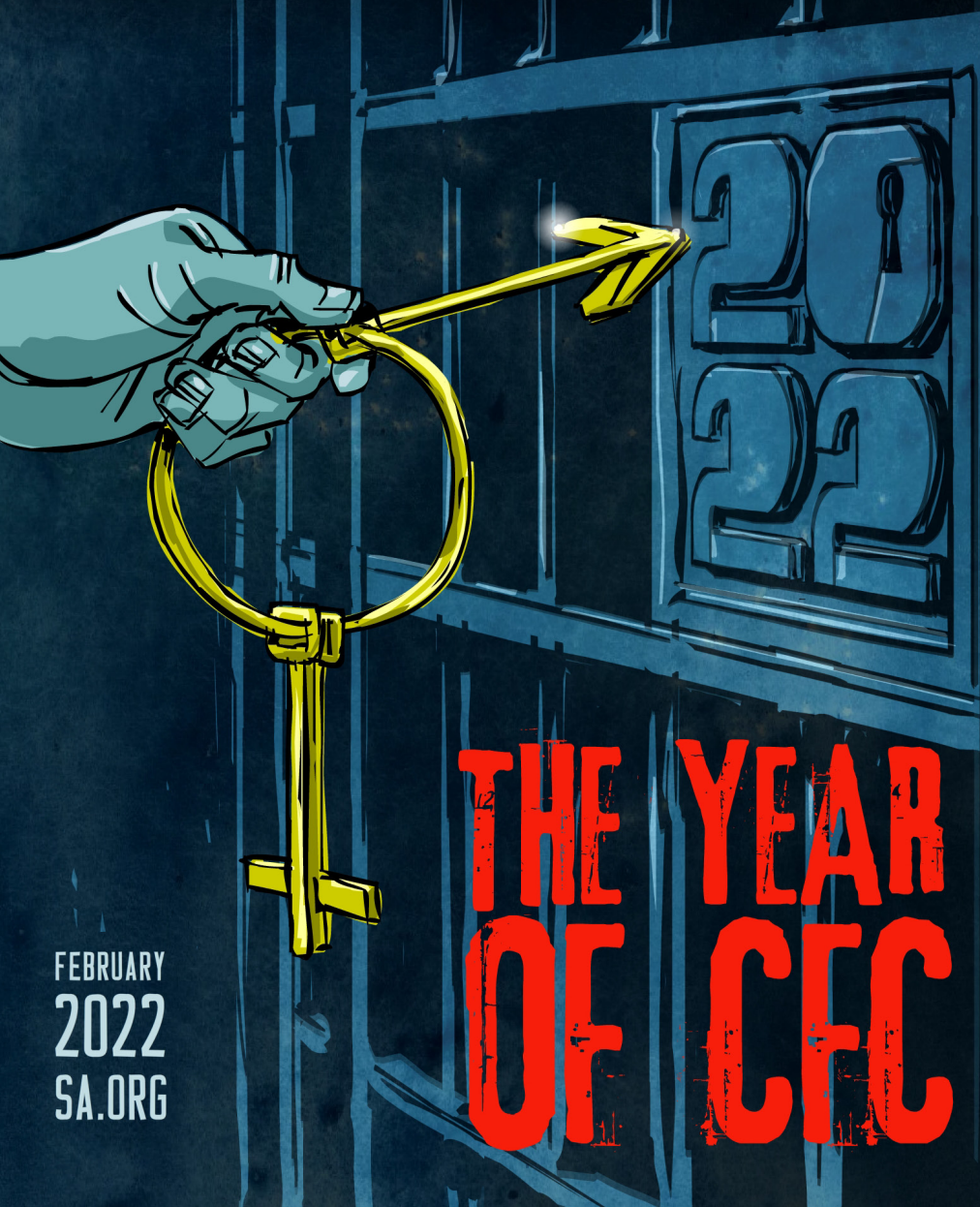


ESSAY

THE INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF SEXAHOLICS ANONYMOUS



THE YEAR
OF CFC

FEBRUARY
2022
SA.ORG

SA Purpose

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 AA Grapevine Inc.

RESPONSIBILITY DECLARATION

I am responsible. When anyone, anywhere reaches out for help, I want the hand of SA always to be there. And for that, I am responsible.

Sexaholics Anonymous STATEMENT OF PRINCIPLE

We have a solution. We don't claim it's for everybody, but for us, it works. If you identify with us and think you may share our problem, we'd like to share our solution with you (*Sexaholics Anonymous 2*). In defining sobriety, we do not speak for those outside Sexaholics Anonymous. We can only speak for ourselves. Thus, for the married sexaholic, sexual sobriety means having no form of sex with self or with persons other than the spouse. In SA's sobriety definition, the term "spouse" refers to one's partner in a marriage between a man and a woman. For the unmarried sexaholic, sexual sobriety means freedom from sex of any kind. And for all of us, single and married alike, sexual sobriety also includes progressive victory over lust (*Sexaholics Anonymous 191-192*). (*Adopted 2010 by the General Delegate Assembly.*)

The only requirement for SA membership is a desire to stop lusting and become sexually sober according to the SA sobriety definition.

Any two or more sexaholics gathered together for SA sobriety according to the SA sobriety definition may call themselves an SA group.

Meetings that do not adhere to and follow Sexaholics Anonymous' sobriety statement as set forth in the foregoing Statement of Principle adopted by the General Delegate Assembly in 2010 are not SA meetings and shall not call themselves SA meetings. (*Addendum to the Statement of Principle passed by the General Delegate Assembly in July 2016.*)

Essay is a publication of Sexaholics Anonymous

essay@sa.org

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RESOLUTION: "Since each issue of *Essay* cannot go through the SA Literature approval process, the Trustees and General Delegate Assembly recognize *Essay* as the International Journal of Sexaholics Anonymous and support the use of *Essay* materials in SA meetings."

Adopted by the Trustees and General Delegate Assembly in May 2016

Editors' Corner

Dear readers,



I am happy to have *Essay* magazine feature the work of the SA Correctional Facilities Committee (CFC) in this February 2022 issue. It is by the hard work of many SA members that this program has been so successful over the past ten years.

This year, "The Year of CFC," we want to highlight the hard work of all the members around the world who are sponsoring friends in prison. It is a caring and joyous responsibility to correspond and do Step work with friends in prison, many of whom are abandoned by friends and family. Sponsors involved know the joy of friendship and spiritual communication which gives joy and freedom from the crippling disease of sexaholism. Many sponsors have long years of correspondence with friends in prison and help them transition to freedom. Just last week, I helped a sponsee transition into free life. He is going to SA meetings and has found friends in the fellowship.

I hope this issue encourages other SA members to volunteer to do Step work with friends in prison. It does not take a lot of time and we have a package of information to help you do the Step work with a friend in prison. There are many in prison seeking help and you can become one of the volunteers.

During 2022 there will be many seminars and workshops held around the world to educate our members to the joy and privilege of helping others. Step work helps friends in prison as well as their sponsor to stay sober and "to live presently in a new and wonderful world, no matter what our present circumstances are." (Adapted from "Working With Others" AA 100.) God bless you all.

PAUL Z., CFC NATIONAL CHAIRMAN, Georgia, USA
zantinger@gmail.com



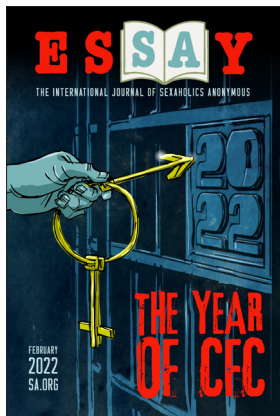
NEED HELP WITH YOUR SEXUAL THOUGHTS OR ACTIONS?

If you want to stop lusting and become sexually sober and need to find SA near you or wish to learn more about Sexaholics Anonymous, visit: www.sa.org

February 2021

The mission of the SA Correctional Facilities Committee (SACFC) is to carry the SA message to incarcerated sexaholics.

