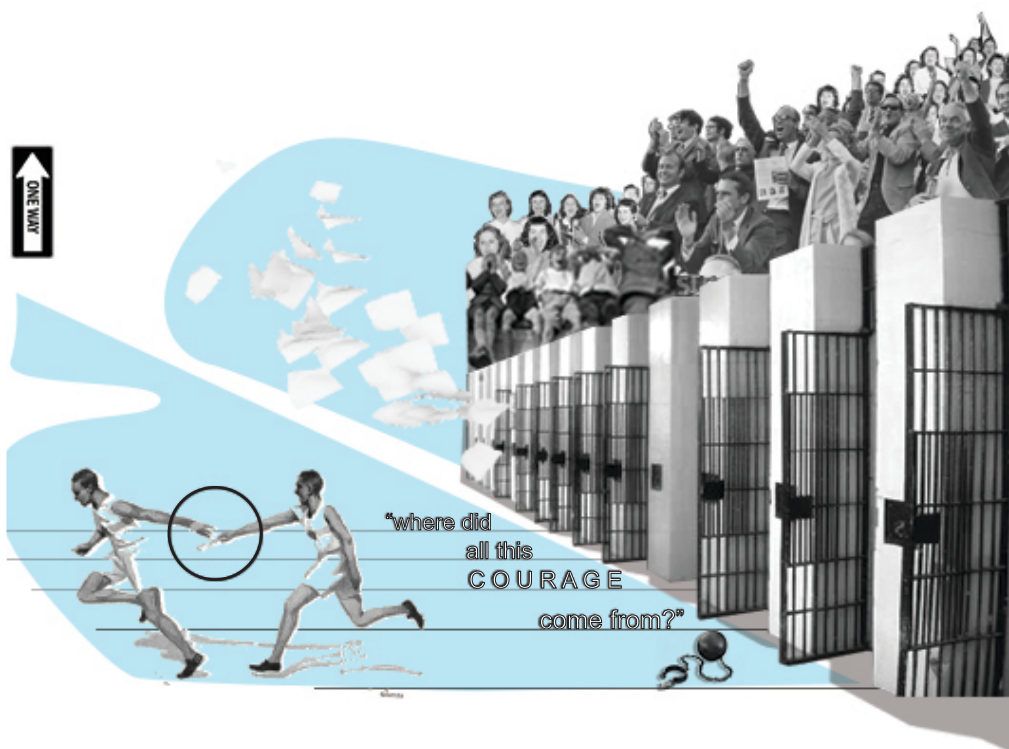


# Essay

June 2014



## No More Excuses

*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*

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June 2014



### **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.*

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### **New to SA?**

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Email us at [saico@sa.org](mailto:saico@sa.org)

Or visit the SA website at [www.sa.org](http://www.sa.org)

## No More Excuses

John C. of Rochester, NY—an SA member long active in service—passed away at his home on March 13, 2014. His sobriety date was October 13, 1996.

John began serving on SA's Correctional Facilities Committee (SACFC) in 1999, and he served as Chair of that committee from 2003-2008. From 2006-2010, he served as an SA Trustee, and he was elected Trustee Chair for 2009-2010. He also served on SA's Regional Alignment Committee, from 2007-2010.

In response to the news of John's death, we received an outpouring of loving remembrances from SA members around the world.

In his memory, we thought it fitting to reprint his story, "No More Excuses," which was first published in *Essay* in March 2001.

I woke up this morning thanking God. Then I prayed this simple prayer: "God grant that I may love thee always and follow thy will. Do with me according to thy will." Then I did my daily readings. It wasn't always that way. Today I'm enjoying over three years of sexual sobriety. But again, it wasn't always that way....

My name is John and I'm a sexaholic. And this is the way it used to be: "Oh God, please get me out of this one and I promise I'll never do it again." "Oh God, if only I had \$50,000, I could pay off my debts, make a down payment on a second car for my wife, and buy new clothes for our children. Then everything would be OK."

Today I call this stinking thinking. Today I know these prayers are called "jailhouse prayers." How do I know? Well, my name wasn't always

John.... I used to be called 9999.

Like many of us, I was abused as a child. I can go back to 1944. I was six years old at the time. A great aunt was abusing me. It was the

month of May and my first communion. I knew then what I know now—that "No" means "No." But my "No's" were ignored. Between that time and 1954, a Boy Scout leader and a Catholic priest abused me. These experiences became my EXCUSE to act out sexually in a reckless, dangerous, and criminal manner.

I was fourteen years old when I first abused an eleven-year-old girl. She was a victim because she said, "No." And I ignored her "No." Therefore I classify her as a victim. I was a very high bottom person at that time but it was still wrong. To me, as I look back in retrospect, that was a low bottom. That was a low thing to do not to respect someone



else's privacy, not to respect someone else's "No." Between my first victim and the last there were many others. I was approximately age fifty-five when I engaged in my last improper sexual contact. It was with an eleven-year-old boy and resulted in my prison sentence.

After the charges were filed, I spent six days prior to Christmas in the county lockup. My sisters, who have never stopped loving me and have stood by me through this whole process even to this day, posted ten thousand dollars bail so that I could be with them for the holidays and continue working. But that didn't stop me from acting out on New Year's Eve.

Earth-shattering fear and panic set in as I made my first court appearance on January 2nd, 1993. It was a very cold day both outside and inside me. I was scared to death. I didn't want to go to prison. So on my lawyer's advice, I began "walking the straight and narrow." "Don't get caught doing anything now," he said. Out of fear, my first period of sexual sobriety began the following day.

Because of lengthy delays and legal ploys by my \$3,500 lawyer, I was able to plea bargain with the court system. Finally, on October 2nd, 1993, I was found guilty of sodomy and child abuse. I was sentenced to one and one-half to four years in a maximum-security prison in a non-jury trial.

God blessed me that day

because I could have received up to six to eighteen years of prison in a jury trial.

In the crazy three years in prison that followed much happened to the man who had become a sex-crazed predator; the man who wallowed in self-pity, denial, self-justification, rationalization and all the other EXCUSES for not getting sexually sober. Sobriety was a word familiar to me when I went to prison as I then already had eleven years of A.A. sobriety. But sexual sobriety was as alien to me as life on Mars. I didn't have a clue. My heart wasn't in it.

I survived a meaningless prison existence by becoming a law clerk. When I was turned down for my first parole board, I realized I had to do something to help myself. There were men in prison secretly reading SA material, so I obtained an address from that literature. I wrote and received a free SA handbook and brochure from Nashville, Tennessee.

Along with this information came a list of Intergroups. I wrote to one of them. A member of SA from that area answered my letter, and I believe, saved me from a continually unfulfilled life, the mental ward (again), life in prison, or death. This member wrote to me in the early part of July 1995. His letter was frightfully candid and lacking in fear. In that initial letter, he wrote on company stationery containing not only the company address and phone number, but his home phone

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number as well. “Wow,” I said to myself, “where did all this courage come from?”

This SA member never questioned my behavior, my being in prison, or the circumstances that brought me there. He only talked about himself and this wonderful program called Sexaholics Anonymous. I was intrigued not only about what kind of man was this, but even more, about what kind of program this was! For the first time in my life I was willing to listen (miracle #1). And I was also willing to follow directions (miracle #2).

In the fifteen months that followed, I wrote out my Twelve Steps for the first time. A loving God had started to express himself through me. As the axiom goes, “When the student is READY the teacher will appear!”

During the months of writing this SA member, I gained many insights into my affliction. I wanted what I saw in him and I was ready to go to any lengths to get it. At first I was positive my years in AA would be a big asset in SA. Wrong! I had to relearn the Steps and endorse a new application as it specifically addressed my LUST addiction. Between 1981 and 1985 I had quit—one day at a time—drinking, cigarette smoking, overeating, and gambling. But they were outside of me. My lust was a part of me. So I worked hard on trying to work a program of sobriety in prison. I tried

to look at myself objectively.

