



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 Three

# ESSAY®

A Quarterly Publication of Sexaholics Anonymous, Incorporated

## Danger: Taking Recovery for Granted

When I was a boy growing upon the farm, I was a very private, shy person, and it was very hard for me to ask anyone about sex. So when my neighbor introduced me to sexual activity, I was ashamed to talk to anyone except the priest in the confessional. In those days the dark confessional box fed right into my deep, dark secrets. I knew there was something wrong about it and I tried to stop many times. However, I was hooked on the relationship, the pleasure, and the experimentation. Even in my earliest teenage years my sexual activity was leading me into progressive pursuit of something more, something different.

Without knowing it at the time, I was looking for the Big Fix. It was always, “Just once more before next Saturday’s confession.” Then my

thinking was, “You’ve done it once, so why not do it again before you go to confession?” So I got in as much acting out as I could before I went. Then after each confession, I would promise God that it would be the last time.

I felt that I was the most sexual person alive! I had sex on my mind all the time. Sexual arousal came at the most embarrassing times. It was never a question of *whether* to masturbate. Once the arousal started, I always ended up masturbating.

I struggled with masturbation throughout my teens and early twenties. I had no sex with others for many years, until late in my twenties. Then an older man invited me to a motel to “talk.” I was an easy target, because I

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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 little humor. You have something you can contribute to this quarterly. Would you please send it in?

The *Essay* is available by individual subscription, through your group or online at the SAICO online store. 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](mailto:saico@sa.org) or by land mail at *Essay*, PO Box 3565, Brentwood TN 37024-3565, U.S.A.

Sincerely,  
*Essay* Editorial Committee  
September 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 [saico@sa.org](mailto:saico@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.
9. A.A., as such, ought never be organized; but we may create service boards or committees directly responsible to those they serve.
10. Alcoholics Anonymous has no opinion on outside issues; hence the A.A. name ought never be drawn into public controversy.
11. Our public relations policy is based on attraction rather than promotion; we need always maintain personal anonymity at the level of press, radio, and films.
12. Anonymity is the spiritual foundation of all our Traditions, ever reminding us to place principles before personalities.

*(Continued from page 1)*

was always the passive partner and had no willpower to say no to sex. I was seduced into a world of homosexuality I had never known. This unleashed a whole new realm of lust. I became the pursuer. I pursued other men. I started cruising. I frequented bars looking for sex. It was never enough. I was devastated. What I thought I had conquered had merely been lying dormant. My addiction had truly progressed, even while I was not having sex.

When I couldn't find men, I pursued boys. I drank alcohol to numb feelings of guilt, inadequacy, shame, and emptiness. I would befriend a young person, telling myself I didn't intend to act out with him, but within a very short time I would be in bed with him. Afterward I would say, "This was the first time this ever happened and it will never happen again." The Big Lie. Then I would then drop that partner and pursue the next one.

At the time, I was totally unaware of what I was doing to my victims. I was focused on my lust, unaware that I was trying to fill the emptiness within my soul; unaware of my lack of intimacy and communion with others. My addictive behavior never met my real need, that of making the real connection with God and other human beings. I felt alone. I could never reach out to anyone else—my life had become too shameful. I was living a Jekyll-and-Hyde existence. My addiction was controlling my life, and I saw no way

out.

At the age of forty-six, I finally sought help and was sent to a treatment center for sex addiction. I was so grateful for my introduction to Sexaholics Anonymous there. I began to work the Steps and this program of recovery.

For the first time in my adult life, I felt that there was hope. It felt so good to be free of the power of the addiction. I was fortunate to be released from my obsession with sex from the beginning. I had an occasional fleeting thought or memory, but only infrequent sexual feelings or arousals. I traveled sixty miles to attend a weekly SA meeting because I knew my life depended upon it. My whole week revolved around that meeting. I became active in SA and tried to put all the principles of SA into practice in my life. I was very disciplined and avoided any situations that would trigger me. I avoided getting into any male relationships, even appropriate ones, because I was afraid of what I might do. I wanted sobriety so badly!