SA Service Manual ch. 13, p. 3



On the cover: Our in-house illustrator and cartoonist LaRon visualized how the SA fellowship sets all of us free from the chains of our lust addiction and offers help to our brothers and sisters in prison.

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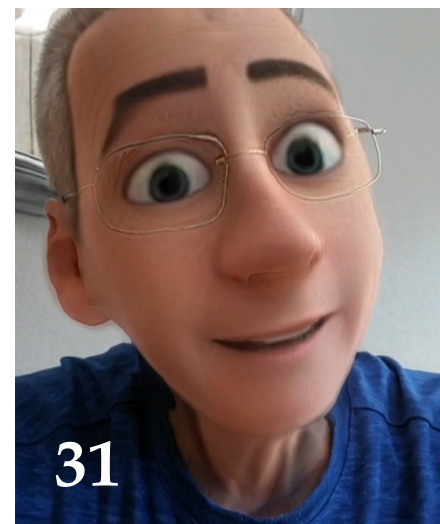


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Dear Essay



He Surrounds Me with His Love and Acceptance

DEAR ESSAY, SOMETIMES my HP speaks to me through gentle moments of awareness, coincidences and “synchronicity,” which make me smile and say, “There you are! Thanks for that!” Of course there are times (usually when I’m stuck in my ego) when He needs to poke me in the forehead ... hard! But every once in a while, I receive a rare gift when He reaches into my heart and surrounds me with His love and acceptance—a feeling of absolute clarity and certainty of his presence.

The few of those I’ve had over the years have always had the potential to be transformative if I

allowed it.

After receiving the October *Essay* in the mail, it sat on my dresser unread for many weeks. Needing to travel to Oregon from Cleveland to join my wife and bonus-daughter (we use the word “step” to describe other things) for the holidays, I was packing my daily reading materials and decided to take the *Essay* with me—something I had never done while traveling.

I opened it up the first morning after arriving and scanned the articles looking for a one-pager. I was intrigued by the title “Compare is Despair” by Brent S., so I began to read.

The words resonated with me as I nodded my head, but at the sixth paragraph I verbalized “Oh my God!” and had to pause reading. Then came the inevitable wave of emotion and I began to weep as I felt the overwhelming presence of my Higher Power. Brent described what it was like being born with a cleft lip and pallet, something I was quite familiar with ... something that had profoundly affected my life. 29 years into my recovery journey, and until that moment, I knew of no one in SA who shared that experience.

Like Brent, fortunately the program has taught me to find similarities with others, not differences, which has been hugely important in my recovery having felt so different my entire life. Regardless of our common birth anomaly, however, I know, without having met him, how truly similar we are.

Brent, please know you’ve helped a fellow sexaholic in a way no one else could have done. A small microcosm of the miracle of our program.

HOWARD M., Oregon, USA 

The Singapore Meeting Enjoys Using *Essay*

DEAR ESSAY TEAM, THANK YOU for all the service you do. Since your start in August 2020, the *Essay* magazine has blossomed under your tutelage and the creativity and color makes it a definite piece of art.

So thank you. Our Thursday group in Singapore (Zoom only, and open to any SA around the world) enjoys reading and sharing from the *Essay* magazine on the Third Thursday of every month.

Ilona B., Singapore 


World Wide Walls Of SA

SA meetings can be held just about anywhere ...




Thursday meeting
Vilnius, Lithuania 



Monday & Friday meeting
Bilbao, Spain 



English-speaking meeting
Yerevan, Armenia 



Tuesday meeting
Brussels, Belgium 

Share your photos

Send your meeting place to Essay@sa.org

Remember:

Include your name, address, group name, and location of the meeting.

Character Defects: Even Less Slightly Than a Dried ...



This friend in prison shares the solution to his character defects and the acting-out they lead to, inspired by an unusual incident.

Twenty-five years ago, I was working as a procurement clerk and was made to give a tour to some clients to whom I had sent hundreds of thousands of dollars worth of proposals over the years. I had spoken with the salespeople by phone. I felt like I knew them.

During the tour I noticed that one of the salespersons kept lowering his focus from my eyes. I asked myself what he might be looking at, but decided after a few times that maybe he was simply one of those folks who is uncomfortable holding eye contact.

The factory sits at the base of a grass-carpeted hill. The Delta Breeze is part of life there, and I spent many an hour watching the wind make waves in the tall grass. However, I suffer from allergies. Well, an hour or two after sending the salespeople on their way, I noticed a little itch on my neck,

caused by—excuse my language—a booger. I immediately realized what the salesperson had been staring

As unsightly as my appearance was that day, I had bigger and less slightly pieces of dried emotional stuff on me such as fear of rejection and confusion about my sexuality.

at and was mortified! I could only imagine what was going through his mind while I was feeling such honor at being his host.

I wished one of my buddies had

given me a heads-up, a simple, “Hey dude, you got something on your neck.” I would have been embarrassed for a moment, but that momentary embarrassment would have kept me from leaving a negative impression on the minds of the salespeople. I remember cleaning myself up and wishing things had been different.

Today I realize, as unsightly as my appearance was that day, I had bigger and less slightly pieces of dried emotional stuff on me such as fear of rejection and confusion about my sexuality which, if you had pointed them out to me that very same day, I would have denied. I would not have wanted a “heads up” from my buddies or anyone else.

Unfortunately, seeing these truths has not entirely set me free of them. I cannot clean myself up without help.

Today, in recovery, I see even more unsightly stuff on me, especially resentment. I work as a senior mentor in a prison program for treating substance abuse. After Covid restrictions were lifted, the staff did not consult with me about reimplementing our program. It really got my resentments going. In time, I saw that my thoughts were being driven by old, very old stuff from way back in my childhood. Seeing these truths did not set me free of them, as my thoughts kept flooding back and resting in those ancient pools of hurt.

Another piece of unsightly, dried old stuff is my tendency to quickly objectify any man I find physically attractive, a sure warning sign that my character defects are active. Between my flawed self-image and my old habit of seeking fulfillment from external sources, I imagine the man filling all my needs for intimacy and love, things that I want even more than

my release from prison. But I know for sure that if I allow my thinking to stay here, my behavior will follow, and ultimately, I’ll end up with the same emptiness and dissatisfaction that I’ve always experienced when I confuse sex with love.

So what’s the solution to my defects and the acting out they lead to? About six years ago I was discussing

Today, when I feel the itch of old hurts and insecurities, I let myself be cleaned up by my Higher Power. It works when I work it, and I look better than I ever could, boogers notwithstanding.

with my sponsor if knowing my character defects is supposed to set me free of them. He pointed out that while identifying them is necessary, identification on its own won’t remove them. My readiness to be free (Step 6) is just a part of it.

Today, when I feel the itch of old hurts and insecurities, I let myself be cleaned up by my Higher Power (Step 7). My part is taking the actions suggested by my sponsor, such as surrender, prayer, reading program literature, and doing service. It works when I work it, and I look better than I ever could, boogers notwithstanding.

DAVID J., California, USA

IN PRISON BUT NOT ALONE

The tool of having an SA Sponsor provides Jared with hope.

My name is Jared and I'm a grateful, recovering sexaholic. I was arrested on the night of Dec 7, 2018. I plead guilty to inappropriate conduct with a minor and was sentenced to 32 1/2 years, 7 1/2 of which are fixed.

It was in a county jail that I found SA's *Step into Action* and began to work the 12 Steps, quickly admitting my powerlessness and realizing my desperate need for change. I arrived in prison in late July 2019.

After spending about three months getting assessed, I was placed in a more permanent housing assignment in a different institution. It was there I first wrote to the SACFC looking for an SA sponsor. My first request was never answered, so I wrote again a few months later.

I've come to learn that, if nothing else, prison is an excellent place to develop patience, tolerance, and

acceptance! Being a sponsee in prison, in fact most things in prison, requires not only patience, but also perseverance, determination, and a firm resolve. It is far too easy to get lost in my head, to give in to thoughts of

It was in a county jail that I found SA's Step Into Action and began to work the 12 Steps, realizing my desperate need to change.

hopelessness, depression, and futility. The urge to seek solace in the old familiarity and fake oblivion of lust can be overwhelming at times. I've fallen into the trap of mental warfare more than once.

