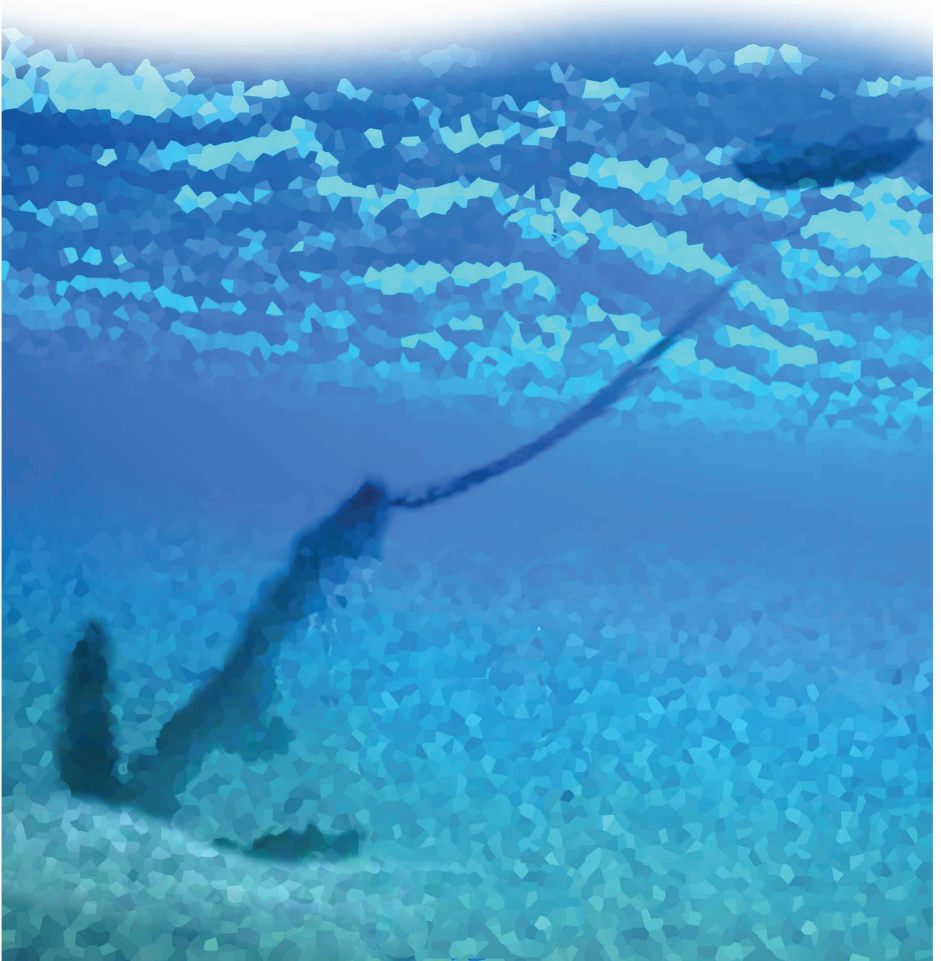


# *Essay*

*September 2008*



## *The Real Connection*

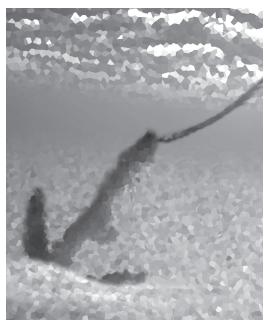
*A quarterly publication of Sexaholics Anonymous*

# The Twelve Steps of Sexaholics Anonymous

1. We admitted that we were powerless over lust—that our lives had become unmanageable.
2. Came to believe that a Power greater than ourselves could restore us to sanity.
3. Made a decision to turn our will and our lives over to the care of God as we understood Him.
4. Made a searching and fearless moral inventory of ourselves.
5. Admitted to God, to ourselves, and to another human being the exact nature of our wrongs.
6. Were entirely ready to have God remove all these defects of character.
7. Humbly asked Him to remove our shortcomings.
8. Made a list of all persons we had harmed, and became willing to make amends to them all.
9. Made direct amends to such people wherever possible, except when to do so would injure them or others.
10. Continued to take personal inventory and when we were wrong, promptly admitted it.
11. Sought through prayer and meditation to improve our conscious contact with God as we understood Him, praying only for knowledge of His will for us and the power to carry that out.
12. Having had a spiritual awakening as the result of these Steps, we tried to carry this message to sexaholics, and to practice these principles in all our affairs.

## *Essay is the quarterly publication of Sexaholics Anonymous*

*The Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions are reprinted with permission of Alcoholics Anonymous World Services, Inc. (AAWS). 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 that are patterned after AA, but which address other problems, or in any other non-AA context, does not imply otherwise.*



**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.

*—Adapted with permission from the AA Grapevine Inc.*

*Sexaholics Anonymous is a recovery program based on the principles of Alcoholics Anonymous and received permission from AA to use its Twelve Steps & Twelve Traditions in 1979.*

<b>Recovery in a Marriage</b>	
The Real Connection	2
<b>Birthday Share</b>	
Two Years	8
<b>Retreats and Conventions</b>	
God is Watching out for You and Me	12
Improving My Conscious Contact with God	13
Getting Honest with Myself	14
Correction Facilities Committee Report	17
Thank You from Convention Chair	18
<b>Tools of the Program</b>	
Letter to a Sponsee	19
A First Step	20
Handling Disruptive Members	21
<b>Member Shares</b>	
I Choose Faith	22
Respecting Myself	23
Mr. Moon	24
Nothing to Hide	25
<b>International Corner</b>	
“White Book” Comes to Russia	26
SA Lima, Peru Celebrates One Year	27
Greetings from Australia	27
<b>Prayers and Meditations</b>	29
<b>A Note from the Delegate Chair</b>	30
<b>Calendar of Events</b>	32

**Newcomers:** Contact SA by telephone toll-free at 866-424-8777; outside North America call 615-370-6062; email at [saico@sa.org](mailto:saico@sa.org); or SA website at [www.sa.org](http://www.sa.org).

## The Real Connection

My name is Will. I'm a sexaholic and part of a recovering couple. I've been sexually sober since January 5, 2000.

Last Saturday, my wife and I came home from our beach vacation. I usually have trouble on vacations. I have rage problems when I'm outside of my usual environment. But I came home and was still sexually and emotionally sober. Mostly it's because I've admitted that I'm totally powerless over lust and can't be looking at people other than my wife. When I see an interesting person in the distance I surrender and admit my powerlessness—and I don't have to look anymore. I don't need more information.

One difficulty with our vacations is that we live in one house with my wife, my four siblings, my siblings' spouses, and several of their kids. I love my family but I struggle with judging some of the in-laws. One goal on this vacation was to not judge and to just be with them. We also wanted to just be with our kids, who are in their 20s. My wife and I like to give the kids all kinds of instructions and directions, but we mostly keep our mouths closed these days and just gaze at them. It's a way to be together without too many problems.

One of my sponsor's greatest gifts to me was telling me that I need to be my kids' father, and that there's a time for correcting them, but it's not when I'm emotionally upset. He emphasized that, more than anything, I need to stay connected with my kids. That was great advice. As a rager and control freak, many times in their teenage years I wanted to disown them. At one point I participated in a recovery program for drug-addicted kids and their families. I found it helpful to learn to detach. Today I have good relationships with my kids.

I'm no expert on marriage or families or relationships, but my wife and I have found something that works for us. As I've heard many old-timers say, I know less today than I knew when I came in here. When I came into the program I thought I knew everything, but I was wrong.

I'm the oldest male child of a family of five siblings. My sisters are eight and nine years older, my brothers, five and eight years younger. My parents stayed unhappily married for 60 years. There were three pairs in my family of origin and I was the odd man out. My mother is an unrecov-

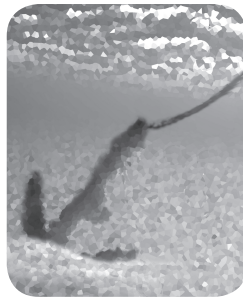


---

ered adult child of an alcoholic. My father, until his death 2 ½ years ago, was a self-proclaimed workaholic and probably a sexaholic.

When I was 18 months old, my mother seriously contemplated killing me with a pair of scissors. Frightened by this, she rushed off in the snow with me in a stroller and had herself hospitalized. She had electric shock treatments. She told me about that as a kid. I lived with an aunt and uncle for months. I believe those early experiences created the background of isolation, anxiety, and fear that have always been with me and fueled my addiction.