For the first time in my life I began to feel alive. I began to experience feelings that I had never felt before. It was not always easy, but it was a hundred times better than when I was acting out. Each year of recovery, new discoveries unfolded. I was able to think more clearly. I was able to go for longer periods of time without being physically sick. I became calmer about

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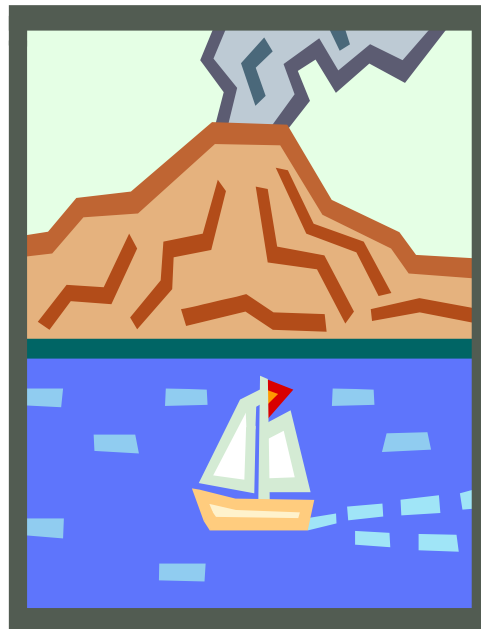
life's situations and didn't let people or life get me so upset. The more sobriety I attained, the more serenity came.

I attended the SA international conference in Baltimore some years ago. I felt very humbled to go up and get my eight-year sexual sobriety chip. Then, within a week, I relapsed by masturbating. This compulsion is very baffling and cunning, as well as powerful. I always imagine this disease as a large black panther waiting to pounce on me. It seems to know my weaknesses and strengths, and will attack me when I least expect it. I was alone and away from home, inside my secret self. My addiction tempted me with thoughts like, "Just this little bit of pursuing pleasure won't lead to masturbation. Go ahead and cross your boundaries. It won't happen!" THE BIG LIE!!! By taking the first little step toward lust, I was lost. Since my slip, I try not to over-analyze what happened, because one of my character defects is to beat up on myself.

There were other signs along the way that led to this reality check. I had begun to take my sobriety for granted. I had begun to relax my reliance on the power of my God by relying more on myself. I had begun to think that I had this addiction licked and—the ultimate temptation—that I was no longer a sex addict. All because I had slowed down on my Step work and had begun to cross the boundary from a trusted servant to one who thought he was better

than, and knew more than, others in the group.

So when I stood before an SA international conference six months later with five months of sobriety and admitted that I had relapsed, I was filled with gratitude to have another chance to get sober. I know many who have gone back out and not returned. I am never to take recovery for granted. I need to be wary of counting months or years of sobriety as something to be proud of, but rather to be grateful that I am sober today. By the grace of God, months and years of sobriety and recovery can and will add up, One Day at a Time.



## 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 as we understood Him.   | 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.  | 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 as we understood Him, 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 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.                    | 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]*

**September 11, 2004**, 2004 Autumn Conference for SA and S-Anon, sponsored by the Pittsburgh Intergroup. Theme: Practicing the Principles. Email pghsaig@yahoo.com

**September 17 - 18, 2004**, SA Step Workshop, Nashville TN. Steps 1 - 7. For more information, call Nashville Intergroup at 615/251-7516.

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

**September 24 - 26, 2004**, SA / S-Anon Regional Retreat, Columbia River Gorge, OR, Sponsored by the Northwest Region. Theme: The Family Afterward, Contacts at www.saportlandmetro.org or call 503/453-5854

**September 26, 2004**, Step Study Workshop, San Jose, CA, sponsored by the Sunday San Jose "rule 62" group. For details, contact Peter T. at 408/935-8885.

**October 15 - 16, 2004**, SA Step Workshop, Nashville, TN. Steps 8 - 12. For details, call Nashville Intergroup at 615/251-7516.

**October 16, 2004**, Sponsorship Workshop, Hayward, CA, sponsored by Pleasanton meeting, "Sober, Serene & Sane." For details, call Peter T. at 408/935-8885.

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

**November 6, 2004**, Regional Unity Day, Hayward, CA, sponsored by Nor-Cal SA Intergroup. Theme: The Gifts of Humility. Contact Bobby S. at 510/336-9483.

**November 13, 2004**, SA Step Workshop, La Habra, CA. Bring your Big Book, pens & highlighters. For more information, contact Tim at 714/961-6893.

**December 10 - 12, 2004**, Fourth Annual NorCal SA Men's Retreat, Ben Lomond, CA. Theme: More About Sexaholism. Contact Doug V. at 707/494-6721.