There is also the ever-present reality of my personal motives:

- Why am I seeking recovery and working the Steps?
- Am I simply seeking so desperately the approval of others?
- Am I merely trying to look good for the Parole Board so I can get out on my fixed time?
- Am I just trying to feel good in a healthier way?
- Is the deceitful nature of my addiction seeping into my Step work?
- Do I want to have my cake and eat it too?

These are questions I simply cannot afford to blatantly ignore if long-term sobriety is my true desire.

The guidance and perspective of my sponsor has been invaluable. Though he is an understandably busy man, and there have been lapses in our contact, I wouldn't be where I'm at in my recovery without him. Knowing he is out there and supportive of me has given me hope and courage when I faced dark moments and a sense of accountability that is indispensable. It's like having a hand gently squeezing my shoulder, a subtle but empowering feeling that I'm not alone.

Ultimately my personal recovery is dependent on God as He chooses to reveal Himself to me. That being said, I also firmly believe that my Higher Power is responsible for bringing my sponsor into my life and uses him as a vessel of light and love. A beacon in the darkness that, although far away, is there to keep me away from the shores of permanent relapse and despair.

Prison can be overwhelming. It can

be devastatingly depressing. One member of the fellowship used to say that we are living in a mental health crisis. There are numerous reasons to let go and few to carry on. At times

Knowing my sponsor is out there and supportive of me has given me hope and courage when I faced dark moments and a sense of accountability that is indispensable.

it seems good behavior is ignored and bad behavior gets you what you want. SA and its tools have been a real miracle for me. Having a sponsor is literally a Godsend. If you are incarcerated and don't have a sponsor, may you find one now!


JARED S., State Correctional Center Idaho, USA 



I Hope That My Poem Will Bring Some Light to Others Like Me

I am now able to talk to women and get to know them in a way that, in the past, I was neither able to nor wanted to. For this I am truly grateful.

I give God all thanks and to those who do service in SA. I am so thankful that I am a fellow member and I really hope that my poem "Sobering Experience" will bring some light to others like me who are battling addiction to lust, and I believe that with SA and the help of my Higher Power, I will continue to stay sober one day at a time and abstain from all lustful desires.

VENIE W., a friend in prison, USA 

was introduced to SA by another inmate. Initial contact from the SA sponsor team was very helpful. I am now working with my sponsor—brother and friend—who was assigned to me earlier this year. SA has changed my life. Since joining, I thank God both for SA and for those behind the scenes who, along with my Higher Power, are helping me stay sober. Before SA I was weak over lust and my life was unmanageable. I was divorced twice, and I didn't realize that the reason was me.

SA has allowed me to see why my life was falling apart. It was all because my lustful desires were taking control of me and ruining everything. SA, with the help of God and my sponsor, has helped me regain control of my life by handing control over to my Higher Power.

Sobering Experience

Day after day, Night after Night, I chased the dragon, pursuing a fantasy while in reality, my life was becoming a Tragedy ...

Misguided by the serpent and cunned by trickers, living in a glass bubble, while my family became indigent, and a resident on skid row, feeding the dealer, yet taking from my children, missing holidays but never a hit ...

Abusing and disappointing those who loved me, yet taking out my inner frustration on the ones who stuck by me ...

Enticed by lust, my heart full of rust, my life a bust, while my marriage is dust in the winter breeze ...

Married twice, divorced twice, nevertheless my sexual desires controlled me and my perception of relationships fadedly disrupted like bleach on black ...

Unfaithful and distorted beliefs, now I'm alone and regretting my pasts, seeking guidance and repentance for my wrongs, I'm now taking the 12 Steps, while remaining sober since January 8, 2016.

KNOWING HOW TO HANDLE NEGATIVE FEELINGS, WHETHER INSIDE PRISON GATES OR ON THE OUTSIDE, CAN FREE A PERSON

Incarceration can easily trigger guilt, shame, remorse, fear, loneliness, and negative feelings like anger and resentment towards oneself and others. Knowing how to handle such feelings, whether inside prison gates or on the outside, can free a person.

On first entering jail and later prison, I felt fearful. I worried I might step out of line and incur the wrath of the deputies or that of prisoners who might not like me for any reason, however irrational. The SA program was not available at that time, but I did attend Bible classes and went to Mass on Sundays, which gave me some peace of mind.

When I exited the system, I withdrew from society. I felt I had ruined my reputation, and wanted to end my life. When I finally found SA, I decided to give it a chance. It helped me immensely by giving me tools to deal with my emotions in a more constructive, healthy, peaceful way.

Newcomers often wonder what the tools of SA are. It's no secret, these are just a few: attending meetings, reading the literature, finding a sponsor, working the Steps, praying, meditating, and being of service. I did "90 in 90": 90 meetings in 90 days. I heard the readings, the 12 Steps, 12 Traditions, and the shares. I looked for miracles and found some. What helped me most that first day was the welcome, the Serenity Prayer, the reciting of "A Vision for You," and the fellowship. I felt like I found "my people" and I belonged.

As a child I had been religious, but in my teen years I had lost the belief in God, mainly because I thought God had abandoned me. *What made me stay with SA was that I could let the God of my understanding be the power that would help me.*

The tools I used to develop that God of my understanding were the first three Steps. In the first Step I admitted that

I was powerless and that my life had become unmanageable. That was true, evidenced by my crime and my financial state. In the second Step I came to believe a power greater than myself could help me become sane. In the third Step, the relief and comfort of surrendering to the God of my understanding helped me "let go" and rely on His will for me.

Tools like calling, texting, or writing to a sponsor or friend in the program have been very helpful to me. Connecting with someone who understands has over and over saved me as well as the other person from acting out. That is why I, being sober for some time now, can reach out and help a sister who is incarcerated, and in turn be reminded by her of what brought me to SA.

SA is a program and fellowship that uses the Twelve Steps of Alcoholics Anonymous to help people like me recover from the negative feelings that might lead to sexually acting out. It's a spiritual quest meant to help us recover from lust and from the bondage of self.

Those incarcerated can safely reach out to SA for a sponsor, and those on the outside in the SA program can make a connection with an inmate who wants spiritual help. Everyone deserves the chance to connect with peace and understanding.

YVONNE R., California, USA 



SEVEN GEMS RAY FOUND IN SA RECOVERY



For over twenty-seven years Ray S., aka “Tucson Ray,” was the genuine, formative force for SA prison ministry (SACFC). He wrote the sponsor-by-mail approach that is still in use, and started the prison meetings. He created the protocol for how to approach prison officials. Ray S. died June 17, 2018 at age 87. We are forever indebted to him for blazing the trail in SA service. You can read his full story on p. 15 of the [October 2019 Essay edition](#). In this article Ray shared some of the main lessons he learned in his recovery.

My story is very similar to many I have read and heard in SA. I was sexually obsessive and compulsive for over 50 years. My disease got worse and worse until I finally found myself living in a flop house hotel, losing my job, frequenting the porno shops and flics, and having lost my family and friends. In desperation, I called SA and got help. From the time I attended that first meeting, I have been sober, and my recovery has progressed many times faster than my disease had. In gratitude, I share now the seven most important gems I have discovered in SA.

1. Sobriety made self-esteem possible

Before I came to SA, I was constantly overwhelmed by guilt and shame. My behavior was contrary to my own moral code and in violation of society’s expectations. As a result, my self-esteem was at rock bottom. I had been suicidal on five different occasions. I had been working with a very competent hypno-therapist on the self-esteem issue, but to no avail.

However, at about thirty days of sobriety, the therapy began to work. In fact, I soon discontinued the therapy, and my self-esteem has grown by leaps and bounds as I started living the Steps. Today, I recognize that I am a child of God,

and that as such, I share in His divine nature as fully as in the human nature of my earthly parents. I take great joy in the progress of my recovery since I decided to let God direct my life.

2. Participation in the Fellowship relieved fear

Before coming into the fellowship, I lived a dual life, one very public and the other very secret. My family and friends had no idea of my obsession and compulsion. I was afraid that they would somehow find out and have nothing more to do with me.

