

# Essay

*September 2015*



“The extraordinary workings  
of a loving and merciful God”

Single Yet Strangely Content

*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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September 2015



**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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## Single Yet Strangely Content

I'm a lust drunk from England, sober for 20 years—since April 12, 1995—by the grace of God and the fellowship of SA. But my road to SA was a long one.

I was 42 years old when I first heard of sexual addiction. I had just been through the catastrophic collapse of a second marriage and a second career. In response to this, I had fled to a New Age community in the north of Scotland and was just about to dive headlong into career three and marriage three.

Then I was comprehensively Twelve-stepped by a couple who were visiting from London. They introduced me to the concept of sexual addiction. The impact of these two words on me was profound. My mind went into a spin. I had difficulty standing upright. Walking in a straight line was impossible.

They shared their experience of being “sex and love addicts” and introduced me to a novel concept: sexual sobriety. My sexual history up to this point had involved copious pornography, sex with self, promiscuity, adultery, using prostitutes, voyeurism, exhibitionism, romantic fantasy, sexual intrigue, and emotional affairs. So I identified and reluctantly made the commitment to four self-defined “bottom lines”

(things I could not do and still call myself sober): no pornography, no masturbation, no sex outside of a committed relationship, and no relationship for the foreseeable future.

We started a meeting in the north of Scotland, and I began my Step work and went to just about any meeting in any fellowship I could find. In AA I got an AA Step sponsor who was willing to work with me. I uncovered experiences of childhood sexual abuse, went to the U.S. for six weeks of treatment, and participated in loads of therapy. And for four years, by the grace of God, I was sober.

By the end of my fourth year of sobriety, I had become something of an “S” fellowship guru. I knew everything there was to know about my ways of acting out and why I had become a sex addict. My recovery model was “find out who you are and be that person,” so I spent a lot of time in therapy. But in the end I found very little of any real worth. I parted company with my first sponsor and got myself ready for a relapse.

This disease is cunning, so it easily found the chink in my spiritual armor. I came to the conclusion that, after four years, it was time to



let go of my fourth bottom line—no relationship for the foreseeable future. This then left me free to engage in a self-defined “committed relationship,” which, of course, I promptly did. Within a few months I was in the grip of an addictive relationship with a violent partner, and I was powerless to stop.

After several failed attempts to set and maintain the necessary boundaries, I had the unwelcome insight that either I would have to change my sobriety definition to “no sex outside of marriage,” or I would remain in the clutches of my disease. I fought this idea at first, but finally, on April 12, 1995, I surrendered and made the commitment. The impact was immediate. I stepped onto solid ground and was able to set effective boundaries with my partner, end my acting out, and withdraw from the relationship with sobriety and serenity.

I moved from Scotland back to England 11 days later and rented a flat about five miles from where my three children were living with their mother and her new partner. And it was surely no coincidence that, two months later, I met a man who told me he belonged to a fellowship called Sexaholics Anonymous, and I learned that SA had a sobriety definition very like my own new one. I went to an SA convention and got an SA sponsor.



My new sponsor was very impressed with my experience of “S” recovery and seemed to like the way I used him as an unpaid therapist. But I did not get well. I stayed sober but my physical and spiritual condition began to decline. I began losing weight. I look back on this now as my recovery rock bottom.

After I had shared my arrogant and rebellious mind at a second SA convention in London, a long-time sober SA member confronted me with the fact that I was, in his words, “on a different track.” I felt this much like a physical punch in the stomach. If I really was on a different track, then should I stay on it or jump onto to the SA track? It was at this crisis point that I truly joined the SA fellowship.

After that, a lot of things seemed to change quite rapidly. I switched to a structured plan of eating. I fired my sponsor-therapist and asked my confronter to sponsor me. I rejoined the church that I had abandoned 25 years previously. I came off sickness benefit and got my first job, after six years of unemployment. Finally, a major change occurred in my thoughts and attitudes, especially as these related to my former wife and our family.

Although I had joined an anonymous fellowship for food addiction about a year after finding “S” recovery, complete surrender of my right to eat the way I wanted to



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seemed to be the key to my recovery around food. In the same way, I have found that complete surrender of my right to sexual activity on my own terms seems to have brought me into real sexual sobriety.

My new sponsor helped me to understand that his job was not to listen to my harrowing but beautifully presented “stuff.” His job was to share his experience, strength, and hope with me.

My job was to listen and try to take the actions that he took, to see if that would also work for me. His model was not “Find out who you are and be that person,” but “Who I am is none of my business. I’m just here to serve.” I tried his model and it worked much better than mine.

I came to see that all my knowledge about sexual addiction and why I became a sex addict was actually unimportant. All I needed to know was that there is a proven reliable method by which I can arrest my addiction. Once I knew that, all I had to do was take the necessary actions, and recovery was assured.

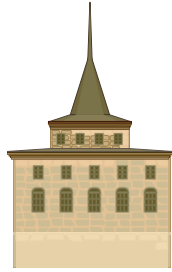
Rejoining the church of my childhood was perhaps my biggest surrender of all. It was certainly my biggest fear but—as ever—such fears are the beacon light of my growth. Eventually, after a spiritual retreat at which I found my mind completely fed but my heart dying of thirst, I made another of those now-familiar surrenders. I decided to go to church

the next Sunday—just park my brain at the door and go in. I stood when they stood, kneeled when they kneeled, sang when they sang, and I let God be God. Home at last!

As for the family, when I had abandoned my wife and children in 1990 for a sexually intriguing geographical cure in Scotland, I had no difficulty in blaming the whole business on my wife. She had made it clear that sex with me was off the menu, so I concluded that was the end of our marriage. In my subsequent struggle with the “no sex outside of marriage” issue, I finally saw the depth of my faithlessness and the bankruptcy of my ideas about commitment. For me today, the only true commitment is lifelong marriage, and that commitment does not end just because one partner says no to sexual activity.

Repetitive inventory work showed me how my wife and children had borne the brunt of my disease and that amends were due in full measure. Once again, a surrender was required as I came to realize that “full measure” meant rebuilding the family which I had earlier broken. This has not happened yet and may never happen, but through this particular wound I am being taught patience, forgiveness, constancy, and faithfulness—virtues so sadly lacking in this particular sexaholic.

For my first five years in “S”



recovery, I did not have a regular job but I worked part-time in a spiritual community, cleaning floors and lavatories. This gave me time to do my Step work and go to therapy, meetings, treatment, etc. Initially I received a pension from my former business but when that ceased, I was classified as sick and began receiving sickness benefits. This had a slowly corrosive effect on me, and—by the time I had returned to England and found SA—I considered myself unemployable and unlikely ever to work again.

This attitude of helplessness and hopelessness undoubtedly contributed to my recovery rock bottom. Surrender came when I called a sober member of the fellowship who had recently been helped out of a similar hole and asked him to sponsor me back into work. He gave me some simple instructions which I carried out, and within two weeks I had a job. Eventually I found myself in a well-paid job specializing in e-commerce.

I have now been blessed with over 25 years of AA sobriety, 20 years of SA sobriety, and 16 years of abstinence from compulsive eating. I have an active spiritual life, and faithfully hold my family in love. This is a miracle due entirely to the grace of God. All I have done is work a programme of recovery to the best of my ability.

I function best when I attend lots of meetings, and I live in an area

where there are many, so I normally attend four SA meetings and two meetings of other fellowships every week. I prefer meetings that study fellowship literature, the Steps, and the Traditions because these help me to enlarge my spiritual life. I have also started several new SA meetings. I reckon it is much harder to act out when I’m the founder of a group!

