

Essay

September 2013



Rocketed into a Fourth Dimension

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.

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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.

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Rocketed Into a Fourth Dimension

My name is L.A. and my sobriety date is August 19, 2000.

One of my favorite passages in the literature is a quote from the Big Book:

We have found much of heaven and we have been rocketed into a fourth dimension of existence of which we had not even dreamed. ... The central fact of our lives today is the absolute certainty that our Creator has entered into our hearts and lives in a way which is indeed miraculous. He has commenced to accomplish those things for us which we could never do by ourselves. (AA, 25).

I think we should read this passage to every newcomer at his or her first meeting. If I had heard this when I first walked through the doors of SA, I might have understood that no matter how far away that fourth dimension seemed to me at the time, that was where I was headed. I still need to remember that every day. Newcomers need to know that all of us together are headed to the realm of the miraculous.

As a kid I was lonely and ashamed of myself. By the time I was three years old, I had deep contempt for myself. I believed that I was ugly and of no use to anyone. I struggled with constant negative feelings and did anything I could to get out of the moment.

At times I would lose myself in music. I would shut the door of my room, turn my record player up full blast, and immerse myself in classical music—and I was gone. Another escape was reading biographies of heroes. I would lose myself in the story, thinking, “If only I could be like that football player at Notre Dame, or that famous aviator...” I wanted to merge into the other person’s life.

As a boy, I felt self-conscious playing sports or army men. When I was around other boys I thought they hated me and didn’t want me around. I also rejected the boy inside of me. I felt hopeless, and I didn’t trust my parents enough to talk to them about these things. I thought my problems were their fault, so I shut them out. I remember deciding at the age of three that I would be my own parent. My brother and two



sisters also had their own issues with life at home, but I didn't trust them enough to open up to them either.

Starting when I was twelve, I would disappear for six or seven hours at a time to escape the stress I felt at home. I would leave our home in North Jersey and walk all the way to the New York border and back again. My parents questioned me about where I'd been, but I just gave them vague answers. I did anything I could to get out of the house.

As an early teen, I constantly ate sweets—secretly, in the pantry. I also started bingeing and purging. This went in parallel with a secret addiction to pornography and masturbation. These were the only things that—at least temporarily—offered relief for my constant self-contempt. I wanted to be anybody but me. I would look at another boy and think, "He's athletic and good looking. I want to be him. I want what he has." I couldn't be truly close to any boy because of this constant desire to merge into him. My variation on "Please connect with me and make me whole! (SA, v)" was, "Please let me become you."

My brother and I and several other kids had a secret porn club. I felt ashamed looking at female porn. It was as if the women were looking back at me saying, "You're contemptible; you're not worthy of looking at me." I would masturbate several times a day, but only to male images. I felt that I first needed to

become a man, like the men I saw in the male porn, before I could move onto females.

I tried to understand what was going on with me. Back then, if a guy looked at male pornography, that meant he was gay. So one day when I was 15, I told my brother that I thought I was gay. He said that it was okay and no big deal, but the label never felt right to me. I didn't really know what it meant at the time. I was just mimicking what others told me I should be saying.

By age 17 I decided I wasn't gay and I got a girlfriend. One weekend we became intimate—not to the point of intercourse, but for me this was a real crossroads—and this caused major stress. In fact I was so stressed that on that same weekend, I acted out with a man anonymously for the first time. I was filled with confusion and shame. But soon, acting out anonymously with males became my new high. It became the only thing that seemed to numb the pain.

Then the need for "different," "better," and "more" (SA, 139) kicked in. I was getting choosier about my partners. But being picky took more time, so my pursuits would take a good part of the night.

In my 20s, I began experiencing consequences. I made 10 or so visits to STD clinics when I experienced symptoms. I'd say, "Just give me something to get me out of this." As soon as I was feeling better, I went

back out there. And things got worse: police chases, citations, and muggings at knifepoint at places where I acted out. Nothing stopped me. At the height of it all, I was drinking coffee all day long, working full-time, acting out during the day, going to grad school at night, and then almost every night acting out again—often into the next morning. I would get four to five hours of sleep. This went on for years.

I don't know how I lived through that period but somehow God saved me. I was terrified to stop and look at my behavior. At times I would ask myself, "What's underneath all this?" Then one day someone said, "Why don't you just embrace what's true and enter the gay lifestyle?" I thought, "Okay, I'll give it another shot." I went back into that lifestyle with gusto. I joined a gay church, went to parties, and got into organizations and then relationships. This never felt right, but I suppressed those thoughts, dreading that there was really no place for me anywhere.

Four years later, I visited a friend at an in-patient treatment center, and it was there that I first admitted that I too had an addiction. I knew that this friend had been attending SA meetings, but before I always thought, "That poor guy, how messed up he must be to have to go to SA." When he told me that the meetings were great, I always tuned him out. But now I wondered whether I might

need them as well. So I went to my first SA meeting on October 30, 1989, at a church in Washington, DC. That was the turning point of my life.

When I walked into that meeting, I was amazed at the openness I found. I knew I needed what they offered, and I was struck abtinent. I guess by then my body was so completely worn out from all my acting out that I was completely spent. I got sober, but I was still living in the gay lifestyle, and I felt rejection for that in the SA rooms. I fought the sobriety definition tooth and nail. I thought, "That definition is against me and all of us like me."

I also fought Roy K. (our founder) as well as the people in my meetings. I joined the "rebels" in our program who were trying to change the sobriety definition to "spouse as you understand spouse." I would go to conventions, stand up, and rail at the fellowship. I would say, "You're discriminating against me. Don't you know I need this program as much as you do?" This was the best I knew then. I think I was really trying to say, "People, I'm dying, please don't reject me."

Despite my rebellion, Roy was always kind to me. One day he said to me, "Just keep coming back, don't use, and watch what God does." I couldn't stand Roy's kindness at the time. I thought, "That's easy for you to say." I couldn't think about God; I had rejected Him.

But then my heart inexplicably started to soften. I didn't know what was coming over me. I learned later that others in the fellowship had been praying for me.

God began giving me visions of who He had created me to be and of the manhood He was calling me into. He showed me where the pull of wanting to be someone else had come from. He began to affirm the rejected boy inside of me, the masculinity He had given me. He was healing my deep fear of men. That's what I was missing—what I was yearning for—all those years.

God started showing me that the male drive toward men is normal. I began to see that little boys at a certain age make heroes of their dads. They need to feel their dads' muscles and beards and everything about them. That's God-given, because they're learning what it means to be a man. They're boys, identifying with the masculine. Somewhere along the line, that process never fully happened for me. It's nobody's fault, it's just a fact.

God spoke to me that all men are created to feel a longing for brotherly love. I understood that my entry into the gay lifestyle was really a search for identity, which I was now receiving from God. I left the lifestyle because I had found something that finally rang true for

me.

I began to see that God made me a man, no different from other men. He was maturing that man right there and then. I began looking at men differently. I didn't want to make lust objects of them anymore. I wanted to be friends with men as whole persons—to relate to them in strong, healthy, brotherly love. Some of these men were from my church, but most of them were my friends in SA. One day, I stepped out in faith and went on a fishing trip with the church men's group. I would have hated this before, but now I loved it.



I began to see that Roy was right. God was doing something I could never have predicted. As all of these missing pieces were coming together inside of me, I started walking a little straighter. I did my best to follow God and pray, and I wanted to devote my life to Him.

