

ESSAY®

A Quarterly Publication of Sexaholics Anonymous, Incorporated

Sexaholic at Ten Years Old

I believe I was a sexaholic at ten years old. I remember at that age undressing the girls in my classroom with my eyes. In my mind the girls were nothing more than robots.

I was thirteen years old when I masturbated for the first time, while fantasizing about the girls in my classroom. That was the ultimate in pleasure for me, which I tried to do again as often as possible.

In my early teens, I put on my mother's or sister's clothes a few times. I felt that I was hurting or getting even with them. The thought of putting on their clothes drove me crazy, but when I did it I felt like a fool and took them off immediately. When I took off their clothes, I urinated and defecated and otherwise desecrated them.

I was a quiet, shy boy with very few friends. I felt that I was not as good as

the other kids because I had no father and we were very poor (we were on welfare.) I did not go out on dates with girls in my teens. That contributed to my feelings of being less adequate than other boys. All I did was fantasize and masturbate. To this day I have never had sex with anyone except myself.

When I was twenty years old, I started going to porno movies. When the other men at work would talk about their sex relations with their girlfriends, I was able to be part of the conversation by talking about porno movies. I usually stayed in the porno movie about thirty minutes. I would become angry and leave because I knew that real women are not like that. I did not approve of the men who were in the movies. They were doing what I wanted to do with women. Since I thought of myself as dirt, I considered the men in the porno movies as dirt also. As angry as I was about being

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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 story about how changing oneself affects every other relationship, some thoughtful short essays by members, and a list of topics for the Meditations book for SA that is in process. 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; the group rate is \$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
March 2005

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in the theater, a week or two later I would go back to see another movie. I did not realize that I was addicted.

At this point I started buying cheap porno newspapers. I would buy one, take it home, look through the pages, masturbate, rip up the paper, and throw it away. A few days later I would buy another paper. I did this for about two months, never understanding why I was buying a paper only to rip it up and throw it away.

Eventually I found a paper that kept my interest. It was about transvestites. I decided, "This is what I want to do." I bought women's clothing and other items I felt I needed to make the fantasy real. I waited until my family went away on vacation. I told them that I had to work and could not join them. When they were gone from the house, I took out the women's clothes from the closet. Pulling some items out of the bag, I looked at them, called myself an idiot, and threw it all away. The very next day I wished I still had the women's clothing. I did not understand—why did I still want it?

When I finally went to my first SA meeting, I heard a piece of myself in the other people who shared. I could hardly believe that there were other people who thought like I did.

The next year I gave my First Step inventory. After I gave my inventory, people came up to me to share their similarities with my story. I did not get a sponsor and I rarely called anyone. After meetings I felt that I did not belong and

did not join in any fellowship. I did not become sober. I continued to fantasize and masturbate daily. While I preferred to fantasize about women, I also fantasized about men, children, and animals.

A few days before Memorial Day, I was at a meeting and someone asked me how I was doing. Usually I would answer that everything was okay, but this time I said I wasn't doing so well. I told him a little bit about my problems. For me, that was my real First Step. I became sober over that weekend. In the beginning I was only physically sober. I was not fantasizing or masturbating.

After a few weeks of sobriety, I wondered why I was not acting out. I still wanted to act out, but I was not doing it. My opinion was that my Higher Power was stopping me, and that I was listening to my Higher Power. That was my Second Step. When I saw an attractive woman, my head would immediately turn in the opposite direction. I believed that my Higher Power was turning my head away, because I still wanted to look. At that point I adopted the phrase "Higher Power Is Keeping Me Sexually Sober."

I was sober about two months when I became very angry. I argued that I just wanted to look at the women, nothing else. I started pounding my fist against my knee saying, "Why can't I just look?" I heard God's voice, "You just can't." I accepted that answer and remained sober. That was my Third Step.

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I was sober about one year before I summoned enough nerve to ask someone to be my sponsor. He was really busy but he accepted me as a sponsee because he realized that it took a lot of effort on my part to ask. I called him on the phone about once a month. He never asked me to do anything—like work the Steps.

I was sober about two and a half years when someone offered to find a Step sponsor for me. My new sponsor was like a drill sergeant. He pushed me to work the Steps. He gave me one week to do my Fourth Step. It took me two weeks to do it and then I gave him my Fifth Step. He asked me to make three program phone calls a day, which I did. I experienced a great deal of growth with that sponsor.

At a meeting when I shared, no one could question me. When I called people on the phone, they would ask me questions. When they questioned me, it forced me to think. I started to understand what was wrong with me.

As I started to understand myself, I started to become emotionally sober. At that point I started to work the Steps in my daily routine. I hardly ever talked to my cousins, because I felt ashamed of my life. Making program phone calls made it easier to call my cousins. When I wasn't sober, I ran away or avoided problems and responsibility. When I started to grow, I grudgingly accepted my shortcomings and started to deal with them more positively.

I became involved with my intergroup and would accept responsibilities such as planning a holiday party or the one-day conference. I needed people to help; I needed them to help me. It took a lot of crying to my sponsor for me to accept that the help will come, but not necessarily at the moment I want it.

Doing service in SA has enabled me to volunteer at work when we have our annual holiday party. Where I attend religious services, I help out by handing out books, and preparing meals for some of the ceremonies.