I have an SA sponsor in the U.S. whom I ring every week. I do my best to tell him the things I would rather keep secret, and I act on his suggestions no matter what. I’ve discovered the weird fact that, even when my sponsor suggests something which seems to me to be quite questionable, if I do what he suggests it always works out, and often in an extraordinary way. At the moment he is helping me to make living amends to my former wife.

I have done a lot of hard, repetitive work on the Steps, attended scores of Step study meetings, and learnt several different ways of approaching the Steps. One method I was taught came from one of the original 100 members of AA. It produced the most profound and startling change in me, finally blowing away most of my old ideas.

Service has also helped me to stay sober. I have sponsored many SA members. My sponsorship did not always keep them sober, but it certainly helped me. I am reputed to be a bit of a hard liner, as I’m not anxious to preside over the

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destruction of human life. So, if I have not heard from a sponsee for a while, I consider myself fired. I'm always delighted to hear from a lost sponsee again, but then I like to know what will be different this time before giving it another try. I've held a number of different service positions at group, national, and international levels. I've experienced the shift from reluctant to glad server. This took time, but I just needed to practice harder! I hold a service appointment in nearly every meeting that I attend regularly.

I attend any conventions that are held in the UK and have also attended many overseas, including several in the U.S. At first, I disliked conventions. I felt quite self-conscious and uncomfortable. Later I found that getting involved with the organization really helped. Nowadays I really look forward to being with my SA buddies. I particularly enjoy the traditional entertainments on Saturday evening. The fellowship in the UK remains fairly small, but at each convention, we add up our collective years of sobriety. And I thank God that, every year, the total keeps on moving upwards.

So these are some of the things I do, but what really keeps me sober? I believe it is God's grace. I've seen others do as much if not more than I do and still relapse. Somehow God's grace is reaching me. This is a mystery and a miracle. I often

receive phone calls from friends in the fellowship when my head is just beginning to go. Lust has such an immediate, toxic, and devastating effect on me that it now acts like permanent, portable aversion therapy. I have become an expert on street paving stones, and my favorite mantra, "I'm powerless, please God help me," is now just as automatic as my rubbernecking used to be.

It seems to me that I am in danger of relapse as long as I have an addiction over which I will not admit powerlessness, a secret which I will not declare, a defect that I am unwilling to surrender, or an amend I am unwilling to make. So, in working the Steps, I do my best to overcome my denial and watch for these four pitfalls.

I am a sexaholic who is also powerless over food, nicotine, alcohol, caffeine, work, money, and power. I have done numerous inventories and now I have a growing sense of scraping the barrel to find anything as yet untold. When I got to Step Six, I was shocked to uncover a list of over 100 defects of character. Actually, I now thank God it was so many, otherwise I might have tried to deal with them myself! Today, I realize that this task is completely beyond me. All I can do is become willing to let go of my defects and then humbly ask God to remove them.

My experiences in making amends have been patchy. Things

went poorly whenever I had a hidden agenda or when I was temporarily sponsorless and going it alone. On other occasions I've been able to make full amends, bring healing into the lives of others, and drop a huge burden of guilt. I sat on my father's grave and had a talk with him. I pray for those on my grudge list and ask God to bring them all that is good. I've made restitution to former employers for theft. Today I'm on good terms with my brothers and sisters. They all came to my 50th belly button birthday in 1999. It was the first time we had been together in 14 years, and there was not one cross word.

Perhaps the biggest gap in my amends-making has been toward the many women who have been harmed by my sexual compulsivity. My usual amends to them is to stay out of their lives. In this area, I shall always need plenty of advice, monitoring, and support from my sponsor, as my disease still has an agenda of its own.

I have an extensive prayer life today. Through reading the spiritual classics, I've come to see that sexaholism is not confined to my generation. There are those who have trodden our path before—realizing their powerlessness over lust and finding redeeming power in God. The unfashionable virtue of chastity has become a real treasure in my

life.

I retired from work five years ago. On the face of it there was no way that my pension could support this, but in fact it has been one of the most prosperous and rewarding periods of my life. I was able to throw myself into full-time SA service. This has included representing the Europe and Middle-East Region as a General Assembly Delegate and even a short spell as a Trustee. I have run Step workshops for SAs in over 12 different countries, and helped the fellowship to flourish on four continents. Now, in my sixth year of retirement, I am trying to become more of "a nobody" in SA and attend more to the poor state of my soul (Step Eleven).

The last few lines are the most difficult to put into words. Through mists I am beginning to discern the extraordinary workings of a loving and merciful God, Who has shaped and ordered the life of just one lust addict. He began by giving me a romantic heart, always striving for

high ideals. As I turned that nature toward lust, I grew up obsessed, isolated, and insatiable. Now, He has guided me into recovery and into a situation designed to show me His love, His power, and His way of life.

For over 20 years I have remained single, sober, and faithful to the mother of my children. I pray



every day that God's will—whatever that may be—will be done between and among us. There has been no miraculous reconciliation and no rebuilding of our broken marriage and family—yet. But last year my ex-wife separated from her partner, and just this week, she called me! I am glad that she still found me guarding the bridge which, one day, she may desire to cross.

I have also been tempted to remarry—temptations made stronger

because I am free both in law and religion to do so. But I know that would not do, that this “good” would be the enemy of “the best.” The heart that God gave me still strives for its ideal and, in it, faith, hope and love live on. I expect that I shall continue living alone, unmarried, on guard and faithful unto death—yet I am strangely content.

Now that is a real miracle.

—Nicholas, Bournemouth, UK

“The extraordinary workings  
of a loving and merciful God”

### Introducing New GDA Chair

## Service: The Third Legacy of AA

Some of us come into these rooms crawling on our hands and knees because we know we have no option other than to stop our destructive way of life. Others, like myself, are pushed into these rooms and—if we are fortunate—we too discover that we had no other options, that our lives are unmanageable, and that we are insane.

I came into SA at the strong suggestion of the State of California. I had been released from prison for a sexual offense, and as a require-

ment of my parole, I was to attend a therapy group and SA. Although I had the court papers to prove that I needed to be there, I was certain that

I was not a sexaholic. I remember telling my wife, “I’ve got to go to this sex addiction class.” She said, “You’re not a sex addict.” I said, “Yeah, I know.” Little did she know, and little did I know.

Full of denial and quick to minimize my situation, I began attending SA meetings. In the rooms of SA, I heard members share stories of powerlessness and unmanage-



ability over sex addiction. Their stories seemed strangely familiar. As my denial began to wane, I came to realize that these stories were also my story. They seemed so familiar to me because I too am a sex addict, and I have been one since childhood.

In the meetings I heard stories of hope. Lives were being transformed through the working of the program. I was introduced to the Twelve Steps, and I began studying and working them on a daily basis. I was introduced to the Twelve Traditions and I learned how these too could be applied to all aspects of my life.

*Alcoholics Anonymous* tells me that, “Our real purpose is to fit ourselves to be of maximum service to God and the people about us” (77). Again, it tells me that, “Your job now is to be at the place where you may be of maximum helpfulness to others...” (102). I heard slogans like “Service to others,” “Give back what you have been given,” and “You can’t keep it if you don’t give it away.” Those are just a few of the recovery slogans that have inspired me to work the Third Legacy.

As I have served others and have given back to the program, my attitude has changed. Self-seeking and selfishness are just two of the character defects that no longer run my life. They are still there, but through serving others I have a chance to get out of my head and experience what I believe is my Higher Power’s true

calling for all of us: serving others.

From very early in recovery I have found places to be of service. I continue to serve at the group, Intergroup, regional, and international levels. In my journey down the service structure, I have found that God truly has done for me what I could never have done for myself. Through service, God has given me back my dignity. Through service, I have experienced a level of integrity.