But then, when I had almost three years of SA sobriety, I took a detour. Something went off inside of me. I thought I heard God say, "Leave this program; you and I will do this together." So I walked out of the fellowship, thinking, "It's going to be okay now, because God and I are solid."

I was in two other fellowships besides SA, and I left them all. This didn't turn out well. I stayed out for eight years. I eventually lost my sobriety. In the year 2000,

I ended up in a binge, returning to my old patterns of needing the male connection. I knew what I was doing, but I was despondent because I felt completely powerless to stop the cycle.

A few months later I crawled back to SA, convinced I'd be scorned and rejected, and that people would say, "You again? You're back?" But—as many others have experienced—when I came back, all I found were love and open arms.

I got a new sponsor. I joined an accountability circle and started working *all* the Steps—not just One, Two, and Three as I had done before. I began hearing truth again from God, and it was replacing all the lies. I understood that although I might have read about the truth, or someone else could have told me the truth, I had to hear the truth from God Himself—because God is the source of all truth.

I began to see the truth about our program, and to admit that I'm powerless over lust, not over acting out. Even though I might not be engaging in acting-out behavior, if I'm still drinking in the look, then I'm drunk. In the past, I held on to the idea that if I didn't touch, I could look all I wanted and keep my sobriety. But in truth I was already drunk just from looking. So I decided that my bottom line would include "no willful lust drinks." And that's when I started to see miracles

happen—one after another.

The healing with my parents was the defining experience of my adult life. I had despised my mother for most of my life, but in 2005, I was able to make a sincere heartfelt amends to her. I had made a formal amends to her before, but (even though I was doing the best I could at the time) my heart wasn't really in it. Then in 2005, God softened my heart toward her. I heard Him say, "Your mother is my precious daughter. I hold her in the palm of my hand, just like I hold you. I release you from the responsibility of holding her accountable for what she did; I've got her." That was all I needed to hear. Instantly the hatred was washed away, and in came love, compassion, patience, and kindness for my mother.

I was with my mom this past May, on the day before she died. I spent the day caressing her hands, her face, and her hair. I told her how much I loved her, and that it was okay for her to go whenever she needed to. I never thought I would be sober and be able to do that when my mom passed on, but because of God's grace, there I was.

When Mom died, I felt joy that she was being released into the hands of a loving God, and that she and I had been restored. And because of experiences like this one, today I know that recovery is about a personal relationship with God.

Everything starts there.

I've been dating a woman for two and a half years. Two years ago I made a full disclosure to her. Her response was 45 seconds of complete silence—I could barely handle the suspense. Then she said, "I feel like I'm in the presence of holiness." I wept. She saw the power of God to transform a human life. I understood how much God was blessing me with this woman, who looked to God first—and not to herself—for what this might mean for her. I was in awe that God would pour out his grace like this.

For the past 11 years, I've been in touch with one man in our program on a daily basis. That consistent, deep connection has made all the difference in my recovery. And even though I go to meetings and I do service, I understand today that my main partner is God. I'm the junior partner; God leads the way. And if I pay attention, I find that He's speaking to me all the time.

The most valuable thing I do today in my recovery is go to business meetings. That may seem crazy to members who can't stand them (I don't really like them either), but at business meetings I can see

what's going on with me today. Am I in my defects today, or am I seeing victory? Is my heart open and accepting, or am I standing back in judgment? This is a real weathervane for me.

But the biggest change I see in myself is the daily recognition that my life is no longer mine. That's the most profound spiritual idea I can imagine living, and that's the change this program has made in me.

Each of us is a story in progress. Bill W. introduces the stories at the back of the Big Book by saying,

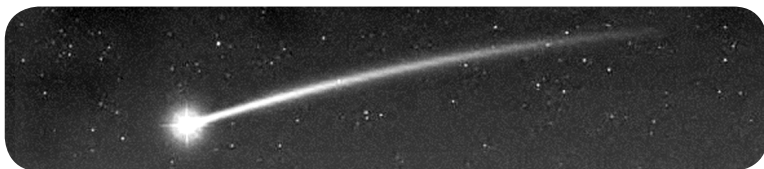
Each individual, in the personal stories, describes in his own language and from his own point of view the way he established his relationship with God. (AA, 29)

So here again is our ultimate truth:

...our Creator has entered into our hearts and lives in a way which is indeed miraculous. He has commenced to accomplish those things for us which we could never do by ourselves.

I'm forever grateful to God and to the SA fellowship for teaching me these things.

—L.A.



How SA Found Me

I'm Bob H., a Class A (non-SA) Trustee, elected by the GDA in July 2010. I currently serve as Trustee Chair. I would like to share some of my journey as well as how I came to serve the SA fellowship.

I was raised in a wonderful and loving family with great moral principles. I went to church, served as an altar boy, and attended Catholic School for several years. In spite of my many opportunities to learn how to live a spiritual life and become a decent human being, somehow I never fit in. For years, I did many horrible things and was out of control. I did not know that I was living in delusion. Not until 35 years later, when my way of living drove me to my bottom, was I forced to seek help.

On my 35th birthday, on March 28, 1982, I had my last drink of alcohol. I was introduced to the spiritual program of Alcoholics Anonymous in a treatment center. You could never have convinced me that I was starting the most fantastic part of my life. I was not excited to be there, but I knew I was crazy and needed to be somewhere. I had been in trouble all of my life and I had no idea that I was an alcoholic. It was with help from other alcoholics

that two days later I came to believe that I was "powerless" over alcohol. I already knew that my life was unmanageable, as did many other people.

It was at this time that my journey into spirituality and a wonderful way of living began. When I was released from the center, a fellow fireman met me at the door and took me to my first AA meeting. In that room I fit in for the first time in my life. I joined in with this fellowship of damaged human beings and started forming friendships unlike any I had ever known.

With a sponsor's help I got involved in service and started a new way of living. I've been blessed to serve AA at many levels and to meet people from all over the United States and the world. I've met people from different cultures, races, and religions. We all had the same illness. I belonged.

In 2009, I began sponsoring a young man who was exhibiting some alarming signs of destructive sexual behavior. I also had a friend who was having problems in this area. At the same time I was a service sponsor for a man who "just happened" to be a member of SA.



After I spoke with him for awhile, he sent me the White Book and some other literature. When I read the White Book, I was afforded another spiritual experience. What I read fit my sponsee and my friend, but something else happened: I truly believe that I was given another piece of a Spiritual Awakening. I was amazed. As I discussed all this with my sponsee who is a member of SA, my amazement grew even more.



One thing I've learned over the years is that just when I think that I know where my journey is taking me, I need to be ready for God to reveal another road. In one of our conversations, my friend asked me if I would consider putting my name in for Class A Trustee for SA. I was astonished. I asked him if he knew what he was talking about and he assured me he did. I told him I had to pray about it and talk to my wife and my sponsor. I did all these things twice. I got the same answer from God both times: "Our real purpose is to fit ourselves to be of maximum service to God and the people about us" (AA, 77)—not just alcoholics. My wife and my sponsor were both supportive, and so started my spiritual journey with SA.