One of the nicest gifts of the program is that I can finally accept a compliment. In the past if someone in my neighborhood mentioned that I was a nice man and would make a good husband, I would wonder how she could possibly see anything good in me. I would become angry and depressed about what she had said to me. All I would think about was all the little things I do wrong.

I answered a personal ad and it was someone I had gone on a date with once. She was in another Twelve-Step program and knew I was in SA. She was not interested in me. She was looking for someone who could meet her exact specifications. When I told my sister that this woman was not interested in me, my sister answered, "She's passing up someone good." I could accept what she said as a compliment and agree that I have changed for the better.

Pioneers and Settlers

In a recent counseling session, I heard the well-worn phrase, “There are two types of people in this world...” Immediately I started guessing what my counselor was going to say. Men and women? Bright and stupid? Addicts and co-dependants?

We had been talking about my apprehensions in helping to start a new SA group in our city. I had been part of another Twelve Step sex addiction group for over a year. However, I had been exposed to SA through a couple of regional retreats, visits to an SA group in another state, reading the “White Book” and other materials, and participation in the Daytona convention. In addition, my wife had become an active member of S-Anon. I had gained a great appreciation for the contribution it made to our recovery as a couple. So when another member asked me if I would consider helping to start an SA group (he had been active in SA in the D.C. area), I told him I was “very interested.”

Then I started having all kinds of self-doubts and fears about trying to start a new group. What if we messed it up? What if nobody wanted to join us? What if a woman came? What if the media got interested in our group and did some sort of undercover story on us? And so on . . .

My counselor (wisely) didn’t try to answer all my ‘questions.’ Instead, he simply said, “There are two types of people in this world: PIONEERS and SETTLERS.” In the pause that followed, I ‘heard’ him asking the logical follow up question: which are you?

I quickly realized that I’ve always been a SETTLER. I like to come into an existing situation and help it become stronger and better. I’d like to think that I’ve had at least a little to do with our existing group doubling in size in the year since I became part of it. I’ve even become the meeting leader! But somebody ELSE sat in that room alone for weeks, several years ago, before anyone started coming to the meeting. Somebody ELSE went to all the trouble of setting up a voice-mail, sending out information to counselors and churches, finding a meeting place, making sure the lights were on, placing notices in the paper, etc. I just came along later and got on the bandwagon and helped grease the wheels a little.

I’m a government worker, used to a regular salary, paid vacation and sick leave, plenty of holidays, and all of the equipment I need provided by somebody ELSE. I would never think seriously about starting my own business or working on a commission-only basis. I’m just not a ‘starter.’

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No wonder I had all kinds of fears about starting a new group, even though I had no reservations about the need for it. I just wanted somebody ELSE to get it going and let me come in later and make it better. What grandiosity!

My counselor never had to verbalize that other question: which are you? I started asking it of myself, and decided that at 60 years old I wanted to quit being just another SETTLER (as important as they are) and try being a PIONEER for once. The thought energized and inspired me to the point that I called the other guy and asked him, "When do we start?"

Well, we started February 7 with five people, and had a great meeting. I was so excited afterward that I got up at 4:00 AM the next morning and emailed SAICO, other regional groups, and anybody else I could safely think of. As far as I'm concerned, the future prospects for the group are unlimited and I have discovered a new identity in my life: me, the PIONEER!

Art S., Columbia, SC

Promptly

Why do I do things the hard way? For example, the other day I was lying awake in bed and kept slipping into a sexually explicit fantasy. I would catch myself, stop, pray, find myself slipping back into it again, catch myself, stop,

pray, and so on. Finally I got out of bed, but only after quite a bit of struggle to keep out of the fantasy. I called one other sexaholic and got his machine, but by that time I was okay, and decided it wasn't necessary to try harder to connect (also it was fairly late at night, and I didn't want to "bother" anyone).

As I was thinking about this today, about whether I should speak with another sexaholic to purge this fantasy out of my system, I remembered the words of my sponsor, who quotes his sponsor: "Step Ten says PROMPTLY. When you are struggling, *promptly* call another sexaholic."

Then I thought about my situation. There I was, in bed, with my phone less than a foot away from my head, struggling with this fantasy all by myself. Duh! All I needed to do was pick up the phone and "promptly" call someone in SA. I have a list of people I can call late at night, and they've given me permission. So why didn't I do it?

Simply enough, I forgot. Sexaholism is a forgetting disease. By writing this message (and talking about "promptly" at meetings and with others), I can help myself remember. Next time I'm struggling with a fantasy, call a sexaholic. It's really that simple, but I have a habit of making it difficult. Progress, not perfection.

Chad C., Denver, CO.

Acceptance

There is a good story in the AA Big Book, called *Acceptance was the Answer*. The author writes, “At last, acceptance proved to be the key to my drinking problems,” and goes on to say, “And acceptance is the answer to *all* my problems today.”

My sponsor introduced me to this passage fairly early in my Step work. If I cannot accept life as it is, good and bad alike, then I am basically saying that God is not running the universe in a manner that suits me. When I get caught up in how I want things to be, I have moved away from God's will and toward self-will. And self-will is the sunblock of the Spirit, causing me to lose my daily reprieve from sexaholism.