This whole program that is called Sexaholics Anonymous is amazing. It has taken an undeserving sex drunk like myself on one of the greatest adventures of my life. It offers me 36 simple principles—the Twelve Steps, Twelve Traditions, and Twelve Concepts—which, if worked on a daily basis, will keep me sober one more day. This has worked for me for the last 19 years. I know it will work for 24 more hours. It has to work, because my life depends on it.

One of the last times Roy K. spoke, he said, “I’m not lust free, but I am free not to lust.” I knew what he meant: the Steps, Traditions, and Concepts of Service are what will help me to be “free not to lust,” one day at a time. I now look forward to continuing my journey by serving SA as the new Chair of the General Delegate Assembly

—Tom K., Irvine, CA



## Tools I Use to Surrender Lust

I'm grateful to have celebrated five years of sexual sobriety this past August. I don't believe I would be sober (or three years married!) without help from my Higher Power, Who has helped me find progressive victory over lust. Through the fellowship of SA, my Higher Power has given me the tools that others have used to surrender lust, one day at a time. I've been keeping a list of these tools, and I would like to summarize the ways that I have been using them.

1. *Leaving it up to God.* One of the first tools I started using for dealing with potential lust objects came out of my work on Steps Two and Three. I realized that my Higher Power was so powerful that He could arrange for any connection to take place, so I didn't have to struggle or take second looks. I would think, "If God wants me to be with that person, He can make it happen." He could even arrange for us to crash-land on a desert island! So until that happens, I can ignore the person, go about my day, and do the next right thing." (Hopefully, whatever island I end up on, my cell phone would still work so I could double check with my sponsor if I was really doing God's will.)

2. *Praying for the lust objects.* I

learned from the White Book (162) that I can pray for the person I want to lust after. Though this hasn't always relieved me of the temptation (depending on the moment), my current sponsor has added the



notion that I can also pray to be a protector rather than a person who takes, manipulates, or uses others. For some reason this idea brings out something noble in me, and it helps me when certain temptations arise. I also heard someone in a meeting recently use the expression, "A special person needs a special prayer," and I've found this to be useful when I start to imagine how some person could fix me without knowing anything about her.

3. *Remembering that I'm powerless.* Paradoxically, whenever I see two potential lust objects in short succession, this somehow helps me, because it reminds me of the insanity of my addiction—one person, image, or fantasy was never enough.

4. *Laughing at myself.* Similarly, when I find myself headed toward the painful lust obsession, I can sometimes just laugh at myself and be grateful that I know now there's a name for the condition I have. I have this problem called sexaholism, but that's really okay, because there

is a solution, and there is hope for me.

5. *Seeing the beauty of God's world.* I can expand my focus away from the potential lust object, and toward all the beauty in the world around that person. I can expand my focus to include the trees blowing in the wind, the sky, the grass, or even a beautiful building or painting in the room.

6. *Practicing gratitude.* One of my sponsees shared with me that, when he sees a potential lust object, he prays, "Thank you, God, for making me a man with instincts and desires." Then he lets it go. I've found this very useful. I thank God, hold my shoulders up a little higher, and walk right by without taking a look. This keeps me safe in the moment from lust, and also counteracts my tendency to shame myself for these natural impulses

that my brain wants to convert to obsession.

7. *Letting go of labels.* My first sponsor suggested that I not use terms to describe women such as "beautiful" or "cute," but instead I simply say "someone I was attracted to." This helps me remember that she is a person and not a lust object, whereas all those terms I used in my addiction perpetuate the idea that I'm helpless over all these triggers.

I'm so grateful to SA for sobriety, and for an opportunity to compile some of the tools that have been so freely given from the fellowship I've experienced in recovery. Rather than suffer alone with the pain of endless lust and obsession, I can use these tools, share honestly when I fall short (so I don't have to have any secrets), and start living a bit more happy, joyous, and free each day.

—Anonymous, Cambridge, MA

### Members Share

## A Warm Blanket

Today I'm tired. My body aches from a long week, and I feel physically and emotionally exhausted. In many ways, I am experiencing the "HALT" (Hungry, Angry, Lonely, Tired) symptoms described in the White Book (34). Although I've been fasting as part of my religious practice, I'm not just hungry for food. The hunger strikes much deeper and is far more powerful. It is a spiritual



hunger that drives me to suck in the world around me: every person, every color, every texture, every smell. My predatory senses are desperate to devour everything, like an alien force that feeds off the very essence of this planet. This is the hunger known as lust. For me, lust is not simply sexual, although it certainly has a huge sexual component. Thanks to the beautiful gift of



sobriety, I now can tell when the lust is active. When I sense that powerful urge to notice every minuscule detail around me, I know that I'm experiencing a "spiritual emptiness and hunger" (SA, 62); a God hunger that manifests itself in me as a thirst for sex.

Once the lust starts, eventually a voice from the diseased part of my brain will say, "You're hungry and cold. You need a nice blanket. Let's go find some comforting warm bodies to soothe your pain."

Thus my spiritual hunger turns to sexual obsession. Suddenly, I find myself painfully craving the images and actions of my disease. No longer happy, joyous, or free, I cry out with outstretched arms for someone—any person or fantasy—to save me. "Hold me tight and love me, for I am unlovable. I need you to be my warm blanket and comfort my fears." I am crippled by the delusion that my problems will vanish in that embrace.

Alas, lust is a warm blanket that burns! It is a mirage. After the moment passes, I will find myself once more filthy and vile. This is not a blanket; it is a sheet of fire that scalds me. False advertising: lust promises me comfort and freedom, but it will leave me with shame and red-hot shackles. How can I heal from this increased pain? I will need something to relieve me of this bondage and to comfort the throb-

bing pain of reality, so once again I will turn to the soft, warm shelter of my lust blanket. I recognize this path, which I have travelled so many times before. If I choose this route, I will spiral violently downward to my hell, having once again fallen prey to the unrelenting idea that lust is the only source of warmth and comfort.

But wait! Those who have gone before me on the path of recovery have told me that there is hope in the Source of the Universe. Once again I cry out in pain, "There is One who can restore me to sanity. May I find Him now." I wonder if my doubts in the existence of a God will prevent the prayer from working. Nevertheless, I continue the call for help: "God, I surrender my need for pleasure. May I find in You the comfort, relief, solace, acceptance, assurance, happiness, freedom, and joy that I seek. Please put me to work doing Your Will. Use me to Your ends. I release my lust to You. I choose You as my blanket!"

Then I ask God to help me take the actions of surrender by changing my environment: moving to a different seat, walking away, turning off the phone or computer, sending a text, or making a phone call. I don't subject myself to lust if I can avoid it, and God can remove me from it. I surrender my need to lust through my choices and actions.

"[Having] just made conscious contact with God" (AA, 87), I start to feel safe for the first time. Better yet,



the "God blanket" didn't burn me. I took a chance and placed my trust in a God in Whom I have unstable faith, and He did for me what lust has never done for me. Is this what "happy, joyous, and free" (AA, 133) feels like? I'd like to order another round! Sign me up!

So, Bill W., I'm starting to believe that your experience, strength, and hope may work for me also. But you have told me that I only have a "daily reprieve contingent on the maintenance of our spiritual condition" (AA, 85). My limited experience in this program tells me that my disease comes with an element of amnesia. When I disconnect from the fellowship, I forget that I have a brain disorder with a spiritual solution. I forget that the lust blanket is actually made of fire-hot chainmail.