### Upcoming International Conventions

**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 8 - 10, 2005**, SA International Convention, Philadelphia, PA  
Theme: A New Freedom and a New Happiness. 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.]*

## One-hundred, do I hear a hundred dollars?

An open letter to my Oklahoma City SA and S-Anon friends!

You provided a first class convention, hotel, meeting location, and down-home hospitality for the July 2004 convention. I enjoyed the conference thoroughly and was saddened to learn of the financial loss incurred.

I was very impressed by the way the convention committee addressed the problem. A group conscience held during the wrap-up session on Sunday went right to discussing (rather than avoiding) the problem. A meal budget based on previous average attendance of over 300 people, compared to the actual attendance of a little over 200, created the deficit. A solution was discussed, to develop published guidelines to help future convention committees negotiate better hotel contracts.

In a valiant effort to raise additional funds at the convention, the Seventh Tradition basket was passed twice. This cut the deficit in half. Chuck wagon replicas, hats, and other "valuable" items were also auctioned off.

I believe it is important that SA and S-Anon as a whole help pay this debt. Securing future quality convention sites depends on a good track record of previous conventions. I would like to

propose an additional solution for this immediate problem. Let's continue the auction! How about one dollar, do I hear two? Two dollars, how about twenty? One hundred people sending twenty-five dollars will enable us to be "self-supporting through our own contributions."

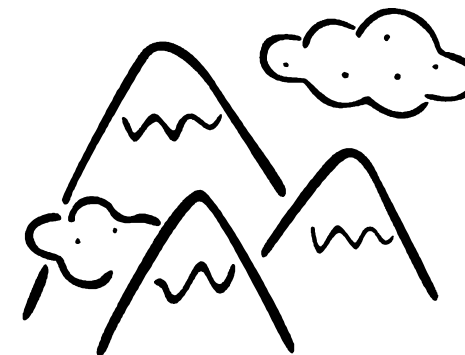
Thank you, Oklahoma City!

Thank you, also, convention committees past, present, and future.

Conventions have helped my sobriety and added joy to my recovery. My check is in the mail payable to:

Spiritual Awakening Conference  
P.O. Box 21075  
Oklahoma City, OK 73129

**Anonymous** and grateful member of SA and S-Anon, from a home group far, far away from OK City





## Stayin' Alive

I admit that, through lust, I have warped my mind into such an obsession for destructive acting-out that only an act of Providence can remove it. Lust bleeds me of all self-sufficiency and all will to resist its demands. I am bankrupt. My personal weakness is the firm bedrock upon which a happy and purposeful life can be built. I accept my devastating weakness and all its consequences. I will find no enduring strength until I first admit complete defeat.

I have a mental obsession so subtly powerful that no amount of my own willpower can break it. I cannot conquer this compulsion with my unaided will. I will never recover using only my own resources.

I must swallow and digest these unpalatable truths. I am out of control, my acting out is not a mere habit –it is the beginning of a fatal progression. I will not sincerely try to practice the S.A. program until I have hit bottom (and am constantly reminded of it).

I must be rigorously honest and tolerant. I must confess my faults to another and make amends for harm done. I must carry the message to the next sufferer. I must care about God and pursue my relationship with Him.

I have to do these things in order to stay alive. I admit the fatal nature of my situation. I am ready to do anything which will lift this merciless obsession from me.

**Anonymous**



## SA Financial Snapshot First Half 2004

Budget 2004		Actual 2004	
Contributions	36,791.67	Contributions	49,404.60
SACFC	3,750.00	SACFC	3,468.95
Conventions	6,250.00	Conventions	6,122.94
Literature Sales	5,833.33	Literature Sales	10,330.27
Discounts	.00	Discounts	.00
Refunds	.00	Refunds	.00
Interest	500.00	Interest	365.78
<i>Essay</i>	2,083.33	<i>Essay</i>	1,875.86
<b>Total Revenues</b>	<b>55,208.33</b>	<b>Total Revenues</b>	<b>71,568.40</b>
Bank Charges	.00	Bank Charges	.00
Credit Card Fees	333.33	Credit Card Fees	642.16
Conference Fees	583.33	Conference Fees	570.00
Depreciation	750.00	Depreciation	900.28
Interest Expense	.00	Interest Expense	0.00
Liability Insurance	708.33	Liability Insurance	517.00
Legal	41.67	Legal	.00
Accounting	1,666.67	Accounting	2,030.00
Literature expense	4,666.67	Literature Expense	7,704.68
Payroll	26,833.33	Payroll	34,169.81
Payroll Tax	2,000.00	Payroll Tax	1,247.61
Pension	1,791.67	Pension	2,082.08
Postage & Freight	1,833.33	Postage & Freight	2,174.55
Office Expense	833.33	Office Expense	945.98
Professional Fees	416.67	Professional Fees	250.00
Rent	3,875.00	Rent	5,067.90
Maintenance	458.33	Maintenance	512.96
Supplies	.00	Supplies	.00
Sales Tax	41.67	Sales Tax	43.27
Taxes & Licenses	41.67	Taxes & Licenses	74.69
Telephone	3,541.67	Telephone	3,032.18
Travel	4,791.67	Travel	11,102.61
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>55,208.33</b>	<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>74,171.48</b>