I got out of prison October 2nd, 1996, fully convinced that Sexaholics Anonymous was the way to go—that I needed this fellowship and its sobriety definition. I thought I was ready for freedom.... I had so much YET to learn. Church friends arrived at the appointed time to drive me home and give me shelter in their homes. Prior to my release, the SA member I had been writing mailed me a list of meetings. By then I also



had both his work and home phone numbers. The relief of being out of prison—and only

those who have been there can understand what that relief is—was enough. I was in a safe home with some church friends. I didn't have people banging on my cell at three o'clock in the morning, and saying, “Move so I can see you move,” and shining a flashlight in my eyes. I didn't have to go through all the rules and regulations and all the formations and standing at my gate to be counted. So I didn't feel like I needed a meeting or phone calls to SA members.

On October 12th, a group of friends invited me to join them on a trip to the mall. I did not know what a grievous mistake that would be so I said, “Yes.” The sights, sounds, aromas, etc, etc, took their toll. That night alone in my room I acted out. Within seconds I began to weep. What I knew before that

act became all the more poignant now—I could not do this ALONE and I needed MEETINGS. Yet it still would be several days before I came to a meeting.

On October 17th, I finally went to my first meeting. I had been in the church where the meeting was being held a hundred times before for AA meetings. So I knew where the parking lot was and where the meetings rooms were. When I got there, I peered through the window. I wanted to see what the weirdos in this program called Sexaholics Anonymous looked like. When I spotted a man inside the room, I said to myself, “Well, he doesn't look too bad. He's kind of an old coot like me. He can't be all that bad.” So I went on into the meeting. I was fully intending to lie about my sobriety date. I was intending to say that it was January 3rd, 1993, because none of them would have really known the truth.

But the first man to speak in that meeting said, “My name is Bob and I've been sexually sober for two days.” And I said, “Son of a gun, these guys are going to be honest. I can't believe it. I can't believe it!” So I found myself admitting that my sobriety date was really October 13th, 1996. This new God of my understanding had compelled me to speak the truth. I soon chose one of the members to be my sponsor and only mildly balked when he asked me to write out the Steps again, even

though I had written them out in prison!

Since getting sober, I have held service positions at local meetings and in our Intergroup. But my heart belongs to the service work of the Sexaholics Anonymous Corrections Facilities Committee (SACFC). For a little over two years I've attended meetings in two state prisons plus visited inmates in three others. I've also attended prison meetings in two other states. Corresponding with over twenty inmates keeps me busy. My involvement with the SACFC has been very fruitful and rewarding. It helps keep me sober. For this I have much gratitude.

I'm not proud of what I did before I got sober. But that's me. That is who I am. It's difficult at best to lead with my weakness and tell everyone just how low of a bottom I hit. I am telling you my story because I hope it might help you to see below the bottom you may have already created to the level where you might continue to fall. Or if you are already at the level that I'm at, perhaps you will see that there is hope. Perhaps you will see that this fellowship can do great things—if you surrender, if you allow it to work in you.

I used to hate the entire Catholic Church. I hated the Pope, the Cardinals, and every member that was ever a Catholic—for the actions of one man. Now the scared little child that was once abused by a

scout leader and a priest...has a priest as a sponsor. God has also blessed me with two sponsees, one of whom was a priest before being sent to prison. He was the "old coot" I saw when I peered through the window to see what sexaholics really looked like!

Today I have nothing but compassion and love for all my brothers and sisters regardless of their religious background, color, creed—or whatever. I can't judge anybody else. I can't say that, "Well, because he's done this or he's done that, or she's done this or she's done that, we have to exclude them from our fellowship.

God's healing and forgiving love is boundless. Thanks to what the God of my understanding and SA have done for me, I am now able to visit with my daughter and have lunch with my grandkids. This is the same little girl that I abused when she was twelve years old. The God of my conscience has healed our relationship.

When I entered Sexaholics Anonymous, God did not ask me what my bottom was. He only asked me, "Do you want to be sober?" "Do you want to be restored to sanity?" "Are you willing to come to this fellowship and admit that you are powerless over lust and that your life is



unmanageable?" And I said, "Yes." And I have been delivered.

I tell you all this because God and SA have taken me, a low-bottom pedophile, and returned me to some sort of sanity by reinforcing in me that every time I come to a meeting and don't act out, I've done the right thing. I hope that the God who allows my presence in SA will be seen as a hope for all who want to stop lusting and become sexually sober—no matter what they have done.

We probably are all familiar with the three pertinent ideas:

- (a) That we were sexaholics and could not manage our own lives.
- (b) That probably no human power could have relieved our sexaholism.
- (c) That God could and would if He were sought.

In my life, God has given me three pertinent concepts—SERENITY, COURAGE, and WISDOM. God has given me the wisdom to follow him, the courage to forgive myself and others, and the serenity of living sober in SA.

I pray God never allows me to forget these words: "This is the beginning of a new day. God has given me this day to use, as I will. I

can waste it or use it for good. What I do today is important because I am exchanging a day of my life for it. When tomorrow comes, this day will be gone forever, leaving in its place something I have traded for it. I

### *In Memoriam*

On March 13, 2014, John C. of Rochester, NY passed away. He was a real beacon to those of us who knew and interacted with him. This included sponsors, sponsees, fellow SA members here and around the world, and members of SA's International service structure.

I started writing to John in 1995 when he was serving prison time in Groveland, NY. It was my privilege to share Twelve Step spirituality with him and then to observe how the light of his spirit flowed when he was released from prison and began to follow the SA path of recovery.

As a convicted sex offender, John faced many hardships on the outside, some due to the strictures of probation and some from the community at large. In sobriety, he was fired from a volunteer job at his beloved firehouse. He was forbidden to be a lector at the church of his choice. He was forced to leave his apartment. Through it all, he never stopped caring and loving—a way of life he learned through the Twelve Steps. This outpouring of love was extended to his personal family,

want it to be gain, not loss; good not evil; success not failure—in order that I shall not regret the price I paid for it."

Be well and God bless!  
—*In sobriety, John C.*

## Light the Way

with whom he was able to achieve healing, and to his SA family. He led by example in his own sobriety, in his leadership in SA, in his honesty, and in his caring for his SA sisters and brothers.



As gentle as he could be, John was a staunch supporter of the SA principles and Traditions. He fully appreciated how these saved him and provided a framework for recovery. He led a life of service, fueled by his desire to give other sexaholics the same healing and opportunities that were given to him.

Though I grieve his passing, the lesson of John's life is a comfort to me—that out of a humble and emotionally wounded place, a man with a spirit of love for his fellow humans and a willingness to extend himself for others can shine his light on us all.

It is said that to emulate a person is the greatest way to honor his memory. As we try to follow in John's footsteps to carry the SA message of recovery, let us also carry his light.

—*Miller A., Rochester, NY*

## The Night the Pot Roast Flew

When I first came to SA, my world had just exploded. My last acting out partner had called my wife and told her what I'd been doing. My wife learned about a long list of behaviors that I was none too proud of. My loving, even-tempered wife responded to that call by picking up the pot roast she had just prepared for dinner and throwing it at me.

Unfortunately, the behaviors she learned about that day were merely the symptoms of the true nature of my life. My life had become a continuous, self-centered, lust-soaked storm that was destroying me and everyone around me. But I was totally blind to the destruction. Up to that point I was convinced that my secret life wasn't hurting anyone. I told myself that my multiple affairs were actually good for me and for my marriage. Today I realize how sick I was. Now, years later, I fondly refer to the night that I hit my bottom as "the night the pot roast flew."

In my addiction, I had been trading my soul for endless pain wrapped in moments of temporary pleasure. It wasn't until I was caught and finally decided to stop that I learned the truth: I could not stop. I was powerless over lust. Lust controlled every aspect of my

life—from my thinking, to the route I drove to work, to the TV shows I watched. Everything I did was impacted and shaped by my lust.