But when I came into SA, I learned that I needed to share my deepest, darkest secrets if I wanted to recover. And sharing I did—all of my Steps, even a summary of my Fourth, with my home group. As disclosure brought relief from my obsession, I gradually developed a genuine enthusiasm for sharing my insides with my fellows.

3. Working the Steps relieved guilt and shame

I carried an enormous load of guilt and shame into SA. I knew that my behavior was very wrong, but I also knew that I couldn’t stop for a whole day. I was convinced that my problem was moral depravity, and that I was beyond hope. But in SA, I have learned that God could and would help me, if only I worked the Steps. As I worked seriously on my shortcomings and began to make amends, I felt the guilt and shame slide away. My awful past became simple historical fact.

4. Recovery nurtured peace and joy

I had always felt on edge and unhappy. I was a bundle of “self-will run riot.” Anger and resentment filled my days and nights. There was no peace in me, and certainly no joy.

But in recovery I began to learn how to live. I began to feel good about myself and my life. I found significant serenity, and I developed the ability to enjoy life in freedom from obsession and compulsion.

5. Life without sex is better than life with compulsive sex

My life had been marked by a compulsive quest for better and better sex, which was never good enough to satisfy my cravings. Every waking moment focused on my obsession, and my compulsion drove most of my activities. My wife had left me and left town. I had no friends or relatives in town.

For the first year of my sobriety my only friends were my fellows in SA. For me, sobriety meant total sexual abstinence, and that certainly seemed impossible. But this program works! And the recovery I began to experience far outshone any loss of sexual pleasure, which was never enough anyway.

6. Love without sex is better than sex without love

I was a compulsive pleasure seeker. For me, sex was always self-centered. It always meant self-gratification. I was always using others, always taking, never giving, totally without love.

But as I achieved some significant recovery, I began to develop a real relationship with my former wife. Now with “nothing to lose,” I was able to risk self-disclosure and make genuine amends. One year into sobriety I moved back in with her and our two daughters, and we agreed to live a celibate life until remarriage.

So, in the second year of my sobriety, I learned that love without sex was infinitely better than the

earlier experience of sex without love.

7. Making love is better than having sex

Before I became sober, sex was not only the most important thing in my life, it was very nearly the only thing. I was on a quest for more and better sex. But it was never enough, and never good enough.

Since our remarriage, I have really learned to make love. I have found a whole new intimacy that guides my love making. Self-gratification

is subordinate to mutual enjoyment and satisfaction. Today I find that my own enjoyment of love making is greatly enhanced by my new attitude toward giving and sharing, rather than taking only.

I have learned many other gems of wisdom in SA, most of them dealing with “how to live,” but these seven lessons seem to me to be the most important—so far! And with God’s help, there will be many more.

RAY S., Arizona, USA 

Serving in the CFC Service Chain of Love Has Cultivated a Greater Empathy and Sensitivity in This Israeli Fellow

In my faith tradition, we have the story of a wise man who was once asked, “What has God been doing since He created the world?” The wise man answered, “He is busy bringing people together”.

Less than a year ago I was asked to be a coordinator for SA sponsorship-by-mail, for prisoners in the US who had reached out to SAICO for help. At first, it sounded like something very technical and not necessarily as fulfilling or exciting as other service projects I had been a part of during my eight-plus years in SA.

However, the impression I got was that people were needed, and supply was short. I had some experience being a sponsor-by-mail myself. I was sensitive to how much of an effect it could have on the life of a person in prison. I prayed and meditated on it, and felt that I could give a bit of my time to the prospect of helping a suffering addict who found himself in

one of the most limiting environments.

It took just a little bit of practice, a teaspoon of discipline and organization, and I had a small, growing group of volunteers I was corresponding with who were reaching out and offering the program of hope to these suffering sexaholics. In my acting-out days I could never have imagined in my wildest dreams that I would be in a position to carry the message of recovery in this way. I always tell my sponsees that when you really open yourself up to your Higher Power’s guidance, He can do some pretty interesting and amazing things with you.

Before assigning someone a sponsee I would have a chance to read a scan of the inmate’s actual hand-written letter myself. This made me feel closer to what was happening. *Not just a postal service worker, as it were, but part of the human chain of love and compassion, extending outward into the world.* If I didn’t take up his case, it

could be days, weeks maybe even months before it happened. What a responsibility.

I soon started to get excited every time a volunteer sponsor I was overseeing made contact with a friend in prison and was requesting a White Book be sent to him. I could hardly feel comfortable going to sleep at night before forwarding the request to the proper channels. Here was a person sitting in a cell somewhere, waiting for this lifeline, how could I delay? I would think about how long things could take by “snail mail” and how every day could matter, when a person was desperate for assistance. My position in the CFC service chain of love was cultivating in me a greater empathy and sensitivity. What a wonderful gift I was receiving without having planned for it.

My inner joy increased when I would follow up on the sponsors and hear how their sponsees were progressing through the Steps, knowing that I was playing a direct role in what was happening.

Whenever I see a film or TV show that involves prison, I can’t help but think about my excel sheet with the names and letters of people who are being given the gift of light in an often dim and depressing situation. My heart goes out to them. I check my email again to see if anyone has reached out regarding sponsorship-by-mail before I can sleep soundly.

Being a coordinator for SA sponsorship-by-mail has been a very enriching and fulfilling addition to my spiritual recovery life. I wholeheartedly recommend that you try it out for yourself. The more people doing it, the easier it becomes to stay on top of things and carry the message more effectively to those who need it. Being a partner with God in connecting people for the good has definitely paid dividends for me in my recovery.

DANIEL K., Ramat Beit Shemesh, Israel 

DISCUSSION TOPIC

What am I, my home group, IG, or Region going to contribute to 2022 - The Year of CFC?

The author lays out how he got involved as a sponsorship-by-mail coordinator, what it entails, and how many gifts he has received in return.

He prayed and meditated and became willing to be a partner with God in helping his suffering brothers and sisters in these very confined circumstances.

Have you ever adapted the last question on p. 8 of our White Book to “Could you ever have been arrested for a sex-

related offense?”

What can you, your home group, IG, or Region do to contribute to 2022 - The Year of CFC? Are you willing to take concrete actions on finding out how you can help the CFC? Can you draw up a list of those concrete actions and provide them with deadlines?

Can you or your home group sponsor one or more friends in prison? Can you make 2022 - The Year of CFC a theme at your local events? Can

you invite speakers with prison experience or with being a sponsor-by-mail?

Which 12th Step work can you do to spread the message to prisons or their chaplains and professionals?

How can you collect 7th Tradition contributions to help CFC send books to friends in need and prison libraries?

You may use this topic in a discussion meeting, or send us a story of your own recovery journey to essay@sa.org

UPDATE ON THE Australian CFC

We were the first ever SA program in a prison outside the USA. It started at the Newcastle Monday night beginners group Prison Subcommittee. A prison chaplain at June Correctional helped us start the first ever SA program in an Aussie prison. We were able to help around six

friends in prison within the very first months of our sponsor-by-mail program. With the help of all the intergroups in Australia we were soon helped with White Books, pamphlets, money to pay for postage, and a post office box. The fellowship in Australia was more than happy to help the program.

We created a National Prison Committee within the Australian SA service structure. We continuously aspire to bring the SA program to other Australian prisons.

We informed religious leaders, every prison

chaplain, nearly every probation and parole office, courts and prison hospitals, of our prison program and sent them White Books.

We sent all the heads of prison chaplains White Books and SA pamphlets to give to our incarcerated friends who were interested in doing the SA program.

We now wait to see what God does. As a former SACFC chair likes to say "More will be revealed." In our experience it is the most rewarding service that we have done.

PRISON WORK COMMITTEE,
Australia



Reaching Across—Not Up or Down—to Share My Newfound Humanity With Another Person

My first sponsorship experience was prison sponsorship. I was skeptical about reaching out and sponsoring others, but my sponsor kept pushing me. "Carry the message. Carry the message. Carry the message." He'd repeat that over and over and over.