## Second Quarter Donations April - June 2004

<b>CANADA</b>					
Montreal, QC	101.00	Springfield CFC	63.80	St. Charles, MO	100.00
Toronto, ON	253.40	Stratford, NJ	30.00	St. Louis, MO	148.00
		Washington DC	410.65	St. Louis CFC	80.00
		Washington DC CFC	44.00		
<b>Northeast Region</b>		Wheeling, WV	52.00	<b>Northwest Region</b>	
Buffalo, NY	50.00	Wheeling/Steubenville	130.00	Bellevue, WA	185.25
Concord, MA	159.00	Woodbridge, VA	100.00	Des Moines, WA	15.00
Elmira, NY	40.00			Fremont, WA	169.00
Long Island, NY	40.00	<b>Southeast Region</b>		Fremont CFC	94.00
Rochester, NY	451.35	Daytona Beach, FL	252.45	Prince George, BC	12.00
Schenectady, NY	25.00	Dunwoody, GA	50.00	Seattle, WA	93.35
		Franklin, TN	86.00	Seattle CFC	30.00
		Greenville, SC	72.00	Tacoma, WA	100.00
<b>Mid-Atlantic Region</b>		Gulf Breeze, FL	25.00	Tri-Cities, WA	11.00
Akron, OH	125.00	Gulf Coast SA, MS	100.00	Twin Falls, ID	70.00
Annapolis, MD	20.00	Nashville, TN	340.00	Vancouver, WA	40.05
Arlington Hgts, VA	250.20	Norcross, GA	50.00		
Baltimore, MD	30.00	Roswell, GA	172.35	<b>Southwest Region</b>	
Centreville, VA	75.65	Savannah, GA	240.00	Anaheim, CA	100.00
Centreville CFC	8.40			Camarillo, CA	150.00
Collingwood, NJ	10.00	<b>North Midwest Region</b>		Fresno, CA	150.00
Columbus, OH	125.00	Adrian, MI	65.00	Hawthorne, CA	15.00
Cranberry Twp, PA	140.00	Arlington Hgts, IL	560.00	Hermosa Beach, CA	50.00
Crystal City, VA	20.00	Bannockburn, IL	30.00	Laguna Niguel, CA	30.00
Crystal City CFC	20.00	Bannockburn CFC	20.00	Los Altos, CA	30.00
Dover, NJ	300.00	Barrington, IL	100.00	N Hollywood, CA	115.00
Eastern PA IG	500.00	Barrington CFC	50.00	Oakland, CA	144.00
Erie, PA	27.00	Chicago, IL	401.40	Palm Desert, CA	25.00
Essington, PA	26.00	Chicago CFC	196.30	Sacramento, CA	750.00
Euclid, OH	100.00	Crystal Lake, IL	127.00	Salt Lake City, UT	400.00
Fairfax, VA	13.80	Davenport, IA	100.00	San Bernadino, CA	20.00
Fairfax CFC	124.20	Downers Grove, IL	110.00	San Diego, CA	170.00
Frederick, MD	225.00	Fargo, ND	40.00	San Francisco, CA	120.00
Herndon, VA	58.00	Ferndale, MI	126.00	San Jose, CA	300.00
Langhorne, PA	65.00	Ft Wayne, IN	20.00	Torrance, CA	80.00
Manassas, VA	252.98	Glen Ellyn, IL	860.00	Tucson, AZ	20.00
Mars, PA	30.00	Milwaukee, WI	150.00	Yorba Linda, CA	50.00
MD/DC/VA IG	189.00	Mt Clemens, MI	200.00		
Meadville, PA	51.25	Omaha, NE	55.00	<b>International</b>	
Northeast OH IG	50.00	Pittsfield, IL	70.00	Melbourne, Australia	100.00
Penn Hills Friday, PA	46.00	St. Charles, IL	50.00		
Penn Hills Weds, PA	46.00	Twin Cities IG	891.00	<b>Group Total</b>	<b>13,376.84</b>
Philadelphia, PA	41.42			<b>Individual</b>	<b>6,575.85</b>
Pittsburgh Southside, PA	66.00	<b>South Midwest Region</b>		<b>SACFC Total</b>	<b>1,164.25</b>
Reston, VA	100.00	Albuquerque, NM	206.00	<b>Quarterly Appeal</b>	<b>2,010.29</b>
Silver Springs, MD	328.00	Boulder, CO	50.00		
Silver Springs CFC	71.00	Denver, CO	130.08	<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>23,127.23</b>
Springfield, VA	118.20				