I had driven myself insane by a lifetime of lust poisoning. My head was on a swivel. I fixated on lust objects even at incredible distances. I was like a truck driver with a heavy load, heading into the downhill portion of a mountain pass. The truck was picking up speed, but I was convinced that I was in control and could safely manage the curves or stop at any time.

The true nature of my situation only became clear when I saw that I could not stop. As I've read in Step One,

It is truly awful to admit that, glass in hand, we have warped our minds into such an obsession for destructive drinking that only an act of Providence can remove it from us. (12&12, 21)

I had witnessed in the past that Twelve Step programs (including SA) were helpful to several people that I knew, but I was blind to my own need for these programs. Now that I could clearly see my powerlessness, I decided to give SA a try.

When I came to my first SA meeting in April 2007, I expected



to find a room full of sad, seedy-looking people dressed in trench coats. Instead, I was welcomed by a group of pleasant-looking, friendly people, who were laughing and seemed glad to be there. I wanted to scream, "How can you laugh? Don't you realize I'm in trouble?"

When the meeting started, people went around the room introducing themselves and sharing what had brought them to the group. They shared openly about many of the same things that I been doing in my secret life. I was shocked that anyone would talk openly about those things, and I realized for the first time that maybe I wasn't the only lust-driven person on the planet. At the end of the meeting several people stayed to talk with me and even asked for my phone number.

That night I went back to my hotel room (my wife had kicked me out of the house) and read the White Book from the first page to the last. I identified with all of it. With every page, the reality of my situation became more apparent. My problem was not that I had gotten caught; my real problem was *me*. If I wanted the pain to stop, I was going to have to change *me*.

Over the next few weeks I received phone calls almost daily from other men in the fellowship. At first I was surprised that anyone would call just to check on me and see how I was doing. Now I'm

grateful to those who reached out to me then. Their selflessness in carrying the message of hope to the suffering sexaholic was invaluable.

I would love to say that from the very start my motives were absolutely pure. The truth is that at first I was motivated mostly out of fear—the fear of losing everything. But over time my fear-driven motives developed into a realization that I was very sick. For me, the process of recovery meant a commitment to take the actions that were required of me. Following are some of the things I've done to stay sober:

1. *Get an SA sponsor.* When I first came to SA, I didn't want anyone telling me what to do. But my best efforts in running my life had resulted in the train wreck I was living. To find recovery, I had to humble myself, ask for help, and become willing to follow the suggestions of others. I could not have found or maintained any level of sobriety or recovery without the help of my sponsor.

2. *Work the Steps.* My sponsor was quick to point out that the only solution SA offers is found in working the Twelve Steps. Going to meetings was great, but the real change happened when I was willing to do the hard work of actually working all the Steps with my sponsor.

3. *Go to meetings.* At first, my local fellowship had only one weekly meeting. I was encouraged

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to attend that meeting every week and supplement it with open AA meetings, as well as any SA marathon in my area. I was told that I needed to stay grounded in the solution, and that I needed to go to meetings to hear the solution. Today our local fellowship has at least one SA meeting every day, and I'm happy to have the opportunity to attend several SA meetings a week.

4. *Stay connected.* At first, my sponsor instructed me to call him daily, and I still speak to him most days. He also suggested that I talk to at least one other "real-live" sexaholic every day. This meant that, if I called someone from the phone list and got a voicemail, I had to keep calling until I found a live person who answered my call. When I questioned his suggestion, I was told that if I was unwilling to reach out to others when things are going well, I would probably not reach out when I'm struggling.

This suggestion has served me well over the years. In early sobriety I travelled out of town on a business trip, and my route took me past a location where I had acted out before. As I drove down the highway, the old temptation hit me. My car wanted to turn into that parking lot! But when I felt the tug, I grabbed my phone and started calling. I got voicemail after voicemail until the very last person

on the list answered my call. He was gracious enough to stay on the phone with me until I successfully drove past the dangerous spot.

5. *Learn to be honest.* In my addiction, I had lost the ability to be honest with anyone, including myself. I would lie about things that didn't even matter. In recovery I had to learn to live a lifestyle of rigorous honesty. The process of getting honest with myself and others wasn't easy. It took constant vigilance and more than a few face-to-face amends before I started to regain the ability to be honest.

6. *Find a way to serve others.* When I came to SA I was completely self-absorbed. I didn't care about others and was usually unaware of their existence (other than as a lust object or someone I resented). My sponsor challenged me to start seeking opportunities to serve others. Initially, this meant getting to the meeting early enough to turn on the air conditioner and set up chairs.

I also started calling newcomers and offering them the same encouragement I received when I was new.

Eventually, I began answering calls from the local SA hotline and began sponsoring others. Over the years, I've found that serving others is one of the best ways to stay out of my own head—plus those I serve help me to stay sober for one more



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day. And if I want to turbocharge the effect of service work, I need to seek opportunities to serve where I can remain anonymous—even to others in the fellowship.

Recovery at times is slow and painful. However, as I continue to live out each day of recovery one day at a time, I'm incredibly thankful for the many blessings that recovery has brought to me. Following are just some of the many things I'm thankful for, because of SA:

- I can live free from the obsession to lust (even though I'm not cured). In my addiction, lust controlled me. Today, if I stay spiritually connected, I have a choice. The way I handle a temptation is my choice.
- I can live free from guilt, remorse, emptiness, and pain. I can hold my head up high, rather than cowering in shame.
- I'm able to be honest with myself and others.
- I can face my faults and shortcomings honestly and openly.
- I have the choice to be happy, joyous, and free—living in serenity and at peace with the world around me. I've found it to be true that I "have ceased fighting anything or anyone—even [lust]" (AA, 84).
- I have friends who accept me as I am, but who also love me enough to challenge me when I need it.
- I can see the world beyond myself. I'm able to care for the needs

of others.

- I have a spiritual connection. Before, I knew a lot about religion but I had no concept of a Higher Power who loved me. Today my faith is more real and sustaining than I could have ever imagined. On the night the pot roast flew, I was spiritually bankrupt—devoid of compassion, self-respect, and love. The program has given me back a sober soul. As the Big Book says,

We are not cured of [sexaholism]. What we have is a daily reprieve contingent on the maintenance of our spiritual connection. (AA, 85)

- I've had the opportunity to learn patience. In my addiction, I wanted what I wanted, and I wanted it immediately. In recovery I've learned to accept things as they are, not as I want them to be.
- I've been blessed with a wonderful relationship with my wife. Our marriage has been restored—and there have been no more pot roasts flying!

In recovery, I'm encouraged by those who have gone before me. In their stories, I hear that wonderful vistas lie ahead, and I know that if I stay on the road I will eventually find them. Today as I think back on what my life was like before that pot roast flew—and what it is like today in recovery—I am able to honestly say that I'm thankful to be a sexaholic.

—Jon D., Columbia, SC  
sober since 4/1/07

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## The Useful Cup

On September 18, 2013, I celebrated five years of SA sobriety. While I realize that five years is only a benchmark and that I still have much to learn, I've been so excited by what I've already learned in SA that I would like to share it with you. And I would like to compare my life to a cup, having an inside and an outside. In recovery, I've learned some healthy tools for maintaining both the inside and the outside of the cup.

I grew up in a loving family, and we attended church together every week. My mom and dad spent time with me and made sure I had what I needed. They did a good job of providing for me, but it was all about externals. I only saw what they did on the outside of the cup. So the outside of my cup looked good, while I was hurting on the inside.

Through my family, I learned many things about the Bible and God. I also learned that knowledge was power. People told me I could be a pastor. I learned that I could impress people by what I knew. I also learned that awards impress people. I earned many academic and civic awards. All these things decorated the outside of my cup. The outside of my cup was just glowing. People would say nice things about me because the outside of the cup looked so good.