I was desperate for recovery and uncertain about my capabilities. Having had encounters with the legal process myself and knowing friends in the program going through their own, this opportunity stood out to me. It felt ... safer—strange as that may seem.

In my first letter I used a lot of the wording from example letters my local coordinator sent me. The letter I received back was raw and honest, and changed the way I thought of recovery.

When my first sponsee mailed his letter back, I read it, then re-read it. He spoke candidly of his early childhood, the pain he'd caused and experienced, and the events leading up to his incarceration. I was uncomfortable, but couldn't understand why. I'd heard hundreds of similar stories from other sexaholics in the rooms.

I called my sponsor and, as we talked through it, I realized that I identified with my sponsee much more than I wanted to. So many of his experiences mirrored my own. The only difference was that I was fortunate enough to have alternate circumstances. That was all.

One of my temptations in recovery is to think, "I'm reaching down to help someone else." In reality, I'm

reaching across—not up or down—to share my newfound humanity with another person. I'm no better than a single person on this planet. Prison sponsorship regularly reminds me of that fact.

Whatever terminology society wants to use for that person—felon, convict, inmate, offender, etc.—doesn't really matter. That person is human. That person is me. Understanding that has changed the way I see people.

His experiences mirrored my own. The only difference was that I was fortunate enough to have alternate circumstances. That was all.

Weirdly enough, sponsoring some of my friends in prison gave me the courage to sponsor members outside of prison.

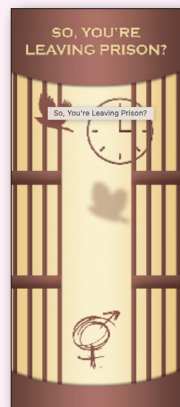
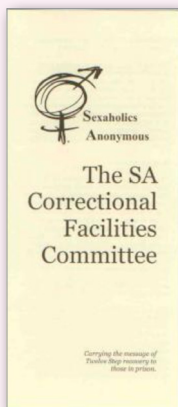
I still sponsor friends in prison. Sometimes communication is slow. Sometimes it fails completely and we lose touch. But more often than not, someone's life is changed just like mine was, and another person who was lost finds his way. I'm grateful for all my friends in prison who have helped me with my recovery and humanity.

MATT J., Virginia, USA



CFC LITERATURE

Find on the sa.org website these three inspiring and very helpful pamphlets to help you and your local group or CFC committee in your service with prison professionals and our friends in prison: <https://www.sexaholics.org/store/index.php?cPath=26>



Doing CFC Service is Often a Challenge But Also a Beautiful Opportunity to Do 12th Step Work

The Belgian CFC Chair describes in great detail the journey and progress in his country.

As early as 2009, fellows of the Belgian SA were involved in 12th Step work for sexaholics in prison. In the 'early years' some contacts were established with prison staff, chaplaincy and social workers.

This resulted in contacts with two incarcerated lust addicts, one of whom actually got an SA sponsor. This fellow was visited several times by a local group and received letters also written by this group. For another person, who was incarcerated in a prison for the mentally ill, the group organized several meetings in his correctional facility. The committee also organized several info meetings in other Belgian prisons, where members of SA shared their experience, strength, and hope with the imprisoned attendees.

We listened to the experience of an AA member who was doing 12th Step work in prisons. He showed us which prisons were more open to 12-Step programs. We got in contact with a prison where members of AA organized non-AA meetings about addictions in general. We were invited to come and share about our addiction and solution. We got encouraging feedback and made contact with a platform of organizations that are offering help

to addicts in prison.

I joined the CFC in the second half of 2020 and was soon asked to be Chairperson of the committee, which I accepted without knowing where this adventure would lead me. One of the first things I did was to make a summary of all the contacts we had. Because of the many previous contacts with people and organizations, we started using an online spreadsheet with all relevant data so far. In doing so, we keep an oversight on our actions and contact data which is easily available for all the members of the committee.

We also decided to organize a Public Information meeting specifically intended for prison staff and social workers working in prison or with people going in or coming out of prison.

We stated that this webinar would be an exchange between SA and professionals in order to get to know each other's work. We invited a speaker, a fellow who had been in prison for sex-related crime and who got into SA during his imprisonment. The atmosphere was positive and many questions were asked. After this event we sent all attendees a feedback form and gave them the opportunity to order SA folders and posters.

We called back the attendees who showed interest to see whether they

needed more info and in some cases we organized an info meeting for their team.

An employee of the psychosocial services of a prison told her warden about us. The warden was in favor of a cooperation with SA but as the prison system has a strict hierarchy she had to inform the general management. At the same time, another attendee of the webinar

Although the prison system and social services may be organized differently in each country, we can still learn from each other's process and progress.

approached us and asked us how we would go about offering the SA program to sexaholics in prison. As a result of this, we got invited by the general management of the Belgian prison system to present the SA program. This led to SA being allowed to unroll its program in all Dutch-speaking prisons in Belgium.

Our next step is to present SA in correctional facilities and to get into contact with those behind bars still suffering from our disease. Our recent attempts to get in touch with prison chaplains and other moral counselors were less successful though: our emails remain unanswered.

In our contacts with professional social workers we often encounter

people who are a bit skeptical about the SA solution—especially the idea of abstinence which gets eyebrows raised and results in a lot of questions.

Our experience has taught us not to be too specific about our sobriety definition. For many people—social workers as well as chaplaincy, the sobriety definition (especially the Cleveland Clarification) can be a breaking point. We spent a lot of time trying to explain this, time we would rather now use to tell how and why the program works for us. Today, we choose to be pragmatic about it and not mention it; after all, the sobriety definition can be found on the SA website and in SA folders.

We usually also stress to professionals that SA is in addition to other treatments and therapy. For instance, the University Forensics center in Antwerp promotes a "healthy and safe sexuality" in their treatment model, even for sexual offenders, but nevertheless they see the value of what SA has to offer and they provide the SA folder to those who they think might benefit from it.

We also see the advantages of sharing experience cross-border; for this purpose our regional CFC committee has great worth. Although the prison system and social services may be organized differently in each country, we can still learn from each other's process and progress. Doing this service is often a challenge and takes a lot of patience but is a beautiful opportunity to do 12th Step work for those still suffering from lust addiction behind bars.

Joost V., *Belgian CFC*



God Was Always With Me Through My Trial



He put his trust in God and turned himself in. So began an unbelievable journey in which God stepped in and rescued him.

Until about four years ago, I was living in a country in Africa with my wife. We had gone there to set up a humanitarian project to help widows, orphans and children. We'd been married for a bit over 38 years at that time. The stress of setting up a project from scratch, put an awful strain on our marriage.

I thought we had a good, strong marriage. I didn't realize at the time that the strain was growing us apart. Nor did I realize I was a sexaholic and enslaved by lust. I'd never even

heard the word sexaholic before until a counselor had told me about Sexaholics Anonymous.

He said I most certainly would benefit from attending their meetings. Was I a sex addict? Oh, I'd struggled most of my life with self-sex, from my early teen years. It had been my dirty little secret, and I wanted to keep it that way. I wanted to be normal with my sex life, but was unsure what normal looked like.

As time went by, my wife began to withdraw her heart from me, which hurt me deeply. And I allowed lust a

greater foothold in my life. It began to consume me and take over. I wanted that excitement, that rush, that ecstasy, but self-sex just left me hollow and used.

So I began pushing the boundaries to feed my addiction. My lust drove me to do stuff I would never have thought I would do, especially as I claim to be a follower of God. So why was I doing it? It was like I was a slave to my own desires and because I thought nobody would know.

But the feelings of guilt and shame haunted me to the point that I hated myself. I was a mess. How could I fix it? I'd always been good at fixing things before, but this was beyond me. I remember one night around midnight and everyone else in the house was asleep. It was just after I'd had a lust binge and I cried out to God to please do whatever it would take to get me out of this dark hole I had dug for myself. I said to him, please rescue me. I didn't want to continue

If I was serious about wanting His help at any cost then He promised to be with me and as painful as it would be, I would have to come clean.

living like this anymore. I was tired of living a lie.

