and I soon returned to all my old behaviors. This time the police came to the seminary to arrest me, and the shame I felt was unbearable. I lost the girl I was dating. My therapist didn't know what to do. I didn't know where to go or what to do. I left the seminary and was once again suicidal.

During this same week, information on sex addiction was presented both on television and in the newspaper. I im-

mediately sent for the information and read it. They were talking about me! I couldn't believe that there were others like me and that there was a place for help. I was used to reading that there was no cure for sex offenders, and I had felt hopeless up to this point.

The information included readings from Sexaholics Anonymous. I saw that SA used the same Twelve Steps as the program I was going to for my drug addiction. I thought that I really didn't need to go to SA, that I could just modify my own program of recovery to include my sexual behavior. Actually, I was afraid to go to SA, because I thought I might see someone I knew there, and what would they think? Of course I never worried about who knew me at bookstores, parks, and jail!

I got rid of all the pornography and all my drugs, and stopped cruising and picking up street partners. However, I really believed that I had to have sex in some form, so I limited myself to masturbation two or three times a week for no more than ten minutes at a time. I continued to attend Twelve Step meetings for drugs, but was too ashamed to tell them about my sex addiction. For about three months I was able to keep to this plan. Then, one day while masturbating for my ten-minute limit, the urge for more grew so intense that I stopped what I was doing, dressed, and went cruising. Within a couple of weeks I had returned to all my past

(Continued on page 6)

(Continued from page 5)

sexual behaviors, to using drugs, and was arrested again. I finally came to see that my way was not working; I needed SA. That was fifteen years ago.

I was scared to death when I attended my first SA meeting. I didn't know what to expect. I listened, and when it was my turn to share, all I could do was cry. In fact, for the first six meetings I attended, I was in so much pain that I would break down and cry before my first sentence ended. I had thought I was the only one who did a lot of what I did, so it was reassuring to hear that I was not alone. It took quite some time before I could name all the behaviors I engaged in, because I was too ashamed to admit to them. But hearing others talk openly about their past and how they were achieving progressive victory over lust gave me real hope.

When I heard the sobriety definition of no sex with self or anyone but the spouse, I panicked. Being fairly young and still single, I didn't think this would be possible. Most of those attending SA meetings in my area who were sober were either older or married. I rationalized that either they were too old for sex or they were having sex regularly with their spouses, and that's why they could be sober. This diseased thinking led to many slips in my first several years of the program. I became a chronic slipper. I knew I needed SA, yet I was still rebelling, still doing things my way, still thinking I would

die if I didn't have some kind of sex. I did "half measures"—going to two or three meetings a week, making phone calls (after a slip, not before), and reading program literature. I even prayed. Yet I didn't really want to give up my "best friend." I would engage in fantasy or objectify while driving. I would push myself so close to the limit that when I did slip I felt like a victim, that I really wasn't responsible for my acting out. It was way too powerful. How could I be expected to resist it?

This pattern lasted for seven years. Sponsors fired me. I was even arrested once while in the program. I was losing the hope I received early in SA. Yet somehow I remembered what someone said at my first meeting: "Keep coming back." That was perhaps the only thing I did right during this time. I felt caught in the middle. I really didn't want to give up acting out all together, but I was so afraid of what would happen to me if I left the program and returned to active addiction. So I would fool myself into thinking that at least I had made some progress in SA. So what if I slipped on occasion?

Then, I relapsed. I went on a several-day binge that included all my past behaviors, even substance abuse after having several years of drug sobriety. I did not get arrested this time, but I woke up spiritually, physically, and emotionally exhausted. Once again I was suicidal. I couldn't even look at myself in the mirror. I had been in SA