My parents fought constantly. I was a pawn in their battles. Their favorite topic was my lack of masculine traits and behaviors. My father was movie-star handsome, a high school football star, and a marine during WWII. Despite these macho credentials, he was a sensitive, charming man who never drank or swore, and who, I think, was worried about his own masculinity. I was an embarrassment to my father. I was his sensitive side, for all the world to see. One of my earliest memories was of him pitching whiffle balls to me, which I could not hit. Neither of us knew that I had needed glasses since birth.



Another early memory, at five, was being with him in the car when he heard on the radio that a famous actress had died. He cried. I mention this because that actress might have been the model in the first pin-ups I saw at about that time. They were hung on the various barrels of scrap at a scrap yard. I thought they were pretty. My father told me not to tell my mother. I told her everything. That was the beginning of aligning myself with my mom against my dad and naked women.

In primary school, I made friends at first but they gradually fell away. I didn't know how to do the normal give and take in a friendship. I desperately wanted to connect with other boys. Unfortunately, I found my connection playing strip poker with my next younger brother's friends.

We did it on a weekly basis in the summer. I was the ringleader. I felt a lot of shame about this. I also started masturbating in front of mirrors. I didn't believe that what I saw in the mirrors was me. As I have read in *Sexaholics Anonymous*, I was disconnected from myself (SA, 203).

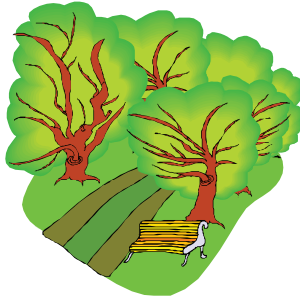
I became my mother's ally and her surrogate spouse. When my parents fought, I would run from the house to a nearby park and cry and masturbate and ask God to take me

---

home to be with Him. Walking back home, I'd see other people sitting down for dinner, the golden glow coming from their homes, and I'd think, "I want that." That's not what I had. Home for me as a kid was church and the library and music lessons; those were my favorite places.

After finding my dad's stash of pornography, I was never again free not to use it when home alone. At 14, I was already swearing off with New Year's Eve resolutions. Then I'd go masturbate because I knew I couldn't keep the resolutions. At 15, my parents found me acting out with pornography. They said nothing. I don't think my father ever talked to me about sex.

At 16, I had my first connection with an adult man. At 17, I lost my virginity to a 19-year-old divorcee. At 19, I left home to live with a man in a three-year committed relationship. We called it a marriage. But I never stopped going to church. In fact, at 17, I found a very loving church family. Most of the members had gone through some kind of emotional ringer. Unbeknownst to me, quite a few of them were in recovery. I found my spiritual home at that church. I got to see loving families in action. However, by age 22 I was ready to enter a monastery. It seemed



like the perfect answer. I could live a life of prayer, solitude, books, music, and manual labor.

I went on a 10-day retreat with the intention of entering the monastery. I talked openly with the spiritual director about my struggles—and he said he didn't think that this would be the place for me, living with a bunch of men. I was crushed.

One afternoon, reading my sacred scripture under a juniper tree, I felt God leading me to go back, join the church community, and be open to marriage. I went to a meeting for new members and I met my wife. It was not love at first sight, but she felt safe. She lent me a book by an author we both admired, and I started courting her—something I had never done before.

I shared with her about my struggles and she didn't run.

We went to mandatory couples counseling at the church and we flunked the compatibility test. Our first fight was the week before the wedding. We got married anyway. I thought the marriage would fix me.

My wife was a nurse and could work so I would not need to be the sole provider. She is an extrovert so I, the introvert, would never have to answer the phone again. I resisted the idea that she was a person separate

---

from me and not just an extension of me. If she disagreed with me, I thought she was against me, not that she had a different opinion.

Neither of us was prepared for marriage. We knew something was wrong and went to a recovery meeting for children of alcoholics. My wife was so upset at hearing people share their secrets that we left. We couldn't stay through one meeting.

I was afraid of responsibility. When my wife got pregnant around our second anniversary, I felt abandoned and cried, explaining that I wasn't ready. Then I pulled myself together. Shortly after our oldest daughter was born, I forced myself to get a professional job in the field in which I was educated—after a memorable scene of me writhing on the floor in an infantile fit of fear and frustration.

Within five years we had three children. I cracked under the strain. I may have used some pornography and masturbated prior to this, but I had been pretty clean. Now, I started going to parks and video stores in search of anonymous sex to try to feel better. I thought I needed this to handle life. It rapidly grew out of control.

I had sought out individual counseling in my early 20s but at this point I turned to my pastor. He counseled me with the Third Step prayer. What stuck with me was the part

about bondage to self. He told me about SA. He gave me a number to call. I threw the number in a drawer, not knowing that one of the two SA meetings in Cleveland at the time was at my church. God works in mysterious ways.

I provided a significant share of the parenting because of our work schedules. I loved my children but had nothing to give to them. I needed help. In desperation I sought out another fellowship for help with my problem. A member of that fellowship directed me to SA. God doesn't give up. It was 1989.

At first, I didn't think SA was Christian enough. But as I read *Sexaholics Anonymous*, I found nothing incompatible with my faith. I am thankful for that book. I wouldn't change one word, including the Cleveland clarification. I am powerless over the nature of my addiction, as well as society's views on sexuality and homosexuality, but I need this fellowship—where I can share all of me, be totally accepted, but not be encouraged to act on it.

My first years in the program are a foggy blur. We were the blind leading the blind in those days. I was a chronic slipper. But some of the members at my first meeting were helpful. Some of those early members still come back. I still talk with one of them every day, doing a sobriety renewal.



---

One night, after about four years, two new guys showed up. One of them had loads of sobriety in AA and a fair amount in SA. The other was his sponsee. From these men I heard for the first time that AA literature is invaluable to recovery, especially *Alcoholics Anonymous* and the *Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions* for working the Steps. I asked the sponsee to be my sponsor. He started me on working the Steps and giving up my rights. We started a new meeting 50 miles from my home.

I worked Steps One through Nine for the first time between 1993 and 1996. I bought lots of tapes of conference speakers and listened to them as I drove 50 miles to and from my home group meeting. I heard about a God who loves me so much he was with me even in a video booth. I heard a member talk about his daily habit of reading two pages each every day from *SA*, *AA*, and the *12 & 12*. I made THAT a habit of my own.

I attended a number of conferences. I was so shy that I would only speak at the open mike at the end of the conference just to prove that I had been there. At those conferences, I observed healthy, recovering couples who gave me hope. I became aware of the sick dance that my wife and I were involved in, and I realized that we needed to work on our relationship. She joined S-Anon, which has helped.

Together, my wife and I served on the 1999 convention in Cleveland. In January 2000, we attended the convention in Nashville. During that convention—after a relapse that had sent me into despair just days before—I made the decision that I was done with lust and wanted to live a sober life, one day at a time.

My wife and I have never had an abstinence contract, but at times we have gone without sex. Today, we truly believe that sex is optional. At one convention, we heard a woman and her husband explain how sex had found a natural place in their marriage. They said it was like the tides. Sometimes the tide is in for her and not for him; sometimes it's in for him and not for her; and sometimes the tide is in for both of them. And they have true union and sexual intimacy together. That also works for us.

On this recent vacation, our kids emphasized again and again how happy they are that we stuck it out together. They have friends and parents of friends who have not stayed married. They just think it's great that we are still married, after 27 years. One night I had one of those priceless moments with my 22-year-old son. We were talking about a relationship that he had broken off with a woman. He said, "Dad, a lot of kids my age think that if they get married and it doesn't work out, they can just get divorced. You and Mom have set the bar so



---

high that I really want to be careful about who I marry.” That is God’s miracle, that he could say that today.

Today I realize that lust-filled sex is a cheap, empty substitute for the partnership that I share with my wife. It is our relationship that is the most precious thing. As described in *Sexaholics Anonymous*, “True Union” (148), “We found that we were just as powerless over trying to relate rightly to others as we had been in putting down our habit; it was *part of our habit*. Thus, we had to approach it the same way, using the Steps—the miracle workers. When we did, we could literally watch ourselves grow into true manhood and womanhood.” That is what my wife and I have found in these programs.