I said, "I'll do whatever it takes, hear my cry for help." And He began to work on me. He convinced me that I had to be honest, that I must seek forgiveness from those I had hurt by my actions. This was a very difficult

thing to do when most of my life I'd been hiding the truth. If I was serious about wanting His help at any cost then He promised to be with me and as painful as it would be, I would have to come clean.

I knew I needed help and I most certainly could not trust myself. So I

After some time I began to feel accepted and that maybe these guys knew the path to recovery. So began my association with SA and this proved to be a lifesaver for me.

put my trust in God. Totally. My wife and I came back to Australia for a visit and it was during this time that God put it on my heart to search for help. I said "Okay God, I will, but you'll have to help me." I contacted a counselor who specialized in sex addiction.

I hadn't thought too much about what the results might be. I followed the promptings of God on my heart and found myself confessing my mess over the phone to a complete stranger. But my confession involved breaking the law and so now he was obliged ethically to inform the authorities.

He told me that it would be best if I turned myself in and so began an unbelievable journey. A journey that God initiated. I turned myself over to the police and confessed my crime. I was bluntly honest and full of remorse. Perhaps I was rather naive, but I believed in my heart that this was what God wanted me to do.

There will always be consequences to our actions, good or bad. The questioning officer asked me if there was anything else that I should tell them. And then God reminded me of a specific incident I had not yet mentioned. In my head I said to God, if I tell them that they will arrest me for sure.

And God reminded me that I agreed to do whatever it would take. So why stop short, you've come this far, come clean. So I told them and was promptly arrested. It all happened so fast. And one of my regrets is that I never had a chance to say goodbye to my wife and family. I'd gone from being a respected citizen to a criminal overnight.

I secured bail and my wife went back to Africa during this time. I continued

I began to sing as many praise songs to God I could think of. He had not abandoned me and I trusted Him. He would take care of me.

to seek help and I contacted another counselor who specialized in sexual addiction. And I began to have two Skype sessions a week with him. After about a month, he suggested that I get in touch with a group closer to where I was staying so I could have face-to-face meetings.

He gave me a number to ring for SA. I was scared and put it off for a few days. Finally I rang and spoke to

a guy called Jason and he has become like a brother to me. I wondered what I was getting myself into, but after some time I began to feel accepted and that maybe these guys knew the path to recovery. So began my association with SA and this proved to be a lifesaver for me. When I went to court, Jason would come to support me which made court not so scary.

While I was on bail, I had an opportunity to volunteer in a community service center where I met and made new friends. I actually felt useful and loved it. And I'm convinced it was part of God's blessing and plan for me. Just when things seemed to be going well, my lawyer told me that the arresting police officer was trying to make other charges stick that could see my sentence possibly increased to 25 years in prison.

This possibility scared me. God's promises from his word rang in my ears, that He will be with me in my fiery trial, and that I am not to fear, but to trust Him. I remembered a part of the Serenity Prayer where it says that the things I cannot control I must turn over to him.

After some time the other charges were dismissed. Once again, God had stepped in and rescued me. And I was so grateful. Finally, the day came for my sentencing. I had pleaded guilty. The only evidence they had was my confession. There was a possibility that I might get house detention or community service because of my previously unblemished record, but I was convicted, handcuffed and led away to the horrible holding cells.

I began to sing as many praise songs to God that I could think of. He had not abandoned me and I trusted Him. He would take care of me. There were some bright spots to this horrible

experience. Like when Jason came and visited me, when my Mum and Dad even came and visited me, and an old schoolmate.

God protected me from harm and he put a song in my heart in trying

There are many guys struggling in jail, some who don't even know they are sex addicts. It's important that they know there is hope and there are people on the outside who care about them.

circumstances. I remember being shifted three times to various prisons and at my final destination visits from my family took two days. So that seriously limited the amount of time they could come and spend with me.

It was so good to find some fellow believers in jail. I made some good friends inside. Jason was a constant. He wrote me letters of encouragement. He was such a good support. He gave me some good advice on survival in jail too. He said, don't tell anyone what your crime was. And I never did.

I slipped into a routine and time seemed to go quickly. The time for my release was approaching. Then about six weeks before my release, I got a letter from the Department of Immigration saying my visa to stay in Australia had been revoked. I had 21 days to respond, to build up a case for

why I should be allowed to stay. But my dream of freedom was shattered and I lost the battle to get my visa reinstated. I was deported back to my country of origin where I hadn't been for about 40 years.

I now live on a 500 acre farm doing construction work on farm buildings and teaching a carpentry course for recovering addicts. I am also involved in a rehabilitation program where I find the tools that SA equipped me with are very beneficial. I am in the 12 Step program and I love the farm and the people I work with. God has been so good to me and I love him for it.

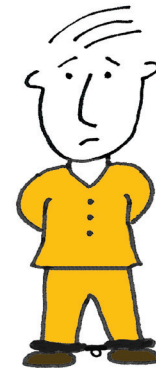
There are many guys struggling in jail, some who don't even know that they are sex addicts. It's important that we get the stories of encouragement out to these guys so that they know there is hope and that there are people on the outside who care about them. Thank you for hearing my story.

PAUL M., Auckland, New Zealand



"In the middle of a difficulty, lies opportunity"

- Albert Einstein



By Jimmy M.



Searching and Finding God's Love is What Healed My Heart in This Program of SA

By the grace of my loving God I've been sober since May 5, 2013. My home group is the Monday night beginners group in Newcastle, Australia. Currently I'm a SA trustee and the current SACFC vice chair.

The SACFC voted in favor of a motion not to call our fellows in prison "prisoners" but "Our Friends" because the term prisoner is so degrading and humiliating.

I spent a number of years in prison for drug-related crimes. I lost everything when I went to prison. When others referred to me as a prisoner and not as a human being—person due dignity just being a child of God—it made my despondency worse. When I went to prison I became a number, that's right,

just a number.

I paid a price for my mistakes, however my experience of being in prison was one in which I never stopped paying the price for what I did. I felt I was paying the price every second of every minute of every day. To relate some of the daily pain and fear I lived through: the food was barely edible; every day could be the day I got stabbed or bashed; the mind games others played with me; even the correctional officers played games with my life. Words cannot describe the cruelty that goes on in there.

I am a human being and all Our Friends are human beings. Everyone deserves a second chance at life. Individuals in prison with our disease of sexaholism experience worse pain, fear, and humiliation than I did

for my drug crimes. I saw the horror of what happens to people with our disease in prison.

God loved me at my worst, and searching and finding that LOVE is what has healed my heart in this program of SA. LOVE is what Our Friends need. Love is free and heals wounded souls. Love transformed my life, your fellowship transformed my life with unconditional love. We all need love.

I wish there was more I could do to help Our Friends. I do everything I can to help them. God and you did everything you could to help me, the least I can do is carry the message and do all I can do to help.

Some view service as something which assists their program, however for me it's more than what I get out of it. It's more about God's deep love for all his children. The God of my understanding loves everyone deeply and intimately; there is nothing my God wouldn't do—or hasn't done—to assist me. That's what I try, and do for others. Our Friends in prison need all the LOVE they can get.

Jason C., Newcastle, Australia



God Sent a Lost Shepherd among His Lost Sheep in Prison

My name is Marty. I am a very grateful child of God and a recovering sexaholic/alcoholic—two things about myself that took years and a fall from grace for me to accept. I am writing this from my kitchen and, as I look out the door, I do not see any razor-wire fences—a view I had for 25 years because of my abuse of prepubescent girls as a Catholic priest.

As I reflect I have an awareness that this is not my story but the story of God's love of me. He knew me in the womb and knew I would fall under selfishness, pride, and addictions. It would take 25 years of leading a double life, on the outside a people-pleaser, but on the inside a wolf seeking to devour for personal pleasures before I found God's purpose for me. I had to fall off my egotistical pedestal in order to become the servant that God created me to be: a rebel and a sinner to serve rebels and sinners. So God graced a victim of my abuse and an intervention took place. I was sent into therapy where my secret life—the mask I was hiding behind—was exposed to me.