SA Financial Snapshot First Quarter

Budget 2004		Actual 2004	
Contributions	22,075.00	Contributions	30,748.11
SACFC	2,250.00	SACFC	2,362.18
Conventions	3,750.00	Conventions	6,122.94
Literature Sales	3,500.00	Literature Sales	3,748.37
Discounts	.00	Discounts	.00
Refunds	.00	Refunds	.00
Interest	300.00	Interest	183.63
Essay	1,250.00	Essay	1,019.86
Total Revenues	33,125.00	Total Revenues	44,185.09
Bank Charges	.00	Bank Charges	.00
Credit Card Fees	200.00	Credit Card Fees	268.25
Conference Fees	350.00	Conference Fees	.00
Depreciation	450.00	Depreciation	450.13
Interest Expense	.00	Interest Expense	0.00
Liability Insurance	425.00	Liability Insurance	517.00
Legal	25.00	Legal	.00
Accounting	1,000.00	Accounting	761.00
Literature expense	1,750.00	Literature Expense	1,549.35
Payroll	17,300.00	Payroll	16,592.90
Payroll Tax	1,200.00	Payroll Tax	1,247.61
Pension	1,075.00	Pension	2,082.08
Postage & Freight	1,100.00	Postage & Freight	1,577.30
Office Expense	250.00	Office Expense	268.18
Printing	500.00	Printing	1,876.55
Professional Fees	250.00	Professional Fees	.00
Rent	2,325.00	Rent	3,005.76
Maintenance	275.00	Maintenance	269.98
Supplies	.00	Supplies	142.63
Sales Tax	25.00	Sales Tax	.00
Taxes & Licenses	25.00	Taxes & Licenses	72.96
Telephone	2,125.00	Telephone	1,288.32
Travel	2,875.00	Travel	7,547.92
Total Expenses	33,125.00	Total Expenses	37,968.57

First Quarter Donations January - March 2004

CANADA					
Barrie, ON	200.00	Washington DC	224.00	Monroe, LA	20.00
Calgary, AB	1,500.00	Washington DC CFC	430.00	Oklahoma City, OK	1,000.00
Edmonton, AB	274.00	Westmont, NJ	21.00	Springfield, MO	20.00
Granby, PQ	150.00	Wheeling, WV	31.00	St. Louis, MO	200.00
Halifax, NS	18.38	Woodbridge, VA	175.00	St. Louis CFC	100.00
Kingston, ON	43.45	Southeast Region		Topeka, KS	50.00
Montreal, PQ	430.00	Asheville, NC	583.51	Northwest Region	
Toronto, ON	174.00	Atlanta, GA	933.65	Bellevue, WA	233.00
Windsor, ON	50.00	Daytona Beach, FL	27.00	INWIG	12.00
		Dunwoody, GA	25.00	Kirkland, WA	40.00
		Greensboro, NC	27.	Marysville, WA	91.00
Northeast Region		Gulf Breeze, FL	1,850.00	Portland, OR	125.00
Beason, NY	20.00	Jacksonville, FL	50.00	Renton, WA	25.00
Binghamton, NY	75.00	Jonesboro, AR	20.00	Renton CFC	25.00
Brooklyn, NY	75.00	Knoxville, TN	100.00	Seattle, WA	338.00
Concord, MA	188.00	Lexington, KY	197.58	Vancouver, WA	17.00
New England IG	340.00	Melbourne, FL	127.50	Yakima, WA	5.00
New York, NY	300.00	Nashville, TN	573.58	Southwest Region	
Rochester, NY	60.00	Orlando, FL	150.00	Anaheim, CA	54.18
Rockland County, NY	120.00	Ormond Bch, FL	50.00	Camarillo, CA	81.00
Yonkers, NY	30.00	Roswell, GA	42.00	Chatsworth, CA	100.00
		North Midwest Region		Chatsworth CFC	100.00
Mid-Atlantic Region		Arlington Hgts, IL	325.00	Laguna Niguel, CA	288.00
Akron, OH	223.00	Bannockburn, IL	80.00	Long Beach, CA	730.00
Annapolis, MD	80.00	Bannockburn CFC	20.00	Los Altos, CA	37.00
Baltimore, MD	60.00	Barrington, IL	255.00	Los Angeles, CA	174.00
Beltsville, MD	88.00	Barrington CFC	145.00	N Hollywood, CA	110.00
Centreville, VA	91.00	Chicago Convention	6,305.22	Oakland, CA	120.00
Centreville CFC	10.00	Chicago, IL	741.56	Palm Desert, CA	25.00
Cleveland, OH	80.25	Chicago CFC	399.68	Pasadena, CA	100.00
Columbus, OH	150.00	Darien, IL	250.00	Phoenix, AZ	60.00
Cranberry Twp, PA	100.00	Darien CFC	50.00	Sacramento, CA	250.00
Crystal City, VA	375.10	Downers Grove, IL	75.00	Salt Lake City, UT	500.00
Crystal City CFC	20.00	Elmhurst, IL	125.00	San Diego, CA	253.73
Eastern PA IG	514.00	Ferndale, MI	195.00	San Diego, CA IG	650.00
Erie, PA	25.00	Glendale Hgts, IL	60.00	San Diego IG CFC	650.00
Falls Church, VA	228.00	Glendale Hgts CFC	60.00	San Francisco, CA	15.00
Falls Church CFC	75.00	Glen Ellyn, IL	1,250.00	Sandy, UT	50.00
Frederick, VA	62.00	Grand Rapids, MI	200.00	Sunnyvale, CA	50.00
Hampton Roads, VA	40.00	Green Bay, WI	100.00	Torrance, CA	70.00
Herndon, VA	50.00	Lincoln, NE	100.00	Tucson, AZ	20.00
Hyattsville, MD	43.00	Milwaukee, WI	180.00	Utah, UT	100.00
Jeannette, PA	32.00	Mt Clemens, MI	200.00		
Jersey City, NJ	60.00	Peoria, IL	500.00	International	
Little Falls, NJ	200.00	Rockford, IL	100.00	Australia Intergroup	245.00
Mars, PA	30.00	Springfield, IL	50.00	Essen, Germany	40.00
McLean, VA	51.00	St. Charles, IL	50.00	United Kingdom	1,210.44
McLean CFC	6.00	Twin Cities IG	228.00		
Northeast OH IG	100.00	Valparaiso, IN	25.00		
Penn Hills Friday, PA	49.00	South Midwest Region			
Penn Hills Weds, PA	127.00	Albuquerque, NM	274.50	Individual	3,150.17
Philadelphia, PA	38.11	Arvada, CO	17.00	SACFC Total	2,198.68
Pittsburgh	25.00	Clayton, MO	200.00	SA Net Group	25.00
Pittsburgh Southside, PA	80.00	Dallas, TX	300.00		
Reston, VA	275.00	Delta, CO	30.00	Grand Total	37,425.64
Springfield, VA	77.00	Denver, CO	199.13		
Springfield CFC	33.00	Grand Junction, CO	200.00		
Timonium, MD	205.00				