## Made a List and Became Willing Step Eight

“We have a list of all the persons we have harmed and to whom we are willing to make amends. We made it when we took inventory.” (*Alcoholics Anonymous* p. 76)

Although I have discovered a number of people I had harmed who did not appear in my Fourth Step, the list of people against whom I held resentments was an excellent place to begin. I had to remember that in the Eighth Step I was merely making the list. I cannot emphasize too strongly the importance of discussing amends with a sponsor before contacting any person harmed. The *SA Big Book* and *Alcoholics Anonymous* both have excellent descriptions of the purpose and actions of this step. I had to read them carefully and discuss what I read with my sponsor.

The chapter on Step Eight in the *12&12* provides specific directions. Pages 80 and 81 give a list of some of the more obvious ways I may have harmed others. Using this as a guide, I followed the advice on page 124 of *Sexaholics Anonymous*,

Many of these memories are triggered by the sharing of others in meetings or private talks. When this happens, I take the new information to my sponsor *before I approach the person to make amends.*

Once I had completed my list, I met with my sponsor to discuss my actions for Step Nine.

**Bill S.**

### *Requesting Your Help for Future Issues of Essay*

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, and thoughtful short essays for the work in progress, the Meditation Book for SA.

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

SAICO – ESSAY, PO Box 3565, Brentwood, TN 37024-3565, U.S.A.

You can email electronic files to [saico@sa.org](mailto:saico@sa.org)

With anticipation and thanks,  
The *Essay* Committee



# MEDITATIONS

## My Source of Strength

“In a very real sense he has laid hold of a source of strength which in one way or another, he had hitherto denied himself.” (*Twelve and Twelve*, p. 110)

Lack of power, that has been my dilemma. Not only am I powerless over lust, I am powerless over everything else.

The things that have given me the most problems over the last few years of my recovery have been my income, the behavior of other people around me (especially my family members, people I interact with in my work, and other SA members), and my health. The struggle to keep things going, according to my plans, has ended each time with my defeat because I lacked the required power.

Where do I go from there? There is only one place –the surrender of Step One. I take the problem to the God of my understanding, who lovingly lifts it from my shoulders and reminds me that the challenge for me in this life is to have faith –faith in His love for me and in His plans for my joy, happiness, and abundance.

And as I look back, I see that He has kept His promise. The money I’ve needed has always been there (and no more!) My work has prospered. I was convinced that my sister was headed for disaster, but it never happened. The SA meetings, the intergroup, and the fellowship at large are all doing great.

*Prayer:* Beloved Higher Power, please let me remember that I am but a small part of the universal plan and that You are the Master of it all. Help me to be willing today to surrender all my fears and doubts to You, and to have faith in Your absolute love for me and Your wonderful plans for my life.

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 repair all flaws.

Please send any contributions by e-mail to [saico@sa.org](mailto: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

## 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 seat 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.

## MEDITATIONS

### Take the Next Right Action

My thinking is often confused when I get a lust hit. My fantasy goes on overdrive and I imagine several scenarios that seem very real and possible. Much of this is triggered and supported by emotions that make the fantasies appear reasonable: "Of course she wants me to stop my car, go over and hug her!"

At the moment, in my lust, I don't see the absurdity in my fantasies. Only when I am away from the triggers can I see the fallacy in my fantasies, and my craziness.

The solution I have found is to not think, but rather to ask, "What is the next right action I should take?" Oddly, the next right action is always very clear to me —call my sponsor, get out of there, get busy with something else, move to where I cannot see the trigger, etc.