I knew that I was in the right place when I attended the SA International Convention in Chicago in 2010, when I was elected as an

SA Trustee. I met a lot of wonderful people and heard many amazing things while I was there, but it was during dinner on Saturday night that I saw very clearly this is a spiritual journey. As I looked around the room I saw several hundred smiling faces and people with "the lights on" in their eyes. They were laughing and having great fellowship with friends new and old. I sat down with a table full of people whom I had never met before but I knew them spiritually. It reminded me of the first AA meeting I attended.

Then I had another revelation: I truly believe that God chose alcoholics to introduce this spiritual program to the world. Alcoholics are in plain sight and they are everywhere. Of all the spiritually bankrupt people on earth, alcoholics were the most obvious. When other people started seeing this hopeless bunch getting better, they began to think that maybe what alcoholics were using could help them too.

I believe that this same thing is happening through SA. People are witnessing healing through a spiritual program that is not religious; a program that is forgiving, tolerant, and non-judgmental. The people who have been spiritually healed give freely of themselves to help fellow sufferers. SA is vital and must remain spiritually sound for those yet to come.

Today I know this spiritual program of recovery does not belong to any one fellowship. It is a gift from God to His suffering children. It is the duty of each fellowship to keep

their own message clear for those yet to come. Thank you for allowing me to be of service.

—Bob H., Huntley, MT,
Trustee Chair

Have You Thought About Serving as an SA Trustee?

Do you like...

- Meeting new friends?
- Working on a team?
- Giving back to the fellowship?
- Watching the promises come alive in your life?
- Attending the Conventions?

SA Trustees, past and present, report receiving far more from their service than they have given. For me, serving as an SA Trustee was a great way to be in relationships with sober people who are giving back what they have received. The time and energy commitment was minimal compared to the benefits I received.

Trustee duties include overseeing SAICO operations, handling fellowship financial and legal matters, and serving on at least two SA committees (such as Literature, Corrections Facilities, or International committee). Trustees also attend the two international conventions per year, for a four-year term (expenses paid).

Trustee candidates must:

- Have five or more years of SA sobriety, and must fully support the Cleveland Clarification of the Sobriety Definition (SA, 192)
- Have service experience at the local, Intergroup, regional, and/or International level
- Have a sponsor and sponsor others
- Have worked the Steps and continue in an active program.
- Have organizational/communication skills, ability to set goals and complete projects, and dependability

Interested? If so (or if you would like to nominate or recommend someone else) contact SAICO at saico@sa.org (Subject line: Trustee Inquiry). We look forward to serving with you!

—*In Service,*
Dave T., Nominations Committee Chair



Twenty-Five Years, One Day at a Time

Early on in my sobriety adventure with Sexaholics Anonymous, I heard the expression “One day at a time.” At the time my marriage was on the line and my acting out had caused me a lot of trouble. I wanted to be free from this sexaholic life for more than one day!

Over the years, however, I’ve come to appreciate the phrase more and more. I suppose the change began as I realized that the Twelve Step program handed to us by Alcoholics

Anonymous grew out of some drunks’ experience with sobriety. Nothing more, nothing less. The stories and the suggestions published in *Alcoholics Anonymous* were the result of members trying many new behaviors and keeping only the ones that worked. Any theorizing about recovery from alcoholism was left to others; the AAs were focused on saving their lives. Thus, they learned that living “one day at a time” resulted from living each day sober and coping with the ever-present power of addiction.

When I came to SA in 1988, our “White Book” was an 8 1/2x11- inch booklet in typewriter script. The contents, however, were dependent

on the experience passed on from AA plus the experience of the pioneer sexaholics whose successful sexual sobriety transformed their lives. Living on a 24-hour basis was an essential part of that sobriety.

As I stopped resisting the truth that recovery is one day at a time and began to live it, an amazing thing happened. I discovered that working this program got much easier. I came to realize that only today do I need to not touch myself, to not fantasize, to make a phone call, to go to a



meeting, and to pray and to read. There was no reason to obsess about yesterday and no need to try to control tomorrow. Indeed, as I kept working Steps Two and Three, I discovered that I had a Higher Power who was willing and able to take care of my past and my future—if I would simply remain connected to Him in the present. For several years this Higher Power was the program, as well as my fellow sexaholics at meetings. Over time, I moved “humanity” into that Higher Power role. For many years, though, I’ve been comfortable saying that it is God who takes care of the past and future, though I might still add “God, as I understand Him,” as stated in the

italics of Steps Three and Eleven.

I guess that's at the core of what I've learned about sobriety over the past 25 years. If I stay sober today and work my program today and connect with God today, I will be fine. If I begin my day by saying, "God, whatever you want to have happen in my life today is fine by me," then that is what will happen. If I go through each day, regardless of my opinions about what's happening, saying over and over, "Thank you, God," then I have great days. In fact, most of the time, I am happy, joyous,

.....

Members Share

I had been in SA for about a year and was working on my Third Step when I was scheduled to be sent to the other side of the country for a year of training with my religious community. Because this training year is very structured, I did not want to go (my disease hates structure). I spent five or six months wishing the training would be cancelled.

One day, after complaining yet again to my sponsor about this program, he stopped me and said, "There is only one question here: Do you think you can stay sober during your year out there?" I knew that I had many tools at my disposal, and that the structured life of the training year

and free today.

Frequently I tell people in our program that SA is not for those who can choose to be sober. That's not what powerlessness over lust is. However, SA is a program for those who desire to be sober, one day at a time, and are willing to work the Steps to get that result. Then we get that spiritual awakening promised in Step Twelve, and in that spiritual awakening I have always found sobriety. For that, I am thankful!

—David M., Portland

In Training

could even be good for my sobriety. I just did not want to go! But his question stopped my complaining, and, as difficult as it was to admit, I said, "Yes, I think I can stay sober."



Upon arriving at the center where the year would be spent, I started building my SA program with phone meetings, calls to my sponsor, emails to other members, and reading lots of literature. There weren't any face-to-face SA meetings in the area, but there were open AA meetings. I asked those in charge of my training for permission to go to one of the open AA meetings. They knew I was in SA so they encouraged me to go—with the condition that I tell the other trainees where I was

going. They reasoned that, since we would be spending a year together, it was important that we be open with each other. I thought that was fair and prepared myself to make the announcement.

When the day came, I stood up after a class and said that I was going to an AA meeting that afternoon. The response was overwhelming. Five people came up to me afterwards and expressed their interest in the

program. One guy came with me to a meeting that very same day. Everyone else thanked me for being so honest and said they admired my courage.

In the car on the way to the meeting, the guy who came with me said, "I'm going to this meeting but AA is not my primary fellowship."



Sensing that he wanted to disclose more, I told him that I too am in another fellowship for problems with pornography (I find this is the easiest way to explain sexaholism to someone not in the program). "Sexaholics Anonymous" I blurted out.

"Really? Me too!" he exclaimed. God sent me another SA! I was overwhelmed with gratitude.

From that day on, the other SA and I have had mini-meetings together, reading from the program literature and sharing our experience strength and hope. A third person has now joined us. God is using me to carry the message to others. My sobriety has never been better!

—Anonymous

Dealing with Death in Recovery

I'm Ken, a sexaholic. With the grace of my Higher Power, the Twelve Step program of recovery, the fellowship of SA, a caring and loving sponsor, and a loving and supportive wife, I've been sexually sober since December 1, 2007.