I was introduced to Twelve Step programs and learned that there is a solution; it begins with accepting the truth that I am a sexaholic, a sick man trying to get well, not a bad man

trying to get good. I saw in this the love of God for me, but I struggled to love myself.

I had to face the truth of my being unfaithful to my spouse, the Church, by hurting her lambs, and face the consequence of my "divorce" from her, meaning no more active ministry for her. Then I had to face the biggest consequence of all, prison, where God wanted me to serve. Who better to send amongst the lost sheep than a lost shepherd? It would take years of reflection before I realized that I was in prison to serve God; in prison, at my most powerless, no longer my own God.

I am writing this in the kitchen of my flat today but my heart is with His flock in two ways. First, I keep in daily contact by email and letters to friends still in prison, struggling as I did to get to know the love of a God who will go to any length to rescue them; and second, by striving to keep those of His flock on the outside of the razor fences free from the brambles of addiction.

This is not my story but the story of the God of my understanding who will go to any length to take care of everything so long as I continue to surrender my whole life to Him—the good and the bad.

Here is a virtual hug to you all from my kitchen.

MARTY L., Ohio, USA





Sponsoring Through Bars—A Way to Work Tradition Five as a Group

Tradition Five: *Each group has but one primary purpose—to carry its message to the sexaholic who still suffers.*

When I became the IGR of the Dutch Intergroup in 2018, I joined the regional (EMER) Correctional Facilities Committee because I realized I could have been arrested for many a column in the chronicle of my powerlessness and unmanageability. Soon, I offered my service as secretary. Thus moving “to the middle of the SA life raft” I met a lot of trusted servants from the US who were involved in the worldwide CFC service.

In “Tuscon” Ray’s footsteps

One of them regularly offered workshops in sponsoring sexaholics in prison. Sometimes it was just him and me, and I experienced great fellowship and was filled by the atmosphere of

loving earnestness and compassion. This direct training in Sponsoring by Media, in short SbM, is supported by a whole array of tools—like template letters, a list of special tips, and, of course, names of sexaholics wanting a sponsor.

These tools had been developed since the pioneer of this service, Ray from Tuscon, Arizona, started his march through the institutions. Lovingly remembered as “Tuscon Ray” and with the patience of an angel, Ray held on to his aim to get entry into the prison system. Listening to him sharing* on how he persisted, it goes to show he did so by holding on to the hand of his HP. The humility with which he gives this testimony of heartfelt service touches me. The international CF

committee has recently worked on a letter to chaplaincy. I pray to work my program in a way that I’m given the perseverance that Ray showed in getting access to correctional facilities.

The “Workshop Leiden/online” — sponsoring as a Group

Inspired by the SbM workshops, I suggested to the fellows in Leiden, the Netherlands, to use half of our pre-meeting fellowship time for that service. They agreed. We started in February 2020 and were happy to welcome fellows from several countries of our region via media, only to go solely online a month later due to the pandemic. Gradually a meeting format came about and within a few months we were sponsoring around ten sexaholics in US prisons.

Helped by the experience, strength, and hope of SACFC servants, we overcame the teething problems—like how to guard the sponsee’s safety. The shares of fellows who have left prison in SA recovery have proven

invaluable. US fellows offered help as conduits, forwarding letters, both in print and via email, to the facilities. In the course of almost two years, we have started corresponding with over thirty sponsor requesters. Not all of them started working the Program. One of the requesters, assigned to me, decided after my introductory letter that he didn’t relate, only to come back after a few months. He admitted he had been in denial. I’m still sponsoring him by mail, and I am ever so grateful for it.

Often the members of the workshop are touched by the chronicles of our sponsees: the pain, both inflicted upon and caused by. What a blessing to be reminded of my insanity, the chaos I caused and the harm I did. What a grace to be granted a non-judgmental and forgiving attitude by working Step Twelve as a group this way.

Contact the Workshop SbM Leiden online through wrkshpsaleiden@gmail.com

How it might work

This should really be wrapped up with a call to service. Here are a few tips:

- Put this service on the agenda of the next business meeting of your home group and discuss whether the group could start sponsoring a sexaholic in prison.
- In order to give your fellows a clue, read this article to the group.
- Request access to the Tuscon Ray Tapes: https://docs.google.com/document/u/1/d/17Rfs50PAaEyKOGoucfdOO9HFtjutV2OuKDTHUgee_cU/mobilebasic
- Find your local/regional SbM coordinator through sacfc1@gmail.com
- It goes to show you can take on a sponsee in prison as an individual member too.

BEN V., EMER CFC, Workshop SbM Leiden/online



WANT
TO HELP
ANOTHER
SEXAHOLIC?

"We were learning how to give and the measure we gave was the measure we got back."

Sexaholics Anonymous 205

Your *Essay* Has Become a *Bimonthly* Magazine!!

The Board of Trustees has approved to have the *Essay* published six instead of five times a year from 2022 onwards.

- ◆ To download your free copy simply go to the [Essay page](#) on our international website sa.org
- ◆ To get the six annual print issues sent to your home in an anonymous envelope, go to the [SA Store](#)
- ◆ Multiple-year subscriptions are welcome. Group rates get a discount.

The *Essay* is a Great *Twelfth Step* Tool!

Give a gift subscription of the print version to a sexaholic who needs it. Great for:

- ◆ Sponsees ◆ Newcomers ◆ **Prisons** ◆ Rehab Centers ◆ Doctor's Offices
- ◆ Giveaways ◆ Group Celebrations ◆ Intergroup and Regional Events

Get your group, intergroup, region, or SA friends to join in. Carry the Message, it's easy!

The CFC committee is asking each region, intergroup and groups to make

2022 the Year of CFC

1. Have "2022, Year of CFC Service" as a theme

- Help "The Year of CFC 2022" be the background focus of international, regional, intergroup and local groups.
- There will be weekly promotions through Whatsapp and email. The main theme is to see people in prison as our "friends" inside.
- Each region is encouraged to hold quarterly meetings and communicate ways to help our friends in need.

2. Have at least one CFC keynote speaker at each of the upcoming conferences

- Each region is asked to hold quarterly events featuring speakers who give testimony of their experience of helping friends in prison.
- Show videos of testimony of friends in prison or prison chaplains.
- Ask their member groups to hold workshops on corresponding with friends in prison.
- Groups should be encouraged to raise funds for books to be sent to friends requesting them.

3. Have the hat passed around for CFC at each of the conferences

- We are not able to do this alone. We need help from SA international, regions, intergroups and groups.
- To be self-sufficient, we need help from SA international, regions, intergroups and local groups to raise money for the program.
- Donations are greatly appreciated <https://www.sa.org/donate/>

We are here to help, please contact the CFC: zantinger@gmail.com





SA UK Winter Convention Gave Her Hope

This January, our fellows in SA Exeter in the UK organized a Winter Convention held in their beautiful ancient city in the Southwest of England; it was a 3-day weekend of fellowship with sexaholics who came from all over the UK and Europe.

This has been my first convention, and I was filled with excitement and anxiety at the same time. The anxiety went away as soon as I encountered everyone who I have met through Zoom meetings in the past year, and I must say that I felt that I have known everyone for a long time, and felt really welcomed.

The program was fantastic with the following topics: “Living Life on Life’s Terms”, “Obstacles and Solutions for a Joyful Recovery”, “Working the Steps”,

“Meditation”, “Disclosure”, “Creating Joy in Fellowship”, “Emotional Sobriety”, “Faith Replacing Fear”, and everyone’s favorite, “The Talent Show.”

It was a blessing to hear people’s stories and be able to relate to them even if we all came from different walks of life and backgrounds. I can identify a lot with the struggles others endured from this disease and how they seek recovery and were given faith through this program, and more importantly, realizing that we all have the same goal: to live a sober life and to share the message to other sexaholics who are still suffering.

I’ve never felt at home and safe in a group of strangers where I can truly be myself and express how I’m feeling—my defects and my hopes. As a young woman in SA, this has truly been an amazing experience for me. I was given hope, and was inspired to live a beautiful sober life, to reconnect with my Higher Power, and be united with my brothers and sisters.