My sponsor also introduced me to the concept that whatever happens to me is God's will, even when it doesn't seem that way. For example, I had a horrible marriage that ended quickly. Afterwards I remember telling a therapist there was *no way* that it had been God's will for me to enter that marriage. Yet years later, I realized I needed that horrible experience in order to learn how unmanageable my life was. It was only after I got divorced that I began to take recovery seriously. Was it God's desire to have me suffer through those two years? No. Was it God's will? Yes. That was the only way I could learn what I needed to know. God let me go through hell for two years, and then when I had done enough “research,” I was removed from the marriage (and divorced) against my will.

I had another, less dramatic, example. I decided to go back to college, and I made a special trip to campus to get my new ID. When I arrived, I found the office had closed earlier than usual. My first response was to get angry. I was upset because it was not easy for me to make it to campus during business hours, and I'd put in a good bit of effort to get there. Now I would have to do it again! A few days later, I returned and was able to get my ID. On the way out, I walked past a table where a job recruiter was sitting.

Two and a half years later, I am still working with that company, grateful for the good job and benefits that I have. If the office had been open when I first visited, I would not be with my current employer. In my limited view of the world, I got angry and upset because things were not happening the way I wanted. Yet, in hindsight, everything was going according to God's plan. I could have saved myself quite a bit of agitation if I'd been able to simply accept the closed office as a part of God's master plan for me.

In *Acceptance was the Answer*, the author writes, “...and I can find no serenity until I accept that person, place, thing, or situation as being exactly the way it is supposed to be at this moment.” This has been my experience as well.

Chad C., Denver CO

MEDITATIONS

Isolation Kills

In my addiction, I isolated. No real friends. No real connections.

Today must be different. Today, I will commit to my program. I will register and attend a Marathon or a conference. At the event, I will connect with others who have had absolute miracles occur in their lives. I will come to believe that there is a power greater than them. That same power is available to me and wants to save me from my sexaholic obsessions and delusional thinking. God saves us all. The Twelve Step programs are God-given. God does not want me to suffer further. I will go towards the light.

Today, I will fill out a registration and mail it in for an upcoming SA event. I will get real friends from local meetings to carpool with me. I will announce at my local meetings that I am going, and looking to carpool to help others and to further cement my commitment. I will make extra registration forms for my local meetings. I will receive by giving to others.

God, thank you for showing me others who have succeeded. Please bless them with continual sobriety. Please help me be a part of—not apart from. God, thank you for giving me hope and a plan

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, 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

MEDITATIONS

Euphoric Recall

Some sexaholics say they had euphoric recall—making it sound pleasant. Today, I realize it is addictive craving and delusional thinking.

What brought me to SA? I was dating a 22 year-old paroled heroin addict, high-school drop-out, a victim of child molestation. I am a 44 year-old college graduate, a manager. While in therapy, and after no contact with the 22 year-old, I shared with my therapist that I was having “euphoric recall” and wanted to contact her. The psychiatrist immediately said, “That is delusional thinking and addictive craving,” writing it in my file.

Saying euphoric recall now is candy coating. If I have lust dreams, I call them drug dreams. If I have thoughts of contacting prior lovers or lust objects, I call it addictive cravings and delusional thinking. I thank God that I am aware.

God, thank You for letting me live in this century with 12 Step groups, therapy, and medication. Help me to be open to all the available tools of recovery.

Wanted

Members who meditate and write about it
Topics needed for the SA Meditation Book

anger, depression, easy does it,
ego, fear, powerlessness,
principles vs. personalities,
the promises, amends, selfishness,
self-pity, guilt, remorse,
honesty, live and let live, open-mindedness,
service, tolerance, willingness.

Take care, Jerry L., Sponsoring Editor

MEDITATIONS

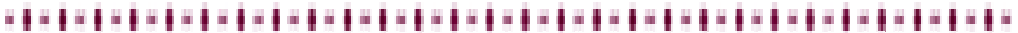
Twelve Rewards

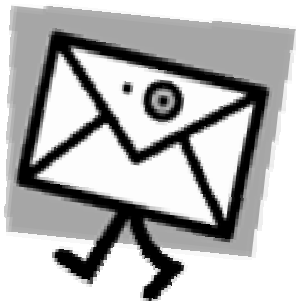
Why am I here?

Dear God, help me find these twelve rewards:

1. God, show me hope instead of desperation.
2. God, give me faith instead of despair.
3. God, grant me courage instead of fear.
4. God, bless me with peace of mind instead of sexaholic confusion and delusion.
5. God, let me earn self-respect instead of self-contempt.
6. God, build my self-confidence, eliminating my helplessness.
7. God, let me win the respect of others instead of their pity and contempt.
8. God, thank You for a clear conscience instead of a sense of guilt.
9. God, direct me to real friendships in SA instead of isolation and loneliness in my disease.
10. God, thank You for directing me to a clean pattern of life instead of a purposeless existence.
11. God, bless me with the love and understanding of my family instead of their doubts and fears.
12. God, thank You for SA and the opportunity of a happy life instead of the bondage of a sexaholic obsession.

God, thank You for these blessings and for real friends, as I trudge the road of happy destiny.