Prior to coming to SA, I was caught cheating on my wife. After years of living in lies, deception, and acting out, I realized that lust was killing me. My wife has supported and loved me through 39 years of marriage, even during my addiction. But at this point I needed to save my

marriage, so I found SA. I've been sober since my first meeting. I did all my relapsing before I got here!

When I was active in my addiction, I had many character defects. I was a fixer; I knew what was best for everyone. I carried resentments for decades. I was judgmental, egotistical, and self-centered. I manipulated people to get what I wanted. But since coming to SA, my Higher Power has led me to a new way of living, through every Step of my recovery.

One significant part of my

journey was how God led me, as I started my second year of recovery, through the deaths of my mother, my brother, and my dog—all within eight months of each other! Through all of this I had to work my program hard to get out of myself. My sponsor recently suggested that I share my experience with the fellowship, as it might be useful to others who are dealing with death.

My journey began in January 2009. My father was 81, legally blind, and diabetic. My 78-year-old mother was frail and had other problems related to yet-undiagnosed lung cancer. My 54-year-old brother had just been diagnosed with Stage Four melanoma. At the time, my wife and I lived 550 miles away from my parents and 200 miles from my brother.

My brother and I had never been close. But in January 2009, when he went through a series of surgeries, I was able to be there for him. I sat in the room with him for six days as he underwent his first treatment. I was his advocate with the doctors, and I kept our family apprised of his progress. I called my sponsor and other members in the fellowship, and I meditated and prayed for the strength to be there.

My brother returned home, I stayed with him until his check-up two weeks later. Once there,

his doctor recommended another surgery for the following week.

After the second surgery, my brother began looking for doctors for chemotherapy. When he was settled, I returned home—six weeks after leaving for a one-week surgery and recovery period. I had been able to be there with him the entire time.

Soon after that, my mother revealed she had lung cancer. She had known this for six months but did not tell us or seek treatment. Then she began chemotherapy, which made her quite sick.

About a month later, I went back to Tennessee for my brother's 55th birthday. He should have been dead the year before, but he could still get around. He was excited to see me. He wanted to show me things that had been important to him. He especially loved the outdoors, hunting, and fishing, and he loved the hills and countryside of Tennessee. He took me to some of these places, and I enjoyed the trip because my brother was opening up to me as I had tried to do with him.

About three weeks later, my dad called to say that he could no longer care for my mother. He asked if I would come and help him find a place for her. I was on my way there when he called to say she had died that morning.

My trip was now focused on



burying my mother. And—for the first time in my life—I was helping my dad! Together we arranged for the funeral. I also helped him set up services for his own care. I was able to support him through his decision-making process and not interfere.

As we were finalizing my mother's funeral, my brother called to say that he was not well and needed my help. I had to tell him that I was not in a position to leave dad. We had not yet buried our mother, and dad was not yet set up. With input from my sponsor and others, I accepted that I could not help my brother this time. I could not be everything for everyone.

After my mother's funeral, I returned home overnight. The next day I headed to Tennessee to see my brother, with the intention of staying with him until the end. His health had deteriorated significantly; the cancer was sapping all his strength. He gradually stopped eating and began to sleep most of the time.

The hospice people came every day, but I was his primary caregiver.

During this time I called my sponsor—three, four, five, or six times a day—as well as others in the program. I listened to program recordings and read program and spiritual material. I prayed for the strength to do what I needed to do. Once a day I'd ask a friend of my brother to sit with him so I could go

to town or sit outside and meditate.

In the last hours as my brother was dying, I held his hand and prayed with him. Then the hospice people came and pronounced him dead. My brother's last wishes were for his ashes to be scattered over a trail in Tennessee. I traveled that trail and found a place I thought he would have liked. As I scattered the ashes, I cried and was not ashamed. In fact, I cried a lot while I was helping my brother. My grief and pain came to the surface, and—because of my SA recovery—that was okay.

When I got back home after all of this, I asked God for a chance to recover from my grief. Two weeks later, my chocolate Labrador was diagnosed with cancer. That was the

last time I ever asked God for rest! In fact, it was the last time I asked Him to do anything for me other than give me the strength to carry out His will and the wisdom to know what to do. He seems to have a much higher

opinion of my abilities than I do, and so far, He has always been right. I have seldom been right.

I cared for my dog and made his life as comfortable as possible for the next six months. I cried for him too. I was stroking his head when the vet administered the injection that would stop his heart. Tears ran down my face.

In less than eight months, I lost



my mother, my brother, and my beloved dog. I grieved for each of them as I lost them, but I accepted that my role in all this was to carry out God's will. I could be helpful, I could be mentally and spiritually present, I could listen and care—but I could not change a thing except my attitude and my actions. God was in control; I was not. My job was to be of service.

Today, the story "Acceptance Was the Answer" (AA, 407), the Eleventh Step prayer, and the

Serenity prayer are the foundations of my life. Without those prayers, the SA program, a loving sponsor, the love and support of my wife, and the fellowship of SA, I would not have made it through that period of my life sober. For that, I will never be sufficiently grateful. My experience has taught me that if I work the SA program and stay connected to God, He will get me through anything, no matter how hard it might seem.

—Ken J., Atlanta, GA

Where Money and Spirituality Mix

There was a place in A.A. where spirituality and money would mix, and that was in the hat! (12&12, 163)

Do you have a problem with money? I did. I had too much!

I wasn't born to money. I left home when I was 21 with a very used car, about 300 dollars in cash, the clothes on my back, and a prospective job 1,540 miles away. In the years since then, I've been able to save money and live a comfortable middle-class lifestyle. But I still had a problem with money.

I didn't realize this until I heard in the Ninth Step promises that the "fear of financial insecurity" would leave me. Fortunately the Fourth Step includes a fear inventory. While

working to this point in the program, I began to sense more clearly that I had a problem with money. It wasn't that I was greedy; on the contrary I was very generous to friends and gave happily to many causes. What was the problem then?

Fear, for one thing.

The Big Book says pointedly that fear is a big problem. It calls it "an evil and corroding thread" (67) and says it "ought to be classed with stealing" (68). For another thing, I used my money-making ability to hide from reality. It's difficult to describe this in just a few words, but I'll try.

I really thought that I deserved



no less than I had because I had made it on my own. But—I didn't and I hadn't. I was given a talent from God (as I understand Him) and a blessing from my parents. The talent was in a field that had high income potential and the blessing was from my parents, who taught me to live within my means, pay cash, and not to get into debt. I worked hard at developing this talent and living the blessing, but even the ability to do this wasn't innate. It too came from somewhere else. What I'm trying to say is that my ability to use the talent and blessing was also given to me. I don't own these, they were given to me.

Now it's my turn to give back. I found another blessing in the program, and that's the Seventh Tradition.

There are times when I'm trudging the road so to speak and can't seem to find my way. When this is the case, I look to see if I have a resentment, fear, or owe an apology. If the answer is no, then I look for any hidden lust. If there isn't any, I seek out someone (usually my sponsor) more sober than I am and see what he has to say. If there is still no relief, I'll make a gratitude list. If this doesn't work, then the Seventh Tradition comes to the rescue. I simply go online and make a donation to the Seventh Tradition at sa.org. It works every time!

For me, it's another way to carry

the message to the sexaholic who still suffers. Under the title "SA Is Self-Supporting," the White Book says: "The fellowship has evolved a means of supporting its world services that is working" (183). I like to think that when I contribute to SAICO, I'm reaching the hand of SA to someone in another place who doesn't have the advantages of sponsor, meetings, and literature.