I have become so blessed by my relationship with my wife—a direct result of my working the SA program of recovery—that I wrote a tribute to her in honor of our 25th wedding anniversary:

*In gratitude for your willing-*

*ness to take a chance on me, I honor you. I was a man with good skin but no money. It took me 25 years to figure out that you really did want a diamond engagement ring. It hasn’t all worked out exactly like we planned. We walked hand-in-hand as a young couple, saying we would only work part-time.*

*We’re working overtime. We planned on running a Catholic worker and architectural firm in Cleveland. We find ourselves working in a psych ward in the suburbs. We hoped for just one child in religious life. we settle for knowing that at least one child is at church on any given Sunday. I wanted a historic home, you wanted a new one. We settled for one built in 1950. Through it all, you’ve been my soul mate, my helpmate, the mother of my children, my friend. You taught me how to really love one woman; that it’s not about loving a thousand women, but learning how to love one woman in a thousand ways.*

—Will K.



## Call for Articles!!!



We seek articles on all aspects of your recovery, including:

- Your experience working the Steps or Traditions
- Your thoughts on working with a sponsor or a sponsee
- Unique ways you or your group have been helped by SA

**Articles for Essay should be submitted to [essay@sa.org](mailto:essay@sa.org)**

## Two Years



Yesterday marked two years of sobriety for me. Prior to my sobriety date of May 24, 2006, I can't remember having gone two days without acting out in the previous 30 years. For my sobriety and so much more, I am forever grateful to the program and to the fellowship of SA.

I didn't come to SA with the purest of motives. I came with a gun to my head, having been caught acting out over the phone by my wife. This was not the first time I had been caught. Just two days earlier, she had found some erotic stories I had written for an acting-out partner. In those stories I detailed acting out with still more people, in person, online, and over the phone.

While the details were a shock to my wife, the fact that I was acting out was certainly not a revelation to her. To the contrary, she had been telling me for five or six years that I was a sex addict. I laughed dismissively and attributed our differences to my "healthy sex drive" and her "limited sex drive." It never occurred to me that wanting to have sex five or six times a day had nothing to do with a "sex drive" until I entered SA.

Funny thing is, the day before my "sobriety date," I had decided to look and see whether my wife was perhaps right. I searched for "sex addict" on

the Internet and found a site with a

quiz. Needless to say, I passed with flying colors. For the first time I thought "maybe there's something to this sex addiction stuff." That day I called two therapists. One was a general therapist that I found in the phone book, the other was a sex addiction specialist. The specialist did not call me back but the other therapist did and I made an appointment.

All of that was not enough to stop me from acting out the next day. I cannot imagine a truer definition of powerlessness. Then, my wife coming in and discovering me was surely a clear sign of unmanageability. My memory of that afternoon is quite clear, and I hope it always will be. My wife was crushed and hysterical and could not decide what to scream or throw at me next.

That afternoon, after the blowup, I did the smartest thing I have ever done. I called back the sex addiction specialist. This time she called me back and, while she was booked solid and could not see me for a couple of weeks, she suggested I go to a group therapy session that evening. I drove there—fully 45 minutes further than the other therapist—and for the first time, I spoke to a group of men about

---

my life and the things I was doing.

I'd love to say that I went to that meeting surrendered and ready for recovery, but I did not. I battled and debated and talked about "giving up this, but keeping that." I had already forgotten what that afternoon had been like.

At the conclusion of that first group therapy session, the co-therapist said something to me that stuck. After all of my negotiation and debating and still having not decided what I was going to do, he said "If you want to come back, you're welcome and we'd love to have you, but you need to stop what you're doing."

I took those words seriously and went home and debated with myself. I credit much of my recovery and certainly my early recovery to the words "stop what you're doing." I had a decision to make; stop and join the group or don't stop and move on. Moving on would also have meant leaving my home and family. That made the decision easier.

I left that group about a month ago. I will join a different group in the fall with the same therapist and people who are further along in recovery. The people who were at the group my first night unanimously agree that they never thought I would return. But I could not

bear life without my family. I knew that leaving them would lead me to death—an idea that didn't necessarily seem like a bad thing at the time, but I was not quite ready.

I did one other thing after that group; I went to an SA meeting. The group was on a Tuesday and I went to an SA meeting on Saturday morning. Both the SA meeting and the therapy group seemed very odd to me. "These guys had a problem. All I did was A, B and C but, these guys . . ." I've since come to understand that there is NOTHING that I would not do, only things I had not done. Every time I drew a line in the sand, every time I decided that I would stop, I came back with more energy focused on destroying myself and those around me. But the meetings were a start.

Something else happened at that first SA meeting: God stepped in and offered me a choice. I had been what the literature calls a "militant atheist" all my life. Born into a Jewish household, I never had any exposure to religion and, therefore, decided

that religion was for weak people—not a strong person like me.

I came home from the meeting with a copy of *Sexaholics Anonymous* and went upstairs



---

to my wife. She asked how it went and I started to cry. I showed her the Twelve Steps of SA and asked her what she saw. She, a religious Catholic, immediately saw all of the references to God. I asked how I could possibly do this and she said, “I don’t know, just try it and see where it takes you.”

I continued going to meetings (when I could fit them into my busy schedule) and seeing the therapist. The therapist eventually told me to put the meetings into my book, treat them like client appointments, “and don’t miss them.” I did and it worked. Still, my program consisted of three meetings a week and not much else; no sponsor, no making phone calls, very little connection to the fellowship, and still no relationship with a Higher Power who I now choose to call God.

After about five months, at two meetings in a row I read a passage from *Alcoholics Anonymous* (47), that said “Do I now believe or am I even willing to believe that there is a Power greater than myself?” *Willing to believe? Even I can be willing!* So the door was open and I started being “willing”—and it made all the difference. Being willing meant taking the action and hoping something would follow. It meant praying, even if I wasn’t certain that there would be a result. The result, of course, turned out to be all about the action. What

had I been fighting for so long?

The next struggle was getting a sponsor. Like everything else, this took me awhile. My therapist said it had something to do with my lousy relationships with my father and two of my three older brothers; that asking older or more senior people for help is a struggle. But five months into the program I decided who my sponsor would be. It took me another two months to ask him. Up to that point, I had done no Step work.

When I did ask, he said yes and we started meeting and working the Steps on a regular basis. I dove in, especially on the first three Steps. This was completely new but the idea of a Higher Power was something that I was now ready for.

Today, I love working the Steps—whether as part of my own program, or just doing a quick Four through Nine on whatever needs addressing on a particular day, or working with a sponsee and trying to give back a sliver of what’s been given to me. I often tell people that for me, I can sum this program up in 30 words, “Go to meetings, go to meetings, go to meetings, go to meetings, go to meetings. Work the Steps, work the Steps, work the Steps, work the steps, work the Steps.” If you can’t do anything else, just do that and let God do the rest.

Also, I began showing up to meetings early, setting up, leading

---

meetings, and making phone calls (lots of phone calls).

When the Saturday morning meeting became difficult for me to make, I started one closer to home. Now, I need a Wednesday meeting and there isn't one nearby, so a group of us have decided to start one. If I need something for my recovery, I make sure that I can get it.

Sobriety has been a wonderful gift for me, but sobriety is not what I'm here for today. Today I realize that recovery is where the treasure is.

Recovery, for me, is spending time with my children and not resenting the fact that I'm not acting out or planning my next acting out session. It's being able to spend time with my wife without her wondering whether I'm only there in the hopes that we'll have sex. It's being able to speak or work with women and not imagine them in a sexual fashion and not spend my time and energy trying to get them to act out with me.

Recovery is being able to spend time with friends and family and enjoying it. Recovery is taking a walk in the park and noticing the weather, the trees, the birds; not just the women on the bike path.

Recovery is also about speak-

ing my truth and letting people know when they have done something that has hurt or bothered me—without feeling that it makes me a weakling. It is about setting boundaries for myself and letting others know that they need to respect those boundaries. As an addict, I would often simply go along to get along, hoping I could then slink away—with my resentments—to act out. Today I know that I can choose to be treated well and fairly, and to remove myself from situations where that does not happen.

I am so very grateful for the gifts I have gotten from this program of recovery. For the newcomers, I would like to say that it gets better and better—if you do your part. The clichés are true, “It's easy, but it's not simple” and “It works if you work it.” It really is work, but so is acting out. I spent so much time and energy on acting out and living two separate lives that I did little else. Living honestly takes much less effort and produces much less stress.