for years, and I still couldn't get it right. I cannot begin to describe the utter pain and desperation I felt. For the first time I began to see myself for who I really was, no excuses. I was out of control and would soon end up in jail, in an institution, or dead. The realization came to me that I could be one of those who aren't lucky enough to return after a slip. I wanted out of this insanity, and for the first time I was actually willing to do whatever I had to do to get better.

I got out *Sexaholics Anonymous*, read the section "How I Overcame My Obsession With Lust," and prayed for strength. I pondered what I needed to do to make the program my life, not just something to spend some time on between episodes of acting out. The time I had in the program helped at this point. I knew what to do; I had heard it said so many times before but never really understood—or maybe I really didn't want to understand. I needed to attend more meetings; two or three per week were not enough. I was attending a night course at college for work, which I really enjoyed, but it was preventing me from attending more meetings. I went to school that night and dropped out. I cried all the way home. I finally saw that I had a life-threatening condition, and if I didn't accept the limitations I needed to have in my life, I wouldn't survive. While driving home and crying, I did my first prayer of surrender to God. I remembered the line from "How it Works" which states, "Rarely have we seen a person fail who has *thoroughly* followed our path." No

more doing the Twelve Step program my way.

I was on my fourth sponsor. I met with him and made a commitment to do daily phone calls, a minimum of five meetings per week, daily SA readings, prayer throughout the day, writing my First Step. I made a list of boundaries I needed to maintain, and reported each day to my sponsor and to the meeting how I was doing with my boundaries. I avoided people, places, and things that could lead to acting out, and I "stuck with the winners."

I am happy to report that through the grace of God and the fellowship of SA, I have been sober for eight years. It has not been easy, but it has certainly been worth it! The program works, even for me, a former chronic slipper! I'm in awe at the change in my life today. Now when I get tempted, instead of resorting to the old "stinking thinking," I am able to look beyond the despair, remorse, and consequences that always result. Instead of seeing recovery as not being able to have sex, I see my recovery as being free from the imprisonment of lust. My whole life and thinking is continuously being changed day by day.

This program has given me more than I ever dreamed. Besides sobriety today, I have friends in the program who know me for who I really am, and support me. I have a job where I am given promotions and leadership roles.

(Continued on page 8)

(Continued from page 7)

I have hobbies and interests. In the past, my time was spent acting out; I had no other interests. Now I have a genuine self-respect. I can look myself in the mirror and be proud of who I see. Today, I want to live.

One of the most treasured gifts I have received from this program is my girlfriend of over five years. Before, I never had a relationship of more than six months; now we are planning for marriage. After about two years of dating and seeing that we were becoming committed to each other, I took the risk and told her I was a sexaholic. I wanted to be loved for who I am, not for who I pretended to be. I knew I might lose her if I was honest, yet I was willing to risk it. She was accepting and now attends S-Anon meetings regularly. We attend couples meetings together, and have a relationship based upon honesty and open communication—for the first time in my life.