I also had to give the amount of my donation a thorough overhaul, and here's how I did it. I used an inflation calculator to see whether I was giving enough. I posed this problem: If the first donation in

the first AA meeting that passed the hat in 1939 was one penny—the smallest possible coin available at the time—then what was the smallest amount I would give today? The

equivalent of one cent in 1939 is 17 cents today. In other words, if you put a dollar in the hat today that is only .0588235 cents in 1939 dollars. Or let's say you wanted to be very generous in 1939 and you put a dollar in the hat. That's equivalent to over 15 dollars today.

If you have a problem with money, I am happy to share my solution with you. Maybe you too need to ask yourself, "What am I giving back?" Who knows? Relief from the bondage of self may only be a few clicks away.

—Brian G., Idaho



Just the Way It Is Supposed to Be

Being still inexperienced and having just made conscious contact with God, it is not probable that we are going to be inspired at all times.

We might pay for this presumption in all sorts of absurd actions and ideas. Nevertheless, we find that our thinking will, as time passes, be more and more on the plane of inspiration. We come to rely upon it. (AA, 87)

A couple of months ago, it became apparent that I would need to rotate out of the SA service structure due to other obligations in my life. I found myself struggling with grandiosity in the form of fear for the future of SA, and grief for the loss of my GDA friends, whom I would no longer be seeing on a regular basis. One would think it would be obvious when one is acting upon an absurd idea (as referred to on AA page 87), but it often escapes me when I do just that. It helped a lot to study the “spirit of rotation” as discussed in the AA 12&12 and “The AA Group” pamphlet.

While speaking a friend on the phone, he reminded me that “things happen for a reason” and then “everything is just as it is supposed to be.”

As I reflected on these things, in light of his comments, it occurred to me that all of my angst had been because of my own thinking, which is to say my self-centered, self-concerned view of the world and my place in it. My own presumptions and less than truly spiritual behaviors

have been the primary cause of my displeasure. Things are, for the most part, just as I envisioned they would be. But how we got from point A to point B did not follow my map for this part of the journey, thus I chose to be disturbed.

I prayed about it, thought I had received clear guidance from God, and further discussed it with my sponsor, who essentially said the same thing my friend did. And I prayed about it some more.



Then, to my great personal consternation, the rest of the players did not follow the script!. Who wants to sweep the floor when he can simply be the director, even if one doesn't have any discernible history of being a successful director or even of being a director period?

As things continue to unfold, and I allow my sponsor and others to wipe a little dirt off of my spiritual glasses, I may finally see that things are just the way they are supposed to be.

My perception of the guidance I received, my reaction to that direction, and the resultant actions since have still brought me to the

same basic position in which I thought I would be. Who am I to tell God how to accomplish what He has so graciously shown me? Isn't that like saying "God, wait a minute, I agree with your plan, but it would work better to do it this way." I can only imagine how God gets a deep belly laugh at times while watching some of my ideas unfold. But then again, that is as it should be.

After all, God gave me Twelve Steps, Twelve Traditions, and Twelve Concepts for Service, along with the SA fellowship, sponsors, and other spiritual guides to help me find my way. As long as I continue to practice

these spiritual principles with as much willingness, honesty and open-mindedness as I can muster, it will all continue to be just the way it is supposed to be.

Yes, I am coming to the end of one season in my life, but a new season is already beginning. Whatever role God assigns me, I need to remember that things happen for a reason. I rarely need to know the reason, and that is just the way it is supposed to be. Thus I am now stepping into the future without fear, and without hanging onto those absurd ideas.

—Anonymous

Dealing With Resentment

Recently, an incident that occurred in a therapy group I attend that left me feeling resentful toward one of the group members. He had called me a "dry drunk." I needed to work my program in order to address my resentment.

This man's words (and his tone) had hurt me—even though it may not have been his intention to hurt me. My hurt turned to anger, and anger makes me feel unsafe. I needed the group to be a safe place for me to share—but after he spoke to me that way I felt shame and rejection. The feelings were so overwhelming at the time that I wanted to cry, but I was numb. I wanted to run out of the room and never return.



The reality is that his words triggered my past wounds. When I was a young boy in school, my rabbi would make fun of me because I had learning disabilities. Throughout my childhood years I felt worthless. The reaction felt to that group member's words was the same reaction that I had as a boy: I wanted to run away. As a child, I would cry for hours, thinking, "These people don't understand me. I'm different, I have a learning problem." I didn't want to admit that I had a problem. And I feel this same way in my therapy group. I don't want to admit fully that my disease is a problem for me; I want to think that I'm different.

In the end I discussed this with

my sponsor, and—after taking a full inventory of this group member’s character defects!—I asked myself what my part was in the situation. What character defects led me to interpret things the way I did? Then, the answers became clear to me:

1) My ego and pride got in the way. I have a hard time being humble. I know how to act humble sometimes, but being truly humble is tough for me.

2) I want to be able to get away with “a little” lust, to have the attitude that it won’t affect me, that I can handle it. In short, I’m in denial.

3) I only feel valued or not valued based on others’ views of me. So if someone else doesn’t approve of my recovery, then my recovery has no value.

4) I have the idea that “I’m special,” and if others don’t agree, then I’m not “special” anymore.

5) I want to believe that I’m different, that I have a different rule book than everybody else.



Today I know that the words this man spoke to me were sent straight from God for me to hear. The writing I did helped me let go of the resentment. At the end of the next meeting, he made an effort to apologize for the way he had spoken. That helped me a lot. I also made the effort to go over and give him a hug. That is what I call “tough love:” being loving even when loving is tough. And I learned this only through SA. It’s what our book calls “taking the actions of love”: I took the action, and the feeling followed (SA, 164).

In keeping with the spirit of the Eleventh Step Prayer: “Lord, make me a channel of Thy peace...” (12x12, 99), I will continue praying for this man every day. I pray that God will bless him with love and compassion for himself and others, and use him as a channel of kindness and goodness for the world.

This resentment opened the way to a new understanding for me.

—Love, M.

Finding My Higher Power

A friend and I were working on a Step Two exercise that my sponsor taught me. My friend was answering the question, “Why don’t you choose your own conception of God?” (AA,12). The exercise is to write down new ideas about a Higher Power.



He wrote out his list and read it to me: comforting, nonjudgmental, caring, loving... As he was reading, I remembered a line from the Big Book, “We, in our turn, sought the same escape with all the desperation of drowning men. What seemed at first a flimsy reed, has

proved to be the loving and powerful hand of God. A new life has been given us or, if you prefer, ‘a design for living’ that really works.” (AA, 28)

It occurred to me that my friend’s sheet of paper with his list on it was the flimsy reed. He could easily tear up or crumple the paper and toss it in the trash. It was nothing more than ink on paper; not much more than a wish and of no value in the material sense.

I suggested to my friend that he begin looking for those characteristics of a Higher Power as he goes about the day. I suggested that every time he feels anxious and

experiences discomfort, he might recognize that as the “loving and powerful hand of God.” I shared that I have come to realize that any time I want to shame myself and don’t, it’s because of the nonjudgmental mercy and grace of my Higher Power.

The fact is that when I completed this same exercise myself, it was as if the words on my paper became the proving ground for my own Higher Power—a design for living that really works. It is in the working out of this design for living that God restores us to sanity and we experience a new life.