Yet none of those outside things could solve my emotional or spiritual problems. How was I to cope when people I loved in my life died? How could I deal with people who did not like me? What did I do when I failed (dirtying the outside of the cup)?



In pornography, I found a way to cope. This was my little secret. I knew this was wrong, but if things did not go my way, I would find a magazine or a movie and act out. I thought I could keep my public life and private life separate. It was no big deal. What could go wrong?

I thought things were going well. I thought I could be successful at my new career. I thought I could be a loving husband, wonderful father, and faithful church worker. That is what people expected of me. I needed to keep the outside of the cup looking good. Yet I was confronted with unmet expectations. My job was never good enough. I always thought the problem was the job, so I constantly looked for better opportunities. Even when I was caught viewing and downloading porn at one job, I believed the job was still the problem: I was bored and needed something to do.

Also, being a loving husband was hard work. It was even harder being a father. When I volunteered my time for church activities, I was just going through the motions to

keep the outside of the cup looking good—but I turned to porn more and more often. And even when I wasn't viewing the images, I could replay them in my mind. As time went on, it became easy to have porn access at home. So what was the big deal that I had a double life? Who was I hurting?

Eventually, my coping mechanism stopped working. I felt guilty about the porn I watched, but the only way to feel better was to get more porn. I became quite depressed about my life. Life was no longer worth living. It did not matter anymore what the outside of the cup looked like.

Something was missing in my life. I thought I had what I needed, but really I had nothing. In October 2008, I started seeing a counselor to help me sort out these issues. At his suggestion, I attended my first SA meeting a few months later. It was only after I attended SA that I started to see what I needed in life.

SA made me do something I had never wanted to do: it made me look inside the cup and take care of it. This was uncomfortable. I did not like what I saw on the inside. I learned that I was dishonest, resentful, critical, fearful, and uncaring—just to name a few of my character defects. These things were not just bad; they were toxic. I had been using porn to fill a void that

only my Higher Power could fill.

Thankfully, God did not reveal everything to me all at once. First, I learned that I could survive without masturbating. As I surrendered masturbation, I could see other things in my life more clearly. I could see how the things I had on the inside of the cup affected other people. By working the Steps, I could see that I had been minimizing the truth or blaming others for my problems in order to help myself look good. In SA, I've been trying to take responsibility for my own actions and accept things as they are.



I also saw that I have a critical nature. I was great at telling people about the faults of others, but I left out their good qualities. Now I'm learning to treat others with respect. I came to realize that my anger was out of control and that I fear many things. Through SA, God has been showing me these things in my life and removing them day by day.

Yet God did not clean out the inside of my cup and leave it empty. Instead, He put some good qualities into my life. One important quality is love. Love helps me see the needs of other people and not just my own. As I looked past the outside of the cup, I began to see integrity in my life. People can see the real outside and inside of my life more often now. I no longer live a double life. In



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all of my dealings, I try to live by the same principle. I try to act the same way at church as I do at work or with my family.

Furthermore, God did not fill my cup just to satisfy me. The reason God filled my cup was to pour it out into the lives of others. This is the Twelfth Step, and it was a big challenge for me at first. But today I'm able to love my wife and family the way I always should have. My new behavior has led to more laughter in my home, and a deeper intimacy with my wife.

I can also help people I don't even know. I've found great joy in leading someone new to an SA meeting on the phone line—and then seeing the person go to a meeting and keep coming back. I feel I've made a small difference in

this world when I lead someone from darkness and despair to the Great Light.

I've experienced the promise that the measure I give is the measure I will get back. I had to read that promise several times before I started understanding it. The addict logic told me that if I give, I have less. But in recovery I see that the more I give, the more God will fill my cup to overflowing.

Maybe the outside of my cup does not look as good as it once did when I ran my whole life. Yet the inside of my cup has been purified with the help of a Higher Power. I have learned that I can go to God with my problems and I can even be used to bless the lives of others.

—Scott B.

## A Loving, Forgiving God

*As we glimpse the true nature of our spiritual and moral bankruptcy, we can only wonder what kind of God this is who can not only stand to see and know it all, but who patiently and mercifully works in us and with us toward turning these dreadful liabilities into song.*

*God is surely for the sexaholic. (SA, 119)*

While I was growing up, our family attended church twice on Sunday and again on Wednesday nearly every week. This gave me a good exposure to God and to the church. I didn't always enjoy attending church, but something was planted within me. I believed in a punishing God, but at least I believed in God.



Unfortunately, this exposure to the church did not prevent me from seeking inappropriate ways to handle my emotions. Therefore, I acted out for the next 35 to 40 years as a single boy and as a married man.

A few years ago, at an AA meeting, I was given a copy of the White Book to read. After reading the first couple of pages, I

decided that I did not relate to what was written. Boy was I wrong! After six more years of pain, shame, and self-hatred, I finally had to admit my problem, so I started attending SA meetings and reading the literature.

As soon as I walked into the small room in a local church for my first SA meeting, I felt welcome. I felt that I belonged. This feeling was confirmed during the member introductions. I never thought that I would talk about this sort of thing with anyone, especially other men. But when a member read "The Problem" (SA, 203), he could have been talking about me. And I most assuredly related to many of the shares I heard at that meeting. I knew that I would be attending more meetings and diving into this program.

I immediately found a sponsor and started working the Steps. I became close to some men in SA as well as others in a therapy group. That was when I became aware that I actually have feelings—and that I could work on my feelings, rather than stuff them deep inside, as I had



done my entire life. Through my relationships with those men I also found a deeper faith in God.

Nowadays, I diligently work Step One every day, doing my best to not take a second look or intentionally expose myself to sexual images. And to maintain my spiritual fitness, I pray and meditate every morning, every night, and at other times during the day.

I don't know whether God led me to SA, or SA brought me closer to God. It doesn't matter because I now believe that God led me to SA so that I would come closer to Him—and I've never felt closer to God. I receive a tremendous amount of comfort through Him, which in turn inspires me to keep working this program to the best of my ability.

Today I believe that I have a loving God who isn't waiting to punish me. He's there to love and forgive me. He wants this program to work for me and I will not disappoint Him. Thank you God, for being at my side during this journey of recovery.

—Jim B., Evans City, PA

## Surrender

*Step Three: Made a decision to turn our will and our lives over to the care of God as we understood Him*

One of the ways I continued in my addiction and acting out was by going to SA meetings (no, that is not a typo!). That was because "going to

meetings" was all I wanted to do to stop acting out. I wanted an "easier, softer way" (AA, 58). I wanted to design my own program, and that

meant *just* going to meetings. But acting out is a result of the problem; it is not the problem itself. And going to meetings is not the solution to the problem—at least not by itself. So just going to meetings didn't keep me sober. Reduced to the most basic statement, God keeps me sober. But I couldn't get sober because I was running away from God.

In the past, I was so ashamed of the lusting and acting out I was doing as an addict that I wanted to somehow get rid of "the problem" before I could turn and face God. But being an addict meant precisely that I could not get rid of the problem (me), so I ran further and further from God (but really not making any progress). Shame and pride are a deadly combination for me.

One of the things that has really helped me stop running from God and start running to Him—in surrender—is to embrace the truth that I am a sexaholic. SA is not a means by which I can somehow eradicate "the addict" from my being. I am what I am. I am as much a sexaholic as I am 183 cm tall (72 inches) and have brown eyes and brown (but graying) hair.

I now find that the greatest asset in connecting with "a loving God" is my brokenness. I'm a sexaholic, and I'm beloved of God. That's what makes God so amazing! Now I just bring all the mess that is "me" to

Him and let Him do the cleaning up. And since the God of my understanding already knows all of my faults before I admit them to myself, there is no point in trying to run and hide from Him.

For me, surrender is a conscious effort to connect with God through prayer at every moment, and turn over to Him my difficulties and myself. As I become aware of a temptation or disturbance, I accept it as an immediate reminder to turn to God in prayer and speak to Him as honestly as I can. I offer up to Him the temptation or disturbance in an act of surrender.