SA has saved my life. Better yet, SA has given me a new life. For all of this, and for all the people who have made this possible, I am truly grateful. Thank you SA for showing me that recovery is possible for me, too! I now believe that whether young or old, single or married, sex is indeed optional. As long as I follow the Steps each day to the best of my ability, I know there is nothing to fear. I can finally see that it does get better; we do recover.

Each Morning

Each morning I try to start my day on the right path. I read from “Answers in the Heart,” meditate, and pray to my Higher Power. I pray for my family, for the other addicts in the world and for serenity, courage, strength, and willingness for myself. I look out the window to try to connect with the world of which I am a part. I gaze at the sky, the ground, the trees. One tree in particular usually gets most of my time. It is several decades old. At its base, it has a strong, straight trunk. But the higher limbs have suffered over time. They are gnarled and bent. Some have broken off. The main branch bends over to horizontal, as if pressed upon by a heavy weight. But from that large, bent, sagging limb, several small branches stand up straight, reaching for the light of the sun. I feel very much in tune with that tree as I try to reach for the light from my bent, broken, and damaged past. It is with renewed vigor that I then try to get on with doing the next right thing.

No matter how bent and damaged we have been in the past, we are all precious beings of the Universe who can reach for the light.

Yours in Recovery,

Don P.

The Twelve Concepts for SA

Concept 1: Final responsibility and ultimate authority for SA service should always reside in the collective conscience of our whole Fellowship.

Concept 2: The leadership of SA, as represented by the General Delegate Assembly and the Board of Trustees, has become for nearly every practical purpose the active voice and the effective conscience of our whole society in its service matters.

Concept 3: To ensure effective leadership, we should endow each element of SA's service structure, the General Delegate Assembly and the Board of Trustees and its staffs and Committees with a traditional "Right of Decision."

Concept 4: At all responsible levels, we ought to maintain the traditional "Right of Participation," allowing a voting representation in reasonable proportion to the responsibility that each must discharge at that level.

Concept 5: Throughout our structure a traditional "Right of Appeal" ought to prevail, so that minority opinion will be heard and personal grievances receive careful consideration.

Concept 6: The General Delegate Assembly recognizes that the chief initiative and active responsibility for most service matters should be exercised by the Board of Trustees.

Concept 7: The Bylaws of the Board of Trustees are a legal instrument empowering the Board to manage and conduct service matters. The SA service structure documents are not legal documents. They rely on tradition and the SA purse for final effectiveness.

Concept 8: The Trustees are the principal administrators of overall policy and finance.

Concept 9: Good service leadership at all levels is indispensable for our future functioning and safety.

Concept 10: Every service responsibility should be matched by an equal service authority, with scope of such authority well defined.

Concept 11: The Trustees should always have the assistance of the best possible committees, staffs and consultants. Composition, qualifications, induction procedures, rights and duties will always be matters of serious concern.

Concept 12: The General Delegate Assembly and the Board of Trustees shall observe the spirit of SA tradition, taking care that it never becomes the set of perilous wealth or power, that sufficient operating funds, plus an ample reserve, be its prudent financial principle, that it place none of its members in a position of unqualified authority over others; that it reach all important decisions by discussion, vote and whenever possible by substantial unanimity; that its actions never be personally punitive nor an incitement to public controversy; that it never perform acts of government; and that like the Fellowship it serves, it will always remain democratic in thought and action.

SA, as such, would never have an organization in the sense of a "government" that could issue directives by committee or Board to individuals or groups within the fellowship. Our committees and Board could only provide services and we've tried to organize them to function effectively. But SA has no government in the political sense.*

*"The Co-Founders of Alcoholics Anonymous (Biographical sketches their last major talks)," Pg 25

The Twelve Concepts for SA approved by the General Delegate Assembly, January 2004
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The Twelve Concepts of A.A. (Short Form)

Concept 1: Final responsibility and ultimate authority for A.A. world services should always reside in the collective conscience of our whole Fellowship.

Concept 2: The General Service Conference of A.A. has become for nearly every practical purpose, the active voice and the effective conscience of our whole Society in its world affairs.

Concept 3: To insure effective leadership, we should endow each element of A.A.—the Conference, the General Service Board and its service corporations, staffs, committees, and executives— with a traditional "Right of Decision."