—Brad M., Nashville TN

.....
Meditation

From Fear to Acceptance

The chief activator of our defects has been self-centered fear— primarily fear that we would lose something we already possessed or would fail to get something we demanded. (12&12, 76)



My self-centered fear is invisible to me. What may be obvious to others as my ego disease often looks to me like the “real world” or the facts of my life. Add to that my irrational conviction that “what I’m feeling right now will last forever,” and it’s no wonder I go crazy with fear! Feeling hopeless, I retreat into a convenient character defect: lusting, anger, judging, or isolation.

When I listen to other members speak of their own battles with ego, and about humility as a healer of pain, I begin to find hope. I start to see my character defects as manifestations of self-centered fear rather than as real problems. With my new humility, I pray for God to remove all my shortcomings, including my myopic view of life!

When I trust that God will provide what I need, rather than what I demand, I can relax and accept my life as it is. And that acceptance brings with it—what a gift!--the serenity and wholeness I really wanted all along.

—Anonymous

Morning Never Came

She walked into our AA meeting and sat off to the side. A couple of people nodded to her, but I had never seen her before. She had huge sunglasses on, and for a second she lifted them to rub her eyes. A couple of people recognized her, revealing two huge black eyes. As the meeting ended, she rushed out, so I followed her and asked her what had happened. She replied, "Would you be my sponsor?"

We worked together for only a few months. We began at the beginning, even though this was her fourth time coming back from relapse. The first assignment I gave her was to ask her Higher Power each morning to keep her sober and, at night, to thank her HP for keeping her sober that day.

We began with the First Step. The black eyes, along with her life situation, convinced her that her life was unmanageable, but admitting she was powerless over alcohol was not coming so easy.

We met often and talked every day. She kept counting days and almost two months later she was still sober. Then I didn't hear from her for four days. When she finally called, she sounded sad and weepy.

We agreed to meet, but she didn't show up. I called her, but her voice mail was full. Three days later she returned my call. It was difficult to understand her through the tears, so I asked if I could come to her house. "Sure," she mumbled.

As I arrived and parked my car, I prayed to my Higher Power to guide me through the visit and to help me pass the message. I knocked on the door. I almost didn't recognize her: she was swaying, dirty, barely dressed, and reeked of alcohol. She was all lit up, as the Big Book says. I caught her eye, and there it was: my disease staring right back at me.

There are no rules in AA that I know of, except one: Do not go alone on a Twelfth-Step call. But there I was, with just a bit over a year of sobriety myself. I quietly called on my Higher Power to remind me I was powerless, and I recited the Serenity Prayer.

I stayed with her. She cried, slept a bit, sang, tried to pray, and spoke from her heart. Over and over she repeated that she did not want to drink; so why did she? Then she giggled and said, "Hey, I think you



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are right, I am powerless.”

Ah, she got it, I thought, but will she remember in the morning? She looked like a ghost, so I tried to take her to the hospital but she refused to go. She just sat on my lap and wept.

I tucked her into bed and we agreed to meet in the morning. I joked that she was going to have one wicked hangover when she woke up. She fell asleep—but she did not wake up. My sponsee died in her sleep from severe alcohol poisoning. When I got the call, I went to her house and she was still on her bed as I had left her the night before. The policeman asked me what had happened. I told him she was powerless over alcohol.

My sponsee could not see God’s grace bringing her back into the rooms after four relapses. She did not believe her Higher Power would take care of her if she just surrendered and took the First Step. She left a family and children wondering how it could have come to this.

I was devastated, but the support I received in the Fellowship was incredible. No matter what I did or did not do, God’s will was done.

Every day as I read from her Big Book, I am reminded how fatal my disease is, how acceptance is the answer, and that I only have a daily reprieve based on my willingness to stay sober and to practice the AA principles in all my affairs. I know that everything that happens is meant to be, and I learned that, as long as I continue to do service and stay sober a day at a time, all is well.

As I mourn and grieve, and allow myself to be sad and weep, I can still know that all is well.

As time passes, and I allow myself to feel the sadness, I allow myself to heal, and I know that all is well.

As I am reminded that pain is the touchstone of growth, I know that everything happens for a reason, and my creator’s plan is none of my business. All is well.

—Rachel S., Brooklyn, NY

SA Members: Please Share Your Experience, Strength, and Hope

Sharing your ES&H encourages the addict who still suffers as well as members in recovery. We welcome your stories as well as shorter shares related to your recovery. In sharing your story, please describe what you were like before, how you became involved in SA, what happened, and what is working for you today.

Articles can be 250-1,200 words; member stories are approximately 2,500 words—although longer submissions may be used as space allows. All submissions become the property of Essay and are subject to editing.

Submit articles or ask questions at essay@sa.org.



English-Speaking SA Returns to Tokyo



I came to my first SA meeting while living in Tokyo back in 2002. Soon after, I moved back to the US, where I was in and out of SA for a few years. When I was relocated back to Tokyo in 2008, I was out of control again. I returned to the space where we used to meet, but no one was there. I was told the meeting had died off a few years earlier.

“Oh well,” I thought. “I tried. I guess I’ll just have to manage it on my own.” It never occurred to me at the time to restart the meeting. I thought that if I just worked the Steps in AA a bit harder, I would be okay. But things only got worse.

I got married, survived the earthquake, got a 20-year chip in AA, and buried my father who died from alcoholism. My house got flooded. I was acting out almost daily to numb the pain and stress. Then, while on a holiday with my wife, I went on a major binge that scared me. I realized that I was out of control and I needed to take action.

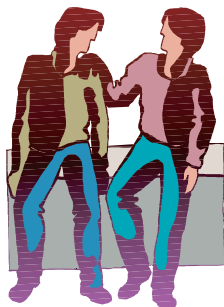
I went back to that church and got permission to restart the meeting. I sat alone in the room every week for three months, reading the Big Book and praying for fellowship. My old White Book was lost

somewhere along the way. Eventually I found a few guys in AA who expressed an interest in SA. Only one of them stayed, but we had a meeting at last.

I thought we would just use the Big Book, but then we realized we could buy SA literature from the SA website. The folks at SAICO were kind enough to send us a start up package. This was a lifesaver, and it included a copy of *Sexaholics Anonymous*. But when I opened it up, I found that it was in Spanish! So we used the publication called *Member Stories* in our meetings, and we identified. We finally ordered a batch of 20 White Books—which

seemed crazy at the time since there were only two of us, but we saved a bit of money on the shipping by ordering in bulk, and I felt somewhat inspired, thinking of the old saying, “If you build it, they will come.”

We placed a notice on the Internet about our meeting, and we set up an email account. After a few responses, finally our third member showed up. The three of us carried on for about six months, with a few visitors here and there, and inquiries every week—but no one stuck around. Finally a new guy



showed up but he couldn't make the Saturday meeting, so we started a meeting on Friday nights.

Since then our fellowship has grown. Last week we had six people at the Friday meeting—a new record. There are 10 regular members now, and I recently went on a Twelfth-Step call for a guy who lost his job and got arrested because of this addiction. We are now planning to start a new meeting earlier in the week and are looking for a new meeting location. Some experienced SA members have



recently relocated to Tokyo, bringing much needed support, and some of the Japanese members have started showing up as well.