Letters, We Get Letters

We are grateful to SAICO for your support to our world-wide fellowship, and we are privileged to contribute to your efforts. Most of our group projects are coordinated with our Intergroup: Fall marathons, Spring retreats, Pass-the-Message Committee, Phone Committee (now with email, too), among others. Our Pass-the-Message outreach has been very successful in local and campus health clinics and area chapters of the employee assistance professionals, including those for federal government employees.

Moreover, we are convening our first open meeting to further spread the word among health professionals and other interested parties. Many of us in this area were referred to recovery programs by such professionals.

Our group receives new members about every other week, and we have created the service position of official “Greeter” to help the newcomers meet other members.

George C., Crystal City, VA

New Groups

USA

Columbia, SC*
Mankato, MN
Memphis, TN
Nampa, ID
New Castle, PA
W Springfield, MA

CANADA

Kelowna BC

MEXICO

Tijuana

We love hearing about your new groups and additional meetings in your local area. Please drop a note to:

SAICO
PO Box 3565
Brentwood TN 37024-3565
USA

saico@sa.org
615/370-6062
866/424-8777

*see related story p. 5



Step Ten Every Day



Every morning while the water is heating for my coffee, I write in the notebook I always carry in my pocket. This is in the form of a personal letter to God on the following topics: my feelings, how I am doing, and what I am harboring.

I pour out the truth on these matters, getting right to the point, and just letting the feelings flow. It can be as little as one page or as many as four pages. It's these feelings and issues that I bring to God in my quiet time before work—either during my train/shuttle bus commute, or lying on a mat on the floor of my office at work.

A couple of hours later, I read it to my sponsor, who gives me his two cents on it. Then he shares with me what is going on in his life, any writings he has done that morning, and what he has taken from his quiet time. This spiritual exercise has allowed us both to be accountable for our feelings and actions, and to develop a healthy and supportive friendship. I often also read my little journal entry to anyone else in the program I talk to that day.

Once a month, I reread what I have written in my journal since the last month. This allows me to see patterns developing that I may need to take action on. There have been times when, though I thought I was doing well in my recovery, my journal showed me that I was taking daily lust hits on the commuter train, shuttle bus, and cafeteria at work. I had thought I was only allowing an occasional glance or thought, but my journal showed me the much greater extent of my laxness.

These realizations scare me enough to work and pray to shore up the holes in my program. This is my way of daily admitting to God, to myself, and to another human being the exact nature of my gratitude, hopes, fears, and wrongs. It has been very good for me because it helps me to be honest with God, with other people, and with myself.

Alex R., San Diego, CA



Addicted to an Attitude

“...lust—an attitude demanding that a natural instinct serve unnatural desires.”

Sexaholics Anonymous, p. 40

I am addicted to an attitude. This is very different than being hooked on something that is outside my body, like drugs or alcohol. I am powerless over an attitude that involves instincts other than my sexual instinct. I can abuse my instinct to eat, and indulge in over-eating. I can abuse my instinct to be social, and try to become a “people pleaser.” I use relationships to try to take what is lacking in me. My sexual instinct is certainly the one I have abused the most, and that is the reason why I identify with our program.

I believe my instincts are God-given and therefore good. It is difficult, maybe impossible, for me to decide by myself when the natural becomes unnatural. That is one reason why I need the help of my Higher Power and the help of the group to find and restore the balance to my life. I am extremely grateful for our program, because without it I would still be in the fog of my addiction, lost in the bondage of self.

Anonymous

To Forget Is To Die

“Today I must be aware of my sexaholism. I cannot afford to believe that I have gained control of my lusting—or again I will think I have gained control of my life. Such a feeling of control is fatal to my recovery.”

Daily Reflections, (Jan 18th), modified for sexaholism

I don't just have a problem with sex—I have a problem with life. And whenever I forget this fact and begin thinking I've gained control of my life, that is when I am without defense against the first drink of lust. There is this thing between my ears that is called a forgetter. Sexaholism is a forgetting disease. It's almost like I have a learning disability in this one area, and if I don't repeatedly hear the truth coming out of my own mouth and out of the mouths of others, then I forget. This is one reason why it's so important for me to go to meetings and talk on the phone with other addicts. To forget is to die.

Anonymous

PRACTICAL TOOLS FOR RECOVERY

Suggestions for Working Step Three

When I first read this Step in the “White Book” I thought it was the simplest of the Twelve. After all, it’s only a “decision.” I figured the Step would take me all of five minutes, mirroring the experience described in the personal story “Flooded with Feeling” in *Alcoholics Anonymous*. When I said my “Third Step Prayer,” however, nothing transformational seemed to happen. So I went to my sponsor. He suggested that, just like making other significant life decisions, perhaps deciding to turn my will and life over to God’s care is more of a process than a one-time event.

I thought about his suggestion and, despite my desire to be like others who have apparently brief (yet transformational) Third Step experiences, endeavored to work the Third until it sunk in. From that experience, from later experiences working the Steps again, and from various AA and SA literature sources, I’ve found that an effective approach to Step Three involves *prayer*, *writing*, and *concrete action*.