I hope others find what I've found. I can't wait to see what else awaits me as I continue trudging the road of happy destiny. I hope to see some of you along the path. May God bless you and keep you until then.

—Andy R., Yardley, PA



# God is Watching Out for You and Me

*Big Bear, CA Men's Retreat: May 30-June 1, 2008*



God led me to a place I hadn't been before, to be with men I didn't know. Why? To

allow me to build on my experience, strength, and hope in recovery from sexual addiction. He took me to the Big Bear men's retreat this past spring. It was a 600-mile round trip for my sponsor and me, driving from St. George, Utah.

It had been some time since I had been with such a gathering of fine men, who had a common desire to share their own experience, strength, and hope in recovery and in turning their wills and lives over to a power greater than themselves. I was slow to warm up to the generous outpouring of welcome, acceptance, and unconditional love that I felt at the retreat.

I pondered the question, why am I here? Would I be willing to turn my life and will over to the care of God? Probably not! In times past, I wasn't even sure whether God liked me, cared for me, or could even find me. Then I had other questions and doubts: is God powerful enough to save me from my addiction? I knew how powerful my addiction was and

how powerless I was in fighting it off. I doubted whether there was any power great enough to save me from this endless battle. I doubted God's love for me. Yet I saw how miraculous His love and power was in the lives of the other men sharing their stories at the retreat. As I listened to their sharing, I nodded with envy of their personal triumphs, struggles, and successes.

But what about my personal triumphs, struggles, and successes? Did God love me enough to save just me? I was sitting in the same circle as these other 100 men. Would it ever be my turn? I didn't know these guys, but I felt a certain closeness. I wanted to share, connect, and be part of what was being given so freely.

So I allowed myself to be part of God's love. I opened my mouth and said a few words about my own fears and struggles. And I experienced my own miracle of recovery. My God is no longer the hateful, mean, punishing type that I imagined in my childhood. I replaced those beliefs with a God of matchless power, who has enough love even for me. One who has enough love and power to heal even me; One who is forgiving. A God who can find me anywhere. My God is such that He finds me in my

---

darkest moment, even when I feel despair, when I doubt, when I succeed, and especially when I experience joy. I am willing to turn my life and my will over to such a great power. I am willing to do His bidding and am grateful to share this.

This is my God. And I felt His

## Improving My Conscious Contact with God

*Akron, OH International Convention: July 11-13, 2008*

*What it was like.* I enjoyed my first convention in the place where it all started. My cell phone's background screen now has a picture of the gatehouse where Dr. Bob and Bill W. first met. When I open my phone, I say a prayer of thanks to God for the Twelve Steps. But the strangest thing happened for me that at first I thought was a tremendous inconvenience but turned out to be a beautiful blessing.

*What happened.* When we got to the airport on Sunday afternoon, we found out that our flight to Atlanta was cancelled. This was a first-time experience for me, and I felt very uncomfortable. One other SA from Georgia was with me, plus another SA from St. Louis who also had a connecting flight in Atlanta. So we left the airport, got a nice room with a kitchen and a couch, and went to eat dinner. That dinner conversation changed my path to recovery. The

presence at Big Bear. It is also the God of my grandson; who taught me this song, which I like to sing: "My God is bigger than the boogie man; He is bigger than Godzilla and the monsters on TV. And [my] God is watching out for you and ME."

—Terry H.



SA from St.

Louis has over

10 years of sobriety, so the other SA from Georgia and I were intent on hearing every syllable he shared.

To sum it up, he talked about Step Eleven, conscious contact with God.

I realized afterward that I had not practiced this Step on a daily basis.

Oh, sure, I said my Third Step and Seventh Step prayers, prayers for others, readings, meditation, etc. But it was feeling stale to me and I couldn't figure out why. After dinner, we went back to the room and had an SA meeting right there in the room. It was a nice way to end the day and the weekend, and it made me realize that we can have an SA meeting anywhere at anytime.

*What it's like now.* To practice that conscious contact with God, I still say the Third and Seventh Step prayers and do the other stuff, but to



---

improve my conscious contact with God, I pray for one person all day throughout the day. Whenever I am away from my desk at work, walking down the hallway, I am praying for that person. If I am driving, I am praying for that person. What it's like now is the key word (for me) in Step Eleven: "improve." If I am improv-

ing every day, I will not feel stale. That was what was missing before. I was not improving, so the result of that was I was not getting a daily spiritual experience as mentioned in Step Twelve. If I'm not improving, I'm deteriorating. God bless.

—Ed R., Columbus, GA

## Getting Honest with Myself

*Akron, OH International Convention, July 11-13, 2008*

Although I've been a member of SA since January 2000, my sobriety date is January 1, 2007. At times, I've felt extremely frustrated with my lack of continuous SA sobriety—especially when compared with my 23 years of sobriety in AA. I have questioned what I might be doing wrong and whether there is something wrong with my spiritual connection. Sometimes I forget that God sees my progress, not my perfection, and I feel unworthy. So I am sharing my experience, strength, and hope that it may benefit others.

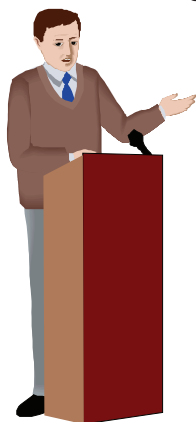
In July 2008, I attended the SA/S-Anon International Convention, "Welcome Home," in Akron. It was an extremely powerful and emotional experience for me, one that led me to discover why I have struggled for eight years in SA. One session in

particular (same sex) had a significant impact on me. Although I have an incredible wife of 40 years, my sexual acting out has had no boundaries.

The meeting room was packed and it appeared that most of the participants wore wedding rings. As I listened, I felt deep pain, deep gratitude, and immense hope as various members shared. But I also heard a very wide and emotional range of what members defined as sexual sobriety within SA.

As a result, I reread *Sexaholics Anonymous* and discovered that I had been only fooling myself in my understanding of sexual sobriety. In particular, I re-read "The Sobriety Definition" (SA, 191-192):

Thus, for the married sexaholic, sexual sobriety means having no form of sex with self or with persons other than the spouse. For the unmar-



ried sexaholic, sexual sobriety means freedom from sex of any kind. And for all of us ... *sexual sobriety also includes progressive victory over lust* .

In “How It Works—the Practical Reality” (SA, 77), several sentences touched me in a new way:

Everything begins with sobriety. Without sobriety, there is no program of recovery. . . . To recover from a life based on wrong attitudes, self-obsession, separation, false connections, blindness and spiritual death requires a program of action that includes a fundamental change in attitude, character change, union, the true Connection, self-



awareness, and spiritual life.

As I read these pages, I saw my first loophole: none of the pages explicitly state that “sex with self” means only masturbation, let alone masturbation to climax. I now understand that sex with myself takes many other forms.

Another loophole for me is the phrase “technical sobriety.” Historically, I would define my sobriety by saying that I did not masturbate or if I did, I did not masturbate to orgasm, and thus I was “technically” sober.

To enhance my understanding of various words used in our literature and meetings, I decided to search the dictionary for definitions. I found these definitions (Table 1) to be much

Table 1. Definitions Related to Sexual Sobriety

Sex	All feelings resulting from the urge to gratify sexual impulses. [Does not include the words “orgasm,” “intercourse,” or “masturbation.”]
Any	In any which way or manner... degree or extent.
Form/Kind	A manner, technique, or way of doing something.
Arousal	To stir to a strong response; excite; to stimulate sexually. [Does not say “to orgasm.”]
Lust	Intense sexual desire. [Does not say “to orgasm.”]
Phone Sex	Sexually explicit conversations engaged in, on a telephone.
Cybersex	Any sexual activity, display, or discussion engaged in, by means of a computer.
Pornography	pictures, writing, or other material whose primary purpose is to cause sexual arousal. [Does not say “to orgasm.”]
Stalking	To obsessively follow or observe a person persistently.
Voyeurism	Obtaining gratification by secretly looking at sexual objects or acts.
Exhibitionism	Behavior intended to attract attention to yourself by exposing your own genitals.

---

different than my previous understanding.