Concept 4: At all responsible levels, we ought to maintain a traditional "Right of Participation," allowing a voting representation in reasonable proportion to the responsibility that each must discharge.

Concept 5: Throughout our structure, a traditional "Right of Appeal" ought to prevail, so that minority opinion will be heard and personal grievances receive careful consideration.

Concept 6: The Conference recognizes that the chief initiative and active responsibility in most world service matters should be exercised by the trustee members of the Conference acting as the General Service Board.

Concept 7: The Charter and Bylaws of the General Service Board are legal instruments, empowering the trustees to manage and conduct world service affairs. The Conference Charter is not a legal document; it relies upon tradition and the A.A. purse for final effectiveness.

Concept 8: The trustees are the principal planners and administrators of overall policy and finance. They have custodial oversight of the separately incorporated and constantly active services, exercising this through their ability to elect all the directors of these entities.

Concept 9: Good service leadership at all levels is indispensable for our future functioning and safety. Primary world service leadership, once exercised by the founders, must necessarily be assumed by the trustees.

Concept 10: Every service responsibility should be matched by an equal service authority, with scope of such authority well defined.

Concept 11: The trustees should always have the best possible committees, corporate service directors, executives, staffs and consultants. Composition, qualifications, induction procedures, and rights and duties will always be matters of serious concern.

Concept 12: The Conference shall observe the spirit of A.A. tradition, taking care that it never becomes the seat of perilous wealth or power, that sufficient operating funds and reserve be its prudent financial principle, that it place none of its members in a position of unqualified authority over others; that it reach all important decisions by discussion, vote, and, whenever possible, by substantial unanimity; that its actions never be personally punitive nor an incitement to public controversy; that it never perform acts of government; and that, like the Society it serves, it will always remain democratic in thought and action.

Birth to a New Life

I just hit nine months of sobriety. I knew it was getting close, but I didn't expect it quite this soon. This got me thinking: what good is counting anyway? I once had sixteen months, and it vanished overnight. I actually have only 24 hours—since yesterday. Tomorrow, it could be gone in a few minutes.

This makes me think about an inmate I have known for many years since I was a volunteer prison visitor. He calls me once a month, always maintains a positive attitude, and even a sense of humor. His slogan is a familiar one: *One Day at a Time*.

I think I'm in a better place than the last time I hit nine months. I contemplate the fact that this is the usual period of human pregnancy before giving birth. I realize that I can use that concept, even though I am a male. At nine months, I am about to give birth to a new life. More accurately, I am being born again—today, and each day that I stay sober. Born again—but not in a sanctimonious, or self-congratulatory sense. Rather it is a calm, grateful, reflective sense of *becoming*. Life is a journey, and recovery is a process within that journey. I truly feel more in control than ever before. But I also realize that I'm not the one in control. My Higher Power, whom I am now happily able to call God, is calling the

shots. As long as I keep trying to connect with Him, I'll be all right. Which brings me to another realization.

I was an agnostic for some thirty years before coming into SA. Over the past few years I have embarked on a spiritual quest, reading everything I could get my hands and my mind on. For much of that time I kept reproaching myself for my inability to believe in traditional religious doctrines. Although I willingly took the Second and Third Steps, something still seemed to be missing. I could not honestly call myself a Christian because I couldn't believe that traditional religion was my only path to God. So what am I? Now at last, I can relax in the knowledge that labels are unimportant. God is everywhere, and my connection with Him is direct, universal, and transcendental. Now I can truly recite that wonderful prayer. *God grant me the serenity . . . and He does!*

Paul P. Concord, MA



MEDITATIONS

Expectations are Pre-meditated Resentments.

I identified with this expression the first time I heard it. How often had I worked myself into a lather of rage because people weren't doing things MY way? How often had I sunk into despair because I was sure life was not working out well? The answer to each question was, "Every day!"

I wish that were an exaggeration. When I sobered up and began to recognize my actual behaviors towards others rather than my intentions, the impact of my self-centeredness became clear. Just as every encounter with a woman was evaluated for its lust potential, so every event or plan was evaluated for what it would do for me. When I finally wanted to stop lusting and stop the self-centeredness, the extent of my disease was embarrassingly clear.

The solution is simple and equally clear. Let Go and Let God. One Day at a Time. Surrender. All those simple program slogans focus on moving me and my expectations out of the center and replacing them with my Higher Power. They also steer me toward accepting the world on the world's terms rather than my own. When I go that direction, the resentments fade and my serenity increases. The true freedom of our program lies not in my expectations but in accepting my life the way God gives it to me.