Prayer. Prayer seems to be the most popular activity for folks working the Third Step. It is certainly a good idea to pray the “Third Step Prayer” found in the AA Big Book and the White Book. Additionally, I have found a “Submission Prayer” to be helpful:

Higher Power, I give this day to you.
Establish the work of my hands,
the steps of my feet,
the words of my mouth,
the direction of my gaze,
the thoughts of my mind,
and the attitude of my heart.

After finishing these two prayers, I like to spend time praying in my own words. Sometimes I focus on a particular aspect of those prayers; sometimes I thank God that this program is actually working; sometimes I pray for the willingness to surrender, because I am full of doubt.

I have found it works best to say these prayers in the morning. I usually set aside 30 minutes. It also helps to say a quick prayer of surrender at noon, even if it is silently at work or at lunch. At night I try to pray for surrender but, to be honest, I normally surrender to the “sleep god” before I connect to the God of my understanding. I do my best and that has always proven sufficient, for my Higher Power does the rest.

Writing. At the beginning of working a Third Step it is helpful to sit down and write about my feelings toward, and thoughts about, working this Step. Am I looking forward to it or am I dreading it? What do I hope happens? What am I afraid might happen? And now to the heart of the matter: do I really want to turn my will over to God? Do I trust God enough to turn over my life to His care?

In writing out responses to these questions, I discover areas of my life which I am willing to turn over to God’s care so long as he cares for them in the exact manner I want him to. Sometimes I find areas of my life which I intend to withhold from God’s care altogether. These are usually areas too important to let go of, needing my control to ensure they don’t get screwed up. If I keep writing, of course, I soon discover what an amazingly inept job I’ve done managing these critical areas myself. If I’m rigorously honest, I can even admit that God can probably do a little bit better than me.

If, however, I get bogged down and am unable to move to a position of sincere willingness, it’s not the end of the world or of my recovery; rather, it’s just an indication that I have more work to do on the earlier Steps. When my God is not trustworthy or capable, I return to Step Two. When my ego will not relinquish certain aspects of my life to God’s care, I return to Step One. Eventually, I get to a point where I am genuinely willing to “let go and let God,” and not only do my prayers and writing communicate that, but my actions do as well.

Concrete action. We’ve all heard it said that “actions speak louder than words.” I’ve found this especially true when praying to my Higher Power. Namely, mere words avail little or nothing, whereas honest effort yields results well beyond anything I am naturally capable of. With this in mind, let us examine how to communicate to God *through action* that “I want You to run the show.”

When I was finally serious about turning my will over to my Higher Power’s care, I got a sponsor. A sponsor is a higher power in the sense that (s)he has a greater degree of sanity, sobriety, peace, and wisdom than me. My attempts to work the program without a sponsor contradict the principle of the Third Step, and stem directly from my prideful self-sufficiency. Getting a sponsor demonstrated to me, and presumably to my

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Higher Power, that I was gaining sincerity and willingness to work this program of recovery.

After finally finding a qualified and available sponsor (admittedly a challenge in our fellowship, but who hasn't hurdled taller obstacles blocking the road to acting out?), the next concrete Third Step action I took was to heed my sponsor's advice. The "self searching and leveling of pride" I experienced in the First Step made advice-taking possible. There I found my first piece of evidence that something truly supernatural was happening, because deference did not come naturally to someone as impressed with himself as I was.

I crossed another milestone on the Third Step journey when I finally set up renewal partners for each morning of the week. The format varied with each partner, but the common denominator is that we committed to turning our wills and the care of our lives over to God for the day. Over time, I became close with most of my partners and developed a network of program friends with whom I could share anything. Along with my sponsor, this network created a prerequisite condition for consummation of my Third Step which can best be described as *unfettered access to honesty*.

I wholeheartedly agree with the notion that "we're as sick as our secrets." After all, how can I be willing to turn over my life to God's care if I keep parts of it hidden? On the other hand, complete openness and full disclosure of not only my past, but my *current, secret*, plans as well, eliminates that final Third Step barrier: reservation.

In sharing all and leaving no stone unturned, I exorcised unwillingness and, in a truly concrete way, I let go. I abandoned myself to God and reached the point of genuine willingness. Then in an unexpected moment, I too felt the joy of surrender in much the same way as the AA writer describes in "Flooded with Feeling."

Charlie S, Boston, MA

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

With anticipation and thanks, The *Essay* Committee

“We also see that lust is the driving force behind our sexual acting out, and true sobriety includes progressive victory over lust.”
Sexaholics Anonymous

Test Yourself for Lust

1. Is lust controlling you?
2. Are you still trying to stop or limit your bouts with lust?
3. Do you resort to lust to escape, relieve anxiety, or because you can't cope?
4. Do you feel guilt, remorse or depression afterward?
5. Is your lust interfering in relations with your spouse?
6. Does lust make you careless for yourself or the welfare of your family or others?
7. Has your effectiveness or concentration decreased because of lust?