Sometimes I imagine my open hands, and sometimes I actually get on my knees with outstretched arms and open hands. I do whatever it takes. I thank God for receiving the temptation from me. Then I go and do the next right thing. Or I pray for the knowledge of His will so that I can then go and do the next right thing. And I surrender to His will.

My surrender to God—both in the specific moments of temptation and as I practice working the Steps with a sponsor—seems to be the conduit by which God grants me the gift of sobriety and relief from the obsession and compulsion. Surrender, and then surrender again. And God does for me what I cannot do for myself.

—*In fellowship, Ron*



## Turning Off My Radar

My tale begins over 12 years ago. At the time, I observed that—as I walked from my car to a downtown SA meeting—I would often notice the women coming toward me or even across the road or on the sidewalk, and smile at them. Sometimes what I noticed about them turned to fantasy, and I would have to surrender this during the subsequent meeting.

This bothered me, as the noticing sometimes stirred up lust. A newcomer with whom I shared this was surprised that, with all of my sobriety, I would still struggle with lust at times. His comment startled me and forced me to question my behavior. Yet I told myself, "I'm a friendly guy!" How could I acknowledge a woman and yet avoid the lust?

Then an idea for an experiment came to mind. For a month I would commit myself to only noticing whether a woman was looking at me as we crossed paths. Following the advice in "Another Look at Lust" (*Recovery Continues*, 8-10), I would not send out the radar; I would only pay attention if the "radar signal" came to me from the woman. The results of this experiment were so startling that I continued the experiment for nearly a year. The results never changed.

I learned that a woman coming toward me or coming across the way never looked at me—not even once! So regarding being "friendly," the behavior came from me to her. This was very humbling! And it was very helpful knowledge about my disease, as well as my choices.

Just a few days ago while crossing a freeway overpass heading to church I saw a woman jogging toward me on the sidewalk. I looked down until she got safely by.

The "safely" was for my inner safety—she was at no risk from me.

Long ago my sponsor taught me that if I don't take in a lust image, I don't have to use our SA tools to get it out. As the woman passed, I was relieved that I took nothing in from her. My experiment from years ago suddenly became clearer. Not only did those women never look at me—they also taught me how I could, as a sexaholic, choose to behave. If I choose to turn off my radar, I won't grab lust images or find myself surrendering stuff at the next SA meeting. What a discovery!

Whenever I read in our literature that "every time [I am] disturbed, no matter what the cause, there is something wrong with me" (*12&12, 90*), the words jump off the page. Every disturbance is God giving me a chance to learn something about



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myself. When I notice someone in a lustful way, I am indeed disturbed. But when I turn off my radar, my

## An Alternative to Applause?

Even as a child I had a sensitivity to noise. I came from a large family, and our house was always noisy and chaotic, with everybody talking at once. There also was a lot of yelling. I used to escape to the woods near our house for some peace and quiet. I liked to listen to the quiet rustling of the trees and hear the soft singing of the birds.

I liked church because it was quiet, and we weren't supposed to talk. I think that's one thing that made God and spirituality attractive to me—they were present in silence. Silence became a holy thing, a place to communicate with God.

SA meetings were balm for my soul, an antidote to the noisy crowd I carried around in my head. They began with a moment of silence. Only one person talked at a time, and everyone else listened. What a difference! I heard my Higher Power speaking to me in the voices of my SA friends.

A few years ago, I developed a problem with my hearing. Noises were magnified, especially sharp sounds like clapping or a door slamming. These sounds became painful to me, a shock to my

disturbances melt away.

—David M., Portland, OR

nervous system from which I had to retreat to a quiet place to recover.

At the SA convention in Baltimore last year, I wanted to attend the SA birthday celebration, which had always been a highlight for me. But it was held in a rather small room instead of a big hall, and even as I approached the door the noise drove me back. So I bought a coin for myself at the literature booth. Then I ran into Sylvia J., and she very kindly presented my coin to me, with a prayer for my sobriety. (That coin is mounted on the wall in my bedroom today.)

So that's the background I bring to the article that follows. I found it in a stack of old *Essays*. Although it is not signed, the writing style somehow reminds me of Roy K. Plus there's his use of the term "star system," which he alluded to in one of his recorded talks—practically a literary fingerprint for him.

But whoever wrote it, it speaks for me, and that's why I submitted it for reprinting. Obviously noise is an issue for me, and I like the author's suggestion that we come up with an alternative to applause. But the author goes deeper—as Roy



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often did—to question the whole philosophy of “the applause meter.” Don’t we claim that we’re powerless over lust, that our sobriety is due to the action of a Higher Power? How can I take credit for my days or years of sobriety?

And what about the “popularity contest?” That’s something that has also bothered me. When the newcomer gets his chip, there’s a polite smattering of applause. When the popular fellow receives his coin, the din is tremendous! What message

does that give?

I’m grateful to the anonymous author for challenging our accepted ideas and holding our practices to the prism of Divine Grace. So I ask with the author—how can we bring God into our sobriety celebrations? Could there perhaps be a way to celebrate gratitude with silence? If your group, Regional Conference, or International Convention Committee can suggest a different solution, please write to *Essay*.

—Mike F., Rochester, NY

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## Who’s Keeping Us Sober?

From “Feedback Corner,” *Essay*, December 1991

I’d like to say something about SA birthday celebrations. I think we’re carrying it too far, going the wrong way with it. For example, in a recent regional SA convention, applause, whoops and whistles weren’t enough, there were horns. Razzmatazz. Is it a popularity contest? Who registers highest on the applause meter? Is this putting principles before personalities or personality before principle?

What are we doing? Giving glory to a person for staying sober? Did they really do it? If they did, what am I doing agonizing over Steps and God and surrender? What am I doing in SA? I’m still sober today—by the grace of God—and am deeply grateful for every day, month, and year that others have. “By all means, let’s keep our laughter and joy.” But something feels wrong about this, for us in SA, I mean.

Also, hugging is enough of a problem for some of us, why make it standard SA birthday ritual? I’ve been in meetings where the hugger had years less sobriety than the one getting the chip, or no sobriety at all! What kind of sickness is this? Plus, this seems to put the person giving the chip in a superior position!

On the constructive side, what would happen if we came up with something more suitable for our own SA situation? What if we acted in truth and used birthdays as an opportunity to somehow thank God together for that person’s sobriety? What if, instead of giving in to the “star” system or personal gratification, we tried to make it more of a spiritual thing?

## Encouraged to Continue

Recently, while attending an SA meeting, I was having a dialogue inside my head as someone read aloud “The Solution” (SA, 61). The second paragraph begins....

We discovered that we *could* stop, that not feeding the hunger didn’t kill us, that sex was indeed optional. There was hope for freedom, and we began to feel alive.

Everything was well and good so far. I liked the idea of feeling alive again! I really loved discovering that I could stop and that sex was optional. I had never considered such a possibility. What a great feeling to have this burden lifted! (Thank you very much SA.) But the reading doesn’t end there:

Encouraged to continue, we turned more and more away from our isolating obsession with sex and self and turned to God and others.

That feels like I’m facing a “turning point” of sorts, as described in AA, 59. Back to the SA reading...

All this was scary. We couldn’t see the path ahead [*Whoa... you call this The Solution?*], except that others had gone that way before. Each new step of surrender felt it would be off the edge into oblivion [*what happened to that part about beginning to feel alive?*], but we

took it.

Oh you mean I can’t just hang around up there in that other paragraph and feel alive? You mean I finally have to face myself? But I don’t like myself. When I look into the isolating obsession of self, I relive the trauma of my past. It hurts and it’s scary. It stirs up feelings of guilt and shame. And when I feel those feelings, that’s when I experience lust obsessions. Lust *is* my solution. It’s what I’ve done all my life. It’s the only solution I know.

And instead of killing us, surrender was killing the obsession! We had stepped into the light, into a whole new way of life.