I forget that I'm allergic to lust. I start to believe that I can indulge lust in small doses. A person who is allergic to peanuts can die if he thinks he can suck on small peanuts without

swallowing them. I too can die once my allergic rash—the lust obsession—has been ignited within me. Small lust looks and lust drinks are enough to start the chain reaction. Most important, I forget how my God has held me in His loving arms and kept me warm and safe. Again, I start to believe that He will choke me, beat me, or abandon me if I become vulnerable to Him.

Fortunately, I have my fellows in the program. They share their stories with me, and I see how the God in their lives is helping them. I may not be able to see God, but the evidence of His Love is readily apparent when I am "willing" to see it. I may be tired and hungry today, but I am not alone! I surrender myself to my God and let Him hold me tight as I settle in for some peaceful sleep in His warm embrace. Happiness, joy, and freedom manifest themselves as a genuine smile on my face.

—AJ

## Warning: Danger Ahead

I just left an SA meeting, where a young member's share struck fear into my heart. He reminded me of my own past, and I was so profoundly moved that I felt compelled to share a bit of my story with him in the parking lot after the meeting.

In the meeting we had read "A Personal Story" in the White Book

(SA, 9). After we read the first part of Roy's story, this young member shared the lure of picking up a prostitute. Up to this point, his addiction has mainly involved Internet pornography and masturbation, but that night he had been driving through some back streets and came upon a couple of women standing near a secluded





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part of town.

He could tell that they were prostitutes. He could feel the immense temptation to cross the line and indulge in what Roy describes as “a thousand-fold more intense” and “lust exploded within me like the star-burst from a Fourth of July rocket. What a wonderful freedom!” (SA,14) He shared that these were the thoughts and feelings that the intense temptation was calling out to him at the time.

After the meeting, I shared with this young man the fear I felt from listening to him. I shared some of my own story: the reality and not the seemingly desirous fruit before him. I told him that the only thing that would be a thousand times more intense is the addiction that awaits him on the other side if he crosses that line. I told him that this would be far worse than the slavery he had experienced from Internet pornography and masturbation, and that he would not have the ability to escape the compulsion that will come after he crosses that line. I was able to tell him all of this, because this is my story.

For me, I know that with just a single thought, I would become uncontrollably compelled to seek out my next prostitute. Before SA, I experienced the complete powerlessness to even consider another avenue.

When the addiction struck, I became a slave, on autopilot, heading toward my next victim. Sometimes these women were ravaged from drugs, or mentally ill, or poor single women trying to feed their kids (and deeply ashamed of what they were doing). They were mothers, sisters, daughters, children of God who were drawn into the destruction of their addictions or misfortunes.

Each time the depravity of my disease took another part of these women’s souls, my own soul was dying inside as well. Yet my addiction would not allow any other solution. As much as my heart would break for these women, I needed them, and they needed me. However, because of SA, I thank God each day for the freedom I am now experiencing from that life.

Without SA I know what my life would be like: powerlessness that would drive me to progress my disease deeper into the blackness of death and destruction where satisfaction cannot be found. So today when I hear the desire of a young man in a meeting describe what looks so good—but who has no idea of the death that is just one decision away—my fear takes my breath as I can see the tragedy that lies ahead.

I write this for those who might see the imaginary desert oasis. I have been there. It is a mirage that drew me further into the dry desert,



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seeking what wasn’t there, only to find death in the abyss of sexual addiction. However, in SA, I am thankful that I have a condition that requires a spiritual solution, and a daily reprieve contingent upon my spiritual condition. I no longer seek

God to give me the power to resist the temptation. Now, because of the temptation, I just seek God—and through that process I have Union with Him, and that Union fills my being like my addiction never could.

—Dennis T., Anchorage AK

## Is Service Necessary for Recovery?

In May 2012, I found SA and became very curious about how the program worked. I got a sponsor right away, and she told me that one way to get myself out of my head—to stop thinking of myself—was to become involved and be of service. She suggested that I do things such as getting to the meetings early to help set up, staying late to help clean up, and staying for business meetings. She told me to look for small ways to be of service in the program. Even though I had no desire to do any of these things, I listened to her. For one thing, she was the one with years of sobriety, and I had only a few days.

One Sunday afternoon, during a face-to-face meeting, someone announced that an Intergroup meeting would be held after the meeting. I had never heard of an Intergroup meeting, so I wanted to attend one to learn more about it. The Intergroup Chair and I were the only two members in attendance that night.

I thought it was sad that more

people weren’t involved in serving this Twelve Step program that has helped so many. I also felt dismayed that the Chair faithfully met each month to have these meetings—alone! So I decided I would attend the meeting each month to support the Chair.

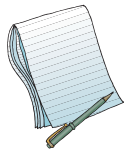
At the time I did not know I was doing service. I really thought I was just being nosy. However, my sponsor and other members of the program who had good recovery told me to continue to attend and be of service.

Hence, I attended Intergroup meetings for many months, and I would return to my home group with announcements from the Intergroup meeting. During a business meeting in June 2014, a member nominated me to be the group’s Intergroup representative. Not only did I meet the qualifications, but I was already attending the meeting. It just made sense! So I happily accepted the position. I have continued to serve as Intergroup rep for the past eight months, and I was renominated in November 2014. During this time, I



believe I have stayed sober because I am not thinking about myself as much.

This past weekend, I was very much inside of my head, feeling sorry for myself, and thinking about the injustice of my personal situation. My cry to God was “Why me?” Fortunately, I wasn’t able to stay in my state of self-pity. Do you know why? Because I had service work to do! I had to write my experience, strength, and hope about why service is needed in recovery, and that meant I had no time to wallow in my sorrows. I had work to do, and



people who were counting on me. I did not realize this beforehand, but service has helped fill a void in my life—the void of being alone. Service in the program has given me a sense of belonging, which I had been looking for all my life. Service has allowed me to get out of my head, and find people who care about me and believe in me—and who need me as much as I need them. And to think I found this all through service! So I ask you: Do you think that service is necessary for *your* recovery?

—Anonymous, NJ

## Am I Triggered or Am I Tempted?

I have been a member of SA, and by the grace of God sexually sober, for the past seven years. My sobriety is not the product of my best thinking or willpower, because for 28 years I searched for sobriety but could not get one full day lust-free. It took many years and many shameful and powerless “low-bottom” acting outs for me to arrive at Step One—to admit that I was beaten. Today, I try to listen and learn from those who went before me, and from that wisdom I would like to share the perspective that works for me.

Today I admit that I’m a sexaholic and I cannot “control and enjoy” lust. Thus, I do not seek lust out to play out in my mind. However, throughout the day, I might see some

form of sexual temptation flitting past me—whether it be a man or woman, an advertisement or any other thing that I might see, and the temptation arises to fantasize or flirt. When discussing these episodes with my recovery brothers, I am very careful when I use the term “tempted” versus when I say that I am “triggered.”

In my addiction, I would get “triggered.” In the extreme example, I would feel the trance-like state begging to take hold. A deep obsession would take over, my eyes would glaze over, my palms would begin to sweat, and my stomach would turn sour. The mental disorder was “triggered” into action, and once it progressed past an invisible line, there was no turning back. One of

the most important things that I have learned in recovery is that a temptation does not need to trigger the insanity!

In Step Two I came to believe that I could be restored to sanity. Sane people are tempted by lust, but sane people are not triggered into a hopeless state of mind and body. When I am tempted by lust but not triggered into insanity I know that my program is working! I can be happy that but for the grace of God, there go I. There is no shame in being restored to the condition of a sane person!