General Delegate Assembly

Region	Delegate	Alternate
Southwest Region	Jerry L.	David S.
Northwest Region	Bob M.	
South Midwest Region	Jack F.	BJ M.
North Midwest Region	Vron J.	To be determined
Southeast Region	David A.	Chuck P.
MidAtlantic Region	Brian S.	Larry H.
Northeast Region	Margot C.	Dianne B.
International	Dara M.	SA UK / Eire

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	Literature, RAC (Regional Alignment Committee), Nominations
Dorene	Service Structure, Literature
Jack	Site Selection, Internet, Nominations
Maria	International, Finance, Site Selection
Carole	Service Structure, Nominations
Tricia	Chair, Board of Trustees
Vron	Chair, General Delegate Assembly, Internet
Bob	Finance, Nominations
David	Finance, Nominations
Brian	Service Structure
Jenny	International, RAC, Service Structure
Margot	Literature

Volunteers for service on these Committees may contact SAICO at saico@sa.org.

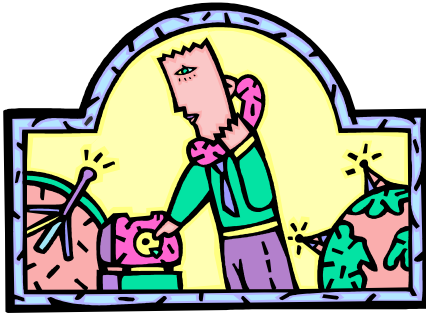
Rule 62

The Twelve Stepromoditions

[An attempt to put together the 12 Steps, Traditions and Promises after the dog ate my Step-work.]

1. For our group purpose, there is but one ultimate authority - a loving God as He may express Himself in press, radio, films and TV.
2. Our leaders are but defects of character-- they had become unmanageable.
3. Made a searching and fearless public controversy of ourselves.
4. Anonymity is the spiritual foundation of all our traditions, ever reminding us to place principles before peace, prayer, personal recovery, primary purpose, public relations policy and persons we had harmed.
5. Were entirely ready to have God remove all these trusted servants.
6. Sought through prayer and meditation to improve our money, property and prestige.
7. Having had a spiritual awakening as a result of interest in selfish things, we tried to carry our leaders far down the scale.
8. Each defect of character should be autonomous, except in matters affecting other shortcomings
9. Every SA group ought to be full, declining outside.
10. Made a list of films to endorse, finance or lend the SA name to.
11. Humbly asked Him to remove Sexaholics Anonymous as a whole.
12. The only requirement for membership is a desire to injure them or others.

Anonymous, Toronto, Canada



Meetings by Phone

Meetings by phone are available.
Call SAICO at 866/424-8777 for information.



Women Helping Women in SA

Women in SA
need your help:

We need women to help newcomer women by becoming phone, mail, & email sponsors.

We are trying to develop a FAQ and other tools to help in this process.

If you can help, send an email to sasandpoint@yahoo.com

Or, call 866-291-0914.

Leave a message with your name, phone number, email, or land mail address with city and state. Please include your sobriety date and your home group.

If you know a woman who needs help, give her the phone number and the email address so that she can contact women in SA.

Calendar of Events

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

April 8 - 10, 2005, Steps retreat, Wyevale, ON, sponsored by SA Toronto, Canada.
Work through the Steps or on your current Step. For information, call
David S. at 416/834-0831 or send email to ddd@reptiles.org

April 15 - 17, 2005, SA / S-Anon Spring Retreat, Kwomais Camp, Surry, BC, Canada,
sponsored by Vancouver, BC Intergroup. Theme: We Admitted That We
Were Powerless” For information call 604/290-9643 or send email to
intergroup@canada.com

April 16, 2005, Fourth Annual Mountain Spring Marathon, Asheville, NC
Theme: Renewing Our Recovery. For info, call John G. at 828/665-4312.

April 30, 2005, Twelfth Annual SA / S-Anon Retreat, Wheeling, WV and Steubenville,
OH SA and S-Anon. For details, call 740/342-0828.

May 13, - 15 2005, 11th annual Spring Men’s Retreat, Big Bear, CA.
Theme: We Agnostics. For information, call 510/273-9878

May 14, 2005, Out of the Darkness Into the Light, Nashville, TN, sponsored by
Nashville Intergroup. For details, call 615/251-7516.

Upcoming International Conventions

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 or check the convention web site at
www.newfreedomconference.org

January 6 - 8, 2006, SA International Convention, Nashville, TN
Theme: To be announced. Information at 615/251-7516.