Asking myself "What is the next right action?" removes me from fantasy and puts me back in reality. It has often saved my sobriety and my life.

"Lord, help me to remember to ask for and to take the next right action."

### Strange Mental Blank Spots

When it comes to recovery, I have a learning disability. If I don't hear program truths coming out of my own mouth and the mouths of others, I tend to forget what I've already learned. More than once, I've gone through a period of struggling, only to find the solution at a meeting—a solution I'd already known but had somehow forgotten. I've found myself telling things to sponsees that I needed to hear myself. Going to meetings and working with others has been crucial to overcoming these "strange mental blank spots" (*Alcoholics Anonymous*, p. 42) that are a part of my sexaholic mind

# MEDITATIONS

## I Have No Control Over My Dreams

In early recovery, sexual dreams were a new and scary experience. Prior to sobriety, I had only experienced one “wet dream”. It occurred early in what turned out to be eleven and half years of celibacy. The only SA program literature available at the time seemed to indicate that these dreams were a loss of sobriety, so I re-set my sobriety date each time one occurred. I also began to keep a dream diary each morning and rejoiced when I could record “clean”.

This went on for over two years until someone suggested that instead of being a part of my disease, perhaps these dreams were a sign of my recovery. The relief was overwhelming. I realized that while I hadn’t worked a perfect program, in my conscious state I had been sober for over two years! I let go of trying to control my unconscious state and continued to talk about my sexual dreams at meetings and with my sponsor when they occurred.

“God, if I am supposed to learn something from my dreams, please make it clear to me.”

## The Truth Shall Set You Free.

Being rigorously honest has meant that I am truthful to myself about what I am thinking and feeling. I have a large capacity for self-deception. For instance, I was a very angry person but did not realize it. I had fears that controlled many of my actions. But if anyone had asked me if I was fearful, I would have said “no”, believing that to be an honest answer. It took me a long time to realize just how much I was trying to manage and control my life; at the same time I believed I was surrendering control to my higher power.

In each of these cases, I experienced freedom once I got honest with myself. My actions are no longer dictated by anger and fear. I have begun learning how to truly surrender control of my life to my higher power, and I no longer have to work so hard at managing everything. I am free.

The group is still small but holding on. We have a committed core. We would appreciate referrals of potential members in the area.

### Rochester, MN

We receive on average five emails per month, which compares well with our phone and PO Box service. Perhaps our own website would give us a boost.

### Ireland

The group is doing well. There are at least five strong meetings a week. Intergroup meets most months. We hosted a statewide retreat in August. We are currently working on outreach ideas. This Fall we plan to get a Yellow Pages ad to make us easier to find. We did a mailing this past Spring to the therapist community. We plan to ask the local events weekly for a weekly classified ad.

### Albuquerque

The group is doing so-so. We have very few members here, and sometimes there is only one of us in the meeting room. Still, the group is alive. The Japanese-speaking group is bigger and stronger.

### SA Tokyo

We did a “Pass the Message” thing, sending brochures and a cover letter to about a dozen local therapists who specialize in our issues. Five folks came to a meeting; four are still attending.

Our Monday night Harrisburg meeting will be three years old in October. We started with five people, some of us transplants from Downingtown PA. We have had a slow but encouraging growth, first adding a Thursday night meeting and then, most recently, a Wednesday lunch meeting. Attendance on Mondays run six to twelve people; Wednesdays, three to seven, and Thursdays, five to eight.

There are about fifteen regular members who attend various combinations of our three meetings (I included Camp Hill since it is right across the river.) A few folks travel between here and York, as well.

We look forward to the next international convention in Philadelphia in July.

We have some members acting as sponsors and we have a core group of sober, active SAs.

### Harrisburg, PA

Our groups are doing well. We have a lot of sobriety. I am taking a six year cake tonight. Another is taking a five year cake. We have two members with over fourteen years; one with eight years, others at nine and six years. The rest are in the six months to three year range. We get a lot of email from members who are traveling and who want to catch a meeting.