LEAH, Surrey, UK



Why Working the Steps Is Important

If you haven’t seen the **brand-new video** that just came out about the 12 Steps, be sure to check it out! “[Why Working the Steps is Important](#)” is the multimedia story of how a member worked the Steps of SA and came to understand the Solution to his Problem. Using animation, special effects, and humor, it takes an in-depth look at the most basic reason **why** addicts work the 12-Step Program: *to obtain, nourish and nurture a relationship with the One who has all power, The Solution to ALL of our problems!*

Usually, in a speaker meeting, you’ll hear someone’s story of what it was like, what happened, and what it’s like now. This video is the same, but does so in a visually- (but not way. It also several about history, terrific life the speaker from his first you haven’t it yet, just link. If you have seen it, please be sure to share it with your sponsees and your home group. Enjoy!



stimulating triggering!) includes stories 12 Step and some lessons that I learned sponsor. If watched click on the

Click on the hyperlink above or type the following link into your browser: https://youtu.be/vd_kNW8vfLo

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The Road to Freedom

RECOVERY WEEKLY

The thought rings in my mind, “Stop writing someone else’s story.” For so many years my addict controlled the story of my life. He told me to be afraid; that I was going to fail, so don’t even try. I so deeply believed my addict’s lies, that I wouldn’t dare to dream of who I am and what I wanted. I resorted to living a life for everyone else but me. I walked a path of loneliness and dread, and settled for being a second-rate version of me. I wrote the story of someone else’s life.

Then I found the program, the 12 Steps, my sponsor, my fellows, and more. I began to share secrets I thought I would bring to my grave. I started to cry, I started to speak from the depths of my heart. For the first time, I began telling my story.


That brings me to our blog, *The Road to Freedom*. A place where the men and women of the English-speaking fellowship in Israel write their stories, sharing their experience, strength and hope together. We have a place to find our voice, and express our own unique experience. We invite you to join us on our “road to freedom”—read our blog, learn from our messages. Our voice yearned to speak, and so we created a place for it to be heard. We hope you’ll join us.

So far we’ve published over 25 entirely new recovery articles, authored by over 16 different sober members. We’ve covered topics like positive sobriety, letting go of sick relationships, mental health, lust in the bedroom, surrendering fantasy, coping with the death of loved ones, how to trust our Higher Power, and more! We’ve also published in-depth guides to daily recovery routines, getting through withdrawal, sober traveling, and finding our Higher Power in everyday life. And every week, we publish a brand new article!

Our collective posts have been read over 2,000 times by members from 29 countries, with many more to come! We also offer an email-only version of the blog for members who don’t have web browsers.

Our committee is highly active, and we’re constantly recruiting new local members to share their experiences in writing. We believe that at present, it is the only active SA blog in the world that publishes regularly. A new article is published every Monday. All articles are available for free at sa-israel.org/en/blog

Come join us on the “Road to Freedom”! We hope you’ll find it useful to your recovery. For questions or feedback, contact sanewsenglish@gmail.com

THE SA ISRAEL “ROAD TO FREEDOM” BLOG COMMITTEE 

Personal Recovery Depends on SA Unity

We invite you to join in and celebrate the Unity of our SA fellowship, listening to the ESH of speakers from PSR and EMER and other participants from all over the world.

The two working languages will be **Farsi** and **English**. There will also be interpretation channels from both languages into: Arabic, Dutch, French, German, Italian, Polish, Romanian, Russian, Slovak, Slovenian, and Spanish.

Themes will include: How does accepting the sobriety definition of SA help us be united? How does working the Steps make us closer? How does placing principles before personalities keep us together?

Friday, April 8 9:30am-2:00pm EST 15:30-20:00 CET 18:00-22:30 Iran time
Saturday, April 9 9:00am-1:30pm EST 15:00-19:30 CET 17:30-22:00 Iran time

We are looking for interpreters from English or Farsi into the other languages listed for the convention. Please contact EMER at emeregion@gmail.com.

To register for the Convention in 13 different languages, click on or paste in this link: <https://docs.google.com/document/d/1JrQCeTS3svzAvoy7esPIWX0s9684Gxn7s5dPV9L9Otw/edit?usp=sharing>

Consult the EMER website starting February 18: www.sexaholicsanonymous.eu.

New SA Groups Feb 2022

- ◆ Amarillo, TX, USA 
- ◆ Derry, NH, USA 
- ◆ Miami Beach, FL, USA 
- ◆ Rogers, AR, USA 
- ◆ Cache Valley, UT, USA 
- ◆ Missoula, MT, USA 
- ◆ Erie, CO, USA 

SAICO Financial Feb 2022

□ Revenue	\$385,259
□ Expenses	\$280,192
□ Net Income	\$105,067
□ Prudent Reserve	\$159,750

Love Essay?

Thank you for keeping our worldwide magazine available with your contributions:
www.sa.org/donate?src=essay

SAVE THE DATE

Friday April 8th, 2022, 15:30 - 20:00 CET
 Saturday April 9th, 2022, 15:00 - 19:30 CET

Europe & Middle East and
 Persian-Speaking Regions
 SA ONLINE CONVENTION

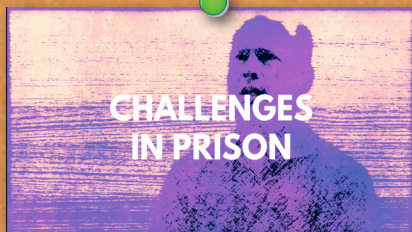
"OUR FELLOWSHIP UNITED"

Speakers from both regions
 Parallel channels in multiple languages

In the near future more details about the event will be announced including registration, topics and speakers involved.

We are looking forward to seeing you there!

SA Notice Board



Members already serving our friends in prison through CFC service believe that this work has become an indispensable part of their own recovery. The CFC has commissioned a video to help you discover what it can do for yours. It's still in the final stages of post-production, but you can see the work-in-progress at the Central California CFC website: <https://sexaholicsanonymous.wixsite.com/modesto/cfc>

Female Speakers Needed
Do you know of any women with 4+ years of sobriety?
Please contact Nancy S. at howp310_11@yahoo.com

Please consider supporting our group which has been struggling

Join Newcastle Beginners Group (Sydney 6PM and 7am UTC)

<https://zoom.us/j/82754040603>
Meeting ID: 827 5404 0603
Password: 647571

ANNOUNCEMENTS?

This is YOUR notice board!
Send your SA-related announcements to: essay@sa.org

For the list of local and worldwide meetings & events, go to our international website: sa.org

To have your local SA meetings or events announced on the website, email the SA Central Office: saico@sa.org



COMING IN APRIL



NEXT EDITION

In the April edition, read what the tool of sponsorship is doing for the daily recovery of our members worldwide.

Sponsorship According to God's Will

This fellow from Siberia inspires his sponsees to want a sober life by his own example.

God Is My Highest Priority

For him, a sponsor does not represent God-with-skin who needs to teach the sponsee discipline.

To Do's and To Avoinds in Sponsoring

Tencha describes in great detail what has and hasn't worked for her both as a sponsee and as a sponsor.

He Can't Make Anyone Sober

Sober in Wales, UK since 2005, he tries to help his sponsees find their rock bottom.

SUBMIT YOUR STORY

June 2022 edition: Emotional Sobriety (stories due May 1) "Sober Is Not Well," we hear often. What is this thing called "emotional sobriety" and how to attain it?

August 2022 edition: The Slogans—How to Use Them in Our Daily Lives (stories due July 1) The Slogans are one of the best kept secrets in SA. How do you use them?

October 2022 edition: Cooperation With Professionals (Stories due Sept 1) Send us your experience in working with therapists, doctors, medical students, and other kinds of professionals.

Dec 2022 edition: Humor—How to Use It for Recovery (stories due Nov 1) How do you use humor in a constructive way? Mail us how "cheerfulness and laughter make for usefulness" (AA 132) in your group.

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*.

**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.**



THY WILL, NOT MINE, BE DONE