May each day be a new opportunity to see and welcome the world the way my Higher Power gives it to me. May my demands be replaced with gratitude. May Thy will be done.

Anonymous



I truly enjoy reading each *Essay* cover to cover. I always feel connected and grateful knowing that I am not alone in my struggle.

Richard N., IL

I've been reading it for five years. I think every SA member—especially loners—should subscribe.

Jeff S., MD

Very helpful and inspiring. Reminds me who I am and who I can be if I follow the program. Keep on typing (trucking.)

Sean C., IL

Best of Essay was wonderful! We continue to order copies.

Nancy S., OH

Bring it on! **Ron M., WA**

How about adding the last line to the Serenity Prayer, as in *12 and 12*, p 41?

Larry H., PA

How about articles by SA members in their first year of recovery?

Paul P., MA

Very helpful, especially when I can't get to a meeting.

Richard O., NY

Nourishing, unique, needed.

Al R., NY

When I receive the *Essay*, it is one of the joyful moments of my life.

Robert H., VA

Essay:

Future Issues

The Editors of the *Essay* would like to devote future issues of the *Essay* to our experience, strength and hope in four areas.

The Twelve Steps

The Twelve Concepts for SA

The Twelve SA Traditions

Thoughtful short essays for the work in progress, the SA Meditation book

We have had many helpful responses, but we still need more, lots more. We need a mountain of material for these projects.

Please send your writings, experience and thoughts to us at:

SAICO – ESSAY

PO Box 3565

Brentwood, TN 37024-3565

U.S.A.

Direct electronic files to saico@sa.org

With anticipation and thanks,

The *Essay* Committee



SAICO NEWS

SA INTERNATIONAL CENTRAL OFFICE
PO Box 3565 BRENTWOOD TN 37024-3565

At SAICO in Tennessee, we are entering the summer season with a positive, upbeat outlook on life. The weather is better and things are looking up. The deficit that we had to carry for the last two years has shrunk to about \$1,000 since the first quarter. Once again, the generosity of SA members has helped make this possible. Across the nation, reports have come in from Intergroups who are considering a special collection for SAICO on a regular basis. Some are looking at a formula for doing this. Others are adding a special appeal at certain times.

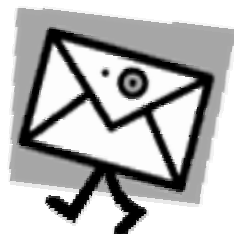
Jerry L., the General Assembly Delegate for the Southwest Region put a pencil to the problem and gave this analysis:

An operating deficit of \$1,000 per month works out to about \$2.40 per member per year. If every member of SA would donate \$1.00 per quarter, or \$4.00 per year, SAICO would be operating at an \$8,000 surplus.

An extra collection for SAICO gives us members an occasion to remind ourselves that the fellowship goes beyond the boundaries of our local region, intergroup, and home group.

In another boundary-stretching exercise, the region is supporting an outreach to the new SA groups in Iran by supplying literature and helping with the efforts to translate the literature into Farsi. We in the Southwest Region believe that Twelfth Step work can be done by Intergroups and Regions, as well as individuals.

Take Care, **Jerry L.**



Letters, We Get Letters

Here is a selection of comments we have received with renewals for the *Essay*.

Essay does a wonderful job in providing so much information in such a small packet.

Max P., Valparaiso, IN

MEDITATIONS

Lord, make me a channel of thy peace...

(Twelve & Twelve, p. 99)

This opening phrase of our version of the St. Francis prayer offers me a degree of comfort and hope unlike any other prayer. Whether sitting in my chair for morning meditation or out walking the dog, those words begin by centering me on "Lord" rather than "me". For this addict, that's the best possible first step toward serenity.

The next words always get my attention. "Make me a channel" reminds me to pass on what has been given to me. "Make me a channel" also reminds me I have pathways in my being which need regular cleaning. "Make me a channel" tells me to let God be the contractor and that I am the worker. "Make me a channel" instills a sense of time and movement. There is a direction to my life.

Finally, "of thy peace" dictates the purpose and the contents of the channel. My normal state is to be afraid. Whether it's one fear or one hundred forms of fear, I default to negative apprehensions. As it says in the *Twelve and Twelve*, the chief activator of my character defects is self-centered fear. What I seek in recovery and in my life every day is serenity, which will come as I accept God's peace and will for my life today.

God, may my channels of self-centeredness be cleansed by your power and love. May Thy will for my life be done today, which is the doorway to inner peace.