However, when I take an action of lust, I am taking an action that can trigger the insanity again. When that happens I immediately call someone and talk about the trigger. I then look back at my daily Step work to find where I have not been thorough. With this quick, fearless, and searching moral inventory,

I can step back into action and once again return to sanity.

For me, there is a grave danger in equating all lust temptations as triggers. If I were to view all natural human temptations as as triggers, I would be open to two dangerous risks. First, I would risk not respecting the severity of a trigger and—instead of correcting my program—I would be relying on “sharing” alone. On the other hand, if I overact to every temptation, I will not experience the true joy of sobriety, and the true happiness in life—a danger that can lead to complacency or disinterest, both of which could be fatal.



For today, I am gratefully sober, surrendering the natural human temptations as they come. I have made some progress spiritually and hope to continue living happy, joyous, and free—one day at a time!

—Raphael, Lakewood NJ

## Thank You, Essay!

My name is Pablo and I’m a sexaholic. I attend the SA fellowship here in San Antonio—and it’s a great fellowship! I first came into SA two years ago, in November 2013, and I just turned 24 this week. Recovery has been a long journey for me since then. I’ve struggled with working the Steps and staying sober.

Until recently, things never “clicked” for me. I did not feel “part

of.” I questioned other members. I wanted to do things my way. I was not willing to go to any length to stay sober. I was not desperate enough. I had to become desperate enough to surrender every aspect of my life. “Pray for willingness to be willing,” I heard in a meeting. So I prayed unceasingly, “God, grant me the willingness to become willing.” And God granted me sobriety on June 3rd

of this year.

Before that, pain had played an important role in my life. My disease wanted me. I was hospitalized twice in two months—first in March, then again in April. Then in mid-June I had a surgery, and the diagnosis seemed to ruin my life. I had contracted a virus because of my sexaholism! Physical recovery was the worst part, but that is what it took for me to become serious and embark on this journey of recovery. God answered my prayers!

Since then, I've experienced an authentic, challenging, and beautiful journey. I've come to experience forgiveness from my Higher Power. True sexual sobriety now means to me: serenity, acceptance, wisdom, joy, freedom, and progressive victory over lust. My concept of a Higher Power has completely changed. I love the fellowship today and am becoming more willing every day as I surrender all to them. Working the Steps with my sponsor is now my only goal.

My story is much longer, but I just choose to share briefly my

### *Working the Steps*

## Step One Again

In the personal story near the front of the White Book, the writer says, "Masturbation again" (SA, 14). So here I am, with two years of SA

experience, strength, and hope of today. This morning another member brought the June 2015 *Essay* to our meeting, and he passed it around for all to read. When it got to me, I opened it and read the first article: "Willing to Wait," written by a young man in San Diego. Tears came to my eyes. That was my story! I have never felt such connection as I did in reading that story.

Being around SA at such a young age has sometimes been difficult, even though I've learned that age does not make me different. "Look for similarities, not for the differences," I'm told. And this guy from San Diego was telling my story. My story started the same way and I ended up acting out using the same means that he did. I've been experiencing the same feelings and fears every single day—they've been more prominent since I've been working the Steps and staying sober one day at a time. So I thank God today for SA, and for *Essay*.

In the spirit of fellowship,  
— Pablo C., San Antonio, TX

sobriety, doing my Step One again, at my sponsor's suggestion. The process was similar to the first time I did Step One, but this time it was



more fruitful because I was not acting alone. Today I have the support of my sponsor and my friends in SA to help me on my journey.

This wasn't a typical Step One in which I painstakingly recount the mistakes that led me into and fed my sexual addiction. Rather, this was more of a reflection on the fact that, despite my progress through the Twelve Steps, I am still on Step One. I'm still powerless over lust, and as a result, my life can still be unmanageable.

Pornography came into my life before I knew what it was, from people I trusted. Even though I didn't want pornography at first, I knew that my older friends did want it—and I figured they were more mature than I was, so I joined in. Masturbation followed—quickly, accidentally, and seemingly innocently. But masturbation was never the draw for me. The draw was always—and continues to be—the fantasy. It's the escape from real life and into a life of adventure and excitement. The fantasy of being accepted by a beautiful woman—that was worth masturbating to!

After a while, I began to see that this behavior wasn't getting me anywhere, and it was cutting me off from real people. I felt dirty. I felt different. I felt broken. I felt that my religion was only a mask to hide the perversion that was going on under-

neath.

God certainly did not approve, but I had to keep up appearances. This was difficult, so I adopted a series of defects as a sort of false bravado. Among them were negative thinking and judging others. Plus, I hated myself so much that I thought there was no possible way anyone else could accept me, especially if they really knew me. If I received any praise or recognition, I could later prove that I was a scoundrel. If they only knew.

And so, like any reasonable person, I noticed a problem and I tried to correct it—alone. My pattern was cyclical: failure, fantasy, masturbation, shame, self-hatred, repeat. I could not stop lusting, and lusting perpetuated the cycle. I was my own worst enemy. This ultimately brought me to SA in June 2012—and I've been sober since June 1, 2013—and yet here I am doing Step One again.

Today I recognize that I'm powerless over much of my life, not just lust. At times I still fear that I'm broken beyond repair, incapable of life as I would have wanted it. But today, because of SA, I also know there is hope.

I'm still powerless over my relationships with women. I try to control outcomes, and when this fails, I feel a sense of loss that I cannot seem to overcome. I seem to be stuck in





a loop: I keep putting women on pedestals, only to remove them when I detect the slightest flaw. I seem unable to let women be human. Through SA, God has worked many miracles in my life, but this is still a problem for me.

I'm powerless over my past. I have fear and anger about how I lived my life previously, and I worry what other people think about my stewardship of what I've been given. I cannot change the past, but I worry that I haven't done enough to take care of myself or a potential future wife. I worry that I have laid a bad foundation for the rest of my life.

I'm powerless over others' reactions to me. I tend to take too much responsibility for people's reactions to me. I often assume I've hurt or annoyed others when they have reactions that I don't expect. At times, I'm not as kind or understanding as I would like to be. Today I know that I do not have power over what others think about me. I've learned that my life becomes unmanageable when I try to guess at others' thoughts.

I've learned that I cannot control every situation that arises in my life, because I'm not the sole participant. I must surrender my attempts to manipulate, though I don't always know when to surrender. Manipulation came so naturally to me that it has

become my default language.

At times lust still cries out, "It'll be different this time! You're doing all right; you can maintain control." Lust wants to tell me that I'm better than the weakling I used to be. Lust is right about one thing: it will be different this time, because I don't want this ride any more! The ride has exacted a cost that I cannot pay, but I need not take it any more. This time, because of SA, things will be different, because lust's voice has been drowned out by the song of God's love for me and the love of my fellows in SA.

I've learned that I will always be powerless over the insanity/lust ride, if I choose to get on it. But today, because of SA, I don't have to face my powerlessness alone, and I no longer need to face lust alone. The friends I've made in SA supply me with the real connection. Through SA, I can be victorious. Through the program, my sponsor and my meetings, I know that I can be

... brought into a way of living infinitely more satisfying and, I hope, more useful than the life I lived before (AA, 43).

Today I am home, happy, and sober—and grateful for SA.  
—Curtis E., San Diego, CA



## SA Around the World

# EMER Convention Live-Streamed

May 2015, Birmingham, UK



Wouldn't it be great to attend a convention without leaving home? That's exactly what some SA members around the world discovered when the EMER Convention in Birmingham, UK, was live-streamed on the Internet. More than 20 people are believed to have listened online, and numerous expressions of thanks and even delight were received. Some attendees enjoyed listening in whilst taking a break in their hotel rooms.

Following is feedback from some of our members who participated.