### Vancouver, BC Canada

# SAICO NEWS

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

At SAICO, we often ask, "How are things? How is the meeting? What is your group doing?" At times, the news is good. What a great day when we hear of a new group starting or another meeting forming! Sometimes the news is not so good. We don't like to report about meetings closing, but it is a fact of life. Some meetings struggle and do not make it. Good news is to hear that the members make it, even if the meetings fail. A good call is to hear from a member that a new meeting has been started. It is always good to hear from you all. So, keep the contacts coming in—ugly, bad, and good. We love hearing from you. Here is a sample of some recent replies to the question, "What's new with you?":

We are growing in San Francisco. We meet after the Thursday meeting for fellowship. Monday and Tuesday noon meetings are growing, and we just started a Wednesday night meeting as well.

**San Francisco, CA**

The Pittsburgh area intergroup collected over a hundred names of area counselors and sent them a letter telling them about SA. One of our recent projects was painting the meeting

room (the kitchen) at the local church building where we meet.

**SAIG Pittsburgh**

We are in the process of setting up a website. More on that later. Our New Freedom book study meeting is doing great!

**Springfield, MO**

Our group is growing, and we'll hopefully be able to add a new meeting or two soon.

**Dallas, TX**

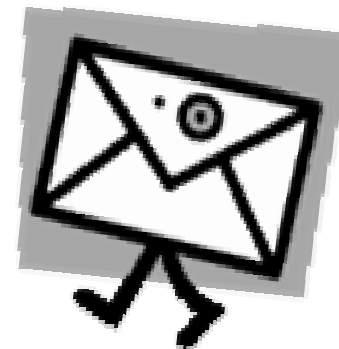
I am new to this group and volunteered to monitor e-mail. The group is very small, only four members that I know of. So, I would say the group is surviving, but not thriving.

**Madison, WI**

Some of us went to Asheville, NC for the Spring Mountain Retreat. We came back saying, "That was great!" Then, we asked, "Why don't we have a retreat like that in Atlanta?" So, we organized a committee, and we will be letting you know when and where.

**Atlanta, GA**

We received some inquiries and have responded, but the people have not come to us. **SA Guatemala**



## Letters, We Get Letters

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

**Max P., Valparaiso, IN**

This is a real lifeline for me. I love the stories and practical steps to try on my own here.

**James H., Altamonte Springs, FL**

Great work! I need it.

**Vaughn W., BC Canada**

Should be available to every group and newcomer! This is a great publication and reference.

**Tim P., CA**

An excellent communication tool, a great help to the SA recovery program.

**Bernard D., SK Canada**

Wonderful! Keep up the good work.

**David S., ON Canada**

## New Groups

### USA

Cedar Rapids, IA  
Garden City, MI  
Longview, WA  
Eau Claire, WI  
Falling Waters, WV

Additional meeting  
Portland, OR  
Greenville, SC

### NEW ZEALAND

Auckland

### SCOTLAND

Dunblane

### SPAIN

Sabadell

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

saico@sa.org  
866/434-8777

# Rule 62

## 7 1/2 Step Prayer

My Creator,  
 I am now willing  
 that you should have some of me,  
 as I see fit.  
 I pray that you *now*  
 remove from me  
 every single defect of character  
 which stands in the way  
 of my doing whatever I want.  
 Grant me strength,  
 as I go out from here,  
 to achieve all my goals.  
 My will be done.  
 Amen

### *Thought for the Day*

**There is no problem I have that I cannot make worse  
 by acting out.**

(Not original, but very true)

### 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](mailto: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](mailto:saico@sa.org)

### Current Committee Assignments for Trustees and Delegates

Jerry	Lit, RAC (Regional Alignment Committee), Nominations
BJ	Lit
Dorene	Service Structure, Lit
Jack	Events, Site Selection, Internet,
Maria	International, Finance, Site Selection
Carole	Event Guidelines, Service Structure, Nominations
Tricia	Chair, Board of Trustees
Vron	Chair, General Delegate Assembly, Internet
Betty	Finance,
David	Finance
Jenny	International, RAC, Service Structure
Margot	Literature

Volunteers for service on these Committees may contact SAICO at [saico@sa.org](mailto:saico@sa.org).

# SA Today - July 2004

## A Report from Oklahoma City General Delegate Assembly

The Bylaws for Sexaholics Anonymous were revised and a format adopted by the General Delegate Assembly. They have been sent to our Tennessee lawyer for review. Following final approval, they will be published to the fellowship.

Funding to attend future General Delegate Assemblies for all Delegates from all Regions will be at the same level. This affirmation recognizes that there are now four International Regions that may each send a Delegate. This also provides for those Regions that decide to add another Delegate because of demographics. The funding formula is available from SAICO.