Just a year ago, I was sitting alone in a room, praying for guidance, wondering what to do. At times the situation seemed hopeless. Now there are meetings to attend, members to call, Steps to work, and new meetings to start. This has been fun, and staying busy in SA keeps me out of myself and out of my addiction. It seems that my prayers have been answered.
—Mark R., Tokyo

Russian Collection

Last year I discovered just how generous our members can be when they see a real need. At the tender age of 50—for the first time in my life—I decided to try to raise money for a cause. As a Russian speaker, I was excited to attend the first-ever Russian-speaking SA Convention in Moscow in 2011. The journey reminded me of how huge Russia is (nine time zones!). Two members were present who came from the Pacific coast city of Vladivostok—an eight-hour flight or seven-day train ride! I also learned how so many other members had wanted to attend from remote areas, but the prohibitive costs kept them away.

So, in preparation for the second Russian convention

in Moscow the following year, after checking with my sponsor here in Chicago,

I mentioned the need for money at my home group's business meeting. Because the need was so far away, I wasn't sure how the local members would react. But I was in for a quite a surprise, when one member said that because I was Russian and a member of his home group, he felt a special connection there. The group voted to start an extra weekly collection for the Russian Convention scholarship fund.

In my mind that was more than enough, and I did not think to take the appeal



further. But then some other (non-Russian) friends in the program took action. After hearing about the special collection at my home group, another group voted to take a special collection for the Russians, and then another group. In the end, I was contacted by several groups that I never even attended! They were asking where to send the money they had also raised. Our local Intergroup also ended up donating money.

I was speechless when I added up all the money and it came to \$1,300. And so, apparently, were the convention organizers and attendees in Russia. The money was used

to help 10 people buy train tickets and attend the convention—many meeting other members for the first time face-to-face. These people were deeply touched that their fellows 9,000 miles away would care enough to send support so that Russian-speaking members could have a chance to get and stay sober.

I'm proud of the generous support of our SA members in Chicago, and grateful to be a member of both the Chicago Intergroup and of our worldwide fellowship.

—Dimitri P., Chicago

Greetings from Iran



Dear SA Fellowship:

I am an SA woman living in Iran. The typical Iranian, it seems, has great difficulty understanding lust addiction and believing in SA's program of recovery, and this can be even more difficult for women. At times we have trouble openly attending SA meetings. At times we feel rejected. Should single women wish to marry, we can face fears about our sobriety and how we shall continue to attend our beloved SA meetings. Married women in SA often have trouble tell-

ing their husbands that they have a problem with sex.

But even in the midst of this situation, I can still work my program! Thanks to the many tools that are available to me, I have an SA sponsor who lives in Germany, and I can attend SA Skype meetings. I also attend local SA meetings in secret—and there are even men here in the SA program who do accept us! Still, we could use help spreading the word here about SA.

As I work to better spread the SA message in my country, I would love to hear from other members who might have similar experiences.

—Anonymous



Want to Connect With SA Members Around the World? Join SA's International Buddy List or Sisters List

The International Buddy List is a directory of SA men from around the world who wish to be in contact with one another. The Buddy List, which is managed by SA's International Committee, has been in operation since 2009. There are currently 246 members—men who are willing to share their contact details so that other members may connect with them. List members are currently available to sponsor others in the SA programme. To learn more about becoming a member of the Buddy List, please contact sabuddylist@gmail.com.

The International SA Sisters List is a worldwide sisterhood of SA women who wish to find SA sponsors, sponsor others, or make SA outreach calls at any hour of the day or night. As of January 2013 there were 77 women from 19 countries on the list. To be added to the list, contact SAICO at 1-866-424-8777 or email saico@sa.org. Reach out to SA sisters in our global fellowship!



Upcoming International Convention

January 10-12, 2014, Nashville, TN. *The Three Legacies*

Join us for a weekend of recovery in Nashville, TN, sponsored by the SA and S-Anon members of the Nashville area. The theme for our convention is Three Legacies: "Traditions for Unity. Concepts for Service. Steps for Recovery."

All sessions will take place at the The Sheraton Music City in Nashville. The convention begins on Friday, January 10, 2014, with registration opening at noon. The first "Early Bird" meeting will begin at 2:00 PM (subject to change), followed by dinner and opening announcements at 6:30 PM. The entire program/session schedule for the convention is posted on our convention website at threelegaciesnashville.com. The Early Bird Hotel Registration Discount closes on December 26, 2013.

We want everyone to feel comfortable and safe. Please be considerate of others in your choice of attire by dressing in a modest manner. Children may not attend any convention activities, including meals, unless they are registered for the convention as an S-Ateen member

We are looking forward to a great Convention!



Report of the General Delegate Assembly

July 18-19, 2013, Baltimore, MD

Dear Fellow SA Members:

The General Delegate Assembly met on Thursday and Friday, July 18-19, prior to the July convention. Attendees included Delegates, Alternates, Trustees, Trustee nominees, representatives from SAICO, and observers.

General Delegate Assembly Actions

- Adopted 2014 budget, as shown on the following page. Note that this is a deficit budget; success in meeting our obligation to carry the message depends on us being truly self-supporting, according to Tradition Seven. (See "Note from the Finance Chair," Page 30).
- Approved committee procedures and forms for better tracking activities among the Trustees, Delegates, and committees. This action should result in greater clarity, accountability, and completion of service projects.
- Re-affirmed four Trustees for another year of service: Jerry L., Laura W., George F., and Bob H. Elected two new Trustee: Laurens A., and Denny B. (non-sexaholic).
- Elected Gary L. as Delegate Chair, and Tom K. as Vice Chair

Recognition of Members Rotating Off

We wish to thank retiring Trustee, Betsy T., and retiring Delegate, Mike S., for your many years of service to our fellowship.

Updates on Current Projects

The IT committee has developed an E-literature prototype prepared for most e-book readers. The prototype needs a copyright and contract, plus a few other tweaks before publication. More information regarding this or other reports can be found in the full minutes report, to be published after approval at the October GDA Teleconference. See your Delegate for a copy.

Committee Requests

Several opportunities for service were identified. Members interested in stepping up your service work, please contact the following committees:

- Literature: Writers of Meditations
- International: Writers of letters to those isolated from meetings, phone, fax, and Internet. Members to sponsor internationally through the Buddies list or Sisters list. Members who speak languages other than English to sponsor, translate, edit, or help.
- SA CFC: Members to help prisoners work the Steps through letter writing

I look forward to serving as the new Chair of the GDA, and I am

grateful for the opportunity to work with such wonderful people as I have encountered at every level of service in SA.