—Luc D., Flanders, Belgium

- Listening to the live streaming made me feel as if I were there at the convention with my fellow sexaholics. I felt a part of the fellowship of recovery even though I was more than 4,000 miles (6,000 kilometers) away. I had a sense of comfort and safety, knowing that I was part of a worldwide fellowship.

—Ed R., Georgia, U.S.

- As usual, I was envious that my beloved fellows could share, see, and catch up with each other at every face-to-face meeting they attend, to foster their recovery and empower their spirits. Then I received the amazing news: I would be able to listen to the convention minute by minute! The voices on the live streaming were clear and uninterrupted. Thanks for all who cared to share the SA



convention with us.

—Shady Y., Cairo, Egypt

- I could not attend the convention due to the birth of my daughter. However, I was so grateful that I could listen to the live stream of the speaker meetings. I forwarded the link to as many fellows as possible. During the convention I felt very connected to the fellowship while listening to several meetings a day, even with my newborn child on my lap! What a gift!

—Timo B., Braunschweig, Germany

- Being able to attend the convention on live-stream was the next best thing to being there. I was not able to attend in person, so the ability to be connected to the fellowship via live streaming was a perfect alternative. The

sound quality was perfect—I really felt that I was sitting there with my SA friends in one room. The spirit of recovery, joy, and love could not have come across any better. The only thing that would have topped it would be to have been there.

—Roland H., Germany

- At one point during the convention, I went to have a rest in my hotel room. Then I remembered that the open meetings were all being streamed on the Internet. This allowed me to listen to the current session and have a rest at the same time.

—Nicholas S. UK

- The technical portion was fairly simple. The convention venue had an Internet connection that each of us could connect to. We found an SA member who was kind enough to lend his computer for the duration of the convention. We then went to a local electronics shop and bought a good quality microphone, which we connected to the computer. We subscribed to an Internet radio service that offered a free account, and then it was simple to connect everything together. After a few tests, we were ready to go!

—Harri H., Helsinki, Finland

## Third SA Colombia Congress

August 2015, Cali, Colombia

The third SA Colombia Congress, held in the city of Cali, was a wonderful event—a source of great joy! We enjoyed meeting many new members in person, and reconnecting with others. For several months beforehand, we met via Skype, and we held a preparation meeting in the city of Pereira in order to share ideas and plan for the Congress.

Because we are in a learning process here in Cali, we asked our fellow SAs in Mexico—who held

their second SA Congress a month earlier—to share their experience with the speakers as well as the topics presented at their Congress.

We had anticipated that up to 30 people would attend, but only 18 could make it. Nonetheless, the joy of feeling that we are not alone—and could talk about recovery in a more natural way—was a priceless gift. Many fellows came from cities that had not attended past Congresses, and this also filled us with great joy. Via the Internet,



we had the participation of Marco from Amsterdam, Brendan from Australia, and Zoila from Canada. We all shared our experience, strength and hope in SA, and again we saw how the program works miracles in our lives.

Sisters and brothers, let us all stay in close contact with each other, with the desire to work this beautiful program with enthusiasm, love, perseverance, and discipline. Many of us confirmed that without



a sponsor we cannot work the program. I must also submit to God's guidance, and remain teachable.

Our group conscience decided to hold the next Congress in the city of Pereira, with the support of the young fellowship from the city of Manizales.

God bless the fellowship of SA, and may He grant us all another 24 hours of sobriety.

—In fraternity, Oscar M., Bogota

### January 2016 International Convention

“Reflections in San Diego”

January 15 - 17, 2016, San Diego CA

Early Bird Special through September 30th

Our path of recovery is illuminated when we reflect on our past, celebrate our progress, and share our experience, strength, and hope with others. We invite you to join members from all over the world as we gather in San Diego, CA for the SA International Convention, a spiritual weekend of Twelve Step reflection, celebration, and hope.

The convention will be held at the newly renovated Town and Country Hotel, boasting expansive grounds with tree-lined walkways and many quiet conversation areas where you can relax and reflect, or share with other members. If you can extend your stay, San Diego is a world-renowned destination spot with numerous attractions including the San Diego Zoo, Old Town, historic Balboa Park, the U.S.S. Midway Naval Museum with life-at-sea exhibits, restored planes, and flight simulators.

To register or make hotel reservations, visit our webpage at [reflectionsinsandiego.com](http://reflectionsinsandiego.com). If you have any questions or special needs, or would like to help with service work, click on the “Contact Us” link on the main page.

We look forward to seeing you in January!

—God Bless, Steve C.,  
SA Convention Chair



## A Hug in the Holy City <sup>1</sup>

I am an Arab American, and I'm an alcoholic. I was sent to the Middle East city of Jerusalem to visit my sick grandma, but in reality, I was the one who was sick. I've struggled with Alcoholism for over a decade.

I started drinking when I was in high school and kept on drinking until my family and friends knew I needed help. Help which I refused, because I wasn't ready until a judge gave me an ultimatum of serving two years and a day in the county jail or 90 days in an inpatient program. So I chose the 90 days, where I attended three AA meetings a day. That was the first time I was introduced to the Steps and Traditions and the Big Book.

After I came out of rehab, I was sent to the city of Jerusalem to get spiritual help with my alcoholism, which didn't help, until one night I was riding with some friends who happened to be natives of the holy city. While we were riding around in the car, something in front of us caught my eye: a bumper sticker on a car that read "AA/NA"

I told my friend to follow the car, whose occupants happened to be Jewish Israelis. I waved for them

to stop and asked them about their bumper sticker. The told me they got it at an AA meeting in Jerusalem and they said the next meeting was the following night. They invited me, and I accepted. Of course my Arab Muslim friends thought I was crazy to go through with it.

So that's how I went to my first AA meeting in Jerusalem. I say it was my first meeting because I honestly believe that's when my sobriety actually started.

When I walked into that meeting room I will never forget how I felt. I saw alcoholics who were Christian, Jewish, and Muslim. They were all shaking hands, sitting side my side, praying the Serenity Prayer, then hugging each other at the end of the meeting. Now that was a miracle.

It was so amazing to see all that love and peace in the room. To see people who have been shedding blood for centuries, who have been at war and are still at war outside that room. But here in the meeting they were at peace, after the same goal—sobriety. I was so touched that I cried tears of joy.

—Majahid S., Coleman, FL



## My Path to SA, and to Essay

I'm Barbara, a sexaholic, sober since December 12, 2001 and *Essay* Editor newsletter since March 2007. I'm grateful to the fellowship for allowing me to be of service all these years; this has been one of the biggest blessings of my recovery. Thus it is with much sadness that I must inform the fellowship that—because of ongoing health issues—I will be resigning as Editor after we publish the December 2015 issue.

So how did I become the Editor? The journey began in June 2001, when I asked my husband what sort of therapy group he had been attending. When he said "It's for sex addiction," I thought, "That's what I have!" But I did not say anything. Our marriage was pretty much destroyed by then, and I was unable to be vulnerable with him—and I certainly did not want him to know that I had the same thing he did! Plus, I did not think I needed a Twelve Step program. I thought it would be good for him, but I was too spiritual for that sort of thing!

Eventually, my husband's counselor insisted that I attend the Twelve Step therapy group for the partners of his clients. I finally went, just to get the counselor off my back, and intending to get myself kicked out.

But then I learned that I could not "graduate" from the group until I had done all of the Twelve Steps. So, reluctantly, I did the Steps for the first time there, doing the least work I could to get by. This was extremely difficult for me because of my complete inability to be honest with myself, but doing the Steps in that simple way was a start on the right track.