These definitions, plus a new understanding of what *Sexaholics Anonymous* says, had a profound impact on me. I desperately needed the “fundamental change” addressed on SA page 77. After studying the definitions, I decided that, to supplement SA’s sobriety definition, I would write a stricter personal sobriety statement—for myself—to take out all the loopholes. Otherwise, I might be tempted to act out in some way and still tell myself that I am “technically” sober. My personal sobriety statement includes specific behaviors that I need to remind myself that I personally must avoid:

*For me*—as a member of SA who desires the true connection, to be free from lust and sexual acting out, and to deal with all of the feelings resulting from the urge to gratify sexual impulses—I cannot indulge in any method, manner, form, or kind of activity (e.g., cyber sex, deliberate viewing of pornography, phone sex, stalking, voyeurism, exhibitionism, deliberate lust, sex outside marriage) that would stir any type of response designed to excite or stimulate a sexual desire whether or not the



activity includes masturbation or leads to orgasm.

As I consider these words I can see why I have struggled for eight years in SA. I have used every form of rationalization, and if I’m honest, outright lying to myself, to rationalize that I was sexually sober when in reality I was acting out in some way via every word defined in Table 1. And I justified the activity because it did not end in orgasm. The problem is that eventually these behaviors lead to relapse.

Today I want to find my true connection with God and with myself. I want true sobriety that includes physical, mental, and most of all spiritual sobriety. I want the spiritual awakening that will bring freedom from lust.

In fact, I feel a great deal of emotion, tears, and gratitude when I think about that spiritual connection—because the only thing I have ever wanted was spiritual freedom and a spiritual awakening to my true self, as well as a true connection with God and others.

With God’s help and the tools of this program, I will do everything possible to adhere to my personal sobriety statement. In doing so, I believe that I can and will find this connection and become truly happy, joyous, and free.

—*In His Love, Steve C.*

---

# Correctional Facilities Committee (CFC) Report from the Akron Convention

CFC offers assistance to those who carry the message of Twelve Step recovery into the prisons. During the past year, we have responded to requests for literature and for help in starting prison meetings from many different states and other countries. By keeping true to the Traditions—we do not govern—we lack an accurate count of the number of SA meetings currently active in federal, state, and local prisons. Our best guess is that there are more than 20 prison-led meetings in 10 different states. Some have been meeting for almost ten years. We recently received a request from a fairly new prison group in Pennsylvania that is looking for an Intergroup that they can become a part of.

At the Akron convention, a Seventh Tradition was held for CFC after the Friday night meal. Those in attendance gave \$3,060.00—almost double any previous collection. We thank you and so will those prisoners who will receive free literature.

Also at Akron, an SA shared an issue that his home group struggles with. One member, who has the desire to follow our program of recovery, is 17 years old. Other members worry that including a minor in an SA



meeting could lead to legal problems, especially if the group contains convicted sex offenders.

They also wonder what can be done for a minor who desires help recovering from sexual addiction. The vast majority of Step One stories we hear include formative incidents in the person's childhood. If a minor recognizes he or she has our problem, how can that person work the Steps and attend meetings?

This brings up the question of sharing about illegal activities at meetings. We attempt to be anonymous and declare that "what we say here, let it stay here," but there is no legal guarantee of privacy such as with a priest or lawyer. A member could potentially share about a slip that involves illegal activity, and those in attendance could be called to testify in a legal proceeding. Some members are in professions which compel them to report suspected abuse. I know of no incident where this has happened in an SA meeting, but it has happened in AA groups.

We continue to receive new members whose acting out has involved illegal actions, so the potential will remain. As has been recommended by others, we recommend

---

that local groups add a statement to their opening readings such as, “Please do not share about illegal activities that have not been adjudicated in court.”

Also, in sharing, details such as names, dates, times, places, and specific activities should be omitted, thus legally rendering the share inadmissible in court. And as old-timers have said: “Take your message to the meeting, and your mess to your sponsor.”

The CFC is working to bring together the collective experience, strength, and hope of people who have worked the SA program while in prison and those on the outside who

have carried the message to prisoners. Our long-term plan is to compile ideas that work well and those that



don't. Then when we receive a request for assistance in starting a prison meeting, we will have more experience to offer. We also want to bring together the stories of those who have worked their Steps in prison.

If you have any experience, strength, or hope on these issues, please email them to the Correctional Facilities Committee at [saico@sa.org](mailto:saico@sa.org) or send by regular mail to *PO Box 3565, Brentwood, TN 37024-3565, USA.*

— Davis C.

## *Thank You* from Akron Convention Chair

Thanks to everyone who attended the “Welcome Home” convention in Akron the weekend of July 11-13, 2008. A total of 636 people attended the convention; 434 SA members and 202 S-Anons. Twenty-one people received scholarships. The 7th Tradition donations collections included \$3,060 for the Prison Outreach; \$3,008 for S-Anon; and \$3,180 for SAICO. Tapes and CDs from over 40 sessions (as well as the special message from Roy K.) are readily available from Lee’s Tapes and CDs ([www.leestape-sandcds.com](http://www.leestape-sandcds.com)).

Our “Welcome Home” red hats are off to everyone who helped make the weekend such a joyful recovery experience. The entire SA and S-Anon membership of Northeast Ohio is grateful for the opportunity to serve. Hosting the convention helped us to improve our relations with each other and increased the spirit of recovery in our respective fellowships. We look forward to seeing many of you again in Nashville in January.

—Rich D., SA Convention Chair



## Letter to a Sponsee



I don't know why you're not able to stay sober, but I don't think it's the incapacity to be honest. Agonizing over that is like agonizing over grieving the Spirit—it happens to very few people.

In my own case, I was unable to stay sober for two reasons. First, I had not fully taken Step One. There was a significant area of unmanageability and powerlessness in my life to which I was blind. Note that it was not related to sex or sexaholism. Once my eyes were opened to it, I was able to shift my priorities and stay sober.

Second, I wasn't making sobriety/recovery my number-one priority at all times. I got too caught up in trying to function in the external world. It's tough to say, but for me, if I want to stay sober, then I need to put SA before my job, my family, and my church. This is not an unusual situation—I know of people who resent AA because, as children, they were neglected by a father or mother in favor of AA. But we do what we have to do to stay sober. I personally think those neglected children would have been much worse off if the parent had remained an active alcoholic, but they don't know that because they didn't experience the active alcoholism.

This is the reason that some of us have to hit a hard bottom before

we can get sober. We have to be willing to do whatever

it takes. It's a very selfish attitude, but as sexaholics, if we have a solid Step One then we know for sure that we'll eventually lose everything if we don't stop acting out. Sexaholism is a progressive path to hell—it keeps getting worse and worse the longer we feed it. It kills us slowly and painfully. It takes away everything we love and fills up our lives until there's nothing else but the obsession.

If you look back to emails I've sent you in the past, I've suggested some radical things: do an in-patient program for 30, 60, or 90 days; rent an apartment in town and attend three meetings a day for a month or two; go to international conventions; travel the hours to a large city to attend meetings there; send out letters to local therapists, clergy, and corrections officers, asking them for potential sexaholic contacts; consider moving to a city with more meetings. The goal is to immerse yourself in recovery, especially for the first few months, and to spend time around people who have significant sobriety. But it's always "I don't have the money or the time or the inclination.

---

I have responsibilities.” For me, those other responsibilities had to take second or third place in my priority system. And weirdly enough, things are working out okay. That’s what happens when I put my priorities in line with God’s priorities.

Your kids are growing up and leaving home. If money is an issue, perhaps you could sell your current house and purchase a smaller one. Does your wife have a job? If not, maybe she could get one. Do your church activities interfere with your recovery activities? Maybe you’ll have to cut back on your involvement with the church. Does your wife complain that you’re spending too much time on recovery and not enough on her? Tell her that this is what you need to do in order to stay sober and that you’d rather neglect her than lose her to your addiction. I’m sure there are many ways you could manage to do what you need to do, provided you set your priorities accordingly. After

## A First Step

*Step One: We admitted we were powerless over lust and our lives had become unmanageable.*

I know I am powerless over lust because of my inability to stop acting out despite knowing the outcomes and consequences. The ways I am powerless are many: I’ve continued to act out alone despite knowing that practicing the compulsion is directly opposed to becoming sober and

all, didn’t we always make time for our addiction at the expense of everything else? I don’t recall how much money you’ve spent on acting out, but program experience tells me that we will pay whatever it costs to keep feeding our addiction.

This is tough talk. And it’s the reason we have to get to the point where we have no other option but to stop before we can stay sober.