But this time I’m willing to try it your way. After all, the reading is all about “The Solution.” My solutions never worked, but the fellowship is here to support me and give me a safe haven where I can finally face myself.

So I will take the Twelve Steps and face myself. I will turn to God and others to help me along the way. I will carry the SA message of spiritual awakening and practice these principles in all my affairs. And when I experience temptation to lust I will remember that *facing* myself, in the light of my experience and recovery *is* the solution, and I will be encouraged to continue...

—Brad M., Nashville, TN



## Grapevine Reprint

### Amber Light <sup>1</sup>

When I was first trying to make contact with something or someone who would love me and accept me, I kept running into roadblocks. This was partly due to my lack of acceptance and love for myself, as well as fear of what other people might think of me. I thought I needed to be absolutely right about a Higher Power in order to be accepted and loved in this world, and perhaps happy in the next, should there be a next one.

I was a full-blown alcoholic when I left high school, and for the next six years, until I got sober in 2000, much of my contact with a Higher Power was unconscious. I blotted out God and filled my life with alcohol and sex. I gave up searching for a Higher Power who would love me.

When I got to AA, I was told that I had to switch back to trying to be filled with the spiritual instead of filled with the material. I was afraid, but I knew deep down that there had to be a way. I started working the Steps right away. I didn’t do them perfectly (I’ve since learned that isn’t a suggestion).

However, I accepted very little direction and guidance and got

through the first nine Steps on my own. I was still sober, but I was also lonely and empty on the inside. I had heard people share in my meetings in Michigan about praying on their knees, so I thought I might as well try it.

It was a Sunday afternoon in October. I lived alone, and the television and radio were both off. I didn’t have a cell phone, so it was really quiet in my apartment. The amber light was coming through my living room windows, and I got down on my knees for the first time—and I asked for help.

So now, I don’t know or care how or why, but all of a sudden there was a power and presence in the room with me. And I also instinctively knew that this power and presence loved and accepted me and that it cared about whether I lived or died, whether or not I stayed sober, and whether or not I was happy. I also knew—and I can’t explain this at all—that this power had been with me the whole time and would continue to do so. I felt warm and loved in a way I had never felt before. I began to cry out of joy like I had never done.



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That was 13 years ago. And since that day, I cry with joy often. It's kind of obnoxious and sometimes seems to come from nowhere. I'm a big strong dude, but many times I can't read the Ninth Step Promises aloud

in a meeting without tears. But they are tears of joy. Today I know that I'm cared for and loved by a Higher Power that has never broken its anonymity to me.

—Aaron H., San Francisco, CA

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## SA Around the World

### SA in Iran—Then and Now

In the Spring of 2001, a fellow was struggling with staying sober from lust. He had tried many ways to stop, including using spiritual tools—but he could not stop. Then in the Fall of 2002 he met another man who also wanted to stop.



talking about issues they had never talked about before. But the meeting was quite effective.

Soon, the first member talked with his sponsor from another Twelve Step program, and that sponsor told him about SA. He then searched the Internet and found the SA fellowship. He then emailed SAICO and reported that there were four men in Shiraz suffering from lust, and that they needed guidance.

Within three days, he received an email reply—in Persian—from a member saying that he would help them. He was an Iranian man who had been in SA for three years. SAICO also sent some pamphlets and other materials, including the format for SA meetings.

We could never have imagined what has happened since then. Today, twelve years after that initial meeting, we have more than 1,500 members, seven Intergroups, and 99 meetings in many cities around the country.

These two men resolved to try to stay clean, so they started talking about their thoughts and supporting each other. They knew about Twelve Step programs and applied the Twelve Steps in an attempt to stop lusting. They also began looking for others who were suffering from the same illness. For the first time they began sharing their problem with people they knew. Within a month, they found two other fellows who had the same struggles, and they decided to form a recovery group.

On March 11, 2003, four men started a meeting in a park in Shiraz, without any pamphlet or brochure. At first there was much fear and shame, because these men were

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Just last month, in May 2014, the General Delegate Assembly recognized us as the “Persian-Speaking Region” of SA. We are happy to become a Region and we want to carry this message to bordering countries where there are also Persian-speaking sexaholics seeking a way out. And just this month we published 5,000 copies of the White Book in Persian.

Here in Iran, as all over the world, our old-timers help others to stay sober and seek help in gaining victory over lust. Every three months we hold a national group-conscience meeting in Tehran to help us improve our fellowship and serve the newcomer. We appreciate having this fellowship in our country. All of this has happened only by the grace of God.

We've maintained contact with long-sober members outside Iran in order to bring the original SA message to our members. We've launched and maintained a successful national website and we hold seven Skype meetings per week as well as a WECHAT meeting.

Currently, we are in need of:

- An SA Twelve Traditions Book, to replace the AA or NA books that we currently use.
- Workshops for members who are doing service at the Intergroup and national level, like the one held in Istanbul in December 2013.

We are grateful for all the support from the SA fellowship as we carry the message in Iran and surrounding countries.

—Mohsen K. from Ahwaz

### Persian White Book at Last

In the early years of establishing SA in Iran we did not know how to stop our problem and recover from sexaholism. Members of other Twelve Step programs who had long-term sobriety joined SA and gave us recommendations from their own fellowships to help us to recover from our

sexual behavior. However, this did not provide much help for our members. Many relapsed after a while, got discouraged, and then left the program. At the time we had only a few SA pamphlets that had been printed in Persian (Farsi), such as “SA for the Newcomer.”

Then in 2006, we established a translations committee and



prioritized our needs. First, we translated “Practical Tools,” “Recovery Continues,” and “Step into Action, One, Two, Three.” In parallel, we worked on translating the White Book. This required a longer time because it is a thick book with many pages. Along the way, we would sometimes publish a few paragraphs of the White Book in the local Persian SA magazine. This was a great help for our members.

Now, after eight years, the White Book has been translated

## Recovery Camp in Israel

May 2014 was an unforgettable month in the history of SA Israel and SAs EMER Region. In only 10 years, SA Israel has grown from a few loners to more than 300 active members; more than 50 meetings in English, French, and Hebrew (with five new meetings opened this month alone); a fully paid-up and redecorated “SA Meeting House;” the hosting of EMER’s 2014 Regional Assembly and SA/S-Anon Convention with nearly 300 participants in attendance from all over Europe and even a handful of members from the US and Canada—and all of this followed by a remarkable International Recovery



and printed, and it is on sale at our groups. Today at my local group meeting, I could see the happiness of our members who have been waiting all these years to have a Persian White Book. This will greatly help us to understand more specifically how our fellowship works.

I’m very grateful for the help of members from the USA and Europe who have helped us to improve SA in Iran and translate our literature.

—*Mohsen K.*

Camp on the shore of Lake Galilee! I was personally privileged to take part in every one of these events.

This was my first visit to Israel in sobriety. What a difference sobriety makes!

Following are some of my own personal highlights from this remarkable

achievement by the 10 organizing members of the Israeli Intergroup:

- The sheer joy in recovery of Israeli SAs: singing, dancing, and fellowshiping with SA members from far and wide.
- The exuberance of the Convention atmosphere contrasted with the grim memorial to Israel’s lost six million at the Yad Va’shem

Holocaust memorial right next door.

- Serving up to 40 delicious kosher meals from a camp kitchen on the shore of Lake Galilee.

- Smooth transfer of the EMER’s Chair from Nicholas S. to Luc D. at this year’s Regional Assembly.

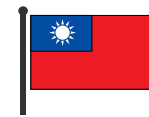
- Early morning walks in the hills above Galilee.

- Celebrating Sabbath with observant Jewish SA members in the heart of Jerusalem.

- Realising that SA is clearly on the move here. What a blessing!