I knew I was a sex addict the whole time I was in the group, but I did not know how to bring it up there. However, about six months into that group, I was telling one of

the women that I thought I "might" be a sex addict. She responded, "If you can stop masturbating without a program, you're not a sexaholic." I reasoned that since I *had* stopped (I knew the sobriety definition from my husband who was already in SA, and I hadn't acted out since he told me the definition), then I must not be a sexaholic. I was not lust-free though, so after hearing her pronouncement, I deliberately acted out one last time—and that incident scared me so much that I knew I was a sex addict and that I needed to stop. I have been sober since then.

When the therapy group ended, I attended a church-based program for women of mixed addictions, and



<sup>1</sup> Copyright © The AA Grapevine, Inc. (July, 2015). Reprinted with permission.



there I did the Steps a second time. In that group, I heard a sexaholic woman share for the first time, but she shared so explicitly that I did not want to reveal my own issues, lest I would have to share like she did.

After the church group ended, I reluctantly went to S-Anon, at my husband's request, so that I could participate in social things with my husband and his SA friends and their spouses. There I met an S-Anon member who was also a member of NA. This was quite helpful to me because I was able to speak frankly with her about my own addiction. So now I had someone to talk with who gave me tips on things like avoiding "triggers."

At some point I bought a White Book (I told my husband that I thought all S-Anon women should read the White Book, because I did still not want him to know I was a sexaholic!). But more important, one day I came across one of my husband's *Essay* newsletters. That was the first time I "heard" an actual SA member share, and it was hugely powerful. After that I regularly looked through my husband's belongings, searching for his *Essays*, because they were lifesavers to me.

Eventually, while working my Step One the fourth time, I became overwhelmed by looking at all the things I had done, and that is when I finally hit bottom—and then sometime in 2005, I started attending SA. When I'd been in SA less than a year,

I volunteered to be a Group Service Rep for a small women's group. During one of my first Intergroup meetings, someone announced that the fellowship was looking for a new *Essay* editor. My husband and another family member were also at the meeting, and the other family member kicked me under the table when he heard the word "editor," since that was my previous career. So I volunteered and sent in my resume, and eventually I was hired. But then I was a nervous wreck. My biggest fear was that I would ruin the beautiful magazine that had helped me so much in my early recovery.

When the job was offered, they suggested I find two local people to help me—one with professional editing background, and one with AA background—and then I was worried that no one would want to work with me. But I knew one SA guy who was an editor, and I asked him to point me to someone who had an AA background—and much to my surprise (and only by God's grace), they both agreed immediately. We added a third editorial member shortly thereafter, and from the beginning we have had awesome teamwork. What a blessing!

Today I would like to thank the entire SA fellowship for allowing me to be of service for the past 8 1/2 years; I cannot think of anything I've enjoyed more than this service. I'm grateful to all of you who have helped out in so many different

ways—by submitting stories or convention reports or artwork, or anything else we might have needed—and sometimes even at the very last second! I'm grateful to those of you who have offered advice or counsel, just when I needed it. And I'm grateful for the opportunity to have fellowship with members from all over the world, because of *Essay*.

I'm also grateful for the members of our editing team (who have chosen to remain anonymous) as well as my husband George, who knows how to keep all sorts of electronic equipment

running perfectly at all times. I could have not possibly done any of this without you guys, and especially not without George (who led me into SA recovery).

Most of all, I'm grateful to God, Who has by His grace orchestrated everything. So many people have helped in so many ways that it could only be from God. He has brought the right people at the right time for everything we have needed—and I will be forever grateful to Him, and to all of you.

—*Much love to you all,*  
Barbara F., San Diego



## Essay Editor Needed

The following descriptions and qualifications are excerpted from the *SA Service Manual, 2015 edition, page 48*:

The *Essay Editor* has managerial oversight and responsibility for *Essay* and reports directly to SA's Board of Trustees. Preferred background and experience includes:

- The *Essay Editor* will be a member of SA with a minimum three years of sobriety, and will fully support and agree with SA's sobriety definition. This is extremely important in evaluating the appropriateness of articles submitted.
- Experience using both MS Word and Adobe InDesign (preferably on an iMac, for compatibility with the printing company's equipment).
- One to three years corporate publications management experience, including the ability to communicate with multiple authors, editors, artists, committee chairs, printing company personnel, etc., and to balance the various schedules and priorities of all parties.
- Three to five years' experience as a Senior Editor, with proven track record of completing projects on time.
- Applicants will be required to provide samples of their work.



If interested contact SAICO at [saico@sa.org](mailto:saico@sa.org)

# Report of the General Delegate Assembly

July 23-24, 2015, Chicago, IL

Dear Fellow SA Members:

The General Delegate Assembly (GDA) held its annual face-to-face meeting on July 24-25 in Chicago. Although the GDA meets quarterly, this is our only face-to-face meeting. Two full days of meetings resulted in action being taken on a multitude of agenda items. Delegates and Alternate Delegates from throughout the world were in attendance. Also in attendance were the Trustees, Trustee candidates, SAICO, and observers.

## General Delegate Assembly Actions

- Reaffirmed five Trustees for another year of service: Dave H., Mike S., Mitch A., Bill S., and Gene T. Elected three new Trustees: Jim B., Michael J., and Gary L.
- Adopted the 2016 budget (*as summarized on page 30*). The 2016 budget is zero-based, on the understanding that the Fellowship, if well informed, will give generously to meet the needs and projects of SA as we strive to carry the message to the still suffering sexaholic.
- Approved the ad hoc committee to facilitate communication between the Fellowship and Roy K.'s Trust.
- Approved a new brochure, "SA Home Group."
- Approved a change to the section, "International Conventions" in the SA Service Manual.
- Approved a letter of commendation and thanks to Linda N. for her many years of service to the Fellowship, and to wish her well in her retirement from SAICO.
- Elected new GDA Officers: Tom K., GDA Chair, and Brian W., GDA Vice-Chair.

## Committee Requests

Several opportunities for service were identified, including the following:

- *Conventions*. We have not received a viable bid for 2017, and we need to identify a city soon if we are to have a January 2017 Convention. Help is available for cities that are interested.
- *International*. The need to help those suffering around the world is at times overwhelming. We need a Portuguese speaker to help translate. Also, travel funds are available for those who wish to lead workshops overseas.
- *SACFC*. Chuck S., SAFC Chair, is seeking Regional chairs to help with the increasing call for meetings and services for those suffering in prison.
- *Literature*. Projects currently in process include "Find Your Dr Bob," "SA is for Women," "So You're Going to Prison" (which is circulating through the Readers), "So You're Leaving Prison" (which is in need of some member shares), "SA Book of Meditations" (which still needs more material), and *Step*

into Action, which is in the hands of Readers.

## Recognition of Members Rotating Off

The Assembly wishes to thank retiring Delegate Scott S. and retiring Trustee Chair, George F. Both members have been of great service to the Fellowship. The Assembly also wishes to thank retiring GDA Chair Gary L., who will continue to guide us as one of our new Trustees.

The next GDA meeting will be by teleconference on October 11, 2015. I am ever mindful of the awe-inspiring things that are done by our Higher

Power through men and women who come together with a simple spirit of willingness and unity, in service to others. That's what it's all about. In the practice of humility, God continues to do for me what I could never do for myself. In the practice of service, I have a chance to stay sober for one more day.