As your sponsor, I only make suggestions. You are the one who makes the actual choices and takes action on them. Also, I’m somewhat of a “bad” sponsor because I expect my sponsees to be self-motivated. I don’t track them down when they haven’t called for a while. I don’t keep hammering on them over and over to do things. I just make suggestions and let them do what they will. I lose a lot of sponsees because of this attitude, but it keeps me sober.

—Anonymous



maintaining sobriety. I act out at work despite knowing that it could cost me my job and reputation. I continue to act out despite knowing that doing so only further drives me into myself and prevents me from growing up as a person. I act out despite knowing that



---

I am offending my God and jeopardizing my immortal soul.

Lust has made my life unmanageable because of all the chaos it has caused in my life. There are many examples of this. I've wasted countless hours at work acting out, preventing me from getting work done. Not getting my work done has damaged my professional reputation and stunted my career. The chaos of acting out has caused me to live in

fear of almost everything and everyone. The chaos of acting out, coupled with all my character defects, has made relationships with family and loved ones difficult. It has caused me to fear making commitments of every kind, especially vocationally.

My only hope is that—as I have heard others share—I will find the solution in this program of recovery.

—Anonymous

## Handling Disruptive Members

*Tradition One and Tradition Seven*

At our Monday evening group, we had an instance of a male SA being inappropriate with a female SA to the point where we had to ask for guidance. What an eye-opener to find out that there were no suggestions, no guidelines, no experience, strength, or hope that anyone I contacted had to share. So we got a couple of sober SAs together, including the offended female and another female SA, and we confronted the male on his behavior and actions. We told him that if he wanted to continue to attend our Monday evening meetings, he had to cease his behavior and actions toward this (or any other) member of SA, apologize, and report himself to his S-Anon.

The Seventh Tradition tells us



that we are to be “fully self-supporting.” That does not limit itself to passing a basket for a monetary contribution. The more we take ownership of our groups, the more we can feel ourselves to be “part of” instead of “apart from.” It might also mean that the disruptive person feels so upset that he or she may stop coming to meetings and fall back into the abyss of the disease. To those persons who are disruptive to our groups, I offer my prayers, and I say . . . bye bye.

Tradition One tells us that “Our common welfare should come first; personal recovery depends on SA unity.” The group must survive or the individual will not.

—Gary D.

## I Choose Faith

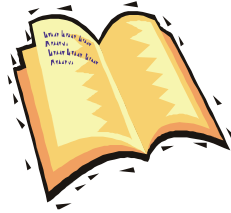
*February 11th, 2008 Journal*

*Entry:* I let myself float off into the beginnings of lust this morning. But this time, strangely, I had an awareness of choice: an awareness of two worlds. The first was dark, although in my addiction it could seem bright and be full of expectation and excitement.

The darkness of acting out promises satisfaction. Promises control. Promises no one will get hurt. It's the "sure thing." I know it's going to happen, and the expectation, anticipation, and knowing is as much a high as the getting.

But when the money is gone and time has run out, my stomach turns over, because it's over. Despair, shame, and loneliness fall upon me. I cram down unwanted feelings. Depression descends . . . until I start to plan the next "sure thing."

The other choice? Faith in God's will. My addict tells me not to trust faith. Things may never change. My wife could be "distant" forever and I may never be looked at, touched, or wanted the way my fear-driven ego believes I need, ever again. This resentment breeds anger, leading to feelings of entitlement, pride, lust and eventually another "sure thing" escape plan.



For me, faith is not just believing, but knowing with all my heart that all is as it should be. Who am I to think I can control anything? Who am I to believe that other people's feelings, actions, or thoughts are something I can manage? Who am I? I am a sex addict who fears the unknown. Faith is taking that first step into the void with complete, total confidence in God's goodness, love, and mercy.

And what is the reward for faith, truth, and love? The reward is the union, intimacy, and the very connection promised as a "sure thing" by my dark addiction.

So let's see . . . I choose the darkness and get the "sure thing" followed by a "sure thing" of shame, remorse, guilt, lies, and a life lived in blindness, fear, and isolation.

Or, I choose faith where the only requirement is to love one another, trust in God's truth, and have total faith in God and the goodness of His will. With faith, I receive the "sure thing" I'm looking for because God loves me, connects with me, and feeds me the spiritual intimacy I crave.

One choice is guaranteed to lose and one has a chance to win. I

---

choose the only action with the possibility of success.

I choose faith.

“You can’t think your way into a new

way of acting, you have to act your way into a new way of thinking.”

—Jimmy C., Denver

## Respecting Myself

Mixed face-to-face meetings are a great place for me to learn to respect myself in the presence of men. I have the option to go to a women-only meeting, but I have found (after hiding out in that women’s meeting for a year or two) that the mixed face-to-face meetings are 10 times better for my recovery and healing. In mixed meetings, I can see that the men appreciate my presence because they say my shares have helped them.

One thing that has been healing is the fact that some of the male members come up to me after a meeting to say “Thank You” for my share (even though I haven’t asked for comments or feedback). Then they leave without any more comments or words. This in itself is also good. I see that they are working their programs by not trying to link eyes and not making any further comments.

I have learned that respect is a key for my recovery. When I don’t act out with other men, I respect them. When I don’t flirt with men, I respect them. When I don’t act out or engage in fantasy, I respect my body and myself.

I have had to practice this respect this past weekend and today, by giving up an activity (for a day, because of one day at a time) that I love to do (ballroom dancing). With the help of my sponsor, I realized that I needed to take a break from seeing or having any more contact with my dance partner, because I already had a lot. A lot, meaning one dance class this past Thursday and one dance party/practice this past Saturday.

What I have learned in the program is priceless. I cannot ever repay SA for what I have been given back: my life and a way of life that gives me serenity.

I have also learned that I desire to be sober in SA more than I want to have a boyfriend or act out and live in turmoil and despair. Acting out to me equals near death. I don’t want to die; I want to live.

Thank you SA for giving me what I need to learn to respect myself. Thank you men and women for sharing what works for you. You are like me and I am like you. I am not alone.

—Sara D.



---

# Mr. Moon

Much of my life was like the moon. I was the largest and brightest object in the night sky. There is only one moon and nothing shined as bright as me. From my vantage, I was all-seeing and all-knowing.

Despite being the brightest object in the night sky, the moon's luminous energy is only a reflection of sunlight. The moon takes the sun's energy and reflects it onto earth for all to see. I too take from others around me in order to make my image reflect and shine brighter.

Like the moon I was not completely visible, for I also had a dark side. My dark side was my addiction. The secrets of my addiction were invisible. Like the phases of the moon, my invisible dark side detracts from the intensity of my lighted image. As my addiction progressed, so did the growth of my dark side, leaving an ever smaller illuminated surface of visible light. I was driven to take more from others in order to maintain my radiant image.

I had only a small crescent sliver of light left. I lived in fear that I would be discovered. It would be doomsday and total destruction if I were discovered. I was finally caught and my worst fears were unfolding. My secrets were no longer invisible and I was exposed for all to see.

But this discovery was not like

anything I had envisioned or feared. The opposite took place; I was at peace. God's grace relieved me of my burden to evermore keep all those secrets. What a relief! In reality, the life-ending cataclysm of discovery that I had so feared was actually becoming the best day of my life. It was my rebirth into sobriety and recovery.

Through acceptance and surrender to my higher power, I was becoming sober and exposing the seeds of my addiction: my resentments and fears. I needed my Higher Power's energy to make me shine. In sobriety He is my solar power. With sobriety the dark shadow of my addiction slowly began to shrink and my reflective surface began to grow and shine brightly.

Would I ever become a full moon and fully shine brightly? Was a full moon His final goal for me? After all, the full moon still needs the sun's energy to shine.

But the full moon is not enough. For if the earth were bathed in eternal moonlight, nothing on earth would grow. In darkness we hunker down to stay warm. With the earth bathed in sunlight, life grows and blossoms. The sun's energy drives the weather



---

and moves the ocean's currents. I need to be more than just a full moon. With the help of my higher power, I need to transform my life to be like the sun of my higher power. I need to radiate energy.

“We began practicing a positive sobriety, taking the actions of love” to

outwardly radiate energy. When I am most like the sun, I radiate outwardly and give to those around me, so that they may grow and blossom. Like the sun, I can shine only one day at a time.

—Carlton B.