Work will begin immediately on the SA Service Manual by the Service Structure Committee. This manual will be helpful to groups and regions as they set up their own service structures.

The SA web site will provide a public information service by listing web site addresses to S-Anon, SAA, SLAA, SRA, and SCA. An appropriate disclaimer will be added respecting Tradition Six.

SAICO will establish a toll free phone number for inquiries and order entry. The new number is 866/424-8777.

Finances have greatly improved through April. If donations continue at the present rate, the fellowship will no longer be operating at a deficit by the end of 2004.

New literature has been added, Practical Recovery Tools 1994 – 2003, which is available from SAICO and at the SAICO online Store at [www.sa.org](http://www.sa.org).

Flyers describing service work in international committees, as a General Assembly Delegate, and as a Trustee will be available from SAICO.

Tricia S., Dorene S., Carole L., Maria G., and Jenny M. were affirmed for another year of service as Trustees. There are still Trustee vacancies to fill.

## Thanksgiving

*O God, I ask Your help Divine  
Whenever I must go online.  
I tell myself that I love art,  
Their sculpted forms; my heavy heart.*

*As I get lost in cyberspace  
And go from face to nameless face,  
Beyond each image, there's a life...  
There's someone's husband, someone's wife.*

*Perhaps a son or daughter, too  
God, if their families only knew!  
As I'm drawn in to surf the net,  
It's all too easy to forget.*

*The way my actions take their toll.  
They slowly work to kill my soul.  
Its essence surely must erode  
With every image I download.*

*Please rescue me from what I do.  
Please help me want to stop it, too.  
Obsession lifted, I'll stand free  
Surrendering my will to Thee.*

[written in thanksgiving to God for one year of sobriety -- June 2, 2004]

**Bernadette (NJ)**

## PRACTICAL TOOLS FOR RECOVERY

### STEP ONE EXERCISE

**We admitted we were powerless over lust—that our lives had become unmanageable.**

The following is an exercise that I have found helpful for getting a sponsee started on working Step One:

The sponsee is directed to take key words from the text of Step One and write out the dictionary meaning for each of the words:

“We admitted we were powerless over lust —that our lives had become unmanageable.”

Then I and the sponsee sit down to look over the results of this assignment: a sheet full of definitions, and circle the ones that seemed most applicable. The list looks something like this:

Admit: to allow to enter; grant or afford entrance to, to let in, to leave room for or permit; *to concede* or grant, *to acknowledge* or avow, *to confess*.

Powerless: unable to produce an effort, ineffective, completely lacking power to act, without authority, *helpless, incapable*.

Lust: For this exercise, the sponsee is asked to use the SA Big Book definition of “an attitude demanding that a natural instinct serve unnatural desires” (p. 40)

Lives: the state in which animals and plants exist which distinguishes them from inorganic substances; that vital state, the loss of which means death; the period of animate existence from birth until death, or a part or specific aspect of it, energy and animation; possessing life; living; alive; *human existence or affairs*.

Unmanageable: *uncontrollable*; incapable of being managed – which is to direct or conduct the affairs or interests of; to cause to do ones bidding.

I point out that while there is much room for debate over just what we mean by “our lives,” most people would agree that it encompasses **our thoughts, feelings and actions**.

The sponsee is next asked to write a short list of the acting-out behaviors or triggers that brought him to the program. One list of behaviors looked like this:

Masturbation  
Internet chat rooms  
Internet images  
Objectification of women and girls  
Pornographic images and videos  
Triggering non-pornographic images

Drawing from these results, we write out the sponsee’s own version of Step One and read it aloud:

“I concede that I am completely incapable of handling masturbation, internet images, chat rooms, objectification and pornography, and that I have lost control over my thoughts, feelings and actions.”

The sponsee is then directed to keep his personal Step One on hand and in mind, and to begin writing his formal First Step story.

“It works if you WORK it!” After many meetings I hear this chant. The question is HOW? Exactly, how do you work it? These articles in Practical Recovery Tools are meant to answer that question and they are written by *you*, the fellowship. So, how did you work it? Please share with the fellowship through *Essay*. Help someone else move from thinking about recovery to action.

Send your thoughts, suggestions, exercises, tools, and experience to:  
SAICO, PO Box 3565, Brentwood TN 37024-3565

E-files accepted at [saico@sa.org](mailto:saico@sa.org).