—Tom K., GDA Chair



## New SA Groups

### USA and Canada

Augusta, GA (additional)  
Boerne, TX (additional)  
Cypress, TX (2 mtgs)  
Englewood, CO (add'l)  
Hoboken, NJ (daily)  
Lubbock TX  
Mendocino, CA  
Pocatello, ID  
San Antonio Texas ( 2 add'l, incl 1 women's)  
Savannah, GA add'l)

Stuart, FL  
Tannersville-Monroe County, PA  
Westmont, IL

### International

Aberystwyth, UK (2 add'l)  
Chelmsford, Essex, UK  
Glasgow, UK  
Newry, Northern Ireland, UK  
Villahermosa, Tabasco, Mexico



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## SA Financial Snapshot YTD 2015

Budget Item		2015 BUDGET Jan-June	2015 ACTUAL June YTD	2016 BUDGET	
<b>Revenues</b>	Contributions	75,000	100,485	205,000	
	SACFC	5,000	6,072	13,000	
	Convention Donations	10,000	4,663	22,500	
	Literature Sales	37,500	32,063	75,000	
	Literature Volume Discounts	(3,250)	(3,261)	(8,100)	
	Essay	4,400	4,897	12,500	
	Credit Card Recovery	1,250	2,250	3,000	
	Cost of Goods Sold (COGS)	(12,250)	(20,306)	(28,000)	
	Interest	600	39	400	
<b>TOTAL Revenues</b>		<b>118,250</b>	<b>126,902</b>	<b>295,300</b>	
<b>Expenses</b>	Bank Charges	100	147	200	
	Credit Card Fees	4,400	4,418	8,400	
	Accounting	2,900	4,021	7,900	
	Liability Insurance	1,150	841	2,600	
	Taxes and Licenses	300	636	800	
	Legal	250	0	500	
	<b>Compensation</b>				
	Payroll and Benefits	69,210	69,209	157,000	
	Professional Fees	2,950	2,950	5,900	
	<b>Overhead</b>				
	Office Supplies	1,550	2,634	3,600	
	Printing	2,250	1,957	5,000	
	Postage and Freight	6,325	6,602	15,000	
	Telephone	2,250	2,910	6,500	
	Internet Services	1,300	1,329	4,000	
	<b>Facility</b>				
	Rent	9,550	9,676	20,100	
	Repairs and Maintenance	250	120	500	
	Travel	16,500	11,971	57,300	
<b>TOTAL Expenses</b>		<b>121,235</b>	<b>119,422</b>	<b>295,300</b>	
Revenues-Expenses		(2,985)	7,480	0	



For Additional Budget Info Contact SAICO@sa.org

## Delegates and Trustees September 2015

Officers: Tom K., <i>GDA Chair</i> Brian W., <i>Vice-Chair</i>		Conventions (Chair), Nominations
Region	Delegate	Committees
North Midwest	Dimitri P. Jon H. Marv R., <i>Alternate</i> Robert Z., <i>Alternate</i>	International (Chair) RAC, Literature Public Information (Chair), SACFC RAC, H&I
South Midwest	Joe M. Dave T. John I., <i>Alternate</i>	RAC (Chair), Legal Nominations, International
Northwest	Brian W. Zoila G. Kathy R., <i>Alternate</i> Maureen J., <i>Alternate</i>	Literature, CFC, GDA Vice-Chair International, RAC Literature
Southwest	Eric S. Steve C. Jim C.	RAC, CFC, Literature PI, Service Structure, <i>Essay</i> Finance, COMC
Mid- Atlantic	Carl N. Ben L. Hugh S. Mike S., <i>Alternate</i>	H&I (Chair), Conventions Conventions, IT Finance, COMC Nominations (Chair)
Northeast	Gary M. Suzanne S. Terry O., <i>Alternate</i>	Finance, Conventions Public Information
Southeast	Manse B. LB B., <i>Alternate</i> Rich P., <i>Alternate</i> Jay H.	Finance, Conventions Literature, RAC Conventions, RAC
German spkg	Hans L.	Literature, Service Structure
EMER	Cathal M., Ireland Luc D., Belgium Daan L., <i>Alt.</i> , Netherlands Artemes, <i>Alt.</i> , Spain Padraic L., <i>Alt.</i> , Ireland	International, IT International Spanish-Speaking areas
Trustee		Committees
Mike Sh., <i>Chair</i> Mitch A., <i>Vice-Chair</i> Bill S. Dave H. Gene T. Jim B. Michael J. Gary L.		COMC, Conventions, Service Structure IT, Serv. Structure, Literature COMC, International, Nominations, Service Structure Finance, Legal, RAC CFC, H&I COMC, H&I Service Structure, Literature, H&I, PI Legal, Literature, Nominations

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



## Calendar of Events



### October 2015

**2-4, 2015, Wichita Kansas USA**, SA South Midwest Region Retreat, Family Reunion, *Attitude of Gratitude*. Online registration will be available at SAICO online store.

**10, Macon GA USA**, SA One Day Marathon. More info to follow.

**10, Greensboro NC USA**, SA One-Day Marathon, *Recovery in the Fall*. Info at 336-833-1591. Flyer available from saico@sa.org.

**11, Bay Shore, NY USA**, Long Island NY Inter-group. Info at alongisland.org.

**16-18, Post Falls, ID USA**, SA Fall Retreat, *Take the Actions of Love*. Info at sanorthwest.org. Online registration offered at www.sanorthwest.org.

**16-18, Munich, Germany**, SA Speaker Workshop. Info at www.anonyme-sexsuechtige.de/kontakt.html. Speaker from USA.

**17, Jacksonville, FL USA**, Fifth Annual Marathon,

*A Common Solution*. Info at sajaxflig@gmail.com. Flyer available from saico@sa.org

**23-25, Poznan Poland**, SA Speaker Workshop, *Happy, Joyous and Free*. Info at sexaholicsanonymous.eu/events.

**23-24, Toronto, Ontario Canada**, 19th Annual Ontario Marathon, *Seasons of Sobriety*. Info at ontariomarathonmeeting2015.eventbrite.ca., email: events@saontario.org

**24, Niskayuna NY** (near Albany). SA One-Day Workshop, *A Vision for You*, Concentrating on Steps Eleven and Twelve. Info at saico@sa.org

**30-November 1, Lille, France**. SA Speaker Workshop, *Happy, Joyous and Free*. Info at sexaholicsanonymous.eu/events.

### November 2015

**6-8, Moscow, Russia**, Russian Convention. Info at sexaholicsanonymous.eu/events.

**7, St Louis, Clayton MO USA**, SA Fall Retreat, *The*

*Journey of Recovery*. For info call 314-995-2687.

**13-15, Bonn, Germany**, SA Convention. Info at www.anonyme-sexsuechtige.de/kontakt.html

**13-15, Wexford, Ireland**, SA Convention, *Unity in Fellowship*. Info at saireland.com. Flyer available from SAICO.

**13-15, Tel Aviv Israel**, SA Speaker Workshop, *Happy, Joyous and Free*. Info at sexaholicsanonymous.eu/events

**14, Memphis TN USA**, Memphis SA Marathon, Germantown, *A Stroll Through the Steps*. Info at 901-729-9067; Flyer available from saico@sa.org

### December 2015

**4-5, Barcelona, Spain**, SA Winter Convention, *Journey to Sobriety*. Info at convencion@saespana.es.

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

## 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.*

### Upcoming International Convention

**July 8-10, 2016, Denver CO, USA**, *Happy, Joyous and Free*. Come join us in the Mile High City for friends, fun, recovery and of course, experience, strength and hope. We have a wonderful assortment of speakers for your entertainment and thoughtfulness. For more information, contact happyjoyousfree2016.org or info@happyjoyousfree2016.org

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# GOD

grant me the

## SERENITY

to accept  
the things  
I cannot change;

## COURAGE

to change the  
things I can; and

## WISDOM

to know the  
difference

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