Anonymous

The work in progress, *A Meditation Book for SA*, needs your thoughts and writings. They do not have to be in "perfect" English. The editor will render them beautiful. Please send any contributions by e-mail to saico@sa.org, or by land mail to
SAICO, P.O. Box 3565, Brentwood TN 37024-3565

Thank you,

Jerry L., Los Gatos, CA, SA Literature Committee Sponsoring Editor

Rule 62

New Format for an SA Meeting

(or, "Do you want some whine with that?")

Good evening. My name is _____, and I am a recovering sexaholic. Welcome to this meeting of Sexaholics Anonymous.

Will you join me in our version of the Serenity Prayer? "God, grant me the serenity to moan about the things I cannot change, the courage to ignore the things I can, and the inability to know the difference."

Sexaholics Anonymous is a fellowship of men and women who share their problems that they may get some sympathy from others and feel good even though they have little or no sobriety.

This is a closed meeting, so only those desiring to share all the bad things that have happened to them can talk.

[Drop all those time-consuming readings. We are here to "get current" and not to be bothered with "recovery" stuff.]

Let's now introduce ourselves by stating our first name only. [I don't want to be embarrassed by hearing that others actually have some sobriety.]

[Skip the giving of "chips"—that is only one more way to have my lack of sobriety noticeable.]

This is a "getting current" meeting. Everyone is encouraged to share all the troubles they've had since the last meeting and how these forced them to act out. Please keep your pleas for sympathy short, so that the other members can also have time to gripe and whine.

We encourage dumping or focusing on the problem, rather than the solution. We welcome topics that can lead to dissension or distraction, including the discussion of religion, therapies, and other programs. The emphasis is on letting others know that our situation is worse than theirs. If you feel that another member is getting too explicit or talking too long, you may so signify by rudely waving your hand or telling him/her to shut up.

General Delegate Assembly		
Region	Delegate	Alternate
Southwest Region	Jerry L.	David S.
Northwest Region	Rose W.	Bob M.
South Midwest Region	Jack F.	BJ M.
North Midwest Region	Vron J.	To be determined
Southeast Region	Betty R.	David A.
MidAtlantic Region	Brian S.	Larry H.
Northeast Region	Margot C.	Dianne B.
All General Assembly Delegates can be reached at SAICO, or email can be sent to saico@sa.org.		
Board of Trustees		
Maria Graf	non-sexaholic Trustee	
Carole L.		
Jenny M.		
Dorene S.		
Tricia S.		
All Trustees can be reached at SAICO, or email can be sent to saico@sa.org.		
Current Committee Assignments for Trustees and Delegates		
Jerry	Lit, RAC (Regional Alignment Committee)	
BJ	Lit	
Dorene	Service Structure, Lit	
Jack	Events, Site Selection, Internet,	
Maria	International, Finance, Event Guidelines	
Carole	Event Guidelines, Service Structure, Nominations	
Tricia	Chair, Board of Trustees	
Vron	Chair, General Delegate Assembly, Internet	
Betty	Finance, Events Guidelines	
David	Event Guidelines	
Jenny	International, RAC, Service Structure	
Margot	Essay, Literature	
Volunteers for service on these Committees may contact SAICO at saico@sa.org.		

Recovery in Africa

After 20 years in AA, I joined SA in 1997. Because I was knowledgeable about the Twelve Step programme, I thought this would be easy. I just needed to admit I was powerless over lust and that my life was unmanageable. All would be well. I was totally wrong. I kept acting out with myself. Then I thought that if I only had sex with a partner, my problems would be over. I was wrong there too. I got married, but that did not help. Sponsorship has been my other problem. I have only had sponsors on the net or long distance.

I somehow think I am alone and maybe there is not anyone like me. We have a group of two here and meet only once in awhile. I live in a society where people do not talk about sex and it is difficult for me to talk about sexual compulsion in any way.

Now I understand that I need to carry the message, beginning with the Twelve Step groups near me. I go to these meetings. I have a feeling of isolation and loneliness, of not belonging. Is it my lack of sobriety giving me this feeling of not belonging? I need help here and surely I need to start a local group of SA. All comments and suggestions will be welcomed.

Inder, Tanzania, Africa



New Groups

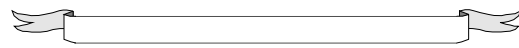
USA

Mobile, AL

Additional meeting
Cleveland, OH

Thank you for calling and notifying SAICO about your new group and new meetings of your home group. We love hearing about your new group.

saico@sa.org
315/370-6062



This concludes our sharing. Anyone not having time to share during the meeting is encouraged to find someone after the meeting who agrees with them and will not challenge them to get sober.