—*Indrei R.*

## Taichung Holds First Annual Retreat



On February 15, 2014 the English-speaking Taichung group held its first SA retreat, entitled “It Works If You Work It.” Five of us active members were present. This was a great milestone for us, to have our first gathering outside of regular meetings since our group began in January 2010. We wanted to improve our sense of connection as well as encourage each other to actively work the Twelve Steps. Members all served in various ways, taking leadership to facilitate sessions, including sessions on the Fourth Step, sharing our stories, and a solitude session to work on our current Step work. Our retreat built fellowship and renewed our motivation to diligently work through the Twelve Steps. We are grateful to God for our fellowship over the past few years and hope that this retreat may become an annual event.

—*Anonymous, Taichung, Taiwan Group*

### Sponsors Needed for International Members

More and more newcomers in countries outside the US are looking for SA sponsors. Can you share your sobriety as a sponsor? If so, please add your name to the International Buddy List and indicate “Available to Sponsor.” The Buddy List is a directory of 350 SA men from around the world who wish to share their experience, strength, and hope with one another. To join the Buddy List, please contact [sabuddylist@gmail.com](mailto: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. There are currently 92 women from 24 countries on the list. To be added to the list, contact SAICO at 1-866-424-8777 or email [saico@sa.org](mailto:saico@sa.org).

**Let’s reach out to others in our global fellowship!**



## Corrections Facility Committee (CFC): Letter-Writing Meetings

Last July, I began serving as the CFC chair for the Los Angeles Inter-group. The mission of SA's CFC is to carry our message to incarcerated sexaholics, and one way to do this is to participate in CFC's Sponsor-by-Mail program. So early in my service, I introduced a Prisoner Correspondence Format in one of our groups (see format on next page). Since then, I've recruited six sober sexaholics to sponsor prisoners by mail, and most of them are currently sponsoring an inmate. We also began reading the prisoners' letters and responding to them in our group.

How does this work? First, a member of the group becomes a Sponsor-by-Mail for an incarcerated sexaholic. The sponsor then gets permission to share his or her sponsees' letters at a meeting, and the group conscience decides whether to "adopt" this particular prisoner as a member.

Our group averages two to three letter-writing meetings per month, sometimes from two different inmates. During the meeting, we first propose a topic, and members are invited to write on the proposed topic for a limited amount of time, with the option to read their writ-

ten responses to the group and send them to the prisoner. We choose a topic for writing (instead of members responding directly to the prisoner's letter) in order to give the prisoner a true experience of participating in a meeting.

We've had as many as 12 people writing responses at once, with many members choosing to share

their letters during subsequent sharing, while others prefer to share on a different topic. After the meeting, the prisoners' sponsors can collect the letters and mail them to the sponsee. We have an alternative format on hand for days when no prisoner's letter has been received.

In our experience, both the prisoner and the participating members benefit greatly from this exchange. The jailed sexaholic gets the benefit of group sharing, and the group members take part in carrying the SA message to those who are less fortunate. This has been a positive experience for us, with many members looking forward to these meetings and prisoners expressing gratitude for the support they receive.

For more information, please contact me at [mottelnnn@gmail.com](mailto:mottelnnn@gmail.com)

—In service, Motti P.,

Los Angeles, SD 08/03/2011



## Sample Prisoner Correspondence Meeting Format

*Read regular format until after the serenity prayer.*

[This meeting has two formats: (a) book study and (b) prisoner correspondence meeting. Does any member have prisoner correspondence to share?]

Would someone please read either the Twelve Steps on page 208 of the White Book or the first page of the chapter "Working with Others" from AA, 89.

During this meeting, we will share correspondence from those who are incarcerated or going into prison, and carry the sa message of recovery to them by sending our written shares through the prisoner's sponsor and/or doing step writing in the meeting and sharing it with the prisoner. Prisoner correspondence often relates to the prisoner's step work with an sa sponsor, who is a member of this group. Reading the correspondence at this meeting permits the prisoner to share, passing the message of his or her recovery to our group, and vice versa.

If you are interested in being of service by sponsoring or corresponding with a prisoner, please see me after the meeting.

**Member shares the prisoner's correspondence.**

**After the reading is completed:** Would someone like to propose a topic on which to write?

**In participation:** Members write on the topic for ten minutes (plus one minute to sum up), with an option to read their written share in this meeting and/or have it sent to the prisoner. In writing, members share their experience, strength, and hope with the prisoner(s), avoiding feedback (with the exception of Step One reading), following normal meeting protocols. No cross-talk please. To avoid cross-talk, we do not comment on another member's share or directly address the prisoner's letter. We stick to the proposed topic, sharing in "I," not "you" or "we," giving our correspondent the benefit of participation in a group sharing. We avoid topics that can lead to dissension or distraction. We also avoid explicit sexual descriptions and sexually abusive language. The emphasis is on honesty, recovery, and healing—how to apply the Twelve Steps and Twelve Traditions in our daily lives.

**At the end of ten minutes,** members may share their writing with the group. Ask, 'Who would like to begin?'

*Read the guidelines for sharing from the regular format. At 9:40 pm, refer to the regular format for the Seventh Tradition and secretary's announcements, after which the meeting will re-open for sharing.*



## Corrections Facility Committee—Call to Serve

SA's Sponsor-by-Mail program, sponsored by SA's Correctional Facilities Committee (CFC), is our primary means of carrying the SA message to prisoners. Local, Intergroup and Regional Corrections Committee Chairs are needed in order for us to support local prisoners, so that we can reach areas not currently carrying the message to prisoners. We need your help. If you are willing to serve as a Corrections Committee Chair of your group, Intergroup, or region, we will help you get started. We also need editorial help for developing a new draft CFC pamphlet. For more information, or if you would like to volunteer to help those less fortunate than us who are trying to work the Steps while incarcerated, please contact me at [sacfc1@gmail.com](mailto:sacfc1@gmail.com).



—In love and service, Unchatwa, CFC Chair

## Upcoming International Convention

July 11-14, 2014, Detroit, MI. *Miracle in Motown*



The city of Detroit has a rich and varied heritage. It was the birthplace of the American auto industry and brought on the age of assembly line manufacturing, which led to unprecedented growth of the US economy. Detroit became known as the Motor City. The booming auto industry attracted a diversity of workers and cultures from all around the world: French, Belgian, German, Irish, Hispanic, Polish, Greek, Italian, Middle Eastern, and African American. It was this mixture of cultures that became the incubator for Detroit's music industry, which exploded on the scene just after the great depression of the 1920's, came-of-age in the 1960's and 70's as "Motown music," and is still a powerful force in 2014.

Today, the city of Detroit is once again in the process of "re-birth"—and so it is an ideal location for us to gather and take part in the "Miracle In Motown": a place for discovery, enlightenment, and fellowship. We are preparing a great program of powerful speakers and lots of opportunity for creating the start of your own recovery miracle.

The convention will be held at the Sheraton Detroit Novi hotel, 20 minutes from the Detroit Metropolitan airport. Please visit our convention website at [miracleinmotown.com](http://miracleinmotown.com) for hotel, registration, and transportation details. We also need service volunteers to make this Convention a success, so please sign up for opportunities on the website. Also, please let us know if you have a special need. You can call and leave a message at the Miracle In Motown hotline: 313-528-3006.

We look forward to seeing you in Detroit!

—In service, George H., SA Convention Chair

## SA Business

### SAICO Financial Update

Following is a summary of SA fellowship revenues and expenses for First Quarter 2014. A detailed donations report is enclosed with mailed issues of *Essay*. The report is also available from SAICO. To request your copy, please call SAICO at 866-424-8777 or write to [saico@sa.org](mailto:saico@sa.org).