## Nothing to Hide

My rock bottom was struck in 1999 when my daughter stumbled across some online chat I left on my computer. For some, suicide is the ultimate rock bottom. For me, losing the respect of my children in this manner was far worse. That particular story ends with me joining SA and, eventually, making amends to my kids for my online conduct during and before that rock bottom.

I lost my first marriage. After years of seeking reconciliation, I accepted the cost of what I had done. One year ago yesterday, I married a wonderful woman.

Just before our anniversary dinner, my new stepdaughter picked up my iPhone without my noticing. She became curious and began snooping through the contents. She soon stumbled across the notepad where I type

private reminders. She began reading

my most intimate messages, ones I had meant only for my eyes.

The words she read were: “Surrender. Powerless. Unmanageable. Came to believe. Made a decision. Inventory. Admitted.” Those were notes I had jotted down several days before when thinking about the program. Nothing else was there to find. My stepdaughter got very little out of her snooping. Just a few puzzling words and nothing else. But I got a major reality check.

What a difference between the two events. Because of a Power that surely is greater than myself, my house was in order. You kept me coming back.

—John I.



“In order to change the way we feel,  
we need to change the way we act.” —Old time AA saying

## “White Book” Comes to Russia



Sexaholism does not care about nationality, politics, or religion. I am Russian—and I’m a good example of that. At the end of the 80s, observing the collapse of Communism, I found myself left with a deep sense of frustration, resentment, and fear. Looking for something to help me cope with the outside world, I became quickly hooked on pornography.

The addiction progressed in the 90s despite a happy marriage and a newly found religious faith. My faith slowed down the progression of the disease; it kept me from the worst forms of acting out, but it did not cure me. Soon I was unable to function with or without my lust. I was depressed, burnt out, and headed for a nervous breakdown.

A few years ago I came to England, discovered SA, and got sober. Soon I became keen to help other sexaholics in my home country. Russian SA is tiny—there is one meeting in Moscow and a few members here and

there across a nation of 150 million. I discovered that there were many people like myself—suffering in despair and not knowing where to go. In fact, a good friend of mine who had been sober for many years in NA was being slowly killed by his sex addiction. I passed him the SA message and he got sober. In 2007, he started a group in Kazan, one of the major cities in Russia. Today the group has five or six regular members, meets three times a week, and is desperate to stay sober.

Most Russians cannot read English, and I wanted to make *Sexaholics Anonymous* available in Russian. By the grace of God, we were able to find a qualified interpreter, money, and a publisher to print the book. I am very grateful to say that the first authorized Russian translation of the book was published in July 2008 and is now available for distribution!

—Anonymous, UK



### How to Order the Russian Translation

Please email Timur at [sa.kazan.rt@gmail.com](mailto:sa.kazan.rt@gmail.com). Cost is \$5 to recover publishing costs, plus postage from Kazan, Russia.

Если вы хотите получить книгу «Анонимные Сексоголики» («Белую Книгу») на русском языке, пожалуйста, напишите Тимуру по адресу [sa.kazan.rt@gmail.com](mailto:sa.kazan.rt@gmail.com) и он вышлет вам необходимое количество экземпляров наложенным платежом. Одна книга стоит \$5 (пять долларов) плюс почтовые расходы из Казани.

---

## SA Lima, Peru Celebrates One Year



My name is Marjorie; I'm a sexaholic with 11 years of SA sobriety. I entered SA in Montreal and have attended groups in Minneapolis-St. Paul, Colorado Springs, and Los Angeles. When I came to Peru I thought my only way of connecting with others would be by Internet. But a priest encouraged me to put my heart and soul into my program and to help others who are in recovery. It did not take me long to find people who needed and wanted SA. The SA Central Office referred people to me. Our group celebrated its first anniversary on July 27, 2008.

Our group is in the district of San Juan de Lurigancho, located in Lima. We have six regular attenders who hardly ever miss a meeting, and four others who have just put their toe in but can't quite make the plunge. We all know what that is like. With the

regulars, we are able to grow in trust and recovery. There is a lot of honesty and support. Our service positions are filled and now we have someone in the group with a credit card who can order books for us. Until now, I was ordering books through a friend in the U.S.

Maybe we will meet at a convention someday. The more likely plan for connecting with others is to start Intergroup meetings with Chile, where SA has just started, or Venezuela, who are well established. We would do this with Skype because the distances are great and money is scarce. We spend a lot of money just paying for translations of *Essay* articles once in a while.

Happy 24 hours of Sobriety and Serenity! If you are ever in Lima, let us know and we will give you directions to our meeting. SAICO has my email address.

—Marjorie, Lima, Peru

## Greetings from Australia

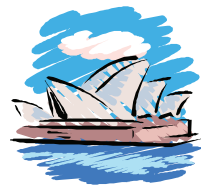
Hi All! I'm Gavin, sexaholic from Adelaide, South Australia.

I first started coming to SA in 2001 and identified immediately. I describe myself as a "hard core" sex addict in that I've crossed not only genders but species in my obsession with lust. My addiction is very similar

to the alcoholic in that once I act out I have no power to stop.

The compulsion is so strong that my physical well-being is at risk.

We have a small but strong group in Adelaide. Since the group is small





we can have difficulties around anonymity (Tradition Twelve). It's a bit like "personalities before principles" at times.

Since coming to SA I have found a new freedom and happiness I would have never known if I hadn't come. I've had many long periods of sobriety in SA and am grateful for the fellowship. Words cannot do justice to the feelings of gratitude and peace SA has given me.

I'm also an alcoholic so I attend AA meetings and find AA to have the

support I need to stay "on track," especially with the male members with lengthy sobriety.

I do have an SA sponsor. He now lives mostly in LA. I couldn't have done it without a sponsor because there are often things I need to share that are not appropriate to share at SA meetings.

Feel free to drop in sometime when next on holidays in Australia.

—*Yours in Loving Fellowship,*  
*Gavin*



## SAICO Announcements

### New Groups

#### USA

Athens, GA  
Austin, TX  
Charlotte, NC  
Chillicothe, OH  
Myrtle Beach, SC



#### additional USA meetings

Chicago, IL  
Nashua, NH

#### Bolivia

Santa Cruz

#### Canada

Lacombe, AB  
Trenton, ON

### Wanted: Native Speakers of Languages other than English

SA's International Committee is seeking speakers who are fluent in a variety of languages (including French, Spanish, Japanese, Polish, Korean, Arabic, and Greek) to assist in literature translation and to sponsor non-English-speaking members. If interested, please contact the International Committee at [saico@sa.org](mailto:saico@sa.org)



Articles for Essay should be submitted to [Essay@sa.org](mailto:Essay@sa.org).

## My Seventh Step Prayer



Dear Heavenly Father,

Give me self-worth to replace my selfishness, and self-esteem to replace my self-centeredness. Please grant me a spirit to overcome my shortcomings. Take care of me that I will not be afraid of doing well or being well. Grant me the relationships that will enable me to trust enough and to be ashamed less.

—*Anonymous*

## One Day at a Time (ODAAT)

I have often heard old-timers say, “One day at a time.” At first I didn’t understand. I was struggling so hard to string together even a few days of sobriety. I thought that when I reached 30 days, I had arrived. I just didn’t understand what it meant to have sobriety, just for today.

Twice, I reached one-year anniversaries. I was excited to get my one-year chip. Then, three days after my first “birthday,” I lost my sobriety. I had been so focused on what I had achieved that I forgot that it is my God who keeps me sober and that sobriety is only for today. The second time that it happened was three days before my anniversary. All of my attention was on what I was going to be able to share with my group about having reached one year. I forgot that I am only promised what I need for today, not for tomorrow and certainly not for the next three days.

Now I understand what it means to only have today. I choose to not live in the past or in the future. I live in the present. And the little acronym ODAAT helps me to remember that.

—*Nancy S.*

## Incense

Gold and silver are not beautiful and pure until heat is applied. The dross then comes to the surface so that it can be skimmed off. Diamonds, before the chisel, are inert, ugly rocks. Incense, without fire, has no sweet smell.

In recovery, the heat of the Steps allows my defects to surface and be removed. The diamond chisel of member relating to program member turns my life into one that radiates the light of my new found freedom. The fire of the working of my Higher Power burns through me. I am the incense, a fragrance for all I touch.