*[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.]*

Fourth Quarter Donations October - December 2004

CANADA		McLean, VA TH	149.40	Nashville IG	1,400.00
		McLean TH CFC	16.60	Norcross, GA	88.12
Barrie, ON	100.00	McLean TU CFC	27.70	Orlando, FL	23.00
Alberta Retreat, AB	141.89	Northeast OH IG	50.00	Ormond Beach, FL	27.00
Montreal, QC	100.00	Penn Hills Weds, PA	49.62	Owensboro, KY	50.00
Toronto, ON	73.04	Philadelphia, PA RT	70.00	Roswell, GA	195.00
		Pittsburgh Autumn	200.00	Winston-Salem NC	75.00
		Pittsburgh IG CFC	25.00	Winston-Salem CFC	25.00
		Pittsburgh SS, PA	16.00		
Northeast Region		Reston, VA	115.00	North Midwest Region	
Long Island, NY	455.00	Silver Spring, MD	384.60	Arlington Hgts, IL M	240.00
Long Island IG	70.00	Silver Spring CFC	453.10	Arlington Hgts Sat	150.00
Plainview, NY	25.00	Springfield, VA M	27.00	Arlington Hgts Tu	400.00
Queens, NY	40.00	Springfield TH	100.00	Bannockburn, IL	38.00
Queens CFC	40.00	Stratford, NJ	45.00	Bannockburn CFC	25.00
Rochester, NY	303.30	Timonium, MD F	76.29	Chi Pittsfield Tu	40.00
Seaford, NY	150.00	Timonium TU	77.43	Chi Pitts CFC	30.00
		Washington CHUM	85.00	Chi St T Mon	14.00
Mid-Atlantic Region		Wash DC CHUM	41.00	Chi St T M CFC	10.50
Akron, OH Sat	88.00	Washington DC M	75.00	Chi St T Sat	146.00
Adelphia RD, MD	65.00	Washington Noon	150.00	Chi St T Sat CFC	151.25
Annapolis, MD	60.00	Westmont, NJ	45.00	Chi St T Weds	173.00
Baltimore, MD	30.00	Wheeling WV	53.65	Chi St T W CFC	131.00
Bethesda, MD	105.00	Wheeling/Steubenville	60.00	Chi Sw Cov	107.00
Bethesda CFC	35.00	Woodbridge, VA	81.00	Chi Sw Cov CFC	139.00
Brecksville, OH	100.00			Crystal Lake, IL	80.00
Columbus, OH Mon	150.00	Southeast Region		Davenport, IA	100.00
Cranberry Twp, PA	211.82	Altamonte Spgs, FL	6.09	Detroit, MI	430.00
Crystal City, VA	74.00	Atlanta, GA	1082.74	Downers Grove, IL	50.00
Crystal City CFC	18.50	Daytona Beach, FL	23.50	Ferndale, MI	173.00
Eastern PA IG	325.00	Georgia IG	300.00	Madison, WI	50.00
Erie, PA Touchstones	38.00	Georgia IG CFC	100.00	Milwaukee, WI M	100.00
Fairfax, VA	91.80	Greensboro, NC	50.00	Milwaukee Tu&F	200.00
Fairfax CFC	10.20	Greensboro CFC	25.00	Munster, IN	100.00
Falls Church, VA	135.00	Greenville, SC	70.00	Naperville, IL Tu	150.00
Falls Church CFC	45.00	Holly Hill, FL	26.00	Peoria, IL	400.00
Herndon, VA	70.00	Murfreesboro, TN	95.00	Rockford, IL	75.00
Jersey City, NJ	40.00	Nashville 5 PM	15.00	St Cloud, MN	25.00
Mars, PA	89.00				

Fourth Quarter Donations October - December 2004

S Barrington, IL W	200.00	Camarillo, CA	170.00	St Louis, MO IG	250.00
S Barrington CFC W	50.00	Glendora, CA	60.00	Toronto, Canada	382.70
Trenton, MI	460.00	Hacienda Hgts	100.00	Twin Falls, ID	25.00
Twin Cities IG	363.00	Hermosa Bch, CA	100.00	Yakima, WA	10.00
Winfield, IL	135.00	Kapaa, HI	10.00	SA Phone Meetings	58.00
Woodstock, IL	26.00	Laguna Hills, CA	25.00		
		No Cal SA IG	100.00	Individual	335.00
		N Hollywood, CA	200.50		1,789.26
		Oakland, CA	30.00		
South Midwest Region		Palm Desert, CA	125.00	TOTALS	
Albuquerque, NM	350.20	Provo, UT	300.00		
Arvada, CO	35.00	Sacramento, CA IG	600.00	Group Total	19,084.54
Dallas, TX	300.00	San Diego, CA	100.00		
Denver, CO	61.00	San Jose, CA M	43.00	Individual	1,844.39
Ft Collins, CO	30.00	Sandy, UT	50.00		
St Charles, MO	200.00	Sierre Madre, CA	120.00	SACFC Total	1,523.85
St. Louis, MO F	100.00	So Cal Unity Conf	297.00		
St Louis, Sat	20.00	Valencia, CA CFC	30.00	Quarterly Appeal	
St. Louis CFC S	20.00	Walnut Creek, CA	15.00		1,789.26
St Louis IG	819.25	Yorba Linda, CA	70.00		

Northwest Region

Bellevue, WA	71.29
Grants Pass, OR	100.00
Kent, WA	30.00
Kent, WA CFC	20.00
Mill Creek, WA Th	50.00
Portland, OR Sat	147.63
Seattle, WA FTF	216.00
Seattle Mon	53.00
Seattle CFC M	35.00
Tukwila, WA	20.00
Tukwila CFC	20.00
Vancouver, WA	100.10

Southwest Region

Anaheim, CA W	50.00
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International

Madrid, Spain	200.00
UK Intergroup	458.40

Quarterly Appeal

Augusta, GA	45.00
Chatsworth, CA	100.00
Chatsworth CFC	100.00
Chicago St T M	48.00
Chicago St T W	96.00
Chicago Sw Cov	113.00
Englewood, CO	87.56
Inland NW IG	20.00
Lincoln, NE	7.00
Rockland, NY	112.00

2004 was a wonderful year. Donations were up 9.4% overall and represent 79.8% of our income. Remember that donations to SA are tax deductible because we are a 501(C)3 organization. Every donation will be acknowledged with a Donations Receipt. Please make your check out to SA. Send a note with it so that we can give proper credit to your group. Thank you many times over for your generosity. SA International Central Office

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 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 our affairs. |

The Twelve Steps and Traditions are reprinted with permission of Alcoholics Anonymous World Services, Inc. ("A.A.W.S.") Permission to reprint and adapt the Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions does not mean that AAWS has approved the contents of this publication, nor that AAWS agrees with the views expressed herein. AA is a program of recovery from alcoholism only. Use of the Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions in connection with programs which are patterned after AA, but which address other problems, or in any other non-AA context, does not imply otherwise.