SAICO Financial Update First Quarter 2014	
Donations	\$ 52,660
Other Revenues	31,906
Expenses	77,879
Revenues (less expenses)	6,687
Total Prudent Reserve	131,151

### Quarterly Appeal Reinstated

In 2008, an appeal was sent out to the fellowship to help offset a shortfall in contributions to SAICO. Called the "Quarterly Appeal," this was a request for contributions from members, meetings, Intergroups, and regions. The fellowship stepped forward and by 2011, SAICO had a funding surplus, and the Quarterly Appeal was retired. However, over the past three years, SAICO fellowship contributions have failed to meet budgeted projections, leaving some of our outreach programs in jeopardy. As a result, the GDA voted in May to reinstate the Quarterly Appeal.

The Finance Committee believes that reinstating this Appeal is necessary to allow SAICO to expand its scope. SA outreach continues to expand in many directions: the support of prisoners through the Corrections Facilities Committee, support of inquirers and new meetings around the world through the International Committee, and the ongoing development of new literature through the Literature Committee. In addition, in carrying the SA message to those who still suffer around the globe, SAICO must expand its capacity to deal with languages other than English, and with a whole range of world cultures and currencies.

We urge every group to send a special donation for this Quarterly Appeal. The participation of your group will be an investment in carrying the SA message around the world to those who still suffer.

Thank you for your service and support.

—Carlton B., Finance Committee Chair



## Essay Subscription Price Adjustment

Dear Readers,

We have always tried to keep the price of *Essay* as low as possible, in order to make our “meeting in print” accessible to the sexaholic who still suffers. For at least the past eight years, the base price for all subscriptions, printed and digital, has been \$12.

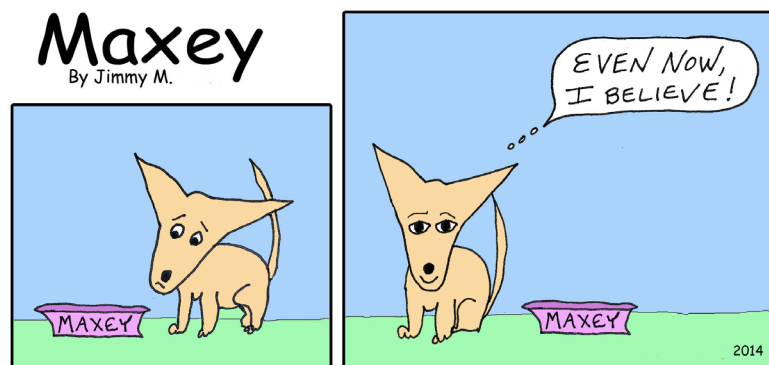
However, because of increased printing and shipping costs (specifically postage) and the increased cost of labor, the Delegates and the Board of Trustees have voted to adjust the price of *Essay*, effective May 2014.

Following is the new pricing structure:

- Electronic version (via e-mail): \$12
- Print version (mailed to USA Zip Code): \$16
- Group rate (print version for 10 or more copies sent to the same USA address): \$14
- Print version (mailed to addresses outside USA): \$20

Thank you for your loyal support of the *Essay*. Without you there would be no *Essay*!

—Carlton B., Finance Committee Chair



### USA

### New SA Groups

Denver, CO (additional mtg)  
Anchorage AK (additional mtg)  
Brooklyn NY, Williamsburg-  
Bushwick sec-  
tion (two mtgs.)  
Edinburg TX  
Henderson NC  
Kalamazoo MI



Oswego NY  
Raleigh Durham, NC (add'l mtg)  
Rexford ID  
Tempe AZ (additional mtg)

### International

Gent, Belgium  
Guapiles, Limon, Costa Rica  
Portage La Prairie MB, Canada  
Zwolle, The Netherlands

## Delegates and Trustees

Region	Delegate	Committees
North Midwest	Gary L., <i>Chair</i> Scott S. Dimitri P. John H., <i>Alternate</i>	Literature, Legal, COMC International International, Conventions
South Midwest	Joe M. Steve L. Glenn J.	RAC, Legal Nominations, PI Conventions, PI
Northwest	Brian W. Yvon L. Kathy R., <i>Alt</i> Scott W.	Literature, CFC
Southwest	Tom K., <i>Vice Chair</i> Eric S. Steve C. Jim C., <i>Alternate</i> Cal H., <i>Alternate</i>	Conventions, Nominations CFC, IT PI, Service Structure Finance, Conventions, IT
Mid-Atlantic	Carl N. Mike S., <i>Alternate</i> Ben L., <i>Alternate</i> Hugh S., <i>Alternate</i>	H&I Nominations
Northeast	Terry O. Gary M. Jim D., <i>Alternate</i>	IT, PI Finance, Conventions
Southeast	Ed R. Art S. LB B., <i>Alternate</i> Dick B., <i>Alternate</i> Manse B., <i>Alternate</i>	Int'l, Conventions, Service Structure COMC, Literature Literature, RAC International
German Speaking	Hans L.	Literature, CFC
EMER	Francis C., Ireland Cathal M., Ireland AJ A., Israel Daan L., <i>Alt.</i> , Netherlands Luc D., <i>Alt.</i> , Belgium Artemes, <i>Alt.</i> , Spain	H&I, International, PI PI H&I
	Trustee	Committees
	Bob H., <i>Chair, Class A</i> George F., <i>Vice Chair</i> Jerry L. Laura W., <i>Class A</i> Mike S.	CFC, RAC IT, Finance, COMC International, Literature, Nominations Literature, H&I, Conventions



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

## Calendar of Events



### June 2014

**20-22, Düsseldorf, Deutschland:** SA Traditions Workshop, *God Will Restore Our Innocence and Sanity....* Workshop will be held in English & translated into German. Phone: +49 157 361 322 39, email: asduesseldorf-schritte@web.de

**21-23, Medellin Colombia:** Segundo Congreso Nacional. For more info, email sabogotacolombia@yahoo.es

**21, Peoria IL USA:** Open Speaker Meeting, for anyone wanting to learn more about sexual addiction. Info at 309-210-2469; solutionsandanswers.com, or email answers@solutionsandanswers.com

### July 2014

**18-20, Dublin:** SA/S-Anon Convention and Workshop, *Courage to Change*. Info at Convention@saireland.com

### September 2014

**5-7, Ammerdown, UK:** Summer Convention. Contact sauksecretary@gmail.com

### October 2014

**11, Greensboro NC, USA:** *Recovery in the Fall* Contact 336-833-1591 or servingtheliving@gmail.com

**17-19, Pittsburgh PA, USA:** SA/S-Anon Mid-Atlantic Regional Convention, *A Change of Heart*. Info at www.acoh2014.org, or acoh2014pgh@gmail.com. Register online at www.acoh2014.org

**18, SA Marathon, Jacksonville FL, USA:** *A Common Solution*. Info at JaxMarathonSaySA@gmail.com

**31-November 2, Biezenmortel, Netherlands:** Dutch-Belgian Regional SA Workshop: *Culture of*

*Sobriety*. Contact emer-workshop@gmail.com

### November 2014

**2, Lake Ronkonkoma NY, USA:** Fall 2014 SA Conference. Save the date. More information to follow.

**7-9, Dublin, Ireland:** Regional SA Workshop, *Culture of Sobriety*. Contact fjcofm@yahoo.com

**14-16 Hattingen, Germany:** *30 Years in Recovery* (30th anniversary of SA in Germany, after Roy visited Germany and gave a workshop in 1985). Contact asbochum1985@gmail.com

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To submit events or for more information about events, contact saico at saico@sa.org or visit sa.org/events.

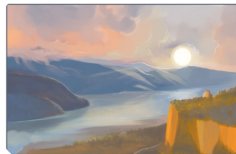
### Upcoming International Conventions



**July 11-13, 2014, Miracle in Motown, Detroit, MI.** For info call 313-528-3006 or contact miracleinmotown.com or email sa-registration@miracleinmotown.com

**January 23-25, 2015, Awakening the Spirit, Portland, OR,** at the Sheraton Portland Airport hotel. For information or to register, contact awakeningthespirit2015.com

**July 2015, Chicago, IL.** Info available soon at saico.org



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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 THE

WISDOM

TO KNOW THE DIFFERENCE.