—Gary L., GDA Chair

SA Financial Snapshot 2013

Budget Item	2013 BUDGET Jan-June	2013 ACTUAL June YTD	2013 BUDGET
Revenues			
Contributions	75,000	67,333	150,000
SACFC	5,000	5,503	10,000
Convention Donations	10,000	21,014	20,000
Literature Sales	39,000	25,204	75,000
Literature Volume Discounts	(4,700)	(3,712)	(6,500)
Essay	4,700	6,357	8,800
Interest	1,000	1,426	1,200
TOTAL Revenues	130,000	123,125	258, 500
Expenses			
Bank Charges	100	60	200
Credit Card Fees	4,200	6,417	8,800
Credit Card Recovery	(2,500)	(1,318)	(2,500)
Accounting	3,000	788	5,800
Liability Insurance	1,150	841	2,300
Taxes and Licenses	300	86	600
Legal	1,250	1,891	500
Compensation			
Payroll and Benefits	69,000	64,520	138, 420
Professional Fees	2,200	2,800	5,900
Overhead			
Office Supplies	1,300	3,447	2,600
Literature	10,000	849	20,000
Printing	4,500	3,246	9,000
Postage and Freight	6,250	6,098	12,650
Telephone	3,250	3,989	4,500
Internet Services	1,300	3,619	2,600
Facility			
Rent	9,250	9,121	19,000
Repairs and Maintenance	250	295	1,000
Travel	16,500	17,174	38,000
TOTAL Expenses	131,300	123,923	269,370
Revenues-Expenses	(1,300)	(798)	(10,870)

For Additional Budget Info Contact SAICO@sa.org

Note from the Finance Committee Chair

Dear SA Fellowship:

The “Financial Snapshot” provided on page 29 shows three sets of figures: SA’s year-to-date 2013 budgeted revenues, our actual year-to-date revenues and expenses, and our approved budget for 2014.



Although contributions have been down for the first six months of 2013, we have experienced growth in other areas. Donations from Conventions have been outstanding—particularly for the Atlanta convention. And, although literature sales have been down (because no new literature has been offered), *Essay* subscriptions have grown.

Mindful of the lower contributions from the fellowship this year, we have projected only a small increase for 2014. With our projected expenses, where will the rest of the money come from? SA members around the world have found creative ways to donate. For example:

- The European and Middle Eastern Region (EMER) instituted a “Gratitude Week” and raised over \$2,600 in eight days!
- Members who attended Conventions this year contributed \$11,249.
- Groups and Intergroups collectively gave (first quarter) \$37,122.
- On-line contributions (first quarter) totaled \$2,251.

This kind of creativity and generosity will keep the message of SA circling the world for a long time. When we each take one step in service on our recovery journey, the entire fellowship moves great distances and “Fear of people and of economic insecurity will leave us” (The Promises, AA, 84).

Please consider an extra donation from your group or Intergroup in the coming months.

—*Carlton B, Finance Committee Chair*

USA

Appelton, WY
Carmel, IN
Fayetteville, NC
Greely, CO
Mason, MI
Stratford, CT

New SA Groups



International

London, Hackney UK (addl mtg)
Newcastle UK
Red Deer, AB Canada
Tewkesbury, UK

Delegates and Trustees

Delegate	Region	Committees
Gary L., <i>Chair</i> Scott S. Dimitri P. Jim S., <i>Alt.</i>	North Midwest	Literature, Legal, COMC IT, International International, Conventions H&I
Joe M. Steve L. Glenn J.	South Midwest	RAC, Legal Nominations, PI Conventions, PI
Brian W. Marie W., <i>Alt.</i>	Northwest	Literature, CFC International, Conventions
Tom K., <i>V. Chair</i> Eric S. Jim C., <i>Alt</i> Steve C. <i>Alt</i>	Southwest	Conventions, Nominations CFC, IT Finance, Conventions, IT PI, Service Structure
Carl N. Dennis P. Mike S., <i>Alt</i>	Mid-Atlantic	H&I, Literature Finance, Legal Nominations
Terry O. Gary M., <i>Alt</i>	Northeast	IT, PI Finance, Nominations
Dick B Ed R. Art S. LB B., <i>Alt</i>	Southeast	International International, Conventions, Service Struct. International, IT, Literature Literature, RAC
Hans L.	German Speaking	Literature, CFC
Francis C. Daan L., <i>Alt</i> Luc D., <i>Alt.</i>	EMER*	H&I, International, PI PI H&I *EMER = Europe & Middle East Region

Trustee	Committees
Bob H., <i>Chair</i> George F., <i>Vice Chair</i> Laurens A. Jerry L. Denny B. Laura W.	CFC, RAC IT, Finance, COMC International, Nominations Nominations, Literature, International Finance, IT, PI, Service Structure Literature, H&I, Conventions



Trustees and Delegates can be reached at saico@sa.org

Calendar of Events



October 2013

11-13 Irvine, CA USA: Southwest Regional Unity Conference. *Improving Our Conscious Contact.* Contact www.sasanonunity.com

11-13 Mt Tabourine, Queensland, Australia: Second Queensland Annual Convention, *There Is a Solution!* Contact thereisasolution2013.org or thereisasolution2013@gmail.com

11-13 Plano IL: Fall SA Retreat. *We Absolutely Insist on Enjoying Life.* Contact 630-415-0341, chicagosa.org, or retreat@chicagosa.org

12 Greensboro, NC USA: First Annual SA Conference, *Recovery in the Fall.* Contact 336-833-1591 or at saico@sa.org

18-20 Post Falls, ID USA: Fall SA Retreat. *Pathway to Serenity.* Contact sanorthwest.org or retreat@yakima1.com

18-20 Münster, Germany: German SA/S-Anon Convention in Durch Vertrauen zur Genesung. Contact 0049 - 1787747003

18-19 Ontario, Canada: Fall SA Marathon Meet-

ing, *A New Way of Living.* Contact 416-721-1220, ontariomarathonmeeting.eventbrite.ca, or events@saontario.org

18-19 San Antonio, TX USA: SA Days in Recovery, *Back to Basics.* Contact: 210-541-1299 or freedomfromlust.com.

25-27 Warsaw, Poland: EMER 1st Regional Convention. *God, Fellowship & Love: In spiritual Fellowship. We grow in Recovery.* Contact sa.convention.poland@gmail.com

November 2013

2 Rock Island, IL, USA: Courage to Change QCSA, *Happy, Joyous & Free!* Contact 563-320-5987 or qcsa-iowa@juno.com

9 Auckland, New Zealand: SA New Zealand Conference, info at saico@sa.org

17 Cranford NJ USA: SA Speaker Jam, *Let It Begin with Me.* Contact 888-258-6104 or www.njessay.org

30 Luxembourg: Second French speaking Journée de Rétablissement. Contact Marie-Paule +352 691 540084 or Tom +352 621 502814.

22-24 Moscow, Russia: SA Convention for the Russian-Speaking World. *A Change of Heart.* Contact: +7 (905) 553-9681 (in Russia), 1-703-350-4699 (in USA), or intsamos@gmail.com

29-Dec 1 Madrid, Spain: SA Convention, Contact artemeslds@gmail.com

January 2014

24-26 Pantasaph, North Wales: SA/Sanon Winter Convention. Contact Ed SA sauksecretary@gmail.com

April 2014

4-6 Bad Teinach-Zavelstein, Germany: Spring-time "Deutschlandtreffen"

May 2014

11-13 Jerusalem, Israel: EMER's Second Regional Assembly and Convention, contact +972 523 772 002, +972 528 604 347, or saecc.israel@gmail.com

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For more information about events, contact [saico@sa.org](mailto:saico@sa.org) or visit [sa.org/events.php](http://sa.org/events.php)

## Upcoming International Conventions



**January 10-12, 2014.** *The Three Legacies*, Nashville, TN. For more information, visit our website at [threelegaciesnashville.com](http://threelegaciesnashville.com), or contact [sa.org](http://sa.org)

**July 11-13, 2014, Miracle in Motown.** Info to follow.

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## 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 before 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. Essay is not a forum for non-SA sobriety. In submissions, please do not reference unadjudicated illegal actions.*

***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.***