The Twelve Traditions of Sexaholics Anonymous

1. Our common welfare should come first; personal recovery depends upon SA unity.
2. For our group purpose there is but one ultimate authority—a loving God as He may express Himself in our group conscience. Our leaders are but trusted servants; they do not govern.
3. The only requirement for membership is a desire to stop lusting and become sexually sober.
4. Each group should be autonomous except in matters affecting other groups or Sexaholics Anonymous as a whole.
5. Each group has but one primary purpose—to carry its message to the sexaholic who still suffers.
6. An SA group ought never endorse, finance, or lend the SA name to any related facility or outside enterprise, lest problems of money, property and prestige divert us from our primary purpose.
7. Every SA group ought to be fully self-supporting, declining outside contributions.
8. Sexaholics Anonymous should remain forever non-professional, but our service centers may employ special workers.
9. SA, as such, ought never be organized; but we may create service boards or committees directly responsible to those they serve.
10. Sexaholics Anonymous has no opinion on outside issues; hence the SA name ought never be drawn into public controversy.
11. Our public relations policy is based on attraction rather than promotion; we need always maintain personal anonymity at the level of press, radio, films, and television.
12. Anonymity is the spiritual foundation of all our Traditions, ever reminding us to place principles before personalities.

The Twelve Traditions of Alcoholics Anonymous

1. Our common welfare should come first; personal recovery depends upon A.A. unity.
2. For our group purpose there is but one ultimate authority—a loving God as He may express himself in our group conscience. Our leaders are but trusted servants; they do not govern.
3. The only requirement for A.A. membership is a desire to stop drinking.
4. Each group should be autonomous, except in matters affecting other groups or A.A. as a whole.
5. Each group has but one primary purpose—to carry its message to the alcoholic who still suffers.
6. An A.A. group ought never endorse, finance, or lend the A.A. name to any related facility or outside enterprise, lest problems of money, property and prestige divert us from our primary purpose.
7. Every A.A. group ought to be fully self-supporting, declining outside contributions.
8. Alcoholics Anonymous should remain forever non-professional, but our service centers may employ special workers.
9. A.A., as such, ought never be organized; but we may create service boards or committees directly responsible to those they serve.
10. Alcoholics Anonymous has no opinion on outside issues; hence the A.A. name ought never be drawn into public controversy.
11. Our public relations policy is based on attraction rather than promotion; we need always maintain personal anonymity at the level of press, radio, and films.
12. Anonymity is the spiritual foundation of all our Traditions, ever reminding us to place principles before personalities.

SA Financial Snapshot 2004

	Budget		Actual
Contributions	88,300.00	Contributions	96,505.59
SACFC	9000.00	SACFC	6,494.66
Conventions	15,000.00	Conventions	15,947.94
Literature Sales	14,000.00	Literature Sales	25,769.40
Interest	1,200.00	Interest	702.57
<i>Essay</i>	<u>5,000.00</u>	<i>Essay</i>	<u>3,521.54</u>
Total Revenues	<u>132,500.00</u>	Total Revenues	<u>148,941.70</u>
Bank Charges	.00	Bank Charges	46.00
Credit Card Fees	800.00	Credit Card Fees	1,349.24
Conference Fees	1,400.00	Conference Fees	2,354.00
Depreciation	1,800.00	Depreciation	1,800.60
Interest Expense	.00	Interest Expense	0.00
Liability Insurance	1,700.00	Liability Insurance	490.00
Legal	100.00	Legal	599.00
Accounting	4,000.00	Accounting	2,711.00
Literature expense	11,200.00	Literature Expense	15,695.89
Payroll	64,400.00	Payroll	71,203.26
Payroll Tax	4,800.00	Payroll Tax	5,132.41
Pension	4,300.00	Pension	3,043.04
Postage & Freight	4,400.00	Postage & Freight	5,862.14
Office Expense	2,000.00	Office Expense	1,897.88
Professional Fees	1,000.00	Professional Fees	500.00
Rent	9,300.00	Rent	9,192.18
Maintenance	1,100.00	Maintenance	991.92
Supplies	.00	Supplies	200.66
Sales Tax	100.00	Sales Tax	129.34
Taxes & Licenses	100.00	Taxes & Licenses	74.69
Telephone	8,500.00	Telephone	8,268.00
<i>Travel</i>	<u>11,500.00</u>	<i>Travel</i>	<u>22,393.20</u>
Total Expenses	<u>132,500.00</u>	Total Expenses	<u>154,434.45</u>

***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. 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.



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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