—*Nancy S.*

---

# A Note from the Delegate

Report of the General Delegate Assembly,  
July 2008, Akron, Ohio



The General Delegate Assembly met on Thursday and Friday prior to the July convention in Akron, Ohio. Attendees included 13 Delegates, five Alternates, three Trustees, one representative from SAICO, and several observers.

## GDA actions:

1. Revised meeting schedule to four meetings per year: three teleconferences and one face-to-face meeting at the July convention.
2. Reviewed Trustee tasks and committee reports:
  - *Finance*: Approved budget of projected Income of \$228,000 and Expenses of \$214,350.
  - *SACFC*: Approved brochure and text for SA web site. Approved additional resources for incarcerated persons.
  - *COMC*: Approved enhancing SA website (sa.org) for better communication. Approved new discount structure for literature: 20% discount on \$200+ orders and 30% discount on \$500+ orders. Approved increasing SAICO staff pay and benefits to be more in line with prevailing conditions.
  - *RAC*: Approved format and instructions for fellowship census. Delegates were asked to distribute information.
  - *Literature: Step Into Action 8-12* should be ready by mid-October. Translations of literature are in process for Egypt, France, Greece, Israel, Iran, Japan, Kenya, Korea, Netherlands, and Poland. Russian, Spanish, and German translations are currently available.
  - *Conventions*: Approved new guidelines and financial support for host cities.
  - *Internet*: Approved idea of major enhancements to sa.org for better communication, for ease of use by conventions, and to be more user friendly. Tech expertise needed, experienced IT volunteers are asked to contact SAICO.
  - *International*: Great need for native speakers and translators for literature and sponsorship.
  - *Structure*: Tasked to produce an updated and revised edition of the service manual. Volunteers are welcome.
  - *Nominations*. Need fellowship help in finding qualified candidates (SA and non-SA) for Trustee positions. Two current Trustee terms expire in July 2009. Please contact your regional Delegate or SAICO for details.

- .....
- Notes:**
1. At times, more than one committee is working on a task.
  2. Contact your Delegate if your IG has not yet received the census form.
  3. Forward any questions or comments to your delegate(s) through SAICO.
  4. Topics to be brought to the GDA should come from your group through your region. The written topic should include the Region's research, considerations, conclusions, recommendations, and reasons.

—Larry H., Pittsburgh, PA

---

# Trustees and Delegates

## *and Their Committee Assignments*

---

### Delegates

---

<b>Region</b>	<b>Delegate</b>	<b>Committees</b>
Mid-Atlantic	Larry H., <i>Chair</i> Tom A. Will K. Brian S., <i>Alt</i>	RAC, Structure, Nominations SACFC, Conventions  Structure, International
North Midwest	Marlene L. Gary L. Tony R., <i>Alt</i>	Nominations, Literature Literature
Northeast	Mike F. Tom V., <i>Alt</i>	Literature, RAC
Northwest	Judy C. Farley H. <i>Alt</i>	Nominations RAC
Southeast	Steve S. Bill S. Dave M., <i>Alt</i> Gary D., <i>Alt</i>	COMC, H&I, Finance  Finance COMC
South Midwest	Glen J. John W., <i>Alt</i>	
Southwest	Mike S. Jerry L. Richard G., <i>Alt</i> Tom K., <i>Alt</i>	Conventions, Agenda Literature, Translations
UK, Ireland	Nicholas S. Denise O., <i>Alt</i>	International

---

### Trustees

---

<b>Region</b>	<b>Trustee</b>	<b>Committees</b>
South Midwest	Gene J., <i>Chair</i> David T.	Nominations SACFC, International
Northeast	Luc B. John C.	Internet, Translation COMC, RAC
Mid Atlantic	Lawrence M., <i>CoChair</i> Sean R.	Literature, International Finance
North Midwest	Carlton B.	Finance, Conventions

---



**Trustees and Delegates can be reached  
at [saico@sa.org](mailto:saico@sa.org)**

## Calendar of Events



**September 26 - 28, 2008,**  
17th Annual SA / S-Anon  
Australian Conference.

*Acceptance is the Key.* Mt  
Evelyn Recreation Camp,  
Victoria. (03)9738 0402.

**September 26 - 27, 2008,**  
12th Annual Toronto SA  
Marathon. "...a Power  
greater than ourselves."  
Toronto, Ontario, Canada.  
Call 416-410-7622; email  
satoronto@reptiles.org

**September 27, 2008,** SA  
Step Workshop. *The Next  
Steps to Recovery: Steps 6  
thru 12.* Jacksonville, FL.  
Phone: 904-861-5408

**October 10 - 12, 2008,**  
SA Fall Retreat 2008. *Build-  
ing a Culture of Sobriety.*  
La Salle Manor, Plano, IL.  
Contact: 630-323-5918;  
<http://chicagosa.org/>; or

[contact@chicagosa.org](mailto:contact@chicagosa.org)

**November 7 - 9, 2008,**  
3rd Annual Veterans Day  
Weekend Workshop,  
Marietta, SC. *The Steps We  
Took.* Contact: David G.,  
[mybigdaddyskid@yahoo.com](mailto:mybigdaddyskid@yahoo.com),  
or 864-642-5039.

**November 7-9, 2008,**  
Northwest Regional Fall  
Retreat. Aldersgate Camp,  
Turner, OR. Phone: 503-  
224-9840; web: [www.saportlandmetro.org](http://www.saportlandmetro.org)

**November 14 - 16, 2008,**  
Eighth Annual SA Fall  
Men's Retreat. *We Will  
Not Regret The Past.* Ben  
Lomond, CA. Visit our web-  
site: [www.sabayarea.org](http://www.sabayarea.org).

**March 6 - 9, 2009,** SA/S-  
Anon Australia Conference.  
Greenhills Centre,

at the Cotter in the ACT,  
Australia. Contact:  
[jfsbrown@yahoo.com.au](mailto:jfsbrown@yahoo.com.au)

**Submit events to  
be listed in Essay to  
[saico@sa.org](mailto:saico@sa.org)**

*Submit info to be listed in  
December 2008 Essay by  
October 15, 2008.*

*Please submit dates, theme,  
place, and points of contact.  
Event flyers are helpful  
for responding to member  
questions.*

*Please contact an interna-  
tional operator for  
guidance on making  
international calls.*

### Upcoming International Conventions



**January 9-11, 2009, Nashville, TN**

*We Absolutely Insist on Enjoying Life.*

For more info, call 877-434-9006, email us at  
[nashvilleconvention2009@gmail.com](mailto:nashvilleconvention2009@gmail.com), or visit our  
website: [www.sa-sanonconventions.org](http://www.sa-sanonconventions.org).

**July 2009, Denver, CO**

*Serenity in the Rockies.* Look for details in upcom-  
ing issues of Essay.

*Events are listed here solely as a service, not as an endorsement by Essay or SAICO.*

**Subscribe to Essay.** Individual subscriptions are \$12.00 per year. Multi-year subscriptions are \$12.00 for the first year, \$10.00 for each subsequent year. Group rate is \$10.00 per year for 10 or more subscriptions sent to one address. Essay is also available by online subscription in PDF format. For more information contact [saico@sa.org](mailto:saico@sa.org) or Essay, PO Box 3565, Brentwood, TN 37024-3565, USA.

## The Twelve Traditions of Sexaholics Anonymous

1. Our common welfare should come first; personal recovery depends on 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 SA membership is a desire to stop lusting and become sexually sober.
4. Each group should be autonomous, except in matters affecting other groups or SA 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. SA 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. SA 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 TV.
12. Anonymity is the spiritual foundation of all our traditions, ever reminding us to place principles above personalities.

*Essay presents the experience, strength, and hope of SA members. Opinions expressed in Essay are not to be attributed to SA as a whole, nor does publication of any article imply endorsement by SA or by Essay. Manuscripts are invited, although no payment can be made. All articles submitted are assumed intended for publication and are subject to editing. All materials submitted become the property of Essay for copyright purposes. In submitting articles, please remember that SA's sobriety definition is not debated, since it distinguishes SA from other sex addiction fellowships. SA is not a forum for non-SA sobriety. In submissions, please do not reference unadjudicated illegal actions.*



555-1211

Pick up  
Corner

God,

higher power.



Grant me the serenity to  
accept the things I cannot  
change, like her!

the courage to change the  
things I can, me

and the wisdom to know  
the difference!

which is hard!



25.4 x 33  
= 75  
1.2  
7.5  
.12  
83.82