Our experience teaches us that “getting current,” missing meetings, not doing the Steps, and avoiding sponsorship are key elements to maintaining our right to moan and whine. Would those who are willing to be temporary sponsors who demand nothing and allow moaning and whining, please raise their hands?

Okay, the meeting is over. [All that ending prayer stuff can be skipped.]
Disrespectfully submitted, **Jerry L., San Jose, CA**



12 Reasons Why I Never Wash (or Go to Meetings)

1. I was forced to wash as a child and now I am afraid of soap and water.
2. People who wash are hypocrites—they think they are cleaner than others.
3. There are so many kinds of soap, I could never decide which one was right.
4. I used to wash—but it got boring.
5. I don't have to wash. I am not as dirty as you.
6. None of my friends wash—besides, I have A.D.D.
7. I'll start washing when I am older. I am not really that dirty yet.
8. I don't have time to wash.
9. The bathroom isn't warm enough/air conditioned/ big enough (pick any excuse).
10. The people who make soap are only after my money.
11. What? People might find out that I wash!
12. What good does it do? I'll only get dirty again.

The application is obvious. The excuses for not attending meetings are as endless as they are weak. Call your sponsor *before* you get dirty, not after.
John C., Rochester, NY

Rule 62, *Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions*, p. 149

PRACTICAL TOOLS FOR RECOVERY

STEP SIX

Were Entirely Ready to have God Remove All These Defects of Character

“Returning home we find a place where we can be quiet for an hour, carefully reviewing what we have done.” (*Alcoholics Anonymous*, page 75)

Step Six requires quiet contemplation of the work we have done. There are several questions on pages 75 & 76 of the Big Book. These are *not* rhetorical questions! The foundation is complete willingness. The cement is our common solution. The cornerstone is coming to believe in a power greater than ourselves. The keystone is Step Three.

I found that reviewing my step work thus far was highly motivating. My First Step inventory painted a horrifyingly frank picture of my powerlessness and the consequences of my addiction. My Step Two inventory helped me come to believe that a Power greater than myself, God *as I understood God*, was eager to restore me to sanity. Admitting my Fourth Step inventory to my sponsor, and listening to his feedback, helped me see how my defects of character had led to actions and beliefs that created my misery. The

great news here was that if I could be free of these defects, my life could change so that I might become “happy, joyous, and free,” like some of the old timers I had met.

So what exactly are these character defects? Bill W. offers, “By now the newcomer has probably arrived at the following conclusions: that his character defects, representing instincts gone astray, have been the primary cause of his drinking and failure at life... (*Twelve and Twelve*, page 50)

My instincts were given to me by my Creator for a purpose. When I let these instincts exceed the purpose for which they were intended, they cause problems. If God rips these instincts from me in some sort of brutal psychological surgery, I will be left with gaping, bleeding wounds where my instincts used to be. Instead of this frightening image, I think of these “instincts gone astray” as a compass that is a few degrees off true. If I use this compass to fly from New York to Los Angeles, the few degrees error, over the length of my trip, may place me in Mexico (or Canada).

Similarly, pursuing instincts that were off the mark of God’s intended purpose leads me away from my intended goal. In becoming entirely ready to have God remove these defects, I am actually becoming ready for him to realign my compass and bring my instincts back into line with His will for me. I am ready for him to restore me to sanity.

One of my sponsees recently showed me a tool that can be very useful in helping me become willing to let go of my defects. It has four columns, similar to the Step Two inventory. In the first column, list the most glaring, repetitive defects that you and your sponsor identify during Step Five. Next, describe how this defect has affected your life, including the pay-off that makes you afraid or unwilling to let it go. Then, describe how you think your life might be if you were free of this shortcoming. The last column is for short simple affirmations which support your willingness to surrender these defects to the God of your understanding. For example:

<i>(Col. 1)</i> <u>Defect</u>	<i>(Col. 2)</i> <u>Effect in my life</u>
Excessive desire for approval from other people.	Sick dependence on others who do not have my best interests at heart.
	I violate my own values and lose self-respect.
	<i>Payoff:</i> At least I am not alone.
<i>(Col. 3)</i> <u>Vision of Life without this defect</u>	<i>(Col. 4)</i> <u>Affirmation</u>
I can embrace the approval of my God and my authentic self.	I am a beloved child of my God.
I can be true to my values.	I am worthy of loving and supportive friends.
I will make friends with people who accept and